



## Grand Commander



**Elbert L. "Sparkie" Travis**

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### **We Need Your Help!**

Please send event news from your local commanderies to us for inclusion in the State News!

- ✘ Submissions must be received by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the upcoming edition. Submissions may be altered to fit.
- ✘ Please send emails with subject line "KT State News" to the editor.

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## Grand Commander's Message

Greetings Sir Knights,

I must say this year so far, is going by faster than I can keep up with. My two colleagues, M.E.G.H.P. Chris Hall and M.I.G.M. Craig Horton have had the pleasure of attending 5 of our 9 district meetings so far, each of which was well attended.

We have met in district 1 Washington, district 2 New Bern, district 4 Oxford, district 5 Raleigh, and district 6 Winston Salem. Coming up the month of June we will meet in district 8 Lenoir June 7, district 3 Wilson June 13, district 9 Waynesville June 17, and district 7 Monroe June 20. Hope to see you there.

Our theme this year is Fraternalism, Relationship, and Brotherly Love. Think about it for a moment, can any one of these stand alone? No, they are so intertwined one cannot exist without the other two. As you recall in your Entered Apprentice degree, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity". As Masons we are all brothers, being of one Father who created the Heavens and the earth.

Looking ahead, Maggie Valley! Summer assembly will be July 10,11,12. This year we will be recovering a time capsule which was buried July of 1972 and replacing it with one to be recovered in 2072. If you have never been to summer assembly, this is definitely the year to come. There will be brothers in attendance from around the world this year.

Sir Knights I leave you with the words of the immortal Rev. Billy Graham, "Life without God is like an unsharpened pencil, it has no point."

May your troubles be less, your blessings more and may nothing but happiness cross your door.

Fraternally,

Sparkie Travis  
Grand Commander

## York Rite District Meetings

**Raleigh** – The Official Grand visitations of REGT "Sparkie" Travis, MIGM Craig J. Horton, and MEGHP Christopher L. Hall got under way in April and continued apace throughout May. The meetings have been well attended by the local bodies, with delicious meals prepared for the occasions.



*New Bern District Meeting, April 12*



*Raleigh District Meeting, May 4*



*Oxford District Meeting, May 9*



*Winston-Salem District Meeting, May 16*



**NC Grand York Rite Hosts the 85th Annual Great Smokies Summer Assembly**

**Maggie Valley** – The Grand York Rite of North Carolina is celebrating 200 years of York Rite Masonry in North Carolina this year, and there are many events planned for our annual Summer Assembly that Sir Knights from all over the country are planning to attend. This will be the 85<sup>th</sup> Summer Assembly, and one of the landmark events of this year will be the unearthing of the Cryptic Deposit that was made in 1972 near the Masonic Marker at Black Camp Gap, which is just up the mountain from Maggie Valley.



This is the second such deposit laid here, as the 1972 even also dug up a previous deposit from the mid-1930s. In keeping with this tradition, a new deposit will be interred, for our brethren and Sir Knights of 2072 to recover. According to David Cashion, the 1972 deposit contains “Coins, Pins, Proceedings, Chapter Pennies, Small Booklets, Small Plaques, Jewels, Histories, Brochures, Masonic Talks, Delegate Badges for Triennials, Miniature Apron, Laminated Photos, Programs of Events, and a Small Holy Bible from the original deposit.” SK Cashion is hard at work cataloging items that have been donated from all across the state for this year’s deposit.

The festivities begin on Saturday, July 9, and conclude Tuesday, July 12. Registration and full information on events can be found on the Summer Assembly website at <https://mwsite.org/sites/ncgssa>. Registration is \$20 (men only) and attendees to both the Summer Assembly and the Banquet Monday night must complete their [registration](#) with payment by June 20 to the Grand Secretary.

Below is a summary of the events that are planned:

**Saturday, July 9**

**10:00 AM** – Putt-Putt Contest at Fantasy Golf next to the Castlewood Motel in Maggie Valley, open to adults and children. Registration fee: \$5 per person

**2:00 PM** – Super Excellent Master Degree, at Waynesville Lodge at 435 East Marshall Street, Waynesville, dress is business casual.

**Sunday, July 10**

**10:30 AM** – Church Service, [First Baptist Church of Maggie Valley](#)

**3:00 PM – 5:00 PM** – Registration & Cookout, Maggie Valley Community Pavilion at 3987 Soco Rd.

**Monday, July 11**

**9:00 AM** – Summer Assembly convenes at the Haywood Community College Student Center Auditorium, located at 185 Frelander Drive, Clyde, NC

**12:00 PM** – Summer Assembly adjourns for lunch and travel to the Masonic Marker.

**3:00 PM** – Masonic Marker Address, at the Masonic Marker at Black Camp Gap. Access to the marker is from the Blue Ridge Parkway, exiting at Wolf Laurel Gap onto Heintooga Road, then onto the parking area at [Black Camp Gap](#).

**7:00 PM** – Banquet & Entertainment at the Maggie Valley Club and Resort, 1819 Country Club Drive, Maggie Valley, NC, \$55 per person, and children under 12 are \$12 each.

**Tuesday, July 12**

**9:00 AM** – Summer Assembly reconvenes.

**12:00 PM** – Summer Assembly adjourns.

**Masonic Week in the Smokies Continues With Scottish Rite Summer Orient Advisory Retreat**

**Franklin** – Following the conclusion of the Grand York Rite’s 85<sup>th</sup> Summer Assembly in Maggie Valley, the Orient of North Carolina will be hosting the Scottish Rite Summer Orient Advisory Retreat (SOAR) just down the road in Franklin, NC starting on July 14. The highlight of the event will be a special



performance of the critically acclaimed USO-style patriotic song and dance group, [Letters From Home](#). If you have never seen a performance by this wonderful group, you are highly encouraged to come see them!

The retreat starts off with a visit to the NC RiteCare Clinic at the Western Carolina University College of

Health & Human Sciences Speech & Hearing Clinic, along with a Barbecue dinner and VIP Reception with the Letters from Home cast prior to their performance, concluding with Saturday’s SOAR conference. Below is a summary of the events that are planned:

**Thursday, July 14**

**5:00 PM** – Visit the NC RiteCare Clinic at [Western Carolina University College of Health & Human Sciences Speech & Hearing Clinic](#) and have dinner at the University in Cullowhee, NC.

**Friday, July 15**

**4:30 PM** – BBQ Dinner at [Junaluskee Lodge # 145](#) in Franklin.

**6:00 PM** – VIP Reception with the Letters from Home Singers at the [Smoky Mountain Theatre for the Performing Arts](#) in Franklin. VIP Tickets on sale now (\$100.00 single, \$150.00 couple) from [Dan Killian](#) at (347) 454-4879.

**7:00 PM** – Letters from Home Singers tribute to our US Armed Forces at the [Theatre](#). Tickets are available at the Smoky Mountain Theatre Box Office at <https://smokymountainarts.com/pec-events/letter-from-home/1657911600> or call (866) 273-4615.

Sponsorships for this performance as well as the performance coming up in New Bern will be accepted through July 1<sup>st</sup>. Please go to the NC RiteCare Performance Sponsorship website at <https://www.ncritecare.org/letters-from-home-in-the-smoky-mountains> for more details.

**Saturday, July 16**

**8:00 AM** – (Reserved for Scottish Rite Members in good standing only) SOAR begins with Breakfast at [Junaluskee Lodge # 145](#).

**District Schools of the Knight Scheduled for 2022-23**

**Raleigh** – Mark Alexander, Grand Instructor/Inspector for the Grand Commandery of NC has announced several district-level meetings for ritual instruction throughout the state. Starting in September and running through November there will be a School of the Knight instruction class presented for each district in NC at a host Body's stated communication. The Class will cover basic Instruction for Sword work, the full form opening, and basic ritual setup. The class will be taught from the newly approved NC Tactics

Manual. A link for this manual should be available soon. Commanderies are requested to order 10 copies each for their use when they become available.

The Class should last about an hour and a half. Commandery officers and Sir Knights from each Commandery in the scheduled districts are requested to attend and to bring your sword and belt and any extra swords that you may have in case we may need them. Full Class A Uniforms may be worn but are not required. The main goal is to come together and learn so our Rituals and Ceremonies may be presented with the dignity and grandeur they deserve and stop short forming just to get through them. The first part of the district schools’ schedule is as follows:

Date	Host Body	Location	Dist. No.	District Commanderies
Sept. 7	Raleigh #4	<a href="#">JJ Crowder Lodge</a>	5	Palestine #20 Nazareth #41
Sept. 13	Calvary #25	<a href="#">Orr Lodge</a>	1	Griggs #14 Bethlehem #29
Oct. 4	Lenoir #33	<a href="#">Hibriten Lodge</a>	8	Hickory #17 Wilkes #40
Oct. 10	Oxford #39	<a href="#">Oxford Lodge</a>	4	Durham #3
Nov. 21	Piedmont #6	<a href="#">Winston Temple</a>	6	Ivanhoe #8 High Point #24 Salisbury #13
Nov. 22	Cyrene #5	<a href="#">Asheville Temple</a>	9	Waynesville #31

The remaining three districts will be scheduled at the conclusion of the District Meetings. Sir Knight Alexander says, “My goal is to never see a Commandery ‘declared’ open again. We do not do it in Blue Lodge, so why do it in an Asylum?”

**Paying Respects**

**Salisbury** – This Easter, I had the distinct honor of participating in the Easter Sunrise Service at the George Washington Masonic Memorial, and the laying of a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers, as part of the North Carolina Grand Commandery. As my fellow Sir Knights and I were leaving the Arlington Cemetery I stopped and placed a penny on a grave headstone. I did this a second time and my companions asked what I was doing, leaving pennies on the gravestones. I thought everyone knew of this custom, but apparently not. I told them it was a symbol of respect that someone, from somewhere, had taken time to pay their respects to the person resting in this hallowed soil. They appeared to be sincerely intrigued with this and asked for more information.

First a very brief history. Leaving coins with the deceased is not new: ancient Greeks and Romans left coins with their dead relatives, and comrades at arms, to pay the ferryman, Charon, the toll necessary to carry the soul across the river Styx. Even into the early twentieth century in parts of the United States, families would place coins over their loved one's eyes. So, this is technically not a new practice, but it has seen a resurgence since the end of the Vietnam War.

- A penny left on the headstone lets the deceased soldier's family and other members of the armed forces know you visited the final resting place and gave your respects.
- A nickel means you and the deceased veteran trained in boot camp together,
- A dime means you and the deceased veteran served in a unit, or theater of conflict together,
- A quarter means that the person leaving the coin was with the deceased soldier when they died. I thought this was especially interesting as George Washington was a Mason, and his profile appears on the quarter and the oldest medal awarded to a veteran, the Purple Heart.

The act of leaving coins was thought to be a less intrusive way for people to let the families know their departed loved one was still in the hearts of a thankful nation for the sacrifices they made. The act of leaving coins on headstones also carries over to non-military grave sites:

- A penny means you visited the site and remembered the person buried there,
- A nickel means you went to school with the deceased,
- A dime means you worked with the deceased,
- A quarter means you were with the person when they passed on.

Another tradition which might be found is the placing of pebbles and stones on the grave marker. This is a Hebrew custom known as "matzevot" and is revered because it symbolizes that this is a pious family who visits the grave of their loved ones.

You don't have to know the person to leave a coin. You're simply leaving a message that you stopped by and said thank you to the departed for their service, and to let others know they have not been forgotten, and that you said a prayer that the family may find peace. The coins left on the headstones are normally collected monthly and used to maintain the cemetery

grounds and assist in offsetting the cost of interring indigent veterans.



SK Sam Henline pauses to pay his respects to a fallen Brother at Arlington National Cemetery

Why did I do this? It reminds me of something my late father told me when I was young. I asked my Dad why he had enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, and he replied, "So you won't have to."

As with most youth it took time for the meaning of his answer to sink in, but I think he was saying that like all members of the military, they serve with the hope that by their service of defending our freedom now, the children of tomorrow will hopefully not have to take up arms. So out of respect and gratitude I will continue to place pennies on the headstones of those resting veterans.

*This article was written by Sir Knight Sam Henline, Grand Sword Bearer, of Salisbury #13, Salisbury, NC. As we have paused this past month to observe Memorial Day, let us all pay our respects to those brave Americans who fought and died to protect our liberties.*

### **Important Reminders:**

**June 4:** Wilkes #40 will be marching in the Shrine Parade at Blowing Rock, stepping off at 2:00 PM

**June 7:** District #8 Meeting, 7:30 PM Hibriten Lodge, Lenoir, meal at 6:30 PM

**June 13:** District #3 Meeting, 7:30 PM at Mt. Lebanon Lodge, Wilson, meal at 6:30 PM

**June 15:** Wilkes #40 will be conferring the Order of the Red Cross and Order of Malta, 6:30 PM at N. Wilkesboro Lodge, no meal served.

**June 17:** District #9 Meeting, 7:30 PM at Waynesville Lodge, Waynesville, meal at 6:30 PM

**June 18:** Raleigh #4 Commandery Orders, starting at 9:00 AM at JJ Crowder Lodge, Raleigh.

**June 20:** District #7 Meeting, 7:30 PM at Monroe Lodge, Monroe, meal at 6:30 PM

**June 27:** Wilkes #40 will be conferring the Order of the Temple, starting at 6:30 PM at the N. Wilkesboro Lodge, meal at 6:00 PM.