



Chapter Notes

Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas



Winter 2026

Patrick C. Carr, MEGHP 2025-2026



From the Grand High Priest

We are now at the beginning of a new year for each of us as the calendar has now turned from 2025 to 2026. A new year means new ideas, new resolve, and new tasks to be completed. I hope this new year is one which finds each of you blessed beyond measure and give you strength and ideas for your personal development and growth.

If we are desirous of growing our Chapters, we must first decide how we want to grow. Growth is not simply numbers. I know that sounds a bit odd coming from a presiding officer in a Grand body, but it is nothing short of the truth. If we want to grow our Chapters, we must decide what we expect of our membership. Some of the expectations for growth should include:

1. A plan for how we will recruit new members to the Chapter;
2. An idea for how we will perform the degree work; and
3. Putting into practice what value we will give to our new members when they attend our meetings.

Recruitment is more about retention of our new members than it is about convincing them to join our Chapters. We must provide each of our members a quality masonic experience if we have any hope of keeping them engaged and active within their capitular experience. We have the ability to perform these tasks and I would encourage each of our membership to take a long look at how we manage our meetings and engage our membership. This could be the key to having your members return to your Chapter meetings and will end in positive growth for your Chapter in the long run.

Be blessed, Companions! My wish for each of you is a happy new year filled with successes and renewed vigor for your lives, your jobs, and for your interest in our Craft.

Fraternally,

Companion Patrick C. Carr
M.:E.: Grand High Priest



Capitular Degrees In Wichita

Wichita Chapter No. 33 traveled to the domicile of Albert Pike Lodge No. 303 to confer the Mark Master, Past Master, and Most Excellent Master Degree on Brother Sean Joseph Riley. It was an excellent opportunity for the Companions of the Chapter to hold a meeting in a different facility and to expose those Brothers of the Lodge to capitular masonry. Congratulations to Wichita Chapter for conferring the first three degrees of the Chapter of Royal Arch

Masons on a new candidate who is now ready to advance to the mysteries of the Holy Royal Arch.

MEGHP Visits Continue in 2026



The Grand High Priest has been continuing to visit the Chapters within the jurisdiction and has only four Chapters left to visit during 2026. Junction City Chapter No. 17 and Liberal Chapter No. 65 will receive their official visit in January, Mt. Horeb Chapter No. 43 in Hiawatha will receive their Official Visit in February, and Lawrence Chapter No. 4 will receive the Grand High Priest's final Official Visit in March.

During the last capitular year, the Grand High Priest has visited eleven out of fifteen Chapters across the state. During his visits, he has been impressed with the quality of the membership. Each Chapter is doing something unique and each has their own version of success. While one Chapter may not have as many Companions in attendance as they desire, their fellowship and interactions far outweighed the shortfall of their attendance. During a visit to Kingman Chapter No. 71, the Grand High Priest discovered history from the Chapter which he had not seen or even realized existed. At Winfield Chapter No. 31, the Grand High Priest and his officers discovered a beautiful and elegant lodge room filled with a rich history.



Each visit has been a unique opportunity to visit with Companions and hear their desires, their frustrations, and their hope for the future of each of their Chapters. The Grand High Priest, and the officers of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas, exist to help and assist our Chapters in any way they deem necessary. The Official Visits have continued to prove that all capitular Masons are encouraged to visit another Chapter during 2026 and see what they each offer.



2026 Grand Chapter Convocation

The 2025 South Central York Rite Meetings and Department Conference will be held in League City, Texas and will start on Friday, September 19, 2025. The Friday sessions include meetings with the General Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons International and will conclude before the evening meal with the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International. On Saturday the sessions will continue with the Grand Encampment Knights Templar of the USA holding their Department Conference. All York Rite Masons are invited to register and to attend. This is a great place to meet with other York Rite Masons from around the region and to hear their ideas for making our York Rite stronger and more vibrant.

Nominations for Bronze Medal

It will be the end of the capitular before we even realize it. It is already 2026, and we have installed our new officers into our Chapters here in Kansas. This means the Annual Convocation will be happening in May, 2026, and there are several awards which the Grand High Priest has the honor, and the responsibility, to give each year.

The most difficult of these awards is the General Grand Chapter Distinguished Service Medal in Bronze. This award is presented to a worthy Companion of the Holy Royal Arch each year at the Annual Convocation on Friday evening. This award can only be given by the Grand High Priest and cannot be presented to a progressive line officer of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas or to a Past Grand High Priest. This award is intended to recognize the hard work, devotion, and commitment to unyielding faithfulness to the tenets of Royal Arch Masonry.



Those who are eligible include: Any companion in good standing who has not served as a Chapter High Priest, a Companion serving as an aide or assistant to a Grand Chapter Officer, a Companion who has served as a constituent Chapter High Priest, or a Past High Priest serving as an appointed officer in a line of Grand Chapter Officers. Those excluded from the award include a Past High Priest serving as an elected officer in a line of Grand Chapter Officers, a sitting or Past Grand High Priest, a Past Grand High Priest serving as an officer in a constituent Chapter, or a Past Grand High Priest serving as an officer in a Grand Chapter.

If you, or your Chapter, is aware of a Companion who you believe meets these qualifications and merits the distinction, please send your nomination to the Grand High Priest, Patrick C. Carr, before February 38, 2026, so the Companion may be considered for the award.



Sweetheart Award

The Ladies of our Chapters are the ones who keep us going. They do this by either helping us supply meals, set up or clean up our Chapter rooms before or after meetings, and most of all support us as we endeavor to make ourselves and the world a better place with our participation in Royal Arch Masonry. Sometimes it takes more than a simple "thank you" to even begin to adequately show our appreciation to our ladies for all they continue to do for us as Royal Arch Masons.



The General Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons International realized many years ago the importance of our ladies and designed a special award just for them. The General Grand Chapter Sweetheart Award is available to all Royal Arch Masons as a way to show their appreciation to our ladies for their support and encouragement. The award costs \$100 and can be requested from the Grand Secretary, Allan Jackson. Please remember there needs to be at least 60 days between the nomination and the presentation at the annual awards during the Annual Convocation.

More information can be found by visiting their website at www.ggcrami.org/forms. Please download the form, fill it out, and send it with a check for \$100 to the General Grand Secretary at the address provided on the form.

Veterans Jewel

The General Grand Chapter has a Veterans Jewel available for purchase for \$25.00. This jewel is intended to be presented to any Companion, or Brother Mason, who is in good standing and who currently serves in an active or reserve unit, or has honorably served in an armed force, foreign or domestic. The jewel can be proudly displayed and worn by any who meet the prior regulations. A veteran can purchase this jewel for themselves, or any individual or Chapter can purchase one for a worthy Brother Mason they would like to recognize.

More information can be found by visiting their website at www.ggcrami.org/forms. Please download the form, fill it out, and send it with a check for \$25 to the General Grand Secretary at the address provided on the form. Please remember there needs to be at least 60 days between the nomination and the presentation at the annual awards during the Annual Convocation.





Council Cliff Notes

Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of Kansas



Winter 2026

Gary B. Strout, MIGM 2025-2026



From the Illustrious Grand Master

Companions,

The holiday season surrounds us with reminders of gratitude, reflection, and renewed purpose. At this time of year, I find myself especially mindful of the blessings we share as Cryptic Masons. In a world filled with uncertainty, we are privileged to labor together within a sacred vault of friendship, fidelity, and spiritual light. For this, I am profoundly thankful.

The lessons of the Royal Master and Select Master remind us that every great work requires preparation, foresight, and unity of labor. They teach us that faithfulness in times of darkness leads to joy in times of revelation, and that the bonds formed in shared duty become a source of strength when the world outside grows dim. These are lessons worth giving thanks for, both as Masons and as men.

I am deeply grateful for each Companion across the state who labors faithfully in our councils. Your dedication strengthens our quarries, enriches our meetings, and ensures that the sacred heritage entrusted to us will be preserved for future generations. As your Most Illustrious Grand Master, I am honored to walk beside you and humbled by the trust you have placed in me.

May this holiday season fill your hearts with peace, your homes with warmth, and your minds with renewed purpose. And may the Great Architect continue to bless our councils with unity, wisdom, and the quiet light of the Secret Vault.

Fraternally,

Companion Gary B. Strout, Ed.S.
M:. I:. Grand Master



Cryptic Mason of the Year Award

It is the singular responsibility of the Most Illustrious Grand Master to make a decision to select a worthy Companion to receive the Cryptic Mason of the Year Award for Kansas. Our Most Illustrious Grand Master, Gary B. Strout, asks each of our Councils to examine their membership and nominate a worthy Companion for this high honor.



For a Companion to be considered for the award, there are several qualifications which must be considered. They should be actively working and supporting a Council of Cryptic Masons. This individual stands out among his Companions for his zeal and dedication to Cryptic Masonry and leads by example.

Those who are eligible include: Any companion in good standing who has not served as a Council Illustrious Master, a Companion serving as an aide or assistant to a Grand Council Officer, a Companion who has served as a constituent Council Illustrious Master, or a Past Illustrious Master serving as an appointed officer in a line of Grand Council Officers.

Those excluded from the award include a Past Illustrious Master serving as an elected officer in a line of Grand Council Officers, a sitting or Past Most Illustrious Grand Master, a Past Most Illustrious Grand Master serving as an officer in a constituent Council, or a Past Most Illustrious Grand Master serving as an officer in a Grand Council.

Cryptic Degree Conferrals



The Cryptic Councils in Kansas are once again performing their own work and conferring degrees within their own Councils. Congratulations to Junction City Council No. 22, Lawrence Council No. 14, Leavenworth Council No. 1, Ellsworth Council No. 9, and Wichita Council No. 12 for your hard work and dedication in your individual Councils and conferring the

degrees of Royal Master and Select Master on not only your candidates, but also on those from other Councils who need assistance in conferring their own degrees.



Lady of the Council Distinction

Our ladies are the ones who help keep us motivated and moving forward in our Councils. In honor of the support and work that the ladies provide to Cryptic Masons and Councils, the General Grand Council has a small token that may be given. The Award is a beautiful gold and purple pin with the Cryptic Mason's emblem surrounded by a gold wreath. Each pin will be accompanied with a numbered certificate. The award costs \$100 and can be requested from the Grand Recorder, Allan Jackson. Please remember there needs to be at least 60 days between the nomination and the presentation at the annual awards during the Annual Communication.



More information can be found by visiting their website at www.crypticmasons.org/awards. Please download the form, fill it out, and send it with a check for \$125 to the General Grand Recorder at the address provided on the form.

General Grand Council First Responder Jewel

The General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International has an award designed to be presented to our First Responders. These are the men and women who put aside their own personal safety each day during their jobs and place their own lives on the line to help others.

The award is given for protecting and preserving our way of life. The inverted triangle denotes that their purpose is borne of the divine love of life and liberty, the angels representing both how we see their contributions and a hope for their protection and guidance from above, each of the symbols for First Responders on the face, surrounded by a not-so-mysterious nine stars, three for each denoting that we seek (knock) their help, and in the center, the Cryptic symbol which shows our reference, surrounded by our understanding of the mortal plane but our belief that we are enfolded by the same divine love, and Community, the First Responder. The award is a "Thank You" to those who serve (or have served) and an opportunity for the Council to reach "to and through the Lodge" to show that Masonry respects those who dedicated their lives to preserving our communities. Any Qualified First Responder, which includes past service, retirees, or those who are no longer serving as a First Responder are eligible.



More information can be found by visiting their website at www.crypticmasons.org/awards. Please download the form, fill it out, and send it with a check for \$50 to the General Grand Recorder at the address provided on the form.



The Nine Arches

The concept of the nine arches within Cryptic Masonry takes center stage in the entire degree structure. The nine arches can be viewed through several different lenses and concepts. Historically, the nine arches can be referenced as an homage or reference to the Biblical nine orders of angels or the nine types of divine communication between the physical and spiritual planes of existence.

A survey of construction shows the strength the manifestation of nine arches bring to the stability of a building. We realize an arch can hold great weights because of its superior design structure. The curved shape allows those weights to continue to be upheld even with great pressure being constantly applied to the arches. The beauty of the arches, combined with their architectural strength, can be viewed shows both the unity and harmony which exist within the structure.

The three pillars of the Blue Lodge correspond to wisdom, strength, and beauty. The nine arches of the Cryptic Councils each have a corresponding metaphysical virtue attached to them.

The first arch represents Beauty.
The second arch represents Wisdom.
The third arch represents Power.
The fourth arch represents Eternity.
The fifth arch represents Infinity.
The sixth arch represents All Knowledge.
The seventh arch represents Justice.
The eighth arch represents Mercy.
The ninth arch represents Perfection.



These corresponding virtues to each of the nine arches can allow the student of cryptic masonry to better understand the importance and precise reason for each of the nine arches to be represented within the subterranean cavern. Each of these arches are a metaphor for how we should view the world around us. We start with the observation of beauty and advance through different phases of personal understanding. In the end we arrive at perfection which is the ultimate goal of every believer in Deity after we pass from this life and enter a glorious existence within the next.