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THE KNIGHT COMMANDER

COURT OF HONOUR



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF SCOTTISH RITE MASONRY

20

23



UNITED SUPREME COUNCIL, 33°

ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE | PRINCE HALL AFFILIATION | SOUTHERN JURISDICTION | USA | INC.

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**OF ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE
OF FREEMASONRY IN UNITY**

EBU



UNITED SUPREME COUNCIL:

EBULLIENCE IS IN THE AIR

A LETTER FROM ILLUSTRIOUS DR. COREY D. HAWKINS, SR., 33° S.G.C.:

In my opinion, annual session for the United Supreme Council, Prince Hall Affiliation, Southern Jurisdiction, is always met with excitement, pride, and devotion. During our most recent session, fraters and loyal ladies from around the world congregated in the beautiful city of Jacksonville, Florida, to support our scholarship efforts, charitable foundation, educational programs, the elevation of the William Moore Class of 2022, the Knight Commander of the Court of Honour (KCCH) investiture ceremony, and other dynamic goals approved by this body. Ebullience was truly in the air in Florida, and much was accomplished.

Although a plethora of achievements were notable throughout the week, for me, investing the first Prince Hall class of Knight Commanders was certainly a session highlight. On October 7th, the KCCH ceremony was facilitated, for the first time in history, by several of our active members. Led by the chairman, Sovereign Grand Inspector General Wilbert Curtis, the ceremonial team was absolutely outstanding. Additionally, the pride and enthusiasm of the team and candidates in that room could not be ignored. What a memorable day for Scottish Rite Masons in the Southern Jurisdiction! Ebullience was in the air.

We now have members, friends, and families in more than 27 Orients supporting our charitable foundation. In fact, over the past few months, numerous reports and images have been forwarded to me of deputies donating goods and/or services to people in areas of need. The smiles and gratitude of the recipients certainly warms my heart and reminds me of the reason why charity is a vital component in every facet of Masonry. As denoted in the Holy Bible, giving is always better than receiving, especially when donations are earnest and from the heart. As an organization, we are always elated to help, wherever and whenever we can! Ebullience is in the air.

Finally, with the robust and untethered commitment of the United Supreme Council and the Order of the Golden Circle, I am confident that we will have many more ebullient memories in the future. In unity with the other recognized Supreme Councils, we are moving in the right direction by continuing to enrich the fraternal experience, enhance our knowledge base, and provide the moral lessons of the Rite. Moreover, with God's grace and mercy, our commitment to excellence and resolve to rebuild our Rite, Stone by Stone, will stand the test of time.

Fraternally,



Illustrious Corey D. Hawkins, Sr., 33°
Sovereign Grand Commander



THE PREVAILING WIND OF CHANGE

FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL -H.E.
ILLUSTRIOUS L. KEN COLLINS, II, 33°

In line with the Sovereign Grand Commander's (SGC) motto of Rebuilding the Rite, Stone by Stone, through Remembrance, Revitalization, and Re-commitment, the office of the Secretary General has been hard at work, changing how the United Supreme Council (USC) does business. The SGC is committed to improving our business and administrative processes and expanding our presence on social media platforms. We recently posted on our robust website digitalized applications and petitions and PowerPoint presentations, which outline the KCCH investiture and the Unity Treaty Signing (September 7, 2022).

As your newly elected Grand Secretary General, part of my charge to the USC staff and support teams is to improve communication mechanisms for the Deputies and the Orients. With the assistance of our IT Director, S.G.I.G. Garnett Hall, deputies attended two vital training sessions on how to access and manage membership rosters using the Deputy-Only Portal on the USC Website. Deputies will now be able to revise membership information in real-time. Additionally, a KSA-only section has been added to the website. Such changes will have a major impact in expediting and streamlining the organizational workflow to and from the USC-HQ and the Orients.

We will soon be launching a new database called the "Eagle's Nest," which allow SGIGs and GIGs to log in and pay their dues, annual session fees, and other financial responsibilities. This option will be removed from the USC Website and placed in a member-only portal.

To improve local processes and procedures, the SGC is also committed to facilitating a genuine partnership between the USC and the Consistories and Assemblies. As a result, semi-annual and annual reports will be completed online in the very near future. A major step in

the right direction, requisite reports will soon be completed from your computer. Our sincere hope is that our membership will find the new system functional and easy to use.


If you attended our 136th Annual Session in Jacksonville, Florida, hopefully, you noticed that we upgraded the registration and educational experiences from arrival until departure. Additionally, as examples, the United Supreme Council's Lecture Series and the educational workshops hosted by the Deputy for the Orient of Alabama, S.G.I.G. Robert Glenn, were highlighted. Moreover, your fraternal experience is always important, and the Secretary General's Office is committed to fostering a professional customer service approach for all.

We ask for your patience during these aggressive endeavors, as there will certainly be growing pains during the process. Moving recently into our new

Headquarters located at 2065 Nonconah Boulevard in Memphis, we anticipate minor hiccups along the way. Still, we are moving swiftly toward getting back online and functioning at maximum capacity.

As a final point, we are excited to announce that the grand opening for our new headquarters is scheduled for May 13, 2023. Save the date, and we look forward to seeing you in Memphis.

Yours by the mysterious numbers,



Illustrious L. Ken Collins, II, 33°
Grand Secretary-General H.E.





*“We are the
change that
we seek”*

Barack Obama



WILLIAM

CLASS OF TWO THOU

ALABAMA

Delrick Berry
Detrius Clarke
John Mark Debro
Cornell Hall
Felton Harley
Quentin Hatcher
Michael L. Jones Jr.
Joseph A. Kimbrough
Sean M. P. Macon
Chester Moore
Brandon Nettles
Neville Palmer Jr.
Thedolphus G. Pogue
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Sherman L. Hill

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Sifiso Mkhize

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AMERICA'S PROMISE

VETERAN'S DISABILITY BENEFITS

BY ILLUSTRIOUS P. CARDELL WORLDS, 33°, STAFF WRITER

Introduction

The defense of a nation requires skilled, trained, and disciplined soldiers to defend itself, and its allies and interests, against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Following this service, many veterans enter civilian life with a myriad of ailments and medical issues, requiring post-service and on-going treatment. Veterans' Service Organizations, such as the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), assist former servicemembers with preparing claims for compensation and pension (C&P).¹ The Veterans Administration (VA) – an agency designed to assist veterans of the Armed Services – offers numerous benefits, including financial compensation for former servicemembers and their dependents.

“A citizen who shirks his duty to contribute to the security of his community is little better than the criminal who threatens it.”

Robert Boatman

Definition

A *veteran* is defined as a former member of the armed forces or a person of long experience, usually in some occupation or skill.² A veteran must have a requisite amount of active U.S. military

service and a qualified character of discharge. Members of the National Guard and Armed Services Reserve Components have difficulty meeting the active duty and length of service requirements due to the nature of their service (i.e., weekends, summer drills, and training courses). However, a member of the National Guard or Reserve Components, who has been activated for federal military service and performs the full period, is considered a veteran for purposes of VA benefits.

Eligibility

Prior to September 8, 1980, a minimum length of service was unnecessary for many VA benefits. For those enlisted after that date, a minimum is now required. Generally, the requirement is 24 months of continuous active duty or the full period for which the servicemember was ordered to active duty.³ However, a service-connected disability, for which a servicemember receives compensation benefits, is exempt from the minimum requirements. As such, a veteran with a disease or injury incurred as a result of active service, in most cases, will be eligible to receive serviceconnected compensation for the condition or disability.⁴ Some exemptions to minimum service requirements include claims for veterans' life insurance benefits, service-related disabilities, or hardship discharges.^{5,6,7} Nonetheless, if a servicemember fails to meet the criteria or falls within one of the statutory exceptions, *eligibility is denied*



Disabled vet enjoying the 46th Annual Disabled Veteran Fish Outing at the Milwaukee VA Medical Center.

*under Title 38 (United States Code) or any law administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs based on that period of active service.*⁸ Additionally, the character of discharge also determines eligibility.

Discharge Characterization

Currently, five characterizations of discharges are granted by the armed services⁹:

1. Honorable discharge (HD),
2. Under Honorable Conditions (UHC) or General Discharge (GD),
3. Under Other Than Honorable Conditions (UOTHC) or undesirable discharge (UD),
4. Bad Conduct Discharge (BCD), and
5. Dishonorable Discharge (DD).

The statute doesn't specifically match current categories of discharges. The

¹ <https://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/benefits-summary/SummaryofVANationalGuardandReserve.pdf>

² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/veteran>. Accessed July 5, 2021.

³ 38 U.S.C. § 5303A(b); 38 C.F.R. § 3.12a(a)(1).

⁴ 38 U.S.C. § 5303A(b)(3)(C); 38 C.F.R. § 3.12a(d)(4).

⁵ 38 U.S.C. § 5303A(b)(3)(E); 38 C.F.R. § 3.12a(d)(5).

⁶ 38 U.S.C. § 5303A(b)(3)(A); 38 C.F.R. § 3.12a(d)(1).

⁷ 38 U.S.C. § 5303A(b)(3)(B); 38 C.F.R. § 3.12a(d)(2).

⁸ 38 U.S.C. § 5303A(b)(1); 38 C.F.R. § 3.12a(b).

⁹ Barton F. Stichman et al., *Veterans Benefits Manual*, at § 2.2.1.

VA often determines on a case-by-case basis whether the discharge fulfills the standards. In most instances, the VA considers *Honorable Discharges* and *Discharges Under Honorable Conditions* to fall within the *Conditions Other Than Dishonorable* category, which usually qualifies veteran status during the eligibility test.¹⁰ Generally, Honorable and General Discharges qualify for most benefits.¹¹

Some exceptions allow VA benefits to be awarded despite the character of the discharge. For example, if insanity occurred prior to discharge, VA benefits may be awarded. In such cases, a direct connection between the diagnosis and the misconduct may not be necessitated.¹²

A veteran, who served during a time of war, may receive VA benefits. Military service is classified simply as either *wartime* or *peacetime* service. For example, the Improved Pension benefit for low-income veterans, who are either elderly or non-service connected disabled veterans, applies only to those with *wartime* service.¹³ The following periods of wartime, for the purposes of veterans' benefits, has been defined by Congress:¹⁴

1. Indian Wars – January 1, 1817, through December 31, 1898.¹⁵
2. Spanish-American War – April 21, 1898, through July 4, 1902.¹⁶
3. Mexican Border Period – May 19, 1916, through April 5, 1917.¹⁷
4. World War I – April 6, 1917, through November 11, 1918; extended to April 1, 1920; by regulation extended to July 1, 1921, under certain specific conditions.¹⁸
5. World War II – December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946; extended to July 25, 1947.¹⁹
6. Korean Conflict – June 27, 1950, through January 31, 1955.²⁰

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² 38 U.S.C. § 5303(b).

¹³ 38 U.S.C. § 1521(j).

¹⁴ 38 U.S.C. § 101 (6)-(11); 38 C.F.R. § 3.2.

¹⁵ See 38 C.F.R. § 3.2(a).

¹⁶ 38 U.S.C. § 101(6); 38 C.F.R. § 3.2(b).

¹⁷ 38 U.S.C. § 101(30); 38 C.F.R. § 3.2(h).

¹⁸ 38 U.S.C. § 101(7); 38 C.F.R. § 3.2(c).

¹⁹ 38 U.S.C. § 101(8); 38 C.F.R. § 3.2(d).

²⁰ 38 U.S.C. § 101(9); 38 C.F.R. § 3.2(e).

²¹ 38 U.S.C. W§ 101(29); 38 C.F.R. § 3.2(f). Personnel who served in Vietnam between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975, are also considered to have served during the Vietnam Era.

²² 38 U.S.C. §§ 101(33), 1501(4); 38 C.F.R. §§ 3.2(l), 3.3(a)(3), 3.17, 3.54(a)(3)(viii).

²³ <https://www.va.gov/pension/eligibility/>

²⁴ https://www.benefits.va.gov/reports/detailed_claims_data.asp. Accessed July 8, 2022.

²⁵ https://www.benefits.va.gov/reports/detailed_claims_data.asp. Accessed August 22, 2022.

7. Vietnam Era – August 5, 1964, through May 7, 1975.²¹
8. Persian Gulf War – August 2, 1990, through a date to be prescribed by Presidential proclamation or law.^{22,23}

In the event of disease, ailments, injury, and the like, servicemembers have the option of claiming the event as a Service-Connected injury. The process is laborious and exhausting, to say the least, given the workload. Nevertheless, more than three million claims were processed in the past three fiscal years, three times the amount completed in 2000.²⁴ Currently, there are over 590,000 claims pending.²⁵

Claims Process

There are various ways to submit a claim for compensation and pension (C&P). Servicemembers can apply for benefits prior to or after exiting the Armed Forces. Applications may be submitted in the following ways:

1. Online at the VA's website: <https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/>
2. By mail at the following address: Department of Veterans Affairs Claims Intake Center P.O. Box 4444 Janesville, WI 53547-4444
3. In person at the Veterans Administration Regional office.

Once an application for Compensation and Pension is received, the process is as follows:

1. Claim Receipt

An online application yields immediate confirmation of receipt, while paper applications may take a week or more. An electronic notice of receipt

“The measure of a country's greatness is its ability to retain compassion in times of crisis.”

Thurgood Marshall

will be forwarded to the applicant by the VA.

2. Evidence Gathering and Review

Claims are assigned to a Veterans Service Representative (VSR). VSRs usually ascertain whether additional evidence is required.

Additional Evidence

If needed, the VSR may request additional information from the veteran, the veteran's physician, or any other sources of treatment (e.g., government agencies, etc.) related to the claim. It should be noted that this portion of the process can be lengthy. Progression of the claim does not occur until all evidence has been supplied.

3. Decision Preparation

The VSR will prepare a detailed letter, summarizing the final decision for the claim. If the veteran disagrees with the decision, an appeal may be submitted. If approved, the veteran begins receiving compensation and pension payments based on the percentage awarded in the claim's decision. The following tables represent current rates of compensation for disabled veterans:



Compensation Rates for Veterans with 10% to 20% disability. Effective December 1, 2020.^{26,27}

DISABILITY RATING	COMPENSATION - MONTHLY
10%	\$165.92
20%	\$327.99

Compensation Rates for Veterans with 30% to 60% disability with a dependent spouse and/or parent, but no children.²⁸ Effective 2023.

VETERAN STATUS	30%	40%	50%	60%
Veteran Monthly Comp. – Alone	\$508.05	\$731.86	\$1,041.82	\$1,319.65
Veteran Monthly Comp. – Spouse Only	\$567.84	\$812.29	\$1,141.83	\$1,440.31
Veteran Monthly Comp. – Spouse & 1 parent	\$615.67	\$876.43	\$1,222.27	\$1,537.05
Veteran Monthly Comp. – Spouse & 2 parent	\$663.49	\$940.56	\$1,302.70	\$1,633.79
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 1 parent & no spouse-child	\$555.88	\$795.99	\$1,122.26	\$1,416.39
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 2 parents & no spouse-child	\$603.71	\$860.12	\$1,202.70	\$1,513.14

Qualifying spouse additional amount²⁹

Spouse receiving Aid & Attendance	\$55.44	\$73.92	\$93.48	\$112.71
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Compensation Rates for Veterans with 70% to 100% disability with a dependent spouse and/or parent, but no children.³⁰ Effective 2023.

VETERAN STATUS	70%	80%	90%	100%
Veteran Monthly Comp. – Alone	\$1,663.06	\$1,933.15	\$2,172.39	\$3,621.95
Veteran Monthly Comp. – Spouse Only	\$1,804.37	\$2,094.03	\$2,353.92	\$3,823.89
Veteran Monthly Comp. – Spouse & 1 parent	\$1,917.41	\$2,223.38	\$2,499.58	\$3,985.96
Veteran Monthly Comp. – Spouse & 2 parents	\$2,030.46	\$2,352.74	\$2,645.24	\$4,148.04
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 1 parent & no spouse-child	\$1,776.10	\$2,062.51	\$2,318.05	\$3,784.02
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 2 parents & no spouse-child	\$1,889.15	\$2,191.86	\$2,463.71	\$3,946.09

Added Amount for a qualifying spouse³¹

This amount pertains to spouses who require additional assistance to meet health-related conditions.

Spouse receiving Aid & Attendance	\$129.35	\$147.83	\$166.31	\$185.20
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²⁶ <https://www.va.gov/disability/compensation-rates/veteran-rates/> Accessed July 6, 2022.

²⁷ If you have a 10% to 20% disability rating, you won't receive a higher rate even if you have a dependent spouse, child, or parent.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/public-papers/5/address-broad-cast-armed-force>

“Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifices. Because of these sacrifices, the dawn of justice and freedom throughout the world slowly casts its gleam across the horizon.”³²

Harry S. Truman,
33rd President of the United States of America

Compensation Rates for Veterans with 30% to 60% disability with dependents, including children.³³

VETERAN STATUS	30%	40%	50%	60%
Veteran Monthly Comp. – One Child Only	\$548.27	\$785.12	\$1,109.22	\$1,400.09
Veteran Monthly Comp. – One Child & Spouse	\$612.40	\$870.99	\$1,215.74	\$1,529.44
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 1 Child, Spouse, & 1 parent	\$660.23	\$935.12	\$1,296.18	\$1,626.18
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 1 Child, Spouse & 2 parents	\$708.06	\$999.26	\$1,376.62	\$1,722.93
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 1 child & 1 parent	\$596.10	\$849.25	\$1,189.66	\$1,496.83
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 1 child and 2 parents	\$643.93	\$913.38	\$1,270.09	\$1,593.57

Added Amount for qualifying child/spouse.

The added amount for qualifying children dependents under eighteen (18) and those over eighteen attending a school or college.³⁴

DEPENDENT STATUS	30%	40%	50%	60%
Each additional Child – Under 18yrs old	\$29.35	\$39.13	\$50.00	\$59.79
Each Child over 18 enrolled in a qualified school	\$96.74	\$129.35	\$161.96	\$193.49
Spouse receiving Aid & Attendance	\$55.44	\$73.92	\$93.48	\$110.87

**Compensation Rates for Veterans with 70% to 100% disability with dependents, including children.³⁵
Effective December 1, 2022**

VETERAN STATUS	70%	80%	90%	100%
Veteran Monthly Comp. – One Child Only	\$1,756.54	\$2,040.77	\$2,293.05	\$3,757.00
Veteran Monthly Comp. – One Child & Spouse	\$1,907.63	\$2,212.51	\$2,486.53	\$3,971.78
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 1 Child, Spouse, & 1 parent	\$2,020.68	\$2,341.87	\$2,632.19	\$4,133.85
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 1 Child, Spouse & 2 parents	\$2,133.74	\$2,471.22	\$2,777.85	\$4,295.92
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 1 child & 1 parent	\$1,869.59	\$2,170.12	\$2,438.71	\$3,919.07
Veteran Monthly Comp. – 1 child and 2 parents	\$1,982.63	\$2,299.47	\$2,584.36	\$4,081.14

Added amount for qualifying children dependents under eighteen (18), those over eighteen and attending a qualified education school or college.³⁶

DEPENDENT STATUS	30%	40%	50%	60%
Each additional Child – Under 18yrs old	\$29.35	\$39.13	\$50.00	\$59.79
Each Child over 18 enrolled in a qualified school	\$96.74	\$129.35	\$161.96	\$193.49
Spouse receiving Aid & Attendance	\$55.44	\$73.92	\$93.48	\$110.87

Veterans Administration’s compensation rates increase with periodic cost-of-living adjustments. Other benefits include, but are not limited to, Special Adaptive Housing grants, Dependents Education Benefits, and Aid and Attendance assistance.

A continuation of this article will be included in the next Bulletin to discuss further benefits for veterans...

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ <https://www.va.gov/disability/compensation-rates/veteran-rates/> Accessed October 22, 2022.



PERFECT MASTER DEGREE

WINTER IS COMING

BY ILLUSTRIOUS MARLON S. HONEYWELL, 33°, STAFF WRITER

“Life and death exist, not as two separate states of being, but as one state that can shape-shift, reconfigure, and reconstitute elemental qualities to animate and reanimate the world. It is because of death that life happens. Death gives life and life gives death.”

Lynn Margulis

Introduction

Winter is coming (FIGURE 1).^{1,2,3,4} Eventually, he comes for us all. No other hunter has ever been as lethal, calculated, and resolute as death. And none ever will.

Death

As proclaimed in Hebrews 9:27, death is incontestable proof that God exists and the scriptures shall come to fruition at a predetermined time.⁵ Therefore, to fulfill God's promises, death must inherently be an efficient and dutiful predator. Like lions which live south of the Sahara in Africa, death hunts his prey with patience and precision. Lurking fiendishly in stealthy places and advancing like a thief in the night⁶, he affords no opportunity for his victim to survive. Thus, irrespective of age, gender, wealth, or status, a visit from death is inevitable: In fulfillment of God's word, man must eventually die and trade a corruptible body for an incorruptible crown and a long, white robe. Only then will light truly overcome darkness,

order surmount chaos, and *perfection be derived from imperfection*. Only then will man mount up with wings like eagles, run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.⁷ Only then will man finally see God for himself.

Celebration of Life

Death and funeral rituals are deeply rooted in cultural beliefs, traditions, religion, and spirituality. For centuries, traditional African cultures and the like viewed death as a celebration of life for a transitioned soul.⁸ Additionally, death was an occasion for the affected community to gather, commiserate, and ritualistically bury their dead.⁹ Moreover, these traditions help the living cope with the mystery and aftermath of death, affording the dichotomy of a mournful closure and a joyful new beginning. The book of Psalms describes profoundly the emotions felt by most when death occurs: *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.*¹⁰ Although extreme sorrow is often experienced when loved ones are lost, the plans on

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

I Corinthians 15:51-52

God’s trestle board must be enacted and life must go on, as denoted esoterically in the Masonic legend of Grand Master Hiram Abiff.

Perfect Master Degree

Death of Grand Master Hiram Abiff

Legend records that the Master Hiram was appointed as the chief architect during the construction of King Solomon’s Temple.¹¹ One of three Grand Masters, Hiram Abiff was killed suddenly by three ruffians who failed to obtain the Master Mason’s password. After this fatal encounter, a dejected King Solomon was forced, like many from time immemorial, to plan a celebration of life for his colleague and assign several individuals to complete the temple. (*Commonly, the Perfect Master degree commences by reiterating this portion of the soliloquy to the candidate.*)

Contemplation of Death by Candidate

To impress upon the candidate that death is looming, preparation for the funeral once included development of a last will and testament.¹² Planning a will was intended to reiterate the certainty of death and indoctrinate the fact that a wise man always ensures provisions are made for his family. Contemplation of death also affords an opportunity for the candidate to begin living a more honorable life by mitigating vice and vicissitudes.

Ceremony

With the utmost dignity and respect, King Solomon ordered an annual tribute to reenact the burial of his colleague, Perfect Master Hiram Abiff. During this solemn observance, the lodge is in sorrow, as seen by the black cloth with silver tears, which drapes the altar. In front of the altar is a coffin, covered with black, resting on a bier, with the jewel

and apron of the deceased. The lodge is hung with green cloth from eight white columns, four on each side and equidistant.¹³

Adoniram was ordered by King Solomon to arrange the ritualistic interment, and attendees were required to wear white gloves and aprons. While complying with this request, Adoniram was also responsible for constructing an obelisk of white and black marble, which would hold eternally the remains of Master Hiram.

Once the celebration of life was finalized, King Solomon proceeded with those in attendance to view the tomb, the obelisk, and the inscription thereon. Gleaming with astonishment, he raised his eyes and hands to the heavens and remarked—“It is accomplished and complete.”¹³

Preparing for the Winter Season

Cyclic Nature of Life and Death

Recorded by several philosophers and theologians, life and death share a symbiotic relationship: Death gives life and life gives death. As perceived from the quote by Lynn Margulis, life and death are cyclic in nature. For example, the “Skeleton Woman” by Clarissa Estes expresses this natural relationship when it occurs between people who are in love.¹⁴ Estes comments the following: “*Rather than seeing the archetypes of Death and Life as opposites, they must be held together as the left and right side of a single thought. The skeleton is an excellent image for the Life/Death/Life nature. The skeleton is composed of hundreds of small and large odd-shaped sticks and knobs in continuous harmonious relationship to one another. When one bone turns, the rest turn, even if imperceptibly. The Life/Death/Life cycles are like that exactly. When life moves, the bones of Death move sympathetically. When Death moves, the bones of Life begin to turn too.*”

Death is also deliberated in detail by Janne Teller, a Danish writer, who authors novels, essays, and short stories. An excerpt from her writings is as follows: “*Everything begins only to end. From the moment we are born, we begin to die. That’s how it is with everything.*”¹⁵ Therefore, knowing that this process is dynamic and in perpetual motion, as seen in several insightful manuscripts, should encourage man to serve God while it is day—for when night approaches—no man can work.¹⁶ After death, each man

shall be paid wages according to his deeds and the innate wisdom within the Parable of the Vineyard.^{17,18}

Advanced Care Planning

The unpredictability of death motivates the astute to begin planning for the transition.¹⁹ Shulz et al. performed a study that evaluated preparedness for death and adjustment to bereavement among caregivers of recently placed nursing home residents.²⁰ The authors concluded prospectively that preparedness ultimately facilitates a positive reaction to death by families and caregivers. Additionally, advanced care planning (i.e., in-depth conversations with caregivers about expectations after death, insurance for end-of-life, funeral arrangements, wills, trusts, adding loved ones to bank accounts, etc.) is an effective means of guaranteeing that life moves forward with minimal issues or debt for family and friends.

Personal Preparation

Death has no sting and the grave no victory because Jesus Christ gave his life for the sins of the world. As such, living an honest life in the sight of the Grand Architect of the Universe and according to biblical principles prepares one to acquire a place in the Kingdom after death. For those who follow God’s commandments, death is simply a path to everlasting life—one that all must eventually travel. Nevertheless, after the frost of winter subsides, the beauty and warmth of spring will, once again, reign supreme; and our souls will finally travel home where it belongs.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award me on that Day, and not only me, but also to all who have loved his appearing.”

2 Timothy 4:7-8



FIGURE 2. Masonic Burial for Brother Napoleon Honeywell

Conclusion

Though death affected my family several times over the last ten years, a more intimate visit was experienced on August 25, 2016, when my father died abruptly of a massive heart attack. Losing my dad certainly evoked robust feelings of remorse and thoughts of focused conversations with him about death. While alive, he was extremely careful to communicate his wishes for a Masonic burial (FIGURE 2), maintenance of the family farm, and several other vital needs. To this end, ratifying my father's wishes after he died coerced me to consider the intent of the Perfect Master Degree and reflect often on lessons learned from parenteral, biblical, and Masonic trainings.²¹

“God bless my daddy, Who’s over there, Said a tiny little boy, In his tiny little prayer; That is my daddy, So, please take care, Said a tiny little boy, In his tiny little prayer; For this is the night, Mother turns out the light, Oh, how I wish you were here, So, I could kiss you goodnight; I hope in dream land, We’ll meet somewhere, Said a tiny little boy, In his tiny little prayer.”

David Michael “Tane” Kaipolaua’eoekuaahiwi

Although the cold winter of death is certain, for those who believe, however, so is life eternal. When preparing for winter, consider the acumen in the sagacious words of Tony Stark (*Avengers 2*): *Money never bought one second of time.*²² Hence, use time wisely and get your house in order because, just as certain as dying leaves descend slowly to the ground in autumn and the seasons continue to change, winter will eventually come for us all. Nonetheless, weep not for loved ones who worked tirelessly in the vineyard¹⁷ and now sleep because, for those who seek His face^{23,24} and stand on His promises, death is nothing more than a doorway to the road home.

So Mote It Be

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THE DR. G WESLEY ALLEN

COUNCIL OF DELIBERATION

BY ILLUSTRIOUS DAMAJO C. SMITH, 33°
Grand Historian, Dr. G. Wesley Allen COD
Orient of North Carolina

The Orient of North Carolina, under the leadership of our Deputy for the Orient, Sovereign Grand Inspector General James H. Upchurch, 33°, has continued to carry with excitement, the banner of the Scottish Rite and the United Supreme Council, 33°, of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Prince Hall Affiliation, Southern Jurisdiction, USA, Inc., where Sovereign Grand Inspector General Corey D. Hawkins, Sr., 33°, serves as our Sovereign Grand Commander. Deputy Upchurch has committed himself to the growth and improvement of Scottish Rite Masonry in North Carolina, regardless of obstacles or pandemics. He has also fully subscribed and devoted himself to the theme set forth by Illustrious Sovereign Grand Commander Hawkins, "Rebuilding the Rite Stone by Stone: Through Remembrance, Revitalization and Recommitment."

The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of F&AM of North Carolina held a leadership forum entitled, "What is the Purpose of Prince Hall Masonry and is Prince Hall Masonry in North Carolina Relevant?" "Heads of Houses" or leaders of appendant and concordant bodies were invited to the forum to present information concerning their organization,

its structure, history, themes and goals to all the members of both the male and female bodies.

Deputy Upchurch's presentation was titled, "Introduction to the United Supreme Council and the Dr. G. Wesley Allen Council of Deliberation." The presentation was a high-level overview of the United Supreme Council, our officers, and the history and of the Scottish Rite bodies with which we hold recognition. Those bodies being the United Supreme Council AASR of Freemasonry, PHA, Northern Jurisdiction, USA, where Ill. Melvin J. Bazemore, 33°, serves as Sovereign Grand Commander as well as the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Supreme Council, 33° of the Southern (Ill. James D. Cole, 33° SGC) and Northern (Ill. Peter J. Samiec, 33° SGC) Masonic Jurisdictions, USA.

The presentation would go on to cover the Scottish Rite structure, including the various bodies within the Scottish Rite and how the degrees of Scottish Rite Masonry elaborate on the teachings and moral lessons found within the first three degrees of Masonry. The Scottish Rite Grades of the Sublime Prince, Grand Inspector General, and Sovereign Grand Inspector General were discussed



and explained. The mission statement of the United Supreme Council was detailed and focus placed on five key points within the mission statement: the College of Freemasonry and enhancing the knowledge base, providing the moral teachings of the Rite, enriching the brotherhood experience, and serving as a benevolent society. Examples of how these five points are relevant today and how they tie into the Sovereign Grand Commander's theme were brought front and center for those in attendance.

Rebuilding the Rite, Stone by Stone: Through Remembrance, Revitalization and Recommitment is the theme of the Sovereign Grand Commander and Deputy Upchurch touched on those three, "R's" in his presentation. By the first "R," Remembrance, we are urged to uplift our origins and history and reminded of the oath and obligations we have taken to this prestigious organization. Looking back across time and shining the light on those leaders who have pushed the Scottish Rite forward is the reason why we have advanced to where we are today.

The Historical Committee of the Dr. G. Wesley Allen Council of Deliberation has been tasked by Deputy Upchurch to search for historical information pertaining to the COD and report their findings. Some interesting pieces of information have been uncovered and the committee continues to seek out lost pieces of the history of the Orient of North Carolina. One interesting point of information brought to light was that the

Dr. G. Wesley Allen Council of Deliberation
visiting the Samuel T. Daniels Council of
Deliberation in Maryland



first person listed in the records of the United Supreme Council, SJ, to receive the 33° in North Carolina was none other than Bishop James Walker Hood, the first Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of North Carolina. He served from 1870 - 1883. In reviewing the records as found in the Minute Books of the United Supreme Council, we find, "In 1902 J.W. Hood was moved from Active to Past Active status." "He is listed as the first SGIG (IG) that has been recorded from North Carolina."¹

We have also been able to uncover the first Deputy for the Orient of North Carolina in the person of J.J. Worlds, a Past Master of Excelsior Lodge No. 21 in Raleigh, NC, who served the Grand Lodge as Grand Chaplain and later elected Most Worshipful Grand Master, serving from 1898 – 1903.² Reverend J.J. Worlds also served as Pastor of First Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC, for two separate terms and, during the second term, he led the congregation to purchase the property that the church still meets in today.³

Through remembrance the name-sake of the Dr. G. Wesley Allen Council of Deliberation was also discussed and expounded upon. Gladstone Wesley Allen was a medical doctor, pioneer, civil rights activist, and a proud Prince Hall Mason. He attended the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Medicine and worked as an obstetrician and gynecologist in Fayetteville, NC, from 1941 until his death on January 20, 1995, at the age of 79. Dr. Allen delivered over 7,700 children in his more than fifty-year career. He would serve as: Grand Junior Warden of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand

Remembrance

Rebuilding the Rite Stone by Stone. Through Remembrance, Revitalization and Recommitment

Remembrance - Remember where we come from as the Scottish Rite. Remembering the oath & obligations we've taken to this prestigious organization.

Bishop James Walker Hood 1 st Grand Master of NC 1 st Person to Receive the 33 rd in NC	Pastor J.J. Worlds 8 th Grand Master of NC 1 st Deputy of the Orient of NC in 1902	YCVC Lawrence Deputy of the Orient of NC from 1905 - 1930	Zechariah Alexander Sr. Deputy of the Orient of NC in 1935 Ench. Alexander Sr Lodge #822 is named in his honor	James T. Diggs Deputy of the Orient of NC from 1944 - 1970

Lodge of North Carolina, Imperial Medical Director and Chairman of the Health and Medical Research Foundation of the AEAONMS, President of the Fayetteville Prince Hall Masonic Corporation and was awarded the Gold Medal of Achievement from the United Supreme Council, SJ, the highest honor awarded by the organization.⁴

Although the North Carolina Council of Deliberation was organized in 1952, while SGIG James T. Diggs served as the Deputy for the Orient, it was on April 18, 2008, that the recommendation from the Orient of North Carolina would be approved by then Sovereign Grand Commander Deary Vaughn to change the name of the Council of Deliberation

to the Dr. G. Wesley Allen Council of Deliberation.⁵ It was also Dr. Allen who was responsible for organizing the North Carolina State Grand Assembly on May 1, 1972, in Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, at the Council of Deliberation. Loyal Lady Annie P. Rogers of University Assembly #218, Durham, North Carolina, was the first State Grand Loyal Lady Ruler of the Assembly.⁶

The second "R" in the Sovereign Grand Commander's theme is revitalization. By using modern technology, incorporating innovative ideas, and the inclusion of all of the membership, we will revitalize the Scottish Rite. The USC uses technology to remain connected with the membership by upgrading the USC website, creating a membership forum on the website, initiating the, "Back in the Rite Drive" (B.I.R.D.) Reclamation Program, as well as creating the USC PHA SJ Community mobile app. The Dr. G. Wesley Allen COD embraced these new ideas and updated our website accordingly to include the uploading of historical issues of the Herald-Tribune, which was the official organ of the Orient of North Carolina, for download via the website.

The last, "R" is for recommitment: recommit and rededicate ourselves to the principal teachings of the Scottish Rite. SGIG James Upchurch, 33°, took this subject seriously and appointed a Director of Training and a Training Committee responsible for sharing and exploring the principal teachings of the Scottish Rite within the Orient of North Carolina. This committee held monthly training sessions for the Orient and discussed a wide range of subjects. The pandemic caused most organizations to use plat-

Recommitment

Rebuilding the Rite Stone by Stone: Through Remembrance, Revitalization and Recommitment

Recommitment - Recommit and/or rededicate ourselves to the principal teachings of the Scottish Rite.

Dr. G. Wesley Allen COD Training Committee

Books & Resources We Should Have

Training Materials

forms, such as Zoom and Google Meet to continue with meetings, instruction and fellowship. The COD has also taken advantage of such platforms to ensure that we follow through on this recommitment effort.

Lastly, the presentation on the Orient of North Carolina covered the programs sponsored by the Council of Deliberation; COD & Area scholarships, disaster relief (www.nccodpha.org) and the Initiative for African American Males youth program (The mission of this Youth initiative is to support African American males between the ages of 5-12 years old. Assisting these males with participating in programs that will provide positive exposure for educational enrichment and community service activities were great). The Orient of North Carolina is divided into four Areas: Lower Piedmont, Mountain, Coastal Plains and Upper Piedmont. Each Area presents a yearly scholarship to deserving youth and the Orient also sponsors the G. Wesley Allen M.D. Foundation Scholarship and the William A. Marsh Jr., UPA Scholarship. The Annie P. Rogers State Grand Assemblage likewise provides a scholarship for graduating high school seniors.

The Orient of North Carolina accepts the challenge of our Sovereign Grand Commander, we embrace his theme, and we will continue to hold up and carry the banner of the Scottish Rite. In so doing, we are committed to moving forward with integrity and excitement and with a historical view point. We strive to make the Orient of North Carolina a better institution and Scottish Rite Masonry a success!

¹SGIG Ken L. Collins, Assistant Grand Secretary General, H.E. – 2018 email received, “In 1902 J.H. Hood was moved from Active to Past Active Status. He is listed as the first SGIG (IG) that I have seen recorded from North Carolina.”

² SGIG Ken L. Collins, Assistant Grand Secretary General, H.E. – 2018 email received, “October 19, 1903, J.J. Worlds was named as the first Deputy for North Carolina.”

³ Raleigh First Baptist Church website - <http://raleighfirstbaptist.org/history.html>

⁴ Dr. G. Wesley Allen COD website - <https://www.nccodpha.org/about-dr-g-wesley-allen/>

⁵ North Carolina Scottish Rite Herald-Tribune, Volume XII, Number 2, July 1985, Page 7

⁶ Annie P. Rogers State Grand Assembly History submitted by Past State Grand Loyal Lady Ruler Marilyn C. Smith, Past State Grand Loyal Lady Rulers, State Grand Organizers and Overseers, Past and Present (2021) – I possession of the writer

SGC HAWKINS' ALLOCUTION

MUST JESUS BEAR THE CROSS ALONE?

BY ILLUSTRIOUS ERIC KONOHA, 33^o, STAFF WRITER

Introduction

On Monday, October 10, 2022, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Jacksonville, Florida, Sovereign Grand Commander (SGC) Corey D. Hawkins, Sr., Esq., 33^o, was received in the packed chambers of the 136th Annual Session of the United Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction, United States of America (USA), Prince Hall Affiliation, by Lieutenant Grand Commander Dr. Anthony T. Stafford, Sr., 33^o. After rendering Grand Honors, LGC Stafford turned over the gavel to the SGC, who paused and remarked, “I wish each of you could come up here, one at a time, to witness the sea of black, gold, red, purple.... You look marvelous!”

Reception of Dignitaries

Fraters in attendance waited a year to hear from the SGC after his first full year in office. And the time finally arrived to listen to all the great things their USC had done over the past 365 days. After glancing over the room, fraters appeared anxious and proud, as they watched the SGC receive the Grand Commanders of the three legitimate Supreme Councils, other visiting delegations, and the 19th Most Worshipful Grand Master (MWGM) of the Jurisdiction of Florida, the Honorable Jeffery G. Jones.

Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?

After protocol was established, the SGC quoted the first stanza of “Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?”¹ SGC Hawkins subsequently gave a hearty thanks to Deputy Chris Terrell, MWGM Jeffery Jones, and the Orient of Florida (Host Orient) for their warm hospitality and kindness since his arrival. Following the invocational prayer by the Grand Prior, Sovereign Grand Inspector General Robert Jemerson, the SGC began to relay to the body the great works that the USC-

SJ accomplished during the 2021-2022 fraternal year.

History in the Making

He started by acknowledging that the 136th annual session is quite historical and that every frater present will always be remembered: For the first time in history, the inaugural class of the Knight Commander of the Court of Honour were invested and this year marks the first time Sublime Princes could attend annual session. SGC Hawkins explained that this could be the beginning of the greatest experiences recorded in the history of this United Supreme Council.



¹ Geraldo Sandell, Sony/ATV Music Publishing, LLC

Photo Credit: Romolo Tavani/Getty Images

State of the Nation Voting and Vaccination

During the State of the Nation, the SGC exclaimed that “Our vote is our power!” He also expressed the importance of being well informed and voting because the results of the mid-term elections could play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our country. The Sovereign acknowledged that many are tired, frustrated, and exhausted with the pandemic. However, thanks to the progress seen with vaccinations and boosters, COVID-19 no longer controls our lives. He further encouraged fraters to remain vaccinated, as it provides the highest degree of known protection.

Job Market

The SGC congratulated the President of the USA, Joe Biden, and Vice President Harris for improving the economy. A recent report published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and other agencies within the U.S. Department of Labor showed that our economy created 10 million jobs since Biden took office. Coupled with the lowest unemployment rate (3.5%) in the last fifty years, this may have been one of the most profound growths in the job market during any presidential term. He closed this section by saying that we still have work to do; but we are truly building an economy that benefits the working class.

Patriotism

The SGC teased the room with patriotism when he quoted the first stanza of the National Anthem, “My country ‘tis of thee……. Let freedom ring. I suspected that this stanza was a transition for his next point. True to form, he asked that we continue to pray for our country because of the devastation experienced over the last year, such as hurricanes, fires, floods, mass shootings, and astronomical fuel prices. He then pivoted to a fundamental masonic lesson: there are two sides to everything. SGC Haw-

kins went on to say, “But we have also experienced the Best.” He lauded Maya Angelou for being the first African American female featured on a quarter and reminded fraters that the Emmitt Till Anti-Lynching Act was recently signed into federal law. SGC Hawkins concluded by acknowledging Katanji Brown Jackson for being the first African American woman confirmed as a Supreme Court Justice. While speaking with the cadence of a southern Baptist preacher, one could hear the affirmations of the membership seated in the Grand East, “Oh yea…” With our full attention, he reaffirmed, “This is still our country! The USA.”

State of the Rite

Discomfort of Change

SGC Hawkins began the State of the Rite by quoting best-selling author and leadership expert Robert Sharma, “The discomfort of change is better than the heartbreak of complacency.” He confirmed that we must continue to institute change and think outside the box to positively affect the longevity of our prestigious organization and enhance the membership experience. Though some changes may cause discomfort, he reasserted that the end goal is one of which we will all be proud.

Councils of Deliberation

SGC Hawkins confirmed attending over the last year several Councils of Deliberation, both in person and virtually. He was very pleased with the Scottish Rite work witnessed and the number of attendees during Council sessions. In his opinion, morale is extremely high because fraters are excited about the progress of the USC.

B.I.R.D. Program

The Back in the Rite Drive (B.I.R.D. reclamation program) continues to be a great success. Orients have been reclaiming members and, due to the success of the B.I.R.D. program, he extended it for another year. Additionally, the on-line quarterly webinar has been well received with rave reviews, he said. Further, he applauded the Orient of Alabama for hosting a monthly educational workshop, which frequently entices fraters to learn more about the Scottish Rite.

K.C.C.H.

SGC proudly stated that the Knight Commander Court of Honour (K.C.C.H.) investiture created an exciting buzz across the Southern Jurisdiction. On Friday, October 7, 2022, we invested 180



candidates with that honor, he remarked. Thereafter, he took a moment to personally thank SGC James D. Cole, who was present, for sharing the K.C.C.H. with us. According to SGC Hawkins, attendance of Sublime Princes at the annual session presents a great avenue of inclusion and retention of our 32^o Masons. They now have an opportunity to attend our sessions and participate in the educational workshops and public programs

New Headquarters

In December 2021, the USC purchased a new Headquarters in Memphis, TN, and sold the previous building in August 2021. Less than two weeks prior to annual session, the USC moved into a more manageable and modern headquarters. The new edifice will have a library and an exhibit room, which will display some of the historical relics of the organization. We will benefit from downsizing by saving “a lot of money” on utilities and upkeep, said SGC Hawkins. It is his intent to facilitate a grand opening in Spring 2023.

Wreath-Laying Ceremony

On Friday, April 22, 2022, the four legitimate Supreme Councils participated in a wreath laying ceremony at the

Tomb of Unknowns at Arlington Cemetery. This was a historical event that received a great deal of positive feedback from Masons and non-Masons alike. He thanked the Louis W. Roy, Sr., Council of Deliberation for their efforts to initiate this venture.

Statement of Unity

Informing a few and reiterating to most, SGC Hawkins said that, on September 7, 2022, the four Sovereign Grand Commanders of the legitimate Supreme Councils within the United States and their delegations came together for the “Statement of Unity” signing at the House of the Temple in Washington, DC. This was a historic moment because the legitimate Supreme Councils acknowledged on record one another’s validity. He encouraged everyone to not get wrapped up in the photos of that moment. He said that although they are nice and deserve attention, the most important item of the day was the document. He implored, “Please, please, please read and digest the document. For we all agree and have declared that, beyond the four of us, there is NO other.” At that time the entire Chamber roared with applause.

Conclusion

Rebuilding the Rite

SGC Hawkins began his conclusion the same way he started the allocution:

“Must Jesus bear the cross alone? And all this world go free? No, there’s a cross for everyone. And there’s a cross for me.”

He likened the cross to a role we all must play. “Throughout our lives, we’ve had crosses to bear or roles to play,” he stated. He enunciated that ALL have a cross to bear if this United Supreme Council is to reach full potential. To accomplish our goal of Rebuilding the Rite, Stone by Stone, we must bear our crosses and play our roles. He elucidated that some crosses may be larger than others, however, each cross plays a significant part in accomplishing the goal.

In my opinion, SGC Hawkins’ allocution was akin to a delivered as advertised or exceeding expectations speech, sprinkled with a heavy dose of an inspirational charge: We can do better! Though pleased with the progress witnessed, he acknowledged room for growth. To reach full potential, each Orient must continue to seek guidance from the Grand Architect of the Universe and enact their strategic plan to accomplish the goal. Moreover, SGC Hawkins was not ashamed to bring to light each historical moment accomplished last year. He was proud; and his pride was infectious. The excitement witnessed was a positive sign that we are moving in the right direction and the membership is committed to Rebuilding the Rite, Stone by Stone.



SCENES FROM THE 2022 U

ANNUAL



UNITED SUPREME COUNCIL SESSION



KNIGHT COMMANDER COURT OF HONOUR

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

BY ILLUSTRIOUS MARLON S. HODGINS

“HUMAN HISTORY IS, IN ESSENCE, A

Introduction

From an audacious idea by Sovereign Grand Commander (SGC) Corey D. Hawkins, Sr., arose an extraordinary day in the chronicles of the United Supreme Council, Prince Hall Affiliation, Southern Jurisdiction—one which was transformative and methodical. More specifically, October 7, 2022, was the day that SGC Hawkins’ idea finally came to fruition: 180 Scottish Rite Masons were invested for the very first time in Prince Hall history as Knight Commanders of the Court of Honour (KCCH). And what a majestic day it was....

Conversations and Emotions

Can you imagine the immense sea of black suits, bowties, and white gloves, standing anxiously in the halls of the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Jacksonville, Florida, while simultaneously considering the implicit distinction of being recorded forever as the first Prince Hall class of Knight Commanders? Can you truly imagine?

In every adjacent hall on the third floor, varying accents from around the world could be overheard, acknowledging intermittently the unparalleled nature of this event. Fraters in attendance appeared to be enthusiastic, to say the least. What is more, two Brothers, standing in the north hall in front of me,

were conversing about the likelihood of their names being remembered as participants long after their demise. Admittedly, overhearing their provocative dialogue forced me to ponder the same theory. Questions subsequently swam around in my mind like novice divers in a barren sea of the unknown: How will future scholars and historians commemorate October 7th? Will their interpretations accurately reflect our conversations and emotions? Will they tell the story correctly?

Investing in the Future

At approximately 5:50 p.m. EST, a few active fraters, dressed in robed regalia, suddenly emerged from the St. John’s Room, and urged candidates to lower their voices—the investiture was about to commence. The decibels in the halls quickly diminished and explicit instructions were issued by select Sovereign Grand Inspectors General, who served on the ceremonial team. Afterward—one by one—nominees began to file into the St. John’s room. As each entered the chamber, only the sound of sequenced footsteps could be heard, resembling the calculated cadence of a military or band drill. Additionally, the SGC, members of his cabinet, and some of his appointed officers were already seated in the East on both sides of the podium. From their posture and smiles, the leadership present appeared to be consumed with immense honor and pride,



COMMANDER OF THE OF HONOUR

OF SCOTTISH RITE MASONRY

NEYWELL, 33°, STAFF WRITER

"A HISTORY OF IDEAS." – H.G. WELLS

much like a parent watching their child march across the stage during a graduation ceremony.

So, why was that moment so regal, so unforgettable? For what reason will it be remembered throughout posterity? It's simple. At the sound of the gavel, October 7th became synonymous with a dream realized. And, for the active membership and Knight Commanders in waiting, investiture conferral—for the first time in history—was eminent. Excitement was in the air. One could almost taste it. Perhaps, for some, the exhilaration felt resembled watching on television for months the trailer for an anticipated movie and, finally, sitting in the theater to await the beginning of the first scene. Although such a feeling only occurs a few times in one's Masonic career, this event will long be remembered and cherished by those in attendance.

Ceremony

As requested by Sovereign Grand Inspector General Wilbert M. Curtis, chairman of the investiture committee, the ceremony ritualistically began at 6:00 p.m. EST and concluded within approximately 50-60 minutes. Additionally, after the ceremony, the purpose of the ritual and other vital information were afforded, along with patents and pins for all, and red caps for the 32° Masons.

Personal Reflection

The KCCH investiture, cap, and pin may be correlated directly with passion, hard work, and devotion to Scottish Rite doctrines. As seen in the book of First Samuel (16:13) and denoted in many Scottish Rite degrees, dedication to God by using your gifts to serve His people brings distinction to life. The book of Proverbs also confirms that your gifts make room for you when God's purpose is followed, His people are covered, and your gifts are used wisely. To this end, to be invested as a Knight Commander and to wear the paraphernalia is an enormous privilege, one to which many 32° Masons will continue to aspire with passion and commitment, I pray.

Conclusion

If H.G. Wells is right and human history is simply the history of ideas, let us continue to make human history through innovation, charity, brotherly love, growth, and evolution. Let us continue to dream big and bring to fruition progressive ideas for the betterment of future aspirants, born and unborn. Finally, let us faithfully align with the vision of our SGC by REBUILDING our Rite, STONE BY STONE. It can be done; and we will do it as a cohesive body with one primary goal: *Ordo ab Chao*. Lest we forget....



THE UNITED SUPREME COUNCIL'S

CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

SUPPORTING THOSE WHO IMPROVE HUMANITY

BY ILLUSTRIOUS P. CARDELL WORLDS, 33°, STAFF WRITER

"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving."

Mother Theresa

Introduction

The United Supreme Council's Charitable Foundation exists to manage fiscal funds donated by the Supreme Council to those identified as having a need and it supports the advancement of humanity. The foundation distributes donations to those organizations whose goals are the progression of mankind. Charity is defined as generosity and helpfulness, especially toward the needy or suffering; aid given to those in need; an institution engaged in relief of the poor; public provision for the relief of the needy; benevolent goodwill toward or love of humanity; a gift for public benevolent purposes; an institution (such as a hospital) founded by such a gift; and the lenient judgment of others.¹

Early Lessons

Lessons learned in the symbolic lodge explore the value and concept of Faith, Hope, and Charity. According to the Bible's book of James, chapter one (1), verse seven (7), religion is defined thusly: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."²

James 1:27 (NIV)



Photo courtesy of SGIG Kevin Scruggs Deputy for the Orient (KY)

to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."² In the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite's 18th degree, Knight of the Rose Croix, the jewel has on one side a pelican pecking its breast to feed its seven (7) younglings. The symbolism expressed is that of charity and compassion for all and the blood shed for humanity by Jesus.

Orders

The Sovereign Grand Commander (SGC) issued orders to the Deputies for the Orients to ensure funds from the USC (PHA - SJ) Charitable Foundation are distributed appropriately and the

recipients are pictured to share with the Council and its members. Thus far, in response to those orders, four (4) deputies provided information regarding the distribution of charitable funds in their respective orients.

¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/charity>

² <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James%201%3A27&version=NIV>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Submitted by SGIG Kevin Scruggs, Deputy for the Orient (KY).



26 pallets of hand sanitizers were delivered to the various communities.

Kentucky Council of Deliberation⁴

Sovereign Grand Inspector General Kevin Scruggs, Deputy for the Orient of Kentucky, provided an excerpt on donations from his Orient to Simmons College. Simmons College of Kentucky is a private, historically black college in Louisville, Kentucky, founded in 1879, as the nation's 107th Historically Black College/University ((HBCU). Simmons College is accredited by the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

In 1879, the school opened its doors under the direction of its first president, Rev. Elijah P. Marrs. After a brief, one-year tenure, Rev. Marrs was succeeded by Dr. William J. Simmons. Simmons was an ex-slave who greatly developed Howard University's teacher training programs. It was under the leadership of Dr. Simmons that the school would begin to flourish in such a way that it would eventually be renamed "Simmons University" in appreciation for his contributions. In 1893, the school had 159 students. By the year 1900, professional degrees were offered in nursing and law, in cooperation with the University of Louisville.⁵

Synopsis from Deputy K. Scruggs

"Today, SGIG Jonathan Bryant and six other Scottish Rite Masons attended this event, as well as yours truly from the Orient of Kentucky. The West Louisville Forum, hosted by Simmons College, is where I made the donation presentation from our USC Charitable Foundation to Dr. Kevin Cosby (President of Simmons College). Dr. Cosby was overwhelmed with joy and sends his thanks to the USC."

Pursuant to the SGC's orders, the Deputy for the Orient of Mississippi, Sovereign Grand Inspector DeJohn Hampton, has plans to comply as well. He has 26 pallets of hand sanitizer, which he distributed to those still battling COVID-19 symptoms to assist in the prevention and transmission of the virus and its variants.

Magnolia Council of Deliberation⁶

The newly appointed Deputy for the Orient hit the ground running so to speak, leading his orient into the new year by clinging to the season of giving. SGIG Hampton submitted the following synopsis of the distribution of funds in his orient: "On Oct 26, 2022, the United

"I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver."

Maya Angelou

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simmons_College_of_Kentucky

⁶ Excerpt from SGIG DeJohn Hampton, Deputy for the Orient – MS

Supreme Council Charitable Foundation received a large donation that would allow each Orient an opportunity to distribute hand sanitizers within our respective valleys. I am proud to announce that because of Illustrious Roosevelt Greenwood and the members of Edward S. Baker Consistory #145, we were able to locate a holding facility two weeks ago that would not just accept the items, but would assist us in the distribution of it as well. These 26 pallets of hand sanitizer are now in our possession at this present time, and we should all be proud of the impact that it could make for some that are less fortunate within the community.”

In addition, SGIG Hampton asked his Commanders-in-Chief to inform him of the amount needed for their valley’s nursing homes, schools, and childcare facilities, etc. The Deputy for the Orient of Mississippi stated further, “On behalf of the United Supreme Council, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Prince Hall Affiliated, Southern Jurisdiction Charitable Foundation, a cumulative total of \$100,000 is being given out to HBCUs and deserving charities throughout our Jurisdiction. M. W. Stringer Grand Lodge received a donation to help benefit those affected by the water crises. Let’s also



Photo courtesy of SGIG Vincent Sutherland Deputy for the Orient (Virgin Islands)

congratulate Tougaloo College and their university president, Dr. Carmen Walters, for receiving the H. M. Thompson endowment scholarship contribution. We are thankful for the leadership of our Sovereign Grand Commander, Dr. Corey Hawkins, Sr., 33°.”

Virgin Islands Council of Deliberation⁷

The Deputy for the Orient of the Virgin Islands, SGIG Vince Sutherland, presented a financial donation to the Queen Louise Home for Children in the United States Virgin Island of St Croix. Deputy Sutherland and his Orient demonstrated the need to protect, help, and advance the efforts of those who are assisting children and preserving the posterity of the Virgin Islands.



Photo courtesy of SGIG DeJohn Hampton Deputy for the Orient (MS)

“When you meet our Creator, God Himself, be able to say that you were more a giver, than a taker.”

Ira M. Johnson

⁷ Photo Submitted by SGIG Vince Sutherland, Deputy for the Orient (V.I.).



Members of the Orient of DC present a donation to the Moorland-Springarn Research Center

Louis W. Roy Sr. Council of Deliberation (Washington, D.C.)⁸

In accordance with the Sovereign Grand Commander's directive, on Monday, January 9, 2023, Deputy for the Orient of the District of Columbia, S.G.I.G. Eric Konohia, along with members of his Orient, visited the Moorland Spingarn Research Center (MSRC). Deputy Konohia chose to support the Moorland Spingarn Research Center at Howard University because of its longstanding relationship and support of Prince Hall Masonry in the District of Columbia. This is the first time the A.A.S.R. participated at MSRC and a video account can be viewed by clicking the following link. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-OaG1b-wjnZq8v0q-jGwcC8vrrObEBqud/view?usp=drivesdk>

MSRC is the largest and most comprehensive repository of books, documents, and ephemera on the global Black experience, including the personal and official papers of Kwame Nkrumah, Paul Robeson, Alain Locke, Mary Frances Berry, Dr. Benjamin Mays, Vernon Jordon,

and Amiri Baraka, to name a few from over seven hundred collections. It was founded in 1914 as the Moorland Library and became a research center at Howard University in 1973, consisting of the University Archives Division, the Manuscripts Division, Library, Museum, and the Black Press Archive.

A check in the amount \$7,140.62 was presented to Dr. Benjamin Talton, Director of Moorland-Springarn Research, inside Founder's Library Building on the campus of historical Howard University. He expressed his thanks for our commitment and support in preserving our history. Dr. Talton explained that MSRC completed a new wing using new temperature-controlled space for better preservation of our archives and instituted a new intern program to reinforce this effort. Accompanying Deputy Konohia to this presentation were: SGIG Glenn N. Ruffin, SGIG Quincy G. Gant., GIG Warren R. Whitley, GIG J. Raymond Murray, GIG Elgin Funches, GIG Jeffrey Anderson, KCCH Kevin Moultrie, KCCH Phillip Harrigan, KCCH Dr. Paul Cotton, KCCH Tyrone Hurley and SP James Morgan.

"When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed."

Maya Angelou



Photo submitted by SGIG Eric Konohia, Deputy for the Orient (D.C.).

⁸ Photo submitted by SGIG Eric Konohia, Deputy for the Orient (D.C.).



USC Charitable Foundation, presented to West Virginia State University December 2022



Congratulations to Rust College for receiving the Dr. Allen Stewart scholarship contribution the Orient (MS)


Conclusion

Leadership defined is simply the ability to influence others to a common goal. In the Sovereign Grand Commander's allocution, he states his goal of Rebuilding the Rite, Stone by Stone, and he employs a technique called personnel asset inventory, which identifies fraters with various talents and utilizes them in such capacities. This encourages the maximization of progress, professionalism, and competency. The United Supreme Council's Charitable Foundation, along with other initiatives, demonstrates intent through action, thereby, confirming the SGC's position as the Commander of this Grand Ole' Order.

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

2 Corinthians 9:6

"Correction to article from the United Supreme Council's Summer 2022 Bulletin, titled: Prince Hall's Knight of the Royal Axe & The Consummate Professional SGIG Michael A. Delgado, Sr., 33°, was listed as an actual fellow (FPS). He is an honorary fellow (FPSH). I'm including this correction to make sure the information in the original article is accurate and correct. "

A photograph of several space shuttle launches in progress, with large plumes of smoke and fire. The shuttles are white with black and orange accents.

SEE YOU IN HUNTSVILLE!

10.06.23 - 10.10.23

137TH ANNUAL SESSION

UNITED SUPREME COUNCIL, 33°

ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE | PRINCE HALL AFFILIATION | SOUTHERN JURISDICTION | USA | INC.



SOVEREIGN GRAND COMMANDER'S

TESTIMONIAL

10.07.23

LET'S HONOR OUR

SOVEREIGN GRAND COMMANDER

FEATURING GRAMMY AWARD NOMINEE

Ruben Studdard



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137TH ANNUAL SESSION
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SOVEREIGN GRAND COMMANDER'S
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OCTOBER 7, 2023
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