

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Right Excellent General Grand Scribe, and my Companions all,
I welcome you to the 214th Grand Convocation of the Grand Chapter of Maryland. I hope this will be a relatively speedy meeting. We have only one major issue to discuss.

State of the Grand Chapter

I believe the Grand Chapter of Maryland is in decent shape currently. I think we have made a small amount of progress over the past year, but we do have a long way to go. As I discuss specific Chapters, please note that I am not trying to embarrass anyone. These are my assessments of the current state of the Chapters, based on my Visitations and other observations. They are intentionally brief. If you disagree with me, please let me know.

I would say that there are four Chapters that are in good shape right now – Druid, Phoenix, Mount Vernon and Concordia working with Baltimore. All are meeting regularly, all are getting new members, and all have the capability to confer all four degrees from their own members. What is lacking to various degrees is depth. Actually having the officers present on any given night to do degree work can be a problem. All could use more understudies. On the next tier are Salem and Tuscan. And perhaps St. Johns also belongs in this group. They have conferred the Mark Master and Past Master recently using their own personnel, but they need assistance with the Most Excellent Master and Royal Arch. Hopefully that will change in the near future. In the most trouble are Belvidere and Hayward. The Grand Secretary had not received an annual report from Belvidere for at least three years, until one arrived a few weeks ago. I fully expected that it would be necessary to pull their Charter at this meeting. They now have a brief reprieve, at least until I can meet with someone from the Chapter and find out what they intend to do. In contrast, Hayward has been making efforts to stay alive, but they haven't been having much success. I know one option they have considered is to turn in their Charter. I hope this won't happen, but we must await developments. Whatever they decide, the Grand Chapter will support them.

The remaining Chapters are still viable. They meet. They can open and close, although that may require some open ritual books. (Which is OK.) But they need assistance to confer degrees. In most cases they are getting at least a few new members. But they too need to get their new members active, and that is a little more important for them. We look forward to the time when these new members will restore the Chapters to the level where they should be.

Ritual

Maryland has always had a reason to be proud of its ritual work. We currently have a number of Companions who can confer the degrees in an outstanding manner and are willing to travel to do so. But we can not rely on these Companions indefinitely. We need to add to this team, and the training must begin at the Chapter level. In this regard I am very pleased with the new direction our Grand Lecturer is taking with respect to Schools of Instruction. While we all enjoy observing ritual done well, if you're going to learn ritual, you need to do it yourself. So having Schools at individual Chapters, with the Companions of that Chapter doing the work, will in the long run be better for the Grand Chapter. Ideally, the only time we would need festivals would be when we get together with our sister Jurisdictions or on a special occasion. If you have not taken advantage of the Grand Lecturer's offer to meet with you, please consider doing so.

Membership

Maryland has been fortunate over the past few years in having relatively stable membership numbers. Some years we have a small gain and others a small loss. But the important word is "small". This contrasts to what I hear in other Jurisdictions I have visited, where losses of 3, 4, 5% or more are not uncommon. Much of this can be attributed to the support we have received from the Grand Lodge

and several Grand Masters, allowing us to visit Lodges and get out the York Rite story. Of course without those Companions who are willing to visit Lodges and do presentations, that permission would be pointless. But we can't stop now. You all know Grand Lodge had a very successful membership drive, culminating with the Open House in April. We will hear just how successful in a few weeks. The first wave of members from that effort is now becoming Master Masons, and we must work on that group. While personal contact is great, our Grand Chapter has been in need of written material as well, a brochure of some sort we can give to Brothers or leave in Lodges. The Grand King has been working on this. Until it is ready, I have written my own brochure, which I have been giving out at Lodges around Glen Burnie. I would be happy to share it with anyone who asks. It is a Word document and can be edited to include local contact information.

Communication

One of the areas I particularly wanted to improve during my tenure is communication. I think I have been somewhat successful. I have been sending out a monthly e-mail to those on my list with information about what is going on in the state, with a calendar of events. I have gone several "thank you"s for doing this, especially from Companions who don't live in the Baltimore metropolitan area. What has been disappointing has been that there is little communication in the other direction. I can't put events on the calendar if you don't tell me about them. This is your Grand Chapter, and we need your input. When I solicit your help or opinions, I really want that. You don't have to reply to everyone. You can just send it to me, if you prefer.

Visitations

I have visited most of the Chapters in the state during the past year. I planned to go to Chesapeake and Hayward at the Eastern Shore festival in March, and I was unable to reschedule when that was called off. There was confusion over the date of my visit to York Chapter, and they met when I was out of town. I did not get to Belvidere because they are not meeting. I would like to visit all these Chapters this year. I would be happy to visit all the other Chapters again as well. I have a few dates scheduled, and they will be on the web site shortly. I am still waiting for a response of the other High Priests as to an appropriate date.

I also visited eleven other Jurisdictions for their Grand Sessions. Six of these were in the Northeast region. I did not get to six others, mainly because of conflicts, either with events in Maryland I had to be here for, or because two Jurisdictions scheduled their Sessions for the same weekend. I also attended a number of DeMolay events and the Rainbow Grand Assembly. I was unable to attend the one Job's Daughters event I was invited to and was represented by Companion Naegele. A complete list of my Visitations and other Masonic activities during the year is attached to this report.

Recommendations

Since I will be continuing in office for another year, I see no point in making recommendations to myself. I have a long list of things that need to be done, and whatever doesn't get done in the next year will be communicated to you and to my successor a year from now. But there are a few ongoing programs that we all need to support. We will continue to reach out to the Lodges. We still have permission from the Grand Master to visit officially, and we will continue to present the Fervency and Zeal program where we can.

The Grand Master has asked us to organize York Rite degree teams to assist Lodges in conferring any of the degrees. I asked for support in my last e-mail. I have not gotten any response directly, but there does seem to be interest in Druid Chapter in organizing such a team. We would like to have several teams, so that people don't have to travel long distances to assist.

We will be giving out pins to the Worshipful Masters of the Lodges again. I did not do a good job getting these distributed last year. So this year I am asking people in various parts of the state to assist me in the task. I have given out some of the pins already, and I will have a list of the remaining Lodges, looking for volunteers. I don't require that you be at the Installation personally, just that you find someone who can represent the Grand Chapter there.

Another issue is the August Scene. This was a major event in years past, but recently it hasn't gotten much support or hasn't been held at all. There is now an effort to revive it. I, like others, feel that the old format needs to be reexamined, to see if we can find something of greater interest. Few of us today are interested in sitting in a Lodge room for several hours and being talked at, no matter how interesting the material is. It would be great if we could make the August Scene into an activity for the entire family. We are looking for people with ideas and who would be willing to serve on the committee. We may not be able to create something new for 2012, so this is a long term project. Bob Brannan has agreed to organize the committee for the present, and you can talk to him or me if you would like to help.

We are also anticipating many new things from General Grand Chapter. Some of these are mentioned in the current issue of the *Royal Arch magazine*, so I won't go into them here. As more details become available, and we know how Maryland will be affected, we will let you know. One thing you should be aware of is that Autism Speaks, one of the charities that RARA is now supporting, holds fund-raising walks throughout the country. General Grand would like to see the Grand Chapters involved in these. There was one in DC last weekend, and the one in Maryland is being held today. This date conflict may affect our ability to participate.

Finally, you see on the schedule that there will be a joint York Rite memorial service for all our Companions who have passed to the Sanctum Sanctorum above. But I would like to have a moment of silence now for three of our Companions who rendered particular service to the Grand Chapter, MEGHP Mickey Frye, MEGHP Joe Chalker, and Grand Chaplain Emeritus Penny Jester.

They live respected and died regretted.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Lumbert, MEGHP

Grand High Priest Activities

Events listed in bold are Grand Chapter events or those I attended as Grand High Priest

October, 2010

22-23 **Grand York Rite Sessions in Maryland**

26 Concordia RA Chapter #1

November, 2010

4 Glen Burnie Lodge #213

5 Maryland Commandery #1

6 Maryland Council #9 Knight Masons meeting

7 DeMolay Chevalier Annual Observance

9 **Grand Visitation to Concordia RA Chapter #1, Baltimore RA Chapter #40**

12-13 **Grand Lodge of Maryland annual communication**

14 DeMolay statewide degree class

16 Glen Burnie Lodge #213 – 3rd degree exemplification

18 Glen Burnie Lodge #213

19-20 **Grand Chapter of Virginia**

21 DeMolay Executive Officer's staff meeting

23 Concordia RA Chapter #1

December, 2010

2 Glen Burnie Lodge #213

3 Maryland Commandery #1

7 **Grand Visitation to Tuscan Chapter #42**

10 Alamo Lodge #44 (TX) – Grand Visitation of the Grand Master of Texas (held in the Alamo)

14 Concordia RA Chapter #1

17 **York Rite Holiday Dance**

January, 2011

4 **King David's Lodge #68 Installation – pin presentation**

5 **Odenton Lodge #209 Installation – pin presentation (with Grand Lodge)**

6 **Glen Burnie Lodge #213 Installation – pin presentation**

7 Maryland Commandery #1

8 Freestate Council #308, Allied Masonic Degrees

12 **Solomons Lodge # 121 Installation – pin presentation**

13 Ron Shaver memorial service

14 **Corinthian Lodge # 93 Installation – pin presentation (with Grand Lodge)**

15 Alton G Billmeier memorial service

Collington Lodge # 230 Installation – pin presentation (with Grand Lodge)

18 **Jephthah Lodge #222 Installation – pin presentation (with Grand Lodge)**

19 **Waverly Lodge #152 Installation – pin presentation**

20 **Sincerity Lodge # 181 Installation – pin presentation**

21 Concordia Council #1

22 **Montgomery-Cornerstone Lodge # 195 Installation – pin presentation (with Grand Lodge)**

24 **Liberty-Pickering Lodge # 146 Installation – pin presentation (with Grand Lodge)**

25 Concordia RA Chapter #1
 27 Maryland Commandery #1 rehearsal
 February, 2011
 3 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
 4 Maryland Commandery #1
 5 Grand Lodge Regional Meeting
 8 Concordia RA Chapter #1
 10-12 Masonic Week, Alexandria, Virginia
 16 Mount Vernon Chapter #25, Mark Master degree
 17 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
 18 Concordia Council #1
 22 Concordia RA Chapter #1
 24 **Grand Visitation to Druid Chapter #28 (Most Excellent Master degree)**
 March, 2011
 3 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
 4-5 **Grand Chapter/Council of New Jersey**
 6 DeMolay Executive Officer's staff meeting
 8 Bonnie Blink Daylight Lodge
 Concordia RA Chapter #1 (conferred MkM)
 10 Druid RA Chapter #28
 11-12 **Grand Chapter/Council of Delaware**
 16 **Grand Visitation to Adonairam Chapter #21**
 17 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
 18 **Rainbow Grand Assembly**
 20-21 **Grand Chapter/Council of North Carolina**
 22 Concordia RA Chapter #1 (conferred MEM)
 April, 2011
 1 Maryland Commandery #1
 2 Open House – Odenton, Glen Burnie Lodges
 5 **Grand Visitation to Edenton Chapter #36**
 7 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
 11 **Grand Visitation to Mount Vernon Chapter #25**
 12 Concordia RA Chapter #1
 14 **Grand Visitation to Talbot Chapter #22**
 16 **Chapter/Council Festival, Cumberland (conferred MEM, CoH in RA)**
 20 **Grand Visitation to St. John's Chapter #19 (and festive board)**
 22 Baltimore Area Commandery Good Friday Observance
 24 Easter Sunrise Services, Alexandria, Virginia
 25 **Grand Visitation to Carroll Chapter #31**
 26 Concordia RA Chapter #1 (CoH in RA)
 27 **Grand Visitation to Phoenix Chapter #7**
 May, 2011
 4 **Grand Visitation to Ithiel Chapter #27**
 5 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
 6 Maryland Commandery #1
 10 **Grand Chapter of Maryland semi-annual communication**
 12 **Druid Chapter Festive Board**
 14 **Grand Lodge of Maryland semi-annual communication**

- 16 **Grand Visitation to James F Allen Chapter #33 (conferred MkM)**
- 17 **York Rite presentation at Jephthah Lodge #222**
- 18 **Grand Visitation to Enoch Chapter #23**
- 19 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
- 20 Grand Council of Maryland semi-annual communication
- 22 DeMolay statewide degree class
- 23 Grand Commandery of Maryland semi-annual communication
- 24 Concordia RA Chapter #1 – installation
- 30 Maryland Masonic Research Society
- 31 Freestate Council #308, Allied Masonic Degrees rehearsal

June, 2011

- 1 **Memorial Service for PGHP Mickey Frye**
- 2 **Glen Burnie Lodge #213 – Grand Lodge Visitation**
- 3-4 **Grand Chapter/Council of Connecticut**
- 6 James F Allen Chapter – Most Excellent Master degree
- 9 Hiram Council #5 installation
- 10 Maryland Council #9 Knight Masons rehearsal
- 11 Freestate Council #308, Allied Masonic Degrees
- 12-14 **Grand York Rite Sessions of Vermont**
- 16 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
- 17 York Rite College #58 rehearsal
- 18 York Rite College #58 meeting
- Maryland Council #9 Knight Masons meeting
- 23-24 **Grand Chapter/Council of Minnesota**
- 28 **School of Instruction – Tuscan Chapter**

July, 2011

- 10-12 **Summer Assembly, Maggie Valley NC**
- 16 Royal Order of Scotland, Washington DC (candidate)
- 19 Catonsville-Palestine Chapter, Order of DeMolay - installation
- 24 **Maryland DeMolay Conclave banquet**
- 29-20 Sovereign York Rite College, Nashville TN (exemplar in the Conferral of the Purple Cross)

August, 2011

- 2, 4 ChiP program – Glen Burnie Carnival
- 12-13 **Grand Chapter/Council of Iowa**
- 17 Grand Commandery school of instruction
- 18 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
- 20 **Festival- Grand Chapters, Councils of Maryland and Pennsylvania, Chambersburg PA**
- 25 Rehearsal for Super Excellent Master degree
- 27 Grand Commandery Multi-Jurisdictional Festival (SW in Order of Temple)
- 28-30 General Grand Chapter, Raleigh NC

September, 2011

- 1 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
- 9 **Northeast Conference, Rocky Hill CT**
- 13 Rehearsal for Super Excellent Master degree
- Concordia RA Chapter #1
- 15 Rehearsal for Super Excellent Master degree
- Memorial services for PGHP Joseph Chalker**

- Glen Burnie Lodge #213, Past Masters night (I raised one brother)
- 16 Concordia Council #1
- 17 **Scottish Rite Honors Day**
- 20-1 **Grand Chapter of Kentucky**
- 24 **Multi-Jurisdictional Festival, Winchester VA (co-conferred PM)**
- 25 Frederick Chapter Order of DeMolay - installation
- 27 Concordia RA Chapter #1 (conferred MkM)

October, 2011

- 1 Harvest Home Day
- Meeting with Grand Master** (heads, secretaries of York Rite bodies)
- Maryland Masonic Research Society
- 2 DeMolay Honors Day
- 3 Rehearsal for Super Excellent Master degree
- 4-6 **Grand Chapter of Ohio**
- 7 Rehearsal for Super Excellent Master degree
- 8 Super Excellent Master degree (parts in all three degrees)
- 11 Concordia RA Chapter #1 (conferred MEM)
- 13-14 **Grand Chapter/Council of Massachusetts**
- 15 Maryland York Rite College #58
- Maryland Council #9 Knight Masons
- 16 DeMolay Executive Officer's staff meeting
- 19 Adonairam Chapter #21 – luncheon
- 20 Glen Burnie Lodge #213
- 21 Concordia Council #1
- 22 Low Vale degree, Union Lodge #7, Dover DE
- 25 Concordia RA Chapter #1
- 26 Phoenix Chapter #7, MEM degree
- 28-29 **Grand York Rite Sessions of Maryland**

Visitations to other Jurisdictions:

[NE] Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Vermont, Virginia

[non-NE] Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Ohio, Minnesota

Reasons for not visiting other NE Jurisdictions:

Maine – over Easter weekend, New Hampshire – conflict with Grand Lodge semi-annual,

New York – same weekend as New Jersey, Pennsylvania – personal conflict

Rhode Island – same day as Grand Lodge Open House plus bad winter weather forecasted,

West Virginia – same weekend as Massachusetts

I hope to attend all of these in 2012 unless there is some conflict with a Maryland event