South Dakota Supplement
Editor: Doug McFarland, PGHP, PMIGM, PGC, PGM
mcfarlas@brookings.net

Grand York Rite Office
P.O. Box 9134 Rapid City
SD 57709-9135

Greetings from our Grand High Priest
Most Excellent Companion Shawn "Jake" Smith
It is my honor to be elected as your Grand High Priest for the ensuing year. In my previous posts in the other Grand bodies I have stressed the importance of “doing something.” I intend to continue that mantra through my term of service to you.

“Do Something,” is a very simple concept. It literally is what it sounds like. Merriam-Wester defines, “Do” – as to perform or execute. It’s a very simple word, do, two letters one syllable. Yet, we all have problems understanding its meaning. The word is simple because the act is simple. It does not need flourishment or fancy syllables. A famous shoe company made a lot of money from that simple word, “do”. When they said: “Just do it.” So why do we try to overthink it or overcomplicate it? We get bogged down in thinking that we have to “do greatness” and add that last word to “do.” I’m not asking you to “do greatness.” Just to “do.” Start small and do small things. The great Cathedrals of Europe were great works of art. But even those masterpieces were created by men who did small things. The sum of those small acts are what we see today.

The biggest problem I see in our organization today is we keep waiting for others to start things. We fear the scrutiny of our companions when we try something and fail. We fear the ever-present phrase, “That’s not how we used to do it,” or “We’ve always done it this way.” I really think we need to either be constructive in our comments or keep quiet and adhere to our oath to assist our companions in their endeavors. I hear too often about membership, “What are we going to do about membership?” But, the problem is, we have nothing to offer prospective members except grumpy old men who admonish new members those dreaded phrases. Our meetings are too structured on reading the minutes and then talking about paying bills and that’s about it. There are a few companions who are engaged at the meetings but most of the members, who do show up, sit silently and get nothing. This is where we need to “Do Something.”
Before any of you think that degree work is doing something. Let me correct you. Although degree work can be educational, it is not always the best option. Why not look at what a small part of the degree work is telling you and expound on its points. Talk about what the words mean to you and encourage all the members of the meeting to voice their own ideas and opinions. And above all, “Don’t let someone try to tell another that their ideas are not correct!” Freemasonry is very subjective and its meanings in the rituals are subject to the interpretation of the individual. The beauty of freemasonry is that the variety of meanings can encourage a companion to see things differently. Embrace the ideas of your fellow companions and you will see growth in your understanding of the world around you.

To wrap up the first of my several ramblings that you will see in this magazine. I offer you a gift to help you get started in “Do Something.” At our latest North-Central Dept Conference in Sioux Falls, we received a great talk on the efforts by the General Grand Chapter to offer ways for you to add something to your meetings. They developed a “Capitular Development Course” and “Lesson Manual” for using as education in your meetings. These manuals take the ritual and break it down into concepts that are easy to talk about and educate in about 10-15 minutes. I have taken the initiative and purchased a copy of each for each Chapter. I hope to be able to visit you and do the first lesson together. Hopefully I can get that accomplished, if not, I will send it to each Chapter with instructions that it be used. Good luck and until next time and remember to “Do Something.”

*Shawn “Jake” Smith*
Grand High Priest

Jake3404@yahoo.com
I would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve you as your Most Illustrious Grand Master for the ensuing year, this
is truly an honor. I also would like to thank all of the Companions who agreed to serve as Grand Council Officers. I would like to Congratulate Past Illustrious Master Herb Cook, PGHP Jon Gonsor and PGC Jake Smith and their officers for a great year and Grand Session. I look forward to working and traveling with Grand High Priest Jake Smith and Grand Commander Herb Cook for the next year.

It is my desire to visit as many Councils and to go to as many meetings and events as I can, weather and time permitting. As of the printing of this article I have attended the Grand Chapter of Eastern Star in Pierre, SD and North Central Conference at Sioux Falls, SD and Traveled to Spearfish, SD where Black Hills Council had a meeting. While at the meeting at Spearfish I had the pleasure and privilege to give Companion James Heald a 50? And ……. A 60yr?? Thank you Companions for the years of service to Masonry and to the York Rite.

I will be continuing the efforts of PMIGP Herb Cook and all of the Companions from SD to contribute and support Cryptic Masons Medical Research Foundation (CMMRF) . CMMRF is the charity of The General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International. For more information about CMMRF and other activities of the General Grand Council you can go their web site at www.crypticmasons.org . This is an excellent resource for all of us to use and I would strongly encourage you to take advantage of their web site.

Wishing all of you a very merry Christmas and Happy New Year, I look to seeing many of you soon.

Stan Schwellenbach
Most Illustrious Grand Master

sschwellen@q.com

2020 Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons
Grand High Priest   Shawn “Jake” Smith
Rapid City
Grand King       Herbert Cook
Rapid City
Grand Scribe    Bruce Crisman
Rapid City
Grand Treasurer  John Laughlin, PGHP
Rapid City
Grand Secretary  George Bauder, PGHP
Rapid City
Grand Chaplain   Jon Gonsor
Pierre
Grand Captain of the Host  Gary Waack
Pierre
Grand Principal Sojourner  Ervin Alspaw
Rapid City
Grand Royal Arch Captain  Ron Hammer
Sioux Falls
Grand Master Third Veil  Dan Nace
Sioux Falls
Grand Master Second Veil  Tony Larsen
Mobridge
Grand Master First Veil  Michael Lamb
Rapid City
Grand Sentinel    David Meltz
Grand Orator      Derek Runge
Grand Historian   Stan Schwellenbach
Rapid City
General Grand Ambassador  George Bauder, PGHP
Rapid City
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2020 Grand Council Cryptic Masons

Most Ill. Grand Master               Stan Schwellenbach
Pierre
Deputy Ill. Grand Master            Bruce Crisman
Rapid City
Grand Prin. Conductor of the Work   Roger Hansen
Sioux Falls
Grand Treasurer                    John Laughlin, PMIGM
Rapid City
Grand Recorder                     George Bauder, PMIGM
Rapid City
Grand Chaplain                      Matt Schatz, PMIGM
Pierre
Grand Captain of the Guard          Ron Hammer
Sioux Falls
Grand Conductor of the Council      Ervin Alspaw
Rapid City
Grand Marshal                       Dan Nace
Sioux Falls
Grand Steward                       Gary Waack
Pierre
Grand Sentinel                      Gordon Bourne
Canton
Grand Historian                     Tony Larsen
Mobridge
Grand Orator       Michael Lamb
Rapid City
Gen. Grand Ambassador     Jon Gonsor, PGHP
Pierre

If you have a pertinent article or news item that you wish to be considered for publication, please forward it to me as soon as possible. Please note that I have strict deadlines to submit material to the magazine editor. The next deadline will be June 1, September 1, and December 1. With best fraternal regards,

Doug McFarland

South Dakota Grand York Rite