

Highlights of the 147<sup>th</sup>  
Grand Lodge of New Mexico  
Annual Communication

March 14 -16, 2024

Ruidoso, NM

Most Worshipful Grand Master

**Thomas L. Schenk**



The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of A.F.& A.M. of New Mexico was called to order at 8:30 am on Friday March 15, 2024, at the Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort and Casino for the public opening. The flag of the United States of America was presented by the New Mexico Knights Templar, the National Anthem was played and a tribute to the Flag was given by Bro. Anthony Uchello of Sandia Mountain Lodge No. 72.

A welcome address was given by Tribal leader Joey Padilla of the Mescalero Apache Tribe Nation. A response was presented by RWB Robin K. Justice the Senior Grand Warden. The parade of Banners was then presented by the Constituent Lodges in attendance, consisting of:

Montezuma Lodge No. 1	Chapman Lodge No. 2	Aztec Lodge No. 3
Temple Lodge No. 6	Silver City Lodge No. 8	Deming Lodge No. 12
Hiram Lodge No. 13	Animas Lodge No. 15	Kingston Lodge No. 16
Chama Lodge No. 17	Cerrillos Lodge No. 19	Eddy Lodge No. 21
San Juan Lodge No. 25	Estancia Lodge No. 33	Clovis Lodge No 40
Lovington Lodge No. 46	Tularosa Lodge No. 49	Albuquerque Lodge No 60
Hobbs Lodge No. 63	Pajarito Lodge No. 66	Eunice Lodge No. 67
Mesa Lodge No. 68	Valley Lodge No. 69	Jornada Lodge No. 70
Sandia Mtn Lodge No. 72	Zia Lodge No. 77	Dona Ana Lodge No. 78
Four Corners Lodge No. 80	Edgewood Lodge No. 82	

**The Worshipful Masters** that were in attendance were then introduced:

Jose M. Montano	Montezuma Lodge No. 1	Ray Edward Manly	Lovington Lodge No. 46
Glen E. Maestas	Chapman Lodge No. 2	Anthony C. Pugliese	Tularosa Lodge No. 49
Nachima R. Coriz	Union Lodge No. 4	Bobby J. Clark	Hobbs Lodge No. 63
Peter E. Hackett	Temple Lodge No. 6	Mark K. Smith	Pajarito Lodge No. 66
Kenneth H. Stalter	Hiram Lodge No. 13	Gary M. Deck	Eunice Lodge No. 67
Edward H. Schmidt	Animas Lodge No 15	Raymond Engstrom	Valley Lodge No. 69
Arthur H. Weber	Kingston Lodge No. 16	Joe N. Chrisman	Jornada Lodge No. 70
Salvatore T. Baragiola	Chama Lodge No. 17	James N. Christopher	Sandia Mtn Lodge No. 72
Michael Frietas	Cerrillos Lodge No 19	Charles W. Bass	Ruidoso Lodge No. 73
Cameron L. Wells	Eddy Lodge No. 21	Joseph L. Beckham	Dona Ana Lodge No. 78
David L. Lawson	San Juan Lodge No. 25	Ernie D. Shoup	4 Corners Lodge No. 80
David B. Cordova	Bent Lodge No 42	Ron S. Betts Jr.	Edgewood Lodge No. 82
		Leon Alderette	Lodge of Research

The Past Grand Masters of the Grand Lodge of New Mexico who were in attendance were then introduced:

B. Mac Page	PGM 1992	Jay Harris	PGM 2008	Adam Hathaway	PGM 2018
Shem T. Peachey	PGM 2001	Gary Deck	PGM 2010	Ralph Easley	PGM 2019
William Beckett Jr.	PGM 2002	Bobby Arther	PGM 2011	Gary Baker	PGM 2020
Jeffery Johnson	PGM 2003	William Childers	PGM 2013	Jonathan Andrews	PGM 2021
G Wayne Morrison	PGM 2005	Jefferson Jordan	PGM 2015	William Pogue	PGM 2022
Jimmie Berkey	PGM 2006	Ernie Shoup	PGM 2017		
Arthur Tunnell	PGM 2007				



PGM of Texas MWB Gene Carnes approached the East to make a presentation to MWB Thomas Schenk painting which is on the outside wall of MWB Tom's home lodge in Texas.

MWB Arthur D. Tunnell was called to the podium to a standing ovation and addressed the Craft. MWB Art has been through many trials and tribulations lately and the Craft was very happy to have him present. MWB Art told those assembled that they were family and he loved being with them.

MWB Thomas L. Schenk then called for the credentials report from RWB James Overfelt, the chairman of the Credentials Committee who reported that there were: **43 Lodges** represented.

29	Worshipful Masters	17	Sr. Wardens	15	Jr. Wardens
15	PGM	6	GL Officers	3	Past Elec GL Officers
10	WM Proxys	22	SR Warden Proxys	24	JR Warden Proxys
<b>141</b>	<b>Total Votes</b>				

The Jurisprudence Committee was then introduced:

Chairperson	Patrick Moroney
Member	Alex Cosby
Member	James Bungard
Member	Michael Frietas
Member	Peter Hackett

MWB Thomas L. Schenk then delivered his Grand Master's Address

The Committee on Reference moved to approve, a 2<sup>nd</sup> was voiced, and the motion passed.

The roll of the Grand Lodge Officers, Lodges and Attendees was called for the Masonic Charity Walk which brought in over \$9,000.

MWB Ralph A Easley the Grand Orator then delivered his address. His reflections on his year as Grand Master during the "Covid years". A journey well worth taking.

**The election of officers** for the ensuing year was called. Ballots had been distributed to the eligible voting officers and their proxies. The results of the election are as follows.

Elected Grand Lodge Officers:

Grand Master	M··W··B·· Steve A. Almager
Deputy Grand Master	R··W··B·· Robin K. Justice
Sr. Grand Warden	R··W··B·· Kevin L. Fitzwater
Jr. Grand Warden	R··W··B·· Alexander M. Cosby
Grand Treasurer	R··W··B·· Wade D. Villanueva
Grand Secretary	R··W··B·· Tony Christophersen

Appointed Grand Lodge Officers:

Sr. Grand Deacon	R.:W.:B.: James E. Bungard
Jr. Grand Deacon	R.:W.:B.: Charles W. Bass
Grand Chaplin	R.:W.:B.: Eddie Lynch
Grand Lecturer	M.:W.:B.: Jonathan Andrews
Grand Orator	R.:W.:B.: Gary Scott
Grand Marshal	R.:W.:B.: Matthew Stevenson
Grand Sword Bearer	W.:B.: Glen Maestas
Sr. Grand Steward	W.:B.: Jason Harmon
Jr. Grand Steward	W.:B.: Gilbert Gamboa
Grand Historian	W.:B.: Tyler Anderson
Grand Tyler	R.:W.:B.: Glenn Connolly
Grand Musician	W.:B.: Bert Dalton

The Grand Lodge was called from Labor to Refreshment to be reconvened for the installation of officers at 4:00 pm.

## Installation of Officers

### Installing Officers:

Installing Master – M.:W.:B.: Ralph Easley

Installing Marshal – M.:W.:B.: Bobby Arther

Installing Chaplin – M.:W.:B.: Gary Deck

M.:W.:B.: Steve A. Almager then installed the District Deputy Grand Masters and M.:W.:B.: Jonathan R. Andrews installed the District Deputy Grand Lecturers.

### DDGMs

R.:W.:B.: Virgil Brumbelow  
R.:W.:B.: D. Don Carlson  
R.:W.:B.: Vern Newlin  
R.:W.:B.: Harry Jenkins II  
R.:W.:B.: James Combs  
R.:W.:B.: Bill Herron  
R.:W.:B.: Clayton Kuehn  
R.:W.:B.: Bob Parish

District #1  
District #2  
District #3  
District #4  
District #5  
District #6  
District #7  
District #8

### DDGLs

W.:B.: Mike Brown  
W.:B.: Chris Williams  
R.:W.:B.: Boyd Wood  
W.:B.: Brian Moss  
W.:B.: Greg Stihel  
W.:B.: Joe Chrisman  
W.:B.: Larry Eakin  
W.:B.: Richard Glenn

Upon the completion of the Installation of Officers the Grand Lodge was called from Labor to Refreshment to prepare for the Grand Master's Banquet. The Banquet was a very well attended affair with good food and excellent company. During the Banquet RWB David Lory Baker, who had just stepped down as Grand Treasurer was called to the podium where MWB Tom Schenk and RWB Steve Almager, Deputy Grand Master presented him with his Grand Treasurer Emeritus Apron and thanked him for his service to the

Grand Lodge in that capacity. RWB Baker has been very active in the affairs of the Grand Lodge for many years and there is no doubt he will remain an important figure in the Masonic landscape.

As one of the highlights of the banquet, **WB Dennis Herman** was called to the podium to be honored with the presentation of the annual Kit Carson Meritorious Award (Outstanding Mason of the Year) by MWB Bill Pogue PGM in 2023 and Chairman of the Kit Carson Award Committee. WB Herman was Raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason in Animas Lodge No. 15 in November of 1992 and has served in numerous offices in the Grand Lodge and the lodges in the Four Corners area of the state. Congratulations to both RWB Baker and WB Herman.



R:W:B: Baker Grand Treasurer Emeritus    W:B: Dennis Herman receiving the Kit Carson Award - 2024

## **Saturday, March 16, 2024**

Saturday morning the Craft assembled at 8:00 am to pay last respects to the Brothers who have gone on before through that closely tiled door. MWB Bobby Arther conducted the memorial service. We bid farewell to 83 of our Brothers including our MWB David Lance Baker, PGM in 2009, who laid down his working tools just before the Annual Communication.

With these sad duties completed the Grand Lodge welcomed representatives from our Masonic Youth Groups. Representing the International Order of Rainbow for Girls was Miss Chloe DeWees the current Grand Worthy Advisor for the Grand Jurisdiction of New Mexico. Miss DeWees outlined her activities and service projects for her term and was very optimistic about the future of the Rainbow Girls.

DeMolay International was represented by Drake Bennett, the State Master Councilor, brought greetings from the several DeMolay groups within the state. They are planning a Kit Carson event in Santa Fe later in March, that will give Masons who did not go through the DeMolay programs when they were young a chance to become a DeMolay and have the experiences that they missed on their Masonic journey. The DeMolay organization in the State of New Mexico is very active and is working with DeMolay International to recruit more members.

Miss Victoria Blgrave the current Honored Queen of Bethel No. 2 of Job's Daughters International reported that there are still two Bethels in the State of New Mexico each with five active members and two to be initiated next week. They have active programs to fundraise for HIKE (Hearing Improvement Kids Endowment) and they are actively recruiting new members.

With the memorial and youth activities concluded MWGM Thomas Schenk called the Grand Lodge back to labor and called for the final credentials report from RWB James Overfelt. There was a total of 143 ballots.

It was moved and seconded that the IT Committee Report be approved. Motion carried.

MWB Jonathan R. Andrews was called to the podium to amend the Ritual Report that was an addendum to the program. There were 3 small changes to the report. 1) to change 274 to 283 Sections. 2) to add Wade Villanueva with 9 Sections. 3) Shem T. Peachey was recorded a Life Lecturer and he is a Deputy Lecturer. With those changes it was moved and seconded that Grand Lecturers Report be accepted – motion carried.

Because of the death of PGM David Lance Baker, the head of the Insurance Committee the report was not available and was withdrawn.

The Legal Advisory Committee report was withdrawn.

The Committee on Foreign Correspondence reviewed the request for recognition from six foreign jurisdictions:

Grand Oriente do Rio Grane do Norte	-	Favorable
Muy Respetable Gran Logia “Benito Juárez Garcia” del Estado de Oaxaca de LL. y AA. MM. (Mexico)	-	Favorable
Grand Lodge of Kazakstán	-	Favorable
Muy Respetable Gran Logia “Benemérito Ejército de Oriente”	-	Favorable
Muy Respetable Gran Logia del Estado de México (Mexico)	-	Favorable
Grande Oriente da Paraíba (Brazil)	-	Favorable

A motion and second was made to recognize the six Grand Lodges as published in the program. Motion Carried. Motion was made and seconded to accept the report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence. Motion Carried.

MWB Bobby Arther presented the report of the Appeals and Grievances Committee on the appeal in the matter of a trial in Dona Ana Daylight Lodge No. 78. The committee found sufficient evidence to send the case back to the lodge for retrial. There was a motion and a second to approve the report. Motion Carried.

## **LEGISLATION**

The legislation held over from the 146<sup>th</sup> Annual Communication in Farmington, NM which was not acted on because it was not published in the program was **WITHDRAWN**

The resolution to amend Code 61. Annual Budget – to add section (F) one-dollar per capita contribution to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial shall be based on the total Master Masons borne on its roll as regular members on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. **PASSED**

### **Grand Master’s Recommendations:**

#### **1. Chapter V – Standing Committees**

Code 50. Appointment – That there be added (G) A committee on Legal Advisement composed of not less than five (%) Brethren all of whom are experienced in appraisal, beneficiaries, bequests, donations, gifts, environment, life insurance, litigation, real estate and

wills, to advise and facilitate when needed, to the Board of Directors on such matters as they pertain to the Grand Lodge. **PASSED**

2. Chapter 1 – Annual Communication

Code 1. Time and Place – That the code be modified to remove City of Albuquerque and replace it with State of New Mexico. **FAILED**

3. Code. 365. Requirement to visit.

That a sentence be added at the end of the code; Digital Dues Cards will be accepted from this Grand Jurisdiction and all other recognized Grand Jurisdictions. **PASSED**

4. Code 393. Dues Cards

That a line be added Digital Dues Cards will be accepted from this and all other recognized Jurisdictions. **FAILED**

5. Code 320. Proficiency of a Master Mason - That a paragraph be added (D)

(d). All Master Masons Entered, Passed and Raised after March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, will be required to pass suitable proficiency on the Master Mason Degree. Suitable proficiency must be completed by Committee, or in Open Lodge, then approved by the vote of the Brethren. The timeline for completion of the proficiency will be (1) one year after receiving his Master Mason Degree. If not completed within the allotted timeframe, the Brother will have to repetition the Lodge as in the preceding degrees. All Master Masons Entered, Passed and Raised prior to March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, will be exempt, and not required to pass suitable proficiency. Master Mason proficiencies from other recognized jurisdictions will be accepted. The Grand Master may waive this requirement with proper justification, such as relocation due to active military service etc. **FAIL**

A motion was made and seconded that the 148<sup>th</sup> Annual Communication is to be held on the third weekend in March 2025 in Hobbs, New Mexico. **Motion passed.**

The Grand Marshal was directed to proclaim and did proclaim that the officers both elected and appointed had been duly installed in their respective positions. The newly elected and appointed officers of the Grand Lodge of A.F.& A.M. of New Mexico were directed to assume their new positions. The hat was passed to collect funds for the family of fallen NMSP Officer Justin Hare. A total of \$2500.00 was donated and will be matched by the New Mexico Masonic Charities Foundation. The 147<sup>th</sup> Grand Lodge Annual Communication was closed in due form.



M.:W.:B.: Steve A. Almager – 2024 - 2025