



# The Traveler

Wilkerson College  
Lodge No. 760

Volume 3, Issue 2

March - April 2009

## Broken Promises

By: WB Tom Wilkerson, PM

***"A man who is good enough to shed his blood for his country is good enough to be given a square deal afterwards."***

*President Teddy Roosevelt*

### Inside this issue:

Chaplain's Page	2
Master's Word	2
Birthdays	3
Captured	3
Wilson Highlights	4
Upcoming Meeting	5
Gen. Tom Wilkerson, Con't	6

**My Brothers of Wilkerson College Lodge:** When President and Brother Mason Teddy Roosevelt delivered this powerful statement, he set the standard for Veteran's care in future generations of Americans.

I believe that every one of us, from the President of the United States to the newest citizen, should be actively concerned with the care and recovery of our wounded warriors and their families. Those in uniform have written us blank checks including putting their lives on the line to defend our freedom and our way of life. In exchange, we have made a sacred promise to serve them as faithfully as they have served us when they are harmed or suffering. Can we possibly do less than to honor that promise?

Unfortunately, in too many instances these heroes, many of whom are Brother Masons, have not received the medical treatment that they deserve and have been pushed into fighting an unnecessary battle at home to rebuild their health and their lives.

Let's start with some good news here. More American military members are surviving combat. In World War II those wounded in combat had about a 70% chance of survival. Despite the first time military use of helicopters for medical evacuations, Korea showed little progress at 74%. In Vietnam the survival opportunity rose to 80%; and in Operation Desert Storm it reached 86%. Today, Americans wounded in Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Afghanistan have better than a 90% chance of survival. This miracle has some very practical underpinning: Medical treatment has moved closer to the fight and on a grander scale than in the past, staying available within one-hour rings around combat operations. Known as the "golden hour," this time of opportunity is the first 60 minutes after a severe injury. If wounded warriors receive medical attention in this "golden hour", they have the greatest chance of survival. And, they are getting that chance. But, this medical miracle has created a new group of permanently handicapped veterans who would not have survived in past conflicts.

There is some other news as well -- nearly every one of those wounded will require continuing access to medical care, many for the rest of their lives. Consider these revealing statistics as of January, 2009: Of the more than 1.5 million service members have deployed in the War on Terrorists: U.S. military dead in Iraq and Afghanistan approaches 5000 with over 44,000 wounded/non-combat injuries/illness.



## The Chaplain's Page

By: WB Rick Smith, PDDGM

### Proverbs 22:28 (KJV)

28 Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.

### Job 24:2 (KJV)

2 Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.

### Deuteronomy 27:17 (KJV)

17 Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen.

You may be surprised to learn that we have no set of landmarks listed in our Code, although landmarks are referenced:

### CONSTITUTION of THE GRAND LODGE of North Carolina Preamble

".....subject to the Ancient **Landmarks** of Freemasonry..."

### I. DECLARATION CONCERNING GOD AND RELIGION:

"The Grand Lodge acknowledges belief in God to be the great fundamental principle and **landmark** of Freemasonry upon which our Fraternity is erected."

To what are we referring in the following ceremonies, if no landmarks are listed by our Grand Lodge?



Our Chaplain along side MWB Dan Rice, GM 2009

### Charge at Raising to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason:

"The **ancient landmarks** of the Order, intrusted to your care, you are carefully to preserve, and never suffer them to be infringed..."

### Ceremony of Instituting a Lodge Under Dispensation

"In short by a diligent observance of the laws of our Grand Lodge, the **Ancient Landmarks**..."

### Ceremony of Installation (Officers of a Subordinate Lodge)

"I promise on the honor of a Master Mason that I will, to the best of my ability, conform to and abide by the **Ancient Landmarks**..."

## The Master's Word

By: WB Mark Conner, PM

**Just a few words to say THANK YOU for attending our stated at Mt. Hebron Lodge in Wilson with Brethren from Prince Hall. Brethren, we have taken *ONE STEP, LET US TAKE MORE* of this same step. PGM Leonard Safarit is to be thanked for putting this together for WCL #760. Bro. Rick Smith did an outstanding job with our educational program, he must finish this for us soon. As MW Milton Fitch came in late and took the floor. It was great to be in his company. Our next stated will be moved to another location due to Orphans Lodge meeting at the same time. I will have that information for you soon. I pray that we can continue with such a large turn-out as we had in Wilson. Please keep Bro. Jesse Bowman in your prayers as he recovers from a recent heart attack. Look forward to seeing ya'll soon.**



WB Mark Conner, PM  
Master 2009

Trail of the Century

# CAPTURED !!



Tickets are \$35 per person  
 And can be purchased by  
 contacting Larry Thomp-  
 son at 704-888-1796

Additional Charges may be  
 brought against the defen-  
 dant by donations

Anyone wanting to speak on  
 the behalf of the Defendant  
 may with a donation

**Captured** - The Notorious WB Bill Bruton, PDDGM: For Crimes Against Mankind

**Where** - The "Trial" will be held at Pinewood Country Club ( 247 Pinewood Rd. Asheboro, NC)

**When** - Saturday, May 6, 2009 at 6:00 - 9:00 PM

*All Proceeds will Benefit NC Masonic Charities*

Happy Birthday to the Following Members

March

- Dalton Mayo - 30
- Fred Sessions - 24
- Gary Handy - 17
- Jesse Bowman - 25
- Jim Medlin - 25
- Joel Black - 7
- Lance Cable - 10
- Rick Moore - 11



April

- Ben Oakes, Jr. - 5
- Jonathan Johnson - 12
- Ozzie Bass, Jr. - 21
- Robert "Boog" Powell - 5
- Tom Gregory - 8

## Wilson's Meeting Highlights

By: WB Shaun Bradshaw, PDDGM

On Saturday, February 21, 2009 an historic event took place when Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760 held its meeting at Mt. Hebron Lodge No. 42, PHA in Wilson, NC. In attendance were 32 AF & AM and 6 PHA Masons. The meeting was presided over by Worshipful Mark Connors, Master of Wilkerson College Lodge. Subsequent to the opening, WB Connors directed the Sr. Deacon to conduct WB Willie Lucas, Master of Mt. Hebron Lodge to the west side of the altar where Bro. Mark took his hand in friendship and presented him a small token of his appreciation for allowing Wilkerson College Lodge to meet at Mt. Hebron Lodge.



Mt. Hebron is a small lodge with movie theatre seats along the walls (including cup holders), a stunningly finished hardwood floor and the usual appointments and furniture found in most AF&AM lodges. The lodge was formed in 1881 and has the distinction of being the home lodge of the current PHA GM, MW Toby Fitch. **WB Shaun Bradshaw, PDDGM**

The meeting itself was fairly typical; WB Mark started it off by asking each brother present to stand, give his name and lodge affiliation. This was followed by special recognition of three Past Grand Masters who were in attendance: Most Worshipfuls Tom Gregory (1998), Bill Mathis (2001), and Leonard Safrit (2004). After the introductions, the Master noted that our PHA brethren were sitting together in the SW corner of the lodge and asked them to disburse themselves among the other brethren in the lodge, which they did – or as he put it, “we don’t want all the Baptists in the back”.

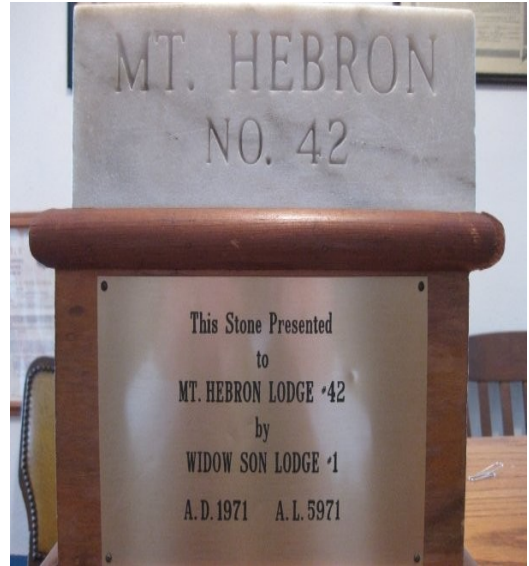
There were two points of interest regarding differences between our PHA counterparts’ customs and our own. First, when one of the PHA brethren needed to step out of the lodge to check on lunch preparations, he presented himself to the Sr. Warden for permission to leave and exited through the preparation room, rather than the custom in our AF&AM lodges. The other point of interest, was a noted difference in the penal signs given by the PHA brethren at the opening and closing of the lodge (while every AF&AM member would recognize the gestures, they would clearly see that there were a few extra moves that we leave out of our penal signs), which caused some consternation for our PHA brethren as they attempted to keep up with our more abbreviated signs.

Following the meeting, several pictures were taken, a meal was served, and WB Rick Smith delivered an interesting and informative program on the Ancient Landmarks of Freemasonry. During his program we were pleased to welcome WB Dan Weatherington, and MW Bro. Toby Fitch, Grand Master of Masons of NC, AF&M – PHA. MW Fitch spoke eloquently concerning the historical nature of this event as well as the ancient landmarks. Knowing that he had been suitably “upstaged” by the Grand Master, Bro. Smith closed out his program after which several more pictures were taken and farewells were given.





Pictures from Wilson



Upcoming Meeting on April 11, 2009

**Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760 will **NOT** meet at Orphans Lodge for our next stated communication.**

**Information on the host Lodge will be forthcoming  
The Date will stay the same (Saturday, April 11, 2009)**

## Wilkerson College Lodge's Mission Statement

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*The mission of Wilkerson College Lodge is to foster a flame of brotherly love and friendship that will surpass all differences, envelope all similarities and consistently travel that level of time in search of how to make good men better. As speculative Masons, education will be our greatest tool, so as to instill in our future Masters qualities of leader-*

In addition, with a new understanding of the impact of combat operations on individuals' mental and psychological health, "shell shock" is no more; in its place is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a treatable medical condition. So, there has been a flood of PTSD cases coming home from the war zone and from previous wars. There are more than 300,000 veterans suffering from PTSD, major depression and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). The VA is ill prepared to expedite their care and with 84,000 new veterans diagnosed with PTSD; the VA is well behind in approving their disability applications.



WB Gen. Tom Wilkerson, PM

After the Walter Reed Army Medical Center debacle, the President appointed a bi-partisan commission led by former Senator Bob Dole, a severely wounded WWII veteran and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala. The Dole/Shalala Commission spoke to wounded service members and veterans across the country and heard stories about lost records and mismanaged care. They found that generally the in-patient care at military and veterans hospitals was and is top-notch. But, after the patients left the hospitals, the bureaucracy reared its ugly head and the wounded warriors encountered problems.

The Commission's recommendations include the first major overhaul of the disability system in more than 50 years; creation of recovery plans with recovery coordinators; a new e-Benefits website; and guaranteeing care for PTSD from the VA for injured service members from Iraq and Afghanistan. At the core of this reform effort is the principal that it is our honor and duty to help all wounded, ill, and injured service members, veterans, and their families to go beyond "survive" to "thrive" – to honor President Teddy Roosevelt's commitment. This remains a work in progress and will require increases in government funding in most instances.

With the U. S. government spending billions to save banks and corporations and to shore up our shaky economy can it do less to ensure that veterans have the necessary care to return to a fruitful, productive life?

What can we who are Masons do to assist? First, honor all those among us who have served and, where needed, support their efforts to gain promised medical care. Second, register and vote. Put pressure on all candidates, federal, state and local to make sure we do the right thing for veterans. Third, support those registered non-profit organizations that fill the void in care while the VA gets up to speed.

At the Naval Institute we are committed to doing our part and addressing these issues, especially at our annual Defense Forum Washington Conference on Wounded Warriors. We will continue to push the care of wounded warriors and their families to the forefront because, like you, we see the moral and the practical consequences of failing at that task.

