

THE GREEN MOUNTAIN FREEMASON

Published at intervals by the
GRAND LODGE OF VERMONT

The Most Ancient and Honorable Society of
FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS of the State of Vermont



2025 DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

Come on out and enjoy a vibrant evening of Brotherhood in a full Lodge room!
A good time to be had by all.

A SINGLE, SUCCESSFUL FORMAT FOR ALL DISTRICT MEETINGS
Dinner @ 6PM; Lodge opens 7PM; Close about 9PM.

D #	RWDDGM	DAY	DATE	LODGE	LOCATION
1	Bro.: Gordon Benson	Friday	10 / 24	White River #90	71 Perley Farm Rd, Royalton (aka Bethel)
2	Bro.: David Young	Tuesday	9 / 30	Mt Anthony #13	504 Main St, Bennington
3	Bro.: John Hogan	Wednesday	9 / 24	Union #2 (w/ St Paul's #25)	1046 Park St, Brandon
4	Bro.: Mike Roberts	Thursday	10 / 16	Rutland #79 (w/ Center #34)	51 Washington St, Rutland
5	Bro.: Bill Ormerod	Monday	10 / 27	Washington #3	100 Dorset St, Suite 11, South Burlington
6	Bro.: Gary Bombard	Thursday	10 / 9	Granite #35	2 Academy St, Barre
7	Bro.: Bryan Schryver	Tuesday	10 / 21	Franklin #4	142 N Main St, St Albans
9	Bro.: Matt Powers	Monday	10 / 13	Pulaski #58	37 Main St North, Wells River
10	Bro.: Tyrell Kerr	Wednesday	9 / 17	Passumpsic #27	115 Eastern Ave, St Johnsbury
12	Bro.: William Achilles				
11	Bro.: Jody Small	Tuesday	10 / 7	Olive Branch #64 (w/ King Solomon's Temple #45)	61 Westminster St, Bellows Falls

Lafayette Masonic
 Cornerstone
 Bicentennial at
 UVM: see p 8.

SUMMER-FALL 2025



FROM THE EAST OF GRAND LODGE

"To achieve all that is possible, we must attempt the impossible."

"To be all we can be, we must dream of being more."

John C. Maxwell

My brothers, it is time to start becoming the fraternity of excellence we are meant to be. We must envision our rituals performed with the highest of standards; we must envision enrichment programs that inspire the deepest understanding of our work and philosophy; we must envision community involvement that shows the world who we are, a brotherhood that is the shining example of what the best in humanity can be. "Make others to know always, that a gentleman stands before them!" We cannot strive for excellence, unless we see in ourselves, the best of ourselves! We cannot inspire our Lodges to be the best they can be without expecting some hard work and perseverance. The train of excellence has been waiting at the station; it is time to get on and go!

The Grand Lodge stands ready to assist in any way we can with a superb team of officers working with you! Officer training, enrichment programs, mentoring, improving our communications, and above all, unity and support to all our appendant bodies, most especially our youth, are just some of the things in the works.

In the words of the philosopher A.D. Gordon, "There will be no victory of light over darkness until we understand the simple truth, that instead of fighting the darkness, we must intensify the light." So, my brothers, let your light so shine before the world that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Fraternally,

Bro.: William "Sandy" Karstens IV

Grand Master

Editor's note: The Grand Master's contribution continues on the next page with his exposition of our Vision, Why, Mission, and Core Values as Vermont Freemasons. That page is formatted to be a stand-alone for ease of printing, contemplation, distribution, and discussion.



BRO.: WILLIAM "SANDY"
KARSTENS IV
M.: W. GRAND MASTER

GRAND LODGE SERVANT-LEADERS:
THE 2025 - 2026 GRAND LINE



MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER
BRO.: WILLIAM "SANDY" KARSTENS IV

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL DEPUTY GRAND MASTER
BRO.: KIRK C. WHITE

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL GRAND SENIOR WARDEN
BRO.: BRIAN A. LOCKE

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL GRAND JUNIOR WARDEN
BRO.: JAMES P. W. GOSS

WORSHIPFUL GRAND LECTURER
BRO.: SETH MICHAEL HOPKINS



Grand Lodge of Vermont, Free & Accepted Masons



Our Vision

To inspire excellence in bringing light to humanity



Our Why

To enhance the Masonic experience of all our Brothers up and down Vermont

To strengthen the condition of Masonry as an institution in the Green Mountain State

Our Mission

- To be a dynamic and relevant organization that labors together in harmony to enhance and enrich the lives of its members, their families, and their communities
- To provide the resources for programs and fellowship activities that inspire its members to higher standards of moral wisdom and ethical conduct
- To provide an intimate fraternal experience that deepens the spiritual lives of its members and encourages them to spread the light of Freemasonry

Our Core Values (Tenets)

Brotherly Love — By this we are taught to regard the whole human species as one family – the high, the low, the rich, the poor – who, as created by one Almighty Parent, and inhabitants of the same planet are to aid, support, and protect each other. On this principle, Masonry unites men of every country, sect, and opinion, and fosters true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance.

Relief — This is a duty incumbent on all men, but particularly on Masons, who are linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection. To soothe the unhappy, to sympathize with them in their misfortunes, to alleviate their miseries, and to restore peace to their troubled minds is the grand aim we have in view. On this basis we form our Masonic friendships and establish our connections.

Truth — This is a divine attribute and the foundation of every virtue. To be good and true is the first lesson we are taught in Masonry. On this theme we contemplate; and by its dictates endeavor to regulate our conduct. Hence, while influenced by this principle, hypocrisy and deceit are unknown among us; sincerity and plain dealing distinguish us; and the heart and tongue join together in promoting each other's prosperity.

FROM THE GRAND SECRETARY'S DESK



Dear Brethren,

As I begin my term as your Grand Secretary, I want to take a moment to encourage you to reach out—whether you need assistance, information, or simply wish to share your thoughts or feedback. I am here to serve you, and I welcome the opportunity to connect.

You can contact me in several ways:

Email: glsec@vtfreemasons.org

Phone: Call the Grand Lodge office at (802) 223-1883 and select option #2 – this will ring directly to my mobile phone.

Text: You can also text me at (802) 342-1820.

The Grand Secretary's chair is never “empty” when it comes to communication. In today's world of constant contact, I am available each day until my phone shuts off at 10:30 PM.

As I become more familiar with the daily operations of the Grand Lodge office, my focus is on working alongside our Brothers to streamline our procedures and strengthen our communication.

We all recognize that communication is a challenge in many aspects of our Masonic work. Thankfully, we have powerful tools to help us overcome this—chief among them is Grand View. As I continue training and exploring its features, I look forward to using Grand View to share information more effectively with the Craft.

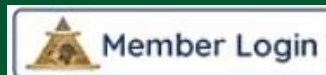
Please take a moment to update your member profile in Grand View, especially your email address. Keeping your contact information current is essential to ensure we can reach you with important updates and notices.

If you have any trouble accessing your Grand View account or updating your information, don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to help.

Fraternally,

Bro. Chris McPhee, Grand Secretary

Editor's note: All Vermont Freemasons may access GrandView by visiting the Grand Lodge website www.vtfreemasons.org and clicking on the “Member Login” button in the upper right corner. It is also linked directly in this trestleboard, at right.



Brethren & Guests at the Grand Lodge Banquet Following Installation (Killington, June 11)



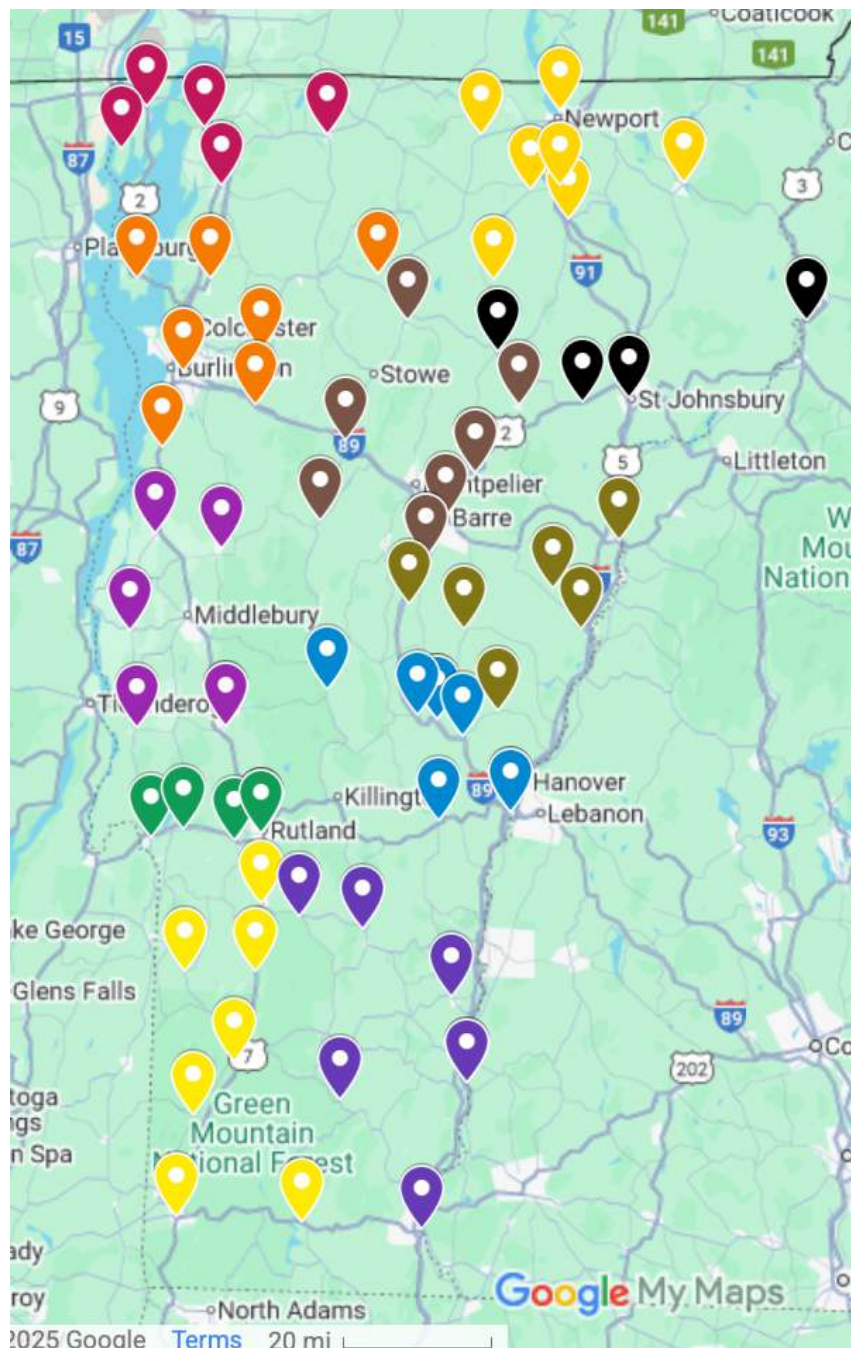
When You're a Traveling Man — Be Sure of Where You Are Going!

Map of Vermont Masonic Lodges (color groups indicate the eleven Masonic Districts)

Clicking anywhere on the map below will open a Google map.

On the Google map, clicking on any "pin" will tell you the name of the Lodge and its address.

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1I5SEvoL9uix09wZUZPwxsHQLs9F-VSw&usp=sharing>



Above: Bro.: Victor Stone, MWPGM (L) receives his Scottish Rite HGA medal from Bro.: Sandy Karstens (R).

Below: Bro.: Jim Goss (L) presents Bro.: Paul Mosher, MWPGM (R) with a Masonic rifle commemorating Bro.: Paul's successful completion of his term as Grand Master



Bro.: Jim Stevens, MWPGM, has established a dedicated email address for lodge, award, degree and similar photos.

Bro.: Jim will be posting photos sent to that web address on the Grand Lodge website. The address is:
grandlodgvt@gmail.com .

From Bro.: James P. W. Goss, R.:W.: Grand Junior Warden

Brothers: Firstly, I want to thank all of you for your vote of confidence in electing me Grand Junior Warden for the ensuing year. I thoroughly enjoyed my time as Grand Lecturer and leading up a splendid group of District Deputy Grand Masters and I am pleased that I can continue my service to the Craft in this new position.

With the restructuring of the CARE program, which traditionally has been organized by the Grand Wardens, one of the first questions I was asked was “what are you going to do with all of your free time.” While I honestly can say I never seem to have difficulty filling my “free time” with masonic endeavors, my hope is that I can continue and expand a project I began while Grand Lecturer.

Vermont freemasonry is in a time of transition. While our fraternity is slowly pulling out of the turmoil caused by the passing of the World War II generation and the pandemic, many of our lodges are facing unique challenges involving everything from membership issues to physical plant problems to serious failings in ritual proficiency. I believe that direct involvement and in-person assistance by Grand Lodge Officers is critical to addressing these challenges.

Thus, during my term as Grand Junior Warden, I will be putting a special emphasis on lodge outreach and assistance in coordination with our Grand Lecturer and District Deputy Grand Masters. If your lodge or District is having problems or challenges that might benefit from some outside back-up or Grand Lodge support, you should feel free to call or email me any time. Over the last two years, my lodge outreach efforts have involved everything from serving as a special lodge speaker, to running lodges of ritual instruction, to meeting with lodges that are seeking guidance with the lodge consolidation process, membership rejuvenation or sale of a lodge building. One of the real joys of this office is truly serving our craft by putting “boots on the ground” in visiting and working with our lodges directly. If you feel this sort of thing would be of assistance, I am only an email away.

Again, thank you so much for the privilege of serving you in this position and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the next year.

Fraternally,

Bro. J. Jim Goss

Grand Junior Warden

jgoss@fgmvt.com



At Grand Lodge, Killington:
Bro. Don Murray, Grand Piper

Grand Lodge Spouses Program (Caption for Following Page)

While all of our members were busy at the recent Grand Lodge Session, their masonic spouses were having fun on their own. This year's Grand Lodge Spouses Program was attended by approximately 20 women from around the Northeast as well as Quebec. The morning began with a coffee mixer and a presentation by noted historian and speaker Howard Coffin about Vermont women in the Civil War. The women then travelled to the beautiful Mountain Top Inn in Chittenden for lunch. The special guest there was Karen Campbell of the US Veterans Administration who spoke about some of the programs for needy veterans in Vermont, many of which are strongly supported by various masonic bodies. The event ended with a service project where the assembled women put together small “necessaries” bags for patients at the Vermont Veterans Administration Hospital in White River Junction. An enjoyable day of friendship and service which, after all, is what Freemasonry is all about.



Grand Lodge Spouses Program (see caption previous page)



Here and There Around the Quarries

Second Masonic District (SW Vermont)

Our Bro. Tim Pinsonneault is in his 11th year collecting winter coats and other cold weather apparel. He collects during the year and goes to different schools and sets up racks of both kids' and adults' coats, boots, snow pants as well as hats and mittens. He sets up his coat drive starting in late October before it gets too cold and opens the doors at Mount Anthony Lodge in Bennington. He then goes to different schools. Normally at Mt. Anthony Union High School alone he gives on average 200 coats out each year.

If you have anything that you no longer need, want, or maybe doesn't fit any longer, this would be a good way to do some good and to get rid of something you aren't using anymore.

If you or your Lodge want to contribute winter apparel or funds, please reach out to Bro. Tim:

timpin97@gmail.com



Bro.: Art Howard's cotton candy was a big hit at the annual Third Masonic District Picnic at Button Bay State Park in Ferrisburgh. About 60 Brothers and Families turned out to enjoy a summer afternoon together.

Fourth Masonic District (Rutland and west)

September 12, 2025 – Friday

Lee Lodge #30 is planning a "Ladies at the Table" event to be held at Lee Lodge in Castleton. More information to come.

September 27, 2025 – Saturday

Eureka Lodge #75 will be sponsoring a golf tournament at the Lake St. Catherine Country Club in Poultney at 1:00 pm. \$400 Team / \$100 Individual. Dinner included to follow. Prizes given. Contact Gary Jamieson at (802) 265-3606 or (802) 558-1424.



The Grand Lodge of Vermont rededicates the cornerstone at UVM 200 years to the day after Brother and General Lafayette laid it on his visit as The Nation's Guest.
1825 — June 29 — 2025



The American Friends of Lafayette is in Burlington, VT.

1h · 🌐

Burlington, Vermont (UVM):

After meeting with veterans and the public at City Hall Park, Lafayette continued his visit to the University of Vermont, where he commemorated his 1825 laying of the cornerstone for the Old Mill building—rebuilt after a fire the year before his arrival. Just eleven days earlier, he had laid the cornerstone for Boston's Bunker Hill Monument, and in Burlington, he brought the same honor to UVM.

As in 1825, many of the dignitaries in attendance, including Lafayette, were Freemasons. The Grand Lodge of Vermont reenacted the traditional Masonic cornerstone consecration ceremony at the historic Old Mill building site on University Place.

Meet Bro.: Seth Michael Hopkins, Wor.: Grand Lecturer



Bro. Seth Hopkins
Grand Lecturer

850 Park St
Brandon, VT 05733

Text (preferred):
(802) 247-3300

Email (also great):
oskarhop@me.com

Phone: same number,
and I'll do my best

Brothers, I've just been given the honor of a lifetime. I want you all to know I treasure it, and I will work to deserve the trust. Being named Grand Lecturer means I have a rare privilege to serve my Brother Vermont Masons — you! — and Vermont Masonry as a way of life.

The challenge at hand is to introduce myself on this page without it reading like my obituary. (The obituary will come later, possibly when I least expect it.) Essentially, I'm a Blue Lodge Mason. For me, the connections and the ritual experience of the Blue Lodge are what resonate deeply in my soul and in my life. For 25 years or more, I have been a life member of York Rite, Scottish Rite, and Shrine, and they all have unique places in our shared fraternal experience. I encourage all Master Masons to explore them and participate. But also: stay anchored in your own Lodge and to your Brothers there.

The lodge that raised me to the sublime degree 27½ years ago is a hundred miles from my home in Brandon. Let's just get this out up front: it's in Massachusetts. I'm from away. I'm sorry. Wish I could have done better on that. I spent the first five years of my life in New Ipswich, NH, and the next 24 just over the state line in little Ashby, MA. So I've lived in Vermont (in three different big old houses we've fixed up, all in Brandon) for only 20 years, which means I may as well have stepped off the Vermont Translines bus yesterday.

When the pandemic struck, I got a phone call from my mother Lodge: a Master I never met asking if my family needed any help. When the Brother who raised me got his 50-year Past District Deputy "diploma" (a thing down there), I drove down to celebrate him. There's almost no one left there from when I was a young man and a junior Mason, but that Lodge gave me a solid foundation to start my Masonic journey. Blue Lodge Masonry is all about squaring our ashlar and fitting ourselves into the Temple of Masonry with our Brothers. I'm happy to report that after twenty years, the Massachusetts ritual truly sounds "wrong" to me and the Vermont ritual is the ritual my heart speaks even when my tongue trips.

Bro. George Deblon appointed me deputy grand organist in 2015, and I have enjoyed (as Bro. James Chancey, the grand organist, puts it) "sitting in the corner and making noise" with Bro. James at Grand Lodge and at LOTS — I suppose over a hundred — of District Meetings over the past decade. I'm also chair of Masonic Relief & Assistance. I was elected Master of St Paul's Lodge #25 in 2019 and 2020, then was honored to be RWDDGM#3 for 2021 and 2022, and elected Grand Junior Deacon in 2023. I'm a plural member of Union Lodge #2 where I'm Master this year, Fibonacci Lodge #112, and Mt Anthony Lodge #13, plus my two lodges in Massachusetts and one in Siberia where my wife grew up and my in-laws live.

My wife Olia and I were, unwittingly, married on "802 Day" (08 / 02) and just celebrated our 22nd anniversary. We've been self-employed together in Vermont tourism for 21 years. (Before that, I was a history teacher.) The Grand Architect blessed us with three daughters, all born at home in Brandon (the middle one was in a hurry and delivered with no midwife), and all homeschooled through 8th grade: Klara is now 19 and in the Vermont State University resort & hospitality management degree program at Killington; Agatha is 17, and we're about to take her to the University of Arizona in Tucson where she intends to major in Linguistics; and Renata is 15 and a rising sophomore at Rutland High School, where all three daughters flourished when it was time for high school.

After Vermont's required-of-flatlanders decade of not saying a word in public, I served a couple of years on my Town's budget advisory committee, was elected a selectman eight times, and, for my sins, was named the professional town manager of the Town of Brandon in 2023.

I'm so excited to share our Masonic journey together, Brothers. If there is any way I can help you in your Masonic journey, you have only to say the word.

Fraternally,
Bro.: Seth Hopkins, Grand Lecturer