

Report of the Committee on Activities and Testimonials

Illustrious Commander-in-Chief and Members of New Hampshire Council of Deliberation:

The Committee made plans to hold in a mid-day celebration honoring our MSA recipients on Sunday, November 1, 2020, at the Bektash Shrine Center in Concord. It was to be catered by Hart's Turkey Farm.

Those to have been honored were elected on June 6, 2020 at the 97th New Hampshire Council of Deliberation Annual Meeting, which was held virtually due to the pandemic restrictions. They were:

Brother Guy R. Martineau, 32°, MSA, Valley of Nashua
Brother Donald W. Milbrand, Jr., 32°, MSA, Valley of Concord

Due to continuing restrictions on gatherings, the celebration had to be cancelled, and the Deputy, Ill.: Brother Mark C. Roth, 33°, would arrange to present the candidates their jewels certificates and pins at a later date, either publicly or privately.

The Committee is planning for the 2021 Thirty-third Testimonial and MSA Award Ceremony to again be held at the Bektash Shrine Center in Concord, NH on Sunday, November 7, 2021.

For the Committee,

John E. Lobdell, 33°, Co-Chairman
Thomas S. Lowe, 33°, Co-Chairman
Jeffrey L. Brown, 33°, M.S.A.
Robert C. Lethbridge, 33°, M.S.A.
Gary E. Larson, 33°, M.S.A.

May 12, 2021

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND LAWS

Illustrious Commander-in-Chief and Members of New Hampshire Council of Deliberation:

As there have been no questions or issues referred to this Committee up to this time, the members of the Committee on Constitution and Laws have nothing to report.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Wayne Libby Jr., 33°, M.S.A., Chairman

Nicholas C. Martel, 33°

Jeffery M. Brown, 33°

John A. Loven, 32°

Michael F. Ripberger, 32°, M.S.A.

Education & Leadership Development Committee

Illustrious Commander-in-Chief, Officers and members of New Hampshire Council of Deliberation:

Our Virtual COD Workshop was well attended during the trials of social distancing and isolation. Under the leadership of our Deputy we had a very interesting and informative interactive meeting. The distinguished Ill. Mark C. Roth invited guest to provide information various topics

Illustrious Richard W. Elliot talked about the history and upcoming project renovations for the library in Lexington. He went into detail on how the library was moved from Boston to Lexington in 1968 and the many updates which have taken place to keep the library informative and evolving. He mentioned plans for further updates to the library coming in the near future. He also mentioned there was a hall of fame for famous masons already in the works.

Illustrious Robert Bianchi did a portrayal of John Staves and gave some history of the William Pit Tavern. He talked of how John Stavers initially decided to take the name of his old tavern and name his new tavern the Earl of Halifax. With the English trying to keep the colonist under tight reigns, an outspoken William Pitt sought to keep the freedoms the colonist had attained from the creation of the colony. Just prior to the outbreak of the American Revolution, John Stavers renamed his Earl of Halifax Tavern, to the William Pitt Tavern. The third floor was added in 1790 specifically for the use of Lodge meetings. General Lafayette and General Washington are reportedly to have been hosted on the first floor.

The Grand Lodge of NH also has further information @
<https://www.nhgrandlodge.org/a-history-of-the-william-pitt-tavern/#.YKJO46hKiUk>

Illustrious James O. Dill, Jr., talked on the Degree Process and how the videos which Supreme Council generates are of Cinematic quality. "Thursday night at the Rite" has also been a huge success and conduit for members to stay active and engaged in the degrees.

Brennan J. Parken, 32°, Director of Membership for Supreme Council talked of the goals of Supreme Council's membership team. Specifically how valleys can interact with members given the restrictions. He stressed we need to be vigilant, connected, and engaged with our members. Statistics were compared the Spring reunion and the Fall reunion showed why the virtual reunions are a necessity and were a productive way to keep membership interest. He talked of the promotional tools available to all the valleys from Supreme Council. Ideas such as watch parties, drive through passport stamping, degree discussions, and "radio" style degrees.

Other items addressed by III. Brother Roth were: reviewing the “new member checklist”, resources in the video Library, “value” of our mission and vision statements.

Illustrious Carl Bickford talked on the scholarships.

III Brother Elliot talked on the MSA deadline and guidelines.

Illustrious Ken Clay talked on the youth advisor of the year details.

Illustrious Dave Collins talked on first responder’s perspectives, and the recognition due to the individuals on the front lines.

Even though at times we cannot be “together” we should always have in our thoughts our members. The belief and comfort of the brotherly love we all feel for our members under the Scottish Rite Banner is what makes our fraternity a beacon of hope and comfort.

We can continue to make strides for our fraternity in the areas of Growth, and Innovation. I am, however, concerned with the many limitations the presiding officers have incurred there are still many hurtles before them. Valleys will need to rigorously work to re-engage their officers to providing quality membership experiences.

Respectfully,
Gary E. Roy, 33° MSA

REPORT OF THE MEDIA & PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

III.: Commander in Chief, Members of the New Hampshire Council of Deliberation, and Distinguished Guests:

Valley communication and publicity statewide are almost exclusively through electronic media. That is followed by any Valley newsletters. This committee thanks those who've provided content and ideas over the past year. Our greatest need is content; not only for Valley newsletters, but also for the New Hampshire Scottish Rite website, Valley newsletters and Facebook pages, and members to help post and publish them.

Social media

With the inability to meet in person over the past year, social media has become a critical format to keep in contact with our members. Scottish Rite has been fortunate to have a robust, proactive response from our Supreme Council to address this. Brand standards set by Supreme Council have benefitted our online presence with standardized Scottish Rite images. On the state level, we have room for improvement.

While all five Valleys have a Facebook page, only two are actively using them to post news and information. The Valley of Concord is to be commended for its Facebook posts. In the first five months of 2021, they've tripled the number of posts they had over the previous five months. The Valley of Nashua continues to regularly post to both the NH Consistory page and the Valley of Nashua group page. The Valley of Nashua also has a Twitter account.

In addition, each Valley has a WordPress page for keeping members up to date. Posts would automatically be added to the Valley's webpage. Unfortunately, no Valley except Nashua has used it over the past year, with some even further back than that. Those links have been removed from the Valley pages as they gave a negative impression of the Valleys.

Email campaigns

Over the past year, New Hampshire Consistory emailed 47 targeted messages to its members, plus 20 more series of emails, called campaigns, informing members of an event. Campaigns let members reply with the click of a button about attending, and if no action is taken, one or more follow-up reminders are sent. Response rates continue to improve.

Unfortunately, one-third of our members do not receive emails sent with the software we use for email communication. Most (70%) of these 356 members have no email address (251). The remainder either have an invalid email address or ISP (internet service provider) preventing our emails to be received (54), or the member opted-out from receiving our emails (51).

Website

The state website, nhscottishrite.org, has now been in use for a couple years. While the format is cleaner and less cluttered-looking than the former site, we will regularly review it to ensure it is easy to navigate and has eye appeal.

The website is used in conjunction with our email announcements to members. Members who use the email's one-button click to RSVP, has his reply recorded and is usually brought to a page on the website; acknowledging his reply. The website also has information pages for members, such as the Council of Deliberation Proceedings.

Web pages visited

In the last year, the website received just over 3,500 unique visits. For each of those visits, an average of 2.12 pages were looked at. These numbers are skewed, as some of our web pages are used with our email campaigns to thank members for their response. The most activity takes place in March and April, which is the time that scholarship applications are being downloaded.

Recent site activity shows the most visited pages are:

1. Home page
2. NH COD Annual Meeting page
3. NH Info for Cleveland 2021
4. (Tied) Valley pages (Concord, Portsmouth-Dover, Nashua); 2020 COD Proceedings
5. (Tied) Thank-you page; Scholarship Application page

The Thank-you page activity from email notices when members RSVP that they won't be attending an event.

BeAFreemason.org

Supreme Council, in conjunction with the Southern Jurisdiction and Shriners unveiled a new website, www.BeAFreemason.org, to be a central point of online information about Freemasonry, and how to join. This follows Supreme Council's "Not Just A Man, A Mason." marketing campaign that was made available at no charge for Grand Lodges and local Masonic Lodges to use. Material is available at www.notjustaman.org, and has been used by Valleys and individual members on Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and on websites.

In conclusion, we continue to ask all Committees, Valley Officers, and Valley Membership Committee members to assist us by providing photos of Scottish Rite events, as well as press releases for distribution to newspapers and other media outlets. We invite all to share observations and suggestions for bettering all our communication with members and with the public.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert M. Porter, 33°, Chairman
Jeffrey M. Brown, 33°
Edward N. Lewis, 33°, M.S.A.
Nicholas C. Martel, 33°
Dennis A. Sheridan, 33°, M.S.A.



Scottish Rite of New Hampshire Council of Deliberation Membership Development Committee

Annual Report for 2020-2021

Introduction

The 2020-2021 year has been difficult for every group. This global pandemic has limited what groups like the Scottish Rite have been able to do. This is especially true for the New Hampshire Membership Development Committee.

The committee spent much of the 2019-2020 year developing a Membership Action Plan for the jurisdiction. The plan was ready in the Summer of 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic halted all in-person activities. The committee released the plan in the Fall of 2020, anticipating that by Spring valleys would be able to implement their own action plans.

This, of course, did not happen. COVID-19 kept the lockdown in place through the winter and well into the Spring. Because of this, the committee extended the 2020-2021 Action Plan and turned it into the 2020-2022 plan.

Valley Action Plans

It is imperative that valleys develop their own action plans. Too often we plan activities in what could be called a scattershot fashion. Rather than develop a program where each activity supports the other activities, we tend to look at things one activity at a time. Some of the activities planned could work against other planned activities.

In order to help avoid this, the committee is offering training programs on event planning and creative problem solving. Both planning and problem solving are discussed in one, three-hour session. At the end of the session, each valley will have started work on its own action plan. The training session will be conducted in each of the New Hampshire valleys. Valley action plans are divided into five sections: goals, re-invigoration events, membership retention plans, Masonic service activities and recruitment programs.

Recommendations

It is recommended that a planning committee be formed made up of the five valley membership chairmen plus two members of the COD Membership Development Committee. This committee would meet periodically to ensure the events planned in one valley do not conflict with the events in another and to determine if there are ways valleys could assist each other with action plan projects.

To encourage members to visit other valleys, a recognition program be developed for members who visit all of the New Hampshire valleys in one Scottish Rite Year.

Respectfully and fraternally submitted:

Richard J. Thompson
Chairman, COD Membership Development Committee

For the Committee: Karl Bickford, Mark Ciarametaro, Ronald Crane, William Lawson, James O'Donnell

COD Membership Committee Action Plan attached

2020 – 2021 Youth Report

Just as all our organizations have shifted gears over the past year due to the pandemic, so has our Youth Organizations. The members of NH Rainbow and NH DeMolay shifted to a virtual format for most of the past year. Through this medium they were able to chat and play games, Kahoots! was a crowd favorite. This also gave them the opportunity to have some form of social interaction when many were isolated at home.

Last summer and fall, many took the opportunity of warmer weather to get outside for social distant get together. NH Rainbow was able to hold a few social distant in person events on a local and state level. One such event was their annual Leadership Camp held on the back field at the Concord Masonic Lodge. These young ladies took the opportunity to sharpen their leadership skills as well as talk about life's challenges and their mental health.

Fast forward a few months, of more virtual get together, to spring of 2021. NH Rainbow has started to slowly meet in person. The assemblies have been starting to work on various projects and slowly get back to business meetings. The young ladies have had the opportunity to get together for an outdoor movie night and celebrate the Homecoming of the Grand Worthy Advisor, Nykola. The assemblies are getting excited for that main event of Grand Assembly on 4th of July weekend.

Our young men of NH DeMolay have been virtual for some time as well. When they are safely able to gather, the young men have met for game nights to foster some comradery. Some of the chapter's have gone out into nature to enjoy several rail trails walks. They have also taken the opportunity to enjoy pizza and ice cream outside.

The young men are looking forward to getting back in the swing of things. Upper Valley Chapter has an excited 12-year-old waiting to join as soon as it can be safely done. The young men are looking forward to welcoming in this young man and many more. The State Master Councilor, Alex, is looking forward to attending International DeMolay in Texas.

Just as our Youth are looking to the future, we too need to look at the future. In order to do that, we must first look at ourselves. Take a look in the mirror, take a look at yourself and what you can do to help ensure there is a future for our Youth and our organizations.

There are many ways to give back to our Youth. Time is the greatest gift you can give to our Youth; show them you care. The state events held throughout the year are a great opportunity to attend and start to get to know the young ladies and young men. These events can range from some fun event for comradery to formal events to showcase their leadership skills.

Do you know a Brother on an assembly or chapter board? Ask them if you can attend a local event with them. It can be a fun event like bring your own ice cream or going on a walk. It can be a more formal setting and attend a business meeting. Our Youth appreciate when you show up, say hello, and show you care.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jerome T Becker, Chair

Jeffrey L. Brown, C. Wayne Libby, Jr., Karl Olson, David A. Rich

Deputy Representatives Report
Valley of Nashua
2020 - 2021

Illustrious Commander-in-Chief and members of the New Hampshire Council of Deliberation. This is my report on the Valley of Nashua for the years 2020-2021.

It has again been my honor to serve as your Deputy's Representative during the past year. As, you know this year has been far from normal due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Most in-person meetings have had to be postponed or moved to a Zoom environment. We were not able to do any live degree work this year. This does not by any means indicate that the Valley was inactive. Through the means of virtual meetings and watch parties we were able to accomplish a lot.

The Executive Board has met regularly via Zoom and we have been able to keep things going. We have been spending a good deal of time working on the Valley of Excellence program and have made progress; although we have a ways to go.

Our Membership Chairman, Richard Thompson has put together a plan of action which he will be unveiling very soon to members of our Valley, as well as the other Valleys in the state.

"Thursday Nite at the Rite" has proved to be a God send. Though this program we were able to initiate, qualify, and welcome several new 32° members into our fold.

I am particularly proud of our Valley for having been chosen to present the 30° as part of this program. Under the direction of III. Brothers Larry Gullett and Jerome Becker a group of our actors were able to rehearse and perform and record the 30° on stage at Supreme Council in Lexington. On Thursday April 15, 2021 it was presented to the whole Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. We had a watch party in Nashua that night. What a great performance it was.

I found this program to be particularly helpful when I noticed on the Member's Center that I was short two degrees for filling out my passport. I was able to complete these at "Thursday Nite at the Rite" and got my gold passport. Ironically the last degree that I needed was the 30° which was performed by our own Valley.

I was, also, proud of our Most Wise Master Br. Robert S. Bean, III, M.S.A. who went to Lexington and represented the Rose Croix at the virtual reunion broadcast to the NMJ .

On Memorial Day May 31 , 2021 I presented the Scottish Rite Medal to Cadet Demitri Foote at a ceremony held by Manchester High School West NJROTC at the Masonic Temple in Manchester.

Now that things are starting to normalize again, I look forward to a vibrant "return to work" in our Valley. We have already planned to present the 15° in the fall . We will be presenting the 18° at the joint Valley reunion to be held on November 6, 2021.

The future of the Valley of Nashua looks bright. I am confident that we will bounce right back from all that occurred during the past year and carry on.

Respectfully Submitted

III. Karl H. Bickford, III,33°, M.S.A.

Deputy's Representative

Valley of Nashua