

Semper Fidelis

Trestleboard

May brotherly love prevail, and every moral and social virtue cement us.

Look to the East

Learning from past mistakes is one of life's greatest teachers, but wisdom comes from applying those lessons rather than remaining trapped by regret. Every mistake offers an opportunity to grow in knowledge, character, and judgment. While we cannot change yesterday, we can choose how yesterday shapes our decisions today. The past should serve as a guidepost, not a prison, reminding us that failure is often the first step toward future success.

Dwelling on past failures can prevent us from recognizing the opportunities that lie ahead. When we continually relive our mistakes, we give them power over our present and future. Instead, we should honestly acknowledge our shortcomings, make amends when necessary, and then release the burden of guilt. True progress begins when we replace self-condemnation with determination, allowing every setback to become a stepping stone toward becoming a wiser and stronger person.

Moving forward requires faith, courage, and perseverance. Each new day presents a fresh chance to make better choices and to live according to the lessons we have learned. Growth is not measured by never making mistakes, but by refusing to repeat them and by continuing to strive for what is right. By embracing the future with hope while carrying the wisdom of the past, we discover that our greatest victories often come after our greatest lessons.

JP Ledford
Master

Officers of the Lodge 2026

	Master	J.P. Ledford	
Senior Warden	Antonio Saenz, Jr	Junior Warden	Jimmy Johnson
Treasurer	Earl Wilson	Secretary	WB Jason Caldwell
Senior Deacon	Nate Bailey	Junior Deacon	Austin Dorschel
Senior Steward	Steve Lewandowski	Junior Steward	Jeff Blackwell
Chaplain	WB Denny Norris	Tyler	Harry Weatherly

Brethren, please do not forget to take a moment, as we always do in our Lodge; to remember the sick, ailing, and those away from their families defending our way of life...and add to it our families.



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On the Secretary's Desk

Brethren,

Something that has set Semper Fidelis apart for many years is our willingness to try things and not be afraid to fail. If we become quick to pull the plug on events because we have a bad showing, we would be no different than those Lodges who do not try at all. Several years ago, it was decided among the Officers that we would approach every event the same way: Plan the event, publish the event, hold the event and then report on the event. Much of what happens at this Lodge administratively is done in this manner. Let's keep up the amazing work we do for our Fraternity and our Community.

As of this posting, we still have 13 Brothers who have yet to pay their dues for 2026. While this year has been busy and immensely successful, remember that we rely on these dues as a way to pay for our bills and charities. If you have any issues with this in getting this rectified, please let me know and we will see if we can get something worked out.

If you need something, please feel free to call any of your officers, because, unfortunately, if we do not know about what is happening in your life, we cannot be there for you as Brothers.

If you have any updates to your mailing address, phone number, email address, please send to: semperfidelisldodge680@gmail.com.

Jason Caldwell
Secretary

Upcoming Events

Brethren,

Upcoming events are in the works and if you have any ideas for our Lodge bring them up so we can all benefit from your ideas.

- 01 Aug—Breakfast
- 03 Aug—Sojourners
- 08 Aug—DeMolay Lockin
- 11 Aug—OES
- 12 Aug—Stated—Education will be given by Br. Nate Bailey on the Middle Chamber Program.
- 13 Aug—Ritual Workshop
- 15 Aug—Breakfast
- 23 Aug—DeMolay
- 25 Aug—OES
- 26 Aug—Stated—Education will be given by Br. Lenn Tippett on Founding Forward.
- 28 Aug—Ladies Night Out

All of these events are located on the calendar online with details. Remember that we have transitioned to Grand View. Please log onto Grand View at nc.grandview.systems.

If anyone wants to help with the upcoming events, please let the Officers know.

Did You Know?

Something to get people thinking:

There was a Masonic meeting held on the Antarctic Continent on February 6, 1947. Seven Officers and Petty Officers met 'at the bottom of the world.' They met in a flimsy canvas hut amidst a raging blizzard.

*"THE GRAND
OBJECT OF
MASONRY IS TO
PROMOTE THE
HAPPINESS OF
THE HUMAN
RACE."
GEORGE
WASHINGTON*



Random pictures of the Lodge:



Br Nicholas Conrad and the Degree Team as he took his First Step in Masonry.



This past DeMolay Conclave, Zach Dietz (son of WB David Dietz) was elected and installed as the Deputy State Master Counsilar. Also, the Dietz family was presented a Legion of Honor in memorial of Mom Dietz and the work she put into DeMolay in Maryland and North Carolina.

Happy Birthday Brothers

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

08/01 DAVID CHRISTOPHER DIETZ

08/03 WILLIAM DOUGLAS GIBBONS

08/05 CRAIG ROBERT BOUCHER

08/06 JOSEPH MAURICE THOMAS

08/12 GORDON WARREN CROSSMAN

08/18 ZACHARY JAMES JOHNSON

08/21 WILLIAM JENNINGS GAINES

08/27 JOSEPH HOWELL JONES

08/31 JEREMY MARCUS BAYON



08/02 JOSEPH ANGEL REYES

08/03 PATRICK JOSEPH KELLEY

08/05 CHARLES V SANTORO

08/11 DAVID LEE MCLAURIN

08/13 LARRY PAUL SUTTON

08/19 DUSTIN MCKENZIE LEE SCHUITT, SR

08/22 RONALD CLEVELAND CHOATE

08/31 HERIBERTO ACEVEDO, JR

08/31 ROBERT DUANE MILLS

Those in **BOLD** are over the age of 70

Necrology Report

Brethren,

As of our last report, we have not had any notifications of any Brother 'Laying down forever his working tools of life.'

Keep watching out for each other and ensure our Brothers are doing well.

Ensure your families know your wishes upon passing. Notifying the Lodge and requesting Masonic Honors (if you so desire) is vital to ensure we get things accomplished according to your wishes.



Masonic Education:

The Journey of a Masonic Apron

A piece of cloth. Rectangular. White. Unadorned in its earliest form. Nothing about it, examined in isolation, would cause anyone to pause. And yet no Mason in this room would call his apron "just a piece of cloth." Something transforms it. The question worth asking is what, exactly, does that.

An Object and a Life

Objects, on their own, mean nothing. A gavel is wood and metal. A ballot box is a wooden container. A building is stone and mortar. What changes them is the lives that pass through them. The meaning is not in the object. It is deposited there, gradually, by the people who handled it, used it, wore it, and cared for it. An apron worn once and discarded carries nothing. An apron worn for thirty years carries a life. This is the beginning of the idea I want to explore tonight. Not the symbolism of the apron, which you already know. But what the apron witnesses. And what that reveals about the nature of the Craft itself.

The First Day

Imagine the apron on its first day. A young man stands in the Lodge room. He is nervous. He has questions he does not yet know how to ask. He is given the apron and told what it represents. He ties it on. He does not yet know what it will see. He does not know which brothers will become his closest friends. He does not know which meetings will change him. He does not know how many years the apron will accompany him. Neither does the apron. They begin together, in shared ignorance of what lies ahead.

A Silent Witness

Now consider what follows. The apron is present for degrees. For installations. For festive boards that go too late and produce too many toasts. For moments of genuine laughter. For the announcement of a brother's death. For Lodge anniversaries. For disagreements that were never fully resolved. For reconciliations that were. For the quiet satisfaction of a degree well worked. For the long stretches of ordinary Lodge business that make up most of Masonic life. It never speaks. It simply remains. The apron is, if you think about it carefully, the only object that consistently accompanies a Mason throughout his entire Masonic life. Books are put down. Rings are taken off. Jewels of office are passed on after a year. But the apron stays. It is present at the beginning. It is present, often literally, at the end.

Masonic Education:

When the Journey Ends

At some point, the apron is folded for the last time by its owner. Perhaps he simply stops attending. Perhaps he passes away. Perhaps the apron is found in a drawer by a family member who is not entirely sure what to do with it. The man believed he owned the apron. But looking at it from a distance, it becomes clear that he was simply its custodian for a time. The apron outlasts him. And in outlasting him, it changes character entirely. It is no longer just his. It becomes a record. A surviving trace of a Masonic life now concluded.

The Second Life

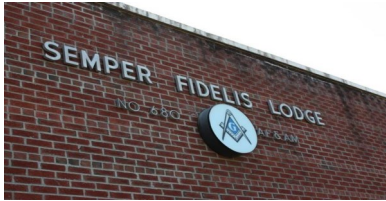
The apron is passed to a son. Or a grandson. Or donated to the Lodge. Or placed in a cabinet alongside others. Without changing at all, it begins another journey. New hands tie its strings. New eyes look at it with curiosity. A new candidate notices it and asks where it came from. Someone, if anyone remembers, tells the story. The apron connects two generations. Then three. Then four. It does this not by doing anything, but simply by continuing to exist while the men around it come and go.

Objects as Memory

Step back from the apron for a moment and look around this Lodge room. The Master's chair. The gavels. The ballot box. The Bible on the altar. The minute books on the shelf. None of them speak. None of them remember anything in a conscious sense. But together, they hold what no living brother can. They remember further back. They were here before any of us arrived. They will, if we are faithful stewards, be here after all of us have gone. They are the Lodge's collective memory, made physical. The minute books record the names of men long dead. The furniture was arranged by hands that have been still for decades. The aprons in the cabinet were worn at meetings nobody living attended. These objects are the connective tissue of the institution. They are how a Lodge remains itself across time, even as every single member changes.

Stewardship, Not Ownership

Here is the philosophical point that the apron quietly makes. Very little in Freemasonry truly belongs to us. The building was here before us. The traditions were handed down to us. The regalia, the furniture, the ritual, the Lodge itself. We receive these things. We care for them for a time. Then we leave them for someone else. This is not a melancholy observation. It is a clarifying one. If we are not owners but stewards, it changes how we think about what we are doing here. We are not building a Masonic career. We are briefly joining a story. A story that began before us and, if we are faithful to what we received, will continue long after we are gone. The apron understands this, in whatever



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Masonic Education Cont:

way an object can understand anything. It has seen men come and go. It has outlasted opinions, disputes, fashions, and grand plans. It simply continues, carried forward by one pair of hands after another.

Closing Words

Imagine the apron one hundred years from now. Its current owner forgotten. His name perhaps recorded in a minute book nobody opens. New hands tying its strings. A new candidate looking at it with the same curiosity the first owner felt. The apron continues. Not because of the cloth. Because the Craft continues. And perhaps that is the real lesson hiding in plain sight. We sometimes speak of what Masonry has given us. But the more honest question might be what we are giving Masonry. What condition are we leaving things in? What are we handing forward? What will remain of our stewardship when the apron outlasts us, as it will, and passes into other hands? The apron does not ask for much. Only to be carried faithfully from one generation to the next. That, in the end, is all the Craft asks of us as well.



The Wisdom of Yoda

**"The Best Preparation for Tomorrow
is Doing Your Best Today."**