

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE 108TH
CONFERENCE OF GRAND MASTERS OF MASONS
IN NORTH AMERICA, INC.**



**Proceedings Zoom session
Saturday, February 20, 2021**

Conference Chairman: Most Worshipful
Daniel J. Lawes, Grand Master of Utah

Executive Secretary/Treasurer:
Most Worshipful Michael DeWolf, Past Grand
Master and Grand Secretary of Wisconsin

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Welcome to the Zoom meeting of the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons In North America. This year's Conference Chairman, Most Worshipful Dan Lawes, Grand Master of the state of Utah. So, Most Worshipful, I will turn it over to you.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful. Thank you. Most Worshipful Brethren, distinguished brethren all, as Most Worshipful Brother DeWolf said, depending on where you're at, good morning or good afternoon. First for all, this is the first time that the Conference of Grand Masters has spanned multiple time zones. I'm Dan Lawes, newly minted Grand Master from Utah. I was installed three weeks ago today. I call to order to the 108th Annual Session of the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons of North America.

I'm very honored to have the opportunity to serve as Chairman for the 2021 Conference. I was really looking forward to spending several days with everyone in Seattle this year. We're a fraternity. We all value the social interactions that we get to have with each other. I suspect most of us are equally disappointed with the current public health issues that prevented us from meeting in person this year. It is great scrolling through the screens here. It's great to see so many faces that I have been privileged to meet, and have become my friends over the last several years through my Grand Lodge and other Masonic journeys, so welcome. I do hope that we get to meet in person here soon.

The decision to cancel was not an easy one for the Planning Committee. Up until early November they were still planning for a full in person session in Seattle. I do want to recognize and thank them for all of their work over the last year trying to put together what would have been, I think, a great session for all of us. If they share my feelings, you really have no idea what you're jumping into when you stand up at one of these meetings and say, yep, I will take the job that you've asked me to do. I have really enjoyed meeting with them over the last 12 months virtually. Not only did I get to talk about planning for the Seattle Conference, but it was great to share how each of our different jurisdictions was managing the COVID crisis differently throughout the country here.

Given the unique arrangements for this year's session, a few special housekeeping items to address. Only delegates and those that have business to bring before the Conference will be on the Zoom session today. Everyone else will have the opportunity to view it through a YouTube Link. I hope many in your jurisdiction are doing so. This is typically not something that is broadcast, so it's an opportunity to see what the

Conference does and how they serve our various jurisdictions here in North America.

Unless you are speaking, kindly keep your microphone muted at all times to eliminate any background noise, and I believe this session will be recorded to assist with the drafting of the proceeding.

Article 4, Section 11 of the Conference Bylaws state that only Grand Masters or authorized representatives of member Grand Lodges may speak. At any time when you wish to speak, please un-mute and address the Chair. When recognized, please state your name and jurisdiction. For any committees that are presenting, would you kindly provide an electronic copy of your report to Most Worshipful Brother DeWolf to be added into these proceedings.

For any votes that we need to take, we'll be utilizing the voting feature within Zoom. Most Worshipful Brother DeWolf will open the vote for each action that we need to take, and leave it open for sufficient time to ascertain if there's a majority. We'll have a sample vote up here in just a second so we can test that feature and make sure that everybody's comfortable navigating that. Are we ready for that Most Worshipful.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Bear with me one second here, there's a problem with the live stream. Yes. So go ahead to the first poll and go to the bottom, select polling and I will launch it for you. There we go.

(Poll taken)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: 47 yes, 13 no. There are the results.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Do you know how many total delegates we have joining us at the moment?

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Not until we do will roll call.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: All right. It looks like we've got that feature worked out, so we will be using that throughout the day today as we need to vote on our various Resolutions and approving the reports.

So, next I would like to ask Worshipful Brother

Natural Allah, Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Washington, to offer our opening prayer.

M.W. Natural Allah: Thank you, Most Worshipful. Holy and glorious God, I thank you for giving us all an opportunity to meet in fellowship today. We come before you from various places, humbled in many stations of our lives and in our thoughts and actions. We ask that you continue to bless us with your presence and ensure that we continue to meet on the level and extend our hand to all who may be in need. Remind us ever so gently, Great Architect, about mortality so that we may use our time wisely to become the men that we ought to be. Remind us of our frailties and of our shortcomings so we may come to understand that the building of the Temple is perpetually ongoing and the work of the Mason is never done. As we open to do our fraternal work, look down upon us in the quarries where we toil for the betterment of our fellow man and know that although our actions often times waiver in life, our hearts are pure as we seek your favor and blessings. Amen. So moot it be.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you, Worshipful sir for that wonderful opening prayer. Presentation of our Colors and our National Anthems will be provided via a video that the National Sojourners prepared.

(Video played)

(Colors Presented)
(National Anthems)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: That was very special. Thank you to National Sojourners for their presentation today and I think we will hear a little bit more from them later on this afternoon.

Most Worshipful Brother DeWolf, will you please call the Roll of the seated Grand Masters.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: I will Most Worshipful. Daniel Lim, American Canadian Grand Lodge.

M.W. Daniel Lim: Here.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Shelby Morrow, Jr., Grand Lodge of Alabama?

(No audible response)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Joe Darnell, Grand Lodge of Alaska?

M.W. Joe Darnell: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Reg Karbonik, Grand Lodge of Alberta?

M.W. Reg Karbonik: Here.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: M. W. Boyd Robertson, Grand Lodge of Arizona?

M.W. Boyd Robertson: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: M.W. William Frizzell, Grand Lodge of Arkansas?

M.W. William Frizzell: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Don Mackenzie, Grand Lodge of British Columbia/Yukon?

M.W. Don Mackenzie: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: M.W. Arthur Weiss, Grand Lodge of California?

M.W. Arthur Weiss: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Michael Moore, Grand Lodge of Colorado?

M.W. Michael Moore: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Stephen Petri, Grand Lodge of Connecticut?

M.W. Stephen Petri: Here.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Jeffery Haass, Sr., Grand Lodge of Delaware?

M.W. Jeffrey Haass, Sr.: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Alan Gorden, District of Columbia?

M.W. Alan Gorden: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Thomas Turlington, Jr., Grand Lodge of Florida.

(No audible response)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Right Worshipful Donald Combs, Deputy Grand Master of Georgia?

R.W. Donald Combs: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful is your Grand Master present, do you know?

R.W. Donald Combs: He is not. That is why I'm here, sir, sitting for him.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Garry Grahan, Grand Master of Hawaii?

M.W. Garry Grahan: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Don't we all wish we were there today? Most Worshipful Steve Zimmerman, Grand Lodge of Idaho?

M.W. Steven Zimmerman: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Stephen Oakley, Grand Lodge of Illinois?

M.W. Stephen Oakley: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Kenneth Roy, Jr., Grand Lodge of Indiana?

M.W. Kenneth Roy, Jr.: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Dennis Heflin, Grand Lodge of Iowa?

M.W. Dennis Heflin: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Anthony Borum, Grand Lodge of Kansas?

(No audible response)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Ernest Jackson, Grand Lodge of Kentucky?

(No audible response)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful James Steen, Grand Lodge of Louisiana?

M.W. James Steen: Here. Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Richard Nadeau, Grand Lodge of Maine?

M.W. Richard Nadeau: Here.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Gordon Fardoe, Grand Lodge of Manitoba?

M.W. Gordon Fardoe: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Marlin Mills, Grand Lodge of Maryland?

(No audible response)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Richard Maggio, Grand Lodge of Massachusetts?

M.W. Richard Maggio: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Craig Mason, Grand Lodge of Michigan?

M.W. Craig Mason: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Ethan Seaberg, Grand Lodge of Minnesota?

M.W. Ethan Seaberg: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Jimmie Windham, Grand Lodge of Mississippi?

M.W. Jimmie Windham: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: He is Past Grand Master.

Most Worshipful Barry Cundiff, Grand Lodge of Missouri?

M.W. Barry Cundiff: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Alan Frohberg, Grand Lodge of Montana?

M.W. Alan Frohberg: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful James Carlton, Grand Lodge of Nebraska?

M.W. James Carlton: Here.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Richard Graver, Grand Lodge of Nevada?

M.W. Richard Graver: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Kenneth Clay, Jr., Grand lodge of New Hampshire?

M.W. Kenneth Clay, Jr.: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Robert Monacelli, Grand Lodge of New Jersey?

M.W. Robert Monacelli: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Gary Baker, Grand Lodge of New Mexico?

M.W. Gary Baker: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Jonathan Andrews, Grand Lodge of New Mexico?

(No audible response)

M.W. Gary Baker: Jonathan is not in this meeting. He was standing by in case.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Okay. I wasn't sure, we had two of them. But Grand Master, you are here?

M.W. Gary Baker: Yes.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful William Sardone, Grand Master of New York?

M.W. William Sardone: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Donald Lambert, Grand Lodge of Newfoundland and Labrador?

(No audible response)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful David Wicker, Grand Lodge of North Carolina?

M.W. David Wicker: Present.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Most Worshipful William Wedberg, Grand Lodge of North Dakota?

M.W. William Wedberg: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Richard Dickerscheid, Grand Lodge of Ohio?

M.W. Richard Dickerscheid: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Robert Davis, Grand Lodge of Oklahoma?

M.W. Robert Davis: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful David Cameron, Grand Lodge of Ontario?

M.W. David Cameron: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Michael McGuyer, Grand Lodge of Oregon?

M.W. Michael McGuyer: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Right Worshipful Thomas Gamon, IV, Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania?

R.W. Thomas Gamon, IV: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Anibal Rosario-Melendez, Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico?

M.W. Anibal Rosario-Melendez: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Marc David, Grand Lodge of Quebec?

M.W. Marc David: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Gary Kaufman, Grand Lodge of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations?

M.W. Gary Kaufman: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Dan Olmsted, Grand Lodge of Saskatchewan?

M.W. Dan Olmsted: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Walter Disher, II,
Grand Lodge of South Carolina?

(No audible response)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Jason Swindler, Grand
Lodge of South Dakota?

M.W. Jason Swindler: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Right Worshipful Charlie Mixon, Grand
Lodge of Tennessee?

M.W. Charlie Mixon: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Right Worshipful Brad Billings, Grand
Lodge of Texas?

R.W. Brad Billings: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Dan Lawes, Grand Lodge
of Utah?

M.W. Dan J. Lawes: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Stuart Corso, Grand
Lodge of Vermont?

M.W. Stuart Corso: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Douglas Jones, Grand
Lodge of Virginia?

M.W. Douglas Jones: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Chris Coffman, Grand
Lodge of Washington?

M.W. Chris Coffman: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Danny Garber, Grand
Lodge of West Virginia?

M.W. Danny Garber: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Kenneth Gorgen, Grand
Lodge of Wisconsin?

M.W. Kenneth Gorgen: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Wayne Christensen, Grand Lodge of Wyoming?

(No audible response)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful Mario Tanus, Grand Lodge of York Mexico?

M.W. Mario Tanus: Present.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful, roll call as been called. I will give you a count in a second, as soon as my assistant tallies it up.

Most Worshipful, we have 53 jurisdictions present.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you, Most Worshipful. Did I hear -- I know we have two names of individuals that are representing their Jurisdictions other than Grand Masters. Was there a third that I heard in your roll call?

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: We have Right Worshipful Donald Combs, Most Worshipful Jimmie Windham, from Mississippi, and Right Worship Charlie Mixon from Tennessee, and Right Worshipful Brad Billings from Texas. Their Grand Masters asked them to stand in.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Brethren, this will be our first official vote for the day. We do need to approve the four representatives of their various Jurisdictions. If we could, put up that next poll?

Unidentified Grand Master: What was the question?

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: We need to approve the four representatives for a seat at the table today.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Okay. That is affirmative, Grand Master.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Most Worshipful Brother Chris Coffman, Grand Master of the great state of Washington, would you like to give us your welcome address, sir?

WELCOME ADDRESS

M.W. Chris Coffman: Thank you very much, Most Worshipful. Most Worshipfuls, Right Worshipfuls, Very Worshipfuls, Worshipfuls,

Brothers all. I welcome you to the 2021 Conference of Grand Masters of North America. When this Conference decided to meet here in Seattle this year, I had not yet been elected to our Grand Line of our state. The thought that I would be addressing this august body made me a little bit nervous. But four years later, here we are. The ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic have prevented us from meeting in person and denied you the opportunity to visit the great city of Seattle. You will not have an opportunity to see the results of the hard work done by our team for that event. I hope you will indulge me for a moment.

The Host Committee chaired by Most Worshipful Brother Jim Mendoza had arranged for transportation from the SeaTac to the hotel and made transportation available if delegations wished to go to the various outstanding dining establishments in the area. Our Grand Lodge Medical Team, which consists of paramedics and other healthcare professionals, were scheduled to be on site. They planned the Welcome Gala and tours for both this Conference and the Conference of Grand Secretaries. We had concierge services arranged, tour guides, et cetera, et cetera. I personally thank Most Worshipful Brother Jim and every member of our committee for all of the hard work they did.

Over the last 11 months or so, we have seen the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on each of us. There are three areas that I believe have been most consequential.

First, none of us expected to have to deal with restrictions on meetings and other aspects of our daily lives. These severely affected our individual lodges, our candidates, our petitioners and our Grand Jurisdictions. I am sure each of you have faced situations similar to those we have faced here. In Washington my predecessor cancelled lodge communications in March and we still haven't been allowed to start in-person meetings. We have numerous candidates awaiting initiation to higher degrees. There are more and more men inquiring about joining our great fraternity, but we are unable to move their petitions forward. We have had to find other ways to communicate with our aging members and continue to do the good work of Masonry and help each other in our communities.

One, the Grand Lodge level, because we are limited the number of Brothers who could be in physical attendance at our Annual Communication, we held it virtually. We conducted only the essential business and held over everything else. Many of the Grand Jurisdictions have done the same. At this time, we are unsure whether this year's Annual Communication will be in-person or virtual.

Second, on a societal basis, this country has seen pent up anger explode. We had the deaths of George Floyd, Brianna Taylor and others led to a summer of protests looking for racial justice. While the vast majority of those protests were peaceful, a small percentage became violent and resulted in rioting, violence, property damage and looting, including some of those protests right here in Seattle. Most Worshipful Grand Master Lester Dickson of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Washington and our Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Charles Wood, issued a joint statement. That statement made clear that we are Brothers. Further, while we strongly believe in the right to make your feelings known, we are adamantly opposed to violence, property damage, and other lawless behavior.

Third, on an individual basis we have seen that same pent up anger and frustration change the way we use social media and interact with each other. I have felt the need to remind our Brothers that we have to respect the right to disagree and that our Grand Lodge has a social media policy.

The question I put to you is, what do we do now? What lessons have we learned during the pandemic that we can implement moving forward? As the saying goes, every dark cloud has a silver lining. I would like to mention a couple.

On the craft level, I have seen the use of platforms like Zoom, Go to Meeting, and Microsoft Teams expand exponentially. They are fabulous means to reconnect with Brother from across the globe, provide Masonic Education, and allow Brothers to vent. Historically, in Washington the Brothers met the Grand Master and the elected officers at District meetings. We have to have those virtual meetings now. We have added several Grand Master's Forums where Brothers can ask questions, raise concerns and propose solutions. These are generally very well attended and I have used them to communicate with the Brothers throughout the state of Washington in handling the pandemic and what is allowed by governmental regulations. Additionally, I have opened these meetings up to ask questions, any subject that is on their minds. These have been well received and I hope they will continue well into the future.

A word of caution. While the use of virtual platforms has been well received and useful, like all tools, they need to be used for the task intended. I am reminded of a lesson my father taught me. Using a sledgehammer while a jackhammer will work is not the best choice. I caution us not to rely on virtual environment as a substitute for in-person meetings. Being on the level with our brothers is a necessary part of Masonry.

On a societal level, I note that this year we lost Brother John Lewis, the conscience of the U.S. House of Representatives. We also lost Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who I personally had the pleasure of having dinner with her, her husband and my parents. Not long ago we lost Senator John McCain. I mention these individuals not for their political points of view, but rather as examples of tolerance and acceptance. They were each known to have been very good friends with those with whom they would forcefully debate on the floor of the House or Senate, or before the Supreme Court. Afterward they would enjoy a bite to eat and talk about their families.

We, as Masons, have a duty, no an obligation, to teach civility. We do not have to agree to be Brothers. Masonry needs to push the values of family, honesty, respect, tolerance and love. I believe that the world would be a much better place if we take that step and teach those who have opposing points of view to listen to each other and try to find some common ground.

Lastly, on an individual basis, we need to practice the civility. Each of us should go back to our rituals. Read the lectures and associate with each of the degrees and take those lessons to heart and re-emphasize them in our daily lives.

The pandemic will eventually pass and we will get back to some sense of normalcy. I believe that our Gentle Craft will survive the flourish going forward as long as we remember the lessons learned.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you. Lastly, I am proud and honored to welcome you to the 2021 Conference of Grand Masters of North America. Thank you very much.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you. Our travel was curtailed this year. I'm glad that I had an opportunity to have dinner with you and your Junior Grand Warden in Nevada. So that was nice to see you in person once, sir.

M.W. Chris J. Coffman: It was, sir. Thank you.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Next on our agenda will be our keynote speaker. I believe I saw him in the gallery here. Worshipful Brother Owen Shieh, Past Grand Orator of the Grand Lodge of Hawaii.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

W.B. Owen Shieh: Thank you Most Worshipful Lawes.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: The floor is yours, sir.

W.B. Owen Shieh: Thank you all, Most Worshipfuls, Right Worshipfuls, Very Worshipfuls, Grand Lodge Officers, Worshipfuls and Brothers all. Thank you for that wonderful introduction. I am honored and humbled to have been invited to share this event with you today. Although I would have loved to meet everyone in person, given these unprecedented times, I'm grateful to at least have the opportunity to fellowship with you virtually. On behalf of the Brethren of Honolulu and the Grand Lodge of Hawaii, I say Aloha.

Today, I would like to take a moment for us to reflect on what it means to be a Mason. As we gather as current and former Grand Lodge Officers, and as Masons from around the world, we share something in common beyond just title or status in Masonic leadership. We all come from different backgrounds, different personalities, and enjoy different activities. Some of us enjoy works of charity and community service, others love to pursue philosophical learning, some of us enjoy thriving in fellowship with our brethren.

What is it that keeps us coming back to lodge? What is the underlying thread that unites us all as an organization of good men who may otherwise have nothing in common? What makes Freemasonry unique among all other community organizations.

We can spend countless hours discussing the logistics of running a lodge, debating how best to address membership retention, talking about the history and purpose of our fraternity, but the only guarantee of future success of our fraternity rests with one word. Inspiration.

Now, I would like to share a short video clip from a Youtube Channel, Whence Came You, the captures this sense of inspiration and mystery. I am going to try to share a screen here if I am able to toggle back and forth.

(Video played)

So as this video so beautifully captures, the one

thing must underlie everything that we do as leaders of our respective Grand Lodges is to inspire future generations of Masons to contribute their talents to our fraternity. One way to ignite such inspiration among our brethren is to actively consider Masonry as a journey.

Perhaps Brother Antoine de Saint-Exupery captured this idea best when he said the following: "If you want to build a ship, don't herd people together to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea."

Simply put, Freemasonry is the journey of inspiration of transformation. A journey of finding personal growth and meaning in an otherwise complex and uncertain world, but this journey is one that must be taken of one's own free will and accord. Some find this personal transformation in offering charity, others find this in seeking education, and still others find this in cultivating fellowship. But once we acknowledge that common theme that underlies all of those preferences, that journey of inspiration through transformation, everything else about running a lodge, from logistics to retention, more naturally fall into place.

So, what is a journey? Simply put a journey is an activity where you go from one place to another. Journeys can be physical, or they can be more abstract and philosophical. Masonry happens to be both. It is a journey to the East within the officer's line, but more importantly it is a journey of self improvement, of fellowship, and the attainment of wisdom or as it is sometimes called enlightenment.

Think about the greatest journeys of all time, whether it be Odysseus' long voyage home after the Trojan War, or Brothers Lewis and Clark's expedition across the American west, or Brother Buzz Aldrin's trip to the moon, or Luke Skywalker's quest to save of the Jedi. They all have the same components. First, the main character meets an abrupt change or transformation that forces them outside his comfort zone. He may have an expectation of what is to come, but he is also ready for surprises along the way.

Second, he meets many difficult challenges over a period of time that tests his mental and physical limits.

Third, he endures, perseveres, and overcomes those challenges and becomes a, "Hero." He learns about the people and places along the way as well as his own responses to each of the unique challenges. As a result, he learns about himself.

Ultimately, he reaches his destination, but the final scene is often a surprise that is unexpected. Yet the journey was fulfilling. It was rewarding in some way.

Think of our degrees of initiation, passing, and raising. As a whole, don't they all have these four aspects of a journey.

We acknowledge that Masons first become Masons in our hearts. We each have a story and this story is often centered on a journey of personal transformation.

So how did I start my journey? Well, unlike many other Masons, I had no family history in our Fraternity. I first heard about Freemasonry from my best friend in college, Brother Daniel Herr, of Truckee Lodge Number 200 in California. Back in college, we would often suffer through calculus problems sets together. During those late nights, we would often find ourselves lost in philosophical conversations. Years later, when Dan became a Mason, he started hinting at how I would enjoy being a part of this fraternity as well. I didn't pay much attention to it at first, since I didn't know anything about Freemasonry except through the limited discussions we had in my high school history class. There was one event in my life that inspired me to dig a little deeper. I think it is one that many of us here can relate with.

When I lived in Oklahoma, before moving to Hawaii, Dan came to visit me for a few days to go storm chasing, (that's what meteorologists do for fun in Oklahoma). That was my profession. A lull in the storms implied fair weather and relative boredom in the southern plains. During one of those rest days, Dan suggested that we go on a bike ride through my low-key town of Norman. Norman was a college town, home of the Sooners, but compared to the mountains of northern California where Dan was from, it was devoid of any major form of outdoor recreation much beyond hunting and fishing. I was a bit surprised by Dan's request to go cycling. "Where do you want to go?" I asked.

"So what does it matter?" Dan responded, looking at me with a slight hint of consternation.

"Well, then where do you want to go?" I asked again, not finding it worthwhile to go anywhere in Norman without a purpose.

"I don't know," he said casually, not seeming to care about my concern.

"So do you want to make pack a lunch or something? Maybe do a picnic at a nearby park? Or maybe we can check out the area by the small airport on the north side of town?" I suggested, trying desperately to come up with some purpose for the bike ride.

Dan simply turned and walked out with a bicycle in my garage. "You coming or not?" he asked.

Well, considering he was the guest, it would have been totally unbecoming of me as the host not to have at least tried my best to entertain, so I dropped my doubts and decided to tag along. "All right, fine," I accepted reluctantly.

So, we started our bike ride to nowhere is particular. We followed a road going north through town, sped through several puddles left by the rain shower earlier in the day, and took turns in the lead. We made it to the outskirts of town near a municipal airport and tested our skills in tackling mud puddles on our mountain bikes. We explored unfamiliar roads and parts of town to which I had never been. I was fascinated by the various convenience stores, small businesses, churches and unfamiliar schools that were tucked away in the humble corners of town. Dan and I shared the details of our lives since we graduated from college, stories from childhood, and our hopes for the future.

After over two hours of riding around town, we returned to my house and cleaned up. Between the new sites, the good conversation, and cool breeze on my face, I had completely forgotten about why we went on the bike ride in the first place. Yet, I enjoyed every moment of it. I soaked in all the nuances of sight and sound. I learned things about the city of Norman that I did not know before. Although we were already good friends, through our conversation during the bike ride, I had learned even more about Dan, who he was as a person and how that fit with his life goals. Most importantly, I learned about myself. I learned about my habits. I learned about my habitual tendencies. I learned about my usual mindset. I learned about my reactions to new places and new ideas. I learn to challenged myself, not physically, but mentally, all within the space of two hours during a random bike ride around town.

The next day, we had lunch before I had to take Dan to the airport to catch his return flight. During a pause in conversation, Dan looked at me and said, "Because you didn't know where you were supposed to go, you never would have gone on that bike ride, huh." That comment completely caught me by surprise. I thought about it, then let out a sigh, grinned, and gave a slight nod.

On our way to the Oklahoma City Airport, I finally began to realize some of what I had learned through the bike ride, although the significance of those lessons would not hit me until over a decade later. "People are so strongly attached to their goals in life they completely miss out on the journey," Dan said to me in the car. "Goals are good to have and all, but when we sacrifice so much just so that we can get something, when we don't even know if that thing is really what we need or want in life, then what are we doing? We're living for a dream, but not really living." As I drove into the airport, Dan summarized his message with these words. "If instead of concerning yourself with the score of the game, you concentrate your whole hearted efforts on doing the best that you possibly can in your role that moment, regardless of your task, living in that moment, that minute, that second, when it comes to the end of that game, you will have achieved more and scored more than you previously thought possible."

Brothers, this quote hit me hard. I did not know what to say but, "Thank you," as I dropped Dan off at the curb. He pointed at my head and responded, "It's all you." As if to say "It's all in your head." He turned and left.

Usually, when we hear, "It's all in your head," we assume it's, "False" or just an "Opinion," but mental impressions do indeed define our reality. What's in someone's head manifests as reality for that person, whether we agree or not.

I may not have known it at the time, but through the bike ride, Dan had taught me the meaning of symbolism. He was right. He didn't actually teach me anything, he simply set up the conditions properly so that I could learn a valuable lesson for myself. It really was in my head. That is why it mattered. I took that bike ride as a symbol for my life without knowing it, and all Dan did was indirectly point that out to me.

Take a look at this picture. What do you see? Perhaps just some random black and white patterns. Try as you might, it's difficult for your mind to construct the symbols into a coherent pattern of meaning. But what if I were to drop a hint to point you in the right direction? What if I were to say that this is a picture of a little animal, perhaps an amphibian that croaks? Now, what do you see.

If a frog all-of-a-sudden jumped out at you, you would be correct. Did you notice the mental shift that just happened in your mind' eye? That momentary epiphany? That instant of clarity that came from realization? Now that you see this

picture for what it is, a frog, you can't unsee it, try as you might. Thus it is with Masonic wisdom and enlightenment derived from inspired symbolism. Once a Mason experiences a personal transformation through inspiration, nobody can take that sense of fulfillment away. A lesson learned through inspiration sticks much longer than merely hearing about it through a lecture.

For me, once such moment of realization, one of many, was that bike ride. With the epiphany that came with that moment of transformation, I decided to petition Norman Lodge Number 38 for membership and the rest is history. What Dan did, without being aware of it at the time, was inspire me to not only join Freemasonry, but to realize that everything around us, even something as simple and mundane as a bike ride through town, can be used as a symbol to teach us the most important lessons in life.

So imagine the possibilities it can truly master the science and art of applying Masonic symbolism to our daily lives. By applying this methodology to symbols of our three degrees, we can similarly inspire a new brother to apply the lessons of the Masonic journey to his daily life. When he masters that, then I promise you, you will have a Mason for life and retention will never be an issue for that brother.

The goal of a Masonic Mentor is to inspire his mentee to understand his Masonic journey through time and through intentional practice. In the words of an anonymous poet:

"You came with me on a long arduous journey,
 Through many forests and jungles;
 The paths confusing and twisted,
 Sometimes, I made you miss a turning;
 There was no promised pot of gold.
 But then my brethren, it was not the
 gold;
 It was the search itself;
 The journey and your comradeship,
 The jungles we saw,
 The forests we conquered,
 The rivers we forded,
 And the links we made,
 It would not have happened
 If it was not for the pot of gold."

Masonry is all about the journey of becoming a Master Mason. There are plenty of organizations out there that you can join for community services, social networking and other benefits. But Masonry is the only organization of its kind

centered upon a long process of initiation. The act of becoming a Master Mason is the purpose of Masonry. The light that we seek is not a destination, but an ongoing process. The journey itself is the pot of gold. At the end of the journey, we find peace of mind, the contentment and fulfillment that comes with becoming not just a Master Mason, but also a Master of our selves and our understanding of the world in which we live. The philosophies inculcated by Masonry then come naturally to us with little efforts, and the joy that results from this peace of mind is something that nobody can take away, because it is grounded on personal experience and practice.

"Every day is a journey, and the journey itself is home." Said by Matsuo Basho.

So as we continue the important work during this virtual conference of planning, collaborating, and coordinating Masonic activities across jurisdictions, I charge every officer here to think about how we can best inspire our fellow brothers, particularly the youngest and the newest candidates in our lodges. The planning, logistics, finances, and everything else is important, but all of those things become far easier when we have a strong membership base that is grounded on personal inspiration. As a Masonic leader, you will know that you have succeeded when you no longer have to push your brothers to do something and instead, feel that you are all walking the same journey together.

I would like to end with my favorite Masonic poem of all time, one that I have printed out and keep handy whenever I myself need inspiration to move forward in Masonic leadership no matter how rough and rugged the road ahead may be. These were the words of Brother Joseph Fort Newton in his book, "The Builders", published in 1914. Yes, answers this question.

When is a man a Mason?

"When he can look out over the rivers, the hills, and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope, and courage which is the root of every virtue. When he knows that down in his heart every man is as noble, as vile, as Divine, a diabolic, and as lonely s himself, and seeks to know, to forgive, and to love his fellow man. When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, yes, even in their sins, knowing that each man fights a hard fight against many odds. When he has learned how to make friends and to keep them, and above all how to keep friends with himself. When he loves flowers, can hunt birds without a gun, and feels the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laugh of a little child. When he can be happy and

high minded amid the meaner drudgeries of life. When the star-crowned trees and the glint of sunlight on flowing waters subdue him like the thought of one much loved and long dead.

When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without response. When he finds good in everything faith that help any man to lay hold of Divine things, and sees majestic meaning in life, whatever the name of that faith may be. When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something beyond mud, and into the fact of the most forlorn fellow ortal and see something beyond sin.

When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope. When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellow man, with his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of a song, glad to live, but not afraid to die. Such a man has found the only real secret of Masonry, and the one which it is trying to give to all the world."

Thank you for this priceless opportunity to share in virtual fellowship with you all. I look forward to meeting you all in person some day. Till then, may your Masonic journeys continue to be the most inspired and transformative.

For those who are interested in further reading on the topic of Masonry as a journey and on specific strategies for applying Masonic symbolism to daily life, I published a book several years ago as a resource for Masonic mentors. For those who are interested, signed copies are available on the web site, JourneyOnTheLevel.com, and my e-mail is also on the screen here. I would love to hear from you after this meeting.

On behalf of the Most Worshipful Brother Gary Graham, Grand Master of Masons in Hawaii, I extend a warm "Aloha." After the pandemic, if you ever find yourself in Hawaii, please pay a visit to one of our lodges on the Hawaiian Islands. My current lodge, Honolulu Lodge, meets on Tuesday nights, and we would love to host your visit. With that, thank you and best wishes.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you, Worship Sir. That was wonderful. I think I am going to take you up on your offer and come visit you next summer.

M.W. Owen Shieh: Please do.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful. Thank you very much. Moving along, I would call upon Most Worshipful Brother Robert Monacelli, Grand Master of New Jersey for the report of the Planning Committee.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

M.W. Robert Monacelli: Thank you, Brother. Most Worshipful, Right Worshipful, Very Worshipful Sirs, my Brethren all, good afternoon. It's been an interesting year, to say the least, and the Planning Committee worked very, very hard to put together a program for Seattle. Unfortunately due to the COVID pandemic and the lockdown, we were not able to meet in person, but I do want to thank personally Mike DeWolf, Dan Lawes, Charlie Mixon, Craig Mason, James Golloday and Gary Kaufman for all of the work that you did and for picking up the slack when I had a family medical issue come up and I had to take a step back for a couple of months to deal with health issues with the family. They stepped up and did a great job. So, again, they prove what Masonry is all about. They just did. Got the job done. I thank all of you individually and collectively for all of the hard work that you did.

Just to give you a little idea of some of the things we had planned for you. We were going to have a session dealing with legislative bodies and a wonderful session on the Hauts Grades Academy. It's something that Mohamad Yatim and Yasser Al-Khadib of New Jersey and Pennsylvania respectively put together for Scottish Rite. A wonderful education program. Muhammad has also worked on the one for New Jersey, Society of King Solomon, which would have come in part of that. That's one of the things.

We also were looking at budgeting. Obviously real estate, you know, the buildings. Things we have with buildings. Another Scottish Rite initiative was the ICE Movement keeping things interesting, convenient and enjoyable for all of your members. Running an effective meeting. We were going to give you a breakout session on virtual meetings, which we are doing here in New Jersey. I am allowing everything except ritual to be done. You cannot do ritual and you cannot vote on candidates on a Zoom Meeting or Webex Meeting, but you can conduct lodge business so we can keep the lodges going and keep the brethren coming together. These are some of the things we were working on. Moving forward, if next years committee is interested in any of these, just give me a yell and we will be more than happy to pass that information along to you.

It's been, like I said, a real challenge for us here in New Jersey. I think we're the lockdown capital of the United States. Our governor changes his mind unlike he changes his socks. It's pretty interesting how things keep changing for us. We are limited to 10 people right now.

So, I know all of my colleagues from the northeast know this, but those of you who do not know this, the Grand Lodge in New Jersey will be holding it's Annual Communication in November, however, we will not be electing new Grand Lodge Officers. The current Grand Lodge Officers will continue for another year. So, I will be your Grand Master from New Jersey through 2022.

I have a little bit of business we need to take care of. With the COVID it's put a little bit of a financial crunch on the Conference. So, I have been asked to introduce a Resolution that each of the Jurisdictions participating in the Conference be assessed a one time assessment of \$250 to help us keep the coffers full and move forward. So this would be a Resolution asking for a one time assessment of \$250 from each of the Jurisdictions.

Mike do you have anything you want to add to that, or do you just want to go to a poll.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: I think we can go to a poll. I think it's pretty straight forward, Most Worshipful.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Can I get a second to that Motion from Most Worshipful Brother Monacelli?

(Second)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Brethren, Motion has been made and seconded that we, a one time assessment of \$250 for each participating Jurisdiction of the Conference. Most Worshipful Sir, will you please put up that vote.

(Poll taken)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Brother Chairman, the results are in. I will share them. That did pass at 53 yes's and, again, one no.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful. Thank you.

M.W. Robert Monacelli: Brethren, I thank you. In closing, I would just like to remind -- well, our motto this year in New Jersey is, "New jersey Freemasons, We Care for Each Other." In this time of turmoil and COVID restrictions we need to do that even more. We need to pick up the phone, call a brother, make

sure our brothers are okay. I challenge you to take that motto, "New Jersey Freemasons, We Care for Each Other", drop the New Jersey, and just make it "Freemasons, we Care for Each Other", because that's what we're all about.

Brethren, I thank you so much for the opportunity to serve on this committee. It's been a marvelous experience. I thank all of my fellow committee members for all of their hard work and I wish you a wonderful day. Take care and may God bless.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you Most Worshipful Sir. Another thank you to all of the members of the Planning Committee for their hard work and dedication over this last year. They really did have an amazing session planned for us in Seattle.

Can I have motion to accept the report of the Planning Committee.

(So moved)

(Second)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: We have motion and second. We'll skip the poll. Are there any opposed?

(No audible response)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Motion carries. Thank you, again, sir.

Next on our agenda Most Worshipful Brother Michael A. DeWolf, Executive Secretary of the Conference of Grand Masters, for his report.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Thank you, Most Worshipful. To the members of the 108th Annual Conference of Grand Masters:

It has been a challenging year since we last met in Louisville, Kentucky. However, challenges offer new opportunities. We have learned to meet and learned to conduct business on new platforms, today being an example of that.

Time moves quickly and we continue to push the needle in a positive direction. Here is a short recap of the activities and progress of our last year.

At the conclusion of the 2020 Conference in Louisville, I am pleased to report that we set another attendance record with 911 registrations. This marks the third

straight year we have enjoyed an increase in Conference registrations and attendance. Additionally, we had another year of positive cash flow, so my thanks to all of you for your participation and support.

In July I did a site visit with the Grand Lodge of Washington to the Weston Seattle, the contracted site for the 2021 Conference. As you're all aware, COVID and civil unrest precluded us from holding the Conference in that city and we cancelled the contract. I might add that this contract was not favorable at all to our Conference. The cancellation provided a unique opportunity to renegotiate and rebook the event for 2024, with a number of favorable concessions for us. I then spoke with the Conference Committee from Guadalajara, who kindly agreed to move the event to 2025, provided we can negotiate favorable rates with the hotel vendors.

Your Planning Committee has been meeting on a monthly basis via Zoom. After the decision was made to hold a virtual conference, it was decided to cover the basic requirements and then pass that planning on to the next committee. These ideas, along with some great topics that we received from the North East Conference of Grand Lodges, should provide some excellent breakouts for 2022 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. One of the negative effects of not having a conference is that our revenues are substantially reduced, as Brother Monacelli said. We still have fixed costs that continue whether we meet in person or on line. I would like to take a minute to thank Sovereign Grand Commander David Glattly and the Scottish Rite Northern Jurisdiction for their generous financial support they have provided the Conference this year. Your help is most deeply appreciated. Brothers, I thank you for the vote to keep the Conference going.

Now, let's take a moment and fast forward to the future. We know we will be in Milwaukee in 2022; Arlington, Virginia in 2023; and Seattle, Washington in 2024. I strongly encourage Grand Lodges to put a bid in to host this great event. It does take hard work and coordination, but at the same time it brings the Masons in your state together and instills great pride. It's a great honor to host Masonic leaders from around the world, and to showboat Masonry in your jurisdiction and it provides your constituent's a unique opportunity to host and network with Masonic leaders from all around the world.

We look forward to seeing all of you in Milwaukee next year, their planning and host committees have been working hard to provide you an excellent event. Of course I am biased, as I am from Milwaukee, the home of beer, brats, bowling and brotherhood.

Watch for the hotel registration links which will be available on March 15th, 2021 on our web site cogmna.info. Once again, registration will open up on the 15th March for our hotel. That will all be posted on the web site.

My thanks to Most Worshipful Dan Lawes, Grand Master of Utah for his conference leadership this year, to the Planning, Time and Place and Nominations Committee members, and all of the Officers of this 108th Conference. Our sincere appreciation goes out to the Grand Lodge of Washington who put in a lot of work and then had to go on hold for a few years. I am glad we can meet there in 2024 and enjoy your hospitality. I thank Most Worshipful Ken Gorgen, Grand Master of Wisconsin for his support and that of the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin to allow the Conference to Headquarter in the Wisconsin Grand Masonic Center.

Finally, thanks to each and every one of you for the opportunity to serve you as the Secretary of this great Masonic Organization. I am truly honored.

Brother Chairman, I move this report be accepted and spread upon the Minutes of this organization.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: I have a motion, can I have a second, please?

(Second)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Are there any opposed?

(No audible response)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Motion carries. Thank you Most Worshipful Sir. It's been great getting to know you over this last year a little bit. I'm sure like most of our Secretaries and Grand Secretaries, the majority of your work is unseen by the attendees but it's certainly greatly appreciated.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Thank you, Most Worshipful.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Next can I have Most Worshipful Brother Kenneth Gorgen, Grand Master of Wisconsin an Pro-Tem Chair of the Nominating Committee for his report.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

M.W. Kenneth Gorgen: Thank you, Most Worshipful Brother. I just want to say I have heard several comments today already. I was in another Conference yesterday, which was a wonderful

Conference. To Worshipful Brother Owen, who just gave that wonderful keynote address, I want to explain to him that that is my slogan this year, that you were first prepared to be a Mason in your heart and I note that he brought that up in his address.

One of the things we have all been through this year has been a year of trials, tribulations and we all keep muddling through. One of the things I would like to say to you, it came from retired Admiral James Stockdale. "You never must confuse faith that you will prevail in the end which you can never afford to lose with the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever it might be." I will tell you, I have seen that in Masonry this year. I have seen the push from all of my Brothers in Wisconsin. I saw the push that I heard from all of my Brothers yesterday. So, congratulations that we will prevail.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to step in as temporary Chairman of the Nominations Committee. I am pleased to present the following Brethren to serve as officers to the 109th Conference of Grand Masters to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I don't have to tell you about Milwaukee, our Most Worshipful Grand Secretary already told you about the beer and the brats.

All Brethren have been contacted that I am going to read off and have agreed to serve.

Chairman of the 2022 Conference, Right Worshipful Brother Dr. Ty G. Treutelaar, Deputy Grand Master right now of the Grand Lodge of Missouri.

Vice-Chairman: Right Worshipful Brother James W. Golloday, Jr., Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Virginia.

Executive Secretary/Treasurer, Most Worshipful Brother Michael A. DeWolf, Past Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Wisconsin.

For the Chairman of Planning, Right Worshipful Brother Timothy Wheeland, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Ohio.

For the Planning Committee, Right Worshipful Michael Jackson, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Illinois and Right Worshipful Brother James Gibson, Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky.

For the Chairman of Time and Place Committee, Right Worshipful Brother Donald Combs, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Georgia. For the Committee Members, Time and Place,

Right Worshipful Brother Charles Ward, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Alaska and Right Worshipful Brother Charles Mixon, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Tennessee.

For the Commission for Information on Recognition, Most Worshipful Brother Adam Hathaway, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New Mexico.

I respectfully submit this report. Most Worshipful Kenneth Gorgen, Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Wisconsin.

Brother Chairman, I move for acceptance of this report and ask that it be spread upon the Minutes of this meeting. Thank you.

(Second)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Brethren, we have a motion and second to accept the Report of the Nominating Committee. Are there any opposed?

(No audible response)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Motion carries. Thank you Most Worshipful Sir for stepping into that role on fairly short notice.

I will now open up if there are any additional nominations for any of the offices for the 2022 Conference of Grand Masters in Milwaukee? Any additional nominations? Hearing none, I will close the nominations and as there are no additional, may I have a Motion that we cast a unanimous ballot in favor of all of the officers that were presented by Most Worshipful Brother Gorgen.

(So moved)

(Second)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Motion and second. Are there any opposed to that?

(No audible response)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful. Motion carries.

It's my understanding --

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: May we do a poll on that, just so I could have it for the record, please?

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Absolutely.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Thank you. We will open up a poll of that one.

(Poll taken)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Thank you. 100 percent.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful. Thank you. It is my understanding that everyone has confirmed. Following past precedent, I think we would ask each of them to stand and affirm that. If there are any that are unable or unwilling to serve in that capacity, if you would kindly reach out to your respective committee chair and Most Worshipful Michael A. DeWolf.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Most Worshipful, I believe that we have the newly elected Chairman, on line.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Perfect. Right Worshipful Sir, do you accept the position of Chairman for the 2022 Conference?

M.W. Dr. Ty G. Treutelaar: I do. I am grateful for the opportunity and hope to see each of you or your Jurisdictions next year. I miss all of you. Also warn you that while I am from Missouri, I was born in Milwaukee. So, have very nice time there.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful. I am looking forward to being there as a spectator next year myself.

M.W. Dr. Ty G. Treutelaar: I do accept.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Our Vice-Chair is also on line.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Right Worshipful Brother Golloday, do you accept as well, the position of Vice-Chairman for next year?

M.W. James W. Golloday, Jr.: I do. Thank you so much.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you, sir. I look forward to seeing you again next year. Most Worshipful Brother Michael A. DeWolf, do you accept again your reappointment to Secretary/Treasurer?

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: I do, Most Worshipful. Thank you, Brethren. Appreciate the support.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you. Okay. Wonderful. Congratulations to all. We thank you for all of the work you are going to put in over the next 12 months, and I look forward to seeing the wonderful things you do at next year's Conference. I would love some really good brats. I hope that is factored in in many places.

Moving along then. This will be a presentation by Worshipful Brother Robert W. Roth, National President of National Sojourners of the Masonic Patriotism Effort.

**NATIONAL SOJOURNER'S
Masonic patriotism effort**

M.W. Ed Cohen: Most Worshipful, Right Worshipful, Very Worshipful Sirs and Brethren all, I am Ed Cohen, Past Grand Master of Masons in Virginia. I will give a shout out to my Grand Master, Doug Jones and our Deputy who was just elected, Jim Golloday. As Chairman of the Fraternal Relations Committee of the National Sojourners, it is my pleasure to introduce to you the President of National Sojourners, Colonel Robert W. Roth.

Brother Roth is a man of many accomplishments, in the U.S. Army, as a skilled trial attorney, and for 30 years he owned and operated a skilled care nursing home in Northern Wisconsin. His Masonic Credentials are equally impressive, serving as Worshipful Master in various positions in the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin. He's a 33rd Degree Scottish Rite Mason, Shrine and active in the York Rite bodies. He is here today in his capacity as President of the National Sojourners.

The National Sojourners is an organization of Masons who are current or former members of our armed forces and armory members. Our organization is dedicated to assisting the various Grand Lodges in any way possible and working cooperatively with other appendant bodies to support Freemasonry.

President Roth will provide in his brief remarks how we support our veterans, our youth, and the cause of patriotism. So without further ado, I present Colonel Robert Roth.

M.W. Robert W. Roth: Good day almost Worshipful Grand Masters, Right Worshipful Brothers and all other Brothers joining this virtual Conference of Grand Masters of North America. There is but one appendant body of Freemasonry that wishes to be in constant direct support of all Grand Jurisdictions within the United States all of the time, it is the National Sojourners and we are the Masonic Military Veterans Order in America.

Now, first let me thank all of you for allowing National Sojourners Ritual and Ceremonies Unit, Heros of 76, to prepare the Color Guard movie you saw a few minutes ago. It was a humble privilege for all involved and the anthems really sounded good when we put it together. All of the Brothers hail from our Chapter Members in Orlando, Florida, and the project was headed up by our national commanders of the Heros of 76 who voiced over the recording, Worshipful Brother Martin D. Schwebel. Thank you, again.

The National Sojourners stated purpose is to support and honor all Masonic military veteran and promote all matters of patriotism and Americanism within the American Grand Jurisdiction and the community at large. That direct support to all of you in the U.S. is designed to help all Master Masons in America better understand their duties as it relates to their nation state and why they should honor their love of their country and love it.

I will discuss two programs today, one a Grand Lodge initiative that our Order fully supports and the other a National Sojourner Educational Program designed for presentation in your lodges and our chapters.

Let's begin with the first topic. It's called the Permanent Veteran's Pin Initiative. Permanent, meaning if it is given by the Grand Lodge to a member of that Grand Jurisdiction, it stays with them forever and goes with them into the casket. The idea for a permanent veteran's pin within a Grand Jurisdiction first took hold within the Grand Lodge of Georgia about five, six years ago. The program there continues in full force and effect.

The Wisconsin Grand Lodge initiative took that idea and developed a pin which could be used in multiple jurisdictions throughout the nation. The Grand Lodge Permanent Pin Initiative was briefed to the Conference of Grand Secretaries in 2017 and 2018 and here today. Most jurisdictions where it is in use, is given to a Master Mason Veteran by your Grand Lodge Officer, not just issued by mail. The ceremony adds a very short program to the visitations and special events that you are very busy doing when you are not in the middle of a COVID attack. Where allowed, National Sojourner Officers also help you with the distribution.

Now, here is what the pin looks like (indicating). This gives you a sense for its design, and its basic concept of operation. Add your state name in there and you have a pretty good idea of what you're looking at. The neat thing, is people

from different states are using the same pin, but with their own state name in there, in your travels, it is very easy to spot. Now, if you have an interest in the program at all, here is my contact information. I will leave that up there for a second. For those of you who haven't seen this before, this the actual National Sojourner logo. Just for fun.

The Veteran's Pin Initiative has been adopted in Grand Jurisdictions in Minnesota, Utah, Connecticut, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, it has been used jointly by both the Prince Hall Grand Lodge and the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin. A joint declaration which dates back to 2016 is still in full effect.

Finally, if any of you wish to partake in the Permanent Veteran's Pin Initiative, remember, this is a Grand Lodge initiative. It's simple to do. You can contact me, or you can drop a message to your Conference Secretary, Grand Secretary and Past Grand Master Michael A. DeWolf, on behalf of the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, who owns the program artwork and distribution process. He will tell you who to contact and what to do. Pins will be made with your state name on it and you're good to go.

Now, let's change gears. Let me talk about the Masonic Patriotism Project. Something that can fit into all three nation states, Masonic Education.

First, some background. In almost every Blue Lodge in the USA there is an American Flag positioned somewhere in the northeast corner of the lodge. Almost everyone in American Freemasonry generally thinks it has been put there out of a sense of ordinary civic patriotism. That for better than 200 years at least, most of us in Freemasonry have mostly taken for granted.

Now, today I humbly suggest that ordinary civic patriotism leaves them as secondary at best to the main reason. In fact, the planning of the national flag in the lodge is done to remind us that as Master Masons we have a duty to your nation state as set out in our three degrees, our appendant bodies additional degrees, or ceremonies, as we may be able to agree. This reason for the flag in the lodge has not been the subject of much attention in Masonic Education probably for a long time. We are hoping to change that.

Now digging into this a little deeper, if you notice the decreasing understanding of patriotism among citizens in all three of our Nation's today, have you noticed that the same problem is occurring among younger new Masons? Have you seen

the poll suggesting that younger men are increasingly attracted to humanism in the extreme in some cases or some utopian world view of society? Many young men seem not to have learned the role of patriotism in their lives, much.

This would include some of the good men who we have taken into our Craft and had Degrees conferred upon. Now, before I get into my comments, let me say that several of my Past Grand Masters in Wisconsin have helped me with this, and we have done what we can to avoid directly quoting pure work. Let me apologize in advance if any of you think we might have skirted a bit too close here and there, and I am humbly aware that each of you are the true keepers of the pure work in your jurisdictions and that nothing I say here today impacts your view of what your pure work means. Thank you for that understanding.

Now, before I go on, I want to shout out to the next speaker. I want to shout out to Sovereign Grand Commander David E. Glattly of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of Scottish Rite in America. His order has placed devotion to country, love of country as one of its core values and has helped immeasurably within the 15 states of his jurisdiction in focusing others on the importance of this Masonic Patriotism. He helped, and he should know that his value of Milwaukee has helped with projects, moral support and provided a cash grant for the promotion and education of the effort. The National Sojourners are deeply indebted to the Rite for its help.

Now, let's have some fun and find out what this is all about. In the Entered Apprentice Degree, on some circumambulations about to begin, some comments are made to the candidate. These are completely paraphrased here, but the candidate is told that he should go with his conductor -- knowing that nothing he will do during the proceedings will interfere with any duty he might owe to -- and the words will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction in this last part, I will just use mine -- family, neighbor or and this is the punch line, or your country.

Almost identical language is then to be found in about the same place in the F.C. and M.M. Degrees. So the notion -- so this notion of duty to country is re-enforced three times in the three degrees. That's notable.

Now, in the E.A. Degree, this is the first time that candidate, later Freemason, realizes that he owes some important duties to his country and Freemasonry, places these duties high up on list of duties he will always have as a Master Mason. Up there with God, or country, or whatever happens to be in your

section of your ritual.

Now, the next thing I want to comment on is justice, the cardinal virtue of justice. Cardinal virtue of justice means in part, to render, do honor to those who deserve it. It is the root of why Freemasonry honors the Military Veteran. It is the veteran's love of country that cements the just cause of the honor given. Now, let's take a look at how this relates to all Freemasons, not just military veterans.

In the E.A. charge, this is an obvious one, but it has an interesting twist, it really does. The charge declared in my jurisdiction, so I won't speak it in the clear. Says in the state you are to be a quiet and peaceful subject. True, truth, your government and then it doesn't say be loyal of your country, be devoted, it says, "And just to your country." Fascinating, it actually points to cardinal versus justice. Right there it says, you know, okay this business of honoring. Yeah. That's what you do. You honor your nation state and you are not to be disloyal through rebellion.

Back to devotion to country. Now, I've got two more, because there's a bunch, but I just want to do a sampling for you today so you can see how this might work into some of your programs in your Grand Jurisdictions.

Let's travel to the Master Mason Degree for a minute. Everybody knows what happens when we open the Master Mason Degree. Be that as it may, folks are talking back and forth to one another and the Master and Senior Warden are talking. At some point they talk about traveling, just traveling. Somewhere along the line words to the effect that you might travel into foreign countries. Now, some of your jurisdictions actually don't have a foreign in it, but when I did the research, as best as I can tell, that's pretty much the original intent. What do you do when you travel to a foreign country? You cross a border. Behind you, when you cross that border, back across that border is the nation state that Master Mason is leaving behind. The land the Master Mason loves. It's a place where the Master Mason's family lives. It's the place he wants to go back to. The place where he and his brothers take care of the widows and orphans. The place where relief is given to Masons. It's your nation state. It's your home. You are devoted to Masonic, but you honor it, you love it Masonically. It's the state of being a Master Mason. You are a good man trying to be better as a Freemason. This is part of it.

Okay. Let's do one more. As I say, there are so many more we can pick, but this last one is for the Freemasons in all three jurisdictions -- excuse me, nation states. It again shows

how being a good man, honoring your nation state, living a good life grants you certain privileges from your nation state. That honor in Freemasonry goes both ways. Now, the idea of your country is special, and the concept of the need to travel sometimes into foreign countries is good and interesting. You also normally need a document to do that.

Now, let's take a look at the Masonic World that deals with that document. All of you have played many roles in our virtual, and some of you have played the roles of seafaring men, some of you played the role ruffians, who knows. But all of you know, when bad guys do bad things, they try to run away from the country, and sometimes they go down to the seashore and sometimes they got to get out of dodge. Well, rhetorically, what's to stop the three bad guys from getting off shore and away to some country out there. They need to have something, and the word that we use in all of our rituals is the word, "Pass." Now, I would suggest to you, that if you are to think about it, the concept of the pass in our ritual is the original concept of the meaning of passport. For you to have a passport, you have to be a good citizen, which is what those three bad guys had a bit of difficulty achieving after their rather bad act. In short, you have to be honorable and devoted to your country and fond good to get a passport. It's still a privilege to have and hold a Canadian, Mexican or U.S. Passport today. It's reserved for those who are just, honorable and not sideways with the law.

All passports have the same preamble to the visit international treaties we have all signed, the countries have all signed. So mine reads like this. "The Secretary of State of the United States of America hereby requests all whom it may concern to permit the citizen/national of the United States to pass without delay or hindrance, and in case of need, to give lawful aid and protection."

That is Masonic to the core. Think about it. For Master Mason this language has special meaning in all three of our countries. But when we travel into foreign countries on our passport, we'll often be met by Master Masons who welcome us with a bond of brotherly love that is universal and serves as an extra layer of protection for my land.

Once again, cardinal virtue of justice obtained both out of respect for several nations, to the use of the passport, and when we interact with our brothers in our countries. Brothers that is exactly what you are doing in your Conference today and it is a beautiful thing.

The relationship between a Master Mason and his native

state -- his native nation state is one of love and devotion. It goes both ways. Now, when you visit the lodge and see your nation's flag there, that, too, will be seen as a Masonic good worthy of devotion and respect. I think this would be good to be telling our members in all of our Grand Jurisdictions.

Well, my Most Worshipful Brothers and other Brothers assembled, this concludes our two educational presentations. Your Brother Masonic Veterans are humbled that you would have us speak and reach out to you. Please reach out to us and let us visit you whenever you will have us. We'll be reaching out to you as well.

Now, let me introduce my fellow Sojourner, and Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, Most Worshipful Bobby Simmons. He has a notice and special request for those of you who might be interested in becoming part of Sojourners. This is because one of our organizational subunits has been a part of this Conference for decades and we don't want COVID to interfere with the offer of brotherly interaction and work that we have all offered in person in the past. Most Worshipful Bobby, the presentation is all yours.

M.W. Bobby Simmons: Thank you Brother President. Good day Most Worshipful Brethren. It is an unusual year, and rather rough times. We have assembled virtually from the three countries to re-enforce our commitment for Freemasonry as Grand Masters and Grand Masters in the making. It is a privilege to be with you again.

I am currently the President of National Sojourners Chapter Number 996, which is very unique in Masonic circles, being composed of entirely of Grand Masters and Past Grand Masters.

The National Sojourner Chapter meets once a year at the Annual Conference of Grand Masters of North America, which we have done since 2005.

Now, please let me say that it would be very good if there were three Grand Master Chapters being initiated, one from each country represented at the Conference. We would be most happy to work with the Canadians and Mexicans to help make this a reality. We are 101 years old, and we have some experience in this regard. The rules of our order have always been allowed to take in Veterans who have honorably served, and honorary members who have never served but who respect all and support of our patriotism and decorative emblems worn on our sleeves. In most cases, as almost always, include all of the sitting Grand Masters in all of the Grand Jurisdictions in the United States.

Each year, up until this year, we met and assembled immediately after the Grand Masters Conference adjourned. We would install the new Grand Masters who wished to join. We'd then have a short program with focus on Masonic Patriotism, and in our case Americanism in general.

My brothers and my Most Worshipful Brethren, in order to join in our Grand Masters Chapter we require only that you be an American citizen, be a Grand Master and to pay a one time fee of \$250 and be initiated. This year all you have to do is contact our national offices in Washington D.C. We will help you to fill out the short application form, then arrange a date shortly for a virtual initiation. In this case, with all of our National Sojourners Chapters, we would be of service to the Grand Jurisdiction of all of our Masonic bodies. We present patriotism and also in our community as a further face of patriotism for all.

Thank you for allowing me to be here today. All three of us are looking forward to seeing you next year in Milwaukee, once again, working for your Grand Jurisdictions and for Freemasonry. Now I will return back to Most Worshipful Past Grand Master Ed Cohen for his closing remarks. Thank you very much.

M.W. Ed Cohen: I hope in the short time allotted we have given you a better appreciation of some of what the National Sojourners do and how we can support your Grand Lodge and support lodges to include providing Color Guard, and a wide variety of patriotic and educational programing. There is much more to tell and you can reach out to our national organization or your local National Sojourners Chapter by going to our web site at www.NationalSojourners.org, or by contacting our national Secretary/Treasurer Right Worshipful Brother Mark Underwood at 703-725-5000. I thank you for your time and attention. Can I make one more comment?

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Sure.

M.W. Ed Cohen: Anyone interested in being an officer in the Grand Master's Chapter, if you contact me, I will be welcome to talk to you about it. Thank you very much.

M.W. Robert W. Roth: That concludes our National Sojourners program. Thank you

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you Most Worshipful Sirs for joining us today and sharing those wonderful programs.

Moving along, brethren, we will have a break coming up here shortly. Next will be a video update of the Path Forward Program that was introduced at our Louisville session by the Southern and Northern Jurisdictions of Scottish Rite of Imperial Shrine.

PATH FORWARD UPDATE

M.W. David A. Glattly: Thank you Most Worshipful Sirs. Before we throw that video on there, I just want to say good afternoon to the Most Worshipful, Right Worshipful Sirs, Brethren and guests on here on Zoom today. Those of you that we said good morning to earlier, I am sure you're surprised how close you are to the afternoon now since we started. We do have a couple of our staff with us today that can answer questions either on Zoom or immediately after, and that is Michael Russell our Executive Director and Linda Patch, our Director of Communications. So, on behalf of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction and our partners in the BeAFreemason.org site, Shriners International and Southern jurisdiction Scottish Rite, I present our video that we put together for today's information.

(Video played)

(The following is transcribed from the video address.)

M.W. Michael Russell: Hi. Michael Russell here, Chairman and Director of our Path Forward team. We launched just a few years ago, reclaiming the soul of Freemasonry by John William McNaughton. This was based in a survey done across all jurisdictions of men ages 18 to 65. This survey launched a thousand questions for Freemasonry. Those questions got their answers in a program that we love and affectionately call The Path Forward Program. That launched Not Just a Man a Mason.

As we know, many of our leaders transition from year to year and sometimes communication doesn't trickle down. So I want to show you here real quick is our first video, Even Better. Take a look.

(The following is a short video clip that was presented.)

How does a good man become even better? By working out? Or by working his way up the corporate ladder? By changing his diet? Or by changing his style? By traveling the world? Or by staying permanently still.

For 300 years we've helped good men become the best versions of themselves through a dedicated fraternity, and by taking an oath to live a life of integrity, service and brotherly love. Men who are as committed to each other and their families as they are to our noble cause. In the end, we don't just make men better, we make them Masons. Not just a Man a Mason.

(End of video clip)

M.W. Michael Russell: Now, that video can be shown and customized at NotJustaMan.org. We have a few folks here to continue to talk about an incredible partnership in BeAFreemason.org that we launched just over 12 months ago. Our Sovereign Grand Commander, David A. Glattly, 33rd Degree.

M.W. David A. Glattly: Thank you, Michael. It's a pleasure to be with you here at the Conference of Grand Masters of North America, even virtually. You know, for the past few years our Northern Masonic Jurisdiction team has been with you to do a presentation on our Not just a Man a Mason Campaign. That campaign has done great throughout North America in Freemasonry. Several of your Grand Lodges have done fantastic with that. We have heard great reports from Oregon, to Texas, to Ohio, to New Jersey, it has been fantastic.

As you know, last year we launched a new site, called, BeAFreemason.org. Now, that site will take men that are interested in Freemasonry and give them a place to go to find out more about Freemasonry. It describes just the way you and I want it described. The nice thing about the BeAFreemason.org site is we have partners that helped develop it. Shriners International and the Southern Jurisdiction of Scottish Rite.

We have reached some great results on that. We launched it March 1st, 2020, and since then we have had over 7,000 men that have asked for more information about Freemasonry. That's in all of the Grand Lodges of North America have received men interested in Freemasonry.

Now the project begins helping those men join, even during a pandemic of keeping in touch with those men to keep their interest there until we can bring them into our great fraternity.

Now, having that partnership has been fantastic, and let me announce something new. We are about to go bilingual, which has been requested of us. So you can expect to see that site in Spanish and French in the near future and that will help many of the Grand Lodges in North America.

So, let me now introduce you to one of our partners, the Imperial Sir, Jim Smith, the Imperial Potentate of Shriners International.

M.W. Jim Smith: Thank you Sovereign Commander Glattly. We are proud to be a part of the partnership to grow our Blue Lodges. This partnership demonstrates Masonic unity at its finest. Shrine Masons and Scottish Rite Masons aren't competitors, they are full partners in the collaborative effort to create more Masons. This partnership is simply one of the examples of the close relationship that exists between us.

BeAFreemason.org is probably one of the most important tools that attracts and informs candidates for Masonic membership that has been developed in generations. We announced this initiative just before the pandemic hit. Regardless of the effects of the pandemic, the results have been impressive. BeAFreemason.org serves as a vital recruitment tool that connects and communicates the value of Freemasonry to the next generation of prospects that otherwise would be difficult to reach via traditional marketing efforts.

The Grand Lodge of Texas had benefited from this initiative, not only from the perspective of increasing awareness of Freemasonry across the state, but more importantly, has received the second highest quantity of leads sent to Blue Lodges in those Southern Jurisdictions. When converting these leads to members, men of good character can ultimately contribute to the success of the Blue Lodges and have the opportunity to further their growth in the Masonic brotherhood while contributing to the fun, fellowship and philanthropy that Shriners focus on.

We encourage Grand Lodges to explore, plan and fully utilize this tool for the benefit of your local lodges. Make sure that candidates who are knocking on our door obtain a prompt response. Supreme Commander Cole, please provide us with the benefit of your thoughts.

M.W. James D. Cole: Thank you Imperial Sir, Jim Smith. It's a pleasure to be able to talk to our wonderful friends, our good brethren, the Grand Masters, and also I would reach out to our Grand Secretaries. We have done a lot of work with you with this Be A Freemason. It's important these days, we have all gone through some different changes in our lives and in the way we operate our lodges and this has been challenging times certainly, but also times of opportunity. I will tell you that Be a Freemason is now more important than ever.

The reason I'm holding this cell phone is the same reason I told you last year. Technology. This is how people have connected during this era that we have been through for the last year. It's this technology and, you know, folks are reaching out to us, over 7,000 people have come through the Be a Freemason portal and they have come there wanting to find out more about who we are and about what we do. Therefore, we have been working with our Grand Lodges. What our Grand Lodges can do in the coming year is to follow up on these leads that are coming through. Now, they won't all work, but several Grand Lodges have had literally hundreds of solid leads. I encourage you to follow up on these leads, to reach out to those who are reaching out for information.

It is very important to us. In this time when sometimes this is the only link we have, I want to encourage you to remember what we are about. That's why I come to this little replica altar located in my office, because what we want to do is to bring more through your doors and to here. This is what we look back to. This is what we look forward to. This is what we want to bring good men to, is to this experience in your Grand Lodge. It's very important that we continue to work with you. Reach out to us and help us to answer any questions that you might have. God bless you as we bring more people here.

M.W. David A. Glattly: Thank you Sovereign Grand Commander Cole for the incredible words of wisdom and for what you do for Freemasonry and our BeAFreemason.org Campaign. Now, I would like to introduce Linda Patch to talk about our bilingual integration and more details about our Not Just a Man a Mason Campaign.

Ms. Linda Patch: Greetings, Grand Masters. I am delighted to be here with you today sharing resources that have been developed to help us continue to work to raise the profile of Freemasonry and attract good and worthy men into the Craft.

First, the BeAFreemason.org site has been fully translated into Spanish and French. Not only is this a service to our neighbors to the north and the south, but it can be deployed as needed across this great land of ours as well. You, through this site, will see the globe icon in the main navigation, which is the standard language switcher indicator. Click on it and available languages are displayed and users can make their selection. Also, the preferred language can be accessed in the footer links as well. For ease and convenience the switches will be part of all pages on the site.

Secondly, I am very pleased to report on the performance statistics of BeAFreemason.org and they are

outstanding. From March 1st, 2020 through February 8th, 2021, exactly 7,700 leads were sent to Grand Lodges across the United States. That is a rousing success.

We did a follow up survey with those leads to learn more about their experience and if they were contacted directly about joining. Those results were mixed. Of those 7,700 leads, 68 percent reported they had not been contacted by a Grand Lodge or local lodge representative. But, there is good news. Of those who were not contacted, a full 98 percent of them said they were still interested in joining. To remedy the time lag from submittal to personal contact, I recommend to find a simple but effective automated e-mail campaign that better helps keep the leads engaged. This can be done simply and economically. Contact me if you would like more information on how to do that, or download our e-mail marketing e-book. Guaranteed, you will see excellent returns on this modest investment.

The complete survey results can be found at the link that you see on the screen. Lastly, the MNJ remains committed to supporting the Not Just a Man Campaign. As the data told us in 2017, and the success of Be a Freemason proves today, Freemasonry is far from a dying organization. Men want to join, men are willing to join, we just have to help them find their way.

To that end, we refreshed the Not Just a Man Campaign with five new pieces of creatives that can be used in ads, for Social Media sharing, refreshing your web site, mailing pieces, et cetera.

Here are the new additions to the campaign. Men don't need the same last name to be Brothers. Who says you can't choose your family? Look inside yourself, you'll see the world a whole new way. It's amazing how much you get back when you give. We hope you like the new creatives. As always, you can request customizations or simply download the campaign at our web site.

Thank you for allowing me to share this news with you today. We continue to move forward, even in these most extraordinary times. I hope to share even more good news with you when we meet in person again next year.

M.W. Michael Russell: Thank you, Linda. What an incredible presentation of all of our incredible leaders throughout the United States of America and the world. We were so excited to bring you this presentation today, and thank you to our Grand Masters of North America. Now, in the spirit of bilingual integration, I would like to end with, Au revoir. Adios.

M.W. David A. Glattly: Well, Grand Masters and Grand Lodge elected lines, thank you. We are here to assist you. That was a lot of information thrown at you, a lot of different sites supplying information. All you need to do is contact us at our headquarters and we will get you the information that you need. The BeAFreemason.org web site is revolutionizing Masonry, I think. I appreciate all of your follow up to help those men that are interested in finding out more about Freemasonry.

Most Worshipful Brother Chairman, we can take a few questions, or we more than welcome to take them off line after the Conference is over.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Illustrious Sir, thank you very much. We do have to some time set aside for questions. Actually, I would like to lead with one. Is that video presentation available on the web site?

M.W. David A. Glattly: Yes, it is.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful. I would like to show that, hopefully.

M.W. David A. Glattly: There's two videos for the Not Just a Man a Mason like that short video, and we can put your Grand Lodge and contact information, whatever, right at the end of it. So, you're more than welcome to use that. That's available at NotJustAMan.org if you go on the site, you can order all of the materials you want. We'll customize them for you and send it back to you electronically. Guess what, no charge because Masons like free.

Unidentified Grand Master: In addition to that, Most Worshipful, both Shriners, Scottish Rite Northern and Southern at 5:00 p.m. today will be putting out social media.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful.

Unidentified Grand Master: A video presentation.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful. Thank you. Brethren all, are there any additional questions regarding the BeAFreemason.org or any of the wonderful services they provide?

M.W. Steve Zimmerman: Steve Zimmerman, Idaho. I was wondering if we could see that link to the stats again for a second. I couldn't write fast enough to get it, or if that will be shared.

M.W. David A. Glattly: Just a second.

M.W. Stephen Petri: Stephen Petri, Grand Lodge Connecticut. Brother Glattly, I understand you had to slow down your market ad buys for most of the site during the COVID situation. I was wondering, are you going to turn the faucet back on again.

M.W. David A. Glattly: Yes, Grand Master. I will let Linda comment on that. I think we just started to turn the faucet back on. We did slow it down because the Grand Lodges were getting inundated and nothing, the follow up was just difficult. Linda, could you make a comment on that?

Ms. Linda Patch: Yes. Good afternoon everyone. As soon as we have the best sense that Grand Lodges and local lodges are up and running, which is happening more and more every day. We are doing it incrementally. We are turning the faucet back on a bit right now to warm up the audience again and to get things going. As we come back on line, so to speak, and be able to meet in person across the country, we will be going again full bore. It is hard to gauge when exactly the full steam ahead will happen, but as soon as we can, we will. If I may add one more thing that we weren't sure that we would really have ready for the presentation today, but I am happy to say that in addition to the websites being translated into French and Spanish, all of the previous print ads for the Not Just a Man Campaign have been translated, and those new ones that you saw today have also been done and they are also available in French and Spanish as well.

M.W. Stephen Petri: Mr. Chairman, if I may ask one more question, this is Stephen Petri from Connecticut again.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Steve?

M.W. Stephen Petri: We have been working with Grandview, who is our membership management program, using technology called Web Hooks to enable applications going through our system to be able to go directly into Grandview so we can use Grandview to track everything. We have asked a few times to have the Not Just a Man, BeAFreemason.org web site do the same thing. Is there any way we can make that happen, to automate the process so we don't have to manually rekey everything in?

M.W. David A. Glattly: We have been looking at that. Michael, do you want to give us an update?

M.W. Michael Russell: Yes, sir, Commander. We have had this request, Most Worshipful Petri, from three different web developers and in three different jurisdictions and we're more than happy to try and work with anybody to integrate into it. In an ideal world, we are going to try to do that all at the

same time instead of trying to focus on one than the other. We also have as our team, led by Jeff Kitzmiller would say, our funnel is full and keeps getting more full. So the web development machine has to be piled on top for anyone who knows web development well. So I can tell you absolutely we will work with any jurisdiction on making that happen with their database as long as we have a two-way communication, and especially yours Most Worshipful Petri.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Were we able to come up with those statistics?

M.W. Steve Zimmerman: I got what I need. I appreciate it. Thank you very much.

Unidentified Grand Master: I could make a further comment, too, about what was just discussed. I know from talking with the Grandview developer that project is in progress on their side, uncompleted however.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful. Speaking for Utah, we get very frequent inquiries coming through the BeAFreemason.org web site. I was just chatting off line here with the chairman of our membership committee and he says that to his recollection we are at a hundred percent response. So I am pretty excited that we are doing our part here in Utah. It is a wonderful service these three bodies have provided everybody here in all of our jurisdictions. Any final questions for Illustrious Brother Glattly or any of the others from the Scottish Rite?

(No audible response)

M.W. David A. Glattly: Thank you Most Worshipful Brother Chairman. It's a pleasure to be here today. We're only here to serve and to help Freemasonry grow.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you, sir. It's greatly appreciated.

Moving on. I believe I saw Most Worshipful Brother Christoph Bisbach, the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Germany.

M.W. Christoph Bisbach: Yes, I am here. Good evening, sir.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Would you like to give us an update on the World Conference?

WORLD CONFERENCE OF GRAND LODGES

M.W. Christoph Bisbach: Yes. Yes. So good evening from my house in Europe, from my home office in Cologne, Germany. It is good evening. It's already nine o'clock in the evening. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity for several minutes to show you all of the news about the World Conference of Regular Grand Lodges which will take place in 2021 in November in Berlin. Let me just start with a short three minute video.

(Video played)

(The following is a transcription of the video.)

So I say welcome to Germany. Welcome to Berlin. We will hold the 17th World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges in November 2021 in Berlin. Germany has a special situation as we are very proud of having an organization where five Grand Lodges, including the American Canadian Grand Lodge, which is a member of your Conference, are under one umbrella, under the umbrella of the United Grand Lodges of Germany.

The discussions, meetings and breakout sessions of the World Conference will take place in these wonderful three classical Grand Lodge buildings in greater Berlin. The main focus, the main content that we will talk about, that we will work on, is about future development of the digital transformation, its influence on International Freemasonry. It will be the digital revolution and talk about influence on social behavior, the question of Freemasonry and the Internet, what is that? What is the inference? The opportunity of Freemasonry's obligation toward the societies it is embedded in. The need of reflecting changes in the world to our way of communication.

The second main item will be everything about the pandemia experience. So what did we learn in times of pandemia or even current time? Can Freemasonry be an alternative to understand the world and ask the question people are mostly asking now after these 12 months. The opportunity of Freemasonry's obligation in times of great questions of meaning. Are we going back to a normal life as we know it from before, or do we have to accept a new normal life. So how did the lodges in the world handle the pandemia phase.

The World Conference will start on Wednesday the 17th

of November until Saturday evening or Sunday the 21st. We will have the general opening, we'll have keynote speeches, we will have breakout sessions where we will work together, we will have podium discussions where e-radio, youtube and some social media cameras are invited. We will have a gala dinner, we will have free time to visit Berlin and we will have ritual work. Berlin is old city but Berlin is also a very prospering and very modern city. The places and the hotels that we have got reservations are five of them. Hopefully you all should have got or will get in the next two, three weeks, an e-mail to your office, your Grand Secretary or to yourselves with the ability and ask for registration for the World Conference and everything will be in there.

(Video ends)

M.W. Christoph Bisbach: So, I just wanted to take a few minutes to present that. I will be happy, very happy to see you and to greet you in Berlin in November. At the moment the status is that we have already registrations from about 30 Grand Lodges in the world, including at least four from the United States. So that's it. Thank you very much for your patience.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you, Most Worshipful Sir.

M.W. Christoph Bisbach: Any questions I can answer it, or just send me an e-mail.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Brethren, any questions you would like to ask about the World Conference?

M.W. Steve Petri: Will you need to be a sitting Grand Master to be able to attend? I guess the question is, who is invited?

M.W. Christoph Bisbach: It is invited every Regular Grand Lodge with a minimum of 50 recognitions, which is very easy for you. The delegation is for two people, for two persons, which should be always the Grand Master or his representative and the Grand Secretary or Grand Chancellor or his representative. So, I means the Deputy Grand Master, or Deputy Secretary, or the Secretary. We have the opportunity for three additional persons as, so called guests, to join the Conference. This will not give them the opportunity to join the main voting, the main breakout sessions, but that's the only difference. Okay. So, again, two for every delegation.

M.W. Steve Petri: Thank you.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you again, Most Worshipful Sir.

M.W. Christoph Bisbach: That's it for me.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: You have a great evening.

So, Brothers, we're pushing about 2 1/2 hours into the Conference. So let's take a 10 minute break. We will be back here at 1:30 p.m. Mountain Time and 3:30 p.m. Eastern time. We'll wrap up the rest of our business then.

(CONFERENCE BREAK)

(CONFERENCE MET PURSUANT TO BREAK)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: There are annual meetings that are typically held as part of our Conference. The first one I have on our agenda will be the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association Annual meeting. I would like to turn the time over to Most Worshipful Brother Jeff Webb, Past Grand Master of Louisiana and President of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial.

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
 GEORGE WASHINGTON MASONIC NATIONAL MEMORIAL**

M.W. Jeff Webb: Thank you, sir. Good afternoon brethren. I would like to welcome and thank all who are participating in this Conference of Grand Masters of North America. More specially, the current Grand Masters who are the active voting members of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association. I would be remiss if I didn't personally welcome my own Grand Master, Most Worshipful James Steen, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the state of Louisiana. Thank you, Brother Jimmy, for participating.

The Grand Lodges of North America came together over a hundred years ago and formed the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association to build a suitable memorial to honor the memory of our esteemed Brother, General George Washington, the man, the Mason, the father of our country.

Their pledge to build and support the Memorial came to fruition and I am of the opinion that continuing this pledge of support is necessary for our future existence. We cannot thank the Grand Lodges enough for their financial support. The

Freemasons of the United States, District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are the owners of the Memorial. The seated Grand Master of each jurisdiction is a voting member of the Memorial Association. I, therefore, beg your attention as we convene our annual business meeting and ask you to vote on new board members, officers and bylaw amendments.

I am Jeff Webb, Past Grand Master of Louisiana and President of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association. I declare a quorum present and call the 111th annual meeting of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association to order.

I would entertain a motion to dispense with the reading of, and approve of the Minutes of the 110th Annual Meeting as printed and distributed to the active members.

(So moved)
(Second)

M.W. Jeff Webb: It has been moved and seconded. All in favor signify by saying Aye? Opposed same sign? Motion carried.

I hope and pray that all had a safe and happy holiday season. If we look back at the past year, we can feel both sorrow and joy. Sorrow in the fact that this nation faced one of the worst pandemics of our lifetime. Sorrow for those who died from COVID 19 virus and other causes, including two of our distinguished Board members, Most Worshipful Brother Stephen Ponzillo, Past Grand Master and Most Worshipful Brother John R. Bo Cline, Past Grand Master.

Joy in knowing that the Supreme Architect of the universe has once again preserved and blessed this great country of ours, fractured as it may be. Joy in knowing that we have yet another chance to preserve our constitutional rights and freedoms given to us by our founding fathers. Joy in knowing that Freemasonry, although down in numbers, is as strong and reverent as ever.

2020 is the year nobody planned for. As the Board prepared the Memorial's 2020 budget in 2019 no one ever thought that the Memorial would be closed down for months and then open on a very limited basis. The Memorial suffered financially due to loss of operating revenue, however, our well seasoned Executive Director, Brother George Seghers successfully directed the Memorial through troubled ward. We were blessed to have retained all of our full time employees and they did a marvelous job under great duress. It's an accomplishment that could not had been achieved without the financial support of our Grand

Lodges and brethren. Our gratitude goes out to all who contributed to this worthy endeavor.

As we are still faced with financial constraints, we ask and pray for your continued support ever remembering that the Memorial is yours.

As I depart the Board, I can sum up my feelings by saying that my 12 year tenure on the Board of Directors was a blessing. I had the opportunity to work and travel with some of the top Masonic Leaders in the country. The exchange of ideas at our meetings I learned from each of these Board Members and thank them for their willingness to share their knowledge and wisdom. Each contributed freely of his time, talent, and energy to support the Memorial and bring it forward. None of these Board Members or Officers ever sought recognition. They only desire to fulfill the mission of the Memorial, to inspire humanity through education to emulate and promote the virtues, character, and vision of George Washington, the man, the Mason, the father of our country. And they did that.

I leave the Board with full confidence that the Memorial is in good hands, not only our first hundred years since the Memorial cornerstone was set, but to carry it forward into the the beginning of its second century.

Mark your calendar now, February 2023 will be the Memorial's Centennial Cornerstone Celebration. As I have often stated, every Mason should make a pilgrimage to the Memorial and this will certainly be a prime opportunity. From the bottom of my heart, thanks to all Masons wherever disbursed, for allowing me the honor and privilege to serve on the Board of Directors and as President of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association.

I will now proceed with our Executive Director's Report.

M.W. George D. Seghers: Thank you, Brother Webb. My report is in the binder that we sent to you. Please read it at your leisure and contact me if you have any questions. Thank you so much for your support.

M.W. Jeff Webb: We will entertain a motion to suspense/approve the report of Executive Director as printed and distributed to the active members.

(So moved)
(Second)

M.W. Jeff Webb: All in favor signify by saying Aye? Aye.
Opposed same sign?

(No audible response)

M.W. Jeff Webb: The Nominating Committee, consisting of Richard M. Nato, Grand Master of Maine; Most Worshipful Arthur W. Weiss, Grand Master of California; and Right Worshipful Thomas Cameron, IV, Grand Master of Pennsylvania. They present the following Brethren for your consideration for members of Board of Directors of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association to serve a term of three years.

All of the Brothers have been contacted and are willing to serve if elected. They are as follows: Alan W. Atkins, Past Grand Master of Virginia; Lewis J. Castle, II, Past Grand Master of Nevada; Robert L. Darling, Past Grand Master of Minnesota; Paul F. Gleason, Past Grand Master of Massachusetts; Robert G. Davis, Grand Master of Oklahoma; Thomas K. Sturgeon, Past Grand Master of Pennsylvania; Scott A. Thomas, Past Grand Master of Arizona.

We would like a poll on these nominees.

(Poll taken)

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: 100 percent.

M.W. Jeff Webb: Thank you, Brethren, that vote came in at 100 percent. Brethren, we will not hold the election of the officers of the Board of Directors. The Nominating Committee presents the following brethren for your consideration as officers to the Board of Directors for the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association to serve a term of two years until February 22nd, 2023. All of the brothers have been contacted and are willing to serve if elected.

President, Claire V. Tusch, Past Grand Master of Maine; First Vice-President, Kenneth G. Nagel, Past Grand Master of California; Second Vice-President, Thomas K. Sturgeon, Past Grand Master of Pennsylvania; Third Vice-President, Scott A. Thomas, Past Grand Master of Arizona; and Secretary, George TRANL master of articles son a, am secretary George D. Seghers. I will ask for a poll on these nominations.

(Poll taken)

M.W. Jeff Webb: I know declare members of the Board of Directors and Officers of the Board of Directors of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association duly elected.

Brother Tusch, congratulations on being elected President of George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association. It is my honor and pleasure to ask you to assume your position and continue the Annual Meeting of the Memorial Association.

First, I would like to present you your President's metal and to personally thank you for so many years of service that you have given to the Memorial, and what a pleasure it has been to travel with you, and to work with you, and participate in so many things.

M.W. Claire V. Tusch: Brother Webb, thank you so very, very much.

M.W. Jeff Webb: All right. The meeting will be turned over to our new President. Thank you all so very much.

M.W. Claire V. Tusch: Well, Jeff, thank you so much. You have done an amazing job. I think you have done a superlative job as President of this Association. As we spoke of the man in the mirror earlier, you indeed are the man in the mirror. You are a man of incredible ethics and super, super man. Mainly what I am saying is called a, "Salt of the earth man." You indeed are a salt of the earth man. You can leave being proud and satisfied knowing that you did a tremendous job and one that some of us are going to have to work hard to live up to. Congratulations.

I would like to also thank Grand Master Nadeau, my Grand Master, and members of the Nominating Committee and all of the Right Worshipful and most Worshipful Grand Masters for electing me to this position. It is truly, truly an honor.

I am the second Maine Mason to hold this office. The first was Most Worshipful Charles Glassmeyer, it was 60 years ago. I serendipitously wear his Past Grand Master's jewel. I don't know if Charlie is up there or not right now, but thank you Charlie.

Thank you for electing a tremendous team. The men on this Board, Past Grand Masters, Grand Masters on this Board have

been incredible, incredible men and, again, we thank you, compliment you, the current Directors and also all of the support that you give. All of the Grand Masters I am speaking to now, the support that you give, to the remarkable staff here at the Memorial.

I would like to outline just very quickly the future that we are looking at over the next couple of years as we emerge from the challenges of COVID-19 and we will emerge from these challenges, I think, probably better than we were before.

It's an exciting time at the Memorial. We have, in 2023, the Centennial Celebration of the Cornerstone laying Chaired by First Vice-President Ken Nagel, who is doing a tremendous job. Brethren, please watch for information about this going forward. Also, we will have the Grand Master's Conference here in 2023. There is a lot of restoration work that has been done and a lot more that needs to be done here at the Memorial. That will continue. We will have that done in a couple of years.

The outreach and educational component and mission of the Memorial moves forward aggressively. Watch for some new initiatives here over the next couple of years.

Also, a major thing that we are working on right now is the financial security of the Memorial going forward, led by the Director of Development, Brother Timothy, Right Worshipful Brother Timothy Strawn, who already is doing an incredible job. Again, watch for information from Tim.

Perhaps in the next couple of years we will need to hire an Executive Director because ours is well seasoned and may be ready to take a break.

So you know it's astonishing to think that over a hundred years ago men like Callahan, Waters, Shryock and many, many others, men of great vision had conceived of and constructed a Memorial to honor His Excellency, Brother George Washington, to instilled his virtues and radiate the light of Freemasonry to the world in the 21st Century.

This vision is manifested today by Masons from every state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and indeed around the world.

Today you have elected a President from the eastern most state in the country, a Vice-President from the Pacific Coast, and Board Members from all across this great nation. It is up to each one of us, each and every one of us to keep our

heritage and this great Memorial supported and growing in it's mission and service.

It's up to us as individuals and as Freemasons to support, sustain, and perpetuate our Memorial and its mission. This mission to inspire humanity through education that emulated and promote the virtues, character and vision of George Washington, the man, the Mason, and the father of our country.

It's also up to us to inspire those who would follow us. So, once again, I thank all of you from the bottom of my heart for this incredible opportunity and honor, and the trust that you propose to me.

Now my Right Worshipful, Most Worshipful and Worshipful Brothers, we have business to do. Work to do.

I would direct you to the proposed changes to the bylaws of the Masonic Memorial Association. Our Board looked at the bylaws, as we do review them regularly, and felt that some changes needed to be made. Many of them are housekeeping changes and a couple speak to highlighting of fiduciary responsibility going forward.

Brethren, you have a copy of the proposed changes to the Memorial Bylaws, Association Bylaws and per our bylaws these changes will require a unanimous vote to be adopted.

The proposed changes have been proposed by the five active members of the Association, Most Worshipful Brother James E. Steen; Grand Master of Louisiana; Most Worshipful Brother Richard M. Nadeau, Grand Master of Maine; Most Worshipful Brother Arthur M. Weiss, Grand Master of California; Right Worshipful Brother Thomas Gamon, IV, Grand Master of Pennsylvania; and Most Worshipful Brother Boyd Robertson, Grand Master of Arizona.

Now, you all received these. I don't know if you had a chance to review them yet. I wonder if we might have a poll to see if Grand Masters need to review these, or if we can just go right ahead with a vote or questions.

M.W. Richard Dickerscheid: Richard Dickerscheid, Grand Master of Ohio. Can you rephrase the question in a yes or no fashion, please?

M.W. Claire V. Tusch: Since the bylaw changes have been previously sent to each of you, if you have had ample time to review them, I would ask you to vote, yes, you have had ample time to review them and we can go directly to a vote or answer

questions?

(Poll taken)

M.W. Claire V. Tusch: It would appear that several of you have not had time, so we'll offer a few minutes to review those changes. I would ask that since the poll is still up, when you have reviewed them, perhaps you could change your no vote to a yes. Would that work, Brother Mike?

M.W. Stephen Oakley: I never received anything on what you're talking about. I'm the Grand Master of Illinois.

M.W. Claire V. Tusch: I wonder if it's the cold weather that slowed it?

M.W. George D. Seghers: It went to the Grand Lodge Offices.

M.W. Claire V. Tusch: Yes. They were sent out to the Grand Lodge Offices.

M.W. James Steen: This is the Grand Master of Louisiana, I received it, signed it, and sent it back.

M.W. Claire V. Tusch: Brethren, I am sorry about anyone who hasn't received it. Perhaps we could call for a vote if there are no questions. Could we have a poll all in favor of adopting The proposed changes to the Memorial Bylaws?

(Poll taken)

M.W. Claire V. Tusch: We will need to lay over this vote. This needs to be unanimous, so three no's. So, brethren, we will work hard to get these bylaws out to you ahead of time for the next Conference. All right. Well, thank you.

Thank you all. I, too, would like to acknowledge the passing of our Board members Brother Steve Ponzillo from Maryland and Brother John Bo Cline from Alaska. Two true giants in the Masonic world, and speak for all of us when I say we miss them. We miss them very, very much.

I would also like to thank and recognize the retiring members of the Board of Directors for their support and their efforts on behalf of the Memorial. Our Board members serve for three years and then rotate off the Board of Directors. This is done to allow all of our 52 active member Grand Lodges the opportunity to serve on the Board. These Brethren have done an outstanding job for the last three years and we thank them for their dedication, hard work, and the input and for all that they have done for the Memorial. I am truly appreciative of their service on the Board. They have done a tremendous job. This includes, Mike Rodman, Michael Rodman of South Dakota; John Ryan of New Jersey; Tom Sturgeon of Pennsylvania; Scott Thomas of Arizona; and Jeff Webb of Louisiana. Grand Master Sturgeon and Grand Master Thomas will both be returning to the Board. They were just elected as Executive Committee Members. They will serve two year terms in each office.

Now, at this juncture, we would normally invite you to the floor for any Grand Lodges to present contributions they have for us. Brother Seghers, however, since this is a Zoom Conference, didn't expect you to drive to the Memorial, so he will be quite happy to accept, and very much appreciate contributions by mail.

And lastly, we will be live streaming on Monday at high noon. A salute to Brother George Washington. The link can be found on the George Washington Masonic National Memorial web site. So please join us. That should be a memorable event.

Now, Grand Masters, may God bless you all and God Bless the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. I now declare this 111th Annual Meeting of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association adjourned. Thank you all.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you Most Worshipful Sir, and congratulations to all of the newly elected Officers to the Board.

M.W. Claire V. Tusch: I'm sure they appreciate that.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Is Most Worshipful Brother Tom Velvin, Past Grand Master Velvin and Executive Director of the National Masonic Foundation for Children present?

M.W. Tom Velvin: Yes, I am.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Sir, I would like to turn the time over to you for your annual meeting.

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
NATIONAL MASONIC FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN**

M.W. Tom Velvin: Okay. Thank you very much. First of all, I would like to congratulate you on being made President of the Conference for 2021, and to welcome all of the Grand Masters from all over the United States, Canada and Mexico and hopefully you are enjoying the teleconference today courtesy of our Executive Secretary, Brother Mike.

Anyway, I would take a couple of minutes here just to let you know what the National Masonic Foundation for Children is all about and then I will turn it over to our Foundation President, Brother Ted Paria -- I will say it right in a moment -- who is Past Grand Master of Michigan.

The national Masonic Foundation for Children was established by this Conference in 1986 for the purpose of training teachers the art of dealing with kids who are in danger of being absorbed into the alcohol and drug abuse areas of life.

Unfortunately the world has turned and caused a lot more need for this kind of training than we ever imagined, and it has been very, very popular. Newburgh Stecher International, who is our contractor, developed the training and did it in Pennsylvania for a couple of years prior to the fact that the foundation was established. It has been very, very successful over the years.

It originally started out as a three day training effort to teach teachers how to deal with this situation. We now have a two day training for teachers and administrators that has been quite popular, and now a one day initiative that we have undertaken over the last two or three years that has also become very popular.

Let me turn it over to Most Worshipful Brother Ted Paria for his comments and then we'll go on with our meeting from there.

M.W. Ted Paria: Thank you very much Most Worshipful Tom. I would just like to say it is a pleasure to be here. I am going to go on to one of the parts of our business that we have three Directors that we need to vote on and bring them onto the Board. I'm moving that up in the schedule because the nomination is going to come from my Most Worshipful Grand Master Craig Mason and I know he's under a bit of a time crunch. So I would like to ask if Most Worshipful Craig Mason would come forth and do the nominations to elect the three Directors to be on our Board

for the next three years. Most Worshipful Craig, are you there?

(No audible response)

M.W. Ted Paria: Many of you don't know this, but Most Worshipful Craig has a very personal family issue that is going on right now and we weren't sure whether he would be able to be here to do this. So we have a backup plan, and go ahead Tom.

Unidentified Grand Master: Thank you, Mr. President, Past Grand Master Velvin. I would like to place in nomination for Directors, Worshipful Brother Ted Paria from Michigan; Worshipful Brother Ronald Winnet from Ohio; and Worshipful Brother Ronald Aungst from Pennsylvania.

M.W. Ted Paria: Thank you very much, Most Worshipful. Could we have a -- are there any other nominations? If there are no other nominations, Most Worshipful Mike DeWolf, would you put up a poll to elect those three Directors.

(Poll taken)

Unidentified Grand Master: Brethren so elected.

M.W. Ted Paria: Thank you very much. We have all been together and we thank you very much for allowing us to serve another three years on this fantastic foundation. Before I turn it over to Tom to get into some of the nitty gritty of what we are and what has happened in the past year, I just would like to actually provide my personal observations of where we have been, if you will indulge me.

Looking back to New Years Eve in 2019, when I and my Lady Karen were enjoying an early dinner at our favorite restaurant and then going to home usher in 2020. Hopeful anticipation for the future plans we had for the next year. We all know that old adage, "The best laid plans of mice and men." Well, the year 2020 definitely had different plans.

As most of you know, most of the country was in lockdown in some form or another due to the pandemic. Restaurants, movie theaters, gyms, churches, hair salons, manufacturing and schools were all shut down.

We now had parents that could work from home, doing so along with their children in virtual classrooms. This

contributed to added stress to our children and their parents, but also to our teachers and administrators. Our teachers had to shift gears, almost overnight from in-person teaching to virtual teaching, with almost no training on how to convert their lesson plans to virtual. I actually know this firsthand because my lady's one daughter is a school teacher and I know what they struggle through.

This also caused your foundation to cancel all in-person trainings for 2020, even though now, during this time, our program is needed more than ever to help our teachers recognize and help our kids. I have listened to teachers who are struggling because they cannot see what is going on with their kids because the students are turning off their cameras.

We have all read articles in the paper of that child that is so depressed because he has not had that interaction with his friends or can no longer participate in his chosen sport due to the pandemic, and because of this has committed suicide. More than ever this program needs to succeed. Thankfully through the help of our administrator, and with the help of some other bright people, they thought if the schools are doing virtual training, why can't we.

So basically we had to adapt to survive. Our trainers, who are past educators with years of experience, were skeptical on how they could handle this virtual training, especially doing what they call their breakout sessions. We actually established virtual work rooms where small groups could go to and work on their assignments virtually, the same as in person, but also allowing our trainers to pop into those virtual work rooms to monitor the interaction and offer advice.

You've heard that other old adage, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." Some of our trainers are old dogs. Sorry Larry. Well, guess what? We proved that wrong, and through perseverance we also have developed what we call rejuvenation programs for our teachers titled, "Courage to Teach", and one for our administrators -- (screen froze).

M.W. Tom Velvin: Thank you Most Worshipful Brother Ted. Brother Ted's internet service decided to leave him.

Some of Brother Ted's comments were germane to what happened in 2020. We ended up having to cancel all of our in-person training we had scheduled. We were able to do in-person training in January and February, but from there on things got really muddied, so we ended up having to cancel all of our scheduled dates.

So we ended up doing about 50 total days of training in 2020. Most of it was done virtually, courtesy of Illinois, Ohio and Arizona. Illinois we did, I don't know how many one day training sessions. In Ohio we did a couple of virtual trainings for their Youth Day, which we talked about suicide prevention for DeMolay, Job's Daughter and Rainbow. In Arizona we ended up doing two three-day Student assistant Program Trainings. During that our coordinator in Arizona got the state of Arizona to agree to do these MMSAP trainings.

Larry Newburgh, who is one of the founders of Newburgh Stecher International did the train in Arizona for us. Larry liked it because he could stay at home and he doesn't have to travel, but it makes it a whole lot better if we could do it this person.

Fortunately, though my assistant, Abby Morgan, was able to convert all of our one day, two and three day training sessions to virtual and we have been doing that recently.

For 2021 we have two days scheduled currently that is going on this past week in Ohio. Several one day training for Illinois. Oregon has the two day Student Assistant Training scheduled for April 18th and 19th. We have a possibility to do some training in South Dakota and Maryland in the fall. We expect to do at least 50 days worth of training for 2021. Most of it is probably going to end up being done virtually.

One of the things we're talking about doing is to develop a booster or refresher training for the Student Assistance Program. That would probably be a one day session for our teachers and administrators who have been through the Student Assistance Training in the past and need to have their skills brought up-to-date, and new techniques described and that sort of thing.

One of the things we talked to our coordinators about when we had a meeting one day last week to discuss this, is to allow the coordinators to find a single, or maybe more than one individual in a given jurisdiction and get them signed up for a national training course where they would attend virtually. Once the training is completed, then we would bill the given jurisdiction that they are from according to the cost of the training. I don't have any specific information on cost at this time. We can put that out at a later date.

In 2020, because of the pandemic, we did encounter some financial difficulties. We had to run our accounts down to kind of a bare minimum. We thank three jurisdictions for stepping up and providing us with some additional support

financially that carried us through the end of the year and actually the beginning of this year.

I think that's about the extent of my comments at this time. Ted, I see you're back on line.

M.W. Ted Paria: Was I off line?

M.W. Tom Velvin: The last paragraph of your comments.

M.W. Ted Paria: Oh, wonderful. Okay. I don't understand that. I'm sorry about that. I didn't realize. Something flashed up said, "No internet", but.

I think we pretty much touched on everything. We, in our annual meeting that we had last week, we really, really thrashed over our budget and we went through a lot of soul searching, and things that we need to cut down, and we really did. We have got our budget down to pretty much a break even budget, which is what you're supposed to have.

We have taken -- one of the things we have decided that we need to do because of the financial situation that is going on with the Grand Lodges, and going on with what we, we need another place where we get some funds from, some corporate areas. We need to look at some different areas to go out to see about fundraising. So, we are now working on applying for grants. We are filling -- we are going into the application process to see if we can receive some grants to help us to get through what we need to do and how we can further advance the program. We are looking for some donations from some other organizations that are actually in the way of supporting our schools. We have been looking at maybe some of the Tribal Councils to go and talk to them about, see if they can give us the support. Also, as another avenue as to where we can go in and launch our programs with them.

Also, one of the things we looked at is we have to talk to Newburgh Stecher, but we're basically going to start eliminating half of the cost of the manuals in a way that we can, again, cut some of the cost for us. We are looking also at, since we have gone virtual, we have now opened up this new way, we are going to go to digital manuals, and that way we can reduce a lot of the costs of the printing that we have. So we are going to provide digital copies to our program, to our teachers and then they can go off and have them printed on their own.

One of the ways we're looking forward is trying to keep the program viable and keep it moving forward. I'm sorry

you didn't hear the last part of my paragraph that the fact is this program is so much needed right now for the children, especially as we have seen, you know, kids are, you know, not having this interpersonal relationship skills. I don't know. I've seen some reports on depression, especially in our children, teachers and the parents. I mean this has just been a trying time. This program as I said, as I close, basically this is one of the most valuable programs and it's something that you, as Masons, should be proud that you contribute to. This is something that is needed and it needs to continue. I will tell you, everybody on the Board has a passion for this program. We really want to see it keep on going and what is needed. That is about all I have. Tom, anything else.

M.W. Tom Velvin: We are just about the only source of this kind of training in the world. There are other companies that claim that they do LGBTQ Training and things such as that, but unfortunately they don't do the kind of a job that our people do. As far as the Student Assistance Program training goes, we're the only ones in the world who provide it. Today we have trained a huge cadre of teachers throughout the United States. We currently have provided training in about 19 different jurisdictions and we're looking to expand that if at all possible to other states and jurisdictions if we can. We really do need your support. Thank you.

M.W. Ted Paria: I think I will take a cue from our brothers and friends from the National Memorial. At this time I would ask for donations, and I'm not sure you want to travel up to the snowy north here in Michigan, or you might want to go to Oregon where Tom is, but we will accept mail-in. I am -- you can go to our web site and you can find out what our address is and we also have a link there on our website where you can make donations for any individuals who want to do that to help our organization. You do it by PayPal. That is, I would say, the conclusion of our report. We'll turn it back to you, Grand Master.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you, Most Worshipful Sirs. Most Worshipful Brother Craig Davis, Past Grand Master of Iowa and Chief Operating Officer of the Masonic Service Association. I will turn this time over to you for your annual meeting.

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
MASONIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION**

M.W. Craig Davis: Thank you Most Worshipful Grand Master. Most Worshipful Brothers, Right Worshipful Brothers, Worshipful Brothers, Distinguished Brothers and Brethren all. I bring you

greetings on behalf of the Commissioners of the Masonic Service Association of North America.

The Commissioners are as follows: Most Worshipful Brother Lanny R. Sander, Past Grand Master from Oklahoma, he serves as Chairman of the Commissioners. Most Worshipful Brother Earl J. Washburn, Past Grand Master from Vermont; Most Worshipful Brother Clayton J. Chip Borne, III, Past Grand Master from Louisiana and Most Worshipful Brother James H. Kendall, Past Grand Master from the state of Washington; and Most Worshipful Brother Barry D. Weer, Past Grand Master from Illinois. I submit to you the report of the Masonic Service Association of North America for the past year.

In the report you will find a copy of the Resolution, the set agenda, Administrator's Report, Minutes from the previous meeting and a draft of the independent accountant's review report for 2019/2020. This report was sent to the Grand Secretary in each Jurisdiction and asked to be distributed to the Grand Master of that jurisdiction. I will be brief today, but I do encourage you to review the Masonic Service Association Report.

I would like to start my report by remembering a long-time Commissioner, Raymond J. Vanden Berghe, Sr. Most Worshipful Brother Ray passed to the Grand Lodge above on September 24th, 2020. Brother Ray served the Masons of New Jersey as Grand Master in 1996 and served many years as a Commissioner for the Masonic Service Association of North America.

The Masonic Service Association remains committed to the service of the Craft with our Short Talk Bulletins and MSA notes being distributed monthly. Most Worshipful Brother George O. Braatz, Past Grand Master from Ohio has been a steady hand behind these publications and we thank him for his services this past year.

Brother Michael Smith from the Grand Lodge of Maine has produced the podcast for the Short Talk Bulletins and our viewership went from 50,000 a year ago to over 250,000 this past year. This is due to in large part because of a grant from the Grand Lodge of Minnesota. We thank them for their contribution.

The Hospital Visitation Program continues in many jurisdictions. Some volunteers are able to visit their local veteran's hospitals and serve our Brethren. Brother Richard has had the oversight of this program and continues to work in Maryland. He says his time working with the volunteers as well as seeking items to donate to the veterans.

The MSA, Masonic Service Association continues to be part of the the Veteran's Administration Veteran's Services. We continually work with them and and have representation at the national level in the VAVS.

The Disaster Relief Program has been busy this year with relief requests from Louisiana, Iowa and Mississippi. The appeals for Louisiana and Mississippi are still active while the appeal for Iowa has concluded. It is with a great debt of gratitude I thank each and every one of you that have contributed to these appeals. The devastation has been plentiful this year.

Your Commissioners are committed to the restoration of the Masonic Information Center and make that part of our mission in the future. They have also agreed to put together a long range strategic plan and we are currently talking with different organizations about the possibility of joint ventures.

One thing I would like to bring up, at the last year's conference there was a vote to change the alignment of representatives. So in the near future, the next couple of months, we will be sending out notices to the jurisdictions that will need to nominate a representative from their division. So that will be coming out soon.

The MSA has moved their offices from Maryland to Iowa. The materials from Burtonsville were delivered in Iowa during October and we are in the process of inventory and putting items away so we are able to fulfill order requests now. Our web site is up and running.

Things just continue to progress here in Iowa. As everybody says, 2020 was a difficult year and trying to move a business from one state to another state was quite challenging.

I would like to conclude my remarks with this Resolution presented by the Board. Resolution for action. In order to conduct the required annual meeting of the association within the limited participants the Executive Commissioners have access only to the youtube link. Time and technical constraints, the following Resolution is proposed as a singular action item for this meeting.

Resolution February 20, 2021:

Whereas the Corona Virus pandemic has significantly disrupted our lives, and the conduct and flow of our regular and routine business;

Whereas the Grand jurisdictions have altered meetings scheduled and limited or eliminated in-person attendance reducing interaction with membership;

Whereas these changes have seriously denigrated or eliminated the interchange of communication, dialog, discussions, and decisions between the Masonic Service Association and our member Grand Jurisdictions;

Whereas these circumstances impose constraints upon the effective and efficient conduct of or annual meeting, now therefore, be it resolved that the Masonic Service Association:

1. Accepts, approves and authorize the Consent Agenda for this meeting and that no additional actions or presentations will be conducted as part of the February 2021 annual meeting.

2. Delays in implementation of the bylaw change affecting divisional representation adopted at the 2020 annual meeting, and intended to be implemented in 2021 until the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Masonic Service Association.

3. Continues the Executive Commissioners representing the five division alignment in place prior to the amendment of the constitution and Bylaws of the Masonic Service Association until the 2022 Annual Meeting representing the former divisional alignment.

I, therefore, move for the adoption of this Resolution.

Do I have a second.

M.W. Ethan Seaberg: Ethan Seaberg from Minnesota. I second that.

M.W. Craig Davis: Can I have a poll?

(Poll taken)

M.W. Craig Davis: All right. I thank you for the adoption of that Resolution. This concludes my report for the Masonic Service Association. If you have any questions I would encourage you to contact your local Commissioner. If you do not have their contact information, I can get that for you. Thank

you, Most Worshipful.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you, Most Worshipful Sir. Next up we have a video from the Masonic Renewal Committee featuring Most Worshipful Patton S. Hart, Past Grand Master of Kentucky and Chairman of that committee.

(Video played)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: I'm not hearing any sounds.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: We're having a problem here getting the video back.

M.W. Craig Mason: Right Worshipful Grand Masters, this is Craig Mason up in Michigan. I got blocked out. I wanted to come in on the vote for Past Grand Master Brother Ted. I just got blocked out and so I couldn't speak. I had trouble with the mechanism here with mute and un-mute. Then it went blank and came back on.

Ted and I worked together, Brother Ted, on the program up in Michigan and I am very proud of him. So, I just wanted to say that. I had my brother pass away here last night, so I have just been kind of running a little bit with the family. My apologies, Tom.

M.W. Bill Berman: Worshipful Sirs, Right Worshipful Sirs and by Brethren all. On behalf of Most Worshipful Patton Hart, President of the Masonic Renewal Committee of North America, it is my pleasure and honor to present the 2021 President's Report from the MRC.

My name is Bill Berman. I was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the state of New Jersey in 2009, and currently serve as the Secretary/Treasurer of the Masonic Renewal Committee.

One year ago, as the COVID-19 crisis began to unfold, Illustrious Brother James Cole, Grand Commander, Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction presented the MRC with a challenge: turn the MRC's web site into the predominant resource center for webinars, podcasts, online education, and other communication tools for the good of Freemasonry. Along with this challenge, Grand Commander Cole committed staff support and financial resources from the Scottish Rite to assist us so that together we could work toward our goal of providing support for our Grand Lodges across North America.

Immediately the MRC began assembling exciting and

innovative content and revamping our web site to be a more accessible and useful resource to meet the needs of the Grand Lodges. The MRC engaged with AutoWebTech, a pioneer in Masonic online technology. Using AutoWebTech's considerable expertise AND the MRC's collective Masonic knowledge, we are now putting the finishing touches on an innovative educational and leadership engagement platform offering an easy-to-use experience.

The web site features a robust, searchable repository of Masonic content and resources, and a secure engagement portal that will provide Grand Lodges with password protected access. This impressive new web site is designed to expand to meet the needs of our Grand Lodges for years to come. Please go to www.MasonicRenewal.org to see what has been accomplished.

Several months ago, the MRC created and developed a short survey to see how the pandemic had affected Grand Lodges across North America. Using those results, the MRC converted our Annual ENGAGE Conference to a virtual format. ENGAGE 2020 Online featured dynamic monthly presentations. Beginning in November, these presentations featured a diverse group of Masonic speakers including Tim Wheeland of the Grand Lodge of Ohio; Dr. S. Brent Morris, Scottish Rite, SJ; Brother Jeff Kitsmiller, Jr., IT Director Scottish Rite; NMJ Brother Maynard Edwards, Membership Engagement Manager of the Scottish Rite, SJ; and Past Grand Master Bob Conley of the Grand Lodge of Michigan.

The final session of ENGAGE was a full update of the BeAFreemason.org program, which was hosted by Mrs. Linda Patch, Director of Marketing and Communications for the Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction and Brother Len Cercone, of Cercone Brown, an Experimental Marketing Public Relations and Creative Agency. The program was launched at last year's Conference of Grand Masters. All the ENGAGE 2020 Online sessions are available for viewing at any time at our web site, www.MasonicRenewal.org.

For the last three years, the MRC has been honored to present the Jack Jones Memorial Humanitarian Award. Imperial Sir Jack Jones was a tireless advocate for every aspect of our fraternity, and this award named in his honor, recognizes the significant accomplishments and contributions of Masonic Leaders from all of the families of Freemasonry. The committee thanks all of the Grand Masters who put names into nominations for the award. It was truly a difficult decision. However, this year's recipient is Illustrious Brother John William McNaughton who served a distinguished tenure of 12 years as Sovereign Grand Commander of Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. Grand Commander McNaughton was instrumental in establishing the

Scottish Rite, NMJ Almoner's Fund helping literally thousands of Freemasons throughout the United States. He was also instrumental in the groundbreaking Masonic marketing initiative, The Path Forward. It was an honor and privilege for the MRC to be able to recognize Grand Commander McNaughton.

The MRC is a 501c(3) entity. As such, the committee is not funded by any Grand Lodge. However, it does encourage tax-deductible donations from Grand Lodges and other Masonic bodies to provide financial support for our endeavors. Your contribution, whatever it may be, will be used wisely to help our cause. Please feel free to contact me via our web site to discuss your offer of financial support. We would like to recognize and thank Illustrious David A. Glattly, Grand Commander of the Scottish Rite of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, for his continuing generous support of the Masonic Renewal Committee over this past year.

The Masonic Renewal Committee is comprised of representatives from across North America, including several Grand Lodges, Scottish Rite, York Rite, and the Shrine. Our Committee remains focused and dedicated to the goal of supporting Freemasonry across our continent.

After one of the most difficult years any of us can remember, the Masonic ideals of brotherly love, relief and truth are needed now more than ever. Freemasonry alone can provide the light that is sorely needed, and the MRC stands constantly ready to help your Grand Lodges and local lodges take that light into your communities wherever and whenever it is needed. Submitted on behalf of the Committee, Most Worshipful Patton R. Hart, President.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Brother Mike, will that be everything from the MRC today?

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: That's all I have from the MRC unless there's a representative out there that wants to say something.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: I believe I saw Most Worshipful Brother Hart in the gallery. He remains quiet.

M.W. Patton Hart: That concludes the report from the Masonic Renewal Committee. Thank you so much.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you Most Worshipful Sir. Next up, Most Worshipful Brother Joe Harrison, Past Grand Master of Tennessee and the Secretary Treasurer of the Commission for Information and Recognition.

COMMISSION ON INFORMATION FOR RECOGNITION REPORT

M.W. Joe Harrison: Good afternoon, Right Worshipful, Most Worshipful and Worshipful Brethren. Going to switch to a screen share for a moment. Michael will you switch on screen sharing for me?

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: I will as soon as I can find you on the list here.

M.W. Joe Harris: I hope everyone can see that. Good afternoon. On behalf of the Commission on Information for Recognition for the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons of North America, I will present the Annual Report of the Commission.

The Commission extends our best fraternal greetings to all member Grand Lodges and to Masons everywhere. I bring you greetings from our Commission Chairman, Most Worshipful Joe R. Manning, Jr. and Commission Vice-Chairman Most Worshipful Glen A. Cook.

The Commission has deemed it impossible to conduct our normal business in a virtual environment. Many jurisdictions in North America and around the world have a prohibition against our members engaging in virtual meetings. Certainly the feat would be nearly impossible anyway. So we're carrying a few proposals that we have forward to the '22 Conference, February of next year.

You have seen this before. Brethren, just a reminder, the Commission was started by act of this Conference in 1952. At that time they adopted the three requirements for being considered a Regular Grand Lodge. They are on the screen. I think you've probably heard them many times. But since 1952 the Commission has continued to use these requirements in the process of trying to determine the regularity of a Grand Lodge who seeks our review of its practices and seeks that the Commission determine that they are practicing Regular Masonry.

We believe that once the virus situation has improved, our recent packets will get out. The group handling that has been very heavily affected by the virus due to COPD issues within their group. They have not even cashed our check from last year, but they are going to do it and promise everything will be rolling in the next few weeks.

Since no reports were sent out, no letters requesting contributions were mailed either. We understand that during this period February '20 to '21, February '21 all Grand Lodges

are experiencing irregularities in their normal cash flow and we saw no reason to request the traditional donations until this situation gets a little better. We have no financial activity in the Commission bank account since January of '20. The account remains as we last reported on January 31 of 2020, \$1,275.91.

I would like to introduce the new and recently elected member of our Commission for '21, Most Worshipful Adam Hathaway, Past Grand Master of New Mexico. We welcome Adam to the Commission and know that Adam is going to be a great asset to us over the next seven years.

The organization of the '21 Commission will be as follows: Chairman, Most Worshipful Glen A. Cook, Past Grand Master of Utah; Vice-Chairman, Most Worshipful George Aladro, Past Grand Master of Florida; and I will continue as Secretary/Treasurer for one more year.

Commission on Information for Recognition wishes the very best, happiness and good health to all member Grand Lodges and Masons everywhere. Most Worshipful, Right Worshipful Brethren, this concludes the '21 report of the Commission on Information for Recognition. I would like to request that it be made part of the Minutes of this Conference session and wish all the very best in '21. See you next year.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: I have a Motion by Most Worshipful Brother Harrison to accept their report. Do I have a second?

(Second)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Are there any opposed?

(No audible response)

M.W. Alan Gorden: Most Worshipful, I have a question. Alan Gordon, Washington, D.C.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Please?

M.W. Alan Gorden: Would it be possible for the members of this body to receive copies of the bylaws of the Commission to see how the new members are selected?

M.W. Joe Harris: Certainly. We would be glad to. We would rotate through the Conferences in North America, make sure every Conference is represented. When a member goes, rotates off the Commission, the new incoming member is, when at all possible, taken from his Conference. The members of that Conference are

contacted before their Conference session and informed that their Conference should nominate someone for the new member on the Commission. Also, members of the Commission may nominate someone, if necessary. We encourage the Conferences to nominate someone.

M.W. Alan Gorden: Is that written down anywhere, Most Worshipful? Are there bylaws we can look at?

M.W. Joe Harris: I will have to look for you. To tell you of the truth, I've been doing this for 20 years and that's just been the way we've done it. It's the way it was done through two secretaries before me. I will be glad to look and see if there is something in print, but that's the way it works, sir.

M.W. Alan Gorden: Thank you, Most Worshipful. I look forward to the meeting.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Anybody opposed to accepting the report on the Commission?

(No audible response)

Unidentified Grand Master: I think we should do a poll.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Very well. Most Worshipful Brother Mike, will you please put up a poll for this one.

(Poll taken)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: That seems to be overwhelmingly in favor of accepting that report. Thank you, sir.

Next will be Most Worshipful Brother Ken Gorgen, Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, Chairman of the Time of Place Committee.

TIME AND PLACE COMMITTEE REPORT

M.W. Ken Gorgen: Thank you. To the members of the 108th Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America, can you hear me?

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Yes, sir, we can.

M.W. Ken Gorgen: Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to

serve as Chairman of the Time and Place Committee. This year we have not received any bids to host the Conference in 2025. However, the following has transpired during the year.

Since the 2021 Conference has gone virtual, the Executive Secretary has worked with the Grand Lodge of Washington and the Seattle Weston and negotiated a favorable contract for 2024. With the travel locked down due to COVID, site negotiations did not occur for Guadalajara, Mexico. The Executive Secretary has worked with the Grand Lodge of York Mexico and they have kindly agreed to move their session to 2025 pending successful negotiations with the hotels.

The Committee extends its thanks, and especially me, to Executive Secretary Most Worshipful Michael A. DeWolf, for all his excellent work managing the various logistics involved in holding our Conference. Respectfully submitted, Most Worshipful Ken Gorgen, Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Wisconsin.

Most Worshipful Brother Chairman, I would ask that this report be spread upon the Minutes of this meeting.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Motion has been made. Can I have a second, please?

(Second)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Any objection to this motion?

(No audible response)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Motion carries. Thank you, Most Worshipful Sir.

I believe last on our agenda will be Worshipful Brother Jeff Thiele, Deputy Grand Master and Chairman of the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin Host Committee and Brittney Korth for the 2022 site report.

2022 SITE REPORT

M.W. Jeffrey Thiele: Good afternoon Most Worshipfuls, Right Worshipfuls, Very Worshipfuls, my own Grand Master, Most Worshipful Ken Gorgen of Wisconsin, my DGMP, Gary Stang, who I know is watching out there somewhere, watching the stream, other distinguished guests.

My name is Jeff Thiele and I am the Deputy District Grand Master of District 12 for the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Wisconsin. I am also Chairman for the Grand

Lodge of Wisconsin for the Conference of Grand Masters in North America, coming to Milwaukee, Wisconsin in February of 2022. I want to thank you all for this opportunity to talk to you today and to tell you why you want to come to Milwaukee, even in February.

Before I tell you why you want to come here, let me give you a very quick history of our city. Milwaukee was originally inhabited by the Algonquin and Ho-Chunk Native American people until about 1818. The name Milwaukee is an Algonquin word meaning, good, beautiful and pleasant land.

Now, some of you may recognize that phrase from the movies, but I assure you, it really does mean good, beautiful and pleasant land. I tell you this for a reason, which I will explain to you very shortly. In the 1840's a large number of German immigrants arrived here in Milwaukee and other ethnic groups from Europe soon followed. There were approximately three different settlements, all started by Freemasons mind you, in the area until 1846 when those settlements incorporated to what is present day Milwaukee. As a Freemason, I am proud to say that Milwaukee's founding fathers were Masons.

Here is another quick funny fact about Milwaukee that you will see when you come here. Prior to incorporation, leaders of these settlements were always arguing, just like Masons tend to do. So many of the roads that lead north and south to the Milwaukee River did not on purpose meet up exactly from one side to the other and are still not exactly straight today.

Our Conference next year in Milwaukee is based upon heavy German presence and history that framed Milwaukee and put Milwaukee on the map. Some of you may already know that Milwaukee has always been famous for its beer production with recipes coming straight from Germany. Jacob Best, Frederick Pabst, Joseph Schlitz and Valentin Blatz are probably the most popular in Milwaukee's early history. But, my Brothers, for as much as we all like beer, this isn't just about beer.

Milwaukee's German history was also about sausage and brats, which we have heard at least twice already today about and foundries, and tanneries, and just about everything else German you could think of. Usinger Sausage Company and Klement's Sausage Company are still in business today and still produce some of the best sausage around. There actually was a Thiele Sausage Company in Milwaukee, which is now out of business and Thiele Tannery which still operates down in the valley today. I am unfortunately no relation to either company.

One more interesting fact about Milwaukee's German history is that Milwaukee's first Police Chief was William Beck, a German born immigrant who served a span of 23 years as the city's first, fourth and sixth police chief. As a retired Milwaukee Police Officer, I am very proud of that as well.

Now, let's get back to the meaning of the name Milwaukee. If you remember, I told you it means the good, beautiful and pleasant land. When you come to Milwaukee, we will offer you the good, beautiful and pleasant which makes up Milwaukee today.

We will provide you with Milwaukee brewery tours, world famous Milwaukee fish fries, the Harley Davidson Museum which, of course, is another reason why Milwaukee is famous. Our world renowned art museum and being a dairy state, the Milwaukee Market for delicious cheeses, wine and chocolate from local businesses and much, much more.

Your evening entertainment will be German themed as well with adult and children dance groups and German witches. I am told that Krampus might also show up one night, so I hope you all will be good and well behaved in 2021.

Milwaukee also has a great nightlife if you choose to go out and explore and we can definitely steer you to the very best restaurants, taverns, tours, and shopping.

For the ladies, I haven't forgotten about them. We are planning on having a hospitality room, and if space permits, maybe some games to keep the ladies occupied while giving them something to do together while the men are conducting that ever important Masonic business. Here is a hint. The ladies might want to brush up on their corn hole and cribbage skills. A ladies only tour is being planned for the Conference as well.

Brothers and guests, I would like to show you a little video about Milwaukee. Most Worshipful Brother Mike, can you please start the video.

(Video played)

M.W. Jeffrey Thiele: Thank you, Brother Mike. I just want to make two quick comments, number one, yes, Wisconsin is the home of the Packers and I failed to mention the Packers. I am mentioning the Packers. Great team.

I want to make another quick comment about the bloody Marys you saw on that video. Those drinks are really stacked with all of that food on them, and Brothers, I will show you where to get one.

Brothers, please keep in mind that February in Milwaukee can be quite cold and snowy, but do not let that deter you from coming here and seeing and experiencing the sights and great city of Milwaukee. We cannot wait to share beer, brats and our city with you.

Milwaukee isn't just a place this Conference is coming to in 2022, Milwaukee is a destination you all want to come to in 2022.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you Worshipful Brother Thiele for that great overview of next year. I think we are all looking forward to that and the opportunity to, once again, actually shake someone's hand in this great fraternity. For those of you that made it to South Dakota two years ago, I don't think we're afraid of any weather you can throw at us in Milwaukee. So, we will be prepared.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: Mr. Chairman?

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Yes.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: If I can, again, remind everybody registration for the hotels will start on the 15th of this month and all of the information will be posted on the Conference web site. I will also send it out to all Grand Secretaries.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Wonderful. Thank you. Well, that's the end of the agenda that I have. Is there any other business that needs to come before the Conference before we adjourn today?

Unidentified Grand Master: Most Worshipful Brother Chairman, if I might make a very brief announcement and I had a question.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Go ahead, sir.

Unidentified Grand Master: Good afternoon brethren and guests. July 30th, 2033 marks the 300th anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We are planning a world class event to celebrate 300 years of organized Freemasonry in the new world.

I had the pleasure of attending the United Grand Lodge of England's 300th Anniversary in 2017. Seeing the logistics of

planning such an event, I have appointed a committee to plan the triannual celebration of duly constituted Freemasonry in the western hemisphere, aka, the new world.

So please save the weekend of Saturday, July 30th, 2033 in your Grand Lodge calendar as the pinnacle triannual anniversary celebration date following a year-long celebration leading up to that day.

Envision a celebration of Freemasonry, it's relevance and strength in the modern world as a society of friends and brothers for over 300 years, a span of time over the United States of America. This spectacular gathering of Freemasons is not only a celebration, but is also intended to engage local and national media outlets for awareness.

Massachusetts plans to invite Grand Masters from jurisdictions worldwide for this first class event, as well as sponsoring events throughout the year. So I look forward to seeing you then. My only hope is I live long enough to attend. More information will be available at our Conference next year. I appreciate your time. My request is for Brother DeWolf, if he might supply all of us with a spreadsheet of everyone who was in attendance today, with their name, jurisdiction and e-mail addresses.

M.W. Michael A. DeWolf: I would be happy to do that.

Unidentified Grand Master: Thank you so much.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: Thank you Most Worshipful Sir. Anything else from the members present today?

(No audible response)

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: I will take silence as a good sign. Brethren, I thank all of you for attending and participating in today's meeting. This has been unprecedented and challenging for so many of us this last year. In many instances the very foundation of our fraternities is shaken by our time apart. Several jurisdictions, I believe, are now approaching a year and continue to not be able to meet. I wish you all the best and continued health and safety. I look forward to when we can all meet in person again and enjoy the fellowship of Freemasonry.

If I could now call upon Brother Natural Allah, Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Washington to offer our closing prayer.

M.W. Natural Allah: Thank you, Most Worshipful. Brethren, as

we are about to separate and be upon the highways and byways of our individual and collective lives, know that the Supreme Architect of the Universe is with us. We ask that he guide us in all our affairs and tend to our hearts as he sees fit. We ask that he grant us another opportunity to fellowship in the very near future and bring joy upon those we encounter. We ask that the ailments of our fellow man be soothed, and that our soldiers who may be in harms way find peace and solis. That our family, friends and all we encounter recognize the heart of a Mason as one who extends his hand seeking nothing in return, but adding another celestial brick to that temple not made with hands, eternal. Amen.

M.W. Daniel J. Lawes: So mote it be. Thank you Worshipful Sir. I now declare the 108th Conference of Grand Masters of Masons of North America now closed. Go in peace brethren.