



NATIONAL SOJOURNERS, INC

Harrisburg Chapter #76 — York Camp, Heroes of '76



President's Message

Harrisburg Chapter No. 76 News
SSG Todd Snyder, President

The end of summer has arrived, and it is time to get back to our labors. It is with great honor that I become your president of the Harrisburg Chapter No 76 of the National Sojourners for the 2024-2025 year. I am thankful for the leadership and friendship of Past President Darwin Gaston, I have very large shoes to fill. I have what I feel is an interesting year planned out, but we all know what happens to the best laid plans. I have already had to replace a third Vice President, a Treasurer and four speakers. The good news is I had planned for some to not end up on the speakers list and was semi-ready. We will continue to have our meals provided by the same caterer at the same price as last year. I would like to see as many of you as possible attend our meetings, let's get the attendance number over 100. Out of all the masonic meetings I attend, this is my favorite.



I will need your help this year, as we get older, we are not able to do as much as we used to, and leadership of committees and our projects need to start being transitioned to younger members. Please step up to help, every little bit helps. You do not need to be the chairman of a committee but offer to help a committee. I also encourage you to replace yourself, make sure you bring at least one new member into our chapter over the next year. We are already the largest chapter, and it would be nice to continue to have that honor by increasing our ranks. A copy of my schedule for this year's speakers is included in this issue. If you have any comments, questions, complaints, etc please contact me either by email or phone.

I may be the one elected to the office, but it takes all of us to make the chapter. A quote from John F. Kennedy comes to mind, "One Person can make a difference, and everyone should try."

Thanks again for putting your faith in me and electing me as president for the ensuing year, and please come out to the meetings, enjoy a meal with your brothers in arms and brother masons and more especially the fellowship that goes with it.

Sincerely and Fraternally,
Todd Snyder, President



Essay Contest, 2025

Issue #43 September 2024

Entry forms for the 2025 National Sojourners High School Essay Contest were mailed on 05 August to 18 JROTC leaders, 9 Masonic Youth group leaders, 44 public and private schools in the greater Harrisburg area, as well as the Masonic Home for Children and 4 "Courtesy copies". The subject that the entrants must write about this year is "Is the Preamble to the Declaration of Independence still relevant today". Entries must be postmarked by 01 December 2024 to be considered. The three winning entries from our chapter will be submitted to national for further judging and subsequent national awards. In addition, we are now offering a prize to a fourth winner. This new award is for the top ninth grade entry. This winning essay will not be submitted to national as we are limited to three winners. This additional award is to encourage entries from the ninth grade. It is our plan to have the four winners attend our April 2025 meeting with their parents and present their essays to us and receive their awards. We hope that we will see some repeat winners and possibly we will see another national winner. Those of you who have heard previous winners speak know the quality of their work. Please plan to attend that meeting. You will be impressed by their writing and speaking skills.

Entry forms will be available from me at the September and October meetings, should you have a grandchild or neighbor who may be interested in entering the contest. I will also make copies available at various Masonic meetings that I may attend, before the end of October. Just ask for a copy when you see me.

Glenn R. Kurzenknabe, Past President
Essay Contest Chairman



Harrisburg Chapter #76 MEMBERSHIP

As of August 31, 2024

Primary Members-In-Perpetuity	239
Annual Active Members	47
Honorary Members-In-Perpetuity	34
Annual Honorary Members	4
Multiple Members-In-Perpetuity	27
Total Chapter Membership	351

York Camp Heroes of '76 168

The Chapter also has 197 Inactive Members-In-Perpetuity who laid down their working tools.



Education & Training

By Brother Secretary Tom Gordon

Brother Sojourners,

Recently, a question was asked of me, “What happens if I am a Member-In-Perpetuity (MIP) of National Sojourners and do not pay my Masonic Lodge dues or drop out of my Blue Lodge?”

The answer is that since the National Sojourners is a Social Appendant Body of Freemasonry, a member of the National Sojourners must first and foremost be a Master Mason in good standing in any duly constituted Lodge of Master Masons.... “In good standing” means that a Sojourner either be a Life Member of their Lodge or pay their Lodges annual dues.

If a MIP of a National Sojourner chapter is not a Master Mason in good standing in any duly constituted Lodge of Master Masons, their MIP membership in their local National Sojourners chapter must be transferred to the National Headquarters Chapter as a terminated member, and fees will not be refunded. Therefore, they will no longer be a member of the National Sojourners.

If the terminated Sojourner is reinstated as a Master Mason in good standing in any duly constituted Lodge, they may be reinstated in the National Sojourners and their local Sojourners chapter.

As a common courtesy, if you are no longer a Master Mason in good standing, please inform me and I will notify the National Headquarters of National Sojourners.

It is our hope that you will all remain Master Masons in good standing with your Blue Lodge, and Brother Sojourners.

Scheduled Guest Speakers and Activities

Social Gathering 5:15 PM Dinner 6:00 PM Meeting 6:45 PM

12 Sep 2024 - Sgt. Keith E. Murray USMC, Marine Security Guard, Lagos, Bongi, Burns, and Warsaw

HEROES' Bivouacs 18:00 (6:00 PM)

26 Sep 24 - Harrisburg Consistory Unit Room, Lower level
24 Oct 2024, 27 Mar 2025, 24 Apr 2025, 22 May 2025



Secretary's Report

Issue #43 September 2024

By Brother Tom Gordon

As we start our new Sojourners year, with our first monthly meeting on September 12th, I thought I would share facts and thoughts with you. They are not in any specific order.

The Chapter's Executive Committee met on August 27th to discuss topics such as filling elected and appointed position vacancies. These positions will be ratified by the membership vote at the September 12th meeting. Appointed positions are at the discretion of the Chapter President, Todd Snyder for this year.

We are still looking for active members of our Chapter to step up to be various Committee Chairmen. Vacancies will be announced at our September meeting. You all have talents, and hopefully time, to assist in strengthening our Chapter. We are more than a monthly dinner club, and we have ample Past Presidents and former Committee Chairmen to provide guidance and direction to ensure each Committee is successful. Please consider saying “Yes” when asked to become more involved in our Chapter's programs and committee work. Our Chapter is only as strong as our members make it.

If you have suggestions as to the speakers you would like at our monthly meetings, Please share your thoughts with Chapter President Todd Snyder, 1st VP Keith Murray, 2nd VP Rick Shultz, or 3rd VP Steve Wilt. Each of these Chapter officers will also be preparing the list of Guest Speakers for their years as Chapter President.

In June 2023, National Sojourners Inc. adopted a new Constitution and Bylaws with the sole purpose of consolidating all the rules and regulations of the National Sojourner order. Therefore, each National Sojourner Chapter is required to update their Chapter's Constitution and Bylaws to ensure there is no conflict with the National Bylaws. This will be done over the next few months with the goal of having our Chapter's new Bylaws prepared and approved by our membership by the November 2024 chapter meeting.

The EXCOM will be reviewing the various “donation policy” suggestions, and we hope to have a final draft for the membership at either the September or October meeting.

Secretary's Report continued on page 3





NATIONAL SOJOURNERS, INC

Harrisburg Chapter #76 - York Camp, Heroes Chapter #76



York Camp Color Guard.

The York Camp Color Guard presented the colors at the 171st Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Pennsylvania on Saturday, 18 May. The Color Guard consisted of Jack Vickery, Gene Meashey and Al Vasko. The members of the Color Guard were attired in their Colonial Uniforms and period muskets. In addition, Bryan Hill, Past Commander delivered the Toast to the Flag, in Colonial Uniform. Their appearance was well received by the Sir Knights and their ladies.



York Camp Color Guard, left to right Jack Vickery, Gene Meashey and Al Vasko.

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The latest call lists have been prepared for September 2024 through June 2025 and disseminated to our 21 callers. The calls go out to the 252 Chapter members in the 17XXX zip codes. The purpose of these monthly calls are for both meeting attendance and meal choice, as well as wellness checks on our Brothers. Please give our callers the courtesy of answering your phone or returning their voice message. The remaining 100+ Chapter members are always invited to our meetings which are the 2nd Thursday of each month, September through June. If you are in the area and wish to attend the meeting, please give me a call (717) 534-2478.

If you have changed your mailing address, home phone number, cell phone number, or email address in the last 6 months, please send the changes to me by email: tgor-don1951@comcast.net, text at (717) 215-9734 or by phone at (717) 534-2478. I will update our Chapter records and the National Sojourners membership database.

Our own, Past Chapter President Mike Wertz has stepped up to the position of 2nd Vice President at the National level and will be the National President of National Sojourners in the 2027-2028. **CONGRATULATIONS!**

At the 2024 Annual National Convention in Austin Texas, Harrisburg Chapter #76 received the following awards: Past National Presidents' Award (Growth - Percentage Gain), and the Chapter of Excellence Award. Our Heroes of '76 York Camp also received the prestigious Wainwright Award. **WELL DONE** to all who help make the Harrisburg Chapter #76 the model Chapter it is.

In closing, it is my sad duty to report that two of our Brothers have laid down their working tools while the Chapter was "dark." Brother Paul Sheaffer passed on June 28, 2024 and Brother Ron Kerns passed on July 13, 2024. We will remember these Brothers with a Memorial Prayer at the September meeting.

Welcome New Members!



Welcome to our new members initiated at the June 2024 meeting.

Toast to the Flag by Brother Terry Coffman



Scenes from our June Meeting





NATIONAL SOJOURNERS, INC

Harrisburg Chapter #76 - York Camp, Heroes Chapter #76



Family Remembrances

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My late Grandfather, Bro. Charles E. Kurzenknabe was initiated into Freemasonry in December 1915 in Robert Burns Lodge No. 464, Harrisburg, PA. After he was drafted, he served in World War I in the U.S. Army, 315th Regiment, 79th Infantry Division, American Expeditionary Forces in France.

A few years ago, while looking at some family papers, I came across a printed invitation inviting "any Mason who receives this", to a Masonic dinner on 08 March 1919 in Chaumont-sur-Aire in northeast France. The dinner was hosted by the "Square Men". I have no information on who these brethren were or how they produced printed invitations. My Grandfather's diary indicated that nearly 80 brethren were in attendance and Major Graves was the Toastmaster. He also indicated that all in attendance had an enjoyable time.

The menu at the dinner consisted of Pickles, Celery, Chicken, Mashed Potatoes, Peas, Cauliflower, Claret, Lemonade, Oranges, Cheese, Coffee, Nuts and Cigars. Not bad for war torn France. This is certainly proof that even in a war zone more than 100 years ago, Freemasonry was alive and well!

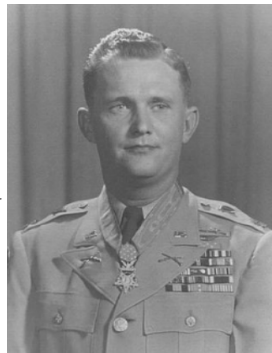
Glenn R. Kurzenknabe, Past President

This month we recognize our Brothers, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Coast Guard Veterans



Distinguished Sojourners

Colonel Lloyd L. Burke, U.S. Army was born in Tichnor, Arkansas on 29 September 1924. He graduated from Henderson State University. Colonel Burke served in three wars over 35 years—in Italy during World War II, in Korea during the Korean War, and in Vietnam as an infantry battalion commander during the Vietnam War. He was severely wounded during that war. He lived in the Washington D.C. area off and on from 1963 to 1988, when he moved to Alabama.



Lt. Burke received the Medal of Honor for an assault on three North Korean bunkers near the Imjin River in October 1951. He led his 35-man company under intense

fire, killing more than 100 North Koreans himself and suffering wounds in return. He then made lone charges on two of the bunkers and killed the crews. He threw grenades at the third bunker and then tossed back several of the grenades that were hurled at him. His men then overran the position but were pinned down by fire. Lt. Burke set up a gun, wiped out 75 North Koreans and destroyed two mortar emplacements. He led his men forward and killed 25 of the retreating soldiers. None of his men were killed. Lt. Burke's wartime exploits in Korea were featured in an episode of the A&E television series "Heroes."

Military Awards: Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, four Army Commendation Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, two Purple Hearts and three Bronze Stars.

Masonic History: Mason and National Sojourner

For Change of address, email address or telephone number

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Chapter contact information

National website: <https://nationalsojourners.org>
Facebook: "National Sojourners Harrisburg
Chapter #76

"When we assumed the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen." *George Washington*