



VENERABLE MASTER'S MESSAGE

Duane E. Cunningham, 32°, KCCH

At the close of a Master Mason called communication we are reminded of our duty to befriend and relieve every Brother who shall need assistance. The Scottish Rite degrees build on this by repeatedly mentioning charity, benevolence, assisting the distressed, scorning selfishness, and active brotherly support. The Eighth Degree, *Intendant of the Building*, emphasizes striving for perfection through "God's inherent love, charity, morality and kindness." The candidate is taught to view himself as an almoner of God's bounty and to promote works of charity and benevolence.

My message is not to remind you of your duty to assist your Brother. Based on my experience in Masonry the Brethren are generous, loving and benevolent. Rather, I wonder if we also have a duty or responsibility to ask for assistance when needed.

I don't like to ask for help. I stubbornly resist. Yet, it occurs to me, if no one appeals to his brother for help, how can our duty to assist be fulfilled? Doesn't the highest duty of the Fraternity depend on a symbiotic relationship of those in need and those fulfilling that need?

The degrees do not lecture on "overcome your pride and ask," but the entire structure of brotherhood and the repeated emphasis on charity as a duty imply that a Brother in genuine need *should* make his situation known so that the relief the Rite teaches can be given. Refusing to ask out of pride can frustrate the very purpose of the fraternal bond. At the same time, the obligation on the other side is equally clear: brothers are to respond within the length of their cable tow, discreetly and without fanfare.

The responsibility to ask is the necessary counterpart to the duty to relieve, rooted in the same teachings that run through the degrees. Masons are both potential givers and potential receivers within a confidential, brotherly system designed for exactly that purpose.

I suspect my reluctance to ask for assistance is based in pride and a deep-rooted independence. In *Morals and Dogma*, Albert Pike treats pride with nuance. He strongly condemns vain, arrogant, or self-conceited pride while affirming a legitimate "noble pride" rooted in human dignity and independence. Humility is consistently presented as a core Masonic virtue.

The pride Pike criticizes is the self-sufficient arrogance or false independence that refuses to acknowledge human frailty and interdependence. The humility he praises and the reciprocal brotherhood he describes supports the idea that a Mason in genuine need should be willing to ask for assistance rather than let false pride isolate him. At the same time, the "noble pride" he defends protects a brother's dignity—help is to be given and received without degradation or humiliation.

In short, the Scottish Rite degrees teach Masons to reject the pride that hardens the heart or isolates the individual, while cultivating the quiet self-respect that allows genuine humility and mutual aid to flourish. And, while we may not have a stated fraternal "duty to ask" responsibility, we have a practical encouragement to seek help from other Masons when in genuine need.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Tom Varner, 32°, KCCH

Who is my neighbor? In each Masonic obligation we take, we are told that it will not conflict with our duty to God, our country, our neighbor, and ourselves. Pretty straightforward, but you may have the same question that was famously asked in the Book of Luke. You may remember that the answer was given in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, which can be recounted quickly as follows: A lawyer asked how to gain eternal life, and when asked his understanding of the requirements, said to love the Lord with all your heart, your mind, your strength, and your spirit, and to love your neighbor as yourself. When told that if he does all of those (which is impossible, of course, because we continue to fail and fail in perfectly performing our duties), he asked, "but who is my neighbor?" He was then told the story of a Jewish man on the road who was attacked by thieves and left naked and half dead. A priest and a Levite (both men who served God in the Temple) saw him on the side of the road and not wanting to get involved, passed to the other side. But a Samaritan (who had fierce mutual hostility with Jews) stopped, had pity on the man, bound up his wounds with wine and oil, took him to an inn, and paid the innkeeper a significant sum to take care of him. When this Parable was finished, the lawyer was asked which one was a neighbor to the man, and his response was the one who showed the stricken man mercy.

Think of all the Masonic lessons in this story. First, the symbolic use of corn (food supplied at the inn), wine (to cleanse the wounds of infection), and oil (to help the wounds heal). Second, and more importantly, we Masons have been taught this lesson in many ways, such as the Rite of Destitution. The lawyer probably thought, like we do, that a neighbor is someone we know and who lives near us. It is easy to help people we know, but our obligations go much further. We are required to help anyone who needs our assistance, even if the person is someone we do not like or who is very different from us. Do you remember in the Closing Charge that we are solemnly bound to befriend and relieve anyone who needs our assistance? This is not an easy requirement, but as our Grand Master says, we are to set an example for others, that we are striving to be better men and should have a higher standard for behavior than society at large. I encourage you that, when you encounter a person who needs help, you really "see him" and his needs. Love him as a fellow human being, and help to the best of your ability. My brethren, as the lawyer was told at the conclusion of the Parable, "Go and do likewise!"

MEMBERSHIP

**Charles Robinson,
33°, Chairman**

The year is quickly coming to an end. The conference and workshops have come and gone. We will have completed two successful reunions. We could sit back and admire our accomplishments, but time marches on. It is never too early to start looking at our goals for 2027. As we enjoy the Holidays remember to keep an eye open for any opportunity to help a Brother advance in his Masonic Journey.

Enjoy the Holidays and come back all refreshed and ready to hit the floor running.

SCOTTISH RITE MEETING SCHEDULE

Monday, October 26, 2026

5:30 PM.....Guard Meeting
6:00 PM.....Dinner
7:00 PM.....Business Meeting
Cost \$15.00 (\$20 w/out reservation)

Monday, November 23, 2026

5:30 PM.....Guard Meeting
6:00 PM.....Dinner
7:00 PM.....Business Meeting
Cost \$15.00 (\$20 w/out reservation)

- 2027 -

Monday, January 25, 2027

5:30 PM.....Guard Meeting
6:00 PM.....Business Meeting
7:00 PM.....Dinner
Cost \$15.00 (\$20 w/out reservation)

Monday, February 22, 2027

5:30 PM.....Guard Meeting
6:00 PM.....Dinner
7:00 PM.....Business Meeting
Cost \$15.00 (\$20 w/out reservation)

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK

Lambros Deligan, 33°, IGH



Thus far this year we have had the Spring Reunion, in memory of Ill Wayne Alfred "Rocky" Robison, Sr., 33°. This was held on Saturday, April 18, 2026, at MAHOVA. Seven candidates were made Masters of the Royal Secret via the presentation of the degrees cinematically. Our Fall Reunion will be in memory of Ill Gray Wilfred Bradford, 33°, and will soon be upon us. Take the time now to contact your prospects and get them signed up for Saturday, October 10, 2026, at MAHOVA. Following the Reunion, we will be having the Second Annual Homecoming Dinner at MAHOVA on Saturday, October 17, 2026, to honor all newly made Scottish Rite Masons in 2026. Call the office for your reservation.

The Danville Scottish Rite Valley, on Sunday September 27 to Tuesday September 29, hosted the 102nd Annual Scottish Rite Conference at Caesars Virginia in Danville. The Conference was well attended by Richmond. Nineteen of our Brothers and five of our Ladies enjoyed the event. Our Keynote speaker, Ill & MW Brother Matthew Todd Szramoski, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia was outstanding. Our very own, Ill and MW Brother Alan Adkins, 33°, SGIG was the perfect host.

In October we will, also be recognize our new 50-year members, along with our Past Venerable Masters. November will bring the Visit and reception of our newly installed 181st Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, the now Deputy Grand Master, RW Gino Warren Williams.

Regarding our meals, our Culinary Committee, Chaired by Brother Scott Davis, 32° has done an outstanding job. They have met the goal of serving meals prepared by local restaurants. In September we had a Chinese meal from Peking on Broad Street. In October we will have Lee's Chicken. In November we are planning to serve a steak dinner for our special event welcoming the newly installed Grand Master.

Beginning in January 2027 a new Culinary Committee headed by Brother Ben Smith, 32° and Brother Jim Culley, 32° will be handed the baton to continue serving meals prepared by local restaurants. They will be assisted by the Knights of Saint Andrew and the JOBIES of Bethel 51. Let's cheer them on to good service.

Remember, reservations are required for dinner and must be made by the Wednesday of the week before the Stated. The cost for dinner with a reservation is \$15.00 per person. Except for the month of January, meals will be served at 6:00 PM. The Stated meeting will be held at 7:00 PM.

Our delinquent list is slowly shrinking. We now have over 20 members who have not paid their 2025 dues. We will activate the committee of Brethren, who last year volunteered to contact delinquent Brothers. Sometimes all it takes is a kind word or a sympathetic ear to convince a Brother to continue his membership in the Richmond Valley.

We are anticipating with excitement our year-end holidays. We will be celebrating Halloween and looking forward to Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and the New Year, where our New Year's Resolutions will guide us in 2027.

Remember that the Valley is dark in December. At our first Stated Meeting on January 25, 2027, we will hold the election and installation of officers.

The office staff wants to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy and Merry Holiday Season as we gather with family and friends in celebration.



GINO WARREN WILLIAMS GRAND MASTER'S BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Gino Warren Williams was born in Roanoke, Virginia, on December 28, 1959. He was raised and has spent his entire life in Floyd County, Virginia. He graduated from Floyd County High School in 1978. He received a B.A. from Virginia Tech in History in 1982, and a Juris Doctor Degree from the Marshall-Wythe School of Law, at the College of William and Mary, in 1986. In 1981 Brother Williams was appointed to the Floyd Town Council where he served until, he was elected Mayor of the Town in 1982, a position he held until 1992. After graduation from law school, he joined the law firm of Lineberry and Profitt, where he practiced for two years. He would later join the firm of Profitt and Williams and would remain there until he was elected as Commonwealth's Attorney for Floyd County in November of 1992. He served in that capacity until April 2003, when he was appointed as a

General District Court Judge for the 27th Judicial District of Virginia. He served in the General District Court until his retirement on November 1, 2026. He served as the Chief Judge of the 27th Judicial District from 2006 to 2026.

Brother Williams was Raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on September 30, 1997, in Floyd Lodge No. 329, where he is a member and where he served as Worshipful Master in 2001, 2006 and 2013, and as Secretary from 2013 to 2025. He is also a charter member of Blue Ridge Lodge of Research No 1738. He was District Deputy Grand Master of Masonic District 43 in 2002. He served as Administrative Assistant to the Grand Master in 2016. He has also served as a committeeman on the Committee on Appeals and

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Committee on Jurisprudence. He has been a member of the Board of Governors of MAHOVA - Your Masonic Community since 2017, where he has previously served as Treasurer. He has also served as an ex-officio member of the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Virginia Library, Museum and Historical Preservation Trust, Inc. Board of Directors since 2022. Brother Williams was elected to the Office of Grand Junior Deacon in November 2021.

Brother Williams is a 32nd KCCH member of the Valley of Roanoke, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. He is a member of Taylor Chapter No. 70, Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons in Virginia and Grand Council of Cryptic Masons in Virginia. He is a member of the Kazim Shrine and a member of the New River Valley Shrine Club. Additionally, he is a member of New River Valley Commandery No. 32 Knights Templar, a Knight Companion of the St. Cornelius the Centurion Conclave of the Red Cross of Constantine, a member of Fort Andrew Lewis Council No. 81 Knights Mason, a member of Richard Amos Debusk Council No. 575, Allied Masonic Degrees, and a member of Wilderness York Rite College No. 94.

Brother Williams currently is a member of the Board of the Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program (VASAP). He is a former member and Vice-Chairman of the Self-Represented Litigants sub-committee of the Virginia Access to Justice Commission, Past President of The Association of District Court Judges of Virginia, Inc., a former Chairman and member of the Judicial Inquiry and Review Commission and a member of the American Judges Association.

Within Floyd County, Brother Williams is the golf coach at Floyd County High School, the President of the Floyd County Historical Society, Inc., a member of the Floyd County Library Building Fund, Inc. of the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library, holds membership in the Floyd Moose Lodge No. 2300 and Legion of the Moose No. 122. He is a Past President, and Board member, of the Floyd County Recreation Association (doing business as Great Oaks Country Club), Past Chairman of the Floyd-Floyd County Public Service Authority and a former member of the Floyd-Floyd County Public Recreational Facilities Authority. He was the Incorporator and initial Board member of Medical Charities of Floyd County, Virginia, Inc., Floyd County Cares, Inc., the Floyd Parks Committee, Inc., and the Floyd County Historical Preservation Trust, Inc. He is a Past President and former Board member of the Smith Mountain Lake 4-H Educational Conference Center (now the Skelton Center), a former member of the Board of the Carilion-New River Valley Health Foundation and Carilion-New River Valley Hospital, and former board member of the Southwest Governors School for the Gifted. He is a life member of the Virginia 4-H All Stars and an active member of Floyd United Methodist Church.

Brother Williams is married to the former Vickie Ann Hamblin. They have a son, Brother Tyler, who is 2024 graduate of Virginia Tech and a current second year law student, and a daughter, Karlee, who is a 2026 graduate of Bluefield State University and a current graduate student at Liberty University. In his spare time, Brother Williams likes to play golf, read, and collect historic memorabilia about Floyd County.

PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Terry F. Hilton, 33°

Greetings and welcome to Fall. It feels good outside and we can all look forward to some busy Masonic activities as we head toward the holidays.

I am confident you are interested in the latest news on our new building. We are very close to closing on the purchase of the building from Tuckahoe Lodge No. 347. As Ill. Moring has stated numerous times, these folks have been terrific to work with, and the Brotherly Love is on full display. We have also hired a program manager to consult with us and guide us as we go through the building process. Jessica Buchta will be helping us every step of the way and facilitating permits, plans, and construction when that begins in 2027.

It is exciting to know the SR Childhood Language Center will be moving into their new home in the near future. This is a big step for the future of the CLC. It will give a whole new look to what the CLC can offer to help those kids who have speech/language problems. I hope that you will be able to visit their new school when the Grand Opening is announced. Please continue to support them as they are the priority charity for the Richmond Valley.

By the time you read this, the 2026 SR Conference will be complete. I have a feeling you will see lots of photos and hear stories about the SEA OF PURPLE that invaded Danville from Richmond. Congratulations to RW Bro. Barry Faison for his service as President of the SR Foundation. Thank you, Barry. His time is up and Wor. Bro. Duane Cunningham has been chosen as a Director for the next term on the Foundation Board. My hat is off to you, Bro. Duane and I know you will do a good job.

October seems like it will be MASONIC Month for all of us. It starts with Founders Day, then MAHOVA Family Day on Oct. 3 with lots of new activities for you and your families to enjoy. Our Reunion will be held Oct. 10, and we may have the largest class in recent history. There is still time for more petitions. The 4th Degree will be presented live so please join us for the day at MAHOVA. On Oct. 17, we will have a Homecoming Gala for all Reunion candidates from both spring and fall as well as a terrific guest speaker, our Grand Sr. Warden, RW Mike McKenney. It will be a very nice dinner so bring your wife out for a great evening at MAHOVA.

We are blessed to have a special presentation at our Oct. 26 Stated meeting. Bro. Peyton Anderson was Knighted by our Sovereign Grand Commander as a KCCH during the Fellows Retreat in August. This was a very special event in SR history, and we will be honoring Bro. Peyton, his wife Sarah, and son William with a local ceremony of this wonderful event.

The Executive Council will be meeting on Oct. 28. Remember, everyone is invited and we always encourage comments, ideas, and suggestions that will help our Valley grow and prosper in the future. Please join us at 5:30 pm for snacks at the SR Office.

The SR Guard is honored to have been asked by the Grand Master to Present Swords for the procession of Grand Line officers on Saturday, Nov. 7. This is another first for the Richmond Valley and we are all very excited for all members of the Guard. Congratulations!

Our last meeting of the year will be November 23. The incoming Grand Master will be our guest speaker. Please bring your ladies and friends out for this traditional celebration.

Thank you for all you do for the Richmond Valley. We are getting better each month!

THE SCOTTISH RITE NEWS

Published by the Scottish Rite
Bodies in the Valley of Richmond,
Orient of Virginia

Third Class Mail privileges
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Friday by Appointment

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Master of Kadosh, Consistory

RICHMOND VALLEY COMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

Saturday 10 Reunion

Monday 12 Columbus Day
Office Closed

Monday 26 Stated Meeting

NOVEMBER

Tuesday 3 Election Day

Wednesday 11 Veterans Day
Office Closed

Monday 23 Stated Meeting

DECEMBER DARK

Thursday 31 New Year's Eve
Office Closed

JANUARY (2027)

Friday 1 New Year's Day

Monday 18 MLK Day
Office Closed

Monday 25 Stated Meeting
Installation of Officers

FEBRUARY

Monday 15 Washington's
Birthday

Office Closed

Monday 22 Stated Meeting

Called from Labor

RICHARD ALISON BOWEN
1931 - 2021

JOHN ALFRED BROOKS
1947 - 2023

HENRY CLAY CARSON
1931 - 2026

MICHAEL ELBRIDGE CHURCH
1941 - 2025

EMMETT MOFFETT COLEMAN III
1943 - 2023

GEORGE MILTON DEAN
1936 - 2026

WILLIAM FREDERICK DEITZ III
1943 - 2026

TALIAFERRO CRAWFORD DICKERSON III
1936 - 2026

VINCENT JOSEPH FARACI
1944 - 2025

GARY PHILLIP HAYNES
1942 - 2023

JOSEPH FREDRICK HENRY
1930 - 2022

WILLIAM CLIFFORD HENSLEY
1937 - 2025

BOBBY WAYNE KELLY
1948 - 2026

IVAN EUGENE LETNER, JR
1943 - 2026

THOMAS MARTIN LEWIS
1942 - 2026

DAVID LEON MARTIN
1951 - 2025

DAVID CHARLES MERCHANT
1953 - 2024

WILLIAM MICHAEL SAUNDERS
1938 - 2026

AUSTIN LINWOOD SHEPHERD
1928 - 2022

ROBERT MAYNARD SINE
1938 - 2021

SAMUEL GEORGE SPANGLER III
1943 - 2025

DONALD RICHARD SPARKS
1935 - 2024

MARTIN LUTHER STROBLE
1936 - 2024

GRAHAM KENNEDY TILLER
1932 - 2025

ROBERT GRANT WALLS, JR.
1944 - 2025

BOBBY JOE WEATHERFORD
1943 - 2026

JULIAN GRANT WHANGER
1940 - 2026

HURLEY BRAXTON WILKINS
1936 - 2020

RAOPH NORRIS WOOD, JR.
1942 - 2021

DANIEL PEYTON YANCEY
1942 - 2025

Virtus Junxit-Mors non Separabit

"whom virtue has united, Death will not separate"

FELLOWSHIP REPORTS

Please take a moment and communicate with our shut-in Brethren either by card or a phone call. They will appreciate your thoughtfulness and you will feel better for it.

NEW SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER

Harless Dobbins

REQUESTED
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