

Foreword

GRAND MASTER DECISIONS AND ANNOTATIONS TO THE LAWS OF THE GRAND LODGE OF TEXAS A.F. & A.M.

FOREWORD

These Grand Master Decisions and Annotations to the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas are presented to the Craft in an endeavor to add to their common stock of knowledge and understanding. These annotations only cover the period from approximately 1949 through the present date. Should there be any need for an expanded search of the Laws, inquiries should be made in the Library of The Grand Lodge of Texas at Waco. There will be found decisions dating from 1837 through the present date.

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO USE THESE ANNOTATIONS

This work contains only Grand Master Decisions and Annotations to the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas and other materials relating to our Masonic Law as they appear in our current so called "Blue Book". This work is not intended as a substitution for the reading of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas and their annual revisions and amendments. It is foreseeable that this work will not be supplemented as often as the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas and care must be taken to assure that there have been no **changes** or **revisions** in the various articles of the Laws since these were printed.

The reader is cautioned that portions of our Masonic Law, including our Constitution, **may** have changed dramatically since the individual Grand Master Decisions were issued; accordingly, certain decisions may be currently wrong, inaccurate, without application or mute.

The Committee on Jurisprudence recommends, to the officer/brother researching a question relating to our laws and the annotations in this work, that his question/problem be written. After doing this, it should be apparent that there are certain key words that will point one to either the Index or the Table of Contents in our "Blue Book" of Law that should assist him in finding the applicable Law and/or Grand Master Decision relating to the researched question. Thereafter, it should be easier to ascertain whether or not there are any Grand Master Decisions constru-

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ing said Law. Do not neglect reference to the current Corporate Charter, the Constitution and Ancient Charges of Freemasonry, the current and past Monitors as a source of information.

The reader **is cautioned and reminded that Title V, in its entirety was revised and replaced** with new article language, in December 2005; accordingly, decisions pertaining to Title V which were given on or before December 2005, **may** be currently wrong, inaccurate, without application or mute. All available Grand Master decisions, regardless of the date of their publication have been included herein.

Special thanks are due to all current and past Grand Masters, Grand Secretaries, Committees and individuals which provided materials from which this ANNOTATION has been assembled.

This document was created and edited by Brack Jones, Jr., Vice-Chairman of the Masonic Jurisprudence Committee of the Grand Lodge of Texas, whose patience and perseverance is hereby acknowledged.

2009

**GRAND MASTER DECISIONS
and ANNOTATIONS**

(as revised 1/1/06)

DIVISION I

CORPORATE CHARTER OF THE GRAND LODGE

DIVISION II

**CONSTITUTION AND ANCIENT CHARGES OF A
FREEMASON**

CONSTITUTION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF TEXAS

As adopted December 8, A. L. 5920, A. D. 1920, and Amended
December 6, 1922, December 2, 1925,

December 4, 1947, December 4, 1957, December 8, 1990;
December 5, 1992 and December 6, 1997.

ARTICLE I

TITLE AND PURPOSES

Section 1. – Title.

Section 2. – Purposes.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can a constituent Lodge accept and cosign a Christian declaration form so a Brother can join a certain denomination church in his community?

HELD: No, regarding religion, Masonry is Nonsectarian. There are no provisions in Grand Lodge Laws that would permit a constituent Lodge of the Grand Lodge of Texas to cosign a Christian declaration form required of a Brother by a certain church. This declaration included such statements as, “Whenever I shall choose, if possible, I may convert to Christianity any Brother who has not adopted the Christian Faith.” (Article 1, Section 2, Constitution and Charges of a Freemason 1) GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 18.

ARTICLE II OF WHOM COMPOSED

Section 1. – Members and Representatives.

Members

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A Past Master of a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction has affiliated with one of our Texas Lodges and the inquiry has been made whether or not this Brother is entitled to the honors of a Past Master in Texas, such as opening and closing the Lodge, wearing a pin and carrying a Past Master's Card Membership in the Past Master's Club, etc.

DECISION: It was my decision that this Brother is not a member of our Grand Lodge (See Art. 11, Sec. 1[c] of our Constitution); cannot preside over a Texas Lodge; is not a Past Master of our Texas Lodge (see Articles 269 and 285); cannot install Officers as this is limited in this regard to "Past Masters of this Grand Jurisdiction" (see Article 526). Therefore, the answers to all the questions posed are "No." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 16.

Representatives

ARTICLE III JURISDICTION AND POWERS

Section 1. — Exclusive Jurisdiction Over Masonry in Texas.

Section 2. — Inherent Power to Regulate Masonry.

Section 3. — Anderson's "Old Charges of a Freemason."

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS OF THE GRAND LODGE

Section 1. — Style and Rank.

Section 2. — Elective Grand Officers. Section

3. — Appointive Grand Officers. Section 4. — Time of Election and Installation.

Section 5. — Failure to Elect or Install Grand Officers.

Section 6. — Eligibility to Office.

Section 7. — Mode of Election.

Section 8. — District Deputy Grand Masters.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Why was the Brother not appointed when a Lodge was informed by a Past District Deputy Grand Master that the incoming District Deputy Grand Master would be selected from that Lodge because it was their turn?

ANSWER: It is the responsibility and duty of the Grand Master to appoint District Deputy Grand Masters (Article IV, Section 8 of our Constitution). No Mason has the authority to inform a Lodge it is their turn and a District Deputy will be appointed from that Lodge membership. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 31.

Section 9. — Other Officers May Be Provided.**Section 10. — Installation of Officers.****ARTICLE V****DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE GRAND OFFICERS****Section 1. — Duties of the Grand Master and His Deputy and Grand Wardens.****Section 2. — Powers of the Grand Master.****Notes and Decisions**

QUESTION: Can a Lodge request the Grand Master's dispensation on short notice and re-schedule its Stated Meeting by one week?

ANSWER: The Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, e.g. Title II, Chapter 5, and Title II, Chapter 7, Article 238, does not give the Grand Master the authority to grant his dispensation on such notice. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Can a Worshipful Master refuse to allow the lodge to vote on a motion made and seconded in open lodge?

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master is accorded broad discretion in this matter. Certainly the Worshipful Master should prevent the lodge from taking an illegal action. If the Brethren disagree with the actions of the Worshipful Master, Article 283 provides for an appeal to Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER DECISION - 2005 - NO. 5 .

Section 3. — Duties of Other Grand Officers.

ARTICLE VI

**QUORUM, PRESIDING OFFICERS,
COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.**

Section 1. — Quorum.

Section 2. — Presiding Officers.

Section 3. — Communication.

ARTICLE VII

MANNER OF VOTING IN THE GRAND LODGE

**Section 1. — Voting by “Lodges and Members” and
Otherwise.**

Section 2. — No Member Can Cast More Than Four Votes.

Section 3. — Presiding Officer Votes in Case of a Tie.

ARTICLE VIII

SUBORDINATE LODGES

Section 1. — Dispensations, Charters, Etc.

**Section 2. — No Lodges Chartered in Other States or
Countries.**

**Section 3. — Grand Master May Grant Dispensations for
New Lodges.**

Section 4. — Charters Granted by the Grand Lodge Only.

ARTICLE IX

RETURNS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Section 1. — Lodges Shall Make Annual Returns.

Section 2. — Annual Contributions.

**Section 3. — Charter Suspended for Failure to Make
Returns or Pay Dues.**

Section 4. — Fees for Dispensations and Charters.

**ARTICLE X WIDOWS
AND ORPHANS**

Section 1. — Honor and Resources Pledged.

Section 2. — Masonic Home and School.

Section 3. — Provisions for Widows and Orphans.

Section 4. — Board of Directors.

Section 5. — Funds Administered by Grand Lodge and Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XI

COMMITTEE ON WORK

Section 1. — Election, Term of Office, Etc.

ARTICLE XII GENERAL

PROVISIONS

Section 1. — No Expense of Officers, Representatives, or Committees Paid.

Section 2. — All Propositions Must Be Referred to Committee.

Section 3. — Same Question Not Acted upon Again Unless Reconsidered.

Section 4. — Questions of Order Decided by the Presiding Officer.

ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS TO THE

CONSTITUTION

Section 1. — Amendment Must be Approved and Submitted to Lodges.

Section 2. — Voted on at Next Communication. Section 3. — All Laws in Conflict Herewith Repealed. Section 4. — All New Laws to Be Printed in Proceedings. Section 5. — Date of Taking Effect of this Constitution.

Charges of a Freemason

THE CHARGES OF A FREEMASON

I

CONCERNING GOD AND RELIGION. –

Notes on Decisions

No, regarding religion, Masonry is Nonsectarian. There are no provisions in Grand Lodge Laws that would permit a constituent Lodge of the Grand Lodge of Texas to cosign a Christian declaration form required of a Brother by a certain church. This declaration included such statements as, "Whenever I shall choose, if possible, I may convert to Christianity any Brother who has not adopted the Christian Faith." (Article 1, Section 2, Constitution and Charges of a Freemason 1) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 18.

QUESTION: What action can be taken against the well-intentioned but misinformed religious groups in their hysterical attacks on Masonry?

ANSWER: Nothing! Consider and have compassion and sympathy for the source. Demonstrate the great tenets and philosophy of Freemasonry by your support to your church or synagogue; your personal actions in support of your community; and your demonstrated and visible pride in your fraternity. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 5.

II

OF THE CIVIL MAGISTRATES, SUPREME AND SUBORDINATE. –

III

OF LODGES. –

CHARGES OF A FREEMASON. –

IV

OF MASTERS, WARDENS, FELLOWS AND APPRENTICES. –

Charges of a Freemason

V

OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CRAFT IN WORKING. –

CHARGES OF A FREEMASON. –

VI

1. OF BEHAVIOR IN THE LODGE WHILE CONSTITUTED. –

Notes on Decisions

It is improper for any member to present at any meeting matter casting odium or disrepute on other organizations. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 23.

2. BEHAVIOR AFTER THE LODGE IS OVER, AND THE BRETHREN NOT GONE.

3. BEHAVIOR WHEN BRETHREN MEET WITHOUT STRANGERS, BUT NOT IN A LODGE FORMED.

4. BEHAVIOR IN PRESENCE OF STRANGERS NOT MASONS.

5. BEHAVIOR AT HOME AND IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

6. BEHAVIOR TOWARD A STRANGER BROTHER.

DIVISION III THE
STATUTES being
the
CODE OF MASONIC LAWS FOR
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
GRAND LODGE OF TEXAS
ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
AND SUBORDINATE LODGES
UNDER ITS JURISDICTION

CANONS OF CONSTRUCTION

I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
IX

TITLE I

THE GRAND LODGE
CHAPTER 1 - TITLE I

Art. 1. **Style and Title.**

CHAPTER 2 - TITLE I
COMMUNICATIONS

For "Time and Place of " see Constitution Art. VI, Sec. 3, Sub-div. (a);

For "Special Communications" see Constitution Art. VI, Sec. 3, Sub-div. (b).

Art. 2. **Annual Communication.**

Art. 2a. **Representations of the Grand Lodge.**

CHAPTER 3 - TITLE I

MEMBERSHIP

For "Members of the Grand Lodge" see Constitution Art. II, Sec. 1;

For "Representatives in the Grand Lodge" see Constitution Art. II, Sec. 1(d).

Art. 3. **Proxies.**

Art. 4. **Proxy Certificates.**

Art. 5. **Proxy Certified to Grand Secretary.**

Art. 6. **Grand Lodge Membership Lost by Dimit:**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A Lodge elected and installed a Worshipful Master, but Worshipful Master moved away shortly and did not serve as such, is he entitled to be considered as a Past Master of said Lodge?

ANSWER: Since Brother was regularly installed as Worshipful Master and although he moved away, he is entitled to be a Past Master. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1957 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: A letter was received from a group of Past Masters requesting that a former Master of the Lodge, who had been removed from office while serving as Worshipful Master at the time the Charter of the Lodge was arrested, be restored to the rights of a Past Master. In December of the same year, acting upon recommendation of the Grand Master, the suspended Charter was restored to the Lodge and a new set of Officers designated.

ANSWER: It was my decision that inasmuch as the deposed Master was not restored to his rights by Grand Lodge, he is not now a Past Master. The Grand Lodge of Texas alone would have the power to restore such rights and privileges. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 25.

QUESTION: An inquiry has been made as to whether a duly elected and installed Worshipful Master of a constituent Lodge who dies during his term of office would be classified, or recorded, as a Past Master of his Lodge.

ANSWER: A Worshipful Master who dies while in office, if he is not suspended or under charges at the time of his death, should be recognized and recorded as a Past Master of his Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1966 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: A Lodge has inquired regarding whether or not the pictures of Past Masters, who have gone suspended for non-pay-

ment of dues, should be returned to the individuals and not displayed in the Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: It was my opinion that this is a matter for each constituent Lodge to determine for itself. Article 6 does provide "A Past Master, *** who dimits *** loses his *** rights, titles and honors, attaching to such Past office." Going suspended for N.P.D. is usually (not always because of possible inability to pay) a voluntary act and when voluntary, should have the same effect as obtaining a dimit. (See Article 323). But his losing his "rights, titles and honors" is one thing and the Lodge having his picture "hung" on its walls is an entirely different thing. Further in my opinion a Past Master does not have the right to have his picture hung in the Lodgeroom - this is a matter for the Lodge in the first place. Further, I suggested that suspension for N.P.D. does not involve any moral turpitude. The person involved did serve as Master and this is an established fact and a part of the record and history of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 17.

QUESTION: Would a Past Master removed together with all other officers of the Lodge from office by the Grand Master be entitled to Past Master status?

ANSWER: In the absence of documentation showing any Masonic offense or official misconduct on the part of the Worshipful Master or any other officer, the Worshipful Master should not be denied privileges as a Past Master. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1992 - NO. 2.

Title I, Chapters 4, 5 Art. — 6a-10

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Does a Brother, who was installed as Worshipful Master, without having previously served as a Warden or Master of a Lodge in Texas or other recognized jurisdiction, qualify as a "Past Master?"

HELD: If the Brother had no prior service to qualify him for installation as Worshipful Master, his status as a Past Master is set aside, and declared null and void.

Should the Lodge elect to do so, the Brother's picture may be displayed in the Lodgeroom alongside pictures of Past Masters. Although in this case other officers of the Lodge seem totally unaware of the Laws of The Grand Lodge, in spite of all educational efforts and opportunities to acquaint them with that knowledge, no gross un-Masonic conduct was committed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2002 - NO. 4.

Art. 6a. **Statement of Availability.**

CHAPTER 4 - TITLE I
VISITORS

Art. 7a. **Master Masons.**

Art. 8. **Exclusion of Visitors.**

CHAPTER 5 - TITLE I
JURISDICTION AND POWERS

For "Extent of" see Constitution, Art. III.

Art. 9. **Rights Exclusive in Texas.**

Notes on Decisions

Masons not holding membership in Lodges under jurisdiction of Grand Lodge of Texas are not entitled to aid through our Grand Lodge Tubercular Aid Fund. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 5.

Art. 10. **Esoteric Work.**

Notes on Decisions

Associations composed of Certificate or other Masons organized for the purpose of disseminating the esoteric work are prohibited. Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Associations, composed of such officers in any Masonic district, may be organized with the approval of the Grand Master. Copy of the by-laws of each such association must be filed with the Grand Secretary and approved by the Grand Lodge. In districts having concurrent territorial jurisdictions, there shall be only one such association. In other cases, such associations may include all the officers of two or more Masonic districts. For By-Laws of Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Associations see Form 23a.

See under this note the following Annual Proceedings: 1910, p. 26, dec. 22; 1924 Jur. Com., p. 285; 1943, dec. 18; 1954, rec. 6(b), pp. 1023, Com. on P. & P., pp. 136-7, Jur. Com., p. 157.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association has the power to open a Master Mason Lodge for the purpose of the official visit of the Most Worshipful Grand Master.

ANSWER: The Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association is not empowered to open a Master Mason Lodge for any purpose. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1960 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a Master Mason Lodge should be opened at a meeting of the Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association.

ANSWER: No, only necessary to open and close the association in accordance with its Bylaws. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1963 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for one Masonic District to join the Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association of another Masonic District?

ANSWER: It is proper for an Association to include two or more adjoining Districts or two or more Districts having concurrent territorial jurisdiction. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1966 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can certain words be added to the end of the Master Mason's obligation?

ANSWER: No, the esoteric obligations of Masonry are traditional landmarks of Masonry and cannot be altered by additions or deletions. (Article 10). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 30.

Art. 11. Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction.

Art. 12. Regalia.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it considered proper for a District Deputy Grand Master to wear his D.D.G.M. Apron when presiding over Masonic funerals?

ANSWER: No, it is not proper for a District Deputy Grand Master to wear his D.D.G.M. Apron or a Past District Deputy Grand Master to wear his past D.D.G.M. Apron when presiding or attending a funeral conducted by a constituent Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction. However, when attending a funeral conducted and presided over by the Grand Lodge of Texas, the District Deputy Grand Master's Apron is considered the Apron representing the Grand Lodge of Texas, and it should be worn on this occasion. (Article 12). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 32.

QUESTION: Is it proper for members of a Shrine Club serving meals to several Lodges simultaneously, to wear Masonic Aprons and a Shrine fez at the same time?

ANSWER: It is not proper for regalia of other organizations to be worn in conjunction with the Masonic apron at Masonic Lodge meetings. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge officer, who is also a District Deputy Grand Master, wear his District Deputy apron while filling his station in the Lodge?

HELD: As he is at all times the representative of The Grand Master in his District, he may wear his District Deputy apron while filling his Lodge station, provided he also wears the jewel of his office. It would only be improper at a Masonic funeral. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1999 - NO. 2.

Art. 13a **Past Grand Masters Jewels.**

Art. 13b. **Past Grand Masters Portrait.**

Art. 14. **Masonic Service Awards.**

Notes on Decisions

A subordinate Lodge does not have any right or authority to present a Fifty (50) Year Pin: only the Grand Lodge of Texas has authority to present or make the "Fifty-Year Masonic Service Award." See Article 14 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. See said Article, also, for the procedure to be followed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Would it be proper to present the Fifty-Year Gold Grand Lodge Masonic Award to a Master Mason at a Scottish Rite Reunion?

ANSWER: It would be improper for the Fifty-Year Masonic Service award, a gift of The Grand Lodge of Texas, to be presented in other than a symbolic Lodge or at Annual Communications of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 14.

That a Brother suspended and reinstated in the past, may not now pay the dues for such period of suspension, and thereby become entitled to count such suspension period toward the Fifty Year Masonic Service Award. Considering the fact that the time during which dues accumulated during the period of suspension ended on December 3, 1930, it was my further decision that only suspended years prior to December 3, 1930, could be counted toward the Award, and even then, only if reinstatement was accomplished prior to December 3, 1930. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1959 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Brother A affiliated with a Lodge in our Grand Jurisdiction on September 8, 1966. This Brother received a Fifty-year Award from the Grand Lodge of Ohio in 1966 and the Lodge in our Grand Jurisdiction would like to present Brother A with a Fifty-year Masonic Service Award in accordance with Article 14 of our Laws. It was asked if Brother A is eligible to receive a Fifty-year Masonic Service Award from The Grand Lodge of Texas.

ANSWER: It was my opinion, based on the facts submitted, that Brother A, being now a full member of our Lodge in Texas, is entitled to our Fifty-year Masonic Service Award. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 15.

QUESTION: Who may present the Fifty-Year Masonic Service Award?

ANSWER: Article 14 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas provides that a Fifty-Year Masonic Service Award may be presented to a member of a Lodge who has been in good standing in a Lodge or Lodges for a total of fifty years or more. Further, the Grand Master upon finding the record sufficient, may in person, or by a duly authorized representative, present such award to the member as a gift of this Grand Lodge. The Grand Secretary shall keep a permanent record of all such awards. It has been the policy for many years, since it is impossible for the Grand Master to present all Fifty-Year Masonic Service Awards, to send this award to the District Deputy Grand Master of the Masonic District where the Brother desires to have it presented to him. This is usually where the Brother resides. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 38.

QUESTION: Can the Fifty-Year Masonic Service Award be presented to the widow of a deceased Master Mason?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible for the widow of a Master Mason to receive the Fifty-Year Masonic Service Award, if the Master Mason was eligible to receive the award before death. (Article 14). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 39.

QUESTION: Does a Lodge need a dispensation to hold an open meeting to present a Fifty-Year Masonic Service Award?

ANSWER: No, it is not necessary to give a dispensation for an open meeting for the presentation of a Fifty-Year Masonic Service Award. (Purpose 6 of the General Dispensation granted on December 7, 1972). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 40.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge issue special dues cards to Fifty-Year Masonic Service Award members?

ANSWER: No, Grand Lodge Laws do not provide for a Lodge to design special membership cards to issue to Fifty-Year Masonic

Service members. It is suggested that many Secretaries simply type or write on each current dues card issued for such members the simple statement, "Fifty-Year Member." (Article 60). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 41.

QUESTION: Would a Lodge be exempt from paying its per capita contributions to The Grand Lodge of Texas on a dual member who had been awarded a life membership and a 50-year service certificate from a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction?

ANSWER: Such life membership and 50 year service certificate from another Grand Jurisdiction would not exempt the Texas Lodge from payment of the per capita contributions to The Grand Lodge of Texas, since Texas Lodges are not exempt from paying Grand Lodge dues on life members of that Lodge and exemptions from dues for those receiving 50 year service awards provided by Article 316, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas, apply only to those members who are entitled to 50 year Masonic service awards from The Grand Lodge of Texas under Article 14, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. Jurisprudence Committee qualified Decision No. 39: "That it might be possible the dual member involved might be entitled to a Texas Fifty-year Masonic Service Award and this possibility should be investigated." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 39.

QUESTION: Can Brethren who were suspended prior to December 3, 1941 for non-payment of dues count the time between their dates of suspension and the December 3, 1941 date?

ANSWER: That the language of the amendment is very clear and states that the Brother who was suspended prior to December 3, 1941, for non-payment of dues may count his period of suspension toward the 50 Year Award only if he was reinstated prior to December 3, 1941. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1985 - NO. 5.

Art. 14a. **The Sam Houston Medal.**

Art. 14b. **The W. B. and Brandon Carrell Humanitarian Award.**

Art. 14c. **The Golden Trowel Award.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can a Lodge present nine (9) Golden Trowel Awards at the same time?

HELD: No. Our Rules are quite clear, and only two awards may be presented per year. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 4.

Art. 14d. **Community Builders Award.**

Art. 14e. **Daniel Carter Beard Masonic Award.**

Art. 15. **Clandestine Lodges.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Do Grand Lodge Laws in Texas forbid Masonic communication with Negroes?

ANSWER: No, there is nothing in the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas which forbids a Texas Mason to sit in a constituent Lodge or a Grand Lodge simply because a member or members of that Lodge or Grand Lodge are Negroes. In fact, the Grand Lodge of Texas is in fraternal relations with many Grand Lodges which have Negro members. Article 15 relates to Prince Hall Masonry which is considered clandestine by nearly all of the Grand Lodges in the world. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 76.

QUESTION: Can a Prince Hall Mason petition for membership in a Texas Lodge?

ANSWER: No. We have recognized Prince Hall Masonry in Texas as regular in practice and origin. However, that recognition is "without privileges." Therefore, a Prince Hall Mason would have to "sever" all ties with his fraternity and then petition a constituent Lodge of the Texas Grand Lodge of Texas, A.F. & A.M. (See Grand Lodge Proceedings 2006) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 4.

Art. 16. **Side Degrees.**

Notes on Decisions

I issued the following instructions for the Lodge's guidance:

"No side degrees will be put on, no deviation will be made from the work that has been approved by the Grand Lodge and the Committee on Work. There will be nothing added to nor subtracted from" GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1953 - NO. 18.

Art. 17. **General Grand Lodge.**

Art. 18. **Recognition Criteria of Other Grand Lodges.**

Art. 19. **Masonic Relief Association.**

Art. 20. **New Ballot Prohibited.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can the Grand Master assist a rejected candidate by requiring another ballot upon his application?

ANSWER: No, the Grand Master has no power to set aside any ballot or to order another vote by any Lodge on any petition. (Article 22-B). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 24.

Art. 20a. **Trustees.**

Art. 20b. **Annual Audit.**

Art. 20c. **Duty to Appoint Trustee's Audit Committee.**

CHAPTER 6 - TITLE I
OFFICERS

For “Rank and Titles” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 1;

For “Elective Grand Officers” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 2;

For “Appointive Grand Officers” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 3;

For “Election and Installation” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec’s. 4 and 10;

For “Failure to Elect and Install” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 5;

For “Eligibility of Office” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 6;

For “Mode of Election” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 7;

For “Manner of Voting” see Constitution, Art. VII, Sec’s. 1 to 3.

Art. 21. Hold Only One Office.

CHAPTER 7 - TITLE I
THE GRAND MASTER: DUTIES AND POWERS

For “Rank and Title” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 1;

For “Elective” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 2;

For “Mode of Nomination” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 7, Sub-div. (a);

For “Installation” see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec’s. 4 and 10;

For “Duties and Powers” see Constitution, Art. V, Sec’s. 1 and 2;

For “Must Preside” see Constitution, Art. VI, Sec. 2, Sub-div. (a);

For “Order of Succession” see Constitution, Art. VI, Sec. 2, Sub-div. (b);

For “May Grant Dispensation” see Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 2; Art. VIII, Sec. 3;

For “Shall Cast Deciding Vote” see Constitution, Art. VIII, Sec. 3;

For “All Questions of Order Decided by” see Constitution, Art. XII, Sec. 4;

For “In Case of Death, Absence, Who to Act” see Constitution, Art. VI, Sec. 2, Sub-div. (b).

Art. 22. General Powers.**Notes on Decisions**

The Grand Master has no power:

- (a) To set aside a Law of the Grand Lodge.
- (b) To inquire into or set aside a ballot after it is declared.
(Compare Decision 6, 1972, under **Art. 324.**)
- (c) To grant dispensation to confer degrees on one who has not been domiciled 6 months in State and 6 months in the jurisdiction of a Lodge.
- (d) To grant dispensation authorizing one not eligible under **Art. 276** to serve as Master.
- (e) To authorize dimit to an Elected Officer during his term of office.
- (f) To grant waiver of a candidate's examination.
- (g) To receive or act upon a protest; but may direct proper procedure.
- (h) To fill vacancy on Committee on Work.
- (i) To grant permission for Lodge to move from location fixed by Grand Lodge.
- (j) To control disposition of charity funds of a Lodge.
- (k) To remit Grand Lodge Dues.
- (l) To postpone Lodge trial.
- (m) To authorize Lodge to open on Sunday and members attend Church in a body as a Lodge.
- (n) To elect an officer at any other time than as provided in **Art. 292**; nor to order a new election out of time; nor to hold a special meeting for election of Officers; nor to install an officer after July 31.
- (o) To authorize anyone to install officers except those designated in **Art. 295**.
- (p) To authorize withdrawal of a petition for degrees or advancement after it has been lawfully received by Lodge. **Art. 405.**
- (q) To confer a degree on more than one candidate at the same time. **Art. 431.**
- (r) To relieve a Brother from compliance with the provisions of **Art. 439.**

QUESTION: A request was received from Brother Edward R. Carman, Grand Secretary of The Grand Lodge of New York, relative to a sunshine cruise on the SS Mauretania asking if it would be permissible to circularize Lodges "to ascertain if any of their Brethren might be interested in such an affair."

ANSWER: This request was answered in part as follows:
"Inasmuch as permission is being sought to circularize certain of

our Lodges to ascertain if any of their Brethren might be interested in such an affair, it is apparent that those who are to conduct such cruises are in effect asking the Grand Master, and The Grand Lodge of Texas to actively assist in the promotion of such project. The International High Noon Club, although not recognized by our Grand Lodge, will conduct the cruises without direct control or supervision by The Grand Lodge of New York. However even though the Grand Lodge of New York were to supervise the cruises, neither The Grand Lodge of Texas nor the Grand Lodge of New York would have any sort of supervision over the arrangements. Therefore, having no desire to extend our present responsibilities with respect to acts of commission or omission on the part of appendant organizations, I must deny this request of The Grand Lodge of New York. It has been the firm policy of The Grand Lodge of Texas not to permit the Lodges to be circularized at any time. Therefore, this policy cannot be changed, if for no other reason than it might throw open the doors to various other circularizations all of which are prohibited by our Laws.” GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 48.

QUESTION: Can the Grand Master assist a rejected candidate by requiring another ballot upon his applications?

ANSWER: No, the Grand Master has no power to set aside any ballot or to order another vote by any Lodge on any petition. (Article 22-B). GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 24.

QUESTION: Can the Grand Master waive the proficiency examination for an E. A. who is unable to study and learn the work through illness?

ANSWER: No, the Grand Master does not have the authority to waive or set aside the proficiency examinations of a Brother who is unable to learn and pass the proficiency examination. (Article 22-f). GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 51.

QUESTION: Can the Grand Master grant an extension of time for the examination of proficiency in the E. A. Degree?

ANSWER: No, the Grand Master has no authority to extend the time limit for the examination of proficiency of an E. A. Brother when his time limit has elapsed (twelve months since he received the Entered Apprentice Degree). (Article 22-a). GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 52.

Art. 23. When Grand Treasurer or Secretary Incapacitated.

Art. 24. Appoint and Remove District Deputies.

Art. 25. Unsafe Lodge.**Notes on Decisions**

It is not absolutely necessary that janitor or caretaker of a Lodge be a Mason. It is undesirable that non-Mason be employed if Mason can reasonably be obtained, as such caretaker may improperly or inadvertently see records which should not be read by him.

GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 15.

The Grand Master is authorized to approve a one-story Lodge building if sound-proof and Masonically safe. Circumstances with respect to each building govern Grand Master's action. Determination as to safety of each building must be made from facts affecting the particular building. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 18.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to erect a metallic building which will be insulated and sealed inside, for a Lodge building?

ANSWER: It is permissible to erect a metallic building, which will be insulated and sealed inside, as long as the building is Masonically safe and so certified pursuant to Grand Lodge Law as the type of material used is not specified in Grand Lodge Laws. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1971 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: May a one-story Lodge building have a door in the East?

ANSWER: This would be undesirable, but not prohibited, provided it was so constructed as not to detract from the appearance of the East to those in the Lodge Room and provided it was so constructed as to be sound proof and insure Masonic safety. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 6.

Art. 26. Investigate Finances.**Art. 27. Physical Defects.****Art. 28. Mortgaging Lodge Property.**

"Art. 1400 (1215-18) Lodges: charter

"Art. 1401. (1216) Lodge: trustees

"Art. 1402. (1217) Lodges: property

Notes on Decisions

Application for permission to erect new building, or incur indebtedness therefore, must show the completed plans and specifications of the proposed Lodge, the cost thereof, the amount to be paid in cash by the Lodge, and the amount to be borrowed, and all essential terms of the loan, and also show the probable ability of the

Lodge to repay said indebtedness. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 19.

A Lodge may have joint ownership of a building with the Chapter, Council, or any other Masonic Body, either by title directly in the name of the joint owners, or through a corporation, a trust or other legal holding entity. The interests of the several Bodies need to be clearly stated in the muniment of title, or agreement of the Bodies, and consent of the Grand Master is necessary with respect to participation of the Blue Lodge in the acquisition of the property. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 20.

QUESTION: May a group of Lodges ban together and create a Masonic Learning Center?

ANSWER: As other allied Masonic organizations provide excellent and well established Learning Centers, it would not be in the best interest of Freemasonry in Texas for Masonic Lodges to duplicate or compete in such services. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1993 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: May a Lodge participate in a Slow Pitch Softball League, and wear uniforms identifying them as Masons?

HELD: Yes, provided the uniforms are labeled "Blank Masonic Lodge," that no Masonic emblems be displayed, and that the team conduct itself at all times in an exemplary manner, exhibiting the highest moral qualities and personal courtesies. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Constituent Lodge or Lodges to form a Masonic Historical Museum and Library and Library and Masonic Preservation Foundation?

HELD: Such is not proper, and would be contrary to Grand Decision No. 8, 1989, approved by Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Does the sale or mortgage of real estate owned in fee by a Masonic Building Association or a Masonic Temple Association require prior consent or approval by the Grand Master or Grand Lodge?

ANSWER: The Grand Lodge Law requires prior consent or approval from the Grand Master or Grand Lodge before a Lodge can enter a contract of sale (unless the contract specifies performance is conditioned upon such approval), sell, or mortgage any real property in which it owns an interest, whether that interest is represented by ownership of shares of stock in a Masonic Building

Association, a Masonic Temple Association, or any other evidence of ownership. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 2.

Art. 29. **Sell Demised Lodge's Property.**

Art. 30. **Appoint Grand Representatives.**

Art. 31. **Waiver of Jurisdiction.**

Art. 32. **Restore Charter: Demised Lodges.**

Art. 33. **Visit and Inspect Lodges.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Question was asked, should a District Deputy Grand Master be examined if he cannot be vouched for?

ANSWER: Article 33 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas:

The right to visit and inspect Lodges belongs to no one but the Grand Master and his representatives. Whenever the Grand Master, or his representatives, shall visit a Lodge it shall be made known to the Master of the Lodge that the Grand Master, or his representative, is in waiting, so that he may make the necessary preparations for receiving him with the honors and consideration due to his exalted station.

When either the Grand Master or the District Deputy Grand Master visits the Lodge, it is supposed that previous notice will have been given the Lodge, that he will be expected and will, of course, be clothed in the proper regalia of his office. In such instances, it is not necessary that he or they be examined or avouched for nor should any Brother presume to do so. This Decision is approved with the modification and qualification, however, that the presiding officer of the Lodge is authorized to, and must, satisfy himself as to the identity of Grand Master or District Deputy Grand Master, who is presenting himself for admission into the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 24.

Art. 34. **Formalities: Receiving Grand Master or His Representatives.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: An inquiry was made by a District Deputy Grand Master as to whether he should preside and wear his hat during his official visit.

ANSWER: If he chooses to retain the gavel and preside over the Lodge, he should assume the Master's station and then be covered. A District Deputy Grand Master should not wear his hat while being received or at any other time, except when actually presiding over the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Can the Grand Master of another jurisdiction be received with private Grand Honors when visiting a subordinate Lodge in Texas?

ANSWER: No, in accordance with Article 34, it is not proper to receive a Grand Master of another Grand Jurisdiction in a constituent Lodge in Texas with Private Grand Honors. If the Worshipful Master of the Lodge desires, he may have the Brothers rise and give the distinguished visitor applause. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 77.

QUESTION: Can a District Deputy Grand Master or other Grand Lodge Officer be officially received in an Entered Apprentice Lodge or Fellowcraft Lodge?

ANSWER: No. The Grand Lodge Officer will be received in a Master Mason's Lodge and then the Lodge will be "called" down to an Entered Apprentice Lodge or Fellowcraft Lodge for the remainder of meeting. Once that Lodge is closed, the Master Mason's Lodge would then be called from "refreshment to labor" and duly closed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008- NO. 8.

Art. 35. Mason at Sight Prohibited.

Art. 37. Lodge Meetings in Other Halls.

Art. 38. Lodges Appearing in Public.

Notes on Decisions

I have held that the High Noon Club of Dallas is legal, being a group of Masons who meet only for luncheon and discussions, doing no esoteric work and not holding themselves out as any specific Masonic Body. Also held that such group may raise funds for Christmas gifts to Masonic Home and School, Home for Aged Masons, and similar purposes. They may make the solicitation provided there is obtained the consent of the Grand Master and the Masonic organization for whose benefit the funds are to be raised. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 79.

Masonic Lodges, individually or by Districts, or groups of Masons, are authorized to establish blood banks and other charitable and helpful projects under strictly Masonic control. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 80.

QUESTION: Should a Lodge use its funds and the name of its Lodge to sponsor and conduct an annual open event such as a Fish Fry or Barbecue and charge a fee for the purpose of raising funds for a local high school scholarship or for improvements to a local public recreation park, providing that the profits realized from such an event are placed in a Special Lodge Account that is designated and used for that purpose?

ANSWER: The activity described does not fall within the requirement that the fund raising activities be essential to the existence of the Lodge. If the activity is to be undertaken outside of the Lodge building it would be subject to the provisions of Articles 38 and 240 of Grand Lodge Law. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1983 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to participate in a city's observance of the 4th of July?

ANSWER: Article 38 of Grand Lodge Law provides that the Grand Master may grant dispensations to Lodges to appear in public for any proper Masonic purpose provided the function is one of a patriotic or community character and is noncontroversial and non-partisan. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: May a Lodge, at the request of the family, act as honorary Pallbearers at the funeral of one of its members?

ANSWER: To do so would be proper and in keeping with the highest principles of Freemasonry, and would not be in violation of Articles 38 and 240. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1993 - NO. 1.

Art. 39. **Shortening Time for Degrees.**

Notes on Decisions

The Grand Master may grant a dispensation to shorten the time between degrees, when there is an extreme emergency, but the Grand Master is not empowered to grant an extension of time limits fixed in Article 452a (now 416) and/or 468. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 40.

Art. 40. **Appoint Special Committees.**

Art. 41. **Delegation of Powers.**

Art. 42. **Expenses.**

Art. 43. **Annual Reports: Copies to Committees.**

Art. 44. **Annual Reports: Contents.**

CHAPTER 8 - TITLE I DEPUTY GRAND MASTER

For "Rank and Title" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 1;

For "Elective" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 2;

*For "Mode of Nomination" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 7,
Sub-div. (b);*

For "Duties and Powers" see Constitution, Arts. V and VI;

*For "Succeeds to Duties of Grand Master, When" see
Constitution, Art. VI, Sec. 2, Sub-div. (b).*

CHAPTER 9 - TITLE I

GRAND SENIOR AND JUNIOR WARDENS

For "Rank and Title" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 1;

For "Elective" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 2;

*For "Mode of Nomination" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 7,
Sub-div. (c);*

For "Duties and Powers" see Constitution, Arts. IV, V, and VI.

CHAPTER 10 - TITLE I

GRAND TREASURER

Art. 45. Duties.

For "Rank and Title" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 1;

For "Elective" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 2;

*For "Mode of Nomination" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 7,
Sub-div. (c);*

For "Duties and Powers" see Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 3.

CHAPTER 11 - TITLE I

GRAND SECRETARY

Art. 46. Bond.

Art. 46a. Salary and Expenses.

For "Rank and Title" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 1;

For "Elective" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 2;

*For "Mode of Nomination" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 7,
sub-div. (c);*

For "Duties and Powers" see Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 3.

*For "Returns and Contributions of Lodges" see Constitution,
Art. IX;*

*For "Laws, Rules, Resolutions, etc., Published by" see
Constitution, Art. XIII, Sec. 4.*

Art. 47. Record Proceedings.

Art. 47a. Supervision of the Grand Lodge Temple.

Art. 47b. Smoking in Grand Lodge.

Art. 48. Receive and Account for Money.

Art. 49. Deposit Money.

Art. 50. Printing.

Art. 51. Home and School Funds.

Art. 52. Loans to Special Funds.

Art. 53. **Annual Report.**

Art. 54. **Instructions to Lodge Officers.**

Art. 55. **Forms for Lodge Returns.**

Art. 56. **Inspect Lodge Returns.**

Art. 57. **Notice to Lodges Not Reporting.**

Art. 58. **District Deputy to Help Collect Lodge Arrears.**

Art. 59. **Notice to Suspended Lodges.**

Art. 60. **Uniform Dues Receipt.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can a Lodge issue special dues cards to Fifty-Year Masonic Service Award members?

ANSWER: No, Grand Lodge Laws do not provide for a Lodge to design special membership cards to issue to Fifty-Year Masonic Service members. It is suggested that many Secretaries simply type or write on each current dues card issued for such members the simple statement, "Fifty-Year Member." (Article 60). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 41.

Art. 61. **Receive and Distribute Petitions, etc.**

Art. 62. **Deliver Documents and Notices of Appointment.**

Art. 63. **Keep Grievance Committee Reports for Inspection.**

Art. 64. **Diplomas: Past Grand Officers.**

Art. 65. **Diplomas: Master Masons.**

Art. 66. **Attest and Seal Documents.**

Art. 67. **Rosters.**

Art. 68. **Printing Rosters.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible for past District Deputies to use the official letterhead of the Grand Lodge of Texas?

ANSWER: No it is not permissible for past District Deputies, or for that matter, other past Officers of the Grand Lodge, to use the official letterhead, with the exception of Past Grand Masters. Past appointive Grand Officers do not retain any official title, such as "Past Grand Senior Deacon," or "Past District Deputy Grand Master," although many brethren, when introducing an Individual past Grand Officer, refer to these "titles" out of courtesy. This is a nice gesture, and recognizes past service, even though not official. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 4.

Art. 69. **Portraits in Proceedings.**

Art. 70. **Masonic Offenders.**

- Art. 71. **Memorials in.**
 Art. 72. **Register of Grand Lodges and Representatives.**
 Art. 73. **Distribute Proceedings.**
 Art. 74. **Keep Record of Grand Representatives.**

CHAPTER 12 - TITLE I DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTERS

For "Appointive Grand Officers" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 3, Sub-div. (a);

For "Qualifications" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 7;

For "Vacancies, How Filled" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 8;

For "Powers and Duties" see Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 3;

For "Creation of New Districts" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 8;

For "Duties and Powers Relating to Masonic Discipline" see Title V, Chapter 23, Articles 647-653.

For "Assisting in Collecting Lodge Dues in Arrears" See Art. 58.

- Art. 75. **Masonic Districts.**
 Art. 76. **Warrant of Appointment.**
 Art. 77. **Powers.**

- Art. 78. **Visitation.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Should a District Deputy Grand Master be examined if he cannot be vouched for?

DECISION: **Article 33 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas**

The right to visit and inspect Lodges belongs to no one but the Grand Master and his representatives. Whenever the Grand Master, or his representatives, shall visit a Lodge it shall be made known to the Master of the Lodge that the Grand Master, or his representative, is in waiting, so that he may make the necessary preparations for receiving him with the honors and consideration due to his exalted station. When either the Grand Master or the District Deputy Grand Master visits the Lodge, it is supposed that previous notice will have been given the Lodge, that he will be expected and will, of course, be clothed in the proper regalia of his office. In such instances, it is not necessary that he or they be examined or avouched for nor should any Brother presume to do so. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 24.

This Decision is approved with the modification and qualification, however, that the presiding officer of the Lodge is authorized to, and must, satisfy himself as to the identity of the Grand Master or District Deputy Grand Master, who is presenting himself for admission into the Lodge. COMMITTEE ON MASONIC JURISPRUDENCE - 1958.

QUESTION: Is District Service Team and District Deputy Grand Master name badges considered Grand Lodge Regalia, and can these badges be worn at the meetings of appendant bodies?

ANSWER: No. Name badges issued by the Grand Lodge of Texas are not considered to be regalia. However the wearer should accede to the request of the appendant body to remove the same. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 2.

Art. 79. **Examine Records.**

Art. 80. **Inspect Lodgeroom for Masonic Security.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: The question has been asked whether a Lodge, which has no permanent building (a so called Trunk Lodge), may hold its meetings in locations such as local meeting rooms, restaurants, town halls or the like.

ANSWER: It is my decision that so long as the proposed location for the meeting is found by the District Deputy Grand Master to be Masonically safe and secure in compliance with Article 80 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, the Lodge paraphernalia, including its minutes, are also maintained secure, and that so long as a Grand Master's dispensation is obtained for the location, a Lodge may meet in the proposed location.

Any prior Grand Master's decision to the contrary is hereby overruled. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION – 2006 - NO. 3.

Art. 81. **Other Duties.**

Art. 82. **Not Collect Lodge Dues.**

Art. 83. **Report.**

Art. 84. **Expenses.**

Art. 85. **Cannot Grant Dispensations.**

CHAPTER 13 - TITLE I
APPOINTIVE OFFICERS

For "Rank and Title" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 1;

For "List of" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 3, Sub-div. (a);

For "By Whom Appointed" see Constitution, Art. IV, Sec. 3, Sub-div. (a), (b) and (c);

For "Installation" see Constitution, Art. IV, Secs. 4 and 10;

For "Duties" see Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 3.

Art. 86. **Grand Chaplain.**

Art. 87. **Grand Orator.**

Art. 88. **Grand Marshal.**

Art. 89. **Grand Deacons.**

Art. 90. **Grand Stewards.**

Art. 91. **Grand Pursuivant.**

Art. 91a. **Grand Organist.**

Art. 91b. **Grand Photographer.**

Art. 92. **Grand Tiler.**

CHAPTER 14 - TITLE I

GRAND LODGE TEMPORARY COMMITTEE

For "Certain Resolutions Must First Be Referred To" see Constitution, Art. XII, Sec. 2;

For "Amendments to Constitution Must Be Referred To" see Constitution, Art. XIII, Sec. 1.

Art. 93. **Enumeration.**

Art. 94. Repealed in 2002.

Art. 95. (117). **Petitions and Returns of Lodges Under Dispensation.**

Art. 96. (118). Deleted 2001.

Art. 97. **By-Laws.** See Article 126d.

Art. 98. See Article 126b.

Art. 99. **Other Temporary Committees.** (See also Art. 40.)

CHAPTER 15 - TITLE I

GRAND LODGE COMMITTEES SERVING ONE YEAR

Art. 100. **Enumeration.**

Art. 101. **Memorials.**

Art. 102. (127). Repealed 2000.

Art. 103. **Committee on Special Assignments.**

Art. 104. **Transportation.** Deleted 2001.

Art. 104(a). **Texas Masonic History.**

CHAPTER 16 - TITLE I

GRAND LODGE PERMANENT COMMITTEES

Art. 105. (130). **Enumeration and Tenure.**

Art. 105a. **Committee Member Removal.**

Art. 106. **Fraternal Relations.**

Art. 107. **Masonic Jurisprudence.**

Art. 108. **Grand Officers' Reports.** Deleted 2001.

Art. 109. (133) **Grievances and Appeals: Duties.**

Art. 110. (134, 135). **Grievances and Appeals: Reports.**

Art. 111. **Masonic Education and Service.**

Art. 112. **Masonic Education and Service: Rules.**

Art. 113. **Masonic Education and Service: Annual Report.**

Art. 114. Repealed 1971.

- Art. 115. **Masonic Education and Service: Obligations.**
- Art. 116. **Purposes and Policies.**
- Art. 117. **Credentials.**
- Art. 118. **Masonic Graduate Advisory Committee.**
- Art. 119. **Finance: Meetings and Duties.**
- Art. 120. Repealed 2002.
- Art. 121. **Finance: Annual Report and Budget.**
- Art. 122. **Grand Lodge Assistance Fund: Consists of Finance Committee.**
- Art. 123. **Grand Lodge Assistance Fund: Duties.**
- Art. 124. **Grand Lodge Assistance Fund: Receipts and Disbursements.**
- Art. 125. **Grand Lodge Assistance Fund: Purposes of Fund.**
- Art. 126. **Grand Lodge Assistance Fund: Annual Report.**

Art. 126a. **Public Education.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to present the Lamar Medal to a student of a private School?

HELD: Such would not be proper under the provisions of Article 126a. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2000 - NO. 4.

- Art.126b. **Titles, Deeds and Civil Law.**
- Art. 126c. **Youth Activities.**
- Art.126d. **By-Laws.**
- Art. 126e. **Membership Maintenance.**
- Art. 126f. **Grand Lodge Committee on Mediation Nos. 1 and 2.**
- Art.126g. **Committee on Communication.**
- Art.126h. **Committee on Investments.**
- Art. 126i. **Committee on Internet.**

CHAPTER 17 - TITLE I COMMITTEE ON WORK

For "Election and Term of Office" see Constitution, Art. XI.

Art. 127. **Ritual.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: On four occasions, English-speaking Lodges located in Foreign Countries have written stating that it is the desire of a Lodge of Master Masons working under the jurisdiction of a regular Grand Lodge to use Texas Ritual and Texas work in their ceremonies and asked permission to do the same.

ANSWER: I advised them that according to Article 152 of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas no deviation from our Texas Ritual is allowed within the Jurisdiction of Texas, however, it is my opinion that if it meets with the approval of the Grand Lodge, under whose jurisdiction they were working, there was no objection to their using the Texas work and Ritual or any other. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 34.

QUESTION: The question was asked whether it would be permissible for Brethren from another Grand Jurisdiction to confer a degree in a Texas Lodge, according to the ritual of the other Grand Jurisdiction or according to the Texas ritual.

ANSWER: The provisions of Articles 127 and 236, Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, would prohibit the conferring of a degree in a Texas Lodge by a team from another Grand Jurisdiction, either according to Texas ritual or according to the ritual of the other Grand Jurisdiction.

Jurisprudence Committee qualified Decision 30:

"It is our opinion that it is permissible for a team, except the Acting Master, from another Grand Jurisdiction to confer any degree in Texas if Texas ritual is used and if the Acting Master is a member of a Texas Lodge." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 30.

QUESTION: Can the words "declare and affirm" be substituted in the ritual?

ANSWER: There is no place in the Ritual where the words "declare and affirm" can be substituted for any words that are used, and one who cannot conscientiously conform to all the requirements of our Order has no place among us. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a group of Masons, some of whom are members of local Lodges to meet as a group for fellowship and for practice of the degrees as they are conferred in the Grand Lodge of the Philippines?

ANSWER: The forming of this club for the purpose so stated would not serve the best interest of Freemasonry in this Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS - 1985 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it is permissible for a Lodge to accept petitions for the degrees in Masonry from men who do not use or understand our native tongue and to perform Masonic work in a foreign tongue for the petitioner, if accepted?

And accept a petition for affiliation from a Brother, who is a member of a recognized Lodge, who does not use our native language?

ANSWER: It is required that a candidate for the Degrees be able to read and write. This both by inference and of necessity alludes to the English language. It is, also, our established custom that all ritualistic work of the Degrees as well as the ceremonies of opening and closing must be done according to the ritual and lectures as promulgated by this Grand Lodge, both esoteric and exoteric; also, in the English language. Obviously it would be improper, if not impossible for one not able to read and write English to conform to our forms and ceremonies in any manner. Therefore, no Lodge would be permitted to receive or ballot upon the petition of one unable to read, write and speak English. The next question, regarding affiliation of a Brother in good standing in a Lodge of another regular Grand Jurisdiction is one that relates to the universality of Masonry. In this case I assume that the non-English speaking members are members by affiliation and NOT by initiation. If we are to measure up as Masons to the responsibility of our much talked of Universality, if we are to aid in uniting men of every Country, sect and opinion, we must be ready to receive all well qualified Brethren into our Lodges not only as visitors, but as affiliates, if agreeable to the Brethren of the Lodge. It is, therefore, my decision that Lodges may receive petitions for affiliation and elect to membership by affiliation such Brethren from other regular Grand Jurisdictions, even though they are unable to write and speak the English language. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION -1958 - NO. 56.

QUESTION: At a stated meeting, should the Worshipful Master, at the conclusion of the meeting, ask the secretary if he has any further business to bring before the Lodge?

ANSWER: During the "ritualistic closing" of a Master's Lodge, either stated or called, the Worshipful Master would refer to the Secretary. If the stated meeting was held in an Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft Lodge, the Worshipful Master, in his own words, not ritualistically, should ask the Secretary if he has anything to bring before the Lodge, then begin the "ritualistic closing" as prescribed by the Committee on Work. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 12.

Art. 128. **Proficiency of Members.**

Art. 129. **Duties of Committee.**

Art. 130. **The “Word”.**

Art. 131. **Examinations.**

Art. 132. **Certificates.**

Art. 132a. **Certificates: Classifications**

Class C

Class B

Class A

Art. 133. **Certificates: For One, Two and Three Years.**

Art. 134. **Certificates: Renewal.**

Art. 135. **Certificates: Life.**

Art. 136. **Certificates: Life to Ex-Chairman.**

Art. 137. **Certificates: Authentication.**

Art. 138. **Certificates: Forfeiture.**

Art. 139. **Esoteric Work: Who May Exemplify.**

Art. 140. **Esoteric Work: Employing Instructor.**

Art. 141. **Esoteric Work: Examination for Certificates.**

Art. 142. **Esoteric Work: Schools of Instruction.**

Notes on Decisions

Article 171 prohibits holding a school of instruction any place except a Lodgeroom or Grand Lodge Temple. This applies to a formal school under direct auspices and direction of Lodges. It is permissible for the Brethren to meet informally in any hall or place, Masonically safe, and study the esoteric work, including practice here necessary. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 7.

Art. 142a. **Degree Team Recognition.**

Art. 143. **Committeemen: Compensation.**

Art. 144. **Committeemen: Expenses.**

CHAPTER 18 - TITLE I

MASONIC HOME AND SCHOOL

For "Resources Pledged To" see Constitution, Art. X, Sec. 1;

For "Funds for Support Of " See Constitution, Art. X, Sec. 3;

For "Board of Directors, Powers, etc.," see Constitution, Art. X, Sec. 4;

For "Administration of Funds" see Constitution, Art. X, Sec. 5.

Art. 145. **Annual Audit and Report.**

Art. 146. **Use of Funds.**

Art. 147. **Endowment Fund.**

Art. 148 (182). **Endowment Fund.**

Art. 149. **Withdrawals from General Fund.**

Art. 150. **Release of Loans.**

Art. 151. **Mutation of Securities.**

Art. 152. **Sale of Lands.**

Art. 153. **No Sale of Site Unless Authorized.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can a Worshipful Master refuse to allow the lodge to vote on a motion made and seconded in open lodge?

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master is accorded broad discretion in this matter. Certainly the Worshipful Master should prevent the lodge from taking an illegal action. If the Brethren disagree with the actions of the Worshipful Master, article 283 provides for an appeal to Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 5.

Art. 154. **Leases.**

Art. 155. **Donations and Bequests.**

Art. 156. **Erection of Buildings.**

Art. 157. **Rules.**

Art. 158. **Employees: Appointment; Duties; Salaries.**

Art. 160. **Treasurer: Bond.**

Art. 161. **Widows Supported at Aged Masons Home.**

Art. 162. **Students Visit Annual Communication.**

CHAPTER 19 - TITLE I GRAND LODGE REVENUES

For "Additional Contributions" see Constitution, Arts. IX and

X.

Art. 163. **Fees, Dues, and Contributions.**

sum of

Notes on Decisions

That the \$10.00 contribution to the Endowment Fund of the Masonic Home and School of Texas may not be paid by the Lodge but must be paid by the candidate in addition to the Lodge's regular Degree fee for the Master's Degree. The whole aim and purpose of this requirement is to cause the new Master Mason to be conscious of our Home and School and to impress upon him the fact that he has a share in this great Institution. There is nothing new about this requirement of the Law as it has been in effect for many years. It is reported here because it seems to have been generally misunderstood for many years by some of our constituent Lodges.

GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1959 - NO. 5.

Art. 163a. **Grand Lodge Building Maintenance Reserve Fund.**

Art.163b. **The Endowed Membership Fund.**

Art. 163c. **The Grand Lodge Endowment Fund.**

Art.163d. **The Grand Lodge Insurance Reserve Fund.**

CHAPTER 20 - TITLE I RULES OF PROCEDURE IN THE GRAND LODGE

For "Questions of Order Decided by the Presiding Officer Without Debate or Appeal" see Constitution, Art. XII, Sec. 4;

For "When a Question is Decided Cannot Be Acted Upon Again, Unless" see Constitution, Art. XII, Sec. 3;

For "Resolution to Be Referred Appropriate Committee" see Constitution, Art. XIII, Sec. 2;

For "Amendments to Be Referred to Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence and to the Lodges" see Constitution, Art. XIII.

- Art. 164. **Decorum at Opening.**
- Art. 165. **Order of Business: First Day.**
- Art. 166. **Order of Business: Second Day.**
- Art. 167. **Rules Not Exclusive.**
- Art. 168. **All Properly Clothed.**
- Art. 169. **Avoid Moving About.**
- Art. 170. **Rules Governing Speakers.**
- Art. 171. Repealed 1988.

- Art. 172. **Resolutions: Law Changes; Charter Petitions.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can a Worshipful Master refuse to allow the lodge to vote on a motion made and seconded in open lodge?

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master is accorded broad discretion in this matter. Certainly the Worshipful Master should prevent the lodge from taking an illegal action. If the Brethren disagree with the actions of the Worshipful Master, article 283 provides for an appeal to Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION NO. 5 - 2005.

- Art. 172a. **Order for Consideration of Proposals.**
- Art. 173. **Resolutions and Motions: Withdrawal.**
- Art. 174. **Resolutions: Procedure.**
- Art. 175. **Motion Not Divided: When.**
- Art. 176. **Reconsideration of Matters.**

CHAPTER 21 - TITLE I GENERAL PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO THE GRAND LODGE

- Art. 177. **Adopted Resolutions and Decisions.**

- Art. 178. **Laying Cornerstones.**

Notes on Decisions

(a) Rule that cornerstone be laid on north east corner of building is not obligatory; but Masonic buildings should conform thereto if at all practicable.

(b) Not proper for Lodge to donate cornerstone to a church.

(c) See Monitor of the Lodge (1934 Ed., p. 90) for "Ceremonies at Laying Cornerstone."

A Constituent Lodge cannot lay any cornerstone, or dedicate any building, this being the prerogatives and functions of the Grand Lodge. It is not customary for cost of stone or its inscription to be borne by the Lodge, but any individual is at liberty to donate same. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 6.

The Grand Lodge does not own a cornerstone which has been laid by it at a school building, and neither the Grand Lodge nor any subordinate Lodge has any legal right or authority to prevent display in a place of business of such a stone, taken from an old and demolished school building. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 24.

QUESTION: The question has been asked: Is it permissible for a subordinate Lodge to make the request for The Grand Lodge of Texas to accept an invitation to level the cornerstone of a public school building during Public School Weeks?

ANSWER: It is not only permissible, but highly appropriate, that The Grand Lodge of Texas should accept an invitation to level the cornerstone of a public school building during the Public Schools Week. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Question has been asked if The Grand Lodge of Texas would level the cornerstone of a privately owned hospital, to be operated the same as any other hospital.

ANSWER: It is not permissible to level the cornerstone of a privately owned hospital, regardless of the nature of its use in the future. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1961 - NO. 4.

That a cemetery or a section thereof set aside for the exclusive use of Masons and their families, comes within the spirit of Article 178 of our Laws and can be dedicated with appropriate Masonic Ceremonies, provided such Ceremonies are performed under the direction of the Grand Master or his special deputy.

Jurisprudence Committee report:

"We appreciate the difficulty of just where to draw the line in such situations, but a majority of the Committee feel that this Grand Lodge should not perform its ceremonies of Dedication of property forming the whole or a designated section of a privately owned cemetery. Many difficult questions, unseemly disputes and conflicts could arise as to burials therein, etc. We believe that by analogy the same principle should apply here as is the basis for Grand

Master's Decision No. 8." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for The Grand Lodge of Texas to level the cornerstone of a building which is being built for an individual company and being leased to the Government for the Post Office?

ANSWER: If the building, otherwise qualified, is being constructed specifically for exclusive Post Office use and is under long term lease (not less than 10 years) to the Government for Post Office purposes, then it would be permissible for the cornerstone to be leveled by The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1966 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: A request was received from a Lodge and the District Deputy Grand Master in said respective District, about the possibility of The Grand Lodge of Texas dedicating the Agricultural Shop Building of the High School in that City.

ANSWER: While Article 178 of our Laws primarily covers "Laying Cornerstones": it is intended to cover Dedication as well-its first sentence being very plain that it covers Dedication also. Said Article prescribes the character of the building of which cornerstones can be laid and gives the Grand Master "full power and discretion" as to non-Masonic buildings. It is my decision that Article 178 should be observed generally, and the Grand Master has the discretion to determine whether the building involved meets the general requirements and whether it would be in keeping with true Masonic practices for this building to be dedicated with Masonic honors. While certain element of discretion was left with the Grand Master, this request was declined because the building involved did not qualify: (1) was "of steel structure and was with only a concrete floor and foundation and (2) apparently the building does not have any "cornerstone" and it was my feeling that a building should not be dedicated unless it is of such character that it has a cornerstone that was, or at least could have been, leveled by The Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to place the name of a Lodge on a cornerstone which is to be leveled by Grand Lodge?

ANSWER: It is not permissible. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1986 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Is it mandatory that the Grand Lodge conduct an official Dedication Ceremony for a new Lodge building?

ANSWER: No. Most Lodge s request the Grand Master to dedicate new buildings because it gives them an opportunity to invite

Grand Lodge Officers, and to have a large open affair. However, this is entirely up to the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for the Grand Lodge of Texas to level a cornerstone of a Charter School?

ANSWER: Yes. All Charter Schools in Texas are, in fact, public schools as defined in Chapter 12 of the "Texas Education Code," and it is permissible for the Grand Lodge of Texas to perform the Masonic Cornerstone ceremonies for a Charter School. GRAND MASTER DECISION - 2004 - NO. 3.

Jurisprudence Committee Comment:

Note this decision precedes the 2004 revision of Title V of our Grand Lodge Laws.

Art. 179. **Effective Date and Force of This Revision.**

TITLE II SUBORDINATE

LODGES

For "Shall Make Returns and Contributions to the Grand Lodge"

see Constitution, Art. IX, Sec's. 1 and 2;

For "Amount of Contributions" see Constitution, Art. IX, Sec. 2;

For "Dispensations and Charters" see Constitution, Art. VIII.

CHAPTER 1 - TITLE II LODGES

UNDER DISPENSATION

For "Grand Master Alone Has Power to Grant and Revoke Dispensations" see Constitution, Art. V, Sec 2; Art. VIII, Sec. 3;

For "No Set of Masons Can Form Lodge Without It" see Constitution, Art. VIII, Sec. 1;

For "No Dispensation Can Be Granted in Other States" see Constitution, Art. VIII, Sec. 2;

For "Fees for Dispensations" see Constitution, Art. IX, Sec. 4;

For "Returns and Contributions" see Constitution, Art. IX, Sec's. 1, 2 and 3.

Art. 180. **Petition to Grand Master.**

Art. 181. **In County Without a Lodge.**

Art. 182. **In County Having Lodge.**

Art. 183. Approval of Other Lodges Required.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: In forming a new Lodge in Harris County, Texas, which Lodges should the request to form the new Lodge be submitted?

ANSWER: Based upon actions of The Grand Lodge in its 157th Grand Annual Communication, and the recommendation of the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence, it is my decision that Form 16 should be submitted to each Lodge in Harris County, and in each county contiguous to Harris County. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1993 - NO. 3.

Art. 184. Petitioners and Their Credentials.**Art. 185. Approval of Other Lodges: How Obtained.****Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: In forming a new Lodge in Harris County, Texas, which Lodges should the request to form the new Lodge be submitted?

ANSWER: Based upon actions of The Grand Lodge in its 157th Grand Annual Communication, and the recommendation of the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence, it is my decision that Form 16 should be submitted to each Lodge in Harris County, and in each county contiguous to Harris County. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1993 - NO. 3.

Art. 186. Petitioners Cannot Vote.**Art. 187. Proficiency of Officers.****Notes on Decisions**

Only the Grand Master can grant a Dispensation for a "U.D. Lodge" and it is for him to determine qualifications of those recommended to be Officers of a U.D. Lodge, subject to the provisions of Articles 225 (now 185) and 227 (now 187). The Grand Lodge itself names the first "elective" Officers of each newly chartered Lodge and it is for it to determine their qualifications. See Article 232 (now 192) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. Neither Article 329 (now 276) nor Article 330 (now 276) has any direct application to Officers of a "U.D. Lodge" because they refer to qualifications for "election" in an existing Lodge and the Officers of a U.D. Lodge are not elected. But Article 329 does have some bearing in that it provides that, in lieu of having served as a Warden, a person who has served as Master or Warden of a Lodge Under Dispensation may be "elected" Worshipful Master. The clear inference is that a person

may be Master of a Lodge Under Dispensation without ever having been an elected Warden or an elected Master. Furthermore, the only requirement for qualifications of the “signer” of petition for a U.D. Lodge, the only ones who would be members of such U.D. Lodge and from whom the designated Officers would have to come, is that such signers must be “Master Masons.” See Articles 221 (now 181) and 222 (now 182). Since it is not necessary that any signer be a “Past Master,” it follows that there may be no Past Master among the signers and, therefore, none to be designated as Master of the U.D. Lodge. Furthermore, Article 227 (now 187) refers simply to “Brethren” named for Master and Wardens and does not require any of them to be a Past Master, but does require that they be “qualified collectively to confer the first three degrees.” Further, Article 233 (now 193) says that the Officers of a U.D. Lodge shall not be installed, etc., and such Master, therefore, never having been installed, could not become a “Past Master.” It is not necessary, therefore, for the Master designate of U.D. Lodge to be a Past Master or a Past Warden at the time he is designated or during the time he serves as “Master” of a U.D. Lodge. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 16.

Art. 188. Grand Master Receives Fee and Issues Dispensation.

Art. 189. Conditions Pertaining to Dispensation.

Notes on Decisions

By error, Medina Lodge No. 1319 conferred Fellowcraft Degrees on January 2, 1950, this being after the dispensation had expired through the convening of the Grand Lodge Communication, and before the Lodge was regularly constituted. I required the candidates to be healed by reobligating them in the Degree, the time of their Degree, and accordingly their wait for the Master’s Degree to run from the date of this reobligation. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 25.

Art. 190. Name: No Living Person.

Notes on Decisions

NOTE: A Chartered Lodge may not change its name without first amending its By-Laws, and submitting a resolution to the Grand Lodge, through the Committee on By-Laws, proposing such name change. See Art. 219 for date of submission. (Revised 1997)

QUESTION: May a Lodge name it’s Fellowship Hall after a living member?

ANSWER: For a Lodge to name it's Fellowship Hall after a living member would not be in violation of Article 190, provided that neither the Lodgeroom or anterooms be so named. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1993 - NO. 2.

Art. 191. **Cannot Operate Until Organized.**

Notes on Decisions

See Decisions Under Article 187.

Art. 192. **Cannot Elect Officers.**

Art. 193. **Officers Not Installed: Cannot Vote in Grand Lodge.**

Notes on Decisions

See Grand Master's Decision 1954, No. 16, under Article 187.

Art. 194. **By-Laws.**

Art. 195. **Rights, Duties, Privileges.**

Art. 196. **Monitor and Laws Furnished.**

Art. 197. **Fees.**

Art. 198. **Affiliates and Initiates are Members.**

Art. 199. **Records Sent to Grand Lodge.**

Art. 200. **Examination of Records.**

CHAPTER 2 - TITLE II

RESEARCH LODGE

Art. 201. **Creation; Membership; Government.**

Notes on Decisions

Constituent Lodges are authorized to establish research or study clubs or committees, and to invite attendance of Masons at colleges or universities within the territorial jurisdiction of such Lodges. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 86.

QUESTION: The question was asked whether a Masonic discussion group might be conducted under the supervision of a Lodge separate and apart from The Research Lodge authorized by Article 201 of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas or whether such study group would be under the supervision of The Research Lodge.

ANSWER: Article 201 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas would not prevent any Constituent Lodge from organizing, conducting and sponsoring Masonic discussion groups. Such Article

merely gives The Research Lodge authority to provide for the formation of local study Committees under its supervision. That authority would not prevent other Lodge from organizing study groups.

Jurisprudence Committee report:

“We approved the Decision copied above with the qualification that such each local ‘Masonic discussion group’ must remain and be under the control and supervision of the Lodge and its officers and cannot be a separate or independent organization, with officers, by-laws, etc.” GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 2.

TRANQUILITY LODGE NO. 2000

Art. 201a. **Creation; Membership; Government.**

CHAPTER 3-TITLE II

CHARTERS FOR NEW LODGES

For “Grand Lodge has Exclusive Right to Grant and Revoke” see Constitution, Art. III, Sec. 1; Art. VIII;

For “Powers of Grand Master” see Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 2; Art. VIII, Sec. 3;

For “Masons cannot form Lodge without Charter” see Constitution, Art. VIII, Sec. 1.

Art. 202. **Who May Apply.**

Art. 203. **Petition For Charter of New Lodge: By Members of Existing Lodge.**

Notes on Decisions

NOTE: Every Lodge Chartered by the Grand Lodge is a Corporation (body politic) under the laws of the State, having the right to own property, contract, sue and be sued and all other rights of corporations created under the enabling statutes which are set forth in Division I. No Lodge has the power to obtain a separate charter, and any attempt to do so is illegal and void. A Lodge Under Dispensation is not a corporation and can not incorporate. See also Art. 28.

Art. 204. **Petition For Charter of New Lodge: Who Else May Sign Petition.**

Art. 205. **Petition For Charter of New Lodge: By Dimitted and Non-Affiliated Masons.**

- Art. 206. **Petition Sent to Grand Secretary.**
 Art. 207. **Approval of Other Lodges.**
 Art. 208. **Disapproved Petition: Sent to Grand Lodge.**
 Art. 209. **Charters: Signed by Grand Officers.**

Art. 210. **Charter Members.**

Notes on Decisions

Masons properly accepted into or raised in a Lodge to date of constitution of the Lodge under Charter are Charter Members of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 66.

Art. 211. **Duplicate Charters: When Issued.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: It was brought to the attention of the Grand Master that several Lodges in several Masonic Districts were using photostatic copies of their charter in the Lodgerooms and keeping the original in a place of safekeeping, even though, the Lodges, themselves, were less than fifty years old.

ANSWER: It is not permissible for a Lodge to use a photostatic copy of the charter, when less than fifty years old, unless the original is lost or destroyed and only under circumstances per Articles 250 (now 211) and 251 (now 212) may a duplicate be issued. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 9.

Art. 212. **Duplicate Charters: After Fifty Years.**

Notes on Decisions

See Grand Master's Decision No. 9, 1958, under Art. 211.

CHAPTER 4 - TITLE II
CONSTITUTING NEW LODGES

For "Grand Lodge, Exclusive power to Constitute" see Constitution, Art. III, Sec. 1;

For "Grand Master's Powers" see Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 2;

For "Must Hold Charter." see Constitution, Art. VIII, Secs. 1 and 4.

For "Duty of Grand Master Regarding Proficiency of Officers, Adequacy of Equipment and Safety of Lodgeroom," see Art. 32 ante.

Art. 213. **Set to Work: Necessary and by Whom.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it mandatory that the Grand Lodge conduct an official Dedication Ceremony for a new Lodge building?

ANSWER: No. Most Lodges request the Grand Master to dedicate new buildings because it gives them an opportunity to invite Grand Lodge Officers, and to have a large open affair. However, this is entirely up to the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 1.

Art. 214. **Set to Work: Lodges Under Dispensation: Procedure.**

Art. 215. **Set to Work: Suspended and Demised Lodges.**

Art. 216. **Constituting New Chartered Lodge.**

Art. 217. **Lodge Bears Expenses of Constitution.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it mandatory that the Grand Lodge conduct an official Dedication Ceremony for a new Lodge building?

ANSWER: No. Most Lodges request the Grand Master to dedicate new buildings because it gives them an opportunity to invite Grand Lodge Officers, and to have a large open affair. However, this is entirely up to the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 1.

CHAPTER 5 - TITLE II

BY-LAWS AND SEAL OF LODGE

Art. 218. **By-Laws: Presentation and Adoption.**

Notes on Decisions

It is provided in Article 261 (now 221), et seq. that a Lodge may amend its By-Laws as to time for stated meeting. The amendment must state the hour as well as day of stated meetings in order that Brethren may have advance knowledge of the time. Article 267 (now 228) requires that stated meetings be held at least every three months and paragraph 3 of Article 260 (now 220) requires the Grand Secretary be promptly notified of any change in dates of Stated Meetings. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 16.

QUESTION: The question has been asked can a proposed amendment to the By-Laws, read and discussed at one stated meeting, be discussed at the next stated meeting prior to voting.

ANSWER: The proposed amendment can be discussed prior to voting at the second stated meeting, but the vote is taken either for or against the proposed amendment, with no change being permitted in the language of the proposed amendment. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1982 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is a 2/3 majority vote required when approving By-Laws?

ANSWER: The Jurisprudence Committee has consistently ruled that only a simple majority is required for the adoption of an amendment to the By-Laws, and that any provision in a Lodge's By-Laws requiring a greater majority is in conflict with Grand Lodge Law. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1982 - NO. 5.

NOTE: Exception – A greater than majority can be required on amendments pertaining to endowment funds – See Art. 218, 2nd sentence.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge request the Grand Master's dispensation on short notice and re-schedule its Stated Meeting by one week?

ANSWER: The Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, e.g. Title II, Chapter 5, and Title II, Chapter 7, Article 238, does not give the Grand Master the authority to grant his dispensation on such notice. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 7.

Art. 219. By-Laws: Approval by Grand Lodge.

Notes on Decisions

A Lodge cannot increase its dues for a current year then partly elapsed; such increase in dues can become effective only for years commencing thereafter. An increase in dues for a current year then partly elapsed would be in the nature of an assessment. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 41.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for any Lodge chartered by this Grand Lodge to have by-laws permitting the appointment of committee members whose terms expire beyond the term of the Worshipful Master making the appointment?

ANSWER: No. The Worshipful Master can not appoint members of committees beyond his term as Worshipful Master. Each Worshipful Master should have the ability and authority to make all Lodge committee appointments during his term of office. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 17.

Art. 220. By-Laws: Void if Conflicting with Constitution or Laws.

Notes on Decisions

See Grand Master's Decisions under Art. 218.

Art. 221. By-Laws: Changes Not Requiring Approval.

Notes on Decisions

It is provided in Article 261 (now 221), et seq. that a Lodge may amend its By-Laws as to time for stated meeting. The amend-

ment must state the hour as well as day of stated meetings in order that Brethren may have advance knowledge of the time. Article 267 (now 228) requires that stated meetings be held at least every three months and paragraph 3 of Article 260 (now 220) requires the Grand Secretary be promptly notified of any change in dates of Stated Meetings. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 16.

I was asked the question as to whether the Lodges might announce their meetings over the local radio station instead of by direct communication by letter or by the regular newspaper method. I held that this would not be sufficient notice, although, if desired, there would be no objection to using the radio in addition to other notices. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 6.

A Lodge cannot increase its dues for a current year then partly elapsed: such increase in dues can become effective only for years commencing thereafter. An increase in dues for a current year then partly elapsed would be in the nature of an assessment. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 41.

QUESTION: Is it necessary for a Lodge to request a dispensation to change its meeting night?

ANSWER: No, a Lodge may change its meeting date, provided the members of the Lodge vote to make the change in accordance with Article 221, paragraph 3. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 45.

QUESTION: The question has been asked can a proposed amendment to the By-Laws, read and discussed at one stated meeting, be discussed at the next stated meeting prior to voting.

ANSWER: The proposed amendment can be discussed prior to voting at the second stated meeting, but the vote is taken either for or against the proposed amendment, with no change being permitted in the language of the proposed amendment. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1982 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is a 2/3 majority vote required when approving By-Laws?

ANSWER: The Jurisprudence Committee has consistently ruled that only a simple majority is required for the adoption of an amendment to the By-Laws, and that any provision in a Lodge's By-Laws requiring a greater majority is in conflict with Grand Lodge Law. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1982 - NO. 5.

NOTE: Exception – A greater than majority can be required on amendments pertaining to endowment funds – See Art. 218, 2nd sentence.

Art. 222. Lodge Seal: Approval of Grand Lodge.**Notes on Decisions**

All formal and official communications from or to a Lodge, or between Lodges as such, must be under seal. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 43.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to accept E-mail requests for items such as Certificates of Good Standing or Demits?

HELD: It is my opinion that E-mail can be best used for dissemination of information, but not for conducting business of a Lodge, as business affairs require signatures or even seals of Lodges, and use of proper forms. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1998 - NO. 3.

CHAPTER 6 - TITLE II LODGE ROOMS AND ANTEROOMS

Art. 223. Security and Furnishings: Approval by Grand Master.**NECESSARY PARAPHERNALIA FOR LODGES IN TEXAS**

FOR THE ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREE
FOR THE FELLOWCRAFT DEGREE
FOR THE MASTER MASON DEGREE
FOR FUNERALS

Notes on Decisions

Only insignia of Ancient Craft Masonry may be put on Blue Lodge furniture, including square, compasses, the letter "G" or the jewels of the officers. Insignia of the Rites, Eastern Star, or other order should not be placed on Blue Lodge furniture. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 81.

Held it to be improper and contrary to Masonic customs for any Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction to authorize the lights, ornaments, or other fixtures of any other Order to be installed or fixed in a permanent or semi-permanent manner. This will include any stations for work required by other Orders in addition to those regular stations permanently constructed in the Lodgeroom. This restriction embraces all Order mentioned in Article 265 (now 225) as eligible for the use of the Lodgeroom when such permission has been granted by the Lodge. It is best that these lights, ornaments, and appurtenances be stored at all times when they are not actually in use by the respective Order. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: Is it proper to display a United States Flag that has the yellow fringe border?

ANSWER: It is permissible for Masonic Lodges to use or to have a United States Flag with yellow fringe in the Lodgeroom, because this type of flag is used by our military forces and is called a “dress” flag. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1953 - NO. 5.

I do not see any objection to having a telephone on the Secretary’s desk in a Lodgeroom. A telephone located in a Lodgeroom, of course, should be a “plug-in” phone, or have other means to disconnect, in order that it may be “cut off” so as to prevent it ringing at an inappropriate time, particularly during degree work. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 59.

The emblems, paraphernalia, etc., of no other organization (such as Eastern Star) should be permanently left, displayed or “affixed” in a Lodgeroom. A public address system does not come within the rule. It may be installed, but would pass to the Lodge if the Star Chapter should discontinue meeting in the Lodgeroom, unless it could be removed without damage to the property of the Lodge. The Star Chapter, of course, could give it to the Lodge when installed. It cannot be installed, in any event, without the permission and approval of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 71.

QUESTION: The question was asked whether it was proper to hang a picture donated to the Lodge, the same being “Our Saviour” inside the Lodge in view of the fact that some of the Masonic Brethren of this Lodge objected to it being hung in the Lodgeroom inasmuch as they were of other than the Christian Faith.

ANSWER: Masonry bases its appeal to “men of every Country, sect and opinion” in the fact that it is universal, that it recognizes the Great Architect of the Universe, before whom all men may bow down together in prayerful adoration and in that its final goal is the Brotherhood of all Men under the Fatherhood of God. Prayers offered in the Lodgeroom are properly addressed to “Almighty God the Great Architect” and all blessings therein beseeched are done so “In His Holy Name.” As Masons we care not to offend our Brothers. We recognize as Masons, and as Americans, their right and ours to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience. But the question, more particularly, involves the propriety of the picture being hung in the Lodgeroom as well as what, if any, picture should properly be hung in the Lodgeroom. In view of the facts as presented, and of Masonic usage and custom, it is my decision that pictures of Past Masters and, of that greatest of all

Masons, George Washington, can with propriety, be hung within the Lodgeroom. Should there be space available upon the walls of the anterooms or halls for other pictures, the Lodge should feel at liberty to hang such pictures there, care being taken to be sure that such pictures will be in keeping with the dignity and seriousness of Masonry. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 22.

QUESTION: A request was received through the District Deputy Grand Master from the Order of the Eastern Star for permission to place permanent light installations over the stations of said Order in the Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: In line with decisions of previous Grand Master, the Grand Master ruled that it would not be permissible to place permanent light installations over the stations of said Order in the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 41.

QUESTION: A Lodge stated that the Lodges across the river wanted to present the Lodge with a Mexican Flag in token of friendship. They asked to know whether it would be permissible for them to accept and display same in the Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: That it is both permissible and desirable in the interest of Masonic Brotherhood that the Lodge accept the Mexican Flag offered in friendship by the "Lodges across the river" and that it may be displayed in the Lodgeroom, but not in the East, which place of highest honor is reserved for our National Emblem. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 52.

QUESTION: Question has been asked if the Letter G. could be covered during the meetings of other Bodies which meet in the same Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: It should not be removed or covered, under no circumstances, during the meeting of other Bodies or at any other time and the "any other time" means while at labor or refreshment. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1961 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: May lights of different colors be installed in the ceiling of a Lodgeroom to light the points of Eastern Star paraphernalia?

ANSWER: This would be permissible if such lights were recessed in the ceiling so as to be unobtrusive and if such lights were turned on only when the Lodgeroom is in use by the Eastern Star. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: An inquiry has been made as to the proper location of the U. S. Flag in the Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: In accordance with Masonic Form 75, Lodgeroom Layout, the United States Flag and the Texas Flag are placed on the rostrum at the rear - the United States Flag being on the right and the Texas Flag on the left of the Worshipful Master's station. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: What is the correct display of the flag of our country and should it have 48 or 50 stars?

ANSWER: It was held that the correct display of the flag of the United States of American would require the use of a flag containing 50 stars. Older flags with less than 50 stars are historical mementos. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1968 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: What is the proper way that all Master Masons should salute the Flag of the United States of America at the opening of all Master Mason Lodge Meetings?

ANSWER: The salute should be given by placing the right hand over the heart and the Worshipful Master of the Lodge should remove his hat and hold it over his heart. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1969 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to place the "Koran" (the Muslim book of faith) on our Altar, either by itself or with the "Holy Bible" for use in our initiation ceremony?

ANSWER: That it is not proper to substitute the "Koran" for the Holy Bible or to place it with the Holy Bible on the Altar of Texas Lodges. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: What are the rules for draping a Masonic Altar in memory of departed brethren?

ANSWER: There are no procedures for draping Masonic Altars. In my opinion it is not appropriate to drape a Masonic Altar under any circumstances. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 12.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it would be proper to display a MIA/POW flag in the Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: It would be improper under Article 223 to display a MIA/POW flag in the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1988 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a U.S. Flag bordered with gold fringe could be displayed in the Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: A U.S. flag with gold fringe is a ceremonial flag and it is proper but not mandatory that such a flag be a part of the nec-

essary paraphernalia as required by Article 223. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1988 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Would it be proper to substitute the Koran in place of the Holy Bible on the altar during the initiation of a candidate?

ANSWER: To do so would not be proper and in violation of Grand Master's Decision No. 2 approved by Grand Lodge in 1984. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1992 - NO. 8 - See Art. 397.

QUESTION: May Holy Books, other than the Holy Bible be placed upon the Holy Altar?

ANSWER: NO, Unless the Lodge is opened for the purpose of the conferral of candidate degrees, ONLY the Holy Bible is authorized upon the Altar (Article 223) and (Article 397). When utilizing another chosen book of faith during the conferral of a degree, the provisions of Article 397 and any applicable rules of the Committee on Work must be strictly complied with.

To the extent that Grand Master's Decision -1984 - No. 2 and Grand Master's Decision – 1992 - No. 8 (herein indexed under Article 223) are in conflict herewith, such are overruled. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2006 - No. 2.

Art. 224. (264). Use of Lodge and Anterooms.**Notes on Decisions**

It is not absolutely necessary that janitor or caretaker of a Lodge be a Mason. It is undesirable that non-Mason be employed if Mason can reasonably be obtained, as such caretaker may improperly or inadvertently see records which should not be read by him.

GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 15.

The Grand Master is authorized to approve a one-story Lodge building if sound-proof and Masonically safe. Circumstances with respect to each building govern Grand Master's action. Determination as to safety of each building must be made from facts affecting the particular building. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 18.

The clubs or groups composed exclusively of members of York Rite Bodies, Scottish Rite Bodies, or other groups named in Article 265, may be permitted to use the Lodgeroom and its appurtenances on the same conditions as the Bodies named in Article 265, subject to the provisions of Articles 264 and 265, and other relevant portions of the Law. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 22.

It is proper for a Lodge to permit a choir, (or other group) to sing or otherwise properly perform during the open portion of any entertainment properly given by the Lodge, though the entertaining group contains non-Masons. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 26.

A Lodge may have a dance for its members, ladies and friends, in the ballroom of a Scottish Rite Temple, no liquor being served, and such ballroom not constituting any Lodgeroom nor any anteroom of a Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 27.

Held it to be improper and contrary to Masonic customs for any Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction to authorize the lights, ornaments, or other fixtures of any other Order to be installed or fixed in a permanent or semi-permanent manner. This will include any stations for work required by other Orders in addition to those regular stations permanently constructed in the Lodgeroom.

This restriction embraces all Order mentioned in Article 265 (now 225) as eligible for the use of the Lodgeroom when such

permission has been granted by the Lodge. It is best that these lights, ornaments, and appurtenances be stored at all times when they are not actually in use by the respective Order. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 14.

The first sentence of Article 264 (now 224) provides that Lodgerooms and ante-rooms shall not be used for other than Masonic purposes, except as may be otherwise provided in the Laws and Edicts of the Code. This sentence refers to the Lodgerooms and ante-rooms: nothing is said in this part of the Article about "Sundays." In a separate sentence, said Article then provides that a Lodge may have a "clubroom for the social enjoyment of its members," but that such "clubroom" shall be closed on Sunday, etc. Reference is made to Decision No. 15, shown in Proceedings, 1952, p. 85. This Decision was referred (Proceedings, 1952, p. 94) to Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence and was approved by said Committee and by the Grand Lodge. (Proceedings, 1952, p. 114.) Reference is made to Decision No. 17, shown in Proceedings, 1953, p. 53. This Decision was referred to Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence and said Committee reported there. (See Proceedings, 1953, p. 193.) Said Report was adopted and approved by the Grand Lodge at the 118th Annual Grand Communication, in December, 1953. Neither Lodge buildings nor Lodgerooms, of course, should be open, as the word "open" is usually understood, on Sundays, but it is my Decision that under Article 264 (now 224) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, the Secretaries of Lodges, and secretaries of other organizations named in Article 265 (now 224) authorized to use the particular Lodgeroom, occasionally and when necessary, may go to and use the Lodgeroom, on Sundays for performance of their official Lodge duties. This should not be the usual and customary practice. It is my Decision, further, that the Officers and members of each Lodge, and of other organizations named in Article 265 (now 224) authorized to use the particular Lodgeroom, occasionally and when necessary and when approved by the Lodge whose Lodgeroom is involved, may go to and use, at reasonable hours, the Lodgeroom on Sundays for incidental Masonic purposes, such as conferences and instruction to candidates, but subject to all the Decisions rendered prior to 1952 and which are printed in the "Law Book" under said

Article 264 (now 224) of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas and with the specific limitation that, of course, no meeting of the Lodge, stated or called or of other character except for funerals, or meetings of any of such other organizations, can be held on Sunday in any Lodgeroom (see Article 275 (now 237)). I do not believe that under Article 264 (now 224) of our Masonic Laws there should be entirely prohibitive strictness so long as the use is not habitual and the occasional uses are strictly for Masonic purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 8.

Any subordinate Lodge may permit a chartered Chapter of the Order of DeMolay to meet in their Lodgeroom for a "closed" meeting to confer DeMolay Degree or Degrees regardless of whether such Chartered Chapter of DeMolay has been granted permission to meet in such Lodgeroom regularly, and it is not necessary to obtain permission of, or dispensation from, the Grand Master for such a closed meeting. See Article 265 (now 225). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 23.

The emblems, paraphernalia, etc., of no other organization (such as Eastern Star) should be permanently left, displayed or "affixed" in a Lodgeroom. A public address system does not come within the rule. It may be installed, but would pass to the Lodge if the Star Chapter should discontinue meeting in the Lodgeroom, unless it could be removed without damage to the property of the Lodge. The Star Chapter, of course, could give it to the Lodge when installed. It cannot be installed, in any event, without the permission and approval of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 71.

It is contrary to the policies of the Grand Lodge of Texas for Masonic meetings to be held on Sunday. Whether an Assembly of Rainbow for Girls holds a public installation on Sunday, at any place other than the Lodgeroom or hall of a Masonic Lodge, is not within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Texas, but no such installation shall be held in any Lodgeroom on Sunday. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 80.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for Knights Templar to hold open meeting in Lodgeroom on St. John the Evangelist Day (December 27th) for the purpose of public installation of Officers?

ANSWER: It is permissible for Knights Templar to hold open meeting in Lodgeroom on St. John, the Evangelist Day. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1957 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: The question was asked whether it was proper to hang a picture donated to the Lodge, the same being "Our Saviour" inside the Lodge in view of the fact that some of the Masonic Brethren of his Lodge objected to it being hung in the Lodgeroom inasmuch as they were of other than the Christian Faith.

ANSWER: Masonry bases its appeal to "men of every Country, sect and opinion" in the fact that it is universal, that it recognizes the Great Architect of the Universe, before whom all men may bow down together in prayerful adoration and in that its final goal is the Brotherhood of all Men under the Fatherhood of God. Prayers offered in the Lodgeroom are properly addressed to "Almighty God the Great Architect" and all blessings therein beseeched are done so "In His Holy Name." As Masons we care not to offend our Brothers. We recognize as Masons, and as Americans, their right and ours to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience. But the question, more particularly, involves the propriety of the picture being hung in the Lodgeroom as well as what, if any, picture should properly be hung in the Lodgeroom. In view of the facts as presented, and of Masonic usage and custom, it is my decision that pictures of Past Masters and, of that greatest of all Masons, George Washington, can with propriety, be hung within the Lodgeroom. Should there be space available upon the walls of the anterooms or halls for other pictures, the Lodge should feel at liberty to hang such pictures there, care being taken to be sure that such pictures will be in keeping with the dignity and seriousness of Masonry. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 22.

QUESTION: The District Deputy Grand Master wrote that Commandery of Knights Templar had asked to use the Lodge hall to open a Commandery on Sunday, April 6, 1958, Easter Morning. The Worshipful Master had denied this request. Is it permissible for this meeting to be held on Sunday?

ANSWER: Article 264 (now 224) of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas states in part: "Masonic Lodgeroom and anterooms shall not be used for other than Masonic purposes; except, as may be otherwise provided in the Laws and Edicts of this Code . . ." It is my decision that it is not only entirely proper, but strictly in accordance with the Masonic usage and custom that the Knights Templar be granted the use of Masonic Lodgerooms on Sunday for the purpose of their Easter Services and Christmas Observance when the same falls on Sunday. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 27.

QUESTION: A number of requests were received asking whether or not it is permissible for the Orders listed in Article 265 (now 225)

to hold stated meetings on Saint John's Days, June 24th and December 27th.

ANSWER: That it is not permissible for any Order, permitted use of the Lodgeroom under Article 265 of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas, to hold stated meetings or confer Degrees in the Lodgeroom on Sunday or on Saint John's Days. (June 24th and December 27th), the same being Masonic festivals. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 40.

QUESTION: A request was received through the District Deputy Grand Master from the Order of the Eastern Star for permission to place permanent light installations over the stations of said Order in the Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: In line with decisions of previous Grand Master, the Grand Master ruled that it would not be permissible to place permanent light installations over the stations of said Order in the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 41.

QUESTION: A question was asked by the Lodge, through the District Deputy Grand Master, whether it would be permissible for the Lodge to grant permission to an Assembly of the Rainbow for Girls to hold an all night slumber party in the Masonic Temple Building.

ANSWER: As all meetings held in a Masonic Lodgeroom or a Masonic Lodge building must be in strict accord with the usual Masonic custom, it is obvious that such a request should not have been made and permission must be refused. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 45.

QUESTION: A Lodge stated that the Lodges across the river wanted to present the Lodge with a Mexican Flag in token of friendship. They asked to know whether it would be permissible for them to accept and display same in the Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: That it is both permissible and desirable in the interest of Masonic Brotherhood that the Lodge accept the Mexican Flag offered in friendship by the "Lodges across the river" and that it may be displayed in the Lodgeroom, but not in the East, which place of highest honor is reserved for our National Emblem. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 52.

QUESTION: Question has been asked if the Letter G could be covered during the meetings of other Bodies which meet in the same Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: It should not be removed or covered, under no circumstances, during the meeting of other Bodies or at any other time

and the “any other time” means while at labor or refreshment.
GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1961 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: The question has been asked if it would be permissible for a Lodge to furnish a small storage room for the necessary equipment used in fall-out shelters, should its Lodge building be accepted as a fall-out shelter.

ANSWER: This would be appropriate, if the Lodge, at a regular Stated Meeting, voted to approve this use of the building. Masonry is a patriotic organization and always does its part in times of emergency.

Jurisprudence Committee report:

“In the judgment of your Committee much potential risk is run in connection with having the Lodge building used as a fall-out shelter. It is therefore recommended that the propriety of the use of the building as a fall-out shelter, and of furnishing a small storage room therein, is each a matter for the constituent Lodge to decide for itself and in such matters it acts for itself only. However, if a Lodge decides to do so, then it is recommended that such Lodge promptly purchase and keep in force sufficient public liability insurance to protect itself.” With this explanation, we recommend that the Decision be approved. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it is permissible to take pictures inside a Lodgeroom when the Lodge is at labor.

ANSWER: Pictures should never be taken in the Lodgeroom while the Lodge is at labor, and even when called off extreme care should be taken in connection with taking pictures in a Lodgeroom.
GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1963 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: May lights of different colors be installed in the ceiling of a Lodgeroom to light the points of Eastern Star paraphernalia?

ANSWER: This would be permissible if such lights were recessed in the ceiling so as to be unobtrusive and if such lights were turned on only when the Lodgeroom is in use by the Eastern Star. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: The question was asked whether it would be proper to use the Lodgeroom as a temporary dining room to accommodate a large attendance where the dining area of the Lodge would be too small to accommodate the expected number.

ANSWER: It would not be proper to use the Lodgeroom as a dining room on such occasion. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 19.

QUESTION: An inquiry has been made as to the proper location of the U. S. Flag in the Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: In accordance with Masonic Form 75, Lodgeroom Layout, the United States Flag and the Texas Flag are placed on the rostrum at the rear – the United States Flag being on the right and the Texas Flag on the left of the Worshipful Master's station. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it necessary for a constituent Lodge to request a dispensation for the Order of the Eastern Star to use its Lodgeroom for the purpose of conducting the funeral of a deceased member during Public Schools Week.

ANSWER: It was held that it is not necessary for a constituent Lodge to make such a request since the Proclamation of the eighteenth Observance of Public Schools Week applies to and includes the York Rite Bodies, Scottish Rite Bodies, DeMolay, Rainbow Girls, Eastern Star and all others that use the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1968 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: It was asked by a constituent Lodge if the charters of other Organizations should be displayed while the Lodge is at labor.

ANSWER: Lodgerooms being the property of the Lodge, the use thereof by other organizations is permissive and strictly limited. Grand Lodge Laws should be interpreted to permit such organizations to bring into the Lodgerooms such furniture, emblems, etc., as may be required by their Law. This permissive use should not extend to any permanent display. Further it is my decision that property of any other organization should be stored when not actually in use. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1969 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can a "School of Masonic Knowledge" be held in other locations than the Lodgeroom of a constituent Lodge?

ANSWER: It was held that all Masonic schools, practice schools, study groups, or whatever you call these types of schools or sessions to study and practice our Masonic work, should be held in the regular Lodgeroom of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1971 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Due to the school in his locality being burned it was asked if the school system could use the Lodge hall of the Lodge in said locality for school purposes?

ANSWER: Permission was given to use any of the rooms in the Lodge building for the school purposes, with the exception of the Lodgeroom itself - that is where the Lodge meets and where the Degrees are conferred. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1971 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Must each Master approve the use of a Lodgeroom by an appendant or related order in a jointly owned Lodge building even though each Lodge has its own Lodgerooms?

ANSWER: Yes, when Lodges jointly own a building and share dining facilities, library room and hallways, each Master must approve the use of the Lodgerooms for appendant or related orders to meet. This is true, even though the Lodges meet in separate Lodgerooms. If one Lodge elects to exclude an organization, it is not proper for another Lodge to permit the use of their Lodgeroom. (Article 224 and 225) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can the Lodge building be used for Church and Sunday School gatherings?

ANSWER: No, it is not proper for a Masonic Lodge to permit any part of the Lodgeroom or anterooms to hold Church or Sunday School gatherings. (Article 224, present Laws, and Article 264, previous Laws) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge rent a portion of their building to a private business?

ANSWER: Yes, a Lodge may rent a portion of its Lodge building, provided the requirements as to security and all other respects are complied with. (Article 224) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 13.

QUESTION: Can a renter of a space in a Lodge building sub-rent a space for a sign to be placed on that part of the Lodge building?

ANSWER: Grand Lodge Laws do not prohibit a sign on a Lodge building as long as it does not disfigure the attractiveness of the Lodge building or cause structural damage to the building. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge permit its separate club room to be used as a place to hold general election?

ANSWER: Yes, Article 224 requires the use of Lodgerooms and anterooms for exclusively Masonic purposes. However, club rooms

and detached recreational rooms which are entirely separated from the Lodgeroom and anteroom areas may have other uses which are not inconsistent with the traditions and purposes of Masonry. Therefore, a separate club room facility, with the approval of the Lodge during a stated meeting, may be used as a place to hold general elections. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 60.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge erect a building with dining room and kitchen separate from the Lodge building, but on the Lodge property?

ANSWER: Yes, Grand Lodge Law does not prevent a Lodge from erecting a building with a dining room and kitchen on the property of the Lodge, even though separated from the present Lodge building, provided the members of the Lodge, at a stated meeting, vote to approve this proposition. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 61.

QUESTION: May a cemetery association meet in the entrance room or dining room of a Masonic building?

ANSWER: No, the Laws of the Grand Lodge do not permit the entrance room, dining room or any part of a Lodge building to be used as a meeting place for a cemetery association or for the storage of its records. (See Art. 224.) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1974 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is it proper to use the dining hall of a Lodge building for the meeting place of a Hunting Club?

ANSWER: The dining hall of a Lodge building cannot be used for the meeting place for a Hunting Club which is a private organization. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: Is it proper for organizations unrelated to Masonry, such as Lions Clubs, etc. to use the ground floor of the Lodge building for fund raising activities?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible for organizations unrelated to Masonry, such as Lions Clubs, Fire Departments, etc., to conduct fund raising activities on the ground floor of the Lodge building. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: Is it proper for a marriage ceremony to be performed in a Lodgeroom?

ANSWER: It is not permissible for a marriage ceremony to be performed in a Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 16.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for the Lodgeroom to be opened to visitors on Sunday as part of a tour of historical places in the country?

ANSWER: It is my opinion that the Lodgeroom may be opened to visitors on Sunday between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. provided the Lodge maintains control of the building and the Lodgerooms and provides members of the Lodge to supervise the visitors in their inspection of the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to use the entrance hall of a Lodge building to be used for the purpose of holding local, state and national elections?

ANSWER: It is permissible to use the entrance hall for the purpose of conducting an election as long as neither the Lodgeroom nor the anteroom is used. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to allow the use of its dining room for the carrying on of a program referred to as "Title 7 Nutrious Program"?

ANSWER: A Lodge may permit the public education agency administering the Title 7 Nutrious Program to use the dining room, provided no activities contrary to the customs and usages of Freemasonry are carried on in such dining room. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION 1976 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: The question was asked if the National Camper Travelers, Inc., could exist in the state of Texas.

ANSWER: That it would be a violation of the Masonic Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas for such an organization to exist in Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: A request was made by a Chapter of the National Sojourners to hold a meeting in the dining room of a Lodge.

ANSWER: It is permissible for a chapter of National Sojourners to meet in the dining room of a Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 13.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to use a new Lodge building for meetings before it is completed and dedicated?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible to use the new building before it is completed and dedicated, provided it has been certified as Masonically safe and secure by the District Deputy Grand Master. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a Lodge could use the Lodgeroom as a dining room by providing a curtain to separate a portion of the Lodge in which food would be served and eaten.

ANSWER: No, this would be considered a violation of Grand Lodge Law. Article 224 states in part, "in no event shall any food be consumed or served in the Lodgeroom." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it would be permissible for the public to visit the Lodgeroom during the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the community?

ANSWER: It is permissible for the Lodge to be open and visitors to view the Lodge hall as long as the Lodge maintains complete control of the building and the Lodgeroom and provides members of the Lodge to supervise visitors in their inspection of the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Permission was asked to permit the National Safety Council's Defensive Driving Course to be taught in the Lodge dining hall for members of the Lodge and their families.

ANSWER: Permission was granted to the Lodge for the above proposed use provided such use is conducted in accordance with Articles 224 and 225 of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a local chapter of Wildflower Trails of Texas to display arts and crafts in the ground floor area of a Lodge building?

ANSWER: Permission was granted for the display of arts and crafts in the ground floor area of the Lodge building provided such use is conducted in accordance with Articles 224 and 225 of The Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Can a Lodgeroom be used as a polling place for an election?

ANSWER: The Lodge can permit the use of its club room or dining room as a place to hold an election; provided, that such use must be approved by the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Masonic Lodge to assess an appendant order a fee for use of the Lodge's facilities?

ANSWER: That the Lodge may charge a monthly fee for use of the Lodge facilities. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge have a community-wide fish fry for the purpose of raising money to repair the outside of the Lodge building?

ANSWER: That a Lodge may have a community-wide fish fry, provided it is held outside the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: The question was asked if games such as 42, Bridge, etc. could be played in the Lodgeroom?

ANSWER: That a Lodge cannot permit entertainment in its Lodgeroom where slides are shown and games played. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1981 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Are Lodges permitted to have dinners and bake sales for which they would make a charge in excess of the expense in order to raise money for a Centennial celebration?

ANSWER: Article 224 permits the use of the Banquet Room and facilities other than the Lodge and the Anterooms for fund raising activities such as may be authorized by the Grand Master as he deems them essential to the operation of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 4. See 1989 amendment to Art. 224.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to use the front hall of a Lodge as a polling place?

ANSWER: That the front hall of the Lodge building which is not in any way a part of the Lodgeroom or its anterooms, is permissible for use as a place to conduct an election and is not in violation of Grand Lodge Laws. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge hold a benefit chili supper in a community building with the proceeds to go to help defray medical bills for relatives of Masons?

ANSWER: That such sponsorship does not violate Grand Lodge Law. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1985 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for the Boy Scouts of America to use part of the Lodge building for their monthly meetings?

ANSWER: Yes, if the part of the Lodge building used is other than the Lodgeroom or its anteroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1986 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: In a multi-story Lodge building, where several Lodges meet, can a game room be used while one of those Lodges is meeting?

HELD: Although Article 224, which governs, does not mention multi-level and multi-Lodge buildings, the principle is the same. It is my firm opinion that, because misunderstanding and misinterpretation can be so easily involved, the game room should not be in operation when Lodges are meeting in the building. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can the Rainbow and DeMolay have dances in Masonic buildings as money raising events?

HELD: That properly supervised Rainbow and DeMolay dances may be held in Masonic buildings (excluding Lodgerooms and their ante-rooms, of course), as money-raising events, provided that no general promotion to the public be generated, and that guests be generally limited to potential members. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it would be permissible to hold a wedding in the Lodgeroom.

HELD: It would be improper under Article 224 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge to allow use of the Lodgeroom for a wedding. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1988 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it would be permissible to use the Lodge dining room for a polling place for local, state and federal elections.

HELD: It would be legal under Article 224 to use the dining area for a polling place and it was further held that no Masonic meeting be held while the polls were open or if the ballots were being counted.

NOTE: This question was considered to be different from other request to use of the dining area of a Lodge because approval of the Justice is also required, thereby making this an agreement by an additional party and more binding. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1988 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Are beverages permitted to be consumed in a Lodgeroom?

HELD: Article 224 prohibits such use. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a constituent Lodge to form a non-profit corporation for the purpose of creating a Library and Museum in the building owned and used by the Lodge?

HELD: Such use of a building owned by a constituent Lodge in which a Lodge regularly meets is not proper. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to hold a Christmas party, open to Masons, their family and friends, in the Lodgeroom?

HELD: It is not permissible to have a Christmas party, but it is permissible to hold a Christmas program if conducted in accordance with the provisions of Articles 224, 225 and 232a. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: May a Lodgeroom be used for conducting a Halloween "Haunted House" provided the altar, charter and furniture of the Lodge is removed?

HELD: Articles 224 and 225 prohibit such use. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge permit the city to use dining room as a voting precinct?

HELD: It is permissible to use the dining room but not the Lodgeroom or ante-rooms opening directly into the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS - 1989 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: Can an Eastern Star Chapter set up in the Chapter room on Sunday?

HELD: Articles 224 and 225 would not permit such activity. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION- 1988 - NO. 12.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for an Eastern Star Chapter to hold a sidewalk sale in conjunction with an ice cream social?

HELD: If such activity is conducted other than that of the Lodge, no permission is required from the Worshipful Master. Permission would only be required if such activity utilized the Lodge building, its rooms or ante-rooms. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 13.

QUESTION: Would it be permissible to place a love offering on the altar following the close of a Called or Stated Meeting?

ANSWER: To leave a "Love Offering" on the altar following the close of a Stated or Called meeting of a Masonic Lodge, in my opinion, would not be appropriate. It would not be objectionable to place a container simply marked "Charity" in the kitchen near the coffee pot, provided collections were used only for charitable purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: When a person is under sentence of a court, and is required to perform a given number of hours community service, would it be permissible for a Masonic Lodge to be the recipient of that service, in the form of building or ground maintenance, or other acts of servitude?

ANSWER: From time immemorial, one of the most fundamental tenets of Freemasonry has been Brotherly love. Recognizing that it is incumbent upon all Masons to extend Brotherly love to all mankind through kindly acts and deeds of charity, it would be inconsistent with our most basic precept for a Lodge to be the recipient of charity in this manner. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: May the Order of Rainbow use the Lodge building other than the Lodgeroom or ante-rooms for a sleep-over?

HELD: Such would be improper and in violation of Article 224, 225 and Grand Master's Decision, approved, No. 6, 1981. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1994 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: May a Lodge participate in a Slow Pitch Softball League, and wear uniforms identifying them as Masons?

HELD: Yes, provided the uniforms are labeled "Blank Masonic Lodge," that no Masonic emblems be displayed, and that the team conduct itself at all times in an exemplary manner, exhibiting the highest moral qualities and personal courtesies. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Constituent Lodge or Lodges to form a Masonic Historical Museum and Library and Library and Masonic Preservation Foundation?

HELD: Such is not proper, and would be contrary to Grand Decision No. 8, 1989, approved by Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge permit a member to use it's Lodgeroom on Sunday, between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., for his wedding ceremony?

HELD: Yes. Although like requests have been denied in past, I believe Lodges must become more of a center for family, social and community activities, and Article 224 does not specifically prohibit such activity. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: May a Lodge permit a member to use the Lodgeroom on Sunday, between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., for his wedding?

HELD: Yes. Grand Master's Decision No. 3, 1995, approved. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION- 1996 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to permit a Chapter or Delta Chi Fraternity to use portions of the Lodge Hall for an induction of members?

HELD: Yes, provided such use is not on Sunday, that proper decorum and supervision is maintained, and no food or drink be taken into the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1996 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: May a Lodge lease its kitchen and dining facilities for wedding receptions, anniversaries and luncheons where wine and champagne would be served?

HELD: Such use is permissible provided (1) space is properly leased, (2) lease is approved by proper committee, (3) adequate liability insurance is maintained, (4) such use is confined to kitchen and dining facilities only, (5) not during Lodge meetings or funerals. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1996 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Can a wedding be held in the Lodgeroom of a Masonic Lodge?

HELD: Grand Master's Decision No. 3, 1995, approved such activity, and as Article 224 does not prohibit such, I find no reason to decide otherwise. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1997 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to permit a "Traveling Dress Outlet" to use the Lodge dining room to hold a dress sale, and make donations to the Lodge?

HELD: Such use is not in keeping with the principles and purposes of Freemasonry, and use of Lodge property as defined in Article 224. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1999 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Is it proper to display a picture of "Our Savior" in a Lodgeroom?

HELD: Grand Master's Decision No. 22, 1958, is very clear and permits only pictures of Past Masters, and of George Washington to be displayed in a Lodgeroom. One of the basic landmarks in all regular Grand Lodges throughout the world is that no religious or political discussion be held in a Lodge. The display of a religious picture of whatever sect, denomination or persuasion is a statement in support of that particular religion, and in violation of the basic principles of Freemasonry, and Article I, Section 2 of The Constitution. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1999 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to place a container in the Lodgeroom or foyer to collect donations for a Masonic Home & School Scholarship Fund?

HELD: It is not appropriate to place a container for donations in the Lodgeroom or immediate anterooms. It would not be objectionable to place such a container in the kitchen. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2000 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: May a Lodge permit the Kappa Alpha Order to use its Lodgeroom for business meetings and to confer degrees?

HELD: Article 224 expressly prohibits use of Lodgeroom for other than Masonic purposes, and then only by those organizations listed in Article 225. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2001 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge permit a local Boy Scout Troop to use its dining area for meetings?

HELD: Yes, provided: The Lodge at a Stated Meeting votes approval; that no such activity be held during meetings of the Lodge, either Stated, Called or for funerals; and that use does not include Lodgeroom or immediate anterooms. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2002 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: May Texas Masons join the Philippino Masons of America Association, Inc. and may those organizations meet in the Lodgeroom of a Texas Masonic Lodge?

ANSWER: Article 506.29 makes it a Masonic offense for a Texas Mason to belong to "any organization predicated membership on Masonic membership...unless such organization is...approved or recognized in Article 225". As neither the Philippino Masons of America Association, Inc., nor the PAMAT is so listed, a Texas Mason belonging to either, is subject to discipline. Also, Article 224 states that only those organizations listed in Article 225 may meet in Lodgerooms. Again, as neither of the two entities are so listed, they may not meet in the Lodgeroom of a Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2003 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: May Texas Masons join the Phillippino Masons of America Association, Inc. and may those organizations meet in the Lodge room of a Texas Masonic Lodge?

ANSWER: Article 506(29) makes it a Masonic offense for a Texas Mason to belong to "any organization predicated membership on Masonic membership...unless such organization is...approved or recognized in Article 225." As neither the Phillippino Masons of America Association, Inc., nor the PAMAT is so listed, a Texas Mason belonging to either, is subject to discipline. Also, Article 224

states that only those organizations listed in Article 225 may meet in Lodgerooms. Again as neither of the two entities are so listed, they may not meet in the Lodgeroom of a Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 13.

Jurisprudence Committee comment:

This decision may have been affected by the 2005 revision of Title V of our Grand Laws.

QUESTION: Does Grand Lodge Law permit and must the Lodge request and obtain dispensation to allow the Lodge to permit small groups of professional organizations to use its dining room facilities for seminars? An outside catering service will cater food and wine may be served with the meal? The caterer would then make a donation to the Lodge for use of the facility which would be used for either Lodge maintenance or as a contribution to charity.

ANSWER: A Lodge may authorize use of its kitchen and dining facilities to medical, dental, legal and health related professional organizations for seminars where food and wine may be served under the following conditions: (i) a rental agreement approved by Grand Lodge is utilized; and (ii) the rental of the facilities is approved by the Lodge. Under such circumstances no dispensation from the Grand Master is required. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 14.

Art. 224a. Smoking in Lodgerooms and Anterooms.

Art. 225. Use of Lodge and Anterooms by Other Organizations:

Notes on Decisions

When a building was owned by a building corporation, which was owned and controlled by several Lodges, a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons and a Council Chapter, and the room was leased to Eastern Star Chapter for its use, the consent of the Lodges is not necessary for the Eastern Star Chapter to hold its open installation in such room. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 21.

We believe pictures of Past Matrons and of Past Patrons of an Eastern Star Chapter come within the spirit, in fact the wording (other fixtures) of Decision No. 14 (p. 85 of the 1952 Proceedings), which was approved by the Grand Lodge (p. 114 of 1952 Proceedings). Furthermore, Article 265 of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas is limited to permission "to meet" in the Lodgeroom. This does not carry permission, or authority, to use for any other purpose such as hanging pictures of Past

Worth Matrons or Past Worthy Patrons. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 50.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for The High Twelve Club, the sponsoring organization of a Chapter of the Order of DeMolay, to be permitted to hold an open meeting in the Lodgeroom for the purpose of getting members and friends together and acquainted with the DeMolay?

ANSWER: In accordance with Article 265 of the Laws, The High Twelve Club was not permitted to meet in the Lodgerooms of the subordinate Lodges in Texas. Therefore, the request for permission to meet in the Lodgeroom was denied. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for the Order of the Eastern Star to hold an initiation at its regular stated meeting during our Public Schools Week?

ANSWER: It was held that it was permissible for the Order of the Eastern Star to hold an initiation in conjunction with their regular Stated Meeting during our Public Schools Week since said Order regularly conducts initiations at their Stated Meetings. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1969 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can Lodges require a dress code for members of an appendant or related order using the Lodgeroom?

ANSWER: No, a dress code for the members of an organization which meets in the Lodgeroom is not within the prerogative of the Lodge. It is an administrative function and should be handled by the proper authorities of said organization. However, if the Masons feel that the appearance of the related group is not proper in and about a Masonic Temple, they may exclude the organization from meeting in the building without interfering with their personal or organizational affairs. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can members of an appendant or related order use the Lodgeroom on a Sunday to practice and study the work of the order?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible for the members of an appendant or related order to use the Lodge hall on Sunday afternoon between the hours of 1:00 and 5:00 p.m. for the purpose of studying and practicing the work of said order. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is an organization which is permitted to use the Lodge building allowed to leave its emblem in the Lodgeroom?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible for any organization named in Article 225 and 506, Sub. 29, who meet in the Lodgeroom, to leave its paraphernalia in the Lodgeroom all the time so long as such organization is permitted by the Lodge to use the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is an organization, which meets in the Lodge building, permitted to use the Lodge hall on a Sunday evening to prepare for a tea.

ANSWER: No, it is not permissible for the Lodge to permit an organization which meets in their Lodge building, to use the Lodge hall on a Sunday evening for the purpose of getting ready for a tea.

GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for appendant orders to use the Lodge building other than the hall on Sunday between the hours specified in Article 225?

ANSWER: Yes, provided the Worshipful Master of the Lodge gives his permission, the organizations which are permitted to use the Lodge building may do so to study and practice the work of said order as provided in Article 225. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 12.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for the Advisory Board of a Rainbow Assembly to hold a meeting, either formally or informally, in a Masonic Lodge building?

HELD: Yes, the adult Rainbow Advisory Board may meet, either formally or informally, in a Masonic Lodge building, since this board is an authorized group of an Assembly of Rainbow Girls. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1974 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to use a new Lodge building for meetings before it is completed and dedicated?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible to use the new building before it is completed and dedicated, provided it has been certified as Masonically safe and secure by the District Deputy Grand Master. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Permission was asked to permit Harliss Memorial Methodist Church in Denison, Texas, to hold services on Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday night in the dining hall of Billie Mosse Lodge No. 1152, A. F. & A. M., Denison.

ANSWER: Permission was granted for Harliss Memorial Methodist Church, Denison, to hold church services in the dining

hall (not including anteroom and Lodgeroom). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 1.

SEE HOWEVER GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 11 BELOW.

QUESTION: The question was asked if members of a DeMolay Chapter could clean a Lodgeroom on Sunday in exchange for free rent.

ANSWER: That the activity of cleaning the Lodgeroom, particularly if the work is confined to the hours of 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, is not a violation of Article 225 of the Grand Lodge Laws or any other Law of Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1979 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it Permissible for a church to use the facilities of a Masonic Lodge on Sunday?

HELD: That it is not permissible for churches; to use Lodge facilities on Sunday. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lions Club to use a Lodge Hall for its weekly meeting?

HELD: That a Lions Club cannot use the Lodge for its weekly meeting. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1981 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is it Permissible for the Rainbow Assembly to use the Lodge Hall for a slumber Party?

HELD: That Article 225 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas prohibits the use of the Lodge Hall for a slumber party. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1981 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Is it Permissible for a Lodge to use its kitchen and dining room on Sunday for family reunions and other community functions?

HELD: That a Lodge could Permit the use of their community rooms, not the Lodgeroom and ante-rooms, for family reunions and other community functions on Sunday, however, the use should be limited to periods of time after 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, so as not to conflict with church services. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1982 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Is it proper for a Lodge to apply to the Texas Historical Society for a Historical Marker for their Lodge?

HELD: That this request is entirely proper as many Texas Lodges have had Historical Markers attached to their buildings. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Is it possible for a Lodge to utilize its facilities and collect funds for the Annual Jerry Lewis Telethon?

HELD: That such use of the Lodge is not permitted under Article 225 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Would it be permissible to place a love offering on the altar following the close of a Called or Stated Meeting?

ANSWER: To leave a "Love Offering" on the altar following the close of a Stated or Called meeting of a Masonic Lodge, in my opinion, would not be appropriate. It would not be objectionable to place a container simply marked "Charity" in the kitchen near the coffee pot, provided collections were used only for charitable purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: When a person is under sentence of a court, and is required to perform a given number of hours community service, would it be permissible for a Masonic Lodge to be the recipient of that service, in the form of building or ground maintenance, or other acts of servitude?

ANSWER: From time immemorial, one of the most fundamental tenets of Freemasonry has been Brotherly love. Recognizing that it is incumbent upon all Masons to extend Brotherly love to all mankind through kindly acts and deeds of charity, it would be inconsistent with our most basic precept for a Lodge to be the recipient of charity in this manner. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: May the Order of Rainbow use the Lodge building other than the Lodgeroom or ante-rooms for a sleep-over?

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QUESTION: May a Lodge participate in a Slow Pitch Softball League, and wear uniforms identifying them as Masons?

HELD: Yes, provided the uniforms are labeled "Blank Masonic Lodge," that no Masonic emblems be displayed, and that the team conduct itself at all times in an exemplary manner, exhibiting the highest moral qualities and personal courtesies. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 1.

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HELD: Such is not proper, and would be contrary to Grand Decision No. 8, 1989, approved by Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge permit a member to use its Lodgeroom on Sunday, between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., for his wedding ceremony?

HELD: Yes. Although like requests have been denied in past, I believe Lodges must become more of a center for family, social and community activities, and Article 224 does not specifically prohibit such activity. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: May a Lodge permit a member to use the Lodgeroom on Sunday, between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., for his wedding?

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QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to permit a Chapter or Delta Chi Fraternity to use portions of the Lodge Hall for an induction of members?

HELD: Yes, provided such use is not on Sunday, that proper decorum and supervision is maintained, and no food or drink be taken into the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1996 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: May a Lodge lease its kitchen and dining facilities for wedding receptions, anniversaries and luncheons where wine and champagne would be served?

HELD: Such use is permissible provided (1) space is properly leased, (2) lease is approved by proper committee, (3) adequate liability insurance is maintained, (4) such use is confined to kitchen and dining facilities only, (5) not during Lodge meetings or funerals. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1996 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to permit a "Traveling Dress Outlet" to use the Lodge dining room to hold a dress sale, and make donations to the Lodge?

HELD: Such use is not in keeping with the principles and purposes of Freemasonry, and use of Lodge property as defined in Article 224. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1999 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge permit a local Boy Scout Troop to use its dining area for meetings?

HELD: Yes, provided: The Lodge at a Stated Meeting votes approval; that no such activity be held during meetings of the

Lodge, either Stated, Called or for funerals; and that use does not include Lodgeroom or immediate anterooms. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2002 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: May Texas Masons join the Philippino Masons of America Association, Inc. and may those organizations meet in the Lodgeroom of a Texas Masonic Lodge?

ANSWER: Article 506.29 makes it a Masonic offense for a Texas Mason to belong to "any organization predicating membership on Masonic membership...unless such organization is...approved or recognized in Article 225". As neither the Philippino Masons of America Association, Inc., nor the PAMAT is so listed, a Texas Mason belonging to either, is subject to discipline. Also, Article 224 states that only those organizations listed in Article 225 may meet in Lodgerooms. Again, as neither of the two entities are so listed, they may not meet in the Lodgeroom of a Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2003 - NO. 4.

SEE ALSO THE FOLLOWING DECISIONS UNDER ARTICLE 224:

GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 22
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 26
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 27
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 8
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 23
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 71
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 80
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1957 - NO. 1
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 40
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 41
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 45
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 3
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 7
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 19
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1968 - NO. 2
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1969 - NO. 3
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1971 - NO. 1
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1971 - NO. 2
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 3
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 14
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 61
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1974 - NO. 5
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 11
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 15
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 16
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 6

GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 8
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 13
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 3
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 6
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 7
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 3
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 5
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 14
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1981 - NO. 7
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 6
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1986 - NO. 3
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 6
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1988 - NO. 1
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1988 - NO. 2
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 8
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 9
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 10
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 11
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 12
 GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1981 - NO. 13

QUESTION: May Texas Masons join the Phillippino Masons of America Association, Inc. and may those organizations meet in the Lodge room of a Texas Masonic Lodge?

ANSWER: Article 506(29) makes it a Masonic offense for a Texas Mason to belong to "any organization predicating membership on Masonic membership...unless such organization is ...approved or recognized in Article 225." As neither the Phillippino Masons of America Association, Inc., nor the PAMAT is so listed, a Texas Mason belonging to either, is subject to discipline. Also, Article 224 states that only those organizations listed in Article 225 may meet in Lodgerooms. Again as neither of the two entities are so listed, they may not meet in the Lodgeroom of a Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 13.

Jurisprudence Committee comment:

This decision may have been affected by the 2005 revision of Title V of our Grand Laws.

QUESTION: Does Grand Lodge Law permit and must the Lodge request and obtain dispensation to allow the Lodge to permit small groups of professional organizations to use its dining room facilities for seminars? An outside catering service will cater food and wine may be served with the meal? The caterer would then make

a donation to the Lodge for use of the facility which would be used for either Lodge maintenance or as a contribution to charity.

ANSWER: A Lodge may authorize use⁴ of its kitchen and dining facilities to medical, dental, legal and health related professional organizations for seminars where food and wine may be served under the following conditions: (i) a rental agreement approved by Grand Lodge is utilized; and (ii) the rental of the facilities is approved by the Lodge. Under such circumstances no dispensation from the Grand Master is required. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: Do the laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas have any dress codes for members of those organizations listed in Article 225 when using the Lodge and/or anterooms? Specifically, does Grand Lodge law prohibit women from wearing pants suits when attending meetings of such organizations?

ANSWER: No. The Grand Lodge has never been asked this question in the past, but if such question had been presented previously, the answer should have been "no" and the answer is still "no" at the present time. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 19 .

Art. 226. **Weapons.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible to wear swords?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to wear swords, as no offensive or defensive weapons can be admitted to the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Can an individual, who is authorized to carry a weapon (gun) in Texas, carry the weapon into the Lodgeroom, when the Lodge is at labor or refreshment.

HELD: Article 226 is simple and straightforward. It prohibits carrying weapons into a Lodgeroom at any time. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2000 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can a Law Enforcement Honor Team present the flags in an open meeting in the Lodge room in full uniform to include weapons?

ANSWER: Article 226 provides that "Weapons, either offensive or defensive, must not be carried into the Lodge room." Grand Master's Decision 2000, No. 2, clarifies the matter further, concluding that such is prohibited at anytime, whether the Lodge is at labor or refreshment. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 1 .

Art. 227. Repealed 1990.

Notes on Decisions

The list of names provided for in Article 266a, (now 227) adopted by the Grand Lodge in 1952, should be posted INSIDE THE LODGE ROOM and near the outer door (preferably just to the right of the Station of the Senior Warden). It must be posted or exhibited at all times when the "Lodge" is at Labor but ONLY while the Lodge is in session: it should be "put up" each time the Lodge is "opened" and must be taken down each time the Lodge is "closed." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 78.

QUESTION: At the last Communication of The Grand Lodge of Texas, Article 266a (now 227) provided: "Each Lodge shall have a permanently bound book, on the cover of which shall be clearly inscribed, 'Roster of Petitioners and Candidates for Degrees'..." The question was persistently asked by all Lodges: Where can this book be obtained and what type of book shall it be?

ANSWER: That this book may be purchased by any Lodge locally and that any type of book such as a post binder or loose leaf binder that will serve the purpose will be acceptable. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 12.

It is improper to furnish rosters or lists showing names and addresses of Masons to Kiwanis or other clubs or organizations for the purpose of permitting them to solicit aid or funds from Masons for non-Masonic purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 3.

CHAPTER 7 - TITLE II

MEETINGS OF THE LODGE

Art. 228. **Meetings: Frequency.**

Notes on Decisions

It is provided in Article 261 (now 221), et seq. that a Lodge may amend its By-Laws as to time for stated meeting. The amendment must state the hour as well as day of stated meetings in order that Brethren may have advance knowledge of the time. Article 267 requires that stated meetings be held at least every three months and paragraph 3 of Article 260 (now 220) requires the Grand Secretary be promptly notified of any change in dates of Stated Meetings. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 16.

I was asked the question as to whether the Lodges might announce their meetings over the local radio station instead of by direct communication by letter or by the regular newspaper method. I held that this would not be sufficient notice, although, if desired, there would be no objection to using the radio in addition to other notices. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 6.

Art. 229. Quorum for Each of the Three Degrees.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can the Worshipful Master call upon the Senior Warden to preside over the Lodge at a Stated Meeting, even though the Worshipful Master is present?

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master may call upon the Senior Warden to preside over the Lodge at a stated communication, even though the Worshipful Master is present. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 8.

Art. 230. Month: Defined.

Art. 231. Dispensation Required to Meet Elsewhere.

Art. 232. Request for Dispensation to Meet Elsewhere.

Notes on Decisions

It was my decision that it was improper to hold a rehearsal of a Masonic Degree in other than the Lodgeroom unless special dispensation for the Degree had been granted by the Grand Master. I further ruled it was not permissible for these Brethren to hold practice sessions in the upper floor of said building. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 49.

Art.232a. Certain Open Meetings Permitted.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible to hold a Christmas party, open to Masons, their family and friends, in the Lodgeroom?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to have a Christmas party, but it is permissible to hold a Christmas program if conducted in accordance with the provisions of Articles 224, 225 and 232a. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 9.

Art. 233. Stated and Called Meetings Defined.

Notes on Decisions

I was asked the question as to whether the Lodges might announce their meetings over the local radio station instead of by direct communication by letter or by the regular newspaper method. I held

that this would not be sufficient notice, although, if desired, there would be no objection to using the radio in addition to other notices. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge publish its budget and monthly financial statements in its Lodge newsletter?

ANSWER: There is no prohibition against a Lodge publishing its budget and finances in a Lodge newsletter to the members of that Lodge. However, income from degree fees and return of degree fees to rejected candidates should not be listed by member or candidate name. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 11.

**Art. 234. Stated Meetings: Business Required At.
Notes and Decisions**

QUESTION: Can a Lodge request the Grand Master's dispensation on short notice and re-schedule its Stated Meeting by one week?

ANSWER: The Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, e.g. Title II, Chapter 5, and Title II, Chapter 7, Article 238, does not give the Grand Master the authority to grant his dispensation on such notice. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 7.

**Art. 235. Called Meetings: Business Permitted
Notes on Decisions**

I was asked the question as to whether the Lodges might announce their meetings over the local radio station instead of by direct communication by letter or by the regular newspaper method. I held that this would not be sufficient notice, although, if desired, there would be no objection to using the radio in addition to other notices. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 6.

It is permissible, in fact commendable, for a Lodge to publish and issue a Bulletin for its members. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 76.

QUESTION: Can the Worshipful Master call upon the Senior Warden to preside over the Lodge at a Stated Meeting, even though the Worshipful Master is present?

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master may call upon the Senior Warden to preside over the Lodge at a stated communication, even though the Worshipful Master is present. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: The question was asked, in view of the fact that the Lodge desired to confer the Entered Apprentice Degree on a candidate on Saturday, March 8, 1958: Is this day (Saturday) still a part of Public Schools Week or is it permissible to have the Degree conferred on that day March 8th?

ANSWER: In accordance with the Grand Master's proclamation, Public Schools Week is from Monday through Friday of said week, therefore, it is permissible for Lodges to meet for any proper Masonic purpose on Saturday following Public Schools Week. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 20.

Art. 236. Who May Preside While Conferring Degree.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can the Worshipful Master call upon the Senior Warden to preside over the Lodge at a Stated Meeting, even though the Worshipful Master is present?

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master may call upon the Senior Warden to preside over the Lodge at a stated communication, even though the Worshipful Master is present. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: A letter was received, asking if there is any rule that permits the Worshipful Master to direct that no Brother can be designated to fill a station unless wearing a coat?

ANSWER: This is to advise that in the filling of stations, as in all matters pertaining to the Lodge, the Worshipful Master of the Lodge is supreme and if, in his opinion, the Officers and members working in the stations should wear coats, it is not only required that they do so, but the Worshipful Master of the Lodge should be complemented on his wisdom in upholding the high importance and dignity of Masonry in this manner. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 44.

QUESTION: Do the laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas have any dress codes for members of those organizations listed in Article 225 when using the Lodge and/or anterooms? Specifically, does Grand Lodge law prohibit women from wearing pants suits when attending meetings of such organizations?

ANSWER: No. The Grand Lodge has never been asked this question in the past, but if such question had been presented previously, the answer should have been "no" and the answer is still "no" at the present time. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 19.

Art. 237. Meetings on Sundays.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Received a letter from a District Deputy Grand Master in which he stated that it had been brought to his attention that members of other Bodies are spending Sunday mornings at the Lodge hall, presumably for discussions pertaining to their work.... Will you please advise if such practice is out of order?

ANSWER: It was reasonable to assume that circumstances may arise when it will be found necessary for the Secretaries or Officers of the Lodge to visit the Lodge offices or building on Sunday for some specific purpose. This must not be a planned or regular visit, but occasional and only when necessary. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 16.

QUESTION: The District Deputy Grand Master wrote that a Commandery of Knights Templar had asked to use the Lodge hall to open a Commandery on Sunday, April 6, 1958, Easter Morning. The Worshipful Master had denied this request. Is it permissible for this meeting to be held on Sunday?

ANSWER: Article 264 (now 224) of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas states in part: "Masonic Lodgeroom and anterooms shall not be used for other than Masonic purposes; except, as may be otherwise provided in the Laws and Edicts of this Code . . ." It is my decision that it is not only entirely proper, but strictly in accordance with the Masonic usage and custom that the Knights Templar be granted the use of Masonic Lodgerooms on Sunday for the purpose of their Easter Services and Christmas Observance when the same falls on Sunday. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 27.

QUESTION: The District Deputy Grand Master reported that a Lodge had been opened late on Saturday for the purpose of burying a deceased member and due to the peculiar circumstances was not able to close the Lodge until Sunday.

ANSWER: In view of the fact that the Grand Lodge Laws permits a Lodge to be opened on Sunday for the purpose of burial and, also, in view of the fact that circumstances prevented the Brethren from closing the same on Saturday, it is my decision that this is in this instance permissible, and that there is no violation of the Grand Lodge Laws. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 43.

QUESTION: Question has been asked if it would be permissible for a contractor to work on a Lodge building on Sundays.

ANSWER: It is not permissible for a constituent Lodge to permit construction work in or on a Lodge building on Sundays. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1960 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for the Lodgeroom to be opened to visitors on Sunday as part of a tour of historical places in the country?

ANSWER: It is my opinion that the Lodgeroom may be opened to visitors on Sunday between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. provided the Lodge maintains control of the building and the Lodgerooms and provides members of the Lodge to supervise the visitors in their inspection of the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a Lodge may conduct a dedication program on Sunday.

ANSWER: No, it would be a violation of Grand Lodge Law for a dedication program of the Lodge building to be held on Sunday. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a Lodge could confer a Masonic Degree on a Sunday?

ANSWER: No Lodge in this jurisdiction shall meet on Sunday, the Christian Sabbath, except for the purpose of conducting the funeral ceremony of a Master Mason, or for the purpose of leveling a cornerstone. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1981 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: Can Lodge officers be installed on Sunday afternoon?

ANSWER: No. (see Art. 237) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 10.

Art. 238. Meetings on Saints John Days.

Notes on Decisions

Under ordinary circumstances a stated meeting of a Lodge would have fallen on the first Monday in June, or on June 24, 1950. Article 267 (now 227) provides that Lodge may hold a stated meeting the day before the Festival of St. John in event the following day is a Sunday. Therefore the stated meeting was properly held on Friday and regular business properly transacted, including election of officers. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 31.

As Article 276 (now 238) is permissive, accordingly under such Article and Article 327 (now 292), a Lodge which held meetings only once a month might elect officers at its May meeting when its stated meeting regularly fell on June 24th. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 32.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge request the Grand Master's dispensation on short notice and re-schedule its Stated Meeting by one week?

ANSWER: The Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, e.g. Title II, Chapter 5, and Title II, Chapter 7, Article 238, does not give the Grand Master the authority to grant his dispensation on such notice. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 7.

Art. 239. When Anniversary Falls on Sunday.

Art. 240. Appearing in Public.

NOTES: Dispensations have been refused to Lodges or Masons as such, either individually or in groups to appear at or participate in the following gatherings:

- (a) Divine Services.
- (b) March in Loyalty Parade.
- (c) Act as escort in Commandery Easter Service.
- (d) Attend Odd Fellows Anniversary.
- (e) Funeral not conducted by a Lodge.
- (f) Attend a Fair.

QUESTION: May a Lodge, at the request of the family, act as honorary Pallbearers at the funeral of one of its members?

ANSWER: To do so would be proper and in keeping with the highest principles of Freemasonry, and would not be in violation of Articles 38 and 240. GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS - 1993 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Is it proper for an Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft Mason to appear in public wearing aprons of their respective degrees?

HELD: Yes, provided the Lodge has dispensation to appear in public, that an Entered Apprentice and/or Fellowcraft take no part in the ceremonies involved, and that all aprons are clean, and where possible, starched and of regulation. GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS - 1997 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Can Entered Apprentices and Fellowcraft Masons wear aprons and participate in a Masonic graveside service?

HELD: "Participation" includes taking any part in Masonic ceremonies as set forth in Article 362. Article 344 states "...Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts may attend Masonic funerals and appear in public wearing aprons of their respective degrees, provided the Lodge has dispensation to appear in public, and they do not participate in any of the ceremonies." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2002 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Texas Masonic Lodge to join a local Chamber of Commerce?

ANSWER: Yes. A Lodge may join a local Chamber of Commerce provided (i) the Chamber does not engage in any form of political activity; (ii) the Lodge, at a regular Stated Meeting, votes to do so; and (iii) the Lodge be entered on the rolls of the Chamber of Commerce as _____ Masonic Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 4.

Art. 241. **Removal to Another Location.**

Art. 242. **Repealed 1996.**

Art. 243. **Repealed 1996.**

Art. 244. **Requisite Vote.**

CHAPTER 8 - TITLE II CONSOLIDATION OF LODGES

Art. 245. **Proposal Presented at Stated Meeting.**

Art. 246. **Adopted: When and by What Vote.**

Art. 247. **Proposal Sent to Petitioned Lodge.**

Art. 248. **Acted on by Petitioned Lodge.**

Art. 249. **Acted on by Petitioned Lodge: Ballot, Two-Thirds Vote.**

Art. 250. **Approval by Grand Master.**

Art. 251. **Jurisdiction of Consolidated Lodge.**

Art. 252. **Effective Upon Grand Master's Approval.**

CHAPTER 9 - TITLE II RETURNING AND REVOKING CHARTERS

Art. 254. **Procedure for Returning Charter.**

Art. 255. **Records, Funds and Property of Dormant Lodges.**

Art. 256. **Demise of Lodge by Grand Lodge.**

CHAPTER 10 - TITLE II
SUSPENDED AND DEMISED LODGES AND
THEIR MEMBERS

For "Restoration of Charter of Suspended and Demised Lodges and Procedure Thereon" see Art. 215.

For "Sale of Property of Demised Lodges" see Art. 29.

For "Collection of Dues of Members and Assets of Demised Lodges and Discipline of Delinquent Members" see Art. 650.

Art. 257. Suspended and Demised Defined.

Notes on Decisions

Article 296 (now 257) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas defines a "suspended" Lodge, and Article 297 (now 258) defines a "demised" Lodge. There are differences and distinctions between the two. This must be kept constantly in mind in reading the Constitution and Laws. When the Grand Master, during vacation of Grand Lodge, arrests the charter of a Lodge, such Lodge does not cease to be a Lodge, but its right to function is suspended pending action by the Grand Lodge. The effects of being "suspended" are in many particulars different from the effects of being "demised." Article 300 (now 260) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas provides that the "status of the members (E. A. and F. C. are not members - see Article 381 (now 244)) of a suspended Lodge shall remain unchanged" during the period of suspension, but expressly provides for payment of their dues, during such time, to the Grand Secretary. Members of a suspended Lodge are not, as members, suspended and Article 356 (now 321) has no application: the Lodge is suspended, but the members are not. Members of a suspended Lodge, therefore, should pay to the Grand Secretary their dues during the period the Lodge is suspended. Members who do not do so and who were delinquent at midnight on June 23rd for dues then past due, became automatically suspended. They could be reinstated in accordance with Articles 359 (now 324) or 360 (now 324) whichever is applicable in each respective case. Payments made to the Grand Secretary whether made before or after June 24 - during the time the Lodge is suspended have the same effect as would have been the case had the Lodge not been suspended and the payments had been made to the Secretary of the Lodge. In the event the charter of a suspended Lodge is restored and the Lodge is set back to work, Article IX of the Constitution and Articles 521 (now 488), 525 (now 492) and 526 (now 493) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas are referred to. The annual returns, if any, that would have been due otherwise during the period of suspension, should be made up as promptly as possible and should be sent in

promptly. They are to be made up from the records of the Lodge, as completed and supplemented by recording therein the information contained in the accounting by the Grand Secretary for dues paid to him while the Lodge was suspended. Reference is made to Articles 452a (now 416), 465 (now 430) and 468 (now 430), and these Articles apply regardless of the fact that the Lodge was suspended: Suspension of the Lodge had no effect on the time limits fixed in these Articles because (a) there is no provision in the Articles or elsewhere to the effect that suspension of the Lodge would affect these time limits, and (b) provisions is made in Article 299 (now 259) of the Laws whereby the work could have been timely done had proper request for dispensation been made. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 2.

Art. 258. **Members of Demised Lodges: Status.**

Art. 259. **Suspended Lodge: Territorial Jurisdiction.**

Notes on Decisions

See GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 2 under Art. 257.

Art. 260. **Suspended Lodge: Status of Members.**

Notes on Decisions

See GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 2 under Art. 257.

Art. 261. **Members of Demised Lodges: Dues and Arrears.**

Art. 262. **Members of Suspended and Demised Lodges: Status Upon Restoration.**

Art. 263. **Demised Lodges: Territorial Jurisdiction.**

CHAPTER 11 - TITLE II

LODGE OFFICERS

Art. 264. **Officers Listed.**

Notes on Decisions

That the Officers of a Lodge are specifically listed in Article 303a (now 264), and that Lodges may not make any additions to said list. Lodge By-laws may provide for the election of a Trustee or Trustees, but such Trustees do not thereby become Officers. In the case of a provision in the Lodge By-Laws that Trustees may not be Officers should an elected Trustee be subsequently elected as an Officer of the Lodge, his trusteeship is automatically vacated. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1959 - NO. 2.

A Lodge installed as its Treasurer a Brother who was not a member of the Lodge. The installation was void and the office is vacant. See Article 304 (now 265), particularly Decisions (b) and (c) thereunder, of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge. The Worshipful Master may appoint at each meeting a Treasurer pro tempore for the meeting, or he may appoint an Acting Treasurer to fill the unexpired term to serve until next regular election and installation of Officers. See Article 310 (now 271) of the Constitution and Laws as amended in 1951. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 37.

All Officers of each Texas Lodge (including the Tiler) should be a member in good standing of a Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1966 - NO. 5.

Art. 265. **All but Tiler Must be Members.**

Notes on Decisions

A Lodge installed as its Treasurer a Brother who was not a member of the Lodge. The installation was void and the office is vacant. See Article 304 (now 265), particularly Decisions (b) and (c) thereunder, of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge. The Worshipful Master may appoint at each meeting a Treasurer pro tempore for the meeting, or he may appoint an Acting Treasurer to fill the unexpired term to serve until next regular election and installation of Officers. See Article 310 (now 271) of the Constitution and Laws as amended in 1951. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 37.

All Officers of each Texas Lodge (including the Tiler) should be a member in good standing of a Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1966 - NO. 5.

Art. 266. (305). **Holding Two Offices Restricted.**

Notes on Decisions

Article 305 prohibiting any person holding two offices at the same time applies to "officers," either elective or appointive. But it does not prohibit the appointment of a Tiler, Master or other officer on a Board of Trustees for administering charity fund, for the management of the Lodge building, or other specific purposes. In such instances he acts only for a specific purpose and not as an officer. This question arose in various ways in several Lodges. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 29.

It is not permissible for the same Brother to be elected, or for the same Brother to serve, as both Secretary and Treasurer of a Lodge. See Articles 303a and 305. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 55.

QUESTION: Brother A. B. served as Chaplain of his Lodge in 1956-57, having been properly installed as such. The regular election was held for the Masonic year 1957, and no Chaplain appointed. The question was: Is Brother A. B. still the Chaplain?

ANSWER: Article 328 of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas states:

When a Lodge fails to hold an election of officers at the stated meeting for that purpose the officers of the previous year shall continue in office for another year. If the Lodge failed to hold an election, Brother A. B. is still Chaplain of the Lodge.

If the Lodge did hold a regular election and Brother A. B. was re-appointed Chaplain, even though he was not again installed, he is still the regular Chaplain of the Lodge. If, however, the Lodge did hold a regular election and Brother A. B. was not re-appointed Chaplain, he is no longer Chaplain of the Lodge. Article 305 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas states: "No Brother can hold two elective offices at the same time." A Trustee of the Building fund does not constitute an office in the Lodge, in the usual sense of the term, and as the office of the Chaplain is an appointive one, it is my decision that it is entirely proper for any officer of the Lodge to serve as Trustee of the Building Fund or as a member of a Lodge committee. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 26.

QUESTION: May a District Deputy Grand Master hold the office of Secretary of a Lodge?

ANSWER: A District Deputy Grand Master may hold the office of Secretary of a Lodge. Neither Article 266 nor any other Law of the Grand Lodge of Texas prohibits such. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 16.

QUESTION: Which office does a Brother hold who is installed as Junior Deacon of a Lodge and is later installed as Tiler of another Lodge?

ANSWER: The subsequent installation of the Brother as Tiler is in conflict with Article 266 and is therefore null and void. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1992 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Can a Mason hold office in two Lodges, whose stated Meetings are held on the same day, but at different times of the day?

HELD: No. Article 266 prohibits a Mason from holding office simultaneously in more than one Lodge whose Stated Meetings are held the same date. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2001 - NO. 1.

Art. 267. **Resignation of Officer Prohibited: Exception.**

Notes on Decisions

The duly installed Chaplain cannot resign. See Article 306 (now 267). Article 310 (now 271) refers only to Secretaries and/or Treasurers. The Chaplain cannot be appointed as Secretary pro tem nor can the Chaplain be appointed Acting Secretary. The "office" of Secretary is an elective office regardless of whether the individual acting is acting pro tem or as an "Acting Secretary." Any officer or member, of course, can assist the Secretary in the performances of his duties. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 69.

Art. 268. **Temporary Vacancies: How Filled.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can the Worshipful Master call upon the Senior Warden to preside over the Lodge at a Stated Meeting, even though the Worshipful Master is present?

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master may call upon the Senior Warden to preside over the Lodge at a stated communication, even though the Worshipful Master is present. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 8.

Art. 269. **Absence of Officers.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A Past Master of a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction has affiliated with one of our Texas Lodges, and the inquiry has been made whether or not this Brother is entitled to the honors of a Past Master in Texas, such as opening and closing the Lodge, wearing a pin and carrying a Past Master's Card Membership in the Past Master's Club, etc.

ANSWER: It was my decision that this Brother is not a member of our Grand Lodge (See Art. 11, Sec. 1 (c) of our Constitution); cannot preside over a Texas Lodge; is not a Past Master of our Texas Lodge (see Articles 269 and 285); cannot install Officers as this is limited in this regard to "Past Masters of this Grand Jurisdiction" (see Article 526). Therefore, the answers to all the questions posed are "No." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 16.

QUESTION: Can the Worshipful Master, being present at a called meeting, designate one of his officers, a Past Master of his Lodge, or a member of the Lodge to open or close the Lodge?

ANSWER: That the Worshipful Master, being present at a called meeting, can designate one of his officers, a Past Master of his Lodge, or a member of the Lodge to open or close the Lodge.

Decision 1 modified as follows: "The Worshipful Master present at a called meeting, may designate the Senior or Junior Warden or a Past Master of a Texas Lodge to open or close the Lodge. This is not to prohibit a member Master Mason from presiding after the Lodge is opened and before it is closed." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1981 - NO. 1.

Art. 270. **Presiding Past Master: Powers.**

Art. 271. **Vacancies in Office: How Filled.**

Notes on Decisions

A Lodge installed as its Treasurer a Brother who was not a member of the Lodge. The installation was void and the office is vacant. See Article 304 (now 265), of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge. The Worshipful Master may appoint at each meeting a Treasurer pro tempore for the meeting, or he may appoint an Acting Treasurer to fill the unexpired term to serve until next regular election and installation of Officers. See Article 310 (now 271) of the Constitution and Laws as amended in 1951. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 37.

Secretary of a Lodge tendered his resignation and the Worshipful Master of the Lodge deems his reasons (serious illness) for resigning sufficient. Record thereof should be made in the minutes of the next stated meeting of the Lodge including notation that the Worshipful Master of the Lodge deemed the reason (stating the serious illness) sufficient and, therefore, had accepted the resignation. After the resignation has been approved by the Worshipful Master of the Lodge, and after notation thereof has been noted in the minutes of a stated meeting of said Lodge, then the Worshipful Master of the Lodge may appoint an Acting Secretary to fill the unexpired term and may do this without approval by, or permission of, the Grand Master. In such cases, permission of the Grand Master is required only when the Worshipful Master of a subordinate Lodge wishes to REMOVE the Secretary or the Treasurer of such Lodge. See Article 310 (now 271) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge as amended in 1951. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 48.

Art. 272. Officers: Clothed and Jeweled.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Uniforms of what Masonic organizations may be worn while conferring degrees in a subordinate Lodge?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to wear regalia or costumes which bear the distinctive insignia of another Masonic organization while conferring degrees in a subordinate Lodge. This does not preclude the use of tuxedos, full dress or black double-breasted coats – each of which are sometimes worn by members of other Masonic orders – if same do not include any distinctive insignia of that Order. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to wear a fez or a chapeau while conferring a Degree?

ANSWER: Each of these two types of headdress bear the distinctive insignia of another Order of Masonry. Therefore, it is not permissible to wear them in a subordinate Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: In preparation for a Masonic Meeting of significance, it was asked whether it would be permissible for a special group of Brethren to wear the regalia or costumes, which bear a distinct insignia of another organization, during the tiled meeting of the Lodge.

ANSWER: It was my decision that it is not permissible for any special group as such to wear regalia or costumes bearing distinctive insignia of other organizations during tiled meeting and that within the tiled meeting of the Lodge no one, save the Master of said Lodge or the Grand Master may be covered. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 38.

QUESTION: A letter was received, asking if there is any rule that permits the Worshipful Master to direct that no Brother can be designated to fill a station unless wearing a coat?

ANSWER: This is to advise that in the filling of stations, as in all matters pertaining to the Lodge, the Worshipful Master of the Lodge is supreme and if, in his opinion, the Officers and members working in the stations should wear coats, it is not only required that they do so, but the Worshipful Master of the Lodge should be complemented on his wisdom in upholding the high importance and dignity of Masonry in this manner. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 44.

QUESTION: May a Jewish Brother Wear a Yamaka Hat in the Lodge Room?

ANSWER: Yes, So long as the brother wearing the Yamaka does not (a) by the wearing, challenge the authority of the Worshipful Master or (b) seek to make a religious or political statement by the wearing, it **will** be permitted. Accordingly, the provisions of Art 278 which define the term “covered” are inapplicable to a Yamaka.

To the extent that Grand Master Decision– 1958 - No 38 (here-in indexed under Article 272) conflicts with this decision, such is overruled. This decision states “...no one, save the Master of said Lodge or the Grand Master may be covered”.

This decision applies **ONLY** to a Jewish Yamaka and shall not be interpreted as authorizing any other head gear/covering within a Lodge room (except for the Worshipful Master). GRAND MASTER’S DECISION -2006 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Can a Master Mason, other than the installed Officer, wear the apron of the Installed Officer during conferring of degrees, or filling a station or place pro tempore during a stated or called meeting?

ANSWER: No. Only the officer installed in an office is allowed to wear the apron of that office. A Mason filling a station or place pro tempore, or working in the conferral of a degree should wear the jewel of the office, but not the apron. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION-2008-NO.14.

Art. 273. **Officers: Regalia.**

Notes on Decisions

Aprons of officers, under Article 312 (now 273), as well as Aprons under Article 313 (now 274), may be of any suitable white cloth, of size set forth in Article 312 (now 372). Officers’ cloth aprons may have ornamentation referred to in such Article 312 (now 273). If of cloth, the edging or border may be of cloth also. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 33.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to wear swords?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to wear swords, as no offensive or defensive weapons can be admitted to the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: The question was asked whether it would be proper for an E. A. Degree Team organized by a group of Masons belong-

ing to a Uniformed Body of another Order, could wear aprons trimmed in blue?

ANSWER: It was my decision that aprons for said Degree Team consistent with the various stations and places and in accordance with Article 312 of the Grand Lodge Laws will be permissible. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 32.

QUESTION: Can the members of an appendant order visit a Blue Lodge in the regalia of that order to encourage Masons to become candidates for that order?

ANSWER: No, it is not permitted for members of an appendant order to visit a Masonic Lodge in the regalia of that order to encourage candidates from a Blue Lodge in Texas. (Article 273). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge officer, who is also a District Deputy Grand Master, wear his District Deputy apron while filling his station in the Lodge?

HELD: As he is at all times the representative of The Grand Master in his District, he may wear his District Deputy apron while filling his Lodge station, provided he also wears the jewel of his office. It would only be improper at a Masonic funeral. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1999 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Is District Service Team and District Deputy Grand Master name badges considered Grand Lodge Regalia, and can these badges be worn at the meetings of appendant bodies?

ANSWER: No. Name badges issued by the Grand Lodge of Texas are not considered to be regalia. However the wearer should accede to the request of the appendant body to remove the same. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can a Master Mason, other than the installed Officer, wear the apron of the Installed Officer during conferring of degrees, or filling a station or place pro tempore during a stated or called meeting?

ANSWER: No. Only the officer installed in an office is allowed to wear the apron of that office. A Mason filling a station or place pro tempore, or working in the conferral of a degree should wear the jewel of the office, but not the apron. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO.14.

Art. 274. Members: Apron.**Notes on Decisions**

Aprons of officers, under Article 312 (now 273), as well as Aprons under Article 313 (now 274), may be of any suitable white cloth, of size set forth in Article 312 (now 273). Officers' cloth aprons may have ornamentation referred to in such Article 312 (now 273). If of cloth, the edging or border may be of cloth also. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 33.

QUESTION: Is it proper for members of a Shrine Club serving meals to several Lodges simultaneously, to wear Masonic Aprons and a Shrine fez at the same time?

ANSWER: It is not proper for regalia of other organizations to be worn in conjunction with the Masonic apron at Masonic Lodge meetings. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 4.

Art. 275. Records and Documents: Officers Duties.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Is it permissible to record activities of a tiled meeting of a Masonic Lodge on film, video camera, still camera or audio tape recorder?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to record any portion of a tiled meeting, be it Stated or Called, of a subordinate Lodge in Texas, either on film, video camera, still camera, audio tape recorder or any other mechanical means. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it proper to use electronic taping equipment to record the business of a Lodge?

HELD: No. Such use would not be appropriate. GRAND MASTERS DECISION - 1997 - NO. 2.

CHAPTER 12 - TITLE II

WORSHIPFUL MASTER

For "Is a Representative in the Grand Lodge" see Constitution, Art. II, Sec. 1 (d);

For "Is Entitled to Cast a Vote" see Constitution, Art. II, Sec. 1 (d);

For "Number of Votes which may be Cast" see Constitution, Art. VII, Sec's. 1 and 2;

For "Voting by Lodges and Members" see Constitution, Art. VII, Sec. 1 (b).

Art. 276. **Qualifications.**

Notes on Decisions

Since Brother was regularly installed as Worshipful Master and although he moved away, he is entitled to be a Past Master. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1957 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: A letter was received, asking if there is any rule that permits the Worshipful Master to direct that no Brother can be designated to fill a station unless wearing a coat?

ANSWER: This is to advise that in the filling of stations, as in all matters pertaining to the Lodge, the Worshipful Master of the Lodge is supreme and if, in his opinion, the Officers and members working in the stations should wear coats, it is not only required that they do so, but the Worshipful Master of the Lodge should be complemented on his wisdom in upholding the high importance and dignity of Masonry in this manner. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 44.

QUESTION: Do all committees appointed by the Worshipful Master in office, exception investigation committees on petitions, expire at the end of the Masters' term of office and the new Master appoint his own Committees or re-appoint the old ones?

ANSWER: The tenure of any committee of a constituent Lodge is co-extensive with the term of the Worshipful Master making the appointment of the committee, unless the By-Laws or a resolution of the Lodge, creates a committee and provides for a longer term than one year. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1971 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is a Brother who has served as Junior Warden pro tem eligible to be elected as Worshipful Master of the Lodge?

ANSWER: No, it is not permissible for a Mason who has not been duly elected and properly installed as a Junior or Senior Warden to be elected as Worshipful Master of the Lodge. (Article 276).
GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 50.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a member of a Texas Lodge, who lives in another state, is eligible to be elected or appointed to any office in a Texas Lodge, including Worshipful Master.

ANSWER: Yes, Article 291 of The Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas provides without any limitations as to residence, that "any member in good standing of a Texas Lodge against whom no charges are pending is eligible to hold any elective or appointive office of a Lodge." The member, of course, must have either served as a Warden or Worshipful Master as provided in Article 276. **GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 1.**

Art. 276a. Additional Qualifications.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Should a Brother who has qualified to be installed as Worshipful Master, Senior Warden or Junior Warden under the provisions of Articles 276a and 297a be requalified prior to his installation?

ANSWER: If a Brother has previously qualified to be installed as Worshipful Master, in compliance with Article 276a and Article 279a and if such qualification occurred in the calendar year 1990 or 1991 it would not be necessary for the Brother to requalify prior to his installation. Likewise a Brother previously qualifying for installation for Senior Warden or Junior Warden in 1990 or 1991 would not be required to requalify prior to his installation into the office for which he previously qualified. **GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1992 - NO. 6**

QUESTION: Can the Worshipful Master or whoever he appoints or nominates, serve on the Board of Educational Trusts?

HELD: Decision No. 14, 1987 and No. 7, 1985, prohibits a Lodge from acting as executor of a will, and this prohibition is also applicable in this instance. **GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2000 - NO.5.**

Art. 277. Office Vacant: When and How Filled.

Art. 278. Master Presiding “Covered”.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Is it proper for the Worshipful Master to wear a baseball cap while presiding in the East?

ANSWER: To do so would be improper. GRAND MASTER’S DECISIONS - 1990 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: May a Jewish Brother Wear a Yamaka Hat in the Lodge Room?

ANSWER: Yes, So long as the brother wearing the Yamaka does not (a) by the wearing, challenge the authority of the Worshipful Master or (b) seek to make a religious or political statement by the wearing, it **will** be permitted. Accordingly, the provisions of Art 278 which define the term “covered” are inapplicable to a Yamaka.

To the extent that Grand Master Decision – 1958 - No 38 (here-in indexed under Article 272) conflicts with this decision, such is overruled. This decision states “...no one, save the Master of said Lodge or the Grand Master may be covered”.

This decision applies **ONLY** to a Jewish Yamaka and shall not be interpreted as authorizing any other head gear/covering within a Lodge room (except for the Worshipful Master). GRAND MASTER’S DECISION -2006 - NO. 1.

Art. 279. Custodian of Charter.**Art. 280. Correction of Minutes.****Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Are the Master and Secretary required to sign minutes of meetings at which they were not present or should they be signed by the Pro-tems of those offices?

ANSWER: Article 280 and 337 state that the Worshipful Master is responsible for the correctness of the Minutes and should be signed by the Worshipful Master and Secretary at the meeting of the Lodge at which the minutes are approved. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to record activities of a tiled meeting of a Masonic Lodge on film, video camera, still camera or audio tape recorder?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to record any portion of a tiled meeting, be it Stated or Called, of a subordinate Lodge in Texas,

either on film, video camera, still camera, audio tape recorder or any other mechanical means. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it proper to use electronic taping equipment to record the business of a Lodge?

HELD: No. Such use would not be appropriate. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1997 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can a Worshipful Master correct the minutes of a lodge?

ANSWER: Article 280 states that the Worshipful Master is responsible for and decides upon the correctness of the minutes, and shall order any error corrected at the first stated meeting after the discovery of such error. The Worshipful Master has no authority to correct any minutes other than in open lodge as set out in article 280. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 4.

Art. 281. Can Require Every Member to Vote.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is the Master required to invite the Tiler into the meeting to vote on matters of great importance to the Lodge, e.g., amendments to By-Laws?

ANSWER: No. The Master is not required to invite the Tiler to enter the Lodgeroom for any reason, except in those cases where Grand Lodge Law requires him to do so, e.g., balloting on a petition for the Degrees. The Master MAY, of course, require all members present to vote on any issue, and thus, he could ask the Junior Deacon to replace the Tiler while he enters to vote. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 11.

Art. 282. Can Cast Deciding Vote.

Art. 283. No Appeal from Decision Except to Grand Lodge.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can the Worshipful Master or whoever he appoints or nominates, serve on the Board of Educational Trusts?

HELD: Decision No. 14, 1987 and No. 7, 1985, prohibits a Lodge from acting as executor of a will, and this prohibition is also applicable in this instance. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2000 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Can a Worshipful Master refuse to allow the lodge to vote on a motion made and seconded in open lodge?

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master is accorded broad discretion in this matter. Certainly the Worshipful Master should prevent the lodge from taking an illegal action. If the Brethren disagree with the actions of the Worshipful Master, Article 283 provides for an appeal to Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Does the Worshipful Master have the authority to dismiss a committee elected by his Lodge?

ANSWER: This would depend on the Blue Lodge By-Laws. Assuming that a committee was lawfully elected by the Lodge, then discharged by the Worshipful Master, then the Lodge can appeal as set forth in Article 283. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 7.

Art. 284. Duty to Require Audits.**Notes of Decisions**

QUESTION: Does the signing of checks, such as by a Senior Warden, constitute the handling of funds of the Lodge?

ANSWER: That he should be bonded under terms of Article 284. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: May the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden or Junior Warden of a Lodge serve on it's auditing Committee?

ANSWER: Although Article 284 does not specifically prohibit the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden or Junior Warden from serving on the Auditing Committee, it is my decision that it would be highly improper, and therefore contrary to the spirit and intent of Article 284. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1993 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge publish its budget and monthly financial statements in its Lodge newsletter?

ANSWER: There is no prohibition against a Lodge publishing its budget and finances in a Lodge newsletter to the members of that Lodge. However, income from degree fees and return of degree fees to rejected candidates should not be listed by member or candidate name. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 11.

CHAPTER 13 - TITLE II**THE WARDENS**

For "May be Represented in Grand Lodge" see Const., Art. II, Sec. 1 (d);

For "Is Entitled to Vote" see Const., Art. VII, Sec's. 1 and 2;

For "Manner of Voting" see Const., Art. VII, Sec. 1 (d).

Art. 285. Duties of Wardens.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Can the Worshipful Master call upon the Senior Warden to preside over the Lodge at a Stated Meeting, even though the Worshipful Master is present.

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master may call upon the Senior Warden to preside over the Lodge at a stated communication, even though the Worshipful Master is present. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 8.

Art. 286. Junior Warden: Not Affected.

CHAPTER 14 - TITLE II
THE TREASURER

Art. 287. **Duties of Treasurer.**

CHAPTER 15 - TITLE II
THE SECRETARY

Art. 288. **Duties of Secretary.**

Art. 289. Repealed 1988.

CHAPTER 16 - TITLE II
ELECTION AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Art. 290. **Method of Voting.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it proper to place the ballot box on top of the Bible, Square and Compasses, during the balloting?

ANSWER: It is not proper to place the ballot box on the Bible at any time. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1956 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Does the nomination of an Officer require a second?

ANSWER: That nomination of Officers should not be seconded. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1956 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: When two or more Brethren are nominated for the same office may the Brethren ballot by standing?

HELD: No. A vote by standing is in violation of Article 290 which requires a written ballot and such an election is null and void and the old officers hold over as prescribed by Article 293. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1994 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Can a member of a Texas Lodge vote in an election of Lodge officers of a Lodge in which he is not a member?

HELD: No. Although I find that Article 290 is silent on this issue, I do not believe that the intent of the Grand Lodge was to allow a Mason, not a member of a particular Lodge, to vote in an election of that Lodge's officers. Further, although Article 417 is also silent on this issue and one might argue that since Article 417 is so very specific on matters to be voted upon by members of the acting Lodge, and is silent on this question, it is implied that a non-specific matter, such as voting for a Lodge officer, can be voted upon by a non-member of the acting Lodge. I find such reasoning convoluted and unacceptable. It is my decision that Article 417 cannot be used as a basis to allow the requested action.

I find no provisions in any of the Grand Lodge Law to allow a non-member of a Lodge to vote in an election of a Lodge's officers. To allow a non-member of a Lodge to vote in such an election would produce far reaching consequences I believe would be detrimental to the welfare of the Grand Lodge of Texas, the subordinate Lodges, and the Masonic Fraternity in general.

Therefore, it is my decision that Article 290 only permits a member of a Lodge to vote in an election to elect the officers of the Lodge of which the Mason is a member.

Any prior Grand Master's decision to the contrary is hereby overruled. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008- NO. 1.

Art. 291. **Qualifications for Office.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: The question was asked if a member of a Texas Lodge, who lives in another state, is eligible to be elected or appointed to any office in a Texas Lodge, including Worshipful Master.

ANSWER: Yes, Article 291 of The Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas provides without any limitations as to residence, that "any member in good standing of a Texas Lodge against whom no charges are pending is eligible to hold any elective or appointive office of a Lodge." The member, of course, must have either served as a Warden or Worshipful Master as provided in Article 276. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 1.

Art. 292. Time of Election.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: When a newly elected Warden dies before being installed in office, can the Lodge call a special election to elect a new Warden?

ANSWER: Another Warden cannot be elected but the office must be filled pro tempore at each meeting of the Lodge until the next regular election during which time the office will remain vacant, under provisions of Articles 292 and 306, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: When an ineligible Brother is elected to office and the fact of his ineligibility is discovered subsequently, can another election be held to fill such office?

ANSWER: No, the office must remain vacant until the next regular election and must be filled pro tempore at each meeting of the Lodge until such time. Articles 292 and 306, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 12.

QUESTION: Where for some reason an elected officer is not installed prior to August 1, can such officer be installed thereafter by special dispensation or can a new officer be elected?

ANSWER: Neither is possible. The office will remain vacant until the following year when a new officer shall be elected at the regular election. The office will be filled at each meeting until such time by pro tempore appointment. Articles 292, 293, and 306, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 13.

QUESTION: Permission was asked for a Lodge to hold the installation of its officers on June 18, 1977.

ANSWER: It is not permissible for a Lodge to hold the installation of its officers on June 18, 1977, All officers of a constituent Lodge in Texas must be installed on June 24, the day of the feast of St. John the Baptist, or any stated or called meeting there-after, prior

to midnight on the last day of July. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for any Lodge chartered by this Grand Lodge to have by-laws permitting the appointment of committee members whose terms expire beyond the term of the Worshipful Master making the appointment?

ANSWER: No. The Worshipful Master can not appoint members of committees beyond his term as Worshipful Master. Each Worshipful Master should have the ability and authority to make all Lodge committee appointments during his term of office. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 17.

Art. 293. Old Officers Hold Over: When.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: The question has been asked if it is necessary to install an Officer of a constituent Lodge who was re-elected.

ANSWER: No, as an Officer who is re-elected has the same status as that of a hold over.

Jurisprudence Committee report:

“The decision of Grand Master that it is not necessary to install an Officer of a constituent Lodge who has been re-elected, is eminently correct; but in our opinion it shall be emphasized that the installation of re-elected and re-appointed Officers is both appropriate and desirable, and that it adds to the impressiveness and completeness of the Installation ceremony.” GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1964 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: When two or more Brethren are nominated for the same office may the Brethren ballot by standing?

HELD: No. A vote by standing is in violation of Article 290 which requires a written ballot and such an election is null and void and the old officers hold over as prescribed by Article 293. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1994 - NO. 1.

Art. 294. Dimit or Transfer of Membership Not Allowed While Holding Office.

Notes on Decisions

Ordinarily, a Brother in good standing cannot decline nomination for an office he has never filled. (See Article 332 [now 294].) But it is my decision that the Worshipful Master has the right and authority to, and may, permit a Brother to decline nomination for a particular office when the Worshipful Master, in his judgment, is

satisfied that it is to the best interest of the Lodge or when the Worshipful Master is satisfied that the Brother is justified in declining the nomination and, particularly, when there is another Brother who is willing to accept nomination for the office. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 4.

Art. 295. **Who May Install.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A Lodge elected and installed a Worshipful Master, but Worshipful Master moved away shortly and did not serve as such, is he entitled to be considered as a Past Master?

ANSWER: Since Brother was regularly installed as Worshipful Master and although he has moved away, he is entitled to be a Past Master. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1957 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: A Past Master of a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction has affiliated with one of our Texas Lodges, and the inquiry has been made whether or not this Brother is entitled to the honors of a Past Master in Texas, such as opening and closing the Lodge, wearing a pin and carrying a Past Master's Card Membership in the Past Master's Club, etc.?

ANSWER: It was my decision that this Brother is not a member of our Grand Lodge (See Art. 11, Sec. 1[c] of our Constitution); cannot preside over a Texas Lodge (see Articles 269 and 285); cannot install Officers as this is limited in this regard to "Past Masters of this Grand Jurisdiction" (see Article 526). Therefore, he answers to all the questions posed are "No." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 16.

QUESTION: May wives place jewels of office on Lodge officers during the installation ceremony?

ANSWER: No. The Monitor of the Lodge, approved by the Grand Lodge, requires the Installing Marshal to invest the officer being installed with the jewel of his office. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2003 - NO. 3.

Art. 296. **All Officers Installed In Person.**

Art. 297. **No Installation While Charges Pending.**

Art. 297a. **Requirements for Installation as Worshipful Master or Warden.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Should a Brother who has qualified to be installed as Worshipful Master, Senior Warden or Junior Warden under the

provisions of Articles 276a and 297a be requalified prior to his installation?

ANSWER: If a Brother has previously qualified to be installed as Worshipful Master, in compliance with Article 276a and Article 297a and if such qualification occurred in the calendar year 1990 or 1991 it would not be necessary for the Brother to requalify prior to his installation. Likewise a Brother previously qualifying for installation for Senior Warden or Junior Warden in 1990 or 1991 would not be required to requalify prior to his installation into the office for which he previously qualified. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1992 - NO. 6

Art. 298. Time of Installation.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A constituent Lodge had given notice for a called meeting for installation of Officers on June 24th, but the hour of same was not stated. Later a meeting was called for a Masonic funeral at 4 P.M. on June 24th. When the 4 P.M. meeting was opened, it was announced that it was called for funeral and installation of Officers. After the funeral, the Lodge was not closed, but called off to refreshment until the installation.

ANSWER: The above procedure was irregular. The Officers of this constituent Lodge should be reinstalled, either at the Stated Meeting or a called meeting for this purpose, not later than July 31. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1961 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge install the Chaplain during the month of August?

ANSWER: Masonic Lodges in Texas cannot install an officer after July 31st. All officers of a Blue Lodge must be installed prior to midnight of July 31st each year. (Article 298). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 49.

QUESTION: Permission was asked for a Lodge to hold the installation of its officers on June 18, 1977.

ANSWER: It is not permissible for a Lodge to hold the installation of its officers on June 8, 1977. All officers of a constituent Lodge in Texas must be installed on June 24, the day of the feast of St. John the Baptist, or any stated or called meeting thereafter, prior to midnight on the last day of July. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: The question was asked if an elective officer of a Constituent Lodge could be installed after July 31?

ANSWER: That an elective officer of a Constituent Lodge must be installed by July 31. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1979 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Would it be proper to install officers on June 23?

ANSWER: To do so would be in violation of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS - 1990 - NO. 1.

Art. 299. **Place of Installation.**

Art. 300. **Public Installation: Place.**

Art. 301. **Public Installation: When Dispensation Required.**

Art. 302. **Lodge Opened in Master's Degree.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: May wives place jewels of office on Lodge officers during the installation ceremony?

ANSWER: No. The Monitor of the Lodge, approved by the Grand Lodge, requires the Installing Marshal to invest the officer being installed with the jewel of his office. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2003 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a subordinate Lodge to install officers in an Entered Apprentice Lodge or Fellowcraft Lodge?

ANSWER: No. A Master Mason's Lodge must be opened for this purpose. (see Art. 302). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 9.

Art. 303. **Joint Public Installation.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: May wives place jewels of office on Lodge officers during the installation ceremony?

ANSWER: No. The Monitor of the Lodge, approved by the Grand Lodge, requires the Installing Marshal to invest the officer being installed with the jewel of his office. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2003 - NO. 3.

Art. 304. Repealed 1991.

Art. 305. **New Appointment: When.**

Art. 306. **Elective Office Vacant.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Question was asked as to the status of the office of Junior Warden where in early June the Brother holding such office was elected to hold the office for another year and subsequently on June 23 was suspended for non-payment of dues.

ANSWER: In the event the Brother did not become automatically reinstated during the year by the payment of his dues the office would remain vacant for the remainder of the year, but in the event the Brother should be automatically reinstated by payment of dues he would automatically be reinstated in the office of Junior Warden. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 14.

CHAPTER 17 - TITLE II

FEES AND DUES

For "Fees, Dues and Contributions to the Grand Lodge" see Const., Arts. IX and X.

Art. 307. **Minimum Fees.****Notes on Decisions**

There is no provision of the Constitution and Laws, known to me, which expressly and in so many words says dues cannot be paid in advance for a number of future years. It is, however, very significant that there is no such provision providing for such prepayment or saying it can be done or how the funds should be handled if so done. If dues were paid by a member or members in advance for a number of future years, then the funds should be set aside and held in trust, in a separate trust account, and applied to the payment of the dues as they accrue. The very purpose for Annual Dues, for providing that annual dues should be not less than a minimum amount, and for providing against sale or gift of excessive life memberships, was to insure that the Lodge would have annually, from year to year, a current source of revenue to cover expenses of operation and maintaining its building, but primarily for currently operating the Lodge.

It is my Decision that it is improper to collect in advance, directly or indirectly, annual dues for a period of future years. It is my Decision, further, that it would be improper to use in advance, for any purpose (such as paying for new building, etc.), directly or indirectly, funds resulting from payment in advance of annual dues for future years: savings or accumulations over operating expenses from Annual Dues for current or past years, of course, can be used for building fund or other purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 64.

That the \$10.00 contribution to the Endowment Fund of the Masonic Home and School of Texas may not be paid by the Lodge but must be paid by the candidate in addition to the Lodge's regular Degree fee for the Master's Degree. The whole aim and purpose of this requirement is to cause the new Master Mason to be conscious of our Home and School and to impress upon him the fact that he has a share in this great Institution. There is nothing new about this requirement of the Law as it has been in effect for many years. It is reported here because it seems to have been generally misunderstood for many years by some of our constituent Lodges. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1959 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to charge all members over 60 years of age Grand Lodge dues only, and all members under 60 years of age full dues?

ANSWER: That a Lodge may not classify members for dues paying purposes, so that any member or class of members pay more or less than any other members or class of members. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 6.

Art. 308. **Lodge May Fix Fees Above Minimum.**

Art. 309. **New Lodge in Concurrent Jurisdiction.**

Notes on Decisions

A Lodge in a concurrent Jurisdiction can increase its fees without the concurrence of the other Lodges having concurrent jurisdiction. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 39.

However, a Lodge cannot add the Grand Lodge Memorial Assessment to the dues of the Lodge as an assessment. It may increase its dues by regular change of the By-Laws of the Lodge. Such raise cannot be for a limited or specified term only. However, by independent action, the Lodge at a later date may reduce its fees, subject to all rules governing same, including those applying to Lodges of concurrent jurisdiction.

Approved after eliminating therefrom the words "Such raise cannot be for a limited or specified term only." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 41.

QUESTION: A peculiar situation involving three Lodges within the same District was called to my attention. In 1955 Lodge A was granted a Charter to form a new Lodge and at the same time granted permission to hold concurrent jurisdiction with both Lodge B and Lodge C prior to that time (1955) Lodge B and Lodge C did not hold concurrent jurisdiction with each other. These three towns are separately incorporated cities with Lodge A situated approximately midway between the other two. The question has been raised since Lodge A holds concurrent jurisdiction with Lodge B on one side and Lodge C on the other, do Lodge B and Lodges C hold concurrent jurisdiction with each other? Also, will it be necessary for Lodge B and Lodge C to vote on the question of concurrent jurisdiction with each other?

ANSWER: In view of the above situation, the following questions have been raised: 1. Since Lodge A holds concurrent jurisdiction with Lodge B on one side and Lodge C on the other, do Lodge B and Lodge C have concurrent jurisdiction with each other? The answer

is no. 2. Will it be necessary for Lodge B and Lodge C to vote on the question of concurrent jurisdiction with each other? Yes, see Article 479 of our Laws. 3. In view of the fact that Lodge A was granted concurrent jurisdiction with two Lodges that did not previously hold concurrent jurisdiction with each other, was Lodge A correct in adopting the fees and dues charged in Lodge C rather than in Lodge B? If not, should the fees and dues in Lodge A be changed to comply with Article 346? Also, will fees and dues charged in Lodge C be affected in any way? In view of the fact that Grand Lodge approved the application of Lodge A and issued it a Charter and approved its By-Laws fixing the amount of its fees and dues, it is my decision that if the Lodges are not satisfied with the present situation that they try to get together and adjust their fees and dues in a manner satisfactory to all, and if there is any friction because of the difference in fees and dues that they cannot satisfactorily settle among themselves that they present their petition TO GRAND LODGE for such action as they may consider themselves entitled to. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 60.

QUESTION: May a Lodge reduce its fees without the approval of any other Lodge in it's district provided it does not reduce them below the amount originally fixed?

ANSWER: It is my decision that such action is permitted under Article 309 of our Laws. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1993 - NO. 7.

Art. 310. No Distinctions Among Vocations.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: In the by-laws adopted by a Lodge, the annual dues per member were \$10.00, they asked if it was permissible for the Lodge to vote to reduce the dues to the minimum of \$5.00 per year for members over 65 years of age or will we have to amend our by-laws?

ANSWER: That a Lodge cannot classify its members for dues paying purposes, charging one class less than it charges another group. However, this would not prevent a Lodge from remitting or exempting from year to year any portion of the dues of any member for that year. But, it could not bind itself to do so in advance. The reason for the distinction is, that current dues are charged primarily for current Lodge expenses, and cannot be pledged in advance for any other purpose. Any surplus may each year be appropriated for any Masonic purpose. Of course, life members are automatically exempt from dues. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 55.

That Lodges may not classify members for dues paying purposes so that any member, or any class of members, pay more or less than any other member or class of members. The amount of annual dues in a Lodge must be uniform, and must apply equally to all members, who are required to pay dues. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1959 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge charge members over 65 years of age Grand Lodge dues only, that is the per capita assessment which each Lodge pays to the Grand Lodge, while charging all other members the minimum dues required by the Laws of The Grand Lodge?

ANSWER: It is not permissible for a Lodge to make such a distinction in the amount of dues paid by its members. While a Lodge may remit the dues of a member or exempt any member from payment of dues, under provisions of Article 314, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas, the Lodge is required to collect at least the minimum of \$8.00 (now \$30) per annum from those members who do pay dues by the provisions of Article 311, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 37.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge change its by-laws and raise dues for all members except those Brothers over sixty-five years of age who have paid dues to the Lodge for ten or more years?

ANSWER: No, it is not permissible for a Lodge to change its by-laws and raise dues for all members except those Brothers over sixty-five years of age who have paid dues to the Lodge for the past ten years period. (Proceedings 1959, page 147, dec. 10 GM Briscoe)

GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 20.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to charge all members over 60 years of age Grand Lodge dues only, and all members under 60 years of age full dues?

ANSWER: That a Lodge may not classify members for dues paying purposes, so that any member or class of members pay more or less than any other members or class of members. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 6.

Art. 311. **Dues: Fixed by Lodge: Minimum.**

Notes on Decisions

However, a Lodge cannot add the Grand Lodge Memorial Assessment to the dues of the Lodge as an assessment. It may increase its dues by regular change of the By-Laws of the Lodge. Such raise cannot be for a limited or specified term only. However,

by independent action, the Lodge at a later date may reduce its fees, subject to all rules governing same, including those applying to Lodges of concurrent jurisdiction.

Approved after eliminating therefrom the words "Such raise cannot be for a limited or specified term only." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 41.

QUESTION: A Lodge reported that during the week of May 23, 1962, the Lodge conferred the Master Mason Degree upon three candidates, and the questions have been asked: How much should be collected for their 1962 dues in order to be a paid-up member? Should the total amount of dues, \$12.50, be collected and then retained, or should the Lodge prorate the amount from May 23 until June 23, 1962?

ANSWER: Article 311 of our Laws leaves the fixing of dues to the individual Lodge, subject only to the restriction that the minimum of \$8.00 (now \$30) per annum must be charged. The method of prorating the candidate's dues is clearly left up to each individual Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: The question was submitted by a constituent Lodge, if it was permissible for a member of said Lodge to open an account with a Savings and Loan Association, in a certain amount, as a trust fund for the Lodge, permitting the Lodge to withdraw these interest only and in return said Lodge would never remove his name from its rolls even after his death.

ANSWER: No. The Lodge does not have the power or authority to make such an agreement with a member, as this is neither practical nor permissible. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1964 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: The question was asked whether a Lodge could accept the payment of the sum of \$6.00 as payment of dues instead of the required \$8.00 (now \$30) where, after having remitted the dues of members more than 70 years of age for some time, it had found it necessary to discontinue the practice and had notified members to pay dues without informing such members as to the minimum amount required to pay the dues, due to which facts some members had remitted only \$6.00 instead of \$8.00.

ANSWER: The Lodge must collect the additional \$2.00 from each of the members as dues in order to collect the minimum required by Article 311, Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, or refund the \$6.00 collected and remit the dues of such members. It is not permissible under the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas to collect only a part of the dues required by Article 311, and no Lodge is

authorized to make any distinction in the amount of dues charged its members as compared with that charged other members. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 38.

Art. 312. **Fees and Dues Paid Only in Money.**

Title II, Chapter 17 Art. — 313-315

Art. 313. **Uniform Receipt Card.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: The question has been submitted by a constituent Lodge, if the Lodge can hold up a dues card until the candidate has turned in his proficiency examination in the Master's Degree.

ANSWER: No. When a Brother is properly raised he is a member and Mason in good standing and entitled to all the rights and benefits pertaining there. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1964 - NO. 4.

Art. 314. **May Remit or Exempt from Payment.**

NOTE: The current dues of the Lodge are primarily for the payment of current operating and fixed expenses and charges. While this Article gives to the Lodge a wide discretion in dealing with its members regarding dues for current and previous years, it does not authorize the Lodge to limit, curtail, diminish, allocate or appropriate any portion of its future dues for any other purpose, whether by agreement, resolution, bylaw, pledge, or any other means. Any dues paid in advance for any future period must be held by the Lodge and applied to the receipts of the current year or years for which they are paid.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permitted for Lodge by-laws to grant Life Membership to all members who have reached the age of 65 years by ceasing to collect dues and issuing a paid-up dues card each year?

ANSWER: No, Lodges can only grant one Life Membership a year for distinguished services rendered the Lodge and one additional Life Membership which may be given during any consecutive three-year period of time, for long and distinguished services. Article 314 covers the remitting or exemption from payment of dues. As stated, a Lodge may exempt a member from payment of dues, but Grand Lodge does not exempt the Lodge, which exempts such a member, from paying its Grand Lodge per capita.

The Lodge should discontinue the practice of granting paid-up dues cards to members who have reached the age of 65 years, unless a Lodge is financially able to remit dues and at the same

time meet its obligation of the per capita tax to Grand Lodge. This does not seem to be an advisable practice. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 19.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a Brother diagnosed as having Alzheimer's Disease could be considered an insane member.

ANSWER: A diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease does not designate a member as being insane and the provisions of Article 322 do not apply. Article 314 is applicable if the victim of Alzheimer's Disease is incapacitated to the point of not being able to pay his dues. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1988 - NO. 6.

Art. 315. Life Membership.

Notes on Decisions

A life member of a Lodge who demits from such Lodge thereby loses his life membership and such Lodge has no further responsibility for paying the Grand Lodge dues of such member. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 46.

Article 351 (now 315), as amended in 1947, is a direct law by the Grand Lodge. The Grand Master has no authority to grant a Dispensation permitting a subordinate Lodge to grant additional Life Memberships. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 56.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a protest to be Lodged with the Worshipful Master of a subordinate Lodge against the granting of life membership?

ANSWER: A protest cannot be Lodged against a Brother being elected to life membership. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1957 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge which has previously issued life memberships in accordance with Article 351 of the Laws of The Grand Lodge, to revoke said life membership in the interest of bettering the financial condition of the Lodge?

ANSWER: When life memberships are granted, the same are for life, revocable only in the case of un-Masonic conduct and then only after trial is held and the Brother suspended or expelled. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it is permissible for a constituent Lodge in Texas to issue a "permanent" Life Membership Card to one of its Life Members.

ANSWER: It is my decision that it is entirely proper for a constituent Lodge to issue the so called “permanent” Life Membership Card to its Life Members. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge amend its By-Laws to provide that the outgoing Master, if he holds a certificate in the esoteric work, is automatically granted a Life Membership?

ANSWER: No, in accordance with Article 315 of our Grand Lodge Laws, a constituent Lodge in Texas can not legally amend its By-Laws whereby the outgoing Master, if he is a holder of a certificate in esoteric work, is automatically granted a Life Membership. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 62.

Art. 316. **Exemptions.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Could a Lodge be exempt from paying its per capita contributions to The Grand Lodges of Texas on a dual member who had been awarded a life membership and a 50-year service certificate from a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction?

ANSWER: Such life membership and 50 year service certificate from another Grand Jurisdiction would not exempt the Texas Lodge from payment of the per capita contributions to The Grand Lodge of Texas, since Texas Lodges are not exempt from paying Grand Lodge dues on life members of that Lodge and exemptions from dues for those receiving 50 year service awards provided by Article 316, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas, apply only to those members who are entitled to 50 year Masonic service awards from The Grand Lodge of Texas under Article 14, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas.

Jurisprudence Committee qualified Decision No. 39:

“That it might be possible the dual member involved might be entitled to a Texas Fifty-year Masonic Service Award and this possibility should be investigated.” GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 39.

QUESTION: Can Brethren who were suspended prior to December 3, 1941 for non-payment of dues count the time between their dates of suspension and the December 3, 1941 date?

ANSWER: That the language of the amendment is very clear and states that the Brother who was suspended prior to December 3, 1941, for non-payment of dues may count his period of suspension toward the 50 Year Award only if he was reinstated prior to December 3, 1941. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1985 - NO. 5.

Art. 317. Dimit: Unearned Dues Refunded.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Question was asked if a Brother is suspended from membership by a Trial Commission, should the Lodge refund the unused portion of the dues which he has paid for the year.

ANSWER: That the Lodge shall refund dues for the remaining portion of the year when the member is suspended, and at the same time, shall take up his current dues card. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 50.

Art. 318. Twenty-Five Dollar Donation to Masonic Home and School.**Art. 318a. Endowed Membership.****Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Is a Mason, who is convicted of a felony, conceals the fact from his Lodge, later purchases an Endowed Membership, and who is subsequently expelled for his felony conviction, entitled to a refund of his Endowed Membership fee?

HELD: No. Article 318a provides that a Mason who loses his membership due to suspension or expulsion, shall forfeit his Endowed Membership and any future claim to fees paid or revenues earned through such membership. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2000 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: May a Masonic Lodge assist in the purchase of Endowed Memberships for its members?

ANSWER: Under Article 318a(1), a Lodge may purchase an Endowed Membership in honor or memory of any Master Mason, living or deceased, so long as he was in good standing at the time of purchase; therefore, a Lodge may assist in the purchase of the Endowed Membership. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 9.

Art.318b. Contribution to George Washington Masonic National Memorial.**CHAPTER 18 - TITLE II SUSPENSION FOR
NON-PAYMENT OF DUES****Art. 319. Automatic Suspension.****Notes on Decisions**

Reference is made to Jurisprudence Committee Report No. 4, which was adopted by the Grand Lodge in December, 1953, (see pages 191-192 of the 1953 Proceedings). I cannot see any material

difference in the wording, as to requirement of continuity of membership in good standing, contained in Article 382a (now 346) and the wording on the same matter contained in Article 14. In this particular, therefore, both Articles should receive the same construction and be applied in the same way. An "Automatic Suspension" for non-payment of dues under Article 354 (now 319) will not break the "continuous membership in good standing" required by Article 14 or as required by Article 382a (now 346), provided such suspension is "cured" or remedied by payment of all dues and automatic reinstatement within two (now one) years as provided for in Article 359 (now 323) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 17.

A Brother was automatically suspended for non-payment of dues on June 24th. The time within which he can automatically reinstate (in not more than two [now one] years) dates from the date he was suspended (June 24th) and not from the date the dues, for which he was suspended, "became due." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 52.

QUESTION: It was brought to the attention of the Grand Master for decision that Brother W.B.W. and son, Brother S.O.W., who reside in California, were in arrears for three years dues as of this date. However, these dues were supposed to have been paid by another son, Brother W.B.W., Jr., who resided in said city and who is in good standing. Another Brother, U.A.H., who does not live in the jurisdiction of the Lodge, was two years in arrears as of this date. The records or minutes of the Lodge have been examined and it has been found that these Brothers were not notified in writing by the Secretary of the Lodge.

ANSWER: The receipt given by the Secretary – dues card – specifically recites the date to which dues have been paid, and Article 354 (now 319) provides that if a member fails to pay his dues on or before June 23rd of each year, he shall stand automatically suspended, without action of the Lodge, and "if no meeting of the Lodge be held on said date, such delinquent member shall nevertheless stand automatically suspended," and entry be made in the minutes at the first subsequent stated meeting of the Lodge. It is required by Article 354 (now 319) that the Secretary notify the Brother that if he fails to pay his dues he shall stand automatically suspended, and the Secretary should perform such duty, and if he does not, he is guilty of a serious breach of duty, for which action should be taken by the Lodge. The failure on the part of the Secretary does not relieve the Brother from his duty to keep his dues paid up, and he is chargeable with notice of the law that if he

does not pay up at the time required by Law, he stand automatically suspended. Therefore, it was my decision that Brothers W.B.W., S.O.W. and U.A.H. were automatically suspended, even though no action was taken by the Lodge. If the Brethren desire to be reinstated, then they should file their applications for reinstatements as required by Article 360 of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 57.

Art.319a. Committee on Members in Arrears.

Art. 320. Notice of Suspension.

Art. 321. No Dues During Suspension.

Art. 322. Mental Incompetence.

Notes on Decisions

If a Brother was in fact insane, whether or not adjudged to be, his automatic suspension N.P.D. was invalid. In the absence of an adjudication, however, the fact of actual insanity must be thoroughly and fully established by full and complete proof. If certificate of a reputable physician and affidavits of at least three Master Masons in good standing, who have direct and first-hand knowledge from contacts and opportunity to observe and know, are furnished to the effect that the Brother was insane during June, 1951, and at all times since, I would be inclined to rule that his suspension was illegal and he could be restored to the rolls by complying with Article 357 (now 322) and correcting the records. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 72.

QUESTION: It was brought to the attention of the Grand Master that a Lodge had suspended a Brother for non-payment of dues, although the Brother at the time was physically ill and mentally insane. The question was asked by the District Deputy Grand Master as to what should be done for the Lodge to rectify this unfortunate situation after the action had been obviously taken in error and not in accordance with Article 357 (now 322) of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas.

ANSWER: In order to correct the situation, the Lodge was ordered to introduce a resolution at their next stated meeting, setting forth all the facts, reciting the Law, admitting the error, and restoring the Brother to membership. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION -1958 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a Brother diagnosed as having Alzheimer's Disease could be considered an insane member.

ANSWER: A diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease does not designate a member as being insane and the provisions of Article 322 do not apply. Article 314 is applicable if the victim of Alzheimer's Disease is incapacitated to the point of not being able to pay his dues. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1988 - NO. 6.

Art. 323. **Effect of Suspension.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A Lodge has inquired regarding whether or not the pictures of Past Masters, who have gone suspended for non-payment of dues, should be returned to the individuals and not displayed in the Lodgeroom.

ANSWER: It was my opinion that this is a matter for each constituent Lodge to determine for itself. Article 6 does provide "A Past Master, *** who dimit *** loses his *** rights, titles and honors, attaching to such Past office." going suspended for N.P.D. is usually (not always because of possible inability to pay) a voluntary act and when voluntary, should have the same effect as obtaining a dimit. (See Article 323). But his losing his "rights, titles and honors" is one thing and the Lodge having his picture "hung" on its walls is an entirely different thing. Further in my opinion a Past Master does not have the right to have his picture hung in the Lodgeroom – this is a matter for the Lodge in the first place. Further, I suggested that suspension for N.P.D. does not involve any moral turpitude. The person involved did serve as Master and this is an established fact and a part of the record and history of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 17.

Art. 324. **Reinstatement After Three Years.**

Notes on Decisions

A Brother was automatically suspended for non-payment of dues on June 24th. The time within which he can automatically reinstate (in not more than two [now one] years) dates from the date he was suspended (June 24th) and not from the date the dues, for which he was suspended, "became due." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 52.

QUESTION: Would the advanced age of a suspended member render him ineligible for reinstatement?

ANSWER: That if the suspended member complied with Article 360 (now 324) of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas the advanced age would not render him ineligible for reinstatement. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1956 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: The question was asked as to the effect of the ballot held at a stated meeting of the Lodge in 1971 when the petition for reinstatement of a Brother, who had been suspended for non-payment of dues less than two years, was declared rejected since he received one black ball.

ANSWER: Since the minutes of the stated meeting of the Lodge held in 1971 clearly reflect that the petitioner received more than the required two-thirds favorable ballot, the petitioner was reinstated pursuant to the terms of Article 324. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: The ballot on a petition for reinstatement (after suspension for N.P.D.), taken in September 1986, showed four white balls and one black ball. Is the petitioner reinstated or rejected?

ANSWER: Article 324 was revised in December, 1985 to require two-third favorable ballot to reinstate a petitioner suspended more than three years for non-payment of dues. Therefore, the petitioner in this case was reinstated. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: Can a Worshipful Master find the ballot unfavorable on a petition for reinstatement receiving four black balls from 33 members and four visitors, concerning a member suspended for non-payment of dues for over three years, and announced that the candidate is rejected for two years?

ANSWER: No. Article 324 is the controlling statute over Article 418 and the candidate received more than a two-thirds favorable ballot, and the petitioner should be reinstated. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 10.

Art. 325. (**Article Deleted, 1998. Retained for reference only.**)

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A Lodge Secretary requested a ruling regarding the case of Brother S. states that he dimitted from the Lodge just before he left for the Orient in 1931, and that all of his papers and other things were stored at that time, and have been in storage since then and he does not know if he could find the Dimit if he were to go back there to look for it. Our records show that he was suspended June 24, 1943, but he states that he could not have been suspended for non-payment of dues in 1943 as he had dimitted in 1931. How shall we proceed in this matter? By reinstatement or by affiliation?

ANSWER: It is my ruling that inasmuch as the records of both the Secretary of the Lodge and the Grand Secretary of The Grand

Lodge of Texas indicate that Brother S. was suspended for non-payment of dues in 1943, if Brother S. again desires membership in the Lodge, same shall be by application for reinstatement. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 61.

Art. 326. **Expulsion Permitted After Three Years.**

Art. 327. **Expulsion Permitted After Three Years: Reinstatement.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: It was brought to my attention that a Brother was suspended for non-payment of dues June 23, 1959, in Lodge A, owing \$10.00 and being a Dual Member of Lodge B, was suspended by Lodge B on June 23, 1959, owing \$9.00. He has been reinstated in Lodge B as of March 20, 1962, and the question has been raised by Lodge A: "What action should be taken in Lodge A?"

ANSWER: Article 352 provides that reinstatement in one dual membership Lodge automatically reinstates in the other. While each Lodge has jurisdiction to reinstate when suspension is for non-payment of dues, it is not required that proceedings be instituted in both Lodges. The proper procedure is to petition one of the Lodges, tendering, also, the arrearage due the other Lodge. It is the duty of the petitioned Lodge to see that this is done, as well as to see that its own arrearage is tendered. It is further the duty of the petitioned Lodge to collect and pay to the other Lodge the arrearage due it; and when it reinstates without collecting from the petitioner, it none-the-less owes the arrearage to the other Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 2.

Art. 328. **When Lodge Demised: Restoration.**

Art. 329. **When Lodge Demised: Reinstatement.**

Art. 330. **Grand Lodge Dues Continue During Charter Arrest and Lodge Suspension.**

CHAPTER 19 - TITLE II

BUSINESS OF LODGE

Art. 331. (367). **All Stated and Called Meetings.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible to take snapshots within the Lodgeroom during a meeting?

ANSWER: That permission may be granted by the presiding officer if such picture taking does not disturb the procedure and decorum of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1979 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to record activities of a tiled meeting of a Masonic Lodge on film, video camera, still camera or audio tape recorder?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to record any portion of a tiled meeting, be it Stated or Called, of a subordinate Lodge in Texas, either on film, video camera, still camera, audio tape recorder or any other mechanical means. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it proper to use electronic taping equipment to record the business of a Lodge?

HELD: No. Such use would not be appropriate. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1997 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can a District Deputy Grand Master or other Grand Lodge Officer be officially received in an Entered Apprentice Lodge or Fellowcraft Lodge?

ANSWER: No. The Grand Lodge Officer will be received in a Master Mason's Lodge and then the Lodge will be "called" down to an Entered Apprentice Lodge or Fellowcraft Lodge for the remainder of meeting. Once that Lodge is closed, the Master Mason's Lodge would then be called from "refreshment to labor" and duly closed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008- NO. 8.

QUESTION: What "sign" is to be given during the balloting process when the stated meeting is being held in the Entered Apprentice Lodge, or Fellowcraft Lodge?

ANSWER: The sign of the degree in which the Lodge is conducting the stated meeting is the sign that will be given when balloting. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 11.

Art. 332. (368). **EA and FC Lodges.** Art. 332. At the option of the Worshipful Master, a Lodge may first be opened at a called meeting of the Lodge on an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft Lodge and closed on such degree without first opening on the Master's Degree. No business, balloting, or other proceedings shall be transacted in any Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft Lodge except that which appertains to the work, lectures, and examination of the candidate in such degrees. (Revised 2001)

Art. 333. **Order of Business.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Do all committees appointed by the Worshipful Master in office, excepting investigation committees on petitions, expire at the end of the Master's term of office and the new Master appoint his own Committees or reappoint the old ones?

ANSWER: The tenure of any committee of a constituent Lodge is co-extensive with the term of the Worshipful Master making the appointment of the committee, unless the By-Laws or a resolution of the Lodge, creates a committee and provides for a longer term than one year. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1971 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is a Master of a Lodge entitled to the combination of the safe in the Secretary's office?

ANSWER: The keeping of records by a Lodge is a matter for each Lodge to determine as long as the records are kept in compliance with the Grand Lodge Laws. (Article 333). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 44.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to take snapshots within the Lodgeroom during a meeting?

ANSWER: That permission may be granted by the presiding officer if such picture taking does not disturb the procedure and decorum of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1979 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to record activities of a tiled meeting of a Masonic Lodge on film, video camera, still camera or audio tape recorder?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to record any portion of a tiled meeting, be it Stated or Called, of a subordinate Lodge in Texas, either on film, video camera, still camera, audio tape recorder or any other mechanical means. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it proper to use electronic taping equipment to record the business of a Lodge?

HELD: No. Such use would not be appropriate. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1997 - NO. 2.

Art. 334. **“Committees of the Whole” Prohibited.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Should the Worshipful Master, after being installed in office, desire to appoint a new building committee, does he have to discharge the old ones, or are they automatically discharged the year having ended?

ANSWER: If the By-Laws of the Lodge state that the building committee members are appointed for one, two, three, four or five year terms, then the Worshipful Master will have the privilege of appointing one member to said committee – the same being for the year which expired. However, if the By-Laws state that a building committee is appointed by the Worshipful Master, without stating the year for expiration, then it will be the privilege of the Worshipful Master to appoint a new building committee. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 46.

QUESTION: May a Lodge form a Clown Committee to perform at a school, hospital, Homes for the Aged and other Masonic functions?

ANSWER: Lodges may form such a committee provided events at which they perform are non controversial, or a community nature

and that no aprons and Masonic insignia or paraphernalia be worn and that no charge is made for their services. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1993 - NO. 4.

Art. 335. (371). **Lodge Funds Under Its Control.**

Notes on Decisions

I refuse to ask Grand Lodge, or any Constituent Lodge, to contribute to the Cancer Drive or any other charity not directed and controlled by Masonry. Notwithstanding the undoubted good purpose of such charities, the moneys coming into the hands of the Grand Lodge and Constituent Lodges are trust funds for Masonic purposes. Individual Masons make individual contributions to such charities and public movements. Masonic money should be used for Masonic purposes only. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 2.

It is improper to furnish rosters or lists showing names and addresses of Masons to Kiwanis or other clubs or organizations for the purpose of permitting them to solicit aid or funds from Masons for non-Masonic purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 3.

A Lodge, or its members in the character of Masons, may not assist the Salvation Army in raising funds by serving at the kettles, or in any other capacity. The individual Mason may do so in his individual capacity. He may make any donations he desires in his individual capacity. The Lodge may make a donation if it desires, nonetheless, as set forth in paragraph 18 of my Message of August 24th, I stated my belief that it is not good practice to do so. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 36.

HELD: That Masonic Lodges, individually or by Districts, or groups of Masons, are authorized to establish blood banks and other charitable and helpful projects under strictly Masonic control. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 80.

Lodge may, by by-laws, place surplus funds of the Lodge into special accounts for special or specific purposes, and commit routine management thereof to special committees. Except as they may be set up by trust agreements or other covenants as pledges to secure particular indebtedness, as, for example, purchase or building of temple, such special funds and accounts are subject to the ultimate control of the Lodge which can supervise and control the

committees or amend or repeal the authority thereof. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 84.

QUESTION: Is it proper for a Lodge to use its funds to pay a special prosecutor to assist a county attorney in prosecuting a man who was charged with murder of a Master Mason?

ANSWER: It is not proper to use Lodge funds for this purpose. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1953 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: The District Deputy Grand Master forwarded to me proposed changes in the bylaws of a Lodge creating a building fund to be solely at the disposal of a building committee, stating further that all donations or rents received should be deposited therein and that \$10.00 of each Degree fee as well as \$4.00 of the dues of each member should be deposited therein, that this fund should be used only for construction of Lodge building, for the repairing, equipping and furnishing of the Lodge; that it could not be used to pay janitor's services or any utility bill and that this fund itself was to be audited once each year, and money therein to be paid out only by check signed by Chairman and Treasurer of the building committee.

ANSWER: The current receipts of a Lodge are primarily for current Lodge expenses, and cannot be pledged, in whole or in part, for any other purpose. Any surplus may be transferred to such fund from time to time as and after it accumulates, and the Lodge may fix the amount of fees and dues so as to meet the estimated needs of the fund, but it cannot pledge any part of its future current revenues for any purpose, nor delegate its own authority over its expenditures to any committee or other agency. Apparently, the only limitation upon the powers of the committee over the fund was that of submitting to an annual audit and making an annual report, which is an unwarranted delegation of the powers reserved to the Lodge alone. (See Art. 371 [now 335], Dec. (a)). It was my decision that these proposed changes in the by-laws of said Lodge would be in violation of Grand Lodge Laws and may not be adopted by the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 54.

QUESTION: The question has been asked whether or not it would be permissible for Lodge A to furnish a room in the new hospital being built in its City and place a plaque upon the door of said room, reading: "Furnished by Lodge ____, A. F. & A. M., ____, Texas."

ANSWER: It would be permissible for Lodge A to furnish a room in the new hospital being built in its City and to place such a plaque on the door of the room, provided the hospital is owned and operated either by the City or other Governmental Subdivision, or

by a non-profit organization. However, if it is a privately owned hospital, it would not be permissible to either furnish the room or place the plaque upon the door. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: It was asked by one of the constituent Lodges whether it was lawful to make a donation to an Industrial Foundation which is being established to attract new industries to its town.

ANSWER: My decision is that Lodge funds cannot lawfully be contributed to an Industrial Foundation "being established to attract new industries to a town." The bringing of industry to a community, however, beneficial in many ways, is certainly not a matter within the scope of appropriate Masonic activities. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: Question was asked whether a Lodge could make a donation of \$1,000.00 from Lodge funds to a building fund for the construction of a building to be used as a youth center and other community organizations?

ANSWER: Such a donation from the funds of a Lodge would be prohibited by Articles 335, 339 and 486, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 35.

QUESTION: A request was made for permission to award two scholarships to honor graduates of a high school.

ANSWER: There is no objection to the awarding of scholarships to honor graduates of a high school. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Should a Lodge use its funds and the name of its Lodge to sponsor a local high school scholarship to be awarded to a worthy graduating student for the purpose of furthering their education in a college or trade school?

ANSWER: This is permissible under Grand Lodge Law, as under Article 335 the Lodge may appropriate its funds for any purpose not inconsistent with the principles and purposes of Masonry or the Laws of the Grand Lodge. Freemasonry in Texas has always been most supportive of education, and in fact the earliest schools in Texas were principally those started and supported by Masonic Lodges. Lodges have for many years awarded scholarships to students for college and university training. Dallas Lodge No. 760 has made such awards for over 40 years. The Lodge even has an endowed scholarship at SMU. This is a very appropriate activity of

Lodges and the appropriate use of Lodge funds. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1983 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Could a Lodge purchase a sign on the outfield fence of a baseball park which is used by a local youth organization on which to put the name and location of the Lodge?

ANSWER: That the Lodge could purchase a sign with the following exceptions, that the meeting nights and invitation not be on the sign. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1985 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: May Masonic Appendant Organizations conduct raffles and/or Bingo for charitable purposes?

HELD: Article 643 prohibits Lodges from raising money by lotteries or other gambling devices. This law does not apply to Masonic Appendant Organizations, provided those organizations conduct charitable raffles and/or Bingo according to the Laws of The State of Texas. This decision however, does not apply to "Lotteries," nor to Masonic Lodges, because of the wording of Articles 335.4, 643 and 506.5. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2002 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: May a Lodge solicit funds from non-Masons for Masonic Charities?

ANSWER: Prior Grand Master's opinions, No. 11 (1976), No. 8 (1984), and No. 11 (1972), have held that funds cannot be solicited from the general public for Masonic purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 3.

Art. 336. **Reconsideration of Matters.**

Art. 337. **Minutes of Lodge.
Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Are the Master and Secretary required to sign minutes of meetings at which they were not present or should they be signed by the Pro-tems of those offices?

ANSWER: Article 280 and 337 state that the Worshipful Master is responsible for the correctness of the Minutes and should be signed by the Worshipful Master and Secretary at the meeting of the Lodge at which the minutes are approved. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to record activities of a tiled meeting of a Masonic Lodge on film, video camera, still camera or audio tape recorder?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to record any portion of a tiled meeting, be it Stated or Called, of a subordinate Lodge in Texas, either on film, video camera, still camera, audio tape recorder or any other mechanical means. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it proper to use electronic taping equipment to record the business of a Lodge?

HELD: No. Such use would not be appropriate. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1997 - NO. 2.

Art. 338. **Inspection of Minutes: By Whom.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: The question was asked if it was appropriate for the Internal Revenue Service to examine the minutes of a Lodge?

ANSWER: Yes. The Internal Revenue Service is entitled by law to examine the records of the Lodge, including its minutes, in order to determine that the Lodge is exempt from income taxation under Section 501(c) (10) of the Internal Revenue Code. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: May Lodge minutes be stored away from the Lodge, and under what circumstances?

HELD: No. Minutes must be permanently located at the Lodge, and available under Article 338. A Secretary may transcribe notes of meetings away from the Lodge, but must be completed and returned within 72 hours after the meeting. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2001 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a copy of the minutes of a Lodge long since demised to be placed in the County public library for historical purposes?

ANSWER: A copy of Lodge minutes can not be placed in a County public library, even if the Lodge is demised, and no members are living. However, a summary of Lodge minutes is authorized under Article 338a and can be placed in the County public library if the provisions of Article 338a are strictly followed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 16.

Art. 338a. **Summary of Minutes Permitted.**

Art. 339. Lodge Shall Not Sponsor Other Organizations.**Notes on Decisions**

It is improper to furnish rosters or lists showing names and addresses of Masons to Kiwanis or other clubs or organizations for the purpose of permitting them to solicit aid or funds from Masons for non-Masonic purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 3.

I have held that the High Noon Club of Dallas is legal, being a group of Masons who meet only for luncheon and discussions, doing no esoteric work and not holding themselves out as any specific Masonic Body. Also held that such group may raise funds for Christmas gifts to Masonic Home and School, Home for Aged Masons, and similar purposes. They may make the solicitation provided there is obtained the consent of the Grand Master and the Masonic organization for whose benefit the funds are to be raised. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 79.

HELD: That Masonic Lodges, individually or by Districts, or groups of Masons, are authorized to establish blood banks and other charitable and helpful projects under strictly Masonic control. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 80.

QUESTION: One of the constituent Lodges asked if it was permissible or possible for a Lodge to be co-sponsors of the Chapters of DeMolay for Boys and Assemblies of Rainbow for Girls with other organizations, who meet in its Lodge Hall.

ANSWER: No. The constituent Lodge should be the sole sponsor. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1964 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Question was asked whether a Lodge could make a donation of \$1,000.00 from Lodge funds to a building fund for the construction of a building to be used as a youth center and other community organizations.

ANSWER: Such a donation from the funds of a Lodge would be prohibited of Articles 335, 339 and 486, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 35.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to become a member of a Farm Bureau Organization in order to secure insurance from said Organization for a considerable less amount of money?

ANSWER: It is neither proper nor permissible for a constituent Lodge in Texas to join the Farm Bureau Organization. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: The question has been asked if it is permissible for a monthly bulletin to be issued jointly by a number of Masonic bodies and said bulletin would have paid advertising in it.

ANSWER: It would not be permissible for a Lodge to publish a bulletin jointly with other Masonic Bodies and it would be improper to use paid advertising in Masonic bulletins or similar Masonic publications. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a Cancer Radiation Center could work in conjunction with Lodges so that the support in the form of work would go to the benefit of any Masonic family needing assistance.

ANSWER: In my opinion this would not violate Grand Lodge Law. It appears to me that this project is very similar of that of a Masonic blood bank which has been approved in the past by Grand Masters and Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it would be appropriate for a Lodge to participate in a Family Day sponsored by the Grotto?

ANSWER: It would be inappropriate for a Lodge to participate in the event outlined. However, Masons, as individuals, might participate in such public gatherings. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Constituent Lodge to be named as executor of an estate?

ANSWER: That neither a Constituent Lodge nor the Grand Lodge should be named as executor of an estate. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1979 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Should a Lodge use its funds to sponsor a Little League baseball or soccer team and identify the Lodge as its sponsor on the team's uniforms?

ANSWER: This would be improper under Grand Lodge Law, Article 339 of Grand Lodge Law provides that no Lodge can sponsor any other organization and the only exception is DeMolay and Rainbow. It was ruled in 1923 that it was improper for a Lodge to sponsor a baseball team even though the team was composed entirely of Masons and the game was for the benefit of charity. The statement is made that Masons individually might form a team and carry out a plan but a Lodge as such could not sponsor the team. It was further stated that Masons acting as Lodge do not have the right to sponsor any outside enterprise not strictly belonging to Masonic activities. Therefore, in view of the above, the request for a Lodge to

use its funds to sponsor a Little League baseball or soccer team and identify the Lodge as its sponsor on the team uniforms is denied. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1983 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can a Masonic Lodge belong to a Civic Organization?

ANSWER: A Masonic Lodge in Texas cannot be a member of a Civic Organization. Article 339 of Grand Lodge Laws provides that no Lodge can stand as sponsor for any other organization except chapters of the Order of DeMolay for boys and assemblies for the Order of Rainbow for girls. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1983 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: May a Lodge sponsor a public pancake supper in support of a project to repair a public swimming pool?

ANSWER: The Lodge can raise funds only for purposes "essential to the existence" of the Lodge. However, the Lodge may, under Article 335, contribute from its general fund to "any purpose not inconsistent with the principles and purposes of Masonry," and, therefore, could make a direct contribution to the community swimming pool project. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to join a Community or Social Preservation League?

ANSWER: That the Lodge could belong provided it participated without holding office or joining in a debate and in an observing capacity to determine how the Lodge could benefit the community.

GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS - 1990 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: May a Lodge join a local Chamber of Commerce?

ANSWER: That a Lodge may join a local Chamber of Commerce provided that the Lodge, at a regular Stated meeting, voted to do so, and that the Lodge be entered on the rolls of the Chamber of Commerce as _____ Masonic Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: May a group of Lodges ban together and create a Masonic Learning Center?

ANSWER: As other allied Masonic organizations provide excellent and well established Learning Centers, it would not be in the best interest of Freemasonry in Texas for Masonic Lodges to duplicate or compete in such services. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1993 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: May a Lodge participate in a Slow Pitch Softball League, and wear uniforms identifying them as Masons?

HELD: Yes, provided the uniforms are labeled "Blank Masonic Lodge," that no Masonic emblems be displayed, and that the team conduct itself at all times in an exemplary manner, exhibiting the highest moral qualities and personal courtesies. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Constituent Lodge or Lodges to form a Masonic Historical Museum and Library and Library and Masonic Preservation Foundation?

HELD: Such is not proper, and would be contrary to Grand Master's Decision No. 8, 1989, approved by Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: May a Lodge sponsor an athletic team?

HELD: No. However, a Lodge may support a team by donating money, equipment or uniforms. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1996 - NO. 1.

Art. 339a. Formation of Texas Non-Profit Corporations.

Art. 340. Permission to Acquire, Sell or Mortgage Lodge Property.

Notes on Decisions

Application for permission to erect new building, or incur indebtedness therefor, must show the completed plans and specifications of the proposed Lodge, the cost thereof, the amount to be paid in cash by the Lodge, and the amount to be borrowed, and all essential terms of the loan, and also show the probable ability of the Lodge to repay said indebtedness. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 19.

A Lodge may have joint ownership of a building with the Chapter, Council, or any other Masonic Body, either by title directly in the name of the joint owners, or through a corporation, a trust or other legal holding entity. The interests of the several Bodies need to be clearly stated in the muniment of title, or agreement of the Bodies, and consent of the Grand Master is necessary with respect to participation of the Blue Lodge in the acquisition of the property. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 20.

Under the Laws of the State of Texas, each subordinate Lodge chartered by the Grand Lodge of Texas is, itself, a private coopera-

tion and there is no need for any other Corporation, Association, or "Trustees." See Articles 1399 to 1407, R.C.S. of the State of Texas, the Charter of the Grand Lodge of Texas (printed in the front part of our Masonic "Law Book") and Decision (a) under Article 242 (now 203) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. All funds for a "building fund" must be regularly deposited in a bank in the name of the Lodge and must be and remain subject to the control of the Lodge itself. Special "building fund" or "sinking fund" accounts with a bank, in the name of the Lodge, are permissible. It is within the province of the Worshipful Master to appoint a Special Committee to accumulate funds for the special "Building Fund," but all such funds must be deposited as stated above. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 19.

QUESTION: Does a vote to sell the Lodge building require a majority vote of the entire membership of the Lodge; or just a majority vote of the membership present at the state meeting, at which the question is to be voted upon?

ANSWER: The vote required is only a majority of the membership present at the stated meeting. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: May a Lodge lease or give a first right of refusal on real property without Grand Lodge approval?

ANSWER: Article 340 of the Grand Lodge Laws of Texas permits a Lodge to lease its real property without Grand Lodge approval; however, any additional requirements or language such as a "first right of refusal" is added to the agreement, Grand Lodge approval must first be obtained. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Does the sale or mortgage of real estate owned in fee by a Masonic Building Association or a Masonic Temple Association require prior consent or approval by the Grand Master or Grand Lodge?

ANSWER: The Grand Lodge Law requires prior consent or approval from the Grand Master or Grand Lodge before a Lodge can enter a contract of sale (unless the contract specifies performance is conditioned upon such approval), sell, or mortgage any real property in which it owns an interest, whether that interest is represented by ownership of shares of stock in a Masonic Building Association, a Masonic Temple Association, or any other evidence of ownership. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 2.

Art. 341. Permission to Sell or Mortgage Lodge Property: Procedure.

Art. 342. Permission to Sell or Mortgage Lodge Property: Penalty for Acting Without Consent.

Art.342b. Texas Public Schools Week.

TITLE III MEMBERSHIP

NOTE: The use of the expression “plural member” as synonymous with “resident member” is discarded; and “plural membership” is used to denote membership in two Lodges as distinguished from “single membership” denoting membership in only one Lodge. The two characters of membership are denoted “parent” and “plural” and the respective Lodges as “parent Lodge” and “plural Lodge.”

CHAPTER 1 - TITLE III MEMBERS OF LODGES

Art. 343. Regulations to Enforce Attendance.

Art. 344. Status of E.A.s and F.C.s.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible for the Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts to fill the stations and places in the conferring of a degree in which they have been initiated or passed?

ANSWER: It was held that Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts may fill the stations in the conferring of the Degrees to which they have advanced with the exception of the Master’s station. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1969 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for an Entered Apprentice Mason to work any station or place in a conferral of an Entered Apprentice degree other than the Master’s station, and that a Fellowcraft Mason may do likewise in the conferral of an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft degree.

ANSWER: It is permissible for an Entered Apprentice Mason to work any station or place in a conferral of an Entered Apprentice degree other than the Master’s station, and that a Fellowcraft Mason may do likewise in the conferral of an Entered Apprentice

or a Fellowcraft degree. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: Can Entered Apprentices and Fellowcraft Masons wear aprons and participate in a Masonic graveside service?

HELD: "Participation" includes taking any part in Masonic ceremonies as set forth in Article 362. Article 344 states "...Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts may attend Masonic funerals and appear in public wearing aprons of their respective degrees, provided the Lodge has dispensation to appear in public, and they do not participate in any of the ceremonies." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2002 - NO. 2.

Art. 345. **Master's Degree Conferred Illegally.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Master Mason to be elected or appointed to an office in subordinate Lodge prior to his turning in his proficiency examination in the Master's Degree?

ANSWER: Yes. A Master Mason, after being raised, is subject to annual dues, is allowed to vote on issues coming before the Lodge and is qualified to ballot on petitions, etc. If he does not turn in his proficiency examination within the required time and he has been installed as an officer that office will have to be filled "pro tempore" for the remainder of the year. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 7.

Art. 346. **Twenty-Five Year Emblem.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Fort Worth Lodge No. 148, District No. 64, has 685 Master Masons in good standing who have 25 or more years of service. Not desiring to present the Twenty-five Year Button because of enormous expense involved, they asked permission to present a Certificate instead.

ANSWER: I granted permission for Fort Worth Lodge No. 148 to issue the Certificate of the type they submitted to me for approval. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1953 - NO. 16.

Reference is made to Article 382a (now 346) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas as amended in 1953. The twenty-five years of Masonic Service means twenty-five years of being a Master Mason (from the date of receiving the Master Mason Degree) continuously without a lapse or break of said record; provided, however, that an "automatic suspension" for non-payment of dues under Article 354 (now 319) will not break the "continuous membership

in good standing” required by Article 382a (now 346) if such suspension is “cured” or remedied by payment of dues and automatic reinstatement within two (now one) years as provided for in Article 359 (now 323) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. In all other cases, the matter - with full statement of exact facts - must be submitted to the Grand Lodge or to the Grand Master. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 15.

The subordinate Lodges in Texas may present Twenty-five Year Service Awards to their members who are entitled to receive same. It is not permissible to present Thirty-Year Service Awards in the Grand Jurisdiction of Texas. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 77.

Reference is made to Jurisprudence Committee Report No. 4, which was adopted by the Grand Lodge in December, 1953, (see pages 191-192 of the 1953 Proceedings). I cannot see any material difference in the wording, as to requirement of continuity of membership in good standing, contained in Article 382a (now 346) and the wording on the same matter contained in Article 14. In this particular, therefore, both Articles should receive the same construction and be applied in the same way. An “Automatic Suspension” for non-payment of dues under Article 354 (now 319) will not break the “continuous membership in good standing” required by Article 14 or as required by Article 382a (now 346), provided such suspension is “cured” or remedied by payment of all dues and automatic reinstatement within two (now one) years as provided for in Article 359 (now 323) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 17.

QUESTION: When a member, who has continuously a member for more than 25 years went suspended for non-payment of dues, but several years later was reinstated. Is said member eligible for a Twenty-Five Year Emblem?

ANSWER: The fact that the member went suspended for non-payment of dues after 25 years continuous membership did not make him ineligible to receive the Twenty-Five Year Emblem, if he is in good standing at the time the Emblem is awarded. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 7.

Art. 346a. **Forty-Year Emblem.**

CHAPTER 2 - TITLE III
PLURAL MEMBERSHIP

Art. 347. Membership Permitted in Multiple Lodges.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can a Mason in Texas hold dual membership in a Lodge when he has never resided in the jurisdiction of that Lodge?

ANSWER: Yes, any Mason holding a dual membership since December 6, 1973, is permitted to continue his membership in two Lodges regardless of his residence. (See Art. 347, as amended 1973). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1974 - NO. 6.

Art. 348. In Two Grand Jurisdictions.

Notes on Decisions

No Mason having membership in another Grand Jurisdiction can hold dual membership in a Texas Lodge if such dual membership is prohibited by the Lodge of his present membership. Each Mason must ascertain such facts for himself. No Texas Lodge shall accept one as a dual member, if it has knowledge of any prohibition in the laws of the Sister Jurisdiction. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION -1950 - NO. 37.

QUESTION: Can a Texas Mason who has dimitted and is living in a foreign jurisdiction petition for re-affiliation with his former Texas Lodge?

ANSWER: Yes! The Committee on Jurisprudence has thoroughly researched the question and has found the necessary precedents that would permit a dimitted Texas Mason residing in another state to apply for reaffiliation in his Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 2.

Art. 349. Procedure.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can a Texas Mason who has dimitted and is living in a foreign jurisdiction petition for re-affiliation with his former Texas Lodge?

ANSWER: Yes! The Committee on Jurisprudence has thoroughly researched the question and has found the necessary precedents that would permit a dimitted Texas Mason residing in another state to apply for reaffiliation in his Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 2.

Art. 350. **Record and Reports of Secretary.**

Art. 351. **Effects of Suspension or Expulsion in One Lodge.**

Art. 352. **Reinstatement in One Lodge: Effect.**

Art. 353. **All Lodges Must Pay Grand Lodge Dues.**

Art. 354. **Rights of Plural Members.**

Art. 355. **Withdrawal: Transfer of Membership: Dimit.**

Art. 357. **Requirements as to Domicile.**

Art. 358. **Plural Membership in Another Grand Jurisdiction.**

CHAPTER 3 - TITLE III

MASONIC FUNERALS

Art. 359. **To Whom Extended.**

Notes on Decisions

A Mason and his children were burned to death at the same time. It was permissible for the Lodge to conduct Masonic funeral ceremony for the deceased Brother and applying to him alone, if done after entire completion of the religious services for him and his children. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 47.

Dispensation could not be granted to hold Masonic funeral services over grave of a civilian employee of the United States who dies in prisoner of war camp, and whose remains had been interred in the National Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu at a previous date. However, a memorial service could be held at the grave if desired. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 51.

It was my decision that a called meeting may be held during Public Schools Week for the purpose of conducting Masonic Funeral Services of a deceased Brother as this is an obligation which devolves upon us a Masons, irrespective of time. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: The question was asked whether it is permissible to attend funeral religious services, sit in a body and wear aprons in the funeral home or Church, when the pallbearers are not every one Masons?

ANSWER: It is my ruling that aprons should be worn by the Brethren from the time the Lodge is opened, prior to the funeral service, and until it is closed, even though, the Lodge does not actually take charge of the body until it rests in place at the gravesite. However, until the Lodge takes charge of the body, in the event that all the pallbearers are not Masons, no aprons should be worn by any of the pallbearers until the Lodge takes charge. Masonry is seldom before the public eye, one of the few occasions being that of the Masonic burial, it therefore, behooves us to conduct ourselves not only with propriety, but in a manner which will betoken, not only our love for our deceased Brother, but a regard for his family. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 21.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to translate an approved Masonic burial service into Spanish for the purpose of conducting funerals for Brethren in Mexico?

ANSWER: It would not be permissible for a Texas Lodge to conduct a funeral service in Spanish, but there is nothing in the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas which would prevent the translation of our approved burial services into Spanish for use by one or more of the Grand Jurisdictions in Mexico, subject only to any valid copyright which might exist. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 40.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Texas Lodge to conduct the funeral of a Brother Mason, where the Brother is to be interred in another Grand Jurisdiction?

ANSWER: It would be permissible for a Texas Lodge to conduct the funeral of a Brother Mason in another Grand Jurisdiction, provided the Lodge first obtains permission from the Grand Master to perform such ceremony in the Grand Jurisdiction in which the funeral is to be conducted. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 20.

QUESTION: Is it considered proper for a District Deputy Grand Master or a Past District Deputy Grand Master to wear his D. D. G. M. Apron when presiding over Masonic funerals?

ANSWER: No, it is not proper for a District Deputy Grand Master to wear his D. D. G. M. Apron or a Past District Deputy Grand Master to wear his past D. D. G. M. Apron when presiding or attending a funeral conducted by a constituent Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction. However, when attending a funeral conducted and presided over by the Grand Lodge of Texas, the District Deputy Grand Master's Apron is considered the Apron representing the Grand Lodge of Texas, and it should be worn on this occasion. (Article 12). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 32.

Art. 359a. **Grand Lodge Funerals.**

Art. 360. **To Whom Not Extended.**

Art. 361. **Who May Conduct Ceremonies.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: The question was asked if the chanters of a Shrine Temple should wear a Masonic apron when participating in a Masonic funeral?

ANSWER: The chanters of a Shrine Temple may sing before the Masonic service begins. However, when the Masonic service starts,

if they wish to participate as Masons, they should remove their fez and put on a Masonic apron. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Is it proper for an Entered Apprentice, or a Fellowcraft Mason to attend a Masonic funeral and wear his Apron as an Entered Apprentice or as a Fellowcraft Mason?

ANSWER: That it would be proper for the Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts to attend a Masonic funeral and wear their Aprons, provided that they did not participate in any of the ceremonies. Article 361 of Grand Lodge Law does provide that only Master Masons may participate in the ceremonies. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 1.

Art. 362. Regarding Ceremony and Processions.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can Entered Apprentices and Fellowcraft Masons wear aprons and participate in a Masonic graveside service?

HELD: "Participation" includes taking any part in Masonic ceremonies as set forth in Article 362. Article 344 states "...Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts may attend Masonic funerals and appear in public wearing aprons of their respective degrees, provided the Lodge has dispensation to appear in public, and they do not participate in any of the ceremonies." GRAND MASTERS DECISION - 2002 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: When the family of a deceased Brother requests Masons and non-Masons to act as funeral pallbearers, may the Masons acting as pallbearers be clothed as Masons and be allowed to wear Masonic Aprons?

HELD: Yes. The desires of a family of a deceased Brother should be paramount and allowing Masons to wear their aprons under this circumstance will improve and enhance the image of Masonry. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2007 - No. 1.

Art. 363. In Open Air: On Sundays: Other Days.

Art. 364. When Body Cremated.

Section 1.

Notes on Decisions

Masonic funeral ceremony may be performed at the mausoleum or vault of last resting place of Mason whose remains are to be placed in such vault or mausoleum and not buried. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 48.

The Masonic funeral service may be given for a Mason whose body is to be cremated. The Lodge may depart after the complete ceremony, leaving the body in charge of the attendants who are to convey it to the place of cremation. It is not necessary that the Lodge remain while actual cremation takes place. If such a ceremony is had prior to actual cremation, then none may be had at time of any interment of the ashes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 -NO. 49.

Art. 365. **Death in Armed Services.**

Art. 366. **Funeral in Jurisdiction of Another Lodge.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Texas Lodge to conduct the funeral of a Brother Mason, where the Brother is to be interred in another Grand Jurisdiction?

ANSWER: It would be permissible for a Texas Lodge to conduct the funeral of a Brother Mason in another Grand Jurisdiction, provided the Lodge first obtains permission from the Grand Master to perform such ceremony in the Grand Jurisdiction in which the funeral is to be conducted. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 20.

Art. 367. Deleted, 1995.

CHAPTER 4 - TITLE III

DIMIT

Art. 368. **Definition and Effect.**

Notes on Decisions

Certificate of dimit is but evidence of the withdrawal from the Lodge, and if lost the Brother can secure duplicate from the Lodge, or, in case of its demise, from the Grand Secretary. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 52.

Art. 369. **Procedure.**

Art. 370. **Charges Pending: Not Granted.**

Art. 371. **Officer Cannot Dimit.**

Art. 372. **Certificate of Dimission.**

Art. 373. **Non-Affiliates: Privileges Allowed and Denied.**

CHAPTER 5 - TITLE III
WIDOW'S AND ORPHAN'S CERTIFICATE

- Art. 374. **Widow and Orphans.**
Art. 375. **Widow with Other Masonic Affiliation.**
Art. 376. **Remarriage.**
Art. 377. **Legally Adopted Child.**

CHAPTER 6 - TITLE III

VISITORS

Art. 378. **Register.**

Art. 379. **Masons of Other Grand Jurisdictions.**
Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can a Cuban Mason visit in the subordinate Lodges of Texas?

ANSWER: Yes, since the Grand Lodge of Texas still maintains fraternal relations with the Grand Lodge of Cuba, a member of that Masonic jurisdiction is eligible to visit a Texas Lodge. Of course, the constituent Lodge must determine from the credentials offered by the Brother desiring to visit whether or not he is a member of a regular constituent Lodge of the Grand Lodge of Cuba. (Articles 379, 381) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 78.

Art. 380. **Good Standing.**

Art. 381. **Vouchment and Examination.**
Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: The question was asked whether it is necessary to open a Lodge in order to appoint an examining committee to examine a member of another Lodge (no one present being able to vouch for him) in order that he may attend a "study course," under the auspices of the Lodge, for the purpose of learning the work.

ANSWER: It is not necessary to open a Lodge in order to appoint such committee. Either of the following methods may be used: (1) Under the provision of Art. 381 (417) such examining committee may be appointed without opening the Lodge. (2) A request from the visiting Brother's Lodge, under the Seal of said Lodge, to admit him to the 'study course' is, in my opinion, authorized by Art. 478.

Jurisprudence Committee report:

"While we are in accord with the actual holding of the decision, we are not in accord with the reason given in method (2) set out in the decision, for the reason that in our opinion Art. 478 is not germane to the question propounded." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Must a member of Lodge be examined in his own Lodge if no other member can vouch for him?

ANSWER: There is no provision in the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas for a member to be examined in his own Lodge. If he has

a paid up dues card together with any other type of identification to prove his identity, then he is to be admitted to the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 5.

Art. 382. **Non-Affiliates.**

Art. 383. **Visitors Excluded:When.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can visitors from another Grand Jurisdiction be excluded from visiting in a Texas Lodge?

ANSWER: Yes, any visitor from another Grand Jurisdiction can be excluded from a meeting of a constituent Lodge in Texas on the objection of a member of the Lodge and at the discretion of the Worshipful Master. When three members make the objection, such visitor must be excluded. (Article 383) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 79.

QUESTION: May the Worshipful Master conduct a meeting of the Lodge from which all Masons who are not members of that Lodge be excluded?

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master of a Texas Lodge may not conduct a meeting the attendance to which is restricted solely to the members of that Lodge, the sole exclusions being (i) a member from another Grand Jurisdiction; or (ii) a member of a Lodge of the Grand Lodge of Texas who has Masonic charges preferred against him. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 12.

CHAPTER 7 - TITLE III

AFFILIATION

Art. 384. **Affiliation: Where and by Whom.**

Notes on Decisions

No Lodge in Texas can entertain in petition for affiliation of a dimitted Mason from a foreign jurisdiction if granting such petition would violate the Laws of the Grand Lodge issuing the dimit. Therefore, if such Grand Lodge requires payment of dues during the period between issuance of dimit and affiliation with another Lodge, such payments must be satisfied before the application for affiliation can be considered by the Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 67.

If a petition for affiliation is rejected, should the petitioner wish to reapply, again, for affiliation, he must file a new petition, a new Committee must be appointed, etc. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 68.

QUESTION: Lodge received application for affiliation with properly executed certificate of good standing as required by Article 429, committee appointed and made favorable report, but no one could vouch for applicant for affiliation due to the fact that none have sat in open Lodge with him. Can the Lodge ballot on said applicant for membership without him having visited the Lodge?

ANSWER: Lodge cannot ballot on said petition for affiliation without the applicant first making himself known as a Mason and visiting said Lodge (See Article 422 [now 385], dec. [a].) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: On June 14, 1955, Lodge A granted a Certificate of Good Standing to a member who desired to affiliate with Lodge B. The Certificate of Good Standing expired on June 24, 1956. The member was affiliated on June 26, 1956, with Lodge B, which was two days after expiration of the Certificate of Good Standing. The question arises whether the election by Lodge B was valid, by reason of the fact that it was held after June 24, 1956, the date to which dues was paid at the time the Certificate of Good Standing was issued.

ANSWER: That the election was valid as the Certificate of Good Standing had not expired at the time the petition for affiliation was received by Lodge B. (See Art. 429 [now 392].) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1956 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: A Brother Mason, whose membership is in Colorado applied for affiliation with a Texas Lodge attaching his dues card to the application for affiliation instead of a certificate of good standing or dimit.

ANSWER: It was my decision that the Brother Mason who belonged to a Lodge in Colorado and desired to affiliate with a Lodge in Texas must have a dimit accompanying his petition for affiliation since The Grand Lodge of Colorado does not permit dual membership. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 29.

QUESTION: Do the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas require that a Brother visit a Lodge with which he desires to affiliate before he is granted affiliation?

ANSWER: A Brother is not required to visit the Lodge petitioned before being granted affiliation. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 32.

QUESTION: Can a Texas Mason who has dimitted and is living in a foreign jurisdiction petition for re-affiliation with his former Texas Lodge?

ANSWER: Yes! The Committee on Jurisprudence has thoroughly researched the question and has found the necessary precedents that would permit a dimitted Texas Mason residing in another state to apply for reaffiliation in his Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 2.

Art. 385. Requisites of Petition.

Notes on Decisions

Whether "satisfactory reasons" have been "shown for the absence" of a certificate of demission or a certificate of good standing in connection with a petition for affiliation is a matter to be determined by the Lodge petitioned. See Article 422 (now 385) and decisions (b) and (c) thereunder. The language in "official form No. 26" has not been overlooked, but it is my decision that approved decisions, and the Law itself, control. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 29.

QUESTION: Can a petitioner withdraw a petition for affiliation as a dual member prior to the time it is balloted on in the Lodge with which it has been filed?

ANSWER: Yes, because there is no provision in the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas which would prohibit the withdrawal of such petition for dual membership prior to the time the ballot is taken. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can a Texas Mason who has dimitted and is living in a foreign jurisdiction petition for re-affiliation with his former Texas Lodge?

ANSWER: Yes! The Committee on Jurisprudence has thoroughly researched the question and has found the necessary precedents that would permit a dimitted Texas Mason residing in another state to apply for reaffiliation in his Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 2.

Art. 386. Committee of Inquiry.

Art. 387. Ballot.

Art. 388. Who May Vote.

Art. 389. Protest Not Allowed.**Art. 390. Effect of Rejection.****Notes on Decisions**

If a petition for affiliation is rejected, should the petitioner wish to reapply, again, for affiliation, he must file a new petition, a new Committee must be appointed, etc. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 68.

Art. 391. Members of Demised Lodges.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Can a Texas Mason who has dimitted and is living in a foreign jurisdiction petition for re-affiliation with his former Texas Lodge?

ANSWER: Yes! The Committee on Jurisprudence has thoroughly researched the question and has found the necessary precedents that would permit a dimitted Texas Mason residing in another state to apply for reaffiliation in his Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 2.

Art. 392. Certificate of Good Standing.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Lodge H issued certificate of good standing to a Brother in 1949 who petitioned for affiliation to F Lodge which accepted him April 25, 1949. F Lodge failed to notify H Lodge; also failed to enter the election on its minutes. Both Lodges paid Grand Lodge dues on the Brother.

ANSWER: That F Lodge refund H Lodge amount of Grand Lodge dues erroneously paid, the dereliction having been that of F Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION 1950 - NO. 53.

QUESTION: On June 14, 1955, Lodge A granted a Certificate of Good Standing to a member who desired to affiliate with Lodge B. The Certificate of Good Standing expired on June 24, 1956. The member was affiliated on June 26, 1956, with Lodge B, which was two days after expiration of the Certificate of Good Standing. The question arises whether the election by Lodge B was valid, by reason of the fact that it was held after June 24, 1956, the date to which dues was paid at the time the Certificate of Good Standing was issued.

ANSWER: That the election was valid as the Certificate of Good Standing had not expired at the time the petition for affiliation was received by Lodge B. (See Art. 429 [now 392].) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1956 - NO. 2.

TITLE IV
DEGREES

CHAPTER 1 - TITLE IV
CANDIDATES

Art. 393. **Qualifications.**

Notes on Decisions

Diabetes mellitus, requiring injections of insulin, is not a physical defect or maim within the purview of Articles 430 (now 393) and 439 (now 401). Whether a particular petitioner with this disease should be elected to receive the degrees, therefore, is a matter for the particular Lodge and its members. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 26.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge receive a petition, investigate the petitioner and ballot so a candidate can receive the Entered Apprentice Degree on his twenty-first birthday?

ANSWER: No, a candidate for the Mysteries of Freemasonry must be twenty-one years of age on or before his petition can be officially received and read by a Lodge in Texas. (Article 393). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 23.

QUESTION: The question was asked if the domicile requirements of a candidate should begin immediately proceeding the date his petition is received?

ANSWER: A candidate must have been domiciled in Texas at least twelve (now six) months immediately preceding the date his petition is received by the Lodge and the candidate must be domiciled within the jurisdiction of the Lodge for a period of at least six months immediately preceding the date his petition is received by the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to receive the Petition for the Mysteries of Freemasonry of a person who has been convicted of a felony and charged a term in a state penitentiary?

ANSWER: If the petitioner satisfies the qualifications set out in Article 393, he is not disqualified by reason of such felony conviction under Article 411. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to receive a Petition for the Mysteries of Freemasonry before the petitioner is 21 years of age ?

ANSWER: That a candidate for the degrees of Masonry must be 21 years of age on or before the day his petition is received by the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 12.

Art. 393a. **Solicitation.**

Art. 394. **Domicile Requirements.**

NOTE: In determining the place of a man's domicile for Masonic territorial jurisdictional purposes, the following general rules apply:

1. Domicile means the place of a person's permanent residence; where he has the right to vote, to sit on juries and to exercise other rights and privileges of citizenship.
2. A married man's domicile is usually where his wife resides, but where there is a permanent separation, the husband's domicile is governed by the rules applicable to an unmarried man.
3. When a man (married or single) moves away from his domicile for the purpose of attending school, educating his children, engaging in business or other purpose, but does not intend to abandon his domicile, but intends at some time in the future to return to it, and retains his rights of citizenship there, he does not thereby lose such domicile, regardless of the length of his absence therefrom. In like manner, if such person's business takes him from place to place for short or long periods of time, his domicile is not thereby changed.
4. When a person moves away from his domicile for any purpose, with the intention of not returning thereto, he thereby ceases to be domiciled in that place. He may acquire a domicile in his new place of abode by residence there with the intention of making it his domicile, and exercising or acquiring the right to exercise his rights and privileges of citizenship.
5. When a person has never lived in one place long enough to acquire a domicile, but is a transient person, moving from place to place, he cannot lawfully apply to any Lodge in this State for the degrees in Masonry, since no Lodge has territorial jurisdiction over him. The only exception to this rule is that provided in Art. 395.
6. A person domiciled in this State who has never received any degree in Masonry and who has not been domiciled in this State at least six months and in the jurisdiction of a Lodge for the last preceding six months, is ineligible, during any such period, to apply to any Lodge anywhere for the degrees. He is, "Masonically speaking, a Man without a country."

7. Rule 6 and the provisions of this article regarding the length of time one must be domiciled in this State and in the jurisdiction of some Lodge do not apply to an EA or FC seeking advancement. He must, however, be domiciled in this State, unless some Lodge in this State holds personal jurisdiction over him.

Notes on Decisions

In case of student at university or college, **HELD** that the question of domicile and jurisdiction was primarily one of intention; if student considered his original home town as his domicile and the place to which he intended to return, such Lodge has jurisdiction, and if he had abandoned such a domicile and considered the college city his home at time of his petition, then the Lodge in such college city had jurisdiction to receive the petition. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 73.

Except as provided for in Article 432 (now 395) (soldiers and sailors and residents of countries where there is no Grand Lodge), a Lodge does not have jurisdiction, personal or territorial, over a transient temporarily residing in its jurisdiction but who does not have any fixed residence therein. When lack of jurisdiction is discovered before ballot is taken, the petition and fees, if any, should be returned to the petitioner. See Article 443. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 39.

QUESTION: Can the Grand Master waive the six months domicile requirement so a candidate can petition a Lodge?

ANSWER: No, the Grand Master does not have power to waive the six months domicile period so a candidate can petition a Lodge. (Article 394 and decisions thereunder). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 25.

QUESTION: Can a man recently discharged from the service petition a Lodge of his former domicile or must he wait six months and petition the Lodge of his new residence?

ANSWER: The situation is governed by Article 394 of our Grand Lodge Laws and involves removal and intent, with the latter controlling whether the move is temporary or permanent. If the man retains his original domicile, he may petition a Lodge in the former city. However, if he establishes a new domicile, he must wait six months and petition a Lodge in the territorial jurisdiction of his new residence. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 71.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a young man who had resided in the jurisdiction of the Lodge for three months and who

had been in the military service since 18 years of age, and presently assigned as food inspector with a local food concern who have an army contract, and has established his home, could petition for the Mysteries of Freemasonry.

ANSWER: Yes, based on the facts set out in the letter, the prospective applicant can meet the requirements of Article 395. His application should be supported by statement as to his previous places of residence and the fact that he does not intend to establish a permanent residence in any particular place because of his service in the army. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: The question was asked if the domicile requirements of a candidate should begin immediately preceding the date his petition is received?

ANSWER: A candidate must have been domiciled in Texas at least twelve (now six) months immediately preceding the date his petition is received by the Lodge and the candidate must be domiciled within the jurisdiction of the Lodge for a period of at least six months immediately preceding the date his petition is received by the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 4.

Art. 395. In Armed Services: Countries Without Grand Lodge.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: The question was asked if a young man who had resided in the jurisdiction of the Lodge for three months and who had been in the military service since 18 years of age, and presently assigned as food inspector with a local food concern who have an army contract, and has established his home, could petition for the Mysteries of Freemasonry.

ANSWER: Yes, based on the facts set out in the letter, the prospective applicant can meet the requirements of Article 395. His application should be supported by statement as to his previous places of residence and the fact that he does not intend to establish a permanent residence in any particular place because of his service in the army. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Would a Mason, not on active duty with the military be required to meet the domicile requirements set forth in Article 395 if his wife is on active duty?

ANSWER: That Article 395 applies to Masons and not their dependents. Therefore, the domicile requirements of Article 395 apply. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1992 - NO. 1.

Art. 396. **Unnaturalized Foreigner.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: The question was asked if it is permissible for a Lodge to accept petitions for the degrees in Masonry from men who do not use or understand our native tongue and to perform Masonic work in a foreign tongue for the petitioner, if accepted, and accept a petition for affiliation from a Brother, who is a member of a recognized Lodge, who does not use our native language?

ANSWER: It is required that a candidate for the Degrees be able to read and write. This both by inference and of necessity alludes to the English language. It is, also, our established custom that all ritualistic work of the Degrees as well as the ceremonies of opening and closing must be done according to the ritual and lectures as promulgated by this Grand Lodge, both esoteric and exoteric; also, in the English language. Obviously it would be improper, if not impossible for one not able to read and write English to conform to our forms and ceremonies in any manner. Therefore, no Lodge would be permitted to receive or ballot upon the petition of one unable to read, write and speak English. The next question, regarding affiliation of a Brother in good standing in a Lodge of another regular Grand Jurisdiction is one that relates to the universality of Masonry. In this case I assume that the non-English speaking members are members by affiliation and NOT by initiation. If we are to measure up as Masons to the responsibility of our much talked of Universality, if we are to aid in uniting men of every Country, sect and opinion, we must be ready to receive all well qualified Brethren into our Lodges not only as visitors, but as affiliates, if agreeable to the Brethren of the Lodge. It is, therefore, my decision that Lodges may receive petitions for affiliation and elect to membership by affiliation such Brethren from other regular Grand Jurisdictions, even though they are unable to write and speak the English language. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION -1958 - NO. 56.

QUESTION: Can a Mason who has become a citizen of another country maintain his Lodge membership in Texas?

ANSWER: Yes, Masonry is a universal Fraternity not limited to national boundaries. When a member of a Texas Lodge becomes a citizen of another country, it does not in any way affect his membership in the Texas Lodge. (Article 396) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 70.

Art. 397. Religious Belief.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Would it be proper to substitute the Koran in place of the Holy Bible on the altar during the initiation of a candidate?

ANSWER: To do so would not be proper and in violation of Grand Master's Decision No. 2 approved by Grand Lodge in 1984. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1992 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: May Holy Books, other than the Holy Bible be placed upon the Holy Altar?

ANSWER: NO, Unless the Lodge is opened for the purpose of the conferral of candidate degrees, ONLY the Holy Bible is authorized upon the Altar (Article 223) and (Article 397). When utilizing another chosen book of faith during the conferral of a degree, the provisions of Article 397 and any applicable rules of the Committee on Work must be strictly complied with.

To the extent that Grand Master's Decision -1984 - No. 2 and Grand Master's Decision – 1992 - No. 8 (herein indexed under Article 223) are in conflict herewith, such are overruled. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2006 - No. 2.

Art. 398. Questions Answered by Candidate.**Art. 399. Former Petition.****Art. 400. Suspicion of Former Rejection.****Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Should a request for Waiver of Territorial Jurisdiction be referred to the oldest Lodge in the county or the oldest Lodge in the district?

ANSWER: The oldest Lodge in the county. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge who voted to accept a candidate for the Mysteries confer the Entered Apprentice Decree after learning that he had been rejected by another Lodge Within the year?

ANSWER: No. Governed by Article 400 the Lodge must thoroughly investigate the matter; and if found that he was previously rejected, suspend further action on the petition and/or follow Articles 421-428 procedures pertaining to protests. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 1.

Art. 401. Physical Defects.**Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: Wichita Falls Lodge No. 635 had a member, W. C. F., who suffered the loss of both arms. They asked whether it would be proper, first, for him to attend Lodge, since he could not give the signs, and second, could he be present during the balloting, since he was unable to ballot because of the loss of both arms.

ANSWER: After due consideration, it is my decision that the member is eligible to come to the Lodge, although he is unable to give the signs, and he is eligible to sit in Lodge during the balloting, although he is unable to ballot because of the physical handicap. If he is present during the balloting he is eligible to vote by going to the East and conveying to the Master of the Lodge how he desires to cast his vote and have the Master cast same in his presence. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1953 - NO. 15.

Diabetes mellitus, requiring injections of insulin, is not a physical defect or maim within the purview of Articles 430 and 439. Whether a particular petitioner with this disease should be elected to receive the degrees, therefore, is a matter for the particular Lodge and its members. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 26.

That permission of the Grand Master to ballot upon the petition of a person for the Degrees, or any of them, having a physical maim or defect, should not be requested until the petition has actually been received by the Lodge by being read in a Stated Meeting. It is important that the fact of a petition, for future reference, be recorded in the Minutes which constitute the basic records of the Lodge. Should permission be refused, a statement to that effect at a subsequent Stated Meeting, and recorded in the Minutes, will close the record. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1959 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Lodge A was granted permission to ballot on a petitioner who listed a physical defect by the then Grand Master. Petitioner was rejected for the Degrees; his time of rejection having expired, he has again petitioned Lodge A for the Mysteries of Freemasonry. The question has been asked by Lodge A "Do we still have permission to ballot upon the new petition?"

ANSWER: It was held that the present Grand Master is not bound by permission granted on the first petition by the then Grand Master and request for permission to ballot on the new petition must be made by said Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: A Lodge was granted permission to ballot on a petitioner with a physical defect. Petitioner was rejected for the degrees; his time of rejection has expired and he has again petitioned for the degrees. Does the Lodge still have permission to ballot upon the new petition?

HELD: The present Grand Master is not bound by permission granted on the first petition by the then Grand Master. (Grand Master's Decision No. 14, 1967.) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1994 - NO. 4.

Art. 402. **Physical Defects After Receiving a Degree.**

Art. 403. Petition for Degrees: Requisites.**Notes on Decisions**

Birth certificate, either originally issued or “delayed” under our statutes, absolutely must accompany every petition for the Mysteries. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 11.

In several cases, I held that a certified copy of the birth certificate or a photostatic copy of the original birth certificate should be retained in the records of the Lodge with the petition and other papers included with the application of the candidate. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 3.

It is improper to publish in the bulletin of a subordinate Lodge the name or names of those who have petitioned the Lodge for the degrees. Likewise, it is improper to publish in such a bulletin the name or names of those scheduled to receive the Entered Apprentice, the Fellowcraft or the Master Mason Degree on a future date. These bulletins go into the homes of the Lodge members and, of course, fall into the hands of other members of the families and, possibly, into the hands of other non-Masons. It seems inevitable that if names are so published, the qualifications of petitioners, etc., would become the subject of conversation between members of the Lodge and other members of their families and, even between other non-members of the Fraternity. Furthermore, it soon becomes well known when a man has become a Master Mason. If the names of those who apply, or who are to receive a degree on a future date, are made public and the names of those who become members are made public, it is simply a matter of deduction to determine the names of those rejected. See Article 461, Decision (c) under Article 44 and Article 442 and Decisions thereunder of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 58.

Reference is made to a decision rendered by Grand Master Gilchrist (1952 Proceedings, page 83, Decision 3) which was approved by Grand Lodge in 1952 (1952 Proceedings, page 114) which reads as follows: “In several cases, I held that a certified copy of the birth certificate or a photostatic copy of the original birth certificate should be retained in the records of the Lodge with the petition and other papers included with the application of the candidate.” If the original birth certificate was attached to the petition, the Worshipful Master or Secretary of the Lodge may have a photostat made, at the expense of the petitioner, and substitute the photostat for the original and then return the original: possession

of birth certificate must not be given to the petitioner until photo-stat has been made under supervision of one of the Officers of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 79.

Certificate of Naturalization is NOT acceptable and cannot be accepted in lieu, or as a substitute for, birth certificate. See Decision No. 11 of Grand Master De Lange (p. 122 of the 1950 Proceedings) which was approved by the Grand Lodge (p. 297 of the 1950 Proceedings). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 81.

QUESTION: The question is upon the petition for the Degrees. The petitioner's birth certificate, stating his correct name accompanied by an affidavit of the petitioner's mother stating that her husband, the petitioner's father, subsequent to his birth dropped the family name and adopted the mother's surname and the family after that time used said surname. As a result the petition bore the adopted surname while the birth certificate carried the lawful name of the petitioner.

ANSWER: Under the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas, a petition must be accompanied by a birth certificate and no petition can be received and acted upon in which the petitioner uses an assumed name. However, it was brought to the attention of the petitioner that the Laws of the State provide the means by which application may be filed in the District Court of the County of his residence requesting that the adopted name be made the lawful name of the one so applying. It was suggested that the petitioner take this step immediately to legally change his name, furnishing to the Lodge a certified copy of the judgment, at which time it will be permitted to lawfully receive the petition as it is presently filled out. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 62.

That a Lodge may not receive a petition from a person, otherwise eligible, who has changed his name without legal process, and who signs such name to his petition, and supports it with a Birth Certificate bearing his legal name. Such petition can only be received after the petitioner legally changes his name and submits, for permanent record a certified copy of the legal document which effects the change. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1959 - NO. 7. should be returned to the petitioner without action by the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge accept a birth certificate issued by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, to

fulfill the birth certificate requirement of a petitioner for the Degrees of Masonry?

ANSWER: Yes, a birth certificate which is issued by the United States of America, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census can be accepted by a constituent Lodge. (Article 403). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 22.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to receive the Petition for the Mysteries of Freemasonry of a person who has been convicted of a felony and charged with a term in a state penitentiary?

ANSWER: If the petitioner satisfies the qualifications set out in Article 393, he is not disqualified by reason of such felony conviction under Article 411. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: If a petitioner's birth certificate is available to petition for degrees, what documents can be used in lieu of birth certificate?

HELD: Satisfactory documentary evidence can be obtained from a passport, discharge papers from the US Military or naturalization papers. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2009 - No. 1

Art. 404. **Petition for Degrees: Answers to Questions in Art. 398.**

Art. 405. (442) **Petition for Degrees: (Withdrawal Permitted Before Ballot.)**

Notes on Decisions

Article 442 (now 405) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas expressly prohibits withdrawal of a petition for the degrees, or any of them, but I find no provision in Article 678 (now 625) of, or elsewhere in, said Laws prohibiting the withdrawal of a Petition for Reinstatement of a Brother who has been suspended for an indefinite period. Express provision having been made in one case and not in the other, it is my opinion that a different rule was intended. A Petition for Reinstatement, therefore, can be withdrawn at any time before it is balloted upon. By analogy see Decisions (e) and (f) under Article 405 (Application for Dimit) and Decision (b) under Article 421 (Petition for Affiliation). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 18.

QUESTION: Can a petitioner withdraw a petition for affiliation as a dual member prior to the time it is balloted on in the Lodge with which it has been filed?

ANSWER: Yes, because there is no provision in the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas which would prohibit the withdrawal of such petition for dual membership prior to the time the ballot is taken. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can a petition, which has been received and read, be withdrawn before the investigating committee has completed its report?

ANSWER: No, Grand Lodge Laws do not permit the withdrawing of a petition when it has been properly received and read in Lodge. (Article 405). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 43.

Art. 405a. **Publication of Names Prohibited.**

Art. 406. **Unlawful Presentation: Waiver of Jurisdiction.**

Art. 407. **Referred to Committee.**

Notes on Decisions

The Lodge may refer several petitions to the same investigating Committee, and may refer all received on a particular meeting to the same Committee. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 58.

In investigation report forms, Secretary should fill in questions or memos 1, 2, 3 and 4; remainder should be filled in by each member of the Committee. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 83.

QUESTION: Is it necessary for all three members of an Investigating Committee to submit their reports separately to the Lodge before ballot can be spread?

ANSWER: Under Article 449 it is necessary that a separate report be made by each member of the Investigating Committee before the candidate can be properly voted upon by the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1953 - NO. 8.

According to Articles 423 (now 386) and 442 (now 405) of our Constitution and Laws, it is necessary that all three members of the Investigating Committee make their respective reports before the ballot can be taken. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 25.

QUESTION: It was reported that a Committee on investigation of a candidate, instead of reporting in the usual manner, presented the Lodge with a signed letter as follows:

We, the undersigned members of the committee heretofore appointed to investigate and report on the application of a candidate for membership in the Lodge, respectfully make the following report.

The entire committee has made an extensive investigation of the applicant and has found that many

members of the Lodge have approved the applicant for membership, and that many more have raised some doubt without setting forth specific charges.

Under these circumstances, we, the committee, concluded that it would be only fair to let the applicant's name to be submitted for a vote of the Lodge as a whole.

ANSWER: It is not the function of a committee of investigation on a petition for the degrees to try to ascertain how any Brother would vote on same. The secrecy of the ballot must always be zealously guarded, and one who inquires into how a Brother will vote, or how a Brother has voted, can easily find himself charged with a Masonic offense. The duty of the Committee is to find out the reputation of the applicant, and whether or not he is a proper person to receive into our Order. Therefore, one who is named on a Committee of investigation **MUST** act and the report of the committee **MUST** be on the form prescribed by our Laws, and **EVERY QUESTION** must be answered by the several members of the committee. The letter submitted as a report by the committee **CANNOT IN ANY MANNER** be used as the report of the investigating committee. The committee should be instructed to perform its duty, and make its report on the regular form, answering **EVERY QUESTION**, and making their own recommendation as favorable or unfavorable, as the three members of the committee deem proper from the record and reputation of the applicant. **GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 63.**

QUESTION: Is it permissible to use the Brethren given as references on the petition as members of the Investigation Committee?

ANSWER: Yes, although it is legal and proper for the Worshipful Master to appoint such recommenders on the Committee on Investigation, it might provide a better investigation not to do so. **GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 5.**

Art. 408. **No Standing Committee.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: May a Lodge form a Clown Committee to perform at a school, hospital, Homes for the Aged and other Masonic functions?

ANSWER: Lodges may form such a committee provided events at which they perform are non controversial, of a community nature and that no aprons and Masonic insignia or paraphernalia be worn and that no charge is made for their services. **GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS - 1993 - NO. 4.**

Art. 409. New Committee: When.**Notes on Decisions**

The Lodge, on simple motion and majority vote of those present at any regular or stated meeting, can give the Committee on Investigation, in a specified particular case, further time (the motion should specify how long) in which to report. If the Committee is unable to report “favorable” or “unfavorable” and in usual way on all matters contemplated by Article 450 (now 412) in a reasonable time, it should report the reason why it cannot do so and this will be its “report” and this report, or reports, should be read in open Lodge, at a stated meeting, and the ballot should be spread. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 60.

Art. 410. Petitioner’s Death or Mental Incompetence.**Notes on Decisions**

When it is found, before ballot is taken, that a petitioner is totally disqualified by reason of a possible mental condition, and is under treatment for such, the facts should be reported to the Lodge, such report entered in the minutes, fee (if any) and petition and the birth certificate returned, and no further action taken. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 36.

A Brother received his E.A. and F.C. Degrees but allowed more than one year to elapse. He then petitioned for advancement, but before the petition was acted upon he suffered a nervous breakdown and was confined to the hospital, in ward for those mentally ill. Ordinarily, a Petition for the degrees, or any of them, cannot be returned and a ballot must be taken. See Article 442 (now 405, and Decisions thereunder, of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. And, under Article 446 (now 409) the ballot should not be postponed unduly and it is not proper to grant an indefinite extension of time. But under the facts stated, Articles 443 (now 406), 447 (now 411) and 448 (now 410) control and should be followed in this case: the Committee should report the facts and should report that by reason of said facts the petitioner, at this time, is totally disqualified; such report should be entered in the minutes; no ballot should be taken; the petition and fees, if any, should be returned (Article 443 [now 406]) with explanation, so far as possible, that the candidate may file a NEW petition when he has sufficiently recovered. Such new petition, if ever presented must be accompanied by a birth certificate or a certified or photo-static copy of a birth certificate, unless such is already on file in the Lodge with the original petition (under which the E.A. and F.C.

Degrees were conferred). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 47.

QUESTION: While the Master Mason Degree was being conferred upon a Brother, just after the completion of the obligation, the Brother had a heart attack and could not proceed further. This, in view of recent illness. Since the physical condition of the Brother is better, the question has been asked should the Lodge start where the Degree had been stopped and confer the rest of said Degree.

ANSWER: The Brother should continue with the Degree where same was stopped. I doubt the propriety of starting again at the beginning and re-conferring that portion of the Degree which had been conferred, but that as to whether or not his physical condition was such that he did not grasp that portion of this beautiful work which was conferred upon him prior to his attack, is a matter to be determined by the Worshipful Master of the Lodge. The date of the Brother's raising will be the date that he finishes the Degree. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1964 - NO. 7.

Art. 411. **Petitioner's Total Disqualification.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A constituent Lodge received a petition for the Mysteries of Freemasonry and same was referred to the Investigating Committee. The Investigating Committee found out that the petitioner has rheumatoid arthritis, which has affected his mind to a certain extent. Question was raised: Could the petition be withdrawn without a ballot in accordance with Article 411 of our Laws?

ANSWER: In view of the fact that the Investigating Committee does not feel that he is sound in mind and members as required by our Laws, this petition could be withdrawn without a ballot in accordance with Article 411 of our Laws. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Question was asked what action should be taken on a petition where all three members of the investigating committee report unfavorably, in view of the provisions of Article 411, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas.

ANSWER: Ballot should be taken on such petition as in other cases. Article 411 applies only where the petitioner is totally disqualified, as for example, failing to meet the requirement of Article 293, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas, and not in situations where unfavorable reports are made by investigation committees. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 17.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to receive the Petition for the Mysteries of Freemasonry of a person who has been convicted of a felony and charged a term in a state penitentiary?

ANSWER: If the petitioner satisfies the qualifications set out in Article 393, he is not disqualified by reason of such felony conviction under Article 411. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge publish its budget and monthly financial statements in its Lodge newsletter?

ANSWER: There is no prohibition against a Lodge publishing its budget and finances in a Lodge newsletter to the members of that Lodge. However, income from degree fees and return of degree fees to rejected candidates should not be listed by member or candidate name. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 11.

Art. 412. **Committee: Duties and Report.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Question was asked what action should be taken on a petition where all three members of the investigating committee report unfavorably, in view of the provisions of Article 411, Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas.

ANSWER: Ballot should be taken on such petition as in other cases. Article 411 applies only where the petitioner is totally disqualified, as for example, failing to meet the requirement of Article 393, Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, and not in situations where unfavorable reports are made by investigation committees. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 17.

Art. 413. (449). **Ballot.**

Art. 414. **Dispensation Changing Time Requisites.**

Notes on Decisions

The Grand Master may grant a dispensation to shorten the time between degrees, when there is an extreme emergency, but the Grand Master is not empowered to grant an extension of time limits fixed in Article 452a (now 416) and/or 468 (now 430). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 40.

CHAPTER 2 - TITLE IV
THE BALLOT

Art. 415. **Taken at Stated Meeting: Exception.**

Art. 416. **Favorable Ballot: Effect.**

Notes on Decisions

The language of Articles 452a (now 416), 465 (now 430) and 468 (now 430) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas are clear and mandatory. No Lodge has authority to confer, by courtesy or otherwise, the Entered Apprentice Degree upon a petitioner, whose petition was presented to a Texas Lodge, when more than one year has elapsed since he was elected, in or by a Texas Lodge, to receive the degrees. If the candidate desires to receive any degree after one year has elapsed, he must file an entirely new petition, which must take usual and regular course. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 1.

A Lodge conferred the Fellowcraft Degree and then discovered that more than one year had expired since the petitioner had been initiated as an Entered Apprentice. The candidate did not then stand "elected" to receive the F.C. Degree. The conferral of the Fellowcraft Degree was null and void because the Fellowcraft Degree was not conferred within one (1) year from the date of initiation as an E.A. I do not believe Article 506 (now repealed) was intended to apply to such a case-to a case when the candidate was not then "elected" to receive the degree. If the Brother desires to complete the degrees, it will be necessary for him to petition for advancement to the Fellowcraft and Master Mason Degrees, and this petition will have to take the usual course of any petition for advancement. If the ballot is clear and he is elected to receive the Fellowcraft and Master Mason Degrees, the Fellowcraft Degree must be conferred first. He is not a Fellowcraft Mason at this time. (This Decision and Decision No. 1 are complementary.) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 45.

The Grand Master may grant a dispensation to shorten the time between degrees, when there is an extreme emergency, but the Grand Master is not empowered to grant an extension of time

limits fixed in Article 452a and/or 468. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 40.

Art. 417. **Who May Vote.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is the Master required to invite the Tiler into the meeting to vote on matters of great importance to the Lodge, e.g., amendments to By-Laws?

ANSWER: No. The master is not required to invite the Tiler to enter the Lodgeroom for any reason, except in those cases where Grand Lodge Law requires him to do so, e.g., balloting on a petition for the Degrees. The Master MAY, of course, require all members present to vote on any issue, and thus, he could ask the Junior Deacon to replace the Tiler while he enters to vote. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: Can a member of a Texas Lodge vote in an election of Lodge officers of a Lodge in which he is not a member?

HELD: No. Although I find that Article 290 is silent on this issue, I do not believe that the intent of the Grand Lodge was to allow a Mason, not a member of a particular Lodge, to vote in an election of that Lodge's officers. Further, although Article 417 is also silent on this issue and one might argue that since Article 417 is so very specific on matters to be voted upon by members of the acting Lodge, and is silent on this question, it is implied that a non-specific matter, such as voting for a Lodge officer, can be voted upon by a non-member of the acting Lodge. I find such reasoning convoluted and unacceptable. It is my decision that Article 417 cannot be used as a basis to allow the requested action.

I find no provisions in any of the Grand Lodge Law to allow a non-member of a Lodge to vote in an election of a Lodge's officers. To allow a non-member of a Lodge to vote in such an election would produce far reaching consequences I believe would be detrimental to the welfare of the Grand Lodge of Texas, the subordinate Lodges, and the Masonic Fraternity in general.

Therefore, it is my decision that Article 290 only permits a member of a Lodge to vote in an election to elect the officers of the Lodge of which the Mason is a member.

Any prior Grand Master's decision to the contrary is hereby overruled. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008- NO. 1.

Art. 418. **Blackballs: Effect.**

Notes and Decisions

QUESTION: Can a Worshipful Master find the ballot unfavorable on a petition for reinstatement receiving four black balls from 33 members and four visitors, concerning a member suspended for non-payment of dues for over three years, and announced that the candidate is rejected for two years?

ANSWER: No. Article 324 is the controlling statute over Article 418 and the candidate received more than a two-thirds favorable ballot, and the petitioner should be reinstated. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 10.

Art. 419. **Manner of Balloting.**

Notes on Decisions

If a "collective" ballot is taken, as authorized by Articles 455 (now 419) and 456 (now 419) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, and it becomes necessary to take separate ballots, the Worshipful Master in his discretion may or may not permit any Brother or Brothers to enter or retire in the interval between his declaration of the result of the "collective" ballot and the beginning of the announcement of his purpose to take the ballot upon a particular petition (or whatever is to be balloted upon): in other words, no one (except the Tiler and his relief) should be permitted to enter or retire from the Lodgeroom while any ballot, "collective" or otherwise, is in progress, but the Worshipful Master may pause between ballots and may permit entry and retirement between ballots even though the first ballot was a "collective ballot." In each case, a ballot is in progress from and commences with, and includes, the beginning of the announcement of the Worshipful Master of his purpose to take a ballot and ends with his declara-

tion of the result of the particular ballot. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 9.

It is contrary to the Ancient Customs, Usages and Landmarks of Masonry for the Worshipful Master of a Lodge to permit any Brother (except the Tiler and his relief, when the Tiler is called in) to enter or retire from the Lodgeroom while a ballot is in progress. It is a good policy for the Worshipful Master to announce this rule when he is about to have a ballot taken. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 12.

Article 455 (now 419), permitting "collective ballot" in specified cases provides:

"If one or more black balls are cast, the black ball shall not operate as a rejection of either of said candidates, or any of said applications, but it shall then become the duty of the Worshipful Master to take a separate ballot on each such petition or application of the class balloted on, as the case may be."

The Master, of course, had to inquire of the Wardens concerning the ballot, and the Master had to then announce the condition of the ballot in order to "complete the collective ballot" and in order to lay predicate, and show authority or necessity, for ordering separate ballots. Such announcement and procedure on the collective ballot was a part of the "collective ballot" and did not "operate as a rejection of either of said candidates." Any other construction would be grossly unfair to the Lodge and, particularly, to the candidates. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 49.

Art. 420. **Ballot Is a Finality When Announced.**

NOTE: For the vote for favorable or unfavorable ballot see the following:

Affiliation: Art. 389

Reinstatement except NPD: Art. 625

For NPD: Art. 324 through Art. 329

Restoration: Art. 625

Dimit: Art. 369

Certificate of Good Standing: Art. 392

Waiver of Jurisdiction: One blackball defeats:

Proc. 1914, p. 45, Dec. 88 and

Proc. 1915, p. 45, Dec. 13.

Certificate of Dismissal: Art. 446

NOTE: For informalities in Balloting See the Monitor of the Grand Lodge adopted in 1982. For protests in connection with the ballot see Chapter 3, Title IV of Grand Lodge Laws.

Notes on Decisions

It is contrary to the Ancient Customs, Usages and Landmarks of Masonry for the Worshipful Master of a Lodge to permit any Brother (except the Tiler and his relief, when the Tiler is called in) to enter or retire from the Lodgeroom while a ballot is in progress. It is a good policy for the Worshipful Master to announce this rule when he is about to have a ballot taken. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 12.

Based upon various decisions under Article 457, whenever the Master declares the result of the ballot, it must be so recorded in the minutes, and cannot thereafter be inquired into to determine whether a mistake has been made. The final duty to verify the number of black balls cast, is that of the Worshipful Master. Certainly after he destroyed the evidence (the ballot), the repeatedly announced rule that there can be no inquiry to determine whether the Worshipful Master had made a mistake applies, as in other cases of mistake, as to whether the Worshipful Master made a mistake in count. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: The question was asked as to the effect of the ballot held at a stated meeting of the Lodge in 1971 where the petition for reinstatement of a Brother, who had been suspended for non-payment of dues less than two years was declared rejected since he received one black ball.

ANSWER: Since the minutes of the stated meeting of the Lodge held in 1971 clearly reflect that the petitioner received more than the required two-thirds favorable ballot, the petitioner was reinstated pursuant to the terms of Article 324. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 6.

CHAPTER 3 - TITLE IV PROTESTS

Art. 421. **Against Whom Effective.**

Notes on Decisions

HELD: That protest against a candidate sent to the Grand Master, instead of to the Master of the Lodge, by Masons holding membership in Texas but temporarily out of the country, would be considered as proper protest and forwarded by Grand Master to Master of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 76.

The provisions of Article 463 (now 428) (referring to the effect of a protester being present at the time the ballot is being spread) refers to a protest before the ballot is taken. A protest that has not been made before ballot is taken is not "waived" by the protester being present when the ballot is taken. A Brother does not waive his rights subsequently to make a protest by having been present at the time the ballot was taken, even if the ballot was "clear," in that he may obtain new information between the time the ballot is taken and the time one or more of the degrees are conferred. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 3.

There is some confusion in the various decisions due to the fact that at the time most of them were rendered the original ballot on the Petition elected for only the Entered Apprentice Degree and it was necessary to take another ballot for advancement to Fellowcraft Degree and another ballot for advancement to Master's Degree. Now the original ballot elects for all Three Degrees (see Art. 452a) with the proviso, of course, that not more than one year is permitted to elapse before the E.A. is conferred or between degrees. Corresponding changes as to when a protest, lodged against a petitioner after his election to receive the degrees, should be announced were necessary and were made. See Articles 463 and 464 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. It is the imperative duty of the Worshipful Master (Art. 464) to announce a protest (lodged before the F.C. is conferred and after petitioner had been elected to receive the degrees and after he had received the Entered Apprentice Degree but within one year after he had received the Entered Apprentice Degree) at the first meeting of the Lodge, whether it is a stated or called meeting, and this should be recorded in the minutes of that meeting (Article 463) and, regardless of whether or not properly announced and recorded in the minutes, such protest is effective and dates from the date said meeting was held and "the time for which he was protested" will expire one year (there being only one protest) from the date said meeting was held. The minutes of said meeting should be corrected "nunc pro tunc." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 20.

A member of Lodge A desired to protest a petitioner whose petition had been properly presented to Lodge B, and inquired whether the protest should be made to the Master of Lodge A or to the Master of Lodge B. The protest should be made to the Worshipful Master of the Lodge in which petitioner's petition is pending. See Decisions (c) and (f) under Article 458 and (m), under Article 462, of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 42.

QUESTION: On the evening of August 8, 1955, a Lodge was in the process of conferring the Master Mason Degree on one of their candidates, when during the obligation, it appeared that the candidate might be under influence of intoxicating liquor. A discussion with this Brother in the Preparation room, upon his return thereto, confirmed the fact that he was definitely under the influence of alcohol, whereupon the three chair Officers agreed to, and did send the candidate away from the Lodge without the second section and lecture. A few minutes later a protest was lodged against this Brother. A question has arisen in the Master's mind, as to whether this Brother is subject to protest in view of the fact that he already had his obligation.

ANSWER: It seems obvious that an individual who is definitely under the influence of alcohol cannot grasp, understand, or be accountable for any obligation which he may take while in such condition. Therefore, he cannot be bound by such obligation. Since the obligation is regarded as the most essential and vital part of a degree and since this particular candidate's physical condition did not enable him to grasp or understand same, it seems logical that he is not a Master Mason. Consequently, (because of his inebriated condition agreed upon by all three Officers), his actual situation is substantially the same as if the work in this degree had not been conferred upon him. Therefore, it is my decision that as far as this candidate is concerned the degree had not been commenced (through his inability to receive same) and that the protest is valid. (See Article 367. dec. [1]. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1955 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: The question has been asked if it would be feasible to make a change in our Grand Lodge laws so that no one could file a protest "especially after one degree has been conferred"?

HELD: A protest has always been considered an important requirement in Masonry in order to promote and maintain unity within the Fraternity. It would not promote harmony within a Lodge to make this change in our Grand Lodge laws. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge who voted to accept a candidate for the Mysteries confer the Entered Apprentice Decree after learning that he had been rejected by another Lodge Within the year?

ANSWER: No. Governed by Article 400 the Lodge must thoroughly investigate the matter; and if found that he was previously rejected, suspend further action on the petition and/or follow Articles 421-428 procedures pertaining to protests. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 1.

Art. 422. Against Whom Not Effective.

Art. 423. When and By Whom Made.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a protest to be lodged with the Worshipful Master of a subordinate Lodge against the granting of life membership?

ANSWER: A protest cannot be lodged against a Brother being elected to life membership. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1957 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: The question was asked whether or not a protest received prior to the time the petition was filed is a valid protest.

ANSWER: Article 423 of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas provides that in order for a protest to be effective it must be made after the petition is received by the Lodge and before conferring the degree has begun. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 1.

Art. 423a. Separate and Joint Protests: Defined.

Art. 424. Withdrawn: When.

Art. 425. Effect of Protests.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Mr. A. B. petitioned a Lodge and received a favorable ballot. Before receiving the Degree one protest was presented. At the next called meeting of the Lodge the Worshipful Master announced this protest in accordance with Article 463 (now 425). Approximately two weeks after the Worshipful Master announced this protest in open Lodge another protest by a different Master Mason was presented to the Worshipful Master. Does the Worshipful Master have to accept the second protest?

ANSWER: Reference is made to Article 463 (now 425), which requires the Worshipful Master to announce such protest at the first meeting of the Lodge after receiving the same, whether it be a stated or called meeting and it shall be recorded in the minutes. Worshipful Master announced the protest at the first meeting of the Lodge after he had received the protest and the candidate was then rejected for a period of one year. It is my decision, that the candidate was rejected for a period of one year from the date the Worshipful Master announced the protest in open Lodge, and the second protest, which was received about two weeks later, should not be announced, nor considered for any purpose, by the Master, as there is nothing before the Lodge the candidate having been rejected for a period of one year when the first protest was

announced by the Worshipful Master in open Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 17.

QUESTION: How long should a Worshipful Master hold protests lodged against a petitioner for the degrees, or against an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft?

HELD:

- a. Such protest(s) become null and void upon the announcement of the election of the petitioner to receive the degrees.
- b. Such protests become null and void with the beginning of the conferral of the next degree.
- c. That should the time between degrees lapse and the Brother must petition for advancement the protest(s) would not carry over to his petition for advancement.

GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1994 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: What is the status of an Entered Apprentice who has failed to turn in his proficiency and has gone "Lapse of Time", and has received protests prior to the submission of a Petition for Advancement?

ANSWER: An Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft who receives a sufficient number of valid protests to reject him under the provisions of Art. 425 shall be timely advised by the Worshipful Master or Secretary of the Lodge (i) that such protests have been received; (ii) that he is rejected for the applicable number of years; and (iii) and that the provisions of Art. 426 are available to him after expiration of the time for which he was protested. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO 2.

Art. 426. **Advancement After Protest.**

Notes on Decisions

Petitioner received a degree in first Lodge; thereafter his petition for advancement was rejected by such Lodge. Time of rejection having then expired, petitioner petitioned for advancement with second Lodge, having concurrent jurisdiction. First Lodge retains jurisdiction and is not required to waive on request of second Lodge. The refusal to waive does not operate as another rejection, and if party again petitions first Lodge, first Lodge may ballot on his petition. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 71.

QUESTION: How long should a Worshipful Master hold protests lodged against a petitioner for the degrees, or against an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft?

HELD:

- a. Such protest(s) become null and void upon the announcement of the election of the petitioner to receive the degrees.
- b. Such protests become null and void with the beginning of the conferral of the next degree.
- c. That should the time between degrees lapse and the Brother must petition for advancement the protest(s) would not carry over to his petition for advancement.

GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1994 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: What is the status of an Entered Apprentice who has failed to turn in his proficiency and has gone "Lapse of Time", and has received protests prior to the submission of a Petition for Advancement?

ANSWER: An Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft who receives a sufficient number of valid protests to reject him under the provisions of Art. 425 shall be timely advised by the Worshipful Master or Secretary of the Lodge (i) that such protests have been received; (ii) that he is rejected for the applicable number of years; and (iii) and that the provisions of Art. 426 are available to him after expiration of the time for which he was protested. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO 2.

Art. 427. Rejection Must Not be Published.

Notes on Decisions

It is improper to publish in the bulletin of a subordinate Lodge the name or names of those who have petitioned the Lodge for the degrees. Likewise, it is improper to publish in such a bulletin the name or names of those scheduled to receive the Entered Apprentice, the Fellowcraft or the Master Mason Degree on a future date. These bulletins go into the homes of the Lodge members and, of course, fall into the hands of other members of the families and, possibly, into the hands of other non-Masons. It seems inevitable that if names are so published, the qualifications of petitioners, etc., would become the subject of conversation between members of the Lodge and other members of their families and, even between other non-members of the Fraternity. Furthermore, it soon becomes well known when a man has become a Master Mason. If the names of those who apply, or who are to receive a degree on a future date, are made public and the names of those who become members are made public, it is simply a matter of deduction to determine the names of those rejected. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 58.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge publish the petitioning of a candidate for the degrees in Masonry as a newsworthy item?

ANSWER: No, Grand Lodge Laws prohibit a Lodge or a Mason to publish or advertise the name of any individual who is to petition or receive the Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft or Master Mason Degree. (Proceedings 1954, page 98, dec. 58, GM Ball). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 21.

Art. 428. **Announcement of Protest.**

Notes on Decisions

The provisions of Article 463 (referring to the effect of a protester being present at the time the ballot is being spread) refers to a protest before the ballot is taken. A protest that has not been made before ballot is taken is not "waived" by the protester being present when the ballot is taken. A Brother does not waive his rights subsequently to make a protest by having been present at the time the ballot was taken, even if the ballot was "clear," in that he may obtain new information between the time the ballot is taken and the time one or more of the degrees are conferred. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: When a Lodge votes favorably on a Petition for the Degrees of Freemasonry, then before the degree is conferred protests by four Masons are presented to the Worshipful Master. Two of the protesting Masons were present and voted at the balloting, and two were not. Are the protests valid and is the Worshipful Master required to accept them?

ANSWER: Article 428 provides that protests by anyone present and voting during balloting shall be disregarded. Three valid protests are necessary before the Worshipful Master shall announce the protests. In the situation described, two protests are to be disregarded, leaving only two protests. Announcement of less than three protests is authorized by Grand Lodge law after a ballot is announced by the Worshipful Master. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 15.

Art. 429. **Duty of Worshipful Master.**

CHAPTER 4 - TITLE IV**GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO CANDIDATES****Art. 430. Degree Not Conferred One Year After Election.****Notes on Decisions**

An Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft who has permitted a year or more to elapse before asking for advancement must use the same form of petition as one making original application, with the few changes in text made necessary by fact that he has one or more degrees. If a birth certificate was not originally furnished, birth certificate must be furnished with the petition which serves as a petition for advancement. The Grand Lodge, in adopting the petition form (No. 24 [now 26]) adopted it as a generic form applicable not only to original petitions but to those for advancement, affiliation, and restoration, requiring such changes as a particular situation would require. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 61.

The language of Articles 452a (now 416), 465 (now 430) and 468 (now 430) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas are clear and mandatory. No Lodge has authority to confer, by courtesy or otherwise, the Entered Apprentice Degree upon a petitioner, whose petition was presented to a Texas Lodge, when more than one year has elapsed since he was elected, in or by a Texas Lodge, to receive the degrees. If the candidate desires to receive any degree after one year has elapsed, he must file an entirely new petition, which must take usual and regular course. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 1.

The Grand Master may grant a dispensation to shorten the time between degrees, when there is an extreme emergency, but the Grand Master is not empowered to grant an extension of time limits fixed in Article 452a and/or 468. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 40.

Art. 431. Degree Conferred on Only One Candidate at a Time.**Notes on Decisions**

Lodge must confer both sections of the Entered Apprentice and Fellowcraft Degrees on proper candidates without interrupting one degree to confer part of degree on another candidate. The lecture may be given at one time to all the candidates of that particular session. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 68.

The Grand Master does not have authority to grant a dispensation to postpone to a later time the lecture, charge and apron ceremonies when the Master's Degree is conferred. See last sentence of Article 466 (now 431) and, particularly, Decisions (b), (c) and (d) thereunder. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 30.

Art. 432. Candidate Refusing to Conform.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Can the words "declare and affirm" be substituted in the ritual?

ANSWER: There is no place in the Ritual where the words "declare and affirm" can be substituted for any words that are used, and one who cannot conscientiously conform to all the requirements of our Order has no place among us. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 7.

Art. 433. Time Elements: Examination Requirements.

Notes on Decisions

A Texas Lodge conferring degrees by courtesy on petitioner from another jurisdiction will follow the waiting time prescribed by the laws of the other jurisdiction as instructed in request for the courtesy conferral of the degrees. In absence of instructions, Texas' waiting period will be applied. Esoteric work of the jurisdiction in which degree is conferred will be used. The Lodge to whom the applicant is applying has control of his election and advancement. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 57.

Where, through good faith error, the Master's Degree is conferred in less than twenty-eight days from the time the Fellowcraft Degree was conferred, the Brother is a Master Mason. See Article 506 (now 463) and Decision (g) under Article 511 (now 475). The Lodge is subject to appropriate action. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 27.

An Entered Apprentice received the Fellowcraft Degree, through honest error, without having been examined in the E.A. Degree. While this is irregular and against Masonic Law, yet the Brother is a Fellowcraft Mason and entitled to receive instruction as such. See Article 471 (now 433), Decision (o), and Article 506 (now 463) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 46.

QUESTION: The question was asked: Can the Worshipful Master of a Lodge require a candidate to learn the monitorial explanation of the working tools of a Master Mason?

ANSWER: No, the Worshipful Master does not have this authority. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1963 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Must a Master Mason pass a proficiency examination in the Master's Degree before he can receive the last readings in the Lodge System of Masonic Education?

ANSWER: It is not necessary for a Master Mason to pass the proficiency examination in the Master's Degree before receiving the final readings in the Lodge System of Masonic Education. It would appear to be preferable for such Brother to receive the readings in the Lodge System of Masonic Education first, because of the time element involved in studying for proficiency examination. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 36.

QUESTION: Is it permitted for a candidate who received his Entered Apprentice Degree in 1928 to still apply for advancement in Masonry; and, must he be examined in the proficiency of the degree, where Lodge records do not reflect a satisfactory examination?

ANSWER: Yes, it was proper for a Lodge to receive the petition for advancement of an Entered Apprentice, who received the Degree forty-five years ago. Since the Lodge's records do not reflect a satisfactory examination given by the petitioner at that time, the petitioner will have to be instructed and examined in the Entered Apprentice Degree trial lectures. (Article 434). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 26.

QUESTION: What is meant by the term "entire trial lecture" as stated in Article 439?

ANSWER: The term "entire trial lecture" as stated in Article 439 includes all of the answers to the questions of all three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree, and the first section of the Fellowcraft Degree and all of the answers of the Master's Degree. (Article 433 and 439) In addition, the Working Tools of the Three Degrees and the Furniture of a Lodge in the Entered Apprentice Degree are to be made a part of the Trial Questions and Answers as taught to candidates. (1968 Proceedings, page 307) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 55.

QUESTION: The question was asked as to the standing of a candidate whose Fellowcraft Degree was conferred nine days after his time had expired.

ANSWER: The candidate is a regular Fellowcraft Mason since he has been regularly obligated as such, but it will be necessary for him to petition for advancement to the Master Mason Degree. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: In conducting the examination of the proficiency of a candidate for the respective Degrees of Freemasonry, must the Entered Apprentice Mason be asked all the questions in the three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree; the Fellowcraft Mason be asked all the questions in the first section of the Fellowcraft Degree; and the Master Mason be asked all the questions the entire trial lecture of the Master's Degree?

ANSWER: Yes. While the Lodge is the sole judge of the proficiency of a candidate as provided in Article 433, the procedure required to comply with the intent of Article's 433, 435, 436, and 439, in conducting the examination of a candidate, is that all questions in the three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree be asked of the Entered Apprentice, and his answers given; that all the questions of the first section of the Fellowcraft Degree be asked the Fellowcraft, and his answers given; and that all the questions of the entire trial lecture of the Masters Degree be asked the Master Mason, and his answers given before the Lodge votes on the proficiency of the respective candidate as provided in Article 437. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 13.

Art. 434. Procedure After Rejection.

Art. 434a. Procedure after Lapse of Time.

Notes on Decisions

See Article 471a (now 434). I ruled that, according to this Article, a candidate who received a black ball or protest against his advancement was not entitled to receive any instruction or to visit a Lodge during the period of such black ball or protest, and would have to petition for advancement and receive a favorable ballot before he could receive instruction or visit Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1951 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Does the provision in the amendment to Article 434, made by Grand Lodge in December, 1983 apply to those candidates whose time has expired before the adoption of this amendment?

ANSWER: That Grand Lodge intended to make the amended Article 434 apply to all Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts regardless of when their time expired for learning the work and receiving the Fellowcraft or Master Mason degree. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 3.

Art. 435. **Examinations: What Lodge.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: The question was asked, "Is it mandatory to stand a candidate before the Altar for examination as to his proficiency in the esoteric work in the various degrees?"

ANSWER: My decision is "NO." The only requirements regarding examinations are set forth in Article 435-37 and 475 and 478. There is no requirement as to the manner of conducting the examination except that it be in open Lodge with the Lodge opened in the Degree for which the examination is held. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: The question was asked: Can the Worshipful Master of a Lodge require a candidate to learn the monitorial explanation of the working tools of a Master Mason?

ANSWER: No, the Worshipful Master does not have this authority. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1963 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Can the Worshipful Master authorize an Entered Apprentice candidate be examined separately in the three sections of the Entered Apprentice Trial Questions and Answers? That is, can he be examined on three different occasions, reciting one section at a time?

ANSWER: Although a Grand Master's decision disapproved this approach in 1966, I have reversed that decision (with the concurrence of the Committee on Work), and have agreed to permit the Entered Apprentice examination be segmented, provided the Candidate is, in fact, examined in open Lodge in all three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree prior to receiving the Fellowcraft Degree. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: In conducting the examination of the proficiency of a candidate for the respective Degrees of Freemasonry, must the Entered Apprentice Mason be asked all the questions in the three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree; the Fellowcraft Mason be asked all the questions in the first section of the Fellowcraft Degree; and the Master Mason be asked all the questions the entire trial lecture of the Master's Degree?

ANSWER: Yes. While the Lodge is the sole judge of the proficiency of a candidate as provided in Article 433, the procedure required to comply with the intent of Article's 433, 435, 436, and 439, in conducting the examination of a candidate, is that all questions in the three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree be asked of the Entered Apprentice, and his answers given; that all the questions of the first section of the

Fellowcraft Degree be asked the Fellowcraft, and his answers given; and that all the questions of the entire trial lecture of the Masters Degree be asked the Master Mason, and his answers given before the Lodge votes on the proficiency of the respective candidate as provided in Article 437. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 13.

Art. 436. Examination: How Conducted.

Notes on Decisions

I ruled that, in accordance with Articles 274, 368a and 347a, it would follow that only Master Masons could conduct examinations for proficiency requirements, since all business of the Lodge is done under the auspices of a Master's Lodge. It was my opinion that the one conducting such examinations is acting as Master on and in behalf of the Lodge, and that the results of such examinations can only be approved in a Master's Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1951 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: In conducting the examination of the proficiency of a candidate for the respective Degrees of Freemasonry, must the Entered Apprentice Mason be asked all the questions in the three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree; the Fellowcraft Mason be asked all the questions in the first section of the Fellowcraft Degree; and the Master Mason be asked all the questions the entire trial lecture of the Master's Degree?

ANSWER: Yes. While the Lodge is the sole judge of the proficiency of a candidate as provided in Article 433, the procedure required to comply with the intent of Article's 433, 435, 436, and 439, in conducting the examination of a candidate, is that all questions in the three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree be asked of the Entered Apprentice, and his answers given; that all the questions of the first section of the Fellowcraft Degree be asked the Fellowcraft, and his answers given; and that all the questions of the entire trial lecture of the Masters Degree be asked the Master Mason, and his answers given before the Lodge votes on the proficiency of the respective candidate as provided in Article 437. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 13.

Art.437. (437). Proficiency Vote.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: In conducting the examination of the proficiency of a candidate for the respective Degrees of Freemasonry, must the Entered Apprentice Mason be asked all the questions in the three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree; the Fellowcraft Mason be asked all the questions in the first section of the Fellowcraft

Degree; and the Master Mason be asked all the questions the entire trial lecture of the Master's Degree?

ANSWER: Yes. While the Lodge is the sole judge of the proficiency of a candidate as provided in Article 433, the procedure required to comply with the intent of Article's 433, 435, 436, and 439, in conducting the examination of a candidate, is that all questions in the three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree be asked of the Entered Apprentice, and his answers given; that all the questions of the first section of the Fellowcraft Degree be asked the Fellowcraft, and his answers given; and that all the questions of the entire trial lecture of the Masters Degree be asked the Master Mason, and his answers given before the Lodge votes on the proficiency of the respective candidate as provided in Article 437. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 13.

Art. 438. **New Petition After Rejection.**

Art. 439. **Examination in Master's Degree.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A District Deputy Grand Master requested a clarification of Article 439 concerning instructing a Brother standing suspended for failure to take examination in the Master Mason Degree. His letter was rather indefinite, but did refer to the Obligation.

ANSWER: It was held that our Obligations, and the respective parts thereof, must be interpreted and applied in the light of conditions existing when adopted, the intent thereof and the purpose to be accomplished. When the language involved was adopted as a part of our Obligations there was no such thing as automatic suspension for failure to take the examination and such language applied, and was intended to apply, to suspension for wrongful misconduct. The language involved never was intended to apply, and does not apply, to automatic suspension for failure to take the examination. Furthermore, our Grand Lodge can make changes so long as fundamental Landmarks are not changed and in case of changes resulting in conflicts, the last expression of the Grand Lodge controls. The provision for instruction and examination of a member automatically suspended for failure to take the examination does not make any change in any fundamental Landmark and if there is any conflict (there is no conflict when the language of the Obligations is properly interpreted and applied) the last expression of our Grand Lodge controls. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 12.

QUESTION: Can the Grand Master grant a dispensation to extend the time for a Brother to take the proficiency examination in the Master Mason Degree?

ANSWER: No, the Grand Master can not grant an extension to the time for a proficiency examination in the Master Mason Degree. Only the constituent Lodge can grant additional time for a Brother to learn and pass his proficiency examination. (Article 439). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 53.

QUESTION: What is meant by the term "entire trial lecture" as stated in Article 439?

ANSWER: The term "entire trial lecture" as stated in Article 439 includes all of the answers to the questions of all three sections of the Entered Apprentice Degree, and the first section of the Fellowcraft Degree and all of the answers of the Master's Degree. (Article 433 and 439) In addition, the Working Tools of the Three Degrees and the Furniture of a Lodge in the Entered Apprentice Degree are to be made a part of the Trial Questions and Answers as taught to candidates. (1968 Proceedings, page 307) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 55.

QUESTION: Does the "Suspension" portion of Article 439 pertain to "the Lodge System of Candidate information" as well as the proficiency requirements?

HELD: No. In my opinion, Article 439 refers only to the proficiency requirements. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2000 - NO. 6

QUESTION: Can a Worshipful Master refuse to allow the lodge to vote on a motion made and seconded in open lodge?

ANSWER: The Worshipful Master is accorded broad discretion in this matter. Certainly the Worshipful Master should prevent the lodge from taking an illegal action. If the Brethren disagree with the actions of the Worshipful Master, article 283 provides for an appeal to Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Master Mason to be elected or appointed to an office in subordinate Lodge prior to his turning in his proficiency examination in the Master's Degree?

ANSWER: Yes. A Master Mason, after being raised, is subject to annual dues, is allowed to vote on issues coming before the Lodge and is qualified to ballot on petitions, etc. If he does not turn in his proficiency examination within the required time and he has been installed as an officer that office will have to be filled "pro tempore" for the remainder of the year. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 7.

CHAPTER 5 — TITLE IV
JURISDICTION AS TO DEGREES

Art. 440. **Definitions.**

Art. 441. **Territorial Jurisdiction.**

Notes on Decisions

In connection with a petition for the Degrees to a Lodge in a rural community by an applicant living in a community where there were several Lodges of concurrent jurisdiction I was asked by a District Deputy Grand Master to reconcile the provisions of Article 431 which might indicate the first Lodge had no authority to receive the petition, but Article 490 appearing to permit them to do so. There is no conflict between Article 431 and 490. Article 431 is under Section 66 relating to candidates and prescribes their qualifications. Article 490 is under Section 70 and relates to the jurisdiction as to the degrees and provides for Waiver of Jurisdiction. In this case, before a ballot can be had the petitioned Lodge must request a Waiver of Jurisdiction from the oldest Lodge in the concurrent jurisdiction. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 10.

Art. 442. Repealed December 1987.

Art. 443. Repealed December 1987.

Art. 444. Repealed December 1987.

Art. 445. **Personal Jurisdiction: Acquisition and Duration.**

Notes on Decisions

A person, a resident within jurisdiction of Lodge T, has petitioned for the Degrees to the Secretary of such Lodge. Petition was read in Lodge on May 17th and on that date referred to a Committee. On May 17th, petitioner moved into an adjoining jurisdiction. The date of reading the petition to the Lodge constitutes the date of the petition, the law takes no cognizance of portions or parts of a day, hence Lodge T has jurisdiction to ballot on the petition. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 74.

Petitioner resided within the jurisdiction of Lodge A and petitioned that Lodge for the degrees. He was elected, and the Entered Apprentice Degree was conferred. Shortly thereafter he moved away and resided outside the jurisdiction of Lodge A. Lodge A has jurisdiction over this petitioner and he may present his petition for

advancement to Lodge A. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 -NO. 28.

QUESTION: A Lodge asked if it had jurisdiction over a Fellowcraft Mason, who had filed a petition for advancement with said Lodge, and the Lodge had been granted a waiver of jurisdiction over the Fellowcraft Mason, even though he does not reside within the jurisdiction of said Lodge.

ANSWER: The Lodge acquired personal jurisdiction over the Fellowcraft Mason when the waiver of jurisdiction was granted over him to said Lodge. See Articles 445, 452 and 453. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: A constituent Lodge received a petition for advancement to the Fellowcraft and Master Mason Degrees, after the petitioner had received a certificate of dismissal from the Lodge in which he had received the Entered Apprentice Degree. The petitioner was rejected by the Lodge for a period of one year. Question was raised: Does the Lodge he last petitioned hold personal jurisdiction over him?

ANSWER: Yes. This matter is governed by the provisions of Articles 445, 446 and 457, Grand Lodge laws, Article 445 provides that a Lodge has exclusive personal jurisdiction over a petitioner for any Degree in Masonry at the time the Lodge, in which the petition is filed, received a certificate of dismissal. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 12.

Art. 446. **Certificate of Dismissal.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: When does a certificate of dismissal become effective?

ANSWER: A certificate of dismissal becomes effective as soon as it is granted by a Lodge, regardless of whether or not the fact of the dismissal is communicated to the petitioner or to another Lodge. (Article 445). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 63.

Art. 447. **Certificate of Dismissal: Procedure Under.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is there a waiting period before receiving the Fellowcraft Degree for an E. A. Brother who is favorably balloted upon to advance in Masonry after being transferred into the territory of another Lodge?

ANSWER: No, when an E. A. Brother has received a favorable ballot in the Lodge, passed the required examination as to proficiency

in the Entered Apprentice Degree; and has sat in Lodge petitioned opened in the last Degree he has received, or can be properly vouched for, before he is advanced therein, the Lodge may confer the remaining Degree upon him as there is no further waiting period necessary. A certificate of waiver of jurisdiction or dismissal will not be sufficient to meet this requirement per Article 447. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 27.

Art. 448. **Certificate of Dismissal, E.A. or F.C. of Another Jurisdiction.**

Art. 449. **Rejection in Another Grand Jurisdiction.**

Art. 450. **Degrees Conferred in Traveling Lodges.**

Art. 451. **Jurisdiction When Lodge Demised.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Should a request for Waiver of Territorial Jurisdiction be referred to the oldest Lodge in the county or the oldest Lodge in the district?

ANSWER: The oldest Lodge in the county. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 7.

Art. 452. **Petitioners: To What Lodge They May Apply.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Should a request for Waiver of Territorial Jurisdiction be referred to the oldest Lodge in the county or the oldest Lodge in the district?

ANSWER: The oldest Lodge in the county. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 7.

Art. 453. **Waiver of Jurisdiction: When Required.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A Lodge asked if it had jurisdiction over a Fellowcraft Mason, who had filed a petition for advancement with said Lodge, and the Lodge had been granted a waiver of jurisdiction over the Fellowcraft Mason, even though he does not reside within the jurisdiction of said Lodge.

ANSWER: The Lodge acquired personal jurisdiction over the Fellowcraft Mason when the waiver of jurisdiction was granted over him to said Lodge. See Articles 445, 452 and 453. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Can a petitioner who has been rejected by a Lodge apply to another Lodge in another jurisdiction after waiting the required time without a waiver of jurisdiction?

ANSWER: No action can be taken by a Lodge on a petition if the Lodge does not hold territorial jurisdiction over the petitioner, until a waiver of jurisdiction is granted. (Article 453). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 42.

QUESTION: The question was asked if one year should elapse, after a Lodge has refused to grant a waiver of jurisdiction, before the petitioner can make another request.

ANSWER: Grand Lodge Law does not require that one year elapse before another request can be made for waiver of jurisdiction. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 12.

QUESTION: Should a request for Waiver of Territorial Jurisdiction be referred to the oldest Lodge in the county or the oldest Lodge in the district?

ANSWER: The oldest Lodge in the county. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 7.

Art. 454. Waiver of Jurisdiction: When Request Made.

Notes on Decisions

That Waiver of Jurisdiction over a petitioner for the Degrees, or any of them, may not be requested until the petition has actually been received by the Lodge by being read in a Stated Meeting. It is important that the fact of a petition, for future reference, be recorded in the Minutes which constitute the basic records of the Lodge. Should Waiver of Jurisdiction be refused a statement to that effect at a subsequent Stated Meeting, and recorded in the Minutes, will close the record. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1959 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: Should a request for Waiver of Territorial Jurisdiction be referred to the oldest Lodge in the county or the oldest Lodge in the district?

ANSWER: The oldest Lodge in the county. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 7.

Art. 455. Waiver of Jurisdiction: Not Granted When.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Should a request for Waiver of Territorial Jurisdiction be referred to the oldest Lodge in the county or the oldest Lodge in the district?

ANSWER: The oldest Lodge in the county. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 7.

Art. 456. **Waiver of Jurisdiction: Procedure on Request.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: It was asked for a decision on whether Article 459 of our Laws apply to the question concerning denial of a Waiver of Jurisdiction by another Lodge (which I will call Lodge A) that has concurrent jurisdiction with the Lodge (which I will call Lodge B) making the request for Waiver of Jurisdiction.

ANSWER: It was held that Article 459 did not apply in this case, because the E. A. Brother has not “moved his domicile into the jurisdiction of another Lodge”: “jurisdiction of another Lodge” here means territorial jurisdiction. The domicile of this E. A. has been at all times material, and still is, in the territorial jurisdiction of both of these Lodges. Furthermore, it was my opinion that exclusive personal jurisdiction is now held by Lodge (A) and that it cannot be required to relinquish personal jurisdiction so long as the domicile of this E. A. remains in its territorial jurisdiction. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: Should a request for Waiver of Territorial Jurisdiction be referred to the oldest Lodge in the county or the oldest Lodge in the district?

ANSWER: The oldest Lodge in the county. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 7.

Art. 457. **Waiver of Jurisdiction: Rejected Petitioner.**

Art. 458. **Waiver of Jurisdiction: In Concurrent Jurisdiction.**

Art. 459. **Waiver of Jurisdiction: Refusal for Advancement.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: It was asked for a decision on whether Article 459 of our Laws apply to the question concerning denial of a Waiver of Jurisdiction by another Lodge (which I will call Lodge A) that has concurrent jurisdiction with the Lodge (which I will call Lodge B) making the request for Waiver of Jurisdiction.

ANSWER: It was held that Article 459 did not apply in this case, because the E. A. Brother has not “moved his domicile into the jurisdiction of another Lodge”: “jurisdiction of another Lodge” here means territorial jurisdiction. The domicile of this E. A. has been at all times material, and still is, in the territorial jurisdiction of both of these Lodges. Furthermore, it was my opinion that exclusive personal jurisdiction is now held by Lodge (A) and that it cannot be

required to relinquish personal jurisdiction so long as the domicile of this E. A. remains in its territorial jurisdiction. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 8.

Art. 460. Waiver of Jurisdiction: Effect of Refusal to Grant, refusing.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: When Lodges are in concurrent jurisdiction, can a waiver of jurisdiction for a candidate be refused without charges being instituted in ninety days?

ANSWER: Yes, the effect of the refusal of a constituent Lodge to grant a waiver of jurisdiction to another Lodge, both Lodges having concurrent territorial jurisdiction, is governed by Article 460. Further, the Lodge that refused to grant the waiver of jurisdiction retains exclusive personal jurisdiction over the candidate; and, the candidate may petition that Lodge for advancement. The refusal of the waiver or jurisdiction does not operate as a rejection. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 69.

QUESTION: The question was asked what period of time is covered by the rejection of Waiver of Jurisdiction.

ANSWER: Refusal to grant a waiver of jurisdiction does not operate as a rejection or prevent the one so refused from petitioning the Lodge refusing. See Article 460 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1983 - NO. 6.

Art. 461. Waiver of Jurisdiction: Request Where Personal Jurisdiction in Lodge of Another Grand Jurisdiction.

Art. 462. Degrees Conferred Without Jurisdiction: Further Jurisdiction.

Art. 463. Degrees Conferred Without Jurisdiction: Status of Recipient.

Art. 464. Fees: Paid to Grand Lodge: When.

Art. 465. Fees: For Unlawfully Conferred Degrees.

CHAPTER 6 - TITLE IV

WAIVER OF JURISDICTION IN FAVOR OF REGULAR LODGES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MEXICO

Art. 466. Who May Apply For.

Art. 467. Application: Form and Contents.

Art. 468. Application: Presentation and Investigation.

Art. 469. Application: Report on.

Art. 470. Application: Ballot on and Disposition.

CHAPTER 7 - TITLE IV
COURTESY DEGREES

Art. 471. Foreign Jurisdictions: Grand Secretary's Duties.
Notes on Decisions

A Texas Lodge conferring degrees by courtesy on petitioner from another jurisdiction will follow the waiting time prescribed by the laws of the other jurisdiction as instructed in request for the courtesy conferral of the degrees. In absence of instructions, Texas' waiting period will be applied. Esoteric work of the jurisdiction in which degree is conferred will be used. The Lodge to whom the applicant is applying has control of his election and advancement. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 57.

Art. 472. Foreign Jurisdictions: Correspondence After Request Granted.

Art. 473. Foreign Jurisdictions: Request to Confer Degrees in Texas.

Art. 474. Foreign Jurisdiction: Lodge Designation and Procedure.

Notes on Decisions

Degrees conferred by courtesy in a foreign jurisdiction, too soon and "out of time," without the required intervals elapsing, are validly conferred unless the requesting Lodge was specifically instructed concerning time limits specified in our Laws. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 31.

Art. 475. Requests from This to Another Grand Jurisdiction: Procedure.

Notes on Decisions

Degrees conferred by courtesy in a foreign jurisdiction, too soon and "out of time," without the required intervals elapsing, are validly conferred unless the requesting Lodge was specifically instructed concerning time limits specified in our Laws. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 31.

Art. 476. Refusal by Grand Secretary.

Art. 477. Casual Visitor Barred.

Art. 478. Courtesy Requests Between Lodges of This Grand Jurisdiction.

Art. 479. Protests.

Art. 480. No Fee Charged.

Art. 481. Requesting Lodge Shall Not Confer Degree Until Notice of Withdrawal Received from Requested Lodge.

CHAPTER 8 - TITLE IV**PROXIES**

For "May be Representatives in Grand Lodge" see Constitution, Art. II, Sec. 1, Sub-div. (d);

For "No Expenses paid for attendance upon Grand Lodge" see Constitution, Art. XII, Sec. 1; (Note: See Arts. 3, 4, 5.)

Art. 482. **Only One for A Lodge: Qualifications.**

Art. 483. **No Proxies of Representatives or Proxies.**

CHAPTER 9-TITLE IV**APPEALS FOR AID**

Art. 484. **Dispensation Required for Financial Aid Appeals.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to solicit all Lodges in the state for financial assistance to a member desperately in need of help?

ANSWER: Although the cause is wholly in keeping with Masonic principles, the sheer weight of numbers of similar causes makes it unwise to approve statewide solicitations for help for individual cases. There is no criteria by which they could be limited in number. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: May a Texas Lodge solicit other Texas Lodges for assistance to raise money for its building fund?

HELD: NO. Such would not be proper and in keeping with the customs and traditions of Freemasonry, and in violation of Article 484. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1998 - NO. 1.

Art. 485. **No Grand Lodge Relief to Lodges Sustaining Fire Loss, Unless Fully Insured.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to solicit all Lodges in the state for financial assistance to a member desperately in need of help?

ANSWER: Although the cause is wholly in keeping with Masonic principles, the sheer weight of numbers of similar causes makes it unwise to approve statewide solicitations for help for individual cases. There is no criteria by which they could be limited in number. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 7.

Art. 486. **Donations to Charity.**

Notes on Decisions

I refuse to ask Grand Lodge, or any Constituent Lodge, to contribute to the Cancer Drive or any other charity not directed and controlled by Masonry. Notwithstanding the undoubted good purpose of such charities, the moneys coming into the hands of the Grand Lodge and Constituent Lodges are trust funds for Masonic purposes. Individual Masons make individual contributions to such charities and public movements. Masonic money should be used for Masonic purposes only. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 2

Lodge, or its members in the character of Masons, may not assist the Salvation Army in raising funds by serving at the kettles, or in any other capacity. The individual Mason may do so in his individual capacity. He may make any donations he desires in his individual capacity. The Lodge may make a donation if it desires, nonetheless, as set forth in paragraph 18 of my Message of August 24th, I stated my belief that it is not good practice to do so. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 36.

I have held that the High Noon Club of Dallas is legal, being a group of Masons who meet only for luncheon and discussions, doing no esoteric work and not holding themselves out as any specific Masonic Body. Also held that such group may raise funds for Christmas gifts to Masonic Home and School, Home for Aged Masons, and similar purposes. They may make the solicitation provided there is obtained the consent of the Grand Master and the Masonic organization for whose benefit the funds are to be raised. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 79.

HELD: That Masonic Lodges, individually or by Districts, or groups of Masons, are authorized to establish blood banks and other charitable and helpful projects under strictly Masonic control. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 80.

QUESTION: Is it proper for a Lodge to use its funds to pay a special prosecutor to assist a county attorney in prosecuting a man who was charged with the murder of a Master Mason?

ANSWER: It is not proper to use Lodge funds for this purpose. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1953 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Question was asked whether a Lodge could make a donation of \$1,000.00 from Lodge funds to a building fund for the construction of a building to be used as a youth center and other community organizations.

ANSWER: Such a donation from the funds of a Lodge would be prohibited of Articles 335, 339 and 486, Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 35.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to solicit all Lodges in the state for financial assistance to a member desperately in need of help?

ANSWER: Although the cause is wholly in keeping with Masonic principles, the sheer weight of numbers of similar causes makes it unwise to approve statewide solicitations for help for individual cases. There is no criteria by which they could be limited in number. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Would it be permissible to place a love offering on the altar following the close of a Called or Stated Meeting?

ANSWER: To leave a "Love Offering" on the altar following the close of a Stated or Called meeting of a Masonic Lodge, in my opinion, would not be appropriate. It would not be objectionable to place a container simply marked "Charity" in the kitchen near the coffee pot, provided collections were used only for charitable purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: May a Lodge hold a raffle and use the proceeds for the Lodge building fund?

ANSWER: No. When and if it is determined that Lodges can lawfully conduct raffles, the proceeds can only be used for charitable purposes and can not be placed in the general operating fund, or building fund, of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: May a Lodge solicit funds from non-Masons for Masonic Charities?

ANSWER: Prior Grand Master's opinions, No. 11 (1976), No. 8 (1984), and No. 11 (1972), have held that funds cannot be solicited from the general public for Masonic purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 3.

Art. 487. **Right to Demand Reimbursement: When.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to solicit all Lodges in the state for financial assistance to a member desperately in need of help?

ANSWER: Although the cause is wholly in keeping with Masonic principles, the sheer weight of numbers of similar causes makes it unwise to approve statewide solicitations for help for individual cases. There is no criteria by which they could be limited in number. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 7.

CHAPTER 10 - TITLE IV RETURNS TO THE GRAND LODGE

For "Shall Make Annual Returns" see Constitution, Art. IX, Sec. 1;

For "Shall Pay Contributions Set Forth" see Constitution, Art. IX, Sec. 2;

For "Charter May Be Suspended For Failure" see Constitution, Art. IX, Sec. 3;

For "Fees for Dispensations and Charter" see Constitution, Art. IX, Sec. 4;

For "Fees, Annual Dues and Contributions to the Grand Lodge to be Sent In With Lodge Returns" see Constitution, Arts. IX and X.

Art.488. (521). **Annual Returns by Lodge.**

Art. 489. **Annual Returns by Lodges: Contents.**

Art. 490. **Annual Returns by Lodges: Returned for Proper Authentication.**

Art. 491. **Annual Returns by Lodges: Action on Petitions of EA's and FC's: How Obtained.**

Art. 492. **Annual Returns by Lodges: Penalty for Failure to Make.**

Art. 493. (526). **Remittances by August 15.**

As of December 2005, TITLE V, Article 494 through Article 674, (now Article 494 through Article 672) was repealed and replaced. Article numbers hereinafter, conform to our existing, Title V laws.

TITLE V

MASONIC DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

CHAPTER 1 –TITLE V JURISDICTION OF DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Art. 494. **Powers, Jurisdiction and Duty of Grand Lodge.**

Notes on Decisions

Any chartered subordinate Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction can try one of its own members regardless of where he is, regardless of whether he is present and regardless where the Masonic offense was committed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 73.

Art. 495. **Masons Amenable.**

Art. 496. **Right To Hearing.**

Art. 497. **Lodges To Be Notified.**

Art. 498. **Neglect By Lodges of Duty To Discipline.**

Art. 499. **Powers Of The Grand Master.**

Art. 500. **Exclusive Jurisdiction Of Grand Lodge.**

Art. 501. **No Time Limitation On Asserting Allegations Of Masonic Disciplinary Violations.**

Art. 502. **Disciplinary Hearings For Suspended Masons.**

CHAPTER 2 – TITLE V MASONIC DISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS

Art. 503. **Term Masonic Offenses Repealed.**

Art. 504. **Violations Of Obligations And Laws.**

Notes on Decisions

Chain letters. There has been circulated throughout this Grand Jurisdiction certain chain letters. They were sent to Masons only, with the suggestion of good fortune if the chain is unbroken, and ill

fortune if the chain is broken. They are essentially based on superstition. Inasmuch as Freemasonry has no part in fostering superstition, I advised all Masons who received them to destroy them and, further, that according to Article 538 (now 505) and 539 (now 506) of our Constitution and Laws, such letters were in strict violation and would subject any participant to discipline for un-Masonic conduct. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1951 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for other Grand Jurisdictions to solicit contributions from Masons of this Grand Jurisdiction to defray the cost of constructing a Masonic Temple?

ANSWER: It is not permissible for other Grand Jurisdictions to solicit contributions from Masons of this Grand Jurisdiction for any purpose. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1957 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to record activities of a tiled meeting of a Masonic Lodge on film, video camera, still camera or audio tape recorder?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to record any portion of a tiled meeting, be it Stated or Called, of a subordinate Lodge in Texas, either on film, video camera, still camera, audio tape recorder or any other mechanical means. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it proper to use electronic taping equipment to record the business of a Lodge?

HELD: No. Such use would not be appropriate. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1997 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Texas Masonic Lodge to join a local Chamber of Commerce?

ANSWER: Yes. A Lodge may join a local Chamber of Commerce provided (i) the Chamber does not engage in any form of political activity; (ii) the Lodge, at a regular Stated Meeting, votes to do so; and (iii) the Lodge be entered on the rolls of the Chamber of Commerce as _____ Masonic Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: May a Lodge hold a raffle and use the proceeds for the Lodge building fund?

ANSWER: No. When and if it is determined that Lodges can lawfully conduct raffles, the proceeds can only be used for charitable purposes and can not be placed in the general operating fund, or building fund, of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 6.

Art. 505. Certain Other Masonic Disciplinary Violations.**Notes on Decisions**

Grand Lodge Laws and edicts prohibit any embellishment of emblem of a Lodge on stationery, Lodge notices, or other material. Addition of the All-Seeing Eye, the Bible, or other embellishments of any kind, is prohibited. The rays emanating from the Letter "G," having been used for long ages, do not constitute a prohibited embellishment. (Numerous rulings were made covering individual emblems and stationery). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 9.

A Lodge is not prohibited from publishing and selling, to Masons and non-Masons, a history of such Lodge at reasonable price. No agreement or representation should be made that supplements will be furnished, as changed conditions may prevent the Lodge fulfilling the agreement or representation. Later, if able, the Lodge could sell or gratuitously distribute such supplements. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 12.

A Lodge can make and sell for reasonable price Centennial plate or similar souvenir celebrating the Centennial of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 13.

No Lodge, or any Body of Masons belonging to any Order predicating its membership on Masonry, can conduct any raffles, lotteries, or similar devices, or games of chance, or give away any prizes based on any consideration. Groups may hold meetings at which they give small prizes, usually called attendance prizes, or door prizes, where there is no consideration paid, directly or indirectly, for the receiving of same, or any chance to receive same. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 28.

Bible salesmen, or salesmen of other articles, may not represent that such articles are approved by Grand Lodge or Masonry or the Grand Lodge or any Lodge receives any profit therefrom. Articles 539 and 539a do not prohibit a Mason from putting proper Masonic emblems on purses or similar articles and offering them for sale. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 34.

I have held that the High Noon Club of Dallas is legal, being a group of Masons who meet only for luncheon and discussions, doing no esoteric work and not holding themselves out as any specific Masonic Body. Also held that such group may raise funds for Christmas gifts to Masonic Home and School, Home for Aged

Masons, and similar purposes. They may make the solicitation provided there is obtained the consent of the Grand Master and the Masonic organization for whose benefit the funds are to be raised. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 79.

HELD: That Masonic Lodges, individually or by Districts, or groups of Masons, are authorized to establish blood banks and other charitable and helpful projects under strictly Masonic control. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 80.

Chain letters. There has been circulated throughout this Grand Jurisdiction certain chain letters. They were sent to Masons only, with the suggestion of good fortune if the chain is unbroken, and ill fortune if the chain is broken. They are essentially based on superstition. Inasmuch as Freemasonry has no part in fostering superstition, I advised all Masons who received them to destroy them and, further, that according to Article 538 and 539 of our Constitution and Laws, such letters were in strict violation and would subject any participant to discipline for un-Masonic conduct. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1951 - NO. 3.

Under Article 539 (now 506) of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, it is permissible for a Funeral Home to give to the family of the deceased Brother a guest book engraved with the square, compasses and plain letter "G;" provided the name of the Funeral Home does not appear anywhere upon or in the book and provided, further, there is no advertising of any kind. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 7.

The correct design or emblem for letterhead, "Lodge notices" in newspapers, etc., is the square, compasses and PLAIN letter "G" without any embellishments. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 38.

I do not believe that under State Laws the offense of drunkenness involves a violation of a law of the State involving moral turpitude. Repeated convictions for drunkenness, however, are clear and strong evidence of intemperate use of intoxicating liquors – the latter being a Masonic offense regardless of moral turpitude. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 61.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for other Grand Jurisdictions to solicit contributions from Masons of this Grand Jurisdiction to defray the cost of constructing a Masonic Temple?

ANSWER: It is not permissible for other Grand Jurisdictions to solicit contributions from Masons of this Grand Jurisdiction for any purpose. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1957 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: The question was asked whether it was a violation of Grand Lodge Laws for bulletins of Masonic Bodies to carry paid advertisements for Masonic Insurance Company, the same using the square and compasses as part of its insignia and soliciting policies from Master Masons only?

ANSWER: It was my decision that this was a distinct violation of Article 539, which states in part: "The use of the word 'Masonic' or the use of Masonry, or the faith and credit of Masonry, for a secular business, . . . is prohibited . . ." Any business institution attempting to operate in Texas, using the words "Masonic" or "Masons" and/or the insignia of the "square and compasses" in a commercial enterprise would be in violation of our Laws. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 37.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to include advertisements in its news letter to defray the cost of the publication?

ANSWER: No. Article 506.3 prohibits such advertisements. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2003 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Permission was requested by the Order of the Eastern Star to have dinner plates made commemorating a Lodge's Centennial by showing a picture of the Lodge building on the same.

ANSWER: It was my decision that it would be permissible for the Lodge to grant permission for the plates to be made. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 42.

QUESTION: It was brought to the attention of the Grand Master that a Masonic Lodge had been carrying a paid advertisement on a calendar showing its meeting dates as the second Thursday of each month, together with the ads of many other local organizations; in fact the space containing each date on the calendar had been reserved by some business concern in the community for its particular advertisement. The proceeds from the sale of this calendar provided revenue for the local Lions' Club to be spent for community purposes. The question was whether it was permissible for a Masonic Lodge to participate in this program as such.

ANSWER: That it is not permissible for a Masonic Lodge to participate in such project as this is in violation of Article 539a (now 506) of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 53.

QUESTION: The question has been asked whether or not it would be permissible for Lodge A to furnish a room in the new hospital being built in its City and place a plaque upon the door of said room, reading: "Furnished by Lodge, A. F. & A. M., Texas."

ANSWER: It would be permissible for Lodge A to furnish a room in the new hospital being built in its City and to place such a plaque on the door of the room, provided the hospital is owned and operated either by the City or other Governmental Subdivision, or by a non-profit organization. However, if it is a privately owned hospital, it would not be permissible to either furnish the room or place the plaque upon the door. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: It was asked by one of the constituent Lodges whether it was lawful to make a donation to an Industrial Foundation which is being established to attract new industries to its town.

ANSWER: My decision is that Lodge funds cannot lawfully be contributed to an Industrial Foundation "being established to attract new industries to a town." The bringing of industry to a community, however, beneficial in many ways, is certainly not a matter within the scope of appropriate Masonic activities. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1962 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it is permissible to take pictures inside a Lodgeroom when the Lodge is at labor.

ANSWER: Pictures should never be taken in the Lodgeroom while the Lodge is at labor, and even when called off extreme care should be taken in connection with taking pictures in a Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1963 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: The question has been asked if it is permissible to place a sign beside the highway near the approaches to town with reference to the meeting date of the Lodge.

ANSWER: There is no objection to roadside signs of this character being erected on highways. However, the Brethren should keep a continuous lookout to see that the sign, or signs, are properly maintained and in attractive condition. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1963 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: The question has been asked if it would be permissible for a Blue Lodge to consolidate its monthly bulletins with another Masonic organization.

ANSWER: No. A "Blue Lodge" in our Grand Jurisdiction should not publish jointly with any other organization, or at joint expense or under joint management, any publication of any character. Further, each of our Blue Lodges should have full control over, and be fully responsible for, any publication it has any part in publishing. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1964 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Would it be permissible to place a sign on a painting exhibited in an art display in a commercial establishment which identified the painting as a picture of the first meeting place of a Masonic Lodge?

ANSWER: A simple and dignified statement identifying such a painting as the first meeting place of a Masonic Lodge would not be objectionable. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: Question was asked whether a Lodge could maintain a museum depicting the history of the Lodge in a frontier-type development, in the form of a Lodgeroom in which would be displayed pictures of the Past Masters of the Lodge with brief histories under each, with historical items being displayed in museum-type cases, with the room to be air-conditioned and equipped with cold water fountain, rest rooms, a place to rest and a register, but with no items to be sold on the premises and with an agreement that the location of such Lodge museum in the development would not be used for advertising or promotional purposes, such museum to be marked with a Masonic emblem, the words "Masonic Museum," and the identification of the Lodge by name and number.

ANSWER: The maintenance of such a museum along the lines indicated would violate no laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas and there would be no objection to its maintenance by the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge place and maintain a meeting night schedule board in a grocery store?

ANSWER: A Lodge can maintain such a bulletin board, provided it is plain and well kept, there is no advertising on the board or acknowledgment that it is placed there by courtesy of the store owner or others, that it not on Federal, State, County or other similar premises, and that there be no information in notices on such bulletin board except the name of the Lodge, time and place of meeting, and the nature of the business to be transacted. No names should be included in any such notices other than the signature of the proper officers of the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1965 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to erect the entrance gates to a City Park which is owned by the City of said Lodge, location and place a plaque or sign on these gates, no other signs of advertisements will be placed on the Entrance Gates?

ANSWER: It would be permissible for the Lodge to erect the Entrance Gates to the City Park and place a plaque on same stating that the entrance was built by said Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1966 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to become a member of a Farm Bureau Organization in order to secure insurance from said Organization for a considerable less amount of money?

ANSWER: It is neither proper nor permissible for a constituent Lodge in Texas to join the Farm Bureau Organization. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: The question has been asked whether or not the organization of a dinner club, in the valley area, would violate our Grand Lodge laws.

ANSWER: This matter is governed by Article 506, paragraph 29, of Grand Lodge law. In view of this law, your Grand Master gave his approval to the formation of this dinner club in the valley area. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: The question has been asked if it is permissible for a monthly bulletin to be issued jointly by a number of Masonic bodies and said bulletin would have paid advertising in it.

ANSWER: It would not be permissible for a Lodge to publish a bulletin jointly with other Masonic Bodies and it would be improper to use paid advertising in Masonic bulletins or similar Masonic publications. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: An inquiry has been made asking whether or not an advertisement in the monthly publication of a Shrine Temple in Texas violates our Grand Lodge laws.

ANSWER: The particular advertisement in said monthly publication of said Shrine Temple was in violation of Article 506, paragraph 3, Grand Lodge law. However, there are certain exceptions set out in paragraph 3. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: It has been asked by a Lodge if it would be permissible for a local radio station to solicit donations for a Brother Mason.

ANSWER: A charitable appeal either on behalf of the Lodge or on behalf of an individual member of the Lodge cannot be made to the public generally. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: Is an organization which is permitted to use the Lodge building allowed to leave its emblem in the Lodgeroom?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible for any organization named in Article 225 and 506, Sub. 29, who meet in the Lodgeroom, to leave its paraphernalia in the Lodgeroom all the time so long as such organization is permitted by the Lodge to use the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Can an association of Past Masters within a related order design a special certificate and combine the Square and Compasses with the emblems of that related organization?

ANSWER: No, since the Past Master's Jewel and Square and Compasses are strictly emblems of the Blue Lodge, it is not proper to include them in a certificate designated for the use of an appendant or a Masonic related organization. (Article 506) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Can a renter of space in a Lodge building sub-rent a space for a sign to be placed on that part of the Lodge building?

ANSWER: Grand Lodge Laws do not prohibit a sign on a Lodge building as long as it does not disfigure the attractiveness of the Lodge building or cause structural damage to the building. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: Is it permitted for a Mason to own and operate a liquor store?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible for a Mason to own and operate a liquor or beer store, if it is a legally licensed store. (Article 506, Sub. 6) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 16.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to announce a blood bank which was established by a Master, Wardens and Secretaries Association as a community service on the radio, television and in the newspaper?

ANSWER: Yes, where a Master, Wardens and Secretaries Association has established a blood bank as a community service, it is permissible to announce the blood bank on radio, television and newspaper to promote the blood bank, provided the association maintains entire control of the blood bank and the announcements. (1966 Proceeding, p. 157, dec. 4, GM Fullingim) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 17.

QUESTION: Can an appendant order insert a notice in the newspaper asking unaffiliated Masons to return a questionnaire which would be used to secure Masonic affiliations?

ANSWER: No, although Grand Lodge Laws do not specifically forbid such a questionnaire, it seems clear, from paragraph 4 of Article 506, that the notice could not be placed in a newspaper without the approval of the Grand Master. Since the proposal would have encouraged responses by members of clandestine Masonic Lodges, it was not approved. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 58.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge dedicate a Masonic section in a private cemetery?

ANSWER: No, it would not be appropriate for the Grand Lodge of Texas to dedicate the Masonic section of a privately owned cemetery. And, in accordance with Grand Lodge Laws, it is not permissible for the constituent Lodges in Texas to perform such a dedication service. (1962 Proceedings, pages 142-143, dec. 6, G. M. Dillard) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 64.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge Library join the Correspondence Circle of the Quatuor Coronati Research Lodge of London, England?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible for a Lodge or the Lodge Library to join the Correspondence Circle of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076, a research Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England. (Article 506, Sub. 29) GRAND MASTER'S LODGE - 1973 - NO. 73.

QUESTION: Is a member of an appendant order in Texas permitted to display the emblems of that order on automobiles?

ANSWER: Yes, unless the action of an appendant organization violates Masonic Law or causes a Mason to do so, Grand Lodge does not exercise control over the activities of appendant organizations, recognized by Grand Lodge Law and predicated on their membership on Masonic membership. The decal of an appendant order on a car is not a violation of Masonic Law. (1962 Proceedings, page 142, dec. 1, G. M. Dillard) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 74.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for the Advisory Board of a Rainbow Assembly to hold a meeting, either formally or informally, in a Masonic Lodge building?

ANSWER: Yes, the adult Rainbow Advisory Board may meet, either formally or informally, in a Masonic Lodge building, since this board is an authorized group of an Assembly of Rainbow Girls

(See Articles 25 and 506, Sub. 29). GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS - 1974 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to circularize the membership of the surrounding Lodges and offer scrolls in return for donations to the Masonic Home and School Development Fund?

ANSWER: It is permissible for the Lodge to do this, but it should discuss the proposition with the officers of the other Lodges and request the officers to submit the matter to their membership for approval before there is any attempt to circularize the membership of the other Lodges. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Is it appropriate under the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas to accept political advertisements for publication in a Shrine News Letter?

ANSWER: The publication of political advertisement, even in a News Letter of a Shrine Temple, is conduct calculated to bring reproach on this Grand Lodge and Masonry in general. This being true, such conduct would be in violation of Paragraph 2 of Article 506 of Grand Lodge Law. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1975 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for the entrance hall of a Lodge building to be used for the purpose of holding local, state and national elections?

ANSWER: It is permissible to use the entrance hall for the purpose of conducting an election as long as neither the Lodgeroom nor the ante room is used. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: Is it proper for a Lodge to place a small plaque on the bed of a hospital reciting that the bed was a gift from the Masonic Lodge?

ANSWER: If the hospital is owned by a governmental agency or by a non-profit organization, the Lodge would be authorized to place a plaque on the bed being donated. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: The question was asked if the National Camper Travelers, Inc. could exist in the State of Texas.

ANSWER: That it would be a violation of the Masonic Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas for such an organization to exist in Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Is it appropriate for a Lodge to solicit funds from a foundation for the construction of a new Lodge building?

ANSWER: That such a solicitation of funds would be in violation of both Grand Lodge Law and the usages and customs of Masonry. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1976 - NO. 11.

QUESTION: Is it permissible to use a new Lodge building for meetings before it is completed and dedicated?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible to use the new building before it is completed and dedicated, provided it has been certified as Masonically safe and secure by the District Deputy Grand Master. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to participate in a public celebration by renting a booth in the flea market and asking members to donate items?

ANSWER: No. In my opinion this activity is not of proper historical significance and that Lodge participation would not result in a definite enhancement of the public image of Freemasonry. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it would be appropriate for a Lodge to participate in a Family Day sponsored by the Grotto.

ANSWER: It would be inappropriate for a Lodge to participate in the event outlined. However, Masons, as individuals, might participate in such public gatherings GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1977 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Permission was asked for the establishment of a branch of the "Santa Fe Masonic Club" in Temple, Texas.

ANSWER: Permission was denied as the Santa Fe Masonic Club is not one of the exempted organizations as listed in Paragraph 29 of Article 506 of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 -NO. 2.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it would be permissible for the public to visit the Lodgeroom during the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the community.

ANSWER: It is permissible for the Lodge to be open and visitors to view the Lodge hall as long as the Lodge maintains complete control of the building and the Lodgeroom and provides members of the Lodge to supervise visitors in their inspection of the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1978 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Constituent Lodge to be named as executor of an estate?

ANSWER: That neither a Constituent Lodge nor the Grand Lodge should be named as executor of an estate. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1979 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: Is it legal for a group of Master Masons to form a social club?

ANSWER: That the proposed club would be in violation of Paragraph 29 of Article 506 of Grand Lodge Law. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge have a community-wide fish fry for the purpose of raising money to repair the outside of the Lodge building?

ANSWER: That a Lodge may have a community-wide fish fry, provided it is held outside the Lodgeroom. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 14. (Decision 14 - Not approved. In conflict with Art. 224.)

QUESTION: Can a Lodge display the name of a donor on a plaque, or otherwise, within the Lodge Hall?

ANSWER: Yes, it is permissible. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1981 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge donate a scoreboard to a high school?

ANSWER: That the Lodge may donate a scoreboard to a high school, but should not place on the scoreboard that it was donated from the Masons of the area. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1981 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: The question was asked if it is a Masonic offense to use the words "Masonic", etc. in a political advertisement or literature.

ANSWER: The statement by a candidate for office in a political announcement or advertisement of the fact that he is a Mason is not a Masonic offense, if such announcement or advertisement also lists his church and civic club affiliations. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1982 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to participate in a city's observance of the 4th of July?

ANSWER: Article 38 of Grand Lodge Law provides that the Grand Master may grant dispensations to Lodges to appear in public for any proper Masonic purpose provided the function is one of a patri-

otic or community character and is noncontroversial and nonpartisan. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is it proper for a Lodge to apply to the Texas Historical Society for a Historical Marker for their Lodge?

ANSWER: That this request is entirely proper as many Texas Lodges have had Historical Markers attached to their buildings. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to solicit funds from the public for the purpose of building a building for a community use on property owned by the Lodge?

ANSWER: That it is not permissible of the Lodge to solicit funds from the public. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1984 - NO. 8.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to issue a calendar with commercial advertisements in it?

ANSWER: That the issuance of a calendar, which would include commercial advertisements would be in clear violation of Paragraph 3, Article 506, of Grand Lodge Law. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1985 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Could a Lodge purchase a sign on the outfield fence of a baseball park which is used by a local youth organization on which to put the name and location of the Lodge?

ANSWER: That the Lodge could purchase a sign with the following exceptions, that the meeting nights and invitation not be on the sign. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1985 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a group of Masons, some of whom are members of local Lodges to meet as a group for fellowship and for practice of the degrees as they are conferred in the Grand Lodge of the Philippines?

ANSWER: That the forming of this club for the purpose so stated would not serve the best interest of Freemasonry in this Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS - 1985 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge act as Executor of the will of one of its members?

ANSWER: That neither a constituent Lodge nor the Grand Lodge should be named as Executor of an estate. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1985 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Can the Square and Compasses be placed upon coin purses?

ANSWER: That the Square and Compasses cannot be placed on vehicles, articles of clothing or any ostentatious or inappropriate use that might tend to discredit or bring reproach upon Freemasonry. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1986 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: In a multi-story Lodge building, where several Lodges meet, can a game room be used while one of those Lodges is meeting?

ANSWER: Although Article 224, which governs, does not mention multi-level and multi-Lodge buildings, the principle is the same. It is my firm opinion that, because misunderstanding and misinterpretation can be so easily involved, the game room should not be in operation when Lodges are meeting in the building. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can Eastern Star Past Matron and Past Patron Associations meet in Lodges under the general rules followed by Chapters of the Eastern Star?

ANSWER: Yes, they are a "group authorized, recognized, permitted or commonly used by (see Article 506.29) the Eastern Star, and provided the Eastern Star Chapter and Lodge(s) involved approve, the Law authorizes their meeting in the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 10.

QUESTION: Can Texas Lodges join the state "Adopt-A-Highway" program, and maintain litter control on a section of Texas highway?

ANSWER: By all means, Yes! And since this decision was made in late 1986, many Texas Lodges have joined the program, providing a service to the community and giving visibility to Masonry. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 13.

QUESTION: Can a Texas Lodge act as an Executor of a will?

ANSWER: That it would not be appropriate for a Lodge to act in such capacity because the basic nature and function of the Lodge does not equip it to act as an Executor under a will. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 14.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a Mason who was suspended, N.P.D., could be expelled if found guilty of committing a felony under such suspension.

ANSWER: A Mason suspended N.P.D. may be expelled under Article 506a upon being convicted of a felony. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1988 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to install a road sign in conjunction with civic, religious and fraternal organizations located in the same city?

ANSWER: Such signs are permissible and should be maintained in good condition at all times to project a favorable image of Freemasonry. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: Can the Square and Compasses as depicted on Form No. 77 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas be depicted on baseball caps and be sold by the Lodge?

ANSWER: Baseball caps are not considered articles of clothing and such use is not authorized. However, authorized decals and patches may be purchased from the Grand Secretary and be sold by Lodges. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1989 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it proper to display a Masonic flag on a pole in front of the Lodge?

ANSWER: It would be proper to display a Masonic flag on a pole in front of the Lodge. However, should the United States Flag be displayed the combined display should conform to the United States code. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1990 - NO. 2

QUESTION: Can the Masonic emblem be displayed on the flag pole flying the United States flag?

ANSWER: That it would not be proper to display Masonic emblem above that of the emblem of the United States. The Masonic emblem would be permissible on a separate pole displaying the Masonic flag provided it was the same height as the pole displaying the United States flag. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1990 - NO. 4

QUESTION: Would it be permissible for a Lodge enter into an agreement with a telephone company providing telephone service to its members as a fund raising project?

ANSWER: That to do so would be in violation of Article 506, using the faith and credit of Masonry for business purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1990 - NO. 6.

QUESTION: May a Lodge sell advertising in a newspaper?

ANSWER: It would not be proper, and would be in violation of Article 506, for a Lodge to sell advertising in a newspaper. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1991 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge depict the square and compasses on a banner together with the words "Pepsi" or "Dr Pepper"?

ANSWER: To do so would be in violation of Article 506.3. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1992 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Is it proper to use The Square and Compasses on personal bank checks?

HELD: No. In my opinion, such use is not permitted by Article 506.3. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1998 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: May a Lodge purchase and retail a Fish Hook Removal Kit in a local shopping mall?

HELD: Such a retail adventure is inconsistent with the purposes of Freemasonry, and in violation of Article 506.3. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1999 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge enter into a contract with a company to produce a "Gospel Music Show," and receive a portion of the revenues generated by the show?

HELD: Such a contract would be a business venture, involving third party telemarketing, and would compete with for-profit businesses in the community, and is in violation of Article 506.3. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1999 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for Lodges in Masonic District No. 62 to establish a Child Identification Program at no cost to parents or Grand Lodge? The purpose being an aide to identify missing children as a community service.

HELD: The program as proposed is in keeping with the principles and purposes of Freemasonry, and when instituted will provide a valuable community service. The Lodges of District No. 62 are to be commended for their zeal and foresight in adopting this program. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2001 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge display a page on its city's web page for informational purposes?

HELD: Yes. Such request is in keeping with Grand Master's Decision No. 2, 1989, approved by Grand Lodge, which permits Lodge signs to be displayed in conjunction with civic, religious and fraternal organizations located in the city. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2001 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: May Masonic Appendant Organizations conduct raffles and/or Bingo for charitable purposes?

HELD: Article 643 prohibits Lodges from raising money by lotteries or other gambling devices. This law does not apply to Masonic Appendant Organizations, provided those organizations conduct

charitable raffles and/or Bingo according to the Laws of The State of Texas. This decision however, does not apply to "Lotteries," nor to Masonic Lodges, because of the wording of Articles 335.4, 643 and 506.5. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2002 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: May a Lodge permit a ball field to be named in its honor as recognition of charitable work and community involvement of the Lodge.

HELD: A Lodge may permit a ball field to be named in its honor, provided the name be _____ Lodge No. _____, AF&AM, Ball Field, and further that the Lodge shall retain the right to withdraw its name at any time, and for any reason. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2002 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge sell jewelry, primarily watches, as a fund raising project?

HELD: Such would be in violation of Article 506.3, which prohibits the faith and credit of Masonry to be used for business purposes. In addition, such activity could be conceived as a business venture, exceeding the limitations of our organization as a fraternity, which could compromise our tax exempt status. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2002 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: May Texas Masons join the Philippino Masons of America Association, Inc. and may those organizations meet in the Lodgeroom of a Texas Masonic Lodge?

ANSWER: Article 506.29 makes it a Masonic offense for a Texas Mason to belong to "any organization predicated membership on Masonic membership...unless such organization is...approved or recognized in Article 225". As neither the Philippino Masons of America Association, Inc., nor the PAMAT is so listed, a Texas Mason belonging to either, is subject to discipline. Also, Article 224 states that only those organizations listed in Article 225 may meet in Lodgerooms. Again, as neither of the two entities are so listed, they may not meet in the Lodgeroom of a Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2003 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: May Texas Masons join the Phillippino Masons of America Association, Inc. and may those organizations meet in the Lodge room of a Texas Masonic Lodge?

ANSWER: Article 506(29) makes it a Masonic offense for a Texas Mason to belong to "any organization predicated membership on Masonic membership...unless such organization is...approved or recognized in Article 225." As neither the Phillippino Masons of America Association, Inc., nor the PAMAT is so listed, a Texas

Mason belonging to either, is subject to discipline. Also, Article 224 states that only those organizations listed in Article 225 may meet in Lodgerooms. Again as neither of the two entities are so listed, they may not meet in the Lodgeroom of a Texas Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 13.

QUESTION: Can the Lodge acknowledge the name of the business furnishing the printing of the Lodge roster, by the appearance in the roster of the following: "Printing Donated by _____ Company?"

ANSWER: It would be a violation of the Masonic Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas for a Lodge to acknowledge the name of the business furnishing the printing of the Lodge roster, by the appearance in the roster of the company's name, even though the printing is donated by the company. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 15.

QUESTION: May a Lodge solicit funds from non-Masons for Masonic Charities?

ANSWER: Prior Grand Master's opinions, No. 11 (1976), No. 8 (1984), and No. 11 (1972), have held that funds cannot be solicited from the general public for Masonic purposes. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2005 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: What action can be taken against the well-intentioned but misinformed religious groups in their hysterical attacks on Masonry?

ANSWER: Nothing! Consider and have compassion and sympathy for the source. Demonstrate the great tenets and philosophy of Freemasonry by your support to your church or synagogue; your personal actions in support of your community; and your demonstrated and visible pride in your fraternity. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1987 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: May a road sign containing the Masonic Emblem and words "FREE AND ACCEPTED MASON" include the words "In God we trust"?

ANSWER: No. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it a Masonic Disciplinary Violation for an Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft Mason to possess a “Code Book” in Texas?

ANSWER: Yes. (see Art. 505, No. 20) GRANDMASTER'S DECISION-2008-NO. 5.

QUESTION: Can a Master Mason possess a “code book” prior to his proficiency examination in the Master’s Lodge?

ANSWER: No. The “code book” is only to be used by the instructor to “refresh” his memory, and is not to be used in the presence of the candidate during instruction. (See Art. 505, No. 20) GRAND MASTER’S DECISION-2008-NO. 6.

Art. 506. **Automatic Suspension Or Expulsion** **Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: When a member of a Lodge is convicted of a felony offense, is the Lodge required to take any action if the sentence is suspended and the member is placed on probation?

ANSWER: Yes, when a member is found guilty of a felony offense, even though the imposition of sentence is suspended and he is placed on probation, the fact of guilt is established and the Lodge will be governed by Articles 506a, 506b and 506c under Title Va of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1973 - NO. 34.

QUESTION: May an expelled Mason apply for reinstatement while he is still under probation as a result of a felony conviction and a sentence to the penitentiary?

ANSWER: That an expelled Mason should not apply for reinstatement while under probation as a result of a felony conviction and a sentence to the penitentiary. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1980 - NO. 9.

QUESTION: Should a Lodge conduct a Masonic trial in the case of a misdemeanor?

ANSWER: That the Lodge should not proceed under Title Va since it is not a conviction of a felony. However, the Lodge should be instructed to proceed to file charges under Article 505 and 506. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1982 - NO. 2.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a member of a Lodge who receives a probated sentence should be tried by the Lodge.

ANSWER: That the fact the member received a probated sentence does not affect the finality of his conviction and he is still subject to expulsion under Article 506a. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1983 - NO. 4.

QUESTION: Does Article 506a apply to a member who was convicted of a felony and given a probated sentence?

ANSWER: That the conviction is for a felony and therefore the provisions of 506a are applicable. This is true even though the court granted probation to the defendant. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1985 - NO. 1.

QUESTION: The question was asked if a Mason who was suspended, N.P.D., could be expelled if found guilty of committing a felony under such suspension.

ANSWER: A Mason suspended N.P.D. may be expelled under Article 506a upon being convicted of a felony. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1988 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: Is it permissible for a Lodge to use county jail trustees to perform custodial labor for the Lodge?

ANSWER: Such is not proper, and would be contrary to Grand Master's Decision No. 7, 1991, approved by Grand Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1995 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is a Mason who is convicted of a felony in a military court martial subject to expulsion under Article 506a?

ANSWER: Yes. Article 506a provides for expulsion upon conviction of a felony in a court of any State or the United States, and a military court is a court of the United States. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2003 - NO. 2.

Art. 507. **Voluntary Expulsion For Life.**

**CHAPTER 3 – TITLE V
ALLEGATION OF MASONIC
DISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS**

Art. 508. Necessity Of Written Allegations Of A Masonic Disciplinary Violation.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: When one Brother desires to file Masonic charges against another Brother, both of whom are members of a Texas Lodge in the same concurrent jurisdiction, with which Lodge does the accused file his charges.

ANSWER: It was held that the Master Mason acting as an accuser may choose to file his charges with the Secretary of either Lodge holding such concurrent jurisdiction, since such Lodge has jurisdiction and once the charges are filed must retain it exclusively under the provisions of Article 497. Further, it may be considered a desirable right of the accused to be tried in his own Lodge, but it is my opinion that the applicable laws do not give this right to the accused. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1968 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: Is a Mason in good standing of another Grand Jurisdiction eligible to prefer charges against a member in this Grand Jurisdiction if the offense occurred in this Grand Jurisdiction?

ANSWER: He cannot prefer charges, but he can advise with the Brethren in the area where the offense was committed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1953 - NO. 7.

Art. 509. Status Of Mason Under Allegations Of A Masonic Disciplinary Violation.

Art. 510. Acts Committed Before Accused Became A Mason.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A constituent Lodge noticed, after the petitioner had received the Entered Apprentice Degree, that he had given a false answer to question 16 in the petition for the Mysteries of

Freemasonry in that he had been charged with a felony, but answered the question negatively. Question was raised: What about the false statement on the petition; should the suspension be for one year, as in the case of a protest, or for a longer period?

ANSWER: Charge should be filed against the Entered Apprentice for making a false statement in his application for membership. See Article 515. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1972 - No. 13.

Art. 511. Duty of Grand Secretary When Allegations Of Masonic Disciplinary Violations Received By The Grand Lodge.

Art. 512. Procedure When Allegations Of Masonic Disciplinary Violations Are Received By The Grand Master.

Art. 513. Lodge Committee On Reconciliation.

Art. 514. Grand Lodge Committee On Masonic Mediation.

CHAPTER 4 – TITLE V GRAND MASTER'S REFERRAL TO MASONIC DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

Art. 515. When Commission Appointed.

Art. 516. If Accused Cannot Be Found.

Art. 517. Service On Accused Essential.

Art. 518. Appointment of Trial Master.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: A Past Master of a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction has affiliated with one of our Texas Lodges, and the inquiry has been made whether or not this Brother is entitled to the honors of a Past Master in Texas, such as opening and closing the Lodge, wearing a pin and carrying a Past Master's Card Membership in the Past Master's Club, etc.

ANSWER: It was my decision that this Brother is not a member of our Grand Lodge (See Art. 11, Sec. 1[c] of our Constitution); cannot preside over a Texas Lodge; is not a Past Master of our Texas Lodge (see Articles 269 and 285); cannot install Officers as this is limited in this regard to "Past Masters of this Grand Jurisdiction" (see Article 526). Therefore, the answers to all the questions posed are "No." GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1967 - NO. 16.

Art. 519. Duties And Powers Of Trial Master.

Art. 520. Appointment of Secretary.**Notes on Decisions**

In a case where competent, eligible stenographic service was not available for a Masonic trial, I held that with the sanction of the Trial Master a tape recorder might be used to make a record of the trial with the definite provision that after the tape recording had been reduced to typewritten record, the entire procedure should be certified to by the Trial Master, the Worshipful Master, and the Secretary of the Lodge, after which the tape should be destroyed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 7.

QUESTION: Can a Lodge use a court reporter for a Masonic trial who is not a Master Mason?

ANSWER: No, it is not permissible in accordance with the Grand Lodge Laws for a Lodge in Texas to use a court reporter for a Masonic trial who is not a Master Mason. (Article 541 [2]). GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1974 - NO. 1.

Art. 521. Duties and Powers of Secretary.**Notes on Decisions**

In a case where competent, eligible stenographic service was not available for a Masonic trial, I held that with the sanction of the Trial Master a tape recorder might be used to make a record of the trial with the definite provision that after the tape recording had been reduced to typewritten record, the entire procedure should be certified to by the Trial Master, the Worshipful Master, and the Secretary of the Lodge, after which the tape should be destroyed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 7.

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Art. 522. Appointment of Advocates for Accuser and Accused.**Art. 523. Duties of Advocate For Accuser.****Art. 524. Duties of Advocate For Accused.****Art. 525. Failure of Accused To Appear.****Art. 526. Accuser and Accused May Choose Own Advocates.**

CHAPTER 5 – TITLE V

WAIVER OF RIGHT TO HEARING BEFORE MASONIC DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

Art. 527. Right To Hearing Before A Masonic Disciplinary Commission.

Art. 528. Waiver Of Right To Hearing Before Masonic Disciplinary Commission.

Art. 529. Admonishments To Accused.

Art. 530. Hearing Before Trial Master.

Art. 531. Ruling of Trial Master.

Art. 532. Grand Secretary to Notify Lodge of Action of Trial Master.

CHAPTER 6 – TITLE V

ORGANIZATION OF MASONIC DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

Art. 533. Selection And Empanelling Of Masonic Disciplinary Commission.

Notes on Decisions

The members of trial commission having been duly summoned, and having appeared at the time set for trial, and the case having been postponed, it is not necessary for formal resummons of the Committee for the reset date. They should be notified or reminded, that they will not overlook same. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 82.

Art. 534. Disqualifications for Masonic Disciplinary Commission.

Art. 535. Effect of Disqualification.

Art. 536. Oath To Masonic Disciplinary Commission.

Art. 537. Instructions To Masonic Disciplinary Commission.

Art. 538. Place of Masonic Disciplinary Commission Hearing.

Art. 539. Who May Attend A Masonic Disciplinary Commission Hearing.

Notes on Decisions

Under the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, a visiting Brother, who is not a member in good standing of Lodge

where the trial is being held, or where the charges arose, and who is in no way involved (as a witness, attorney, accuser, accused, etc.) is prohibited from attending a Masonic trial in Texas. Only those as provided for in Article 625 (now 580) of our Constitution and Laws can be permitted to attend such trials. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 13.

QUESTION: It was asked whether it would be permissible for the District Deputy Grand Master to attend the Masonic trial held within his own District.

ANSWER: Article 705 (now 647) directs, that "District Deputy Grand Masters shall inquire into all Masonic offenses committed in their respective Districts, and when the Lodges have failed to act thereon shall report to the Grand Master," and as the District Deputy Grand Master is the personal representative of the Grand Master in his District, and responsible to him and him only, it was my decision that it is not only the right and privilege of the District Deputy Grand Master to be present at any and all Masonic Trials held within the confines of his District, but that even though not specifically directed by the Grand Master to be present on each and every occasion, it is, also, his duty to be present, if it is convenient for him to attend. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 10.

CHAPTER 7 – TITLE V DISCOVERY PRIOR TO MASONIC DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION HEARING

Art. 540. **Forms of Discovery.**

Art. 541. **Scope of Discovery.**

Art. 542. **Request for Disclosure.**

Art. 543. **Request for Production of Documents.**

Art. 544. **Written Interrogatories.**

Art. 545. **Oral Depositions.**

Notes on Decisions

In a case where competent, eligible stenographic service was not available for a Masonic trial, I held that with the sanction of the Trial Master a tape recorder might be used to make a record of the trial with the definite provision that after the tape recording had been reduced to typewritten record, the entire procedure should be certified to by the Trial Master, the Worshipful Master, and the Secretary of the Lodge, after which the tape should be destroyed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1952 - NO. 7.

Art. 546. **Notice and Service of Discovery Request.**

Art. 547. **Time for Response To Discovery.**

Art. 548. **Duty to Supplement or Amend.**

Art. 549. **Discovery Disputes.**

Art. 550. **Pre-Hearing Discovery Order.**

Art. 551. **Discovery Abuse.**

CHAPTER 8 –TITLE V CHANGE OF VENUE

Art. 552. **Motion For Change of Venue.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: In the case of a subordinate Lodge trial ordered by the Grand Master, and in which change in venue is also ordered, would financial expenses incurred by the Lodge to where the trial was removed be borne by the Lodge in which the charge originated, by the Lodge trying the case, or by the Grand Lodge?

ANSWER: That the Lodge in which charges were first presented is responsible for expenses incurred by the Lodge in which the case was tried. (Chapter 8 - Title V) GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1992 - NO. 4.

Art. 553. **Time For Filing Of Motion.**

Art. 554. **Procedures After Change of Venue.**

CHAPTER 9 – TITLE V CONTINUANCE OF MASONIC DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION HEARING

Art. 555. **Grounds For Continuance.**

Art. 556. **Length Of Continuance.**

Art. 557. **Postponement To Time Certain.**

Art. 558. **Acquittal By Civil Courts Not To Govern Disposition Of Allegations Of Masonic Disciplinary Violations.**

CHAPTER 10 – TITLE V

**PRESENTATION OF ALLEGATIONS OF MASONIC
DISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS AND ANSWERS OF
THE ACCUSED**

Art. 559. Allegations Of Masonic Disciplinary Violations To Be Read.

Art. 560. Answer Of Accused.

Art. 561. Two Sets Of Allegations May Be Heard At The Same Time.

Art. 562. Burden On Accuser.

Art. 563. In Absence Of Answer By Accused, Answer Of Not True To Be Recorded.

Art. 564. Accused May Answer Orally Or In Writing.

Art. 565. Procedure When Accused Answers True.

CHAPTER 11 – TITLE V

WITNESSES

Art. 566. Oral Testimony If Witness Present.

Notes on Decisions

A subordinate Lodge has the right, in its discretion, but is not required, to appropriate and use its funds to pay expenses of witnesses, or any of them, including those who voluntarily appear for accused, incurred in attending a trial. In determining whether it desires to do so, as to respective witnesses, it should be remembered that their depositions could have been taken. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 32.

Art. 567. Masons May Be Summoned As Witnesses.

Art. 568. Those Connected With Trial May Be Summoned.

Art. 569. Witnesses Shall Be Sworn And May Be Put Under The Rule.

Art. 570. Oath Of Witnesses.

Art. 571. Qualification Of Witnesses.

Art. 572. Certain Witnesses To Retire After Testimony.

Art. 573. Accused Cannot Be Compelled To Testify.

CHAPTER 12 – TITLE V**EVIDENCE**

Art. 574. **Limitation On Use Of Evidence.**

Art. 575. **Evidence Of Mediation Or Settlements.**

Art. 576. **Order Of Introduction Of Evidence.**

Notes on Decisions

A subordinate Lodge has the right, in its discretion, but is not required, to appropriate and use its funds to pay expenses of witnesses, or any of them, including those who voluntarily appear for accused, incurred in attending a trial. In determining whether it desires to do so, as to respective witnesses, it should be remembered that their depositions could have been taken. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 32.

Art. 577. **Official Record As Evidence.**

Art. 578. **Certain Court Records Admissible.**

Art. 579. **Written Pre-Trial Discovery Admissible.**

Art. 580. **Voluntary Statement of Accused.**

Art. 581. **Hearsay Inadmissible.**

Art. 582. **Ex Parte Affidavits Inadmissible.**

Art. 583. **Proof Of Day Violation Occurred.**

Art. 584. **Truth Of Alleged Defamation Admissible In De-fense and Mitigation.**

Art. 585. **Accused May Testify.**

Art. 586. **Hearings For Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft Masons.**

Art. 587. **Testimony Given In Previous Hearing Admissible.**

Art. 588. **The Trial Master May Question Witnesses.**

Art. 589. **The Trial Master Shall Rule On Evidentiary Questions.**

Art. 590. **An Accuser Or Accused Without Advocate.**

CHAPTER 13 – TITLE V**ARGUMENT OF ADVOCATES**

Art. 591. **Argument Of Advocates.**

Art. 592. **Order Of Arguments.**

Art. 593. **Limitations Of Arguments.**

Art. 594. **Arguments If No Advocates.**

Art. 595. **No Comments After Arguments.**

CHAPTER 14 – TITLE V
CONSIDERATION AND BALLOTING BY
MASONIC DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

Art. 596. Who May Be Present During Consideration And Balloting.

Notes on Decisions

Under the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, a visiting Brother, who is not a member in good standing of Lodge where the trial is being held, or where the charges arose, and who is in no way involved (as a witness, attorney, accuser, accused, etc.) is prohibited from attending a Masonic trial in Texas. Only those as provided for in Article 625 (now 580) of our Constitution and Laws can be permitted to attend such trials. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1954 - NO. 13.

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Art. 597. Trial Commission May Discuss Evidence and Punishments Before and During Balloting.

Art. 598. Ballot On Allegations Of Masonic Disciplinary Violations.

Art. 599. Ballots Necessary To Sustain Allegations And Enter Punishment.

Art. 600. Preparation Of Ballot Box.

Art. 601. Meaning Of White And Black Balls On The Allegations.

Art. 602. Meaning Of White And Black Balls On The Penalties To Be Assessed.

Art. 603. **Manner Of Voting.**

Art. 604. **Ballot On Penalties.**

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: Question was asked if a Brother is suspended from membership by a Trial Commission, should the Lodge refund the unused portion of the dues which he has paid for the year.

ANSWER: That the Lodge shall refund dues for the remaining portion of the year when the member is suspended, and at the same time, shall take up his current dues card. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 50.

Art. 605. **Certain Ballot Cannot Be Reconsidered.**

Art. 606. **Suspension.**

Art. 607. **Balloting On Definite Suspension.**

Art. 608. **Where Penalty Specified By Law.**

Art. 609. **Result Of A Tie Vote.**

Art. 610. **Results Of Ballot To Be Recorded.**

Art. 611. **Notification Of Action Of Masonic Disciplinary Commission.**

Art. 612. **Report Of Masonic Disciplinary Commission Hearings.**

Art. 613. **Grand Secretary To Notice Lodge Of Action Of Trial Master.**

Art. 614. **Result Of Failure To Sustain An Allegation.**

CHAPTER 15 – TITLE V

RE-HEARINGS

Art. 615. **Trial Master To Decide Motions For Re-Hearing.**

Art. 616. **Time For Filing A Motion For Re-Hearing.**

Art. 617. **Procedure For Consideration of Motion For Re-Hearing.**

Art. 618. **No Motion For Re-Hearing After Notice Of Appeal.**

Art. 619. **When A Re-Hearing Is Granted.**

Art. 620. **Result Of Failure To Sustain Allegations At Second Hearing.**

**CHAPTER 16 – TITLE V
APPEALS TO GRAND MASTER**

- Art. 621. Notice Of Appeal.**
- Art. 622. Secretary Of Commission To Prepare Record Of Testimony**
- Art. 623. Certification Of Record Of Testimony.**
- Art. 624. Time For Filing Transcript.**
- Art. 625. Notice of Filing Transcript.**
- Art. 626. Contents Of Transcript.**
- Art. 627. Cost Of Transcript.**
- Art. 628. Affidavit Of Inability To Pay Cost Of Transcript.**
- Art. 629. Appeal Does Not Suspend Findings Of Masonic Disciplinary Commission.**
- Art. 630. Appeals May Be Abandoned.**
- Art. 631. Duty of Grand Secretary.**
- Art. 632. Duty Of Committee On Grievances And Appeals.**
- Art. 633. Appeals Decided Upon Record.**
- Art. 634. Appeal Dismissed Unless Transcript Shows a Notice.**
- Art. 635. Action By The Grand Master.**
- Art. 636. Status Of Accused After Granting Appeal.**
- Art. 637. Grand Secretary To Notify Lodge Of Action Of Grand Master.**

**CHAPTER 17 – TITLE V EXCLUSIVE
ORIGINAL JURISDICTION AND
POWERS OF GRAND LODGE
FOR MASONIC DISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS**

- Art. 638. Exclusive Original Jurisdiction.**
- Art. 639. Masonic Offenses Committed In Other Grand Jurisdictions.**
- Art. 640. Texas Mason Convicted In Other Grand Jurisdiction.**
- Art. 641. Accusations of Masonic Violations Against A Grand Lodge Officer Or Worshipful Master.**
- Art. 642. Procedure In Hearings For Grand Lodge Officers Or Worshipful Masters.**
- Art. 643. Suspension Pending Resolution Of Masonic Disciplinary Violations.**

Art. 644. **When Worshipful Master Suspended.**

Art. 645. **Grand Lodge Officer Relieved Of Privileges and Duties.**

Art. 646. **Summary Procedure.**

CHAPTER 18 – TITLE V MASONIC VIOLATIONS BY LODGES

Art. 647. **Invasion Of Jurisdiction.**

Art. 648. **Grand Master May Arrest Or Suspend Charter of Lodge.**

Notes on Decisions

No Lodge, or any Body of Masons belonging to any Order predicating its membership on Masonry, can conduct any raffles, lotteries, or similar devices, or games of chance, or give away any prizes based on any consideration. Groups may hold meetings at which they give small prizes, usually called attendance prizes, or door prizes, where there is no consideration paid, directly or indirectly, for the receiving of same, or any chance to receive same. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 28.

QUESTION: Would it be permissible for a Lodge to raffle an item for the purpose of a fund-raising?

ANSWER: To do so would be contrary to Article 643 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1990 - NO. 5.

QUESTION: May Masonic Appendant Organizations conduct raffles and/or Bingo for charitable purposes?

HELD: Article 643 prohibits Lodges from raising money by lotteries or other gambling devices. This law does not apply to Masonic Appendant Organizations, provided those organizations conduct charitable raffles and/or Bingo according to the Laws of The State of Texas. This decision however, does not apply to "Lotteries," nor to Masonic Lodges, because of the wording of Articles 335.4, 643 and 506.5. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2002 - NO. 1.

**CHAPTER 19 – TITLE V DISTRICT
DEPUTY GRAND MASTER – DUTIES
AND POWERS RELATING TO
MASONICDISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS**

**Art. 649. Inquiry Into Masonic Disciplinary Violations.
Notes on Decisions**

QUESTION: It was asked whether it would be permissible for the District Deputy Grand Master to attend the Masonic trial held within his own District.

ANSWER: Article 705 directs, that “District Deputy Grand Masters shall inquire into all Masonic offenses committed in their respective Districts, and when the Lodges have failed to act thereon shall report to the Grand Master,” and as the District Deputy Grand Master is the personal representative of the Grand Master in his District, and responsible to him and him only, it was my decision that it is not only the right and privilege of the District Deputy Grand Master to be present at any and all Masonic Trials held within the confines of his District, but that even though not specifically directed by the Grand Master to be present on each and every occasion, it is, also, his duty to be present, if it is convenient for him to attend. GRAND MASTER’S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 10.

Art. 650. Inquiry Into “Cypher Work.”

Art. 651. Duty On Discovery Of Error Or Evil.

Art. 652. Financial Affairs Of Demised Lodges.

Art. 653. Returns Of Lodges And Annual Dues.

Art. 654. Amounts Due By Delinquent Lodges And Property Of Suspended Or Demised Lodges.

Art. 655. Shall Not Be Proxy. Advocate, Or Trial Master In Masonic Disciplinary.

**CHAPTER 20 – TITLE V
REINSTATEMENT AND RESTORATION**

Art. 656. Definitions.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: What is the status of a member's Endowed Membership who has been (i) convicted of a felony; (ii) expelled for Un-Masonic conduct; (iii) completed his period of probation; (iv)

petitioned the Lodge for reinstatement; and (v) subsequently reinstated?

ANSWER: Under Article 623 (**now 656**) a reinstatement applied to a membership in a Lodge carries with it the rights, privileges and honors attaching to such membership, when such membership has been lost through fault or dereliction. Upon reinstatement the member is entitled to the privileges of the Endowed Membership obtained prior to expulsion. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 2004 - NO. 18.

Art. 657. **Jurisdiction.**

Art. 658. **Reinstatement Or Restoration By Lodge. Petition And Vote.**

Notes on Decisions

A member having been indefinitely suspended for un-Masonic conduct, the unanimous favorable ballot is necessary in order to reinstate (Art. 678 [now 625].) Any member of any Lodge has the right to protest this reinstatement (Art. 681 [now 627]). If there has been any appeal to the Grand Lodge, it is necessary that any reinstatement be referred to the Grand Lodge for its action. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 77.

QUESTION: Would it be in order for a District Deputy Grand Master to submit a petition signed by Brother Masons of another Lodge in which jurisdiction the suspended Brother resides attesting as to his conduct and behavior since being indefinitely suspended? And, would it be in order at any time, particularly at the time of considering his said application, for District Deputy Grand Master or any other Brother to speak in his behalf or against his application?

ANSWER: It would be improper to submit the petition signed by District Deputy Grand Master and other Brother Masons of another Lodge and improper to take the floor and speak in his behalf for or against the application. Article 678 (now 625) provides that it is the duty of the investigating committee to report its findings and recommendations to the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION -1958 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: A Lodge Secretary requested a ruling regarding the case of Brother S. states that he dimitted from the Lodge just before he left for the Orient in 1931, and that all of his papers and other things were stored at that time, and have been in storage since then and he does not know if he could find the Dimit if he

were to go back and look for it. Our records show that he was suspended June 24, 1943, but he states that he could not have been suspended for non-payment of dues in 1943 as he had dimitted in 1931. How shall we proceed in this matter? By reinstatement or affiliation?

ANSWER: It is my ruling that inasmuch as the records of both the Secretary of the Lodge and the Grand Secretary of The Grand Lodge of Texas indicate that Brother S. was suspended for non-payment of dues in 1943, if Brother S. again desires membership in the Lodge, same shall be by application for reinstatement. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 61.

Art. 659. **In Cases Of Appeal To Grand Master.**

Art. 660. **Protest.**

Art. 661. **Where Lodge Having Jurisdiction Is Demised.**

Art. 662. **When Suspended For Definite Time.**

Art. 663. **When Suspended For Definite Time And Appealed To Grand Master.**

Art. 664. **When Suspended For Definite Time: Reversal By Grand Master.**

Art. 665. **Reversal By Grand Master And New Hearing Ordered.**

Art. 666. **Where Right Of Appeal Lost.**

Art. 667. **No Appeal From Refusal To Reinstate Or Restore.**

Art. 668. **No Reinstatement Or Restoration Where Suspension Or Expulsion In Another Jurisdiction.**

CHAPTER 21 – TITLE V

REINSTATEMENT AND RESTORATION

TO GRAND LODGE

Art. 669. **Reinstatement To Grand Lodge Membership.**

Notes on Decisions

A member having been indefinitely suspended for un-Masonic conduct, the unanimous favorable ballot is necessary in order to reinstate (Art. 678 [now 625].) Any member of any Lodge has the right to protest this reinstatement (Art. 681 [now 627]). If there has been any appeal to the Grand Lodge, it is necessary that any reinstatement be referred to the Grand Lodge for its action. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1950 - NO. 77.

QUESTION: Would it be in order for a District Deputy Grand Master to submit a petition signed by Brother Masons of another Lodge in which jurisdiction the suspended Brother resides attesting as to his conduct and behavior since being indefinitely suspended? And, would it be in order at any time, particularly at the time of considering his said application, for District Deputy Grand Master or any other Brother to speak in his behalf or against his application?

ANSWER: It would be improper to submit the petition signed by District Deputy Grand Master and other Brother Masons of another Lodge and improper to take the floor and speak in his behalf for or against the application. Article 678 (now 625) provides that it is the duty of the investigating committee to report its findings and recommendations to the Lodge. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION -1958 - NO. 3.

QUESTION: A Lodge Secretary requested a ruling regarding the case of Brother S. states that he dimitted from the Lodge just before he left for the Orient in 1931, and that all of his papers and other things were stored at that time, and have been in storage since then and he does not know if he could find the Dimit if he were to go back and look for it. Our records show that he was suspended June 24, 1943, but he states that he could not have been suspended for non-payment of dues in 1943 as he had dimitted in 1931. How shall we proceed in this matter? By reinstatement or affiliation?

ANSWER: It is my ruling that inasmuch as the records of both the Secretary of the Lodge and the Grand Secretary of The Grand Lodge of Texas indicate that Brother S. was suspended for non-payment of dues in 1943, if Brother S. again desires membership in the Lodge, same shall be by application for reinstatement. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1958 - NO. 61.

Art. 670. Suspended For A Definite Time.

Notes on Decisions

QUESTION: On October 29, 1959, the Senior Warden of a constituent Lodge was suspended for un-Masonic conduct for a period of six months. Question has been raised as to whether automatic reinstatement of said Senior Warden will reinstate him in office held at the time suspension became effective.

ANSWER: If a member is elected to and installed in a particular office and is then suspended for a definite period expiring before the term for which elected and installed, he would be automatically reinstated upon the expiration of the definite period of suspen-

sion and would be entitled to resume the duties of his office for the then unexpired portion of the term of office for which he was elected and installed. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION - 1960 - NO. 1.

Art. 671. **Expulsion Or Indefinite Suspension.**

Art. 672. **Vote By Grand Lodge.**

Grand Master's Decisions O'NEILL

Approved BY GRAND lodge

December 2, 3, and 4, 2010

Decisions

1. Question: When is a Master Mason suspended for not completing the Additional Lodge Light program (A.L.L.)?

Held: Article 439, paragraph One, states that within 90 days after he is raised, a Brother shall have heard the fourth portion of the Lodge System of Candidate information, shall have received all four booklets which comprise the System, be certified as having completed a Grand Lodge approved course in Masonic information under the supervision of the Committee on Masonic education and Service, and shall have been examined in open Lodge and voted as proficient in the entire trial lecture of the Master's Degree. it shall be the duty of the officers of the Lodge to see that this is done. Any Brother who, after receiving the Master's Degree, willfully neglects or refuses to present himself and be examined as to his proficiency in such degree, within ninety days thereafter, unless further time is granted him by the Lodge shall be subject to automatic suspension as provided hereinafter, absence from the State, natural infirmities or unavoidable accident alone excusing him.

Currently the approved course in Masonic information is the Additional Lodge Light program. it is noted that the question being asked does not include anything about the Lodge System of Candidate information or the trial lecture of the Master's Degree.

Therefore, should a newly raised Master Mason fail to

complete any part of paragraph one of this Article, namely the Lodge System of Candidate information, the Trial Lecture of the Master's Degree or the approved course in Masonic information (A.L.L.) within the prescribed time, he shall stand suspended with all of Article 439, paragraph two, being utilized.

2. Question: is it permissible for Masons to hold a "Masonic" Wedding?

Held: There is no authorized wedding ceremony for Texas Masons, and it would be a Masonic disciplinary violation to Grand Lodge of Texas 559 engage in any ceremony purporting to be Masonic that is not approved by Grand Lodge.

3. Question: is it possible to present Masonic Service Awards at a Stated Meeting of the Lodge?

Held: Yes. While the Masonic Service Awards are Grand Lodge Awards and are governed by Article 14, not every eligible Mason can attend the Grand Annual Communication for their presentation. Article 14 provides for the Lodge to arrange for the presentations. Article 333 sets the order of business for stated meetings, and the Worshipful Master or Lodge is permitted to amend the order of business to fit the needs of the Lodge. Article 234 does not require presentations of awards to be made at a stated meeting nor does it prohibit the Worshipful Master from amending the agenda to fit the needs of the Lodge. By tradition, Grand Lodge Service Awards presented to Brethren that cannot attend the Waco Communication are usually presented at a special called meeting to honor the recipient. This tradition does not prohibit a Lodge from doing otherwise.

4. Question: is it permissible to confer degrees at a Stated Meeting of the Lodge?

Held: Yes. Article 331 provides that the regular business of the Lodge may be transacted at a stated meeting. Article 333 sets the order of business for stated meetings, and the Worshipful Master or Lodge is permitted to amend the order of business to fit the needs of the Lodge. Conferring degrees is one of the items of business for a Lodge. By tradition, Lodges sometimes confer degrees at a stated meeting as part of their business and as a convenience for the Lodge.

5. Question: When applying to restore a charter of a Lodge long demised under Article 32a, how many Master Masons must sign the petition?

Held: Since Article 32a equates the restoration of the charter of a Lodge long demised with constituting a new Lodge under Chapter 3, Title ii, the required number of signatures on the petitions should be identical regardless of the manner of creating a Lodge.

Articles 181 and 182 set the number of Master Masons that are necessary to petition for a charter for a new Lodge under Chapter 3, 560 Proceedings of the

Title ii. The numbers required for a County having a Lodge are: (1) 20 Master Masons in a county with only one or two Lodges in rural districts or a town or city of less than ten thousand inhabitants, or (2) fifty Master Masons in cities of more than 10,000 inhabitants.

To restore a Lodge long demised or to create a new Lodge in a county having a Lodge, the number of Master Masons required to sign the petition will follow the guidelines set by Article 182. if the county did

not have any Lodge, the guidelines under Article 181 would apply and be signed by seven known Master Masons residing in that county.

**6. Question: GRAND MASTER'S EDICT OF AUGUST
12, 2010**

To: ALL Lodges, MASONS, Appendant Bodies Under The
Jurisdiction OF The Grand Lodge OF Ancient Free AND
Accepted MASONS OF The State OF Texas

**Subject: Conferral or exemplification of the First Three (3)
Degrees of Masonic ritual**

Whereas, it has come to the attention of the Grand Master that
Masons in other jurisdictions, claiming authority by and through certain
Appendant Bodies, have undertaken to confer or to exemplify the
First Three (3) Degrees of Masonic ritual with or without the prior
approval and sanction of the respective Grand Lodge in those jurisdictions;
and

Whereas, the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Texas, Article
iii, Section 1 states that the Grand Lodge of Texas has exclusive
jurisdiction over all Lodges and Masons in the State of Texas and has
the exclusive right to maintain the uniformity of working and is the
highest power over the first three Degrees of Craft Masonry, to-wit: the
Degrees of entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason, and

Whereas, The Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Texas, Article
viii, Section 1 further states that "no set of Masons shall ever take
upon themselves to work together, or form a Lodge, without a dispensation
or charter issued according to the laws of the Grand Lodge of
Texas; and no Lodge or body of persons in Texas, under whatever name,
conferring or pretending to confer the first three degrees of symbolic
Masonry, can be recognized as a regular Lodge of Masons, unless it

holds its warrant from and under the Grand Lodge of Texas,” and

Whereas, Article 127 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas

states that “No ritual other than that promulgated by this Grand Lodge

Grand Lodge of Texas 561

shall be taught or used in the Jurisdiction provided however, by special

dispensation of the Grand Master, a degree team from another Grand

Jurisdiction in fraternal relations with this Grand Lodge may confer a

degree on one of their own candidates using ritual as approved in the

degree team’s home jurisdiction, provided said ritual is in english.”

WHereAS, to avoid any confusion, and to preserve and maintain

Masonic peace and harmony within the Masonic Family of Texas, i as

Grand Master hereby issue the following eDiCT of the Grand Master

to become ***EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.***

HeID: The Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons

of the State of Texas (hereinafter “the Grand Lodge”), in accordance

with Constitution and Laws hereinabove referenced hereby reaffirms,

asserts and claims unto itself, the sole and exclusive right and privilege

to control and to confer, authorize to be conferred, exemplify or authorize

to be exemplified within the State of Texas, the First Three (3)

Degrees of Masonic ritual; namely, the Degrees of entered Apprentice,

Fellowcraft, and Master Mason. Unless Special Dispensation is granted

in advance by the Grand Master, only the First Three (3) Degrees of

Masonic ritual approved by the Grand Lodge may be used to confer

or exemplify any One (1) or more of said degrees within the State of

Texas.

it is a Masonic Disciplinary violation to violate the

Constitution, laws, or edicts of the Grand lodge, and any such

violation shall be promptly dealt with.

A Copy of this edict shall be distributed by the Grand Secretary to all Grand Lodge Officers; All Past Grand Masters, and to the Heads and Secretaries of the Appendant Bodies of Masonry in Texas. Additional copies may be distributed to other Grand Jurisdictions at the discretion of the Grand Secretary.

This Edict SHALL Be AND remain Posted in ALL Texas Lodges, in ALL Dedicated Texas Masonic Buildings, Unless AND Until it is repealed BY Action OF The Grand Lodge OF Ancient Free AND Accepted MASONS OF The State OF Texas AT AN ANNUAL Communication; Or BY Action OF A Subsequent GRAND Master.

GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION

Referred to Committee on Purposes and Policies and Committee on Finance

The financial condition of the Grand Lodge of Texas has been subjected to similar decline as have the large majority of Subordinate Lodges, of both public and private businesses, religious and charitable organizations and individuals whether retired, unemployed or members of the workforce. It is a really simple equation: when expenses exceed income, adjustments must of necessity be made to close the gap.

To be sure, the recent turmoil experienced by financial institutions and individuals has created financial instability among the Subordinate Lodges in our Grand Jurisdiction. Lodges which have depended in large measure upon income from Endowed Memberships to subsidize Lodge expenses have seen the unit value of Endowed Memberships dwindle below the value required by our Grand Lodge laws to permit distribution of income derived from those investments. Likewise, the value of Grand Lodge investments

has dwindled in similar proportion.

Grand Lodge Law requires that the present per capita amount of \$14.25 be paid by lodges on members who are not otherwise exempt by various provisions of our Grand Lodge Laws. Of that amount, only \$7.00 is deposited to the credit of Grand Lodge operations. The remaining \$7.25 is divided among our Grand Lodge supported charity activities. It needs to be understood that the entire amount of \$14.25 is not available for the operation of Grand Lodge.

When it comes to dealing with matters that have a financial impact upon Subordinate Lodges there is the natural concern about how the individual lodges can cope with additional financial burdens. However, the simple fact is that each Lodge has the authority to establish the amount of their annual dues. Regrettably, some Lodges decline to increase their annual dues above the present \$30.00 minimum required by Grand Lodge law. It is only by vote of Lodges and members of Grand Lodge that the minimum dues can be established.

The bottom line is quite clear: The present per capita rate is insufficient to sustain the operation of our Grand Lodge in a normal manner.

The annual reports of the Grand Lodge Finance Committee over the past several years have indicated a negative direction. Recommendations have consistently been made by the committee that the matter of raising the per capita be addressed, but for some reason there has been a reluctance to address the issue. Brethren, the time has come for the Masons of Texas

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34 Grand Master's Recommendation

to address the matter of an increase in per capita in order to support the ongoing programs of Texas Masonry.

Therefore, I recommend that Article 163 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge

of Texas be amended to provide that the present per capita amount of \$14.25 be increased to \$25.00 and that the increased amount of \$10.75 be designated to the Grand Lodge General Fund for use in the operations of the Grand Lodge, as follows:

Art. 163. Fees, Dues and Contributions. Each subordinate Lodge shall pay to the Grand Secretary fees, dues, and contributions as follows:

1 – 9. No change.

10. For the Grand Lodge General Fund to be remitted by the Lodge with its Annual Returns, for each member on the rolls of the Lodge, the sum of \$.50 required by Section 2 of Article IX plus \$[6.40] 17.15, the total sum of \$[6.90] 17.65

11 – 14. No change.

In accordance with the provisions of Article 488 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge, the proposed increase would become effective on June 24, 2012 and due with Lodge returns no later than August 15, 2012.

An addendum to the above listed information in the form of a Power Point presentation will be presented during the Grand Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge to be held on December 3-4, 2010. That presentation will provide additional information as a basis for the normal legislative process and discussion by the Brethren before being put to a vote by Lodges and members on written ballot as required by Article 163 of the laws of the Grand Lodge.

This recommendation is unanimously supported by the other five Grand Lodge Trustees: R.:W.: Thomas E. “Gene” Carnes, Deputy Grand Master; R.:W.: James F. “Jim” Brumit, Grand Senior Warden; R.:W.: Walter W. Rogers, Grand Junior Warden; R.:W.: Archie Scott, Grand Treasurer and R.:W.: Tom Guest, Grand Secretary.

Fraternally submitted,

Orville L. O'Neill

Grand Master

Grand Lodge of Texas 59

2011 GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS Carnes

The following Grand Master's Edict was issued on January 6, 2011. The "Edict" was issued against the advice of the Masonic Jurisprudence Committee. I felt it was necessary to term it an Edict because of the seriousness of the violations regarding the establishment of eight Chapters of the Organization known as the "Widows Sons Masonic Motorcycle Riders Association." It was estimated that about 65 Texas Masons were members of the group at the time the Edict was issued. Grand Lodge had refused recognition of said Masonic group in 2007 and by virtue of that action it was already an Edict of the Grand Lodge that the group was not authorized in Texas. The jurisprudence Committee requested that the notification be in the form of a Grand Master's Decision. However, it is my contention that the word "Edict" demands more attention than the word "Decision" and that it was necessary that the notice get immediate attention by those that were not aware that they were in violation of a Grand Lodge Law. My assumption was right because the "Edict" received national attention. Many of the Brethren who were members of the group called to apologize for not knowing they were violating Grand Lodge Law.

Without the Edict there would potentially have been 65 trials.

Below is a copy of the Edict that was issued:

GRAND MASTER'S EDICT

January 6, 2011

To the Masons of Texas:

Grand Master's Edict

I have been advised that some Texas Masons presently belong to an organization operating under the name of "Widows Sons Masonic Motorcycle Riders Association". At the 2007 Grand Annual Communication this organization was denied recognition as an organization to which Texas Masons could belong.

Texas Masons are not permitted to belong to, or be identified with, the organization known as "Widows Sons Masonic Motorcycle Riders Association" unless and until such organization is recognized by the Grand Lodge of Texas, and to do so constitutes a Masonic Disciplinary Violation. This Edict is effective immediately. Acts contrary to this edict will result in Masonic Disciplinary action against the violator. This edict is issued to enforce the 2007 decision of the Grand Lodge of Texas concerning the "Widows Sons Masonic Motorcycle Riders Association".

Sincerely and fraternally,

T. E. "Gene" Carnes

2011 GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS

QUESTION: Is it proper for Lodge Officers to wear a metal collar from which is suspended the jewel appropriate to the station of the officer.

ANSWER: Yes: Article 273 and Article 12 by implication provides for the wearing of a Lodge Officer collar made of silver (not gold) colored metal links, each such link embodying distinctive Masonic emblems. The metal collar may be placed upon a collar of blue velvet. Whether the collar be of metal, velvet or a combination thereof, the jewel appropriate to the station of the officer shall be suspended from the collar.

QUESTION: Can a Texas Masonic Lodge rent to a Texas Prince Hall Lodge?

ANSWER: No, organizations that are authorized to use Texas Masonic Lodges are listed in Article 225 of the Grand Lodge Laws and Prince Hall is not listed and therefore they are not authorized to rent, lease, or otherwise use Texas Masonic Lodge rooms and or anti-rooms.

QUESTION: Can the Grand Master remove an officer of a subordinate Lodge for dereliction of the duties of his office or un-Masonic conduct?

ANSWER: Yes, the Grand Master may remove an officer of a subordinate Lodge on information of un-Masonic conduct.

The Constitution Article V, Section 2, provides that the Grand Master has the power to depose officers of subordinate Lodges on information of un-Masonic conduct. The Article further states that these actions are subject to the laws of the Grand Lodge. Several Articles in the Statues give reference to the Grand Master removing a Worshipful Master (Article 277 and 429 specifically) and the consequences of that action. Article 643 gives the Grand Master the ability to suspend Officers who are under charges, but does not limit the Grand Master from removing an officer on information of un-Masonic conduct. The laws do not specifically prohibit the Grand Master from removing officers on information of un-Masonic conduct and therefore he may. In some instances the peace and harmony and even the protection of Lodge assets may be at risk if the Grand Master is not allowed to remove certain Officers on evidence of un-Masonic conduct. Removal from Office does not preclude any Masonic trial from taking place if charges are filed.

QUESTION: Can a motion be made and entertained to accept the proficiency of a Candidate before the completion of the exam?

ANSWER: It would be improper for the Worshipful Master to entertain a motion and call for a vote on the proficiency of a Candidate before the exam is complete. The exam is conducted to ensure the Candidate has learned the work as adopted by the Grand Lodge. Lodges can not change or shorten the lesson requirements. The Lodge is the sole judge of how proficient the Candidate is, but he must learn the lessons of the three degrees as provided in Article 433. The last paragraph of Article 433 regarding the Candidate only answering the questions asked is not to be construed to mean if questions are left out the Candidate doesn't have to learn them. It simple means the Candidate is not required to learn the Questions.

QUESTION: Under what circumstances is it permissible to photograph activities in a tiled meeting of a Masonic Lodge?

ANSWER: It is not permissible to record any portion of a tiled meeting, be it Stated or Called, of a subordinate Lodge in Texas, either on film, video camera, still camera, audio recorder, cell phone, or by any

other mechanical or electronic means of recording.

Note: This decision updates GM Decision Number 4 in 1991, by adding cell phone and electronic technology recordings.

QUESTION: When is a Grand Master's Dispensation required for Lodge installations?

ANSWER: A single Lodge public or private installation or a joint private or public installation does not require a Grand Master's Dispensation, so long as the installation is held within the territorial jurisdiction of their Lodge or Lodges as the case may be (Article 299, 300, 301).

A single Lodge public or private installation being held outside the territorial jurisdiction of that Lodge requires a Grand Master's Dispensation. A joint public or private installation involving Lodges of separate territorial jurisdictions requires a Grand Master's Dispensation. Joint public installations must be held in accordance with Article 303.

QUESTION: What is the proper procedure for a Candidate (EA or FC) in one Lodge, to apply for the degrees or for advancement to another Texas Lodge, including the required voting procedure (ballot or show of hands)?

ANSWER: (1) An EA or FC may not affiliate with another Lodge.

Article 384 uses the term "Mason" and Article 392 indicates that our Affiliation by Certificate of Good Standing method extends to ... "any Master Mason". Accordingly, our affiliation provisions do not apply to an EA or FC. Only members of a Lodge may vote (Art 388) on a petition for affiliation and the vote may be held by ballot or show of hands (Article 386).

(2) There are two ways by which an EA or FC may change Lodges.

(a) By Waiver of Jurisdiction under Article 456 - 462. If the EA or FC is relocating away from the Lodge to which he had been initiated or passed (Lodge A), the gaining Lodge Secretary (Lodge B) would initiate an application for a waiver of jurisdiction (Form No. 42) and his membership would be transferred to the new Lodge B to whom the EA or FC would make an application for advancement (Form 31). The Lodge A Secretary of the EA's or FC's original Lodge would process a Form 43 and the EA/FC would become a member of the requesting Lodge B. This procedure would ensure that the EA/FC is placed in a specific Lodge. The Mother Lodge (Lodge A) must waive personal jurisdiction before the Petitioned Lodge (Lodge B) can act. If Lodge B does not accept the petition (after receiving the waiver from Lodge A) and processing a petition for advancement, Lodge A retains personal jurisdiction. If Lodge B accepts the petition, the Candidate is dropped from the rolls of Lodge A. A vote upon a petition for advancement is taken at a stated meeting and under the same procedures as an original petition for the degrees (Art 415, 416-420, 452, 456 - 462).

(b) By Certificate of Dismissal (Article 446) from his original Lodge (Lodge A). [Delete "if the EA or FC has not allowed one year to pass without turning in his proficiency".] If granted by Lodge A, the EA or FC becomes unaffiliated and may Petition any Lodge. The vote upon a Certificate of Dismissal, Form No. 30, (Art 446) must be unanimous, taken at a stated meeting and by ballot or show of hands.

QUESTION: Are the grips and words of each of the three degrees part of the questions and answers that Candidates must learn to pass proficiency in each degree?

ANSWER: Yes. They are part of the examination and are required to

be learned by the Candidate. It is important that the Candidate know the grips and words to gain admission to a Lodge when attempting to visit. In most Grand Jurisdictions it is required that the Brother being

examine give the grips and words.

QUESTION: May a Masonic Lodge, in case of a local disaster such as wildfires, hurricanes, tornadoes, etc., allow a fire department or other emergency units to use the Lodge building to assist in the protection of the public or house first responders and other emergency personnel during such time?

ANSWER: It would be proper for the Lodge to accommodate emergency personnel under such circumstances. However, the protection of Lodge property such as its Charter and Minutes must be kept safe at all times. A member of the Lodge shall be present in the Lodge at all times when those who are not Masons may have access to Lodge property

GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION NO.2

Referred to Committee on Purposes and Policies

The Qualification requirements for a Worshipful Master and the Senior and Junior Wardens, Articles 291, 297a, 276 and 276a, have been discussed in this Grand Lodge since proficiency and administrative requirements were added in 1989. We, as a Grand Lodge have tried to decide how the requirements are to be implemented several different times since 1999. The last two attempts were in 2008 and again in 2009.

There is no doubt that the three principle officers of a Lodge should be qualified to be able to open and close the various Lodges using the Ritual approved by the Grand Lodge and taught by the Committee on Work. Secondly, they should have basic administrative skills to run the business of the Lodge. Since our Laws are clear that the Senior Warden will take the Master's place in his absence and the Junior Warden does the same in the event both the Master and the Senior Warden are absent, it stands to reason that not only the Master but both Wardens need to be qualified to occupy the East. Article 291, which stipulates the qualifications of officers, addresses that and states that Articles 276 and 276a apply to the Worshipful and both Wardens. Again, Article 297a also states that before his installation as Master or Warden, compliance with Article 276a is required.

Laws are instituted in society because people do not conduct themselves according to established customs and traditions. Masonry is no different and that is why we have the above mentioned articles in our law. However, we have Lodges that can not open and close properly or confer degrees. Many Lodges do not have a qualified instructor and they do not want the District Instructor to come help them learn the work. There must be a standard and it must be enforced either by a competent Lodge or by a qualified instructor. The administrative portion of the qualifications is the responsibility of the Lodge Instruction for Effectiveness (L.I.F.E.) Councilor appointed by the Worshipful Master to administer and record each officer's completion

date. According to the last change in Article 276a it is the responsibility of the Lodge to be satisfied that the requirements of both the Ritual and the Administrative training are fulfilled. The Grand Secretary has provided a Form 101 for that purpose and the Secretary of the Lodge is to update the Grand Secretary's database reflecting the completion of the LIFE program or a Wardens Retreat.

There has been much confusion in the interpretation of these Articles and others, even by our Masonic Jurisprudence Committee. Some believe that the word "should" means it is optional. If a Masonic Law is optional, why is it a Law? My Brethren, in Masonic Law the words are synonymous.

To try to clear up the ambiguity of Articles 297a, 276 and 276a, I offer for your consideration the following Recommendation:

Art. 276. Qualifications. Any member of a Lodge in good standing, and against whom no charges are pending, and who has previously served as Worshipful Master of a regular Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction, or as Worshipful Master or Warden of a Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction, and who [pteferabey hM been certified as to qualifications in accordance with] *is qualified according to* the provisions of Article 276a of these laws, is eligible to be elected Worshipful Master. Such previous service may be either: (1) under election; (2) under appointment by the Grand Master in a Lodge Under Dispensation; or (3) under designation by the Grand Lodge in a newly chartered Lodge. The above provisions regarding service do not apply when a Worshipful Master is appointed by the Grand Master or designated by the Grand Lodge under the above circumstances, but previous requirements as enumerated in the following Article 276a [should] apply to all such circumstances.

Art. 276a. Additional Qualifications. Prior to his installation as Worshipful Master *or Warden*, a Brother shall in all circumstances first be qualified as follows:

1. To the satisfaction of the members of his Lodge he shall be proficient to properly open and close an Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, Master Mason's Lodge, and a Master Mason's Lodge of Sorrow in the manner prescribed by the Committee on Work and approved by this Grand Lodge, and

2. To the satisfaction of the members of his Lodge, he shall have completed a Grand Lodge approved course in the administration of his duties or the Lodge Instruction for Effectiveness program (L.I.F.E.) under the supervision of the Masonic Education and Service Committee. The L.I.F.E. Program is to be administered by a Lodge Counselor appointed by the

Worshipful Master, whose term expires upon the appointment of his successor in office.

Art. 297a. Requirements for Installation as Worshipful Master or Warden. Prior to his installation as Worshipful Master or Warden, -a- Brother should be in compliance with the provisions of Article 276a of the Laws of this Grand Lodge *is required*.

Brethren, I ask that you give serious consideration to the approval of these changes to Articles 276, 276a and 297a in order to clear up the con-

fusion in and about the Temple.

T. E. "Gene" Carnes

2013 Rogers

Grand Master's Decision 1

Brethren, Grand Master's Decision No. 1 was omitted from the Grand

Master's Supplemental Report. Therefore, we must reference the Decision in this report.

Question: Does meeting and sitting with a Brother in a tiled session of the Grand Lodge of Texas satisfy the requirements of Article 381 for purposes of avouchment?

Answer: Yes.

Grand Master's recommendations:

recommendation No. 1 – **adopted as amended**. To standardize the observances of Table Lodges by Texas Lodges, this recommendation placed a moratorium on the observances of Table Lodges until a uniform Table Lodge procedure is approved by the Grand Lodge. an appointed Committee will prepare a recommendation for consideration at the 2014 Grand annual Communication.

recommendation No. 2 – **adopted**. To ensure uniformity in the conferral of the three degrees of Masonry in Texas Lodges, this recommendation amends article 127 to include the phrase “nor shall paraphernalia except as listed in article 223 be used, nor shall preparation of Candidates include other than that provided in the Monitor of the Lodge or otherwise required by any provisions of the laws of this Grand Lodge.”

2014 Martin

2014 GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS

QUESTION: A question has arisen about the interpretation of Article 393. Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas. Specifically I have been asked to provide guidance on the meaning and affect of the phrase *contained in Article 393 “if a candidate has been finally convicted of a felony offense”*. The question presented: ***Is a deferred adjudication of a felony offense a final conviction for the purposes of disqualification of a candidate***

for the degrees under the provisions of Article 393?

Article 393 reads as follows:

Art. 393. Qualifications. *A candidate for the degrees of Masonry must be free-born, sound in mind, of good moral character, a full eighteen years of age on or before the day his petition is received by the Lodge, and without maim or defect which will render him incapable of earning his own*
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living or receiving and imparting, Masonically, all that is required by the ritual of the several degrees: provided that as to physical maims and defects Articles 27 and 401 of these Laws shall be applicable, provided further that if a candidate has been finally convicted of a felony offense, he shall be deemed disqualified to receive the degrees. After the foregoing requirements have been strictly met, the question of the candidate's mental, moral, and such physical qualifications as do not come within the restrictions of Art. 401 is one to be decided within the sound discretion of the members of the Lodge petitioned. (Revised 2011) (Emphasis added)

Under the provisions of Article 42.12, Section 5a, "Deferred Adjudication", Texas Rules of Criminal Procedure, a judge may, after accepting a guilty plea for a felony offense, when the judge determines it is the best interest of the defendant, defer adjudication and place a Defendant on community supervision. No judgment is entered and there is no final conviction.

Under the provisions of Article 42.12, Section 5c, Texas Rules of Criminal Procedure, upon expiration of the community supervision period imposed by the judge, if the judge has not proceeded to an adjudication of guilt for violations of the conditions of community supervision, the judge shall dismiss the proceedings against the defendant and discharge him from all further criminal liability for the offense charged.

Pursuant to the provisions of this statute, the Texas Legislature has

determined that a deferred adjudication is not a final conviction.

ANSWER: Therefore, based on the precedent of law in Texas, I have determined that a candidate who has received “deferred adjudication”, has completed his community supervision, and the criminal proceedings against him have been dismissed by the Court under the provisions of Section 5, Article 42.12, Texas Code of Criminal Procedure; does not have a *final conviction* under the provisions of Article 393 that would deem him disqualified to receive the degrees.

GRAND MASTER’S DECISION – 2014 – NO. 1

QUESTION: Does Article 224a apply to smoking (vaping) E-cigarettes?

ANSWER: The US Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) analysis of electronic cigarettes showed that the product contained detectable levels of known carcinogens and toxic chemicals to which users could potentially be exposed. FDA’s testing also suggested that quality control processes used to manufacture these products are inconsistent or non-existent. FDA regulates cigarettes, cigarette tobacco, roll-your-own tobacco and smokeless tobacco, and its proposed newly “deemed” products would include electronic cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, certain dissolvables that are not “smokeless tobacco,” gels, and waterpipe tobacco.

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Based on the information from the Food and Drug Administration it is my belief that E-cigarettes, E-cigars, and E-pipes are prohibited by Article 224a as they contain elements that are harmful to the individual using them and to others who might inhale the second hand vapors.

GRAND MASTER’S DECISION – 2014 – NO. 2

QUESTION: What is the correct interpretation as to when, and which Worshipful Master is to appoint the audit committee?

ANSWER: Article 284 (323d) states that “it shall be the duty of the

Worshipful Master as soon after the 24th of June each year as convenient to appoint a committee of three qualified members,”. Although many new Worshipful Masters are not installed for several days to several weeks after the 24th of June, the Form 71 Minimum Audit Instructions state that “the new incoming Master shall appoint an Audit Committee at his first meeting”.

It is my decision that the Master of the Lodge installed after June 24th (or heldover, if not installed) during each Masonic year, shall appoint the audit committee at the first stated meeting at which he presides.

GRAND MASTER’S DECISION – 2014 – NO. 3

GRAND MASTER’S RECOMMENDATION NO. 1

When we squarely face the challenges of maintaining and growing a strong fraternity of Texas Masons, we see one overriding need: the ability to begin and maintain effective Masonic programs through continuity at the Grand Lodge. We all have seen the efforts to increase membership, strengthen local Lodges and perform community service which at the beginning, look to be promising, but then wither because of lack of continuing commitment and support.

I sincerely believe there is a way to meet this overriding need, which is through strategic planning by the Grand Lodge and its Trustees, as carried on with care, focus and the force of Grand Lodge Law. In short, once a strategic plan is made and approved by the Grand Lodge in Grand Annual Communication, it should be carried out by the Grand Lodge officers and Committees and all subordinate Lodges and all Texas Masons, unless and until changed by the “Grand West” at a later Grand Annual Communication.

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As a result, I recommend that the following resolution for the establishment of a Strategic Plan Committee be adopted, which would add

new Article 126 I of the Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas A.F. & A.M., as follows:

GRAND MASTER’S RECOMMENDATION NO. 1

Establishment of Strategic Plan Committee

WHEREAS, Texas Masons need to maintain the strength and unity of our fraternity for future generations; and

WHEREAS, due to the variety and complexity of various Masonic activities of the Grand Lodge of Texas A.F. & A.M., it has become increasingly important to focus the limited resources of the Grand Lodge; and

WHEREAS, a long- term planning process embodied in the Grand Lodge Law is considered a positive way to strengthen and unify Texas Masonry;

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED, that a new Article 126I. of the Laws of the Grand Lodge be added as follows, effective January 1, 2015:

Art. 126 I. Strategic Plan Committee. The Strategic Plan Committee (the “Committee”) shall be a permanent Committee composed of five (5) members, all of whom shall be Texas Masters Masons in good standing, and each member of the Committee shall be a past Chairman of one the following Grand Lodge Permanent Committees: Committee on Civil Law, Committee on Finance, Committee on Fraternal Relations, Committee on Investments, Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence, Committee on Masonic Education and Service, Committee on Membership, and Committee on Purposes and Policies.

Two (2) of the Committee members shall be elected by the Grand Lodge at its Grand Annual Communication. The other three (3) Committee members shall be appointed by the majority vote of the Trustees of the Grand Lodge and announced to the Grand Lodge at its Grand Annual Communication. However, the initial five (5) members of the Committee shall draw straws for the initial term of one (1) year, two (2) years, three (3) years, four (4)

years, and Five (5) years.

The successors of those members of the Committee initially appointed by the Trustees shall be at all times appointed by the Trustees, and the successors of those initially elected by the Grand Lodge shall at all times elected by the Grand Lodge, and each successor member (elected or appointed) shall serve a five (5) year term. Each member of the Committee shall attend Grand Lodge of Texas 93

no less than 75% of the meetings (in person, conference calls, electronic or otherwise) of the Committee. If a member fails to attend at least 75% of the meetings that occur during any 12- month period, then his membership on the Committee shall immediately end and his position becomes vacant. The Chairman of the Committee shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the Committee annually at the first meeting of the Committee to occur after each Grand Annual Communication.

In the event of a vacancy, the unexpired term of a Committee member appointed by the Trustees or elected by the Grand Lodge at its Grand Annual Communication shall be filled as follows:

The member shall be appointed by a majority of the Grand Lodge Trustees for the part of the unexpired term beginning with the date the vacancy occurred and ending when the Grand Lodge next elects a successor member of the Committee at a Grand Annual Communication. Then, at that Grand Annual Communication, (A) if the member of the Committee who is no longer serving and therefore resulted in the vacancy, was initially appointed by a majority vote of the Grand Lodge Trustees, the Grand Lodge Trustees shall elect by majority vote, a successor (who maybe the member serving as an interim member of the Committee) and announce his election at that Grand Annual Communication for (as applicable) the remaining unexpired term of the vacancy (if any), or for a full term, or (B) if the member of the

Committee who is no longer serving and therefore resulted in the vacancy, was initially elected by the Grand Lodge in Grand Annual Communication, his successor shall be elected for (as applicable) the remaining unexpired term of the vacancy (if any) or for a full term.

The purpose of the Committee is to develop a 3 to 5 year strategic plan ("Strategic Plan") for the Grand Lodge of Texas for consideration and approval by the Grand Lodge at its next Grand Annual Communication and then to revise and maintain the Strategic Plan, with any amendments and modifications to the Strategic Plan only being effective upon a vote of the Grand Lodge at a Grand Annual Communication. After the initial Strategic Plan is approved, the Committee shall review the Strategic Plan at least annually (or more often as the Committee determines), and shall submit any recommended amendments or modifications for approval by the Grand Lodge at the Grand Annual Communication.

Each and every Texas Mason in good standing shall fully cooperate with the Committee in the initial drafting of a Strategic Plan and thereafter in the drafting of any amendments or modifications thereto.

The Strategic Plan (and as amended thereafter) upon approval by the Grand Lodge at its Grand Annual Communication, shall be binding on the Grand lodge of Texas Trustees, Committees, representatives, agents and employees, and on each and every Texas Mason."

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GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION NO. 2 Repeal By Resolution # 3 2015
Concerning Criminal Background Reports on
Petitioner's for the Degrees

WHEREAS, petitioners who have been finally convicted of a felony offense are disqualified to receive the degrees by Art. 393 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas;

WHEREAS, at the 2012 Grand Annual Communication a resolution was proposed to amend the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas to provide that the criminal history of petitioners for the degrees be obtained by the lodge petitioned as an element of the investigation of the petitioner required by Arts.407 -412;

WHEREAS, such resolution was laid upon the table (tabled) pending further study by the Civil Law Committee;

WHEREAS, the Civil Law Committee has made diligent inquiry into the laws of the United States and of this state concerning criminal background reports, the purposes for which they may lawfully be obtained, the manner in which the information they contain may lawfully be disseminated, used, and disposed of, and the legal rights of those who are the subject of criminal background reports;

WHEREAS, the laws of the United States and the regulations adopted under such laws by the Federal Trade Commission, the agency to which Congress delegated the power to enforce them, impose rights, duties and liabilities upon those who provide criminal background reports and upon all those obtain such reports;

WHEREAS, those laws and regulations provide for the recovery of actual damages, punitive damages, attorney's fees, court costs and for administrative penalties for violations of those laws and regulations and authorize the federal courts to hear all cases brought by those who are damaged by claimed violations;

WHEREAS,, the successful defense of even a single federal case brought under the laws and regulations applicable to criminal background checks would require the Grand Lodge of Texas to spend an unacceptable amount of its financial resources and, if such a defense were unsuccessful, could place in jeopardy the financial solvency of the Grand Lodge of Texas and of

any constituent lodge which is a party;

WHEREAS, the centralization of the criminal background reporting process in the office of the Grand Secretary, and the prohibition of criminal background reports being obtained by the constituent lodges of this Grand Grand Lodge of Texas 95

Lodge, or by any member of such lodges, is essential for compliance with the applicable laws and regulations and to the uniformity of the process by which accuracy and fairness to the petitioner is most likely to be assured;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, I recommend the following additions and amendments to the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas:

Art. 403a.Criminal Background Report. *No criminal background report covering a petitioner for the degrees, a Mason from a jurisdiction in fraternal relations with this Grand Lodge seeking affiliation with a Lodge, or any member of a Lodge in this jurisdiction, shall be obtained by a Lodge or any member of a Lodge except as provided in this article.*

At the time a petitioner for the degrees files a petition with the Secretary of the Lodge, the Secretary shall provide the petitioner with written notice that he must obtain a criminal background report covering the petitioner's criminal history if any. The notice shall contain instructions for obtaining the criminal background report and shall inform the petitioner that an electronic or written version of the report shall be provided to the Grand Secretary for determining the petitioner's eligibility to receive the degrees.

All criminal background reports permitted under this article shall be obtained solely from a vendor authorized by the Grand Lodge Trustees.

As soon as is practicable after his petition is filed with the Secretary of the Lodge, the petitioner for the degrees shall make application to the vendor approved by the Grand Lodge Trustees for a criminal background report and shall pay the vendor the applicable fees and charges required for such report.

No cost for a criminal background report shall be a charge on the Lodge or the Grand Lodge of Texas.

The vendor shall provide an original or duplicate original of the criminal background report covering the petitioner's criminal background to the Grand Secretary. The Grand Secretary shall promptly examine the criminal background report and shall notify the Secretary of the Lodge only whether he is satisfied from the report that the petitioner is not disqualified to receive the degrees.

Neither the criminal background report nor any portion of such report shall be provided or made available to the Lodge or the Secretary of the Lodge. The Grand Secretary shall receive, handle, retain and destroy all criminal background reports obtained pursuant to this article in accordance with applicable law.

Art. 412. Committee: Duties and Report. The investigation by

the committee shall include: the moral character and reputation of the
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petitioner, facts relating to jurisdiction, physical qualifications, and all other matters the Lodge is called upon to pass in balloting on petitioner.

The committee may inquire of the petitioner concerning his criminal history but may not obtain a criminal background report on the petitioner's criminal history, if any, nor require the petitioner to obtain such a report for the use of the committee in connection with its investigation of the petitioner. A face-to-face interview between each Investigation Committee member and the petitioner is required on all petitions for the Mysteries and Advancement, except on approval by the Worshipful Master.

Before a ballot can be taken a signed report of each of the three members of the committee shall be attached to the petition and read to the Lodge; each of which reports shall cover all matters referenced in this Article and

in Form No. 28. If the Master of the Lodge is a member of the committee before his installation he may continue to serve thereon.

Art. 413. Ballot. When the report of the investigating committee has been made, *and the Grand Secretary has informed the Secretary that he is satisfied that the candidate is not disqualified from receiving the degrees pursuant to Article 403a*, and one lunar month has elapsed since the presentation of said petition, the ballot shall be taken. If found clear, the petitioner may be initiated as soon as. As to all petitions requiring ballot by the Lodge, the petitioner shall be notified in writing within fifteen days of such ballot, signed by the Worshipful Master and attested to by the Secretary of the Lodge, as to either his election or his rejection by the Lodge.

Art. 386. Committee of Inquiry. A petition for affiliation or advancement may be referred to a committee or voted upon at a stated meeting where the petition is read. The petition will be referred to committee if any member of the Lodge makes a verbal request for such action. If no request is made and all requirements are met, a vote will be held at the time of original reading. This vote may be held by voting box or show of hands at the discretion of the Lodge. If referred to committee, the committee shall consist of three members who will make inquiry and report thereon, which report shall be made at a subsequent stated meeting; but no ballot shall be taken thereon in less than one month from date of presentation of petition to committee.

The committee may inquire of the petitioner concerning his criminal history but may not obtain a criminal background report on the petitioner's criminal history, if any, nor require the petitioner to obtain such a report for the use of the committee in connection with its investigation of the petitioner.

Art. 505. Certain Other Masonic Disciplinary Violations. It shall be a Masonic disciplinary violation for a Lodge, a committee or any combination of Masons, or an individual Mason to:

Paragraphs 1-37 unchanged

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38. Obtain, possess use or disseminate or to encourage or employ a non-Mason to obtain, possess, use or disseminate a criminal background report on any petitioner for the degrees, petitioner for affiliation or member of a Lodge in this jurisdiction, or to require such petitioner or member to obtain such a report, except as provided in Art.403a. This section shall not apply to military, law enforcement or other governmental employees or to nongovernmental employees in the lawful performance of the duties of their employment.

Further, I recommend if the foregoing is approved at the 2014 Annual Communication that it not be effective until July 1, 2015 to allow timely implementation.

GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION NO. 3

Concerning Uniform Table Lodge Procedure

WHEREAS, Grand Master's Recommendation No. 1 (approved at the 2013 Annual Communication) directed the 2014 Grand Master to appoint a Committee to prepare a Uniform Table Lodge Procedure;

WHEREAS, the Committee was appointed and has prepared a Uniform Table Lodge Procedure;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, I recommend the following additions to the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas:

*Art. TBD **Uniform Table Lodge Procedure.** A Master Mason's Lodge shall be opened in proper form in a Lodge chartered by the Grand Lodge of Texas. Upon such Master Mason's Lodge being called to refreshment, a Table Lodge can be held using the Table Lodge Procedure that shall be published in the appropriate place in the Monitor of the Lodge. Grand Lodge Law shall govern all the actions of those participating in a Table Lodge. The Table*

Lodge shall only be held in the Lodge building' unless special dispensation is granted from the Grand Master to allow it to meet elsewhere. Once the Table Lodge is completed, such Master Mason's Lodge shall be called from refreshment to labor and closed in proper form.

GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION NO. 4

WHEREAS, there are so many Lodge real estate transactions occurring in this Grand Lodge, I recommend that the following revisions to the applicable Grand Lodge laws be adopted to improve the laws that apply to Lodge real estate transactions:

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THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

Art. 250. (288). **Approval by Grand Master.** If the proposition to consolidate is agreed to by the Lodge petitioned, the Secretary thereof shall forthwith forward to the Grand Master certified copies of the proceedings *minutes* of each of such Lodges relative to the proposed consolidation. If the Grand Master shall approve of such proposed consolidation, the Lodges desiring the same shall from and after such approval be deemed and held to be one Lodge existing under the charter and governed by the bylaws of the Lodge petitioned; the members of the petitioning Lodge shall thereupon become members of the Lodge petitioned; the books and records of the former shall be delivered to the latter Lodge for safe keeping and preservation thereof. The charter and seal of the petitioning Lodge shall be forthwith transmitted to the Grand Secretary. All unfinished work or business pending in the petitioning Lodge shall be taken up and completed in the petitioned Lodge, and all the property, money and effects of the petitioning Lodge shall pass to and become the property of the petitioned Lodge; provided, however, that the officers and bylaws of the Lodge petitioned shall not be affected by such consolidation.

*Art. 250a. **Transfer of Property.** If the proposition to consolidate is approved by the Grand Master, all property (including both personal property and real property or any interest therein) shall thereupon become the property of the Lodge petitioned. In the event that it shall be necessary that real property or any interest therein be transferred, conveyed or assigned from the petitioning Lodge to the Lodge petitioned, such transfer, conveyance or assignment of real or personal property or any interest therein shall be written and in form and sufficient detail and description appropriate for a purchase, gift, bequest, or devise as considered by Art. 340.*

Art. 340. Permission to Acquire, Sell or Mortgage Lodge Personal Property or Real Estate.

A. (1) No Lodge shall acquire *any real property or any interest therein* by purchase, gift, bequest, devise or otherwise any real property or interest therein without first obtaining the written consent of this Grand Lodge, or if during its vacation, the consent of the Grand Master; provided, that in granting such consent same shall be done by the Grand Master *by* endorsing his *written* consent on the deed or other instrument capable of being recorded in the Deed *public* records. Neither the Grand Lodge nor the Grand Master shall incur or assume any liability by reason of such consent. The provisions of this Article shall apply to all Lodges on equal terms, whether acting directly or indirectly. (Revised, 1991)

(2) When *written* application is made to the Grand Master by any Lodge. for consent to acquire, *receive or accept title to real property or any interest*

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therein as set out above, it shall be the duty of the Lodge to furnish a full detailed description of the property *subject real property or any interest therein* as may be required by the Grand Master who, upon receipt of such application, may *shall* refer the question to the Committee on Civil Law

or any other Committee of the Grand Lodge for examination report and recommendation thereon either to him or Grand Lodge as he may direct.

(Revised, 1991) *The Committee on Civil Law may make such inquiries for information, or request for documents or documentation, as may assist such Committee in its examination, report and recommendation. In all such applications to acquire, receive or accept title to any real property or any interest therein by purchase, gift, bequest, devise or otherwise, a letter of support or other recommendation from the District Deputy Grand Master appointed for the benefit of the Lodge filing such application shall be included with such application.*

(3) Any Lodge which shall acquire *real property or any interest therein* without first obtaining consent as required herein shall be guilty of a Masonic disciplinary violation and subject to the arrest and forfeiture of its Charter or such other penalty as Grand Lodge shall inflict. (Revised, 1991)

B. (1) No Lodge shall sell any of its real property *or any interest therein*, or create any indebtedness and secure *such indebtedness* by lien or mortgage on any of its property; *(whether real or personal property or any interest therein* or create any indebtedness of any kind or character, secured or unsecured, except for the current operating expenses of the Lodge, without first obtaining the *written* consent of this Grand Lodge, or if during its vacation, the consent of the Grand Master; provided that in granting such consent on the mortgage, lien or other written instrument in such manner that neither the Grand Lodge nor the Grand Master shall incur or assume any liability by reason of such consent. The provisions of this Article shall apply to all Lodges on equal terms, whether acting directly or indirectly.

(Revised, 1991)

(2) Permission may be granted a Lodge under dispensation to purchase property for Lodge purposes for cash; but *shall* not to borrow any money or

create or assume any debt, (*secured or unsecured*)whether by lien, mortgage or otherwise, in connection with such purchase.

(3) Title to real estate *or personal property* should be taken and held in the name of the Lodge. See Article 28 of these Laws. (Revised 1991)

C. The Committee on Civil Law may, from time to time, prepare and forward to the regular lodges and other under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Texas such guidance, suggested forms, and other documentation and information as may be useful in the preparation of an application to acquire or dispose of real or personal property or any interest therein by purchase, gift, bequest, devise or otherwise, as considered by this Article.

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Art. 652. Financial Affairs Of Demised Lodges. Each District Deputy Grand Master *Upon the event of a Lodge being “Demised” as defined in Art.257.B the District Deputy Grand Master (or such other or person who may be so appointed by the Grand Master),* shall collect all the unpaid dues of members of demised Lodges, and all delinquent members may be accused of a Masonic disciplinary violation in the manner prescribed by the Grand Lodge for the infliction of appropriate punishment for nonpayment of dues. When the assets of such Lodges shall have been collected, he shall pay the debts of such Lodges and remit to the Grand Secretary all *surplus* moneys and other property remaining in his hand, with a full statement of all moneys received and paid out by him and upon what account.

Art. 652a. Transfer of Real Property of Demised Lodge. *In the event that it shall be necessary that real property or any interest therein be conveyed or assigned from a demised Lodge, such conveyance or assignment of real property or any interest therein shall be conveyed, or assigned or transferred in writing to the Grand Lodge in a form and sufficient detail and description appropriate for a purchase, gift, bequest, or devise as considered by Art. 340.*

*Art. 652b. **Transfer of Personal Property of Demised Lodge.** In the event that it shall be necessary that personal property or any interest therein be conveyed or assigned by a demised Lodge, such conveyance or assignment of personal property or any interest therein shall be conveyed, assigned or transferred in writing to the Grand Lodge in a form and sufficient detail and description appropriate as considered by Art. 255.*

2015 Wiggins

GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS

APPROVED BY GRAND LODGE

December 3, 4, and 5, 2015

1. QUESTION: Can more than one Volume of Sacred Law be placed on the Altar of Texas Lodges during stated, called, or open meetings? (January 2015)

ANSWER: No. Art. 223 lists the Holy Bible as necessary furniture for the Lodge room. By Statute and Practice, the Volume of Sacred Law required on the Altar in Texas has been the Holy Bible. Therefore, the only Volume of Sacred Law allowed on the Altar is the Holy Bible during stated, called, or open meetings. The only exception is during the conferral of degrees where the candidate is allowed to place the book of his faith on which he takes his obligation in front of the Holy Bible on the Altar (Art. 397). This decision is consistent with Grand Master's Decision 2006 No. 2.

2. QUESTION: Can Grand Master's Recommendation No. 2 regarding background checks for petitioners that was adopted at the 2014 Grand Annual Communication be implemented? (February 2015)

ANSWER: No. After careful consideration of background checks as proposed and the adoption of Resolution No. 12, which removed language that disqualified a petitioner with a felony conviction, it is my determination that it is impractical to implement Grand Master's Recommendation No. 2. I have carefully reviewed the Recommendation and sought guidance from the Committees on Civil Law and Masonic Jurisprudence. After reflection, it is my decision that Grand Master's Recommendation No. 2 not be implemented and the Grand Secretary has been ordered not to include this recommendation in the 2014 changes to the Statutes of this Grand Lodge. This decision does not prevent an individual from obtaining a background check from public records or public data sources, such as the Texas Department of Public Safety, for his private use.

3. QUESTION: Is it appropriate to close prayers in assemblies of Freemasons (Craft Lodges or open or public meetings of Craft Lodges) with wording such as “in Jesus’ name we pray” or “in Christ’s name we pray?” (April 2015)

ANSWER: No. Freemasonry requires a belief in God; however, it does not dictate the way a man worships his God. Therefore, it is inappropriate to close a prayer for a Masonic gathering of a Craft Lodge (tiled, open, or public meetings) by saying “we pray” in the name of Jesus or Jesus Christ as it excludes non-Christians from participating in the prayer. However, the speaker may offer the prayer and close with wording such as “in the name of Jesus Christ I pray.” By offering the closing in the singular, it allows non-Christians attending the event to participate in the prayer. In this way, the speaker can offer his prayer according to his religious tradition, but it allows everyone else present to say amen in the manner they worship God, as it does not ask the participants to accept the speaker’s concept of God.

4. QUESTION: Does Art. 383 apply when the Grand Lodge of Texas has entered into special visitation procedures with another Grand Jurisdiction? (April 2015)

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ANSWER: No. Art. 383 provides mechanisms to prohibit a visitor from a foreign Grand Jurisdiction from attending a Lodge meeting. However, the provisions of this article are not operative in cases where special visitation procedures have been developed for a jurisdiction where the Grand Lodge of Texas has entered into a special treaty with that jurisdiction.

5. QUESTION: Is a registered sex offender, who was convicted of an offense involving a child and has completed the term of his sentence, eligible to petition a Lodge for membership? (June 2015)

ANSWER: No. Art. 658 automatically expels a member for being convicted of any child-related sexual offense. Therefore, a past conviction of any sexual offense involving a child automatically disqualifies a potential petitioner for the degrees.

6. QUESTION: Under Art. 459, does a Lodge have to surrender personal jurisdiction over a candidate that has not moved outside the territorial jurisdiction of the Lodge after 90 days if his request for a Waiver of Jurisdiction has been refused under Art. 456? (July 2015)

ANSWER: No. Art. 459 requires the Candidate for Advancement for whom the Waiver of Jurisdiction is requested to satisfy two requirements to invoke the 90-day automatic issuance of the waiver if the request is refused: (1) to have moved from the territorial jurisdiction of the Lodge holding personal jurisdiction; and (2) have no Masonic charges preferred against him within 90 days. If the Brother requesting the Waiver has not moved from the territorial jurisdiction of the Lodge with personal jurisdiction and the Lodge has refused the request

under Art. 456, the Lodge holding personal jurisdiction does not have to relinquish that jurisdiction as the Brother has not satisfied both requirements of Art. 459 to initiate the automatic 90-day issuance of the waiver. This decision is consistent with Grand Master's Decisions 1967 No. 8 and 1976 No. 69.

7. QUESTION: Does the creation and use by a Lodge of a private, password protected Lodge website containing the names and contact information of its Candidates, Entered Apprentice, and Fellowcraft Masons violate Article 405a of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. (August 2015)

ANSWER: Yes. Art. 405a specifically prohibits the publication of the names of Petitioners, Candidates, Entered Apprentice Masons, and Fellowcraft Masons in any written or electronic form, public or private, including Lodge newsletters, databases, websites, e-mails, etc. Further, at the 2014 Grand Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Texas a resolution to allow the private communication of the names of Petitioners, Candidates, Entered Apprentice Masons, and Fellowcraft Masons was rejected by a majority vote of the members present. Therefore, any publication, public or private, of the names of Petitioners, Candidates, Entered Apprentice Masons, and Fellowcraft Masons is prohibited by Art. 405a and any such publication or disclosure is a Masonic disciplinary violation (Art. 504).

8. QUESTION: Is it permissible for a third-party organization to use Lodge facilities for commercial purposes or fund raising activities? (August 2015)

662 Proceedings of the

ANSWER: No. It is not appropriate to allow Lodge property or Lodge facilities to be used by any third-party organization to market its commercial products and services or raise funds for its charitable activities. This includes commercial enterprises, charitable, social or civic organizations, and religious organizations. This prohibition does not apply to other organizations as listed in Art. 225 subject to the restrictions of Art. 224 that allows Masonic Lodges and Art. 225 organizations to conduct fundraising activities on its premises that are consistent with the principles of Freemasonry and are of a nonsectarian, nonpartisan, and noncontroversial nature. In addition, this decision does not apply to that part of a Lodge-owned building or property that is separated from the Lodge facilities and rented or leased to a third-party on a commercial basis.

9. QUESTION: Can Masons wear Aprons when presenting the Eagle Scout congratulatory letter outside the Lodge? (August 2015)

ANSWER: Yes, if they receive dispensation from the Grand Master. The representatives of the Lodge presenting the congratulatory Eagle Scout letter may wear Masonic aprons if they are appropriately attired AND NOT in a Boy Scout uniform. The presenters are representing the Grand Lodge of Texas and his Lodge. The wearing of Masonic aprons are additionally restricted based on the venue being one of the following: Masonic Lodge building or building

of an appendant Masonic order; Boy Scout building or activity center; public school; civic or public facility such as a community center, city hall, court house, etc.; or house of worship if approved by the congregation (we do not want to infringe on the church as we will be there as guests and should dress as they request).

10. QUESTION: Can a Worshipful Master exclude a member in good standing of the Worshipful Master's Lodge from attending stated, called, or open meetings of his Lodge? (October 2015)

ANSWER: No. There is no statutory authority for a Worshipful Master to exclude a member in good standing in a Lodge working under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Texas from attending meetings of his Lodge. Art. 383 clearly states that objection to a member of a Lodge working under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Texas attending meetings can be made only if that brother has charges preferred against him.

Recommendation No. 1. – Adopted. Amend question 16 on Masonic Form 26, petition for the Degrees of Freemasonry, to clarify its meaning. Question 16 would be changed to: "Have you ever been charged with a felony? _____ (Yes or No). Other than minor traffic citations, have you ever been charged with a crime? _____ (Yes or No). If yes to either question, provide details when and where?"

Recommendation No. 2. – Adopted. Amends Article 393 to treat candidates for Freemasonry the same as a member per Article 658 if the candidate had ever been found guilty or pleaded no contest to charges of pedophilia.

Recommendation No. 3. – Adopted.* Amend Constitution Article X, Section 4 and the Statutes Article 105 to permit no member to serve on more than one Permanent Term Committee or Board elected by the Grand Lodge (Grand Lodge Library and Museum, Masonic Home and School, or other such elected Boards concurrently.

Recommendation No. 4. – Adopted. Amends Article 383 to recognize that a treaty with a foreign jurisdiction supersedes the statutes of the Grand Lodge laws. "...However, the provisions of this article are not operative in cases where special visitation procedures have been developed for a jurisdiction where the Grand Lodge of Texas has entered into a special treaty with that jurisdiction.

* Since this Resolution(14) and Recommendation (3)would amend the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Texas, it must be adopted at the 2017 Grand Communication

before it is effective

2017 Miller

GRAND MASTER'S DECISIONS

APPROVED BY GRAND LODGE

JANUARY 19 - 21, 2017

1. QUESTION: Under the provisions of Art. 318a. Endowed Membership, if a Lodge changes the purchase price of an endowment (i) when does the new price become effective; (ii) when must the Lodge notify Grand Lodge of the change in order for it to be effective; and (iii) when must any funds under the old purchase price be received by Grand Lodge for that price to be effective?

HELD: The change in the purchase price of an endowment becomes effective on June 24 and the Grand Secretary must receive written notice of the change in the purchase price on or before the last business date prior to June 24. The monies for any endowment purchase under the original purchase price must be received by the Grand Secretary on or before the last business day prior to June 24.

2. QUESTION: A question has arisen as to the proper procedures to follow on balloting if an Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft must petition for advancement Art. 434a because of lapse of time.

HELD: It is my decision that balloting on a petition for advancement under Art. 434a shall be taken pursuant to the provisions of Arts. 417, 418 and 419 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas.

3. QUESTION: A question has arisen as to the proper procedures to follow if an Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft is protested under Art. 434. Procedure After Rejection. Art. 434 states that if a blackball or protest is received, no instruction may be given, nor may he be permitted to sit in Lodge until there has been a favorable ballot of a Lodge of Competent Jurisdiction upon his petition for advancement. Art. 434 is unclear as to the number of protests required or how balloting on the petition for advancement should be taken.

HELD: It is my decision that Art. 434 requires a minimum of three protests before becoming effective, and if three or more protests are received, balloting on a petition for advancement shall be taken pursuant to the provisions of Arts. 417, 418 and 419 of the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas.

GRAND MASTER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No. 1. – Adopted as Amended.

Recommendation No. 2. – Adopted.

Recommendation No. 3. – Not Adopted

Recommendation No. 1

Manner of voting

The first thing it does is - I was hoping to clear up a few things because when we change some of the things about Lodges and Members and Members and Representatives and how we voted, just to make it clear in the way that we have always done it was that all questions or matters requiring a vote at the Annual Communication be done by Lodges and Members in Paragraph A. In Paragraph E it was done away with. In Paragraph A of Section 3 we are talking about in case of a tie vote. And to change that to say, "In the case of a tie vote by Lodges and Members the presiding officer shall not be entitled to cast the deciding vote, unless the vote is tied on two consecutive ballots."

Amendment

We would like to make the amendment like this: we would like to take out the words “All questions and matters” and replace with “unless otherwise permitted, all Resolutions and Recommendations requiring a vote ... “ So what that would do, it would just handle the votes on Resolutions and Recommendations unless permitted otherwise or asked otherwise, it would streamline what we are doing and make it a lot easier to run this Grand Lodge.

GRAND MASTER’S RECOMMENDATION NO. 2

GRAND MASTER MILLER: I’m still Wendell Miller, Past Master of Brooklyn Lodge No. 386.

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Right Worshipful and Worshipful Grand Lodge Officers and my Brethren all:

After the wherases and therefore, basically what I’m asking you to do is - most of you have seen the results that we have used to determine a lot of things today by electronic voting that if we were not doing, we would still be here until tomorrow afternoon.

The cost of these devices is a little bit for us. We use them for a couple of days. It costs about it - well, it is \$9,000.00 a day is what it costs us and I think it is well worth it.

Most of you that have ever registered to come to any kind of a conference in several years, there is no way that I spent \$10.00 to register for a conference. I was pretty lucky to get out for three hundred on a good day.

What I am recommending that we do is quit playing with grandpa’s money and we raise our fee that we pay to \$25.00 which will take care and offset the cost of these electronic devices.

GRAND MASTER’S DECISION – 2018 – NO. 1.

Brethren,

Please be attention as our Grand Master, Tommy Chapman has made his first Grand Master's Decision for the 2018 year.

Question: What is the proper procedure for requesting permission and communicating relevant information pertaining to the qualifications of a petitioner to the Worshipful Master, as it relates to the recent revision to Article 412, paragraph two?

Answer: A Mason qualified to vote, that possesses information pertaining to the qualifications of a petitioner based upon his personal knowledge, and not hearsay, may at any time prior to the receiving of the report of the Investigation Committee request permission of the Worshipful Master to speak with him in private. If possible, this should occur prior to the Stated Meeting. Once permission is given, the qualified Mason shall communicate said information to the Worshipful Master confidentially. The Worshipful Master shall then determine that the information is not hearsay, is

based on the Mason's personal knowledge, and if he should be permitted to provide such information. If permission is granted, this additional information is to be communicated by the Mason, directly and succinctly, in open Lodge without discussion. The Master may also elect to refer this information to the Chairman of the Investigation Committee and grant them further time before their report is received and the Committee discharged per Article 407.

Reference:

Art. 407. Referred to Committee. A petition for the degrees shall be presented at a stated meeting and referred by the Master presiding to a committee of three members for investigation and report. A member of this committee may not be a recommender, or any Mason listed as a reference on such petition, unless and except no otherwise qualified Brother is available to serve as such. Such report may be made at a subsequent stated meeting; but no ballot shall be taken thereon in less than one lunar month from the date the petition is received, unless dispensation is granted by the Grand Master under Article 414. The Lodge may grant the committee further time upon request of one of its members; but no recommitment may be made after the committee has reported to the Lodge.
(Revised 2008)

Art. 412. Committee: Duties and Report. The investigation by the committee shall include: the moral character and reputation of the petitioner, facts relating to jurisdiction, physical qualifications, and all other matters the Lodge is called upon to pass in balloting on petitioner. A face-to-face interview between each Investigation Committee member and the petitioner is required on all petitions for the Mysteries and Advancement, except on approval by the Worshipful Master.

Before a ballot can be taken a signed report of each of the three members of the committee shall be attached to the petition and read to the Lodge; each of which reports shall cover all matters referenced in this Article and in Form No. 28. Should a Mason qualified to vote possess additional information pertaining to the qualifications of the petitioner that is based upon the Mason's personal knowledge, and not hearsay, he may request the Worshipful Master's permission to provide said additional information in open Lodge before the committee is discharged and the ballot is taken. If the Master of the Lodge is a member of the committee before his installation he may continue to serve thereon. (Revised 2018)

GRAND MASTER'S DECISION – 2018 – NO. 2.

Question: Can the Golden Trowel Award be presented to a sitting Lodge officer or Past Master that has not been out of office for more than three years?

Answer: Yes, under two circumstances:

- 1. If the Lodge officer has previously served as Worshipful Master of a Texas Lodge, and more than three years have elapsed since such service; or**
- 2. If the sitting Lodge officer is an officer of a Lodge of fifty (50) members or less; the Lodge so votes to do so, and the Lodge has identified no other member as deserving of the award.**

3. GRAND MASTER'S DECISION – 2018 – NO. 3

QUESTION: Are Grand Master's Decision No. 1 (1971) and Grand Master's Decision No. 7 (1950) in conflict with one another?

ANSWER: No. Grand Master's Decision No. 1 (1971) was based on Art. 224 and held that "Schools of Masonic Knowledge", or Masonic Schools of Instruction as identified in Art. 142, can only be held in a Masonic Lodge room, or within the rooms of the Grand Lodge Temple set apart for Masonic purposes. Grand Master's Decision No. 7 (1950), based on Art. 142, is in accord with the 1971 Decision and goes further by finding that it is permissible "for Brethren to meet informally in any hall or place, Masonically safe, and study the esoteric work, including practice where necessary." It is held that both Decisions are correct and do not conflict with one another.

