

News of the Ark

A Monthly Publication of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas



From the Grand King

Right Excellent Companion Thomas M. Krauss, Grand King



The Most Excellent Grand High Priest has asked the current Grand Chapter Officers to write articles each month for this supplement.

have been party to many discussions recently pertaining to the topic of how we add the necessary value to being a member to not only retain but engage our Companions so they become active participants within their local York Rite Bodies. One of the most often mentioned means of this is "Masonic Education".

But just what is Masonic Education? Is it explaining the various aspects of our Chapter Degree work to our new minted Companions so they more fully understand the degrees they just undertook? Most definitely. Is it teaching them our opening and closing ritual? Once again, that answer is yes. Does it mean presenting them with the historical and esoteric aspects of Order? Certainly so. However, I think it's more than just that.

Think back to your blue lodge degree work or for that matter, the Mark Master Degree. There were 80,000 Fellowcrafts who worked in the mines and quarries, 3,300 Overseers of the Work and 3 Masters. Now how does one make the transition from say being a stonemason in the mines to that of an overseer? By obtaining skills, life skills. And I dare say that is something we ought to be teaching as well.

Don't know how to tie a bow tie (and I don't), but know a Companion who does. Why not ask him to use the time allotted to Masonic education during one of your meetings to teach everyone how to. Know a companion who understands the inside and outs of purchasing beef direct from the producer for your freezer? Have him give a presentation of what questions to ask, what to expect and the costs so should you decide to buy $\frac{1}{2}$ a steer you know what you're doing. Do you have a tech savvy younger member who understands QR codes, Apps or how to use Google Lens? Have him sit down and show the older guys who have no idea how to use all the technology on their phones what is possible to do it in this day and age on them.

I will guarantee every one of you reading this article has a skill set that you could give a presentation about in your Chapter meeting that will help build the life skills of your fellow Companions and help them make that transition from a Stonemason to an Overseer. Just think about value that can be gained by this kind of engagement with fellow Companions, Brothers helping Brothers improve their daily lives. The sky is the limit.

Tom Krauss

June, 2026

Gary B. Strout,
Most Excellent
Grand High Priest

2026-2027

First Degree Conferrals of 2026

The Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas held the first degree festival conferral for the new capitular term. On Saturday, May 23, 2026, the Companions of the Holy Royal Arch met at Palmyra Lodge No. 23 in Baldwin City, Kansas for the conferral of the four degrees of Capitular Masonry. The morning started with registration and the normal time of fellowship during coffee and donuts.



After the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas was opened in ample form by the Most Excellent Grand High Priest, Most Excellent Companion Gary B. Strout, the degree conferrals began. There were five Master Masons in attendance to receive the degrees of Capitular Masonry and they were eager to receive that which had been lost to them in the Master Mason degree.

Before the conferrals commenced, the Grand High Priest allowed Most Excellent Companion Patrick C. Carr, Past Grand High Priest, to make a presentation. During the presentation, Excellent Companions Robert D. Beardsley was escorted to the East by Excellent Companion Justin D. Crippen. Companion Beardsley was presented with the General Grand Chapter Award in Bronze for his tireless and continual work in Royal Arch Masonry. Excellent Companion Beardsley was unable to attend the Grand Chapter Convocation several weeks prior, and this was the first

opportunity to present him with his recognition.

Once Most Excellent Companion Carr was done, the Marked Master degree was conferred in full-form by Right Excellent Companion Gary A. Mason. The degree work was well done and while the Companions in attendance may have been a bit upset by the wages they received, at the end of the degree conferral they all left happy and fulfilled.



The Virtual Past Master degree was conferred by Most Excellent Companion H. Wayne Rector on those who had just received the Marked Master degree. This degree allowed our new members to understand the weighty responsibilities of those who place the jewel around their neck, don the hat, and are placed into the Oriental Chair. With this information firmly imprinted upon their minds, the candidates were ready to receive the next degree.



Before the remainder of the degrees would be conferred, those in attendance enjoyed lunch and fellowship at the Lodge Hall. Once lunch was completed, and the candidates and Companions returned to the meeting, the Most Excellent Master degree was conferred by Right Excellent Companion Gary A. Mason. While the degree was not entirely conferred because of the time constraints of the degree day, it was a well done degree and the team performed well during the conferral.

After a short break, it was time at last to witness the conferral of the Holy Royal Arch! The degree was conferred by Excellent Companion Dale Morrow, Grand Orator/Lecturer of the Grand

Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas. As we have come to expect, Excellent Companion Morrow did a fantastic job of conferring the degree and communicating the meanings of the degree to the new Royal Arch Masons.

Congratulations to the five Master Masons who were Exalted to be Royal Arch Masons! We look forward to being with each of these new members of the Chapter again in Russell, Kansas on June 27, 2026, for the Great Plains Rendezvous, and we wish them much success and continued light during their degrees in the Grand York Rite of Kansas.

