



BUILDING MASONRY

COUNCIL OAK LODGE NO.745 March 2026

19780 BRICK ROAD, SOUTH BEND, INDIANA 46619 PH.574.272.4073

... AND GIVE THEM GOOD AND WHOLESOME INSTRUCTION...

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

BROTHERS, THE RASLTON-TAYLOR \$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP FROM COUNCIL OAK LODGE 745 IS AVAILABLE TO ANY MALE OR FEMALE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENT. APPLICANTS DO NOT HAVE TO BE RELATIVES OF MASONIC MEMBERS. BROTHERS IF YOU KNOW OF ANY YOUNG MAN OR LADY IN NEED OF A SCHOLARSHIP PLEASE CONTACT WB TOM DOLLY TDOLLY2@YAHOO.COM FOR AN APPLICATION. APPLICATION DEADLINE IS APRIL 1ST.

BROTHERS SEEKING TO MAKE TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO THE RALSTON-TAYLOR SCHOLARSHIP FUND MAY DO SO BY CONTACTING WB TOM DOLLY TDOLLY2@YAHOO.COM PLEASE GET YOUR DONATION IN BY 12-31-25. THE RALSTON-TAYLOR SCHOLARSHIP IS A 501-C-3 CHARITY. DONATIONS WILL HELP INCREASE SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNTS.

CALENDAR March 2026

2nd - STATED MEETING AND DINNER. DINNER AT 6:30 PM. LODGE OPENS AT 7:30 PM.

3rd - Elkhart York Rite. Stated Meeting. 7:00 PM. At Kane Lodge Hall, Elkhart.

5th - Mishawaka No. 83, R.A.M. Stated Meeting. Dinner at 6:00 PM. Chapter convenes at 7:00 PM. At the Mishawaka No. 130 Lodge Hall.

9th - MM Degree Practice. At the Lodge Hall. 6:30 PM

11th - Plymouth Chapter, RAM. Dinner at 6:45 PM. Chapter convenes at 7:30 PM. At Plymouth.

12th - Valley of South Bend, AASR. 7:00 PM. At the Scottish Rite Cathedral in South Bend.

16th - Executive Committee Meeting. 6:30PM. At the Lodge Hall.

17th - Zanzibar Grotto. 6:30 PM.

23rd - MM Degree Practice At the Lodge Hall. 6:30 PM

30th - Fellowship at Wings Etc. 6:30 PM

COUNCIL OAK LODGE OFFICERS - 2026

WORSHIPFUL MASTER: Charles Yost; SENIOR WARDEN: Thomas Dolly, PM; JUNIOR WARDEN: Colten Eads; TREASURER: James Gillen, PM; SECRETARY: Anthony Meller, PM, ameller31@yahoo.com; SENIOR DEACON: Austin Raab; JUNIOR DEACON: Kyle Dolby, PM; SENIOR STEWARD: Robert Stevens; JUNIOR STEWARD: James Stevens; CHAPLAIN: Robert Matisits, PM; TYLER: Rodney Strozewski, PM; TYLER EMERITUS: David Vaughn; TRUSTEES: Michael Koziel, PM; Tim Genge, PM; Rodney Strozewski, PM; PROPERTY MANAGER: Rodney Strozewski, PM; TRESTLE BOARD EDITOR: Thomas Dolly, PM, 574.514-9499, tdolly2@yahoo.com

!! STATED MEETING AND DINNER !!

MONDAY, MARCH 2ND

DINNER AT 6:30 PM.

LODGE OPENS AT 7:30 PM.

GOOD FOOD! ... GOOD EDUCATION! ... OUTSTANDING FELLOWSHIP!!

Reading Cursive To Unlock The Past

by Midnight Freemasons Contributor

Jim Stapleton

The US National Archives recently asked an interesting question - is reading cursive your superpower? The Citizen Archivist program is looking for assistance with transcribing documents, especially with ones that are written in cursive. "Many of the documents at the National Archives are handwritten records such as letters, memos, and reports, many of the words within those documents are not picked up by a search in our Catalog."¹ Through this program, volunteers can sign up for an account and then after receiving instructions and training, they can get started contributing to the effort.

Transcribing governmental records is important in order to make information available in digital form. According to the Royal Historical Society, digitizing historical records is necessary "to make collections accessible to remote audiences; to enable text searching, and to allow for new types of research."² What makes the need to digitize documents even more crucial now is that older documents are often written in cursive because they were created by hand. However, in the United States there are younger generations that are no longer being taught penmanship in schools. This is mainly due to the US Government removing cursive requirements in 2010 from Common Core Standards for K-12 Education.³ In addition to not being able to write in cursive, younger generations are also not able to read cursive. This could lead to a significant problem when future citizens want to conduct research of original historical texts.

What does this have to do with Freemasonry? Our Fraternity also has many handwritten records dating back hundreds of years. Many Lodges have boxes full of documents sitting in their attics. We have Lodge Register books where members sign in to indicate their attendance at meetings and events. What will happen when future generations of Masons eventually look through these materials and they cannot decipher any of them? Do we need our own version of the Citizen Archivist program to transcribe Masonic documents so that they can be researchable in the years to come? Will we need to teach younger Masons how to read and write in cursive?

If we truly want to encourage Masonic research and education, we will need to take into account this potential educational deficit that will soon impact us. Freemasonry has a rich and storied history that we should work to preserve. Otherwise, our Fraternity will be no different than any number of social clubs.

Jim Stapleton is the Senior Warden of USS New Jersey Lodge No. 62. He is also a member of the New Jersey Lodge of Masonic Research and Education No. 1786. Jim received the Distinguished White Apron Award from the Grand Lodge of New Jersey. He was awarded the Daniel Carter Beard Masonic Scouter Award. Jim is also a member of the Society of King Solomon.

FROM THE BROTHERHOOD

Broken Column: None.

Pray for the Vaughn Brother's who are experiencing various illnesses and surgeries.

Brother Robert Stevens grandmother is struggling with Chemo treatments

Brother James Stevens has a relative Virginia Koontzis in rehab with late stage Alzheimer's

Brother Robert Stevens Daughter is having shoulder surgery and Mother has cancer

Please be in Prayer for our Country, our Service Men and Women and our 1st Responders!

March Birthdays: 1st - **Daniel Frame**, 14th- **George Meller**, 23rd- **Scott Ashton**, 24th- **Patrick Tiller** FC, 27th- **Sergey Shylin** and **James Stevens**, 28th- **Michael Carey**.

Give these Brother's a call and wish them a Happy Birthday or Best Wishes!!

Anniversaries: 50 **Paul Leeser Jr.**, 45 **Phillips Delong**, 45 **Donald Stohler**, 38 **Gaither Bailey**, 33 **Robert Frickson III**, 30 **Steve Leapman**, 22 **Scott Ashton**, 11 **Cody Heckman**