

Grand Master's Agenda 142nd Annual Communication

Most Worshipful Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M.
of the State of West Virginia

Wheeling, West Virginia
October 9 & 10, 2006

From: Frank Joseph Haas
133rd Grand Master of Masons
In West Virginia

To: Members and Officers
of Grand Lodge; Lodges;
and the Craft

Grand Lodge will meet in Wheeling, West Virginia at the Scottish Rite Building on the corner of Fourteenth and Byron Streets on Monday, October 9, 2006 at 7 pm. The host hotel is Wilson Lodge at Oglebay Park.

This is to inform you of some items for the agenda to be considered by Grand Lodge. It is within the authority of the Grand Master to set the agenda at the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge. In his *Commentaries* on our law, Past Grand Master William Maier saw it as a duty to control the agenda. He wrote: "It became the custom for the Grand Master to prepare an agenda prior to Grand Lodge, and the Proceedings of the seventies and eighties of the last century [1800's] are full of examples of concern about adhering to the Ancient Usages and Customs of the Craft. Most Grand Masters have prepared an agenda well in advance of the Annual Communication and passed it around for consideration by the active members of Grand Lodge, and matters on the agenda came to be the only matters

considered at the Annual Communication." *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 235 (15th ed. 2005)

This custom is revived with the hope that lodges will have time to consider some issues that will be on the agenda at Grand Lodge and to inform the Grand Master of any serious omissions. Some time for discussions among the Craft will allow those who vote to be better informed and advised. Dispensation is granted, if needed, under C.T.II.1.20 *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 135 (15th ed. 2005) to enable lodges and members to be better informed and advised of the contents of this agenda. Copies may be made by lodges and provided to the Craft, and this may be read, or portions may be read, during lodge meetings at the option of the Worshipful Master. [This is a list, not the sequence of the agenda.]

1. Formal opening of Grand Lodge.
2. Acknowledgement of distinguished guests.
3. Acknowledgement of Past Grand Masters.
4. Recognition of representatives of other grand lodges.
5. Recognition of District Deputy Grand Masters.
6. Recognition of Deputy Grand Lecturers.
7. Recognition of Worshipful Masters.
8. Appointment of regular committees for this session:
 - a. Proceedings of the Grand Lodge Officers.
 - b. Returns of Chartered Lodges.
 - c. Charters and Dispensations.
 - d. Designation of tellers.
9. Report of the Grand Master.
10. Grand Treasurer's report.
11. Grand Secretary's report.
12. Report of the Grand Lecturer.
13. Report of the Committee on Work.
14. Report of Board of Governors of West Virginia Masonic Home.
15. Report of the Board of Trustees.
16. Committee Reports
 - a. Charity.
 - b. Budget.
 - c. Education Fund.
 - d. Foreign Correspondence.
 - e. Returns of Chartered Lodges.
 - f. Charters and Dispensations.
 - g. Proceedings of Grand Lodge Officers.
 - h. Jurisdictional Advisory.
 - i. Veterans Service Awards.

- j. Finance.
 - k. Grievances and Appeals.
 - l. Internet and Website.
 - m. Masonic Heritage and Archives.
 - n. Masonic Home Day.
 - o. Grand Master's Golf Outing.
 - p. By-Laws.
 - q. Jurisprudence.
17. Grand Master's Proposals.
 18. Elections.
 19. Installation.
 20. Remarks of newly installed Grand Master.
 21. Apron & Jewel.
 22. Report of Annual Communication Committee (Wheeling).
 23. Invitation to Charleston.
 24. Closing.

Grand Lodge, at this Annual Communication, will consider these items as Grand Master's Proposals, requiring action by a vote. Proposed deletions to existing law are shown with strike-through text. Proposed additions to existing law are shown as underscored.

I. Masonic Youth Meetings in Lodge Rooms.

To give lodges the freedom to grant or deny permission to use the lodge room for meetings by DeMolay, Job's Daughters, and Rainbow, will show our support for the youth of our communities, as they organize under the principles of these excellent youth organizations, with historic traditions compatible with Freemasonry. We should, in the words of the entertainer Jimmy Durante, "Help da kids."

There will be a motion to strike this language of a Note:

~~31.14. Job's Daughters may not use a Lodge room in this Grand Jurisdiction without consent of the Grand Lodge. Whether a female organization may use a Lodge Dining Room which is entirely separated from the Lodge room is a question each Lodge must decide for itself. However, experience shows that frequently considerable friction develops between the Lodge and the female organization concerning such use, and such friction sometimes leads to dissension within the Lodge, which disturbs the peace and harmony of the Craft. It is therefore our general policy to recommend strongly against the granting of such permission. —1963 Proceedings 41. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 73 (15th ed. 2005)~~

And to adopt a new note, as follows:

Youth organizations chartered by or officially affiliated with DeMolay International, the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, or Job's Daughters International may use lodge buildings and meet in lodge rooms with the permission of the lodge.

II. Plural membership.

At present, our laws prohibit plural membership in lodges. Freemasons develop a deep affection for their lodges and are hesitant to demit from their "mother lodge" even when they relocate. Our society is now much more mobile than before, with job changes and residence changes at increasing frequency. The financial condition of many lodges is not favorable, and the ranks of officers willing to serve are thin in some lodges. Allowing our members to join more than one lodge, in any grand jurisdiction with which we are in fraternal communication, and allowing our lodges to accept as members brothers, who will retain their membership in another regular lodge, in any grand jurisdiction with which we are in fraternal communication, will add strength to the lodges by brothers who thereby voluntarily increase their Masonic dues and commitment.

A motion will be made regarding Regulation 46, Section 17 (last paragraph) and Code of Trials II.1.12, to be amended as follows:

Reg. 46, Sec. 17—Membership and Affiliation (last paragraph): *** Every Mason should belong to some regular Lodge, but no mason can belong to more than one Lodge at the same time. A member may petition to join, in addition, another Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction or any other lodge in another grand jurisdiction with which we are in fraternal communication. A Mason who is a member of any other lodge in another grand jurisdiction with which we are in fraternal communication may petition to join, in addition, another Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction. A Mason petitioning membership in another Lodge in West Virginia shall be admitted to such membership upon majority voice vote after showing that he is a member in good standing in all other lodges in which he may be a member. Discipline of any kind, including suspension or expulsion for unmasonic conduct in any lodge in this or any other Grand Jurisdiction shall have the same effect in all other West Virginia lodges of which he is a member." Laws of Masonry in West Virginia 100 (15th ed. 2005)

CT.II.1.12. A member of a West Virginia Lodge who, without applying for a demit, petitions for membership in a foreign jurisdiction which permits dual membership, has committed a Masonic offense. —1938 Proceedings 60. Laws of Masonry in West Virginia 134 (15th ed. 2005)

Because this is an amendment to our laws, upon an affirmative vote of one-third of the members present, the amendment shall lie over one year, be printed in the journal and if adopted by a two-thirds vote at the next regular communication, shall become a part of the law at the meeting in 2007.

III. Waiver of territorial jurisdiction by majority vote

A waiver of territorial jurisdiction is not a vote on moral character. Only votes on moral character should be required to be unanimous, human nature being what it is. Our laws protecting territorial jurisdiction were developed to prevent disputes between lodges over initiation fees, which at one time amounted to two-week's gross wages on the average. When measured by the workweek, our fees now are much lower. In former times, transportation and communication were far more difficult. Then, making an assessment of a man's character was most likely to be accurate only at his place of residence, which was also his place of work and which was also his place of worship. Our society has changed. There are many good reasons for a man to seek membership in a lodge that is not the closest to his residence. These may relate to ties of family tradition, friendship, or convenience. I have heard more malicious than honorable reasons for a lodge to refuse to waive territorial jurisdiction.

This motion will be made regarding Regulation 34, Section 17, to be amended as follows:

Regulation 34. (Legal Residence). (a) No Lodge shall receive the petition for initiation of any man whose legal residence is not at the time, and for at least one year has been, within the jurisdiction of such Lodge, except that a Lodge may receive the petition of one who is at the time and for at least one year has been a legal resident of the jurisdiction of some other Lodge in this grand jurisdiction, provided such other Lodge by ~~unanimous and secret ballot~~ majority vote shall give its consent thereto, after the request has been read at a stated communication and laid over four weeks. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 77-78 (15th ed. 2005)

The table "Voting and Balloting in Masonic Lodges in West Virginia" shall be amended in like manner. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 222 (15th ed. 2005)

Because this is an amendment to our laws, upon an affirmative vote of one-third of the members present, the amendment shall lie over one year, be printed in the journal and if adopted by a two-thirds vote at

the next regular communication, shall become a part of the law at the 143rd Annual Communication in 2007.

IV. Advancement after one year (catechism) by majority vote.

A vote to allow advancement after one year is not a vote on moral character. Only votes on moral character should be required to be unanimous, human nature being what it is. Our laws require a candidate to return his catechism within one year, and if he lets that year expire, no further instruction can take place without another unanimous ballot. We must continue to insist that a candidate return his catechism, but some lodges have used this provision of our law as punishment for slow or busy candidates. This law is not intended to punish, and this is an improper procedure for administering punishment. This amendment will make that point clear.

This motion will be made regarding Regulation 42, Section 13-Advancement, within the second paragraph, to be amended to require a majority vote rather than a unanimous ballot by striking language about a unanimous and secret ballot, with a substitution:

Regulation 42, Sec. 13–Advancement: *** Should more than one year have elapsed between the time of receiving his previous degree and the time of his election to, and his presenting himself to receive, the degree to which he wishes to advance, he must present a petition in writing, in form prescribed by the Grand Lodge, which must be read at a stated communication and lie over four weeks before being balloted upon. ~~The ballot upon such petition shall be taken and the result declared in all respects as upon a ballot for initiation as prescribed in Section 2 of this Article, and if the ballot be found clear~~ If the petition is granted by a majority vote, the applicant must then be examined upon his proficiency as hereinbefore provided in this section, unless he had theretofore been found proficient as aforesaid. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 91-92 (15th ed. 2005)

The table "Voting and Balloting in Masonic Lodges in West Virginia" shall be amended in like manner. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 222 (15th ed. 2005)

Because this is an amendment to our laws, upon an affirmative vote of one-third of the members present, the amendment shall lie over one year, be printed in the journal and if adopted by a two-thirds vote at the next regular communication, shall become a part of the law at the 143rd Annual Communication in 2007.

V. Giving lodges freedom to dispense charity

The Grand Lodge is permitted by its constitution to consider petitions for charity without limitation in its own sound discretion. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 12 (15th ed. 2005). As Freemasons, we are taught that our charity should be unbounded. As a contrast, our law prohibits only lodges from considering charitable support for others, with a few exceptions. The scope of the restriction on charity from lodges is overly broad. I have heard of a lodge, which shared a building with another lodge, and was fearful of breaking this law by paying for more than half of the cost of a new furnace. Now, if a brother dies, and his obituary states his request that, in lieu of flowers, donations should be made to his church or a charitable organization dedicated to fighting the disease of his last illness, our lodges must ignore his request, and make no contribution of any kind, or send flowers that he did not want.

This motion will be made regarding Note 24.I.1, to be amended to allow lodges more freedom in responding to charity, with a substitution:

Note 24.I.1. Each Lodge shall be its own judge as to what charity it will dispense. 1918 *Proceedings* 72. However,

4. A Masonic Lodge, as such, shall not make contributions out of its funds to outside charities, businesses or ventures and shall not join in as such any such charity, business, or ventures either for profit or otherwise. provided, however, that upon motion approved by majority vote, a lodge may contribute to such charities as shall qualify as such consistent with the provisions of Section 501 (c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code and provided that such contributions are consistent with the financial stability of the lodge, the tenet of relief as taught in the Entered Apprentice's Degree, our Constitution, and the Landmarks. Trustees of Lodges, in their discretion and in accordance with the law, may purchase, have and hold stocks, bonds and other securities of businesses as investments. Any provision to the contrary in the Notes to the General Laws and Regulations passed prior to 2006 shall be deemed repealed. 1960 *Proceedings* 09; See *Commentaries*, p. 243.

~~2. Grand Lodge under its present Constitution may not sponsor, nor join in sponsoring an organization such as The West Virginia Association for Mental Health, Inc. Constitution, Article IV, Section, 1963 *Proceedings* 42.~~

~~3. While Brethren as individuals are urged to participate in worthwhile civic ventures when they are so disposed, a lodge member does not participate in the name of the lodge nor does a lodge participate as such. 1968 *Proceedings* 22.~~

~~4. A Masonic Lodge may not appear as an advertiser in magazines, trade journals, community directories, or other programs, or use its funds to subscribe~~

~~for advertising space; such use of Lodge funds can in no way be classified as Masonic charity. 1974 Proceedings 3.~~
Laws of Masonry in West Virginia 59 (15th ed. 2005)

VI. Allowing lodges the freedom to have fundraising activities.

Many lodges are not in healthy financial condition. The preferable remedy is for the lodges to raise their dues and fees to provide adequate financial support for the operation of the lodge. Secondly, it falls to the members to donate sufficient funds to support the operation of the lodge by endowing it through wills, gifts, or the perpetual membership fund. When these aspirational factors come together, and funding continues to be inadequate, lodges should have the freedom to seek support through fundraising efforts through legal means, rather than be forced to close or merge. This is in recognition of the fact that our Lodges are a force for good in their communities. There was a substantial division of opinion on this subject when it came to a vote in Grand Lodge in 2004. At that time, the Grand Master sent a committee to negotiate a compromise, which bore fruit, and which compromise was adopted by vote of Grand Lodge. Afterwards, there were additional questions remaining, such that the next Grand Master felt it prudent to suspend implementation of the compromise—until the next meeting of Grand Lodge. The suspension expired when Grand Lodge did not address the issue in 2005; the previously adopted compromise, which had been passed by a vote of the brothers in 2004, then resumed its full force and effect. Unnecessary caution and hesitation persists among lodges about the scope of what the compromise continues to permit. This should be refined with one more vote of the Grand Lodge.

This motion will be made regarding Regulation 24, Section 3, to adopt a new Note and deleting Note 24.H.8 at the last sentence, deleting Note 24.H.9, deleting Note 31.7, deleting Note 31.19, amending Note 31.5, and adding language as follows:

Note 24.H.8. While decisions of previous Grand Masters clearly indicate that the Grand Lodge and Grand Officers may not exercise any control over a particular lodge in the building of a lodge hall, yet the manner in which a particular lodge acquires the money to purchase and construct a lodge hall is a matter for scrutiny by the Grand Master and Grand Lodge. ~~No public dinner should be held for fund-raising purposes.~~
 -1968 Proceedings 21. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 55 (15th ed. 2005)

~~Note 24.H.9. A Lodge has no right to ask donations from profanes for a festival to be given for the benefit of such Lodge. — 1892 *Proceedings* 593. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 55 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~Note 31.19. The Laws of Masonry governing the use of Masonic property apply not only to the Particular Lodges, but to non-Masonic organizations that use designated areas of the Lodge building. Sponsoring dinners, bazaars and rummage sales open to the profane for fund-raising purposes on Lodge property exceeds the permission granted to the non-Masonic bodies. It is the duty of the Master and Wardens of each Lodge to maintain a close supervision over the use of Lodge property and prevent any violation of our Masonic Laws governing its use. In the event a non-Masonic organization is a tenant in common of Lodge property, the Lodge must make every reasonable effort to prevent such activities by such organization on such property, so as to preserve the good name of Masonry as a self-supporting fraternity. Otherwise, the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge may find it necessary to require the Lodge to obtain other quarters. — 1976 *Proceedings* 50, 5. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 73-74 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~31.5. There is nothing improper in permitting guests to visit and inspect a lodge hall under proper circumstances such as an “open house”; however, it would be highly un-Masonic and improper to have any entertainment in the lodge hall such as a dance, party, exhibition, etc. — 1952 *Proceedings* 31. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 72 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~31.7. Written invitations do not avoid the definition of a “non-public meeting,” when that meeting is to be held in the Lodge room. — 1966 *Proceedings* 25. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 72 (15th ed. 2005)~~

“A lodge may conduct fund-raising activities, including within the lodge building, so long as the activity is occasional and provided that the activity (1) is conducted in such a manner as to protect the reputation of Freemasonry in the community; (2) complies with all applicable governmental laws, rules, and regulations; (3) is consistent with sound business judgment; and (4) is not conducted within the tiled recesses of a lodge room itself.

“Such activities should not be conducted with any other organization than those associated with Masonry by membership or family relationship. Notes 24.H.8, 24.H.9, 31.19, and any other note passed prior to 2006 contrary to the foregoing, are repealed and set aside.”

VII. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance is not a part of our Ritual and should not be considered as an addition to it. Everything we do in Lodge is not ritual. Our opening Ritual concludes at the time that the Volume of the Sacred Law is opened, and the deacon returns to his seat.

Freemasons are encouraged to travel in foreign countries, and I have seen patriotic observances in lodges abroad. At such a time, I stand out of respect to the government in authority that defends my freedom to attend such a meeting. When in the United Kingdom, I do not sing, "long to reign o'er us; God save the Queen." However, the British government and monarchy are worthy of my respect when I visit, but not my allegiance, so I stand for the singing by its citizens of the British National Anthem. Visiting Freemasons to America from foreign countries have expressed the same sentiment and have done the same in my presence. I have never heard one who felt offended that we express our patriotism and love of country in lodge. That fear of offending visiting Freemasons, as is expressed in our law, is considerate but unfounded.

This motion will be made regarding Note 24.F.17, to be amended with language to allow the Pledge of Allegiance to be given, in the discretion of the Worshipful Master, and with an amendment to Note 24.F.18:

Note 24.F.17. 1. The Pledge of Allegiance is not a part of Masonic Ritual in this Grand Jurisdiction, and [.]

~~2. Freemasonry is universal, for in every clime a Mason may be found. Inserting the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag, during the business of the Lodge may have a divisive effect when citizens of other countries are present.~~

2. As the charge to an Entered Apprentice Degree is to be "true to your government and just to your country", the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag is consistent with the principles of Freemasonry; and

3. Therefore; the pledge of allegiance, if the presiding master desires that it be given, may be presented only before the officers of the Lodge are called to their stations for the official opening of the Lodge. 2000 Proceedings 4. upon the Master's invitation at any time, including in a tiled lodge after the opening Ritual."

Laws of Masonry in West Virginia 59 (15th ed. 2005)

24.F.18. It is not proper to spread the American flag over the altar of a Lodge. ~~No salute to the flag or pledge of allegiance thereto should be given or required in the opening or closing or while it is open.~~ There can be no objection to displaying the flag in the east or elsewhere about the hall, without ceremony or handling. -1917 Proceedings 41, 1942 Proceedings 116.

Laws of Masonry in West Virginia 53 (15th ed. 2005)

VIII. Emblems

It is appropriate for our lodge buildings and lodge rooms, inside and out, to be beautified and adorned with tasteful art and emblems. This can include emblems of other orders. I granted permission to a lodge to re-install in the lodge room some art that depicted other orders of Masonry. I did not think the permission was needed. To clarify this, we should delete the language that raised the question.

This motion will be made regarding Notes 31.1, 31.2 and 31.3, to be deleted to allow lodges the freedom to decorate and adorn lodge buildings and lodge rooms with tasteful art and emblems.

~~31.1. Lodges are dedicated to Freemasonry and should be used solely for Masonic purposes. 1886 Proceedings 587; 1888 Proceedings 1003; 1892 Proceedings 592; 1893 Proceedings 33; 1898 Proceedings 856; 1899 Proceedings 46.~~

~~31.2. It is highly improper to engrave, inlay, or in any other manner whatsoever, PERMANENTLY place the name, emblem, insignia, or other identification of any non-Masonic organization, upon the inside or outside wall, or upon the floor, or upon any other part of a building owned by a Masonic lodge and used for lodge purposes, except that it is permissible to place such name and/or emblem upon a suitable sign, lamp, or other device, attached to the exterior of the building, to assist visitors in locating the meeting place. 1965 Proceedings 33.~~

~~31.3. 31.2 above has prospective application only. No lodge should be required to change or remove emblems or insignia other than its own which have been made a permanent part of the building prior to its dedication by the Grand Lodge. Lodges are encouraged to maintain their facilities in good repair and to repair or replace such emblems or insignia to the extent necessary to restore the building to the condition in which it was dedicated by the Grand Lodge. 1985 Proceedings 99.~~

Laws of Masonry in West Virginia 71 (15th ed. 2005)

IX. Cornerstone ritual

An invitation from our communities to lay a cornerstone should not be lightly declined. The Ritual for the laying of a cornerstone is a beautiful, symbolic one that includes participation by the public. The Masonic Fraternity joins the community in celebrating its pride in the accomplishment of embarking on construction of a building for the public good. Our symbolic wording of our ritual is many centuries old, and the tradition dates from time immemorial. In the passage of time, construction materials, methods, and schedules have changed over the centuries, and a cornerstone ceremony is appropriate after

groundbreaking if before occupancy or dedication. However, we have notes in our law that conflict with these modern construction materials, methods, and schedules. Those notes should be repealed.

This motion will be made, regarding Note 6.1 and Note CT.II.1.4, to be deleted, to allow us to recognize that it is appropriate for the Grand Lodge to lay a cornerstone on any time after the date of groundbreaking and before occupancy.

~~Note 6.1. A request to lay the cornerstone of a building where the top elevation of the walls exceeds the bottom elevation of the cornerstone to be laid should be refused.—1982 Proceedings 136. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 16 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~CT.II.1.4. It is irregular and illegal in this Grand Jurisdiction to lay the cornerstone of a building supporting a permanent roof or covering.—1982 Proceedings 136. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 133 (15th ed. 2005)~~

Any Note passed before 2006, that would limit the laying of a cornerstone any time after the date of groundbreaking, but before occupancy, is repealed.

X. Disabled Petitioners and Candidates

Freemasons had been known for their charity toward one another. Years ago, our charity was so well known that men would petition for membership with the unstated purpose of claiming the charity of the lodge and the Craft. So that there was some assurance that a man could support himself and family, Freemasonry adopted restrictions concerning disabling amputations as conditions on accepting a petition. Since that time, social legislation has been adopted in the United States, providing an income for the disabled, and we have no prohibition on accepting the petition of a man adjudicated totally disabled and receiving permanent disability benefits. The reason for our prohibition is no longer valid. The prohibition was used to prevent a problem that no longer exists. Now, the main effect of the enforcement of the prohibition is to keep good men out of Freemasonry, contrary to its original laudable purpose. Proper inquiry is to be made of a petitioner's means of support. Physical disabilities should not be a categorical bar to membership.

This motion will be made regarding Regulation 35(b) and Notes 35.6, 35.7, 35.8, 35.9, 35.13, 42.14, and 42.15, to allow lodges to accept and ballot on the petitions of men who are physically disabled, and confer the degrees.

Regulation 35(b) (Qualifications for Degrees.): To receive the degrees of Freemasonry a candidate must be of sound mind, possessed of hearing ~~and or~~ sight and physically able to fulfill, ~~without artificial means or assistance, the ritualistic requirements as to~~ or describe in the English language his accurate recognition of the signs, grips, steps and postures. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 81 (15th ed. 2005)

~~35.6. An applicant for the mysteries of Freemasonry must be able to meet the long established requirements of the Ritual without the aid of artificial appliances, and, in addition, must be capable of honestly acquiring the means of subsistence. —1883 Proceedings 191, 1916 Proceedings 45. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 81-82 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~35.7. A petitioner whose hearing is such that without an artificial hearing aid he can hear sound but can not tell what is being said is ineligible for initiation into the mysteries of Freemasonry. The requirements of Regulation 35 (b), including 35.6, are jurisdictional. —1963 Proceedings 39. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 82 (15th ed. 2005)~~

35.8. It is not contrary to the General Laws and Regulations of this Grand Lodge, Regulation No. 35 (Qualifications for Degrees) for a candidate to wear a hearing aid or glasses ~~after he has been obligated in any degree and returned to the preparation room.~~ -1960 Proceedings 109. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 82 (15th ed. 2005)

~~35.9. One who has lost a foot, a right hand, or a right thumb back of the first joint is ineligible for Masonry. —1938 Proceedings 60, 6. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 82 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~35.13. It is illegal and improper for a Lodge in the jurisdiction of West Virginia to receive a petition and request a waiver therefor from a profane living in another jurisdiction who under our regulations is physically ineligible to receive the degrees of Freemasonry in our jurisdiction. —1969 Proceedings 33. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 82 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~42.14. An Entered Apprentice or Fellow Craft who allowed a year to elapse before applying for advancement, pending which he lost his leg, is ineligible to receive the next degree. —1909 Proceedings 574. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 94 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~42.15. One who has suffered the loss of an arm or leg after being initiated as an E. A. or passed to a F. C., is ineligible to receive the next degree either in this or any other jurisdiction, and our Grand Jurisdiction holds perpetual jurisdiction over E. A. and F. C. Masons. —1975 Proceedings 140. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 94 (15th ed. 2005)~~

Because this is an amendment to our laws, upon an affirmative vote of one-third of the members present, the amendment shall lie over one year, be printed in the journal and if adopted by a two-thirds vote at

the next regular communication, shall become a part of the law at the meeting in 2007.

XI. Washington/Arnold Scottish Rite Degree

The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite has considered itself prohibited from using its Twentieth Degree in its entirety. We have confidence in the excellent rules with which the Scottish Rite governs itself.

This motion will be made to adopt a new Note under Regulation 23.

Notwithstanding Note 23.10, there is no irregularity under our Masonic Law for the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite to confer or exemplify, in full form or otherwise, in a tiled setting, its Twentieth Degree, consistent with its own excellent governing rules.

XII. Masonic Funerals consist of three separate sections

Masonic Funerals consist of three separate sections. The first section is the opening of the lodge or Lodge of Sorrow. The second section is the procession to the place of interment, at which those in the procession must be members of the Craft. The third section is the Masonic Graveside Service. These three separate sections stand on their own and are independent of each other. Decades ago, most lodges opted to open a Lodge of Sorrow, to be held open for the entire Masonic year, rather than to open and close lodge on the day of every funeral. In the same manner, the third section, the Masonic Graveside Service, can stand alone without the formation of a procession, that is to say, the second section. Matters of strength, safety, and imposing on other mourners are valid concerns to be considered sensitively among people in grief. The ritual can begin on the premises of the final resting place, after the earthly remains are in place, consistent with our other laws. The lodge can begin its duties at page 122 rather than page 120 of our textbook, and not a single word of the ritual will be omitted or amended. *Masonic Text Book for Use in the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the State of West Virginia* 120-122 (23rd ed. 1965, reprinted 1985)

This motion will be made regarding Note 24.J.17, to be amended to allow lodges the option to form or not to form the second section of the Masonic funeral service at every funeral:

Note 24.J.17. A Masonic Lodge conducting a burial cannot share the service with any other body. ~~Only Master Masons can act as pallbearers at a Masonic burial.~~ The Worshipful Master is responsible to ensure that the coffin bearing the remains of the deceased brother is handled with respect and to enlist the assistance of non-Masons as pallbearers, if necessary, for that purpose. The lodge need not form a procession before every Masonic Graveside Service. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 62 (15th ed. 2005)

XIII. In Amity

Organizations with which the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the State of West Virginia considers itself IN AMITY.

A motion will be made to adopt the following as a note to our general laws and regulations.

Article 1, Section 1 of the Constitution of this Grand Lodge recognizes that other Masonic bodies exist. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 8 (15th ed. 2005) We perceive a special regard shared by such bodies and us. However, we perceive a difference between ourselves and other organizations, such as the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks or the Fraternal Order of Eagles, as examples. We also perceive a similar difference between ourselves and the Rotary International and the Kiwanis Club, for example.

The Grand Lodge of West Virginia is a sovereign and independent body, self-governing, asserting sole and undisputed authority over the Craft in Symbolic Degrees within its jurisdiction, with peers or agents but admitting no superior Masonic authority. As such, Grand Lodge is aware of certain other bodies, whose own rules make special reference to membership, as a Freemason, or, relationship to a Freemason, as being a part of their own requirements. Grand Lodge is also aware of other bodies and organizations that pay special deference to the published Ancient Landmarks of the Fraternity in their teachings and traditions. Although such bodies are not controlled by, subsidiaries of, partners with, or beholden to Grand Lodge in any actual manner, Grand Lodge has nothing but affectionate regard for its relationship with them and special confidence in the excellence of their own independent governing rules. Grand Lodge recognizes itself to be In Amity with such bodies and organizations. Only these are set forth below.

Allied Masonic Degrees of the United States of America
Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction, USA.
Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine
Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon
Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of West Virginia
Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the State of West Virginia
High Twelve International
Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests
Knight Masons, USA
Knights of the York Cross of Honor
Mystic Order of Veiled Prophets of the Enchanted Realm
Masonic and Military Order of the Red Cross of Constantine
Royal Order of Scotland Provincial Grand Lodge of the USA
Tall Cedars of Lebanon of North America
West Virginia College Masonic Societas Rosicruciana In Civitatibus Foederatis
York Rite Colleges of W. Va. of York Rite Sovereign College of North America
Daughters of the Nile
Ladies Oriental Shrine of North America
Order of the Amaranth
Order of the Eastern Star
Order of the White Shrine of Jerusalem
International Order of the Rainbow for Girls
Job's Daughters International
West Virginia Council Order of DeMolay

Notwithstanding previous Notes adopted before 2006, bodies with which Grand Lodge is in Amity may make use of the building and facilities of our lodges, to the extent that the lodges grant such permission.

In addition, a motion will be made to delete Note 31.9, 31.16, 31.17, 31.18, 31.19, and to amend Notes 31.12, 31.13.

~~31.9. Under the constitutions and laws of Masonry and its customs and usages, Freemasonry is essentially an exclusive organization; it affiliates with no others; it condemns no others; it sponsors no others; and the doors of its Lodge rooms in this grand jurisdiction are open to no others, except under emergent dispensation.—1946 Proceedings 99. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 72 (15th ed. 2005)~~

31.12. The Order of the Eastern Star and the Order of the Ladies of the Mystic Shrine may use a lodge hall if the lodge gives its

~~permission, for holding regular and special meetings, for the purpose of transacting its business, conferring degrees or rehearsing its ritualistic work, but for no other purpose. -1965 Proceedings 33. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 72 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~31.13. The Order of the Eastern Star uses a Lodge hall only with the consent of the Lodge and not as a joint user, and so must be subjected to such restrictions on that use as are imposed, and can use the Lodge hall for transacting of business, conferring degrees or rehearsing ritualistic work and for no other purpose. -1966 Proceedings 25. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 72 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~31.14. Job's Daughters may not use a Lodge room in this Grand Jurisdiction without consent of the Grand Lodge. Whether a female organization may use a Lodge Dining Room which is entirely separated from the Lodge room is a question each Lodge must decide for itself. However, experience shows that frequently considerable friction develops between the Lodge and the female organization concerning such use, and such friction sometimes leads to dissension within the Lodge, which disturbs the peace and harmony of the Craft. It is therefore our general policy to recommend strongly against the granting of such permission. -1963 Proceedings 41. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 73 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~31.16. No subordinate lodge shall meet in any lodge room used by the White Shrine in this Grand Jurisdiction. —1954 Proceedings 24. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 73 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~31.17. The placing in a Lodge room of emblems of non-Masonic organizations should be permitted during the use of the room by these bodies to which permission has been given to occupy the hall; but they should be removed when the Lodge is open, and particularly when Masonic work is being done. —1938 Proceedings 65; 116. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 73 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~31.18. It is the duty of the Master and Wardens of each Lodge to see that the charter, emblems and other paraphernalia of every character of an organization not Masonic, even though claiming connection with Masonry through the family ties of its members, be removed from the Lodge Hall when the Lodge is open. It is not sufficient that such items be covered up or concealed. —1976 Proceedings 50. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 73 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~31.19. The Laws of Masonry governing the use of Masonic property apply not only to the Particular Lodges, but to non-Masonic organizations that use designated areas of the Lodge~~

~~building. Sponsoring dinners, bazaars and rummage sales open to the profane for fund-raising purposes on Lodge property exceeds the permission granted to the non-Masonic bodies. It is the duty of the Master and Wardens of each Lodge to maintain a close supervision over the use of Lodge property and prevent any violation of our Masonic Laws governing its use. In the event a non-Masonic organization is a tenant in common of Lodge property, the Lodge must make every reasonable effort to prevent such activities by such organization on such property, so as to preserve the good name of Masonry as a self-supporting fraternity. Otherwise, the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge may find it necessary to require the Lodge to obtain other quarters.—1976 Proceedings 50, 51. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 73-74 (15th ed. 2005)~~

XIV. Masonic Service Association

The Masonic Service Association of North America is not a governing body but a servant of Freemasonry. Its actions and opinions do not bind grand lodges. Every grand lodge in the United States is a member, except for West Virginia. The cost of the dues is six cents per member. This amounts to about \$1440 per year from Grand Lodge. For this, the MSA supports the Craft with *Short Talk Bulletins* mailed monthly to every lodge and to grand lodge officers. MSA has an organized and experienced method of response to the Craft in the event of natural disasters. MSA has an organized visitation program to support Veteran's Hospitals. MSA provides general factual information about Freemasonry to the public. MSA through its Masonic Information Service provided the study and the booklet, *It's About Time*. MSA has faithfully distributed the donations made by the West Virginia Craft to aid in the relief of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. We benefit from the Masonic Service Association, and we should support it with our fair share in the form of the modest dues.

A motion will be made for the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the State of West Virginia to join as a contributing member of the Masonic Service Association of North America.

XV. Grand Honors

Grand honors are appropriately given to distinguished Masons consistent with their rank in Craft Masonry. Some other jurisdictions with which we are in fraternal communication are organized differently and include different titles and salutations. Visitation among Freemasons is a matter of ancient usage and custom, and Grand Lodge does not intend to require that lodges treat visiting distinguished guests with less honorary greetings than they would be entitled to receive in their home jurisdiction for Blue Lodge Rank.

A motion will be made to amend Note 23.G.1 as follows:

24.G.1. Grand Honors may be given in chartered Lodges ~~only~~ as follows: To the Grand Master or his representative on official business or visit; to the Grand Master of a sister jurisdiction or his representative; ~~and~~ to Past Grand Masters ~~of this grand jurisdiction~~, on appropriate occasions; and at the discretion of the presiding officer, consistent with the honor that a visitor is entitled to receive in his home jurisdiction acknowledging his rank in Craft Masonry. -1939 Proceedings 109, 1976 Proceedings 38, 129. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 54 (15th ed. 2005)

XVI. Notes

Some of the restrictions that we have imposed on ourselves, as we made our laws as a sovereign grand lodge, have served their purpose and run their course. The situation they were designed to remedy no longer requires such vigilance in the form of law. In many ways, lodges should be free to exercise broader discretion, especially in the use of their buildings and facilities.

Our law is set forth in four general categories. The *Ancient Landmarks* make us Freemasons and cannot be changed. The *Constitution* requires approval by Grand Lodge and subordinate lodges to change. The *General Laws* and regulations require the proposed modification to lie over one year to be passed by two-thirds majority at the next session of Grand Lodge. And the *Notes* can be made, modified, or deleted by a majority at any annual communication of Grand Lodge. Our Constitution and our General Laws each have instructions on how they may be amended. Our Notes, by their nature, are more changeable, less permanent, and better designed for targeted remedies that arise for a given time, otherwise they would be General Laws or in the Constitution. The Notes have an entirely different character and use, compared to the Constitution

Some of our Notes have imposed restrictions on the Craft or on Lodges that are no longer necessary. Past Grand Master Maier commented that the law "supports and protects the Work." *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 226 (15th ed. 2005) When the protective purpose is no longer needed, Freemasons should be free of unnecessary obstacles to their responding to the demands of the world that challenge the lodge or its members in their communities as they change from time to time, decade to decade, and century to century. To illustrate, sometimes, for our chief method of transportation, it is prudent to trade-in the once gleaming and reliable Studebaker in the garage.

The renowned Masonic scholar, Dean Roscoe Pound of the Harvard Law School and Past Deputy Grand Master of Massachusetts was wary of overzealous Masonic legislation.

The theory that law is the will of the sovereign, that a sovereign democracy, or its representatives or delegates in its name, can make law by the simple process of translating its will for the time being into chapters and sections, the magic works "be it enacted" justifying all that follow, arose by applying to sovereign peoples the ideas which had been worked out with reference to absolute personal sovereigns. The will of the emperor had the force of law; hence the will of the people is to have the force of law. But a confusion was involved here. The emperor owed it to his subjects to use his will rationally when willing law. The power to give his declarations of will the force of law did not absolve him from obligation to measure the content of those declarations by reason. Our fathers were conscious of this and so sought to limit law-making and give security against arbitrary and capricious action by bills of rights. But these securities are available only within comparatively narrow limits. So long as the theory of law as will prevails, the flood of law-making will continue. In American Masonry we have generally a similar situation, for like reason. *** Having no bills of rights in Masonry and hence nothing beyond a handful of vaguely defined landmarks to restrain him, what then are our barriers against the ravages of the zealous, energetic, ambitious Masonic law-maker? Legal barriers, there are none. But some of the most sacred interests of life have only moral security and on the whole do not lose thereby. *** Another constraining influence is coming forward with the development of Masonic study. Nothing is so dogmatic as ignorance. A better and more general acquaintance with the history, philosophy, and legal traditions of the craft is certain to make our law-makers more cautious, more intelligent, and more effective. R. Pound, *Masonic Jurisprudence* 116-118 (1919)

To modify and relax some of the restrictions imposed by Grand Lodge on Freemasons in its jurisdiction and the subordinate lodges, the

Grand Master proposes that Grand Lodge make modifications to the Notes as follows, effective on passage.

A motion will be made to amend the following Notes as indicated:

A. Past Master Portraits. Note 31.23. By long-established custom, it is permissible to display the charter of the lodge, portraits of the Past Grand Masters and photographs of Past Masters on the walls of a lodge room, ~~although the latter should be displayed elsewhere if suitable space is available in the building.~~ Lodges are encouraged to preserve items of historical interest or value, ~~but they should be displayed in suitable cases, preferably outside the lodge room.~~ -1965 Proceedings 33. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 74 (15th ed. 2005)

B. Book ban. ~~Note 23.9. For reasons not proper to be written, the possession by a Master Mason in our Grand Jurisdiction of a so-called drama entitled "The Spirit of Hiram" without consent of our Grand Lodge is a gross Masonic offense.~~-1963 Proceedings 42. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 41 (15th ed. 2005)

C. Film ban. ~~Note 23.11. It is illegal, improper and contrary to the best interests of Ancient Craft Masonry to use or show at any place within the Grand Jurisdiction of West Virginia the film presentation entitled "Symbol of Pride" or any film production approximating the same. Nor is it legal or proper for any Master Mason of any particular lodge or any sojourner within this jurisdiction to participate in any such use or showing of the same.~~ -1982 Proceedings 136. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 42 (15th ed. 2005)

D. Masonic emblem in lodges. ~~Note 23.12. The use of such gadgets as arm rests, floor mats, slide projectors and light bulbs containing the Masonic emblem in our lodges is not authorized by Grand Lodge and is strictly forbidden.~~-1984 Proceedings 42. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 42 (15th ed. 2005)

E. Worthy Patron. Note 24.C.5. Among the powers and privileges denied and prohibited the Master are the following: *** ~~To serve as Worthy Patron of the Order of the Eastern Star during his term as Master.~~ -1973 Proceedings 41. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 47 (15th ed. 2005)

F. Funeral oration. Note 24.C.13. The Master of a Lodge may transfer his jewel to a Master Mason ~~who has been elected and installed as a Master or Warden,~~ and request him to conduct the burial ceremony. -1879 Proceedings 585 (551). *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 47 (15th ed. 2005)

G. Social use. Note 24.H.12.—~~It is not permissible to incorporate a Masonic Lodge; neither is it permissible to incorporate any appendant part or portion of a Masonic Lodge for the purpose of holding and conducting social meetings and entertainments for its members or engaging in fund-raising~~

~~activities for the benefit of the membership. -1969 Proceedings 33. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 56 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~**H. Scattered ashes.** Note 24.J.10.—The Masonic Funeral Service should not be conducted when the cremated ashes of the deceased Brother are to be scattered over an area rather than deposited in a specific location because such a procedure does not conform to the words of our Funeral Service, and Masonically, the "scattering of ashes" denotes less than honorable disposition of the remains.—1995 Proceedings 26. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 61 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~**I. Apron colors.** Note 24.L.4.The Master Mason's apron is white, but it is not illegal to wear a white apron with blue trimmings and a square with compasses embroidered or painted thereon; although a plain apron is in better taste and more in accordance with Masonic usage. -1883 Proceedings 155. See 24.J.14. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 65 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~**J. Swearing.** Note CT.II.1.7.—Profane swearing at any time is a Masonic offense.—1888 Proceedings 992. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 134 (15th ed. 2005).~~

~~**K. Emblem use.** Note CT.II.1.19.—It is illegal, improper and contrary to the best interests of Ancient Craft Masonry to use the Masonic Emblem (Square and Compasses) separately or in company with any other lodge, fraternity or business organization for the purpose of soliciting donations or funds from the profane or public.—2003 Proceedings 43. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 135 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~**L. This task force.** Note C.T.II.1.24. *** It shall be a violation of Masonic Covenant and shall constitute un-Masonic conduct for any member or sojourner within the Grand Jurisdiction of West Virginia, to provide information to this "Task Force (Talk Group)" on matters pertaining to Masonry without the express written permission of the Grand Master.—1988 Proceedings, 26. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 136 (15th ed. 2005)~~

~~**M. Police firearms.** Note CT.II.1.31. It is improper and illegal for any Brother to carry a firearm into the lodge room. Therefore, the carrying of firearms into a Masonic lodge room is strictly forbidden and will be considered a Masonic offense subject to discipline. This need not apply to a sworn law enforcement officer in uniform or a similar "plain clothes" sworn law enforcement officer with other special firearms safety training. 1998 Proceedings 31. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 137 (15th ed. 2005)~~

The following Rulings are referred to the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence, and the following Rulings are effective immediately.

1. Ruling. *Research lodge membership is distinguished from regular lodge membership.*

Our laws presently prohibit plural membership. It is necessary that a Mason belong to some regular lodge, but he cannot belong to more than one lodge. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 100 (15th ed. 2005)

Past Grand Master Maier notes with approval the lodge of research in London, "the great English lodge of research, Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076 (E.C.)," and refers to it with admiration in his *Commentaries*. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 243 (15th ed. 2005)

A lodge of research, as chartered by a grand lodge with which we are in fraternal communication, is not a regular lodge within meaning of Regulation 46. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 100 (15th ed. 2005) For the same reason, CT.II.1.12 is inapplicable to this situation. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 134 (15th ed. 2005)

Therefore, it is presently compatible with our Masonic Law for a West Virginia Mason also to belong to a chartered lodge of research.

2. Ruling. *Qualified visiting brethren may not be excluded from attendance if race is a factor.*

We learn in the Entered Apprentice's Degree that "Freemasonry unites men of every country, sect, and opinion." It would be contrary to the most basic principle of freemasonry to exclude from attending a lodge in West Virginia a Mason who has been initiated, passed, and raised in a Grand Lodge with which we are in fraternal communication. In fact, to maintain recognition by such other Grand Lodge, our Grand Lodge has made the commitment to admit

a member of the other Grand Jurisdiction provided he could prove such membership and returns the Tiler's Oath. Masters of Lodges in the Grand Jurisdiction of West Virginia are, therefore, reminded that it would be unmasonic to exclude from attendance any member of a lodge from another grand jurisdiction with which we are in fraternal communication on the grounds of his nationality, race, or religion.

3. Ruling. *Approved sources for Prescribed Forms*

When this Grand Lodge in 1944 at its Annual Communication adopted the Prescribed Forms, it was provided that lodges may use only these forms and that they must be obtained from the Grand Secretary's office. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 155 (15th ed. 2005)

Needless to say, in 1944, Grand Lodge had no website. Because these Prescribed Forms are published by the Grand Secretary in the *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* (15th ed. 2005), which comes into the hands of the public, the same forms may also be published on the Grand Lodge's website. A form for the Prescribed Forms may be obtained from the Grand Secretary in person or by mail. The *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* (15th ed. 2005), or the website of this Grand Lodge are also appropriate sources for forms. A lodge, a member, or a prospective candidate may use any such form, provided it is printed, copied, or reprinted without alteration of its wording from said source.

4. Ruling. *A candidate must take his obligation on the Book of the Law that is binding upon his conscience.*

The fundamentals of Masonry are recited as the Landmarks. The third Landmark as recognized in West Virginia is: "The 'Book of the Law' as an indispensable part of the furniture of the Lodge." *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 6 (15th ed. 2005) Past Grand Master Maier's *Commentaries* note that any apparent conflict is only one of the wording of alternative language for the ritual and related procedure, rather than which Book of the Law should be used. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 227 (15th ed. 2005)

In the *Commentaries*, he further observed that when the United Grand Lodge of England promulgated to the Masonic World its Basic Principles for Grand Lodge Recognition in 1929, it included as the third one the requirement that

All initiates shall take their obligation on or in full view of the open Volume of The Sacred Law, by which is meant the revelation from above which is binding upon the conscience of the initiate. *Laws of Masonry in West Virginia* 230 (15th ed. 2005)

Although our Ritual uses the word "Bible," our Landmarks, Constitution, and General Laws and Regulations do not.

Therefore, should a petitioner be of a faith other than Christian, the book of his faith, that volume which, by faith is believed to contain the revealed will of the Grand Architect of the Universe, should be used for his obligation instead of a Bible as the Volume of the Sacred Law or Book of the Law.

5. Ruling. *Approving exemplification of ritual of other grand jurisdictions in West Virginia*

A question has come to the Grand Master several times this year regarding the exemplification of degree work from other grand jurisdictions in a Masonic meeting in West Virginia. Although our law prohibits the use of ritual from another jurisdiction as work in place of West Virginia ritual, lodges here have always been encouraged to have educational programs which inform their members about Freemasonry in other parts of the world. It should be obvious that when visiting brethren from other grand jurisdictions exemplify a part of their ritual for the education of our members, it is not being presented in place of our ritual as work.

The exemplification of ritual or degree work from other grand jurisdictions for educational purposes is approved, provided that the way be clear with the grand lodge whose ritual is to be exemplified, and provided further that it is not attempted to be used as a substitute for West Virginia ritual in actually conferring a degree on our candidate.

The Grand Master's Agenda set forth above is promulgated, and the Rulings are made effective by the authority and the seal of the Grand Master in the State of West Virginia, at the city of Wellsburg, West Virginia, this 18th day of September A.D. 2006, A.L. 6006, and, in the One Hundred and Forty-second year of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the State of West Virginia.

Frank Joseph Haas
Grand Master of Masons
Grand Lodge of West Virginia
AF & AM