

North Carolina

August Edition

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Sir Knights:

As I sit here on June 21, 2003, it is difficult to accept the fact that almost 25% of our York Rite year has been completed. However, looking back on the York Rite events which have occurred since March 25th, a lot has been accomplished.

Your three Grand presiding officers have completed the 9 District meetings (we have 10 Districts, but Districts 7 and 8 were combined for the purpose of that meeting). We have had two Local meetings (these are meetings very similar to the District meetings but with one local body and their visitors). The Grand presiding officers feel that we belong to each local body and want to be a part of them, if only for one evening.

In every meeting, we have been greeted with smiles, positive attitudes, and grips of friendship. When we talk about our theme, "Accentuate the Positives", we experience renewed commitment, hear positive communication, and see sincere concern for the York Rite charities.

We have enjoyed renewing old friendships and making new friends with the Companions and Sir Knights, both in and out of state. I have just returned from the Southeastern Regional York Rite Conference which was held in Myrtle Beach South Carolina. Two of our own, Sir Knight David L. Hargett, Jr., Governor General of the York Rite Sovereign College of North America and Companion Donald B. Street, PMEGHP, were featured speakers. They did themselves and North Carolina proud. We are looking forward to the Grand Assembly of North Carolina, International Order of the Rainbow for Girls; St. John's Day; and the Great Smoky Mountain York Rite Summer Assembly in Maggie Valley, to name only a few of the special events yet to come. By the time you read this, all of the afore mentioned events will have taken place but it seems we have to write in past, present, and future tenses in order to say what we would like.

I would like to share a wonderful experience I had on June 4th in Charlotte North Carolina. The District Deputies of the 31st Masonic District, along with Brother Allen Hardy, put together a very impressive program to honor Brother John Belk and his ancestor, Brother Hezekiah Alexander. Part of the event consisted of a Master Mason=s Lodge being opened in a log structure adjacent to the Hezekiah Alexander House. The Lodge was opened by the Worshipful Master of East Gate Lodge No. 692. After the Lodge was opened we all renewed our obligation.

When the Lodge was closed we proceeded to the Charlotte Museum of History (located on the same property where the Hezekiah Alexander House stands) for the formal tributes to Brothers Belk and Alexander.

I had been invited to prepare a tribute and participate in the program. My chest bulged with pride as I brought greetings from the York Rite Masons of North Carolina.

The Hezekiah Alexander House is the oldest Masonic building in Mecklenburg County. Brother Alexander was an active Mason and politician. He was a signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration, a delegate to the convention at Halifax, and was one of the signers of the Halifax Resolves.

Brother John Belk is an active Mason and has served as Mayor of Charlotte. The Belk Foundation, established by Brother Belk and his family furnished and installed the American Freedom Bell at the Charlotte Museum of History. At the appropriate time, the bell rang three times to honor the men and women defending our freedom and principles. It was truly a wonderful experience and a perfect time to “Accentuate the Positives”.

An art studio in the Salisbury area has donated a *Bob Timberlake Print* to your Grand Presiding officers to be used as a fundraiser for our York Rite charities. This is a beautiful print titled “Studio Moon”. The print, which will be matted and framed, is 24 x 30 inches. We will have the print with us at various meetings and events. Raffle tickets for the print are \$1.00 each. Please see either of us as we travel around or contact us by phone or email for tickets.

PLANNED AUGUST ACTIVITIES

<u>DATE</u>	<u>MEETING</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
August 4	Local (Table Council)	Salisbury
August 9	Order of the Purple Cross	Indianapolis
August 11	Local	Wilson
August 12	Local	Washington
August 17-20	Triennial	St. Louis
August 26	Eastern Star meeting	Stokesdale
August 28	Local (Picnic)	Durham

Saint John=s Day

At a gathering such as we had at Oxford this year , it is impossible to see and speak to everyone. This brief note is just to thank each of you who came and offered your support in any way, shape or form. To those who would have liked to be there and for whatever the reason, were unable to attend, we hope to see you there next year.

Sincerely and fraternally,

M. Gene Lewelllyn, KYCH, KCT, 33
R. E. Grand Commander

He who kneels before God can stand before anyone.