



December 2024

# North Carolina Masonry News



Vol. 50 No. 4

The Newsletter of the North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association

## NC State Fair Contest



The 70th Annual State Fair Apprenticeship Contest was held on October 21, 2024, in Raleigh, NC. Congratulations to Mason Ridenhour from Ridenhour Masonry for his first-place finish. Congratulations to all the contestants for your hard work! There were 28 contestants representing 11 companies across the NC. Many thanks go out to all the sponsors and all the volunteers. There were lots of behind the scenes help to make this contest very successful and it truly shows how strong the NCMCA is. Contest Chairman, Calvin Brodie expressed his appreciation to all the firms that contributed with financial and in-kind donations to make the 2024 contest successful.

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## Thank You! to our SPONSORS

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From Left to Right: Doug Burton, Calvin Brodie, Fourth place winner Everado Gonzales of Brodie Contractors, Inc., Third Place winner O'Connor Leonard of Gates Construction, First Place Winner Mason Ridenhour of Ridenhour Masonry Inc., Second Place Winner Alec Huntley of Huntley Brothers Company Inc., Fifth Place Winner Ryan Gaither of McGee Brothers.



This issue sponsored by:



# Merry Christmas and Best Wishes For a Healthy, Happy and Prosperous New Year!

Big Changes for us in 2025. We will be gradually changing our name and branding from TriSure, to reflect our new national alignment with Alera Group.

We have also moved!

Please note our new name and address.



**ALERA**GROUP

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Thank you for 32 years of sponsoring the NCMCA Workers Comp - Property/Casualty Insurance Program. While our name has changed from TriSure, we are the same people and program and even more committed to serving and supporting the NCMCA!

John Cramer – 919-418-3636 / [jcramer@trisure.com](mailto:jcramer@trisure.com)

Hudson Smelcer – 919-618-5297 / [hsmelcer@trisure.com](mailto:hsmelcer@trisure.com)

Heidi O'Connor – 919-388-1945 / [Hoconnor@trisure.com](mailto:Hoconnor@trisure.com)



# MASONRY EDUCATION DAY



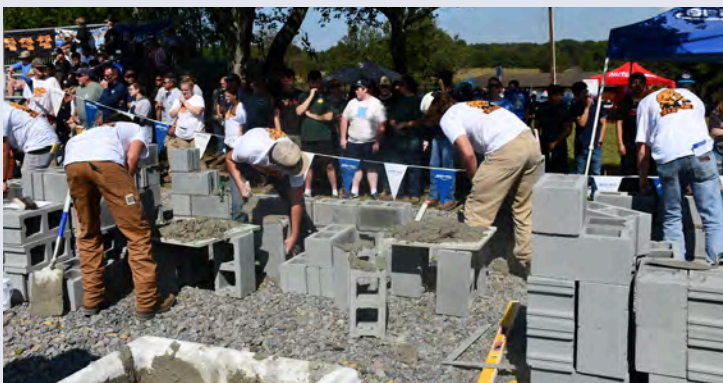
The 8th Annual Masonry Education Day in Gold Hill, NC was a huge success! Thanks to all the vendors and SPEC MIX for making this day successful. Masonry Education Day was held on October 3rd at Stalite's Ben Ketchie Park in Gold Hill, NC. The first-place team who won the October Carolina Qualifier by laying over 767 brick in an hour was Wriston McGee and Darren Eagle. They will now compete in Las Vegas for the upcoming SPEC MIX Bricklayer 500 World Championship. The regional qualifier was part of the 8th Annual Masonry Education Day. Over four hundred masonry students from across North Carolina participated in hands-on exhibits and competitions, met potential employers, and enjoyed a hotdog lunch provided by Johnson Concrete Products. This year featured a new contest, the Jr. Blocklayer. This contest is comprised of teams of three and they are given a max time limit of twenty minutes to build a 10' 8" block wall containing 36 units with a maximum time allowed of twenty minutes. This year's team of three from Jesse Carson High school completed the wall with the least number deductions in under fourteen minutes.



2024 SPEC MIX Bricklayer 500 North Carolina & Top Craftsman Winners from Left to Right: Third Place Winners Mason Ridenhour and Wyatt Trexler with 694 total bricks; First Place Winners and Top Craftsman Wriston McGee and Darren Eagle with 767 total bricks; Second Place Winners Grayson McGee and Haren McGee with 716 total bricks.



2024 NCMCA Jr. Blocklayer Team Contest Winners from Left to Right: Ty Sweatt, Trey Morris, and Krystopher Hernandez of East Rowan High School; First Place Winners Diego Silva, Aaron Vasquez Sanchez, and Jorge Clemente-Garcia of Jesse Carson High School; Third Place Winners Dustin Crump, Garret Black, and Andrew Black of Central Cabarrus High School.



2024 SPEC MIX Jr. Bricklayer Winners Left to Right: Second Place Winners Dakota Grinstead and Ty Sweatt of East Rowan High School; First Place Winners Cameron Grubb and Ryan Gauthier of Jesse Carson High School; Third Place Winners Tyler Shore and Sam Sellers of Davie County High School.



# 2024 NCMCA 34TH ANNUAL FALL GOLF TOURNAMENT



Winning team of Larry Chapman, Larry Kirby and Mark Nelson of Kirby Construction Services.



Second Place team of Kenneth Lanier, Adrian Newis and Brian Coleman of Blum Masonry.



Third Place team of Kevin Neuschaefer, Brad Moore and Matt Cable of McArt Masonry.

The 34th Annual Fall Golf Tournament in September at Mill Creek Golf & Country Club in Mebane was a huge success! We managed to miss the rain till after the tournament was over.

Chairman David McQueen expressed appreciation to all the sponsors including Argos USA for the barbecue chicken dinner and EZG Manufacturing for arranging the EZG Mudhog Mixer hole-in-one prize (that once again went unclaimed). Proceeds from the tournament fund the NCMCA Sigmon Memorial Scholarships at NC State, Appalachian State, and Eastern Carolina Universities. Go ahead and mark your calendar for September 25, 2025. Many thanks to the Golf Committee: David McQueen, Dwayne Bryant, Chris Mitchell, and Nick Ferruci.

### Other Winners:

Longest Drive #2: Larry Chapman

Longest Putt #4: Nick Ferruci

Closest to the Pin #8: Chet Huntley

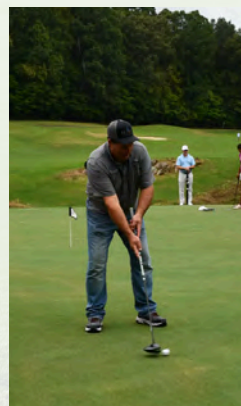
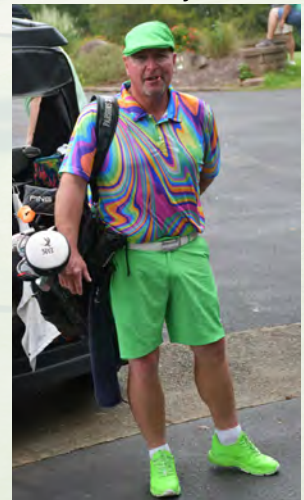
Closest to the Pin #17: James Saunders

Putting Contest: Blake Helton



Special thanks to Danny & Darnelle Alford for the delicious meal!

This year's contest featured a new category: Best Dressed! Winner Billy Knapp with Manning Masonry.



A rare phenomenon! Never before seen! And will probably never see again! Ryan Shaver playing golf.



# 2024 GOLF TOURNAMENT GOLD SPONSORS



ADAMS



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With the Thanksgiving season coming to a close and the Christmas season quickly approaching, I thought it would be a good time for us to reflect on some things we should be thankful for.

Personally, I am deeply grateful for my wonderful wife, my children, my granddaughter (with another on the way!), and for the privilege to live in a country where we can worship and express ourselves freely.

On a professional level I think we can all be thankful to be part of the masonry industry, which has provided us with opportunities to earn a living, support our families, and build lasting relationships.

Being involved in the NCMCA has played a significant role in this, helping us connect with like-minded individuals and forge/create friendships that go beyond the workplace.

I am also thankful for all of the young people that are entering in the masonry field and the enthusiasm that they bring with them. Along with that, I am grateful for all the people in this industry that have taken the time and effort to teach and mentor them on so many levels.

Another thing I'm especially thankful for is the way our industry gives back - whether it's through donations of materials, time, money, tools for contests, or even spending a Saturday morning working alongside friends and competitors on charity projects. I'm especially moved by how we come together during times of crisis, coming together and offering to help our community through disaster relief efforts. The generosity within this community is something I truly appreciate.

In conclusion, I encourage all of you to take a moment and reflect on what you are thankful for during this holiday season. I hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



### Raleigh/Murdell 2025

**NCMCA's Raleigh Chapter 36th Annual Golf Tournament, 25th Annual Murdell Golf trip is January 17-19, 2025. Registration is on the NCMCA website. Sign up early, before it sells out! For more information contact Doug Burton at [doug@whitmanmasonry.com](mailto:doug@whitmanmasonry.com)**

## Hurricane Helene Relief efforts continue in Western North Carolina by Mike Rogers

Gashes Creek Baptist Church is in its 10th week of disaster relief. Our operations have had 4 different phases with many facets involved. Immediately after the hurricane, we were simply using our equipment trying to clear main state owned highways from trees that had fallen. This was not planned but just happened. Connie, Isaiah and I were on our way to help get our son Micah and his family out and on the way got caught up in traffic on a 5 lane highway shut down to 1 lane. We had the skid steer behind us and made the decision to "let's get these roads cleared" not really knowing the vast destruction around us as all communications were completely disabled as the result of the hurricane. We then spent 2-3 days clearing roads, developments and driveways.

After this we volunteered through a local Fire Department with search and rescue. This was a very eerie experience and feeling as I didn't want to find someone but at the same time I wanted to.

It was about the 4th day, and we've made face to face contact with all of our church members, and we started receiving unsolicited supplies at the church. We have no food ministry or pantry at the church. Since we're a very small church and somewhat secluded, I'm wondering what to do with this food. The Holy Spirit then leads me to take the food to the people which we do. We start this process having no idea what we're doing. I quickly learn that Disaster Relief is a disaster within a disaster. It purely chaotic! We had no control of what we were getting, how we were getting it or when we'd get it. NCMCA has been tremendous!! I tear up as I write this thinking of the goodness, graciousness and generosity of this Association! Monetary contributions, labor, equipment and supplies that came from members have been unbelievable! You guys and ladies were a shot in the arm at times I need leadership because of the vastness of operations and organization desperately needed and ever changing. Needs would change literally on an hourly basis. What we didn't need at 1:00 pm suddenly we needed at 2:00 pm. But God used people and continues to use people to meet our every need and sometimes before we even knew we needed it. Noah Shaver - what a blessing!! He and Miss Erin came in with a load of supplies wrapped in plywood on pallets! He had or 4 of them as I recall and literally begged him to let me keep them! They were such a blessing and tremendous idea! We need them and scores more to separate and organize products. I dare say we have built 60-80 of these 40"x48" wood boxes in the 10-week period! They've been so valuable for organizing but then so required because of bears! Multiple bears began to come on the property and infringe on and destroy food products. Our wood boxes became "bear boxes." Yesterday, we received a special permit, issued by the NC Wildlife, to kill intruding bears out of season.

Fast forward to today, all of our food/supply services are at the church where food shopping is in the fellowship hall and clothes shopping is under a 20'x40' tent. We have 2 other tents where one is enclosed, and we have it heated to keep food from freezing. We also use this heated tent for volunteers to work on sorting items. The 3rd tent is used for non-perishable items such as diapers, wipes, clothes, cleaning supplies, etc that we receive and cannot be damaged by freezing temperatures.

We continue to serve 40-60 hot meals each evening at the church. We are also in the middle of a Toy Drive where we have 294 children signed up and registered to receive toys! What an honor and blessing to serve the Lord and the community!

Our church is being used to lodge and house volunteers from out of town. We are working with a group with different trade skills who want to come volunteer their abilities to help rebuild. This process is totally different than anything we would normally plan. By this I mean, normally we'd plan work to be done and then schedule subs and suppliers. With disaster relief, we have to schedule workers and learn of their skills a week before they arrive, locate a place to put them because as aforementioned the needs and location of needs are constantly and ever changing.

Lastly, from the depths of my heart thank you to every single person in the NCMCA who has contributed by praying for us and/or giving to the people of Western North Carolina! "And of some have compassion making a difference." Jude 22





Grove Park Inn, Asheville, NC

# NCMCA Convention

Registration to Open in Early January

*March 27 - 29, 2025*

**Mark Your Calendar!**

## SCHOLARSHIP DESIGN AWARDS

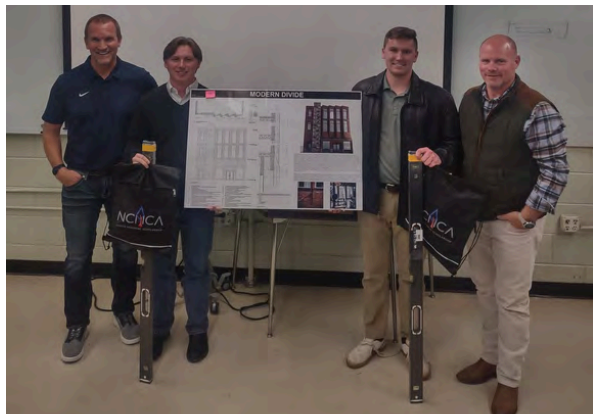


The 23rd Annual NCMCA Sigmon Memorial Scholarship was awarded at NC State University College of Design, School of Architecture. There were twelve teams of four students each competing in the design project and they were tasked with use of modular coordination, innovation, technical performance, and presentation clarity and quality for a masonry facade design. We are extremely excited to announce the winners who earned a semester paid tuition scholarship for their masonry design project. Special thanks to Dr. Grey Isley, for all your outstanding work with your students. Pictured left to right: Prerak Shah, Hayden Ransbury, Ogechi Oseji, Justin Pov, Doug Burton, Tim Manning, and Retired Professor Pat Rand.

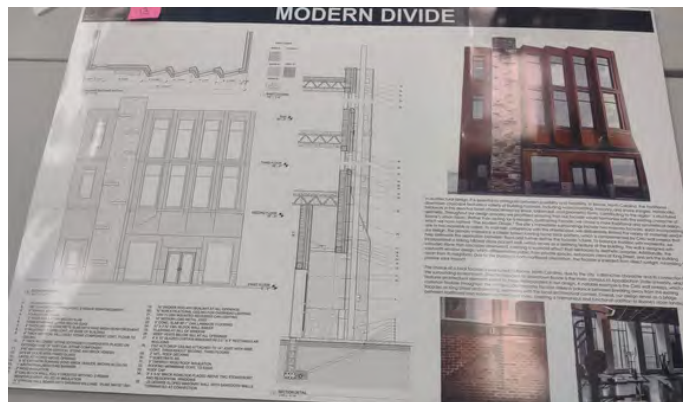


# SCHOLARSHIP DESIGN AWARDS

The 2024 NCMCA Sigmon Memorial Scholarship at Appalachian State was a huge success! Over thirty students participated in the competition to design and model a hypothetical masonry in-fill building section as a graded class assignment. The winning project earned the student's tuition awards from the NCMCA Sigmon Memorial Scholarship Fund named in memory of Randy, David, and Dwayne Sigmon. Congratulations to Quintin Bailey and James Garrett for winning this year's Sigmon Memorial Scholarship with their masonry design titled "Modern Divide".



From Left to Right: Kent Huntley, James Garrett, Quintin Bailey and Tim Manning



## *New Members*

- \*3Gen Masonry Products
- \*Drye-McGlamery Engineering, PLLC
- \*Hohmann & Barnard, Inc.
- \*Gregory Poole Equipment

# Series 12 Certification Classes

The new series of NCMCA classes has started with Module 1 on Thursday, December 5 at 73 & Main in Mt. Pleasant. Bill Parsons and Mike Rosser presented Occupational Safety Management. If you are interested in signing up for a class, please email: [brandy.shaver@ncmca.com](mailto:brandy.shaver@ncmca.com)

January 8, 2024 - NCMCA Series 12 Module 2 Certification Class  
The Basics of Masonry Materials: Brick and Block

February 12, 2025 - NCMCA Series 12 Module 3 Certification Class  
Mortar, Grout & Masonry Testing: Properties, Proportions & Procedures



## October Board Meeting Highlights:



The NCMCA held an in-person Board Meeting on October 31st at Triangle Brick in Durham, NC. The membership in-person board meeting will occur twice a year, once in the fall and the second in the spring at our annual convention. The Executive Board meets quarterly and would like to invite our membership to be involved in all of the in-person meetings. Below are a few highlights of the Board Meeting:

- Certification Classes were nearly maxed out the entire Series 11. We had over forty-three new CMP's and twenty-one new CME's, along with two certified companies. Series 12 will start December 5th.
- Apprentice & Training efforts across the State have been extremely successful this year. The contests that were held had a high participation rate and the industry involvement was phenomenal!
- Sigmon Scholarship was extremely rewarding this year at NC State, Appalachian State, and Eastern Carolina University. All three colleges had an outstanding participation in the masonry design competition. This year marked the 23rd year at NC State, the 12th year at Appalachian State, and the 1st year at Eastern Carolina University.
- State Golf Tournament was amazing with a record 24-hour sellout! This year the Board decided to put the ENTIRE profit into the Sigmon Memorial Scholarship Fund.
- The Convention was held in Williamsburg, Virginia and everyone loved the rich history of brick in this colonial town. All the rooms sold out and the sponsorship was at an all-time high. The next convention will be held at the Grove Park Inn in Asheville on March 27-29, 2025. We look forward to seeing everyone there and registration will go live on the website in January.
- The website has been updated, and you can now register and pay online for certain events and tournaments. The membership database is accessible with a password. Contact Brandy Shaver for the password at [brandy.shaver@ncmca.com](mailto:brandy.shaver@ncmca.com)

# Dates to Remember



**Remember to check the calendar on the NCMCA website for the latest dates, times, and locations for all events!**

**December 5, 2024 – NCMCA Series 12 Module 1 Certification Class**

**January 8, 2024 - NCMCA Series 12 Module 2 Certification Class**

**January 17-19, 2025 – Murdell Golf Tournament, Myrtle Beach, SC**

**January 21-23, 2025 – World of Concrete, Las Vegas, NV**

**February 12, 2025 - NCMCA Series 12 Module 3 Certification Class**

**February 22, 2025 – Skills Rowan Contest, Salisbury, NC**

**March 12, 2025 - NCMCA Series 12 Module 4 Certification Class**

**March 21, 2025 – Adams, Oldcastle Regional Skills Contest, Goldsboro, NC**

**March 27-30, 2025 - NCMCA's 51st Annual Convention, Grove Park Inn, Asheville, NC**

**April 9-10, 2025- SkillsUSA Masonry Contest, Greensboro, NC**

**April 16, 2025 - NCMCA Series 12 Module 5 Certification Class**

**May 17, 2025 - Sam McGee Memorial Apprentice Contest, Raleigh, NC**

**May 21, 2025 - NCMCA Series 12 Module 6 Certification Class**

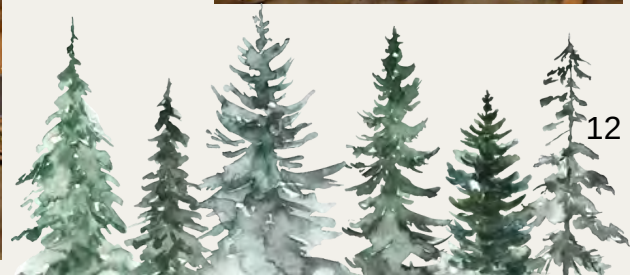




# METROLINA RECOGNITION NIGHT



The NCMCA/Metrolina Chapter Recognition Night was a huge success! We were able to recognize our eight Mortar Net Scholarship recipients, who are working apprentices representing multiple companies across the state. We were also able to acknowledge all our outstanding apprentices that have won various NCMCA contests throughout the year, including SkillsUSA, Samuel A. McGee Memorial, NC State Fair, and Masonry Education Day. We were honored to have Amy Davis-Moore with ApprenticeshipNC on hand to help commend the great young apprentices and highlight the importance of apprenticeship during National Apprenticeship Week. Please join us in congratulating all these fine apprentices from across the state of North Carolina.



# CHAPTER NEWS

## Central Piedmont Chapter

The Central Piedmont Chapter will be having their annual Christmas party on December 9th at Logans Roadhouse in Greensboro. There will be a social from 5:00 to 5:30 and then the meeting will start. We will be doing the traditional dirty Santa. Everyone will bring one gift per couple; we encourage spouses to attend.

## Western Chapter

The Western Chapter is holding its own. Their last meeting was in October with more in attendance than usual. The Western Chapter has decided to support their local schools. No meeting in December. Merry Christmas!

## Metrolina Chapter

The Metrolina Chapter has experienced an incredibly eventful and fulfilling year. As the year comes to a close, it's astounding to reflect on all that we have accomplished together in such a short time.

From our apprentices showcasing their skills at the World of Concrete to the Sam A. McGee Memorial Apprenticeship Contest, and from our participation in the State Fair to the memorable Metrolina Recognition Night, this year has been a testament to the dedication and passion of everyone involved.

We've also hosted several engaging and informative meetings, enjoyed our annual golf tournament, and participated in the unforgettable State Meeting in Colonial Williamsburg, VA, this past April. Each of these events has highlighted the incredible efforts being made toward workforce development and the promotion of our trade.

On behalf of the Metrolina Chapter of the North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association, I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to all our members and associate members for their unwavering support of our trade and the masonry industry as a whole. Here's to continuing our success and dedication to the craft in the year ahead!

## LAND OF THE SKY CHAPTER

The Land of Sky held its monthly meeting on November 19th. Hilti presented to a room of 15-18 members. We learned of new technology and tools that Hilti is offering to our industry. Gary Kitchen didn't believe the presenter when she said that the Hilti flush cut rebar cutter was cool to the touch after cutting, so Mark Gould went and got an anchor bolt from his truck for him to cut in the restaurant and Mike Rogers agged him on, while videoing him. We may not be welcomed back but I'm here to inform you all, it is cool to the touch! Mike Rogers nominated Donny Caldwell to become a lifetime member and the vote passed from the local members. Ronnie Ewart was nominated and elected as the secretary treasure for the chapter. We will hold our Christmas dinner this weekend (12/7/24) at The Fireplace, where we will hold a silent auction for items that have been donated by members and associates of the NCMCA. These funds will go towards families in the community that need help. Donny Caldwell started this fundraiser over 20 years ago (24-25 to be exact) and it is still carried on.

We will host Malta Dynamics on 2/17/25, and Stabila on 3/15/25. We will meet at the Mills River Restaurant at 6:30 and welcome anyone to come and join.

## Raleigh Chapter Report

The Raleigh Chapter held its last meeting of 2024 at Cantina 18 in Raleigh on November 4th. Our guest speakers were Meagan Elfert with York Flashings and Scott Hauser with SpecSouth Group, and the discussion focused on Through-Wall Flashing. The program was very informative and well received by all who were in attendance. Thanks to our social sponsors for the evening: Tucker-Kirby, Palmetto Brick, & Hydro Rents.

In November, members of the Raleigh Chapter participated in a panel for the NC State University (NC SU) School of Design and School of Architecture's ARC 301 Architecture Design: Tectonics Concrete Masonry Building Design competition. This competition, part of a three-year series sponsored by the NCMA/CMHA Foundation, challenged students to incorporate concrete masonry both structurally and architecturally in their building designs. With 27 entries, the students presented impressive projects, and the competition was an invaluable opportunity to expose the next generation of designers to the potential of masonry. Cash prizes totaling \$875 were awarded to the winners. Raleigh Chapter participants included David McQueen from Oldcastle APG, Kelsey Evans from Johnson Concrete Products, Macy Williams from Brodie Contractors, Jason Oliver from Boettcher Masonry, and Matt Cable from McART Masonry. Additionally, Pat Rand, distinguished professor emeritus from NCSU, and Susan Cannon from Cannon Architects were involved in the panel, providing expert insight and guidance to the students.

Our next meeting will be held on January 6th. Ryan Shaver will be on hand to give us a preview of 2025 NCMCA ambitions and upcoming events.

Murdell 25 – Mark your calendars – January 17-19. This tournament has raised \$137,000 since the first trip in 2000, with all funds going directly towards promoting masonry in NC and beyond. Email Doug Burton if you dare at: [doug@whitmanmasonry.com](mailto:doug@whitmanmasonry.com)

## Eastern Chapter Report

The Eastern Chapter will be holding a fundraiser Friday, December 6th at 7:30am. They need masons and laborers to help build the backstop wall at Chowan University. The address is 757 Union Street, Murfreesboro, NC, 27855. All the money raised will go to fund future scholarship opportunities. Special thanks to our sponsors: Adams, an Oldcastle Company, Lee Brick, United Rentals, Commerical Ready Mix, Eastwest Products, and Manning Masonry. We would appreciate any volunteers who are willing to help! Merry Christmas from the Eastern Chapter!



B A B Y

*Congratulations to Isaac and Anna Rogers!!! They are the proud new parents to Wade Freeman Rogers. Born December 5th and weighing in at 9lbs 2 oz and 22' long. A very Merry Christmas indeed!*



Think Local

Among the characteristics that make the North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association unique among masonry promotional groups is the fact that 1) NCMCA is a true masonry contractors' association and 2) the role of local chapters in the state organization.

While the membership of associate companies is welcomed and essential, voting membership and holding NCMCA office is restricted to companies that are in the business of contracting masonry work. NCMCA maintains a strong partnership with block and brick producers as well as stone suppliers and other masonry product manufacturers, but unlike many other state masonry associations, block suppliers, brick manufacturers, and masonry contractors maintain separate promotional/trade associations in North Carolina. And while the three entities are usually of a single mind, there are rare instances when interests are not completely aligned. That separation is a strength of NCMCA. Focus is always on what's best for masonry contractors.

However, of those two unique NCMCA characteristics, "local chapters" is the topic for this anniversary article.

NCMCA member firms are encouraged to affiliate with a local chapter. Firms are also encouraged to affiliate with additional chapters if the firm has offices and operations in more than one area of the state.

Before there was a North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association, there were local masonry trade groups across the state. The first was in the Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton area called the Western Carolina Chapter of the Mason Contractors Association of America. Soon to follow were groups in Lexington, NC, Burlington, Greenville, NC, and Asheville. With the eventual incorporation of the state association, the new bylaws reflected a desire for the local chapters to maintain a strong voice in the leadership of the new organization. The majority of the NCMCA Board of Directors is made up of local chapter representatives, specifically the president and the vice-president of each local chapter. Having a group of locally officially affiliated chapters with a specific role in managing our masonry contractors' association is a somewhat unique feature of NCMCA.

With changes in membership over the years and with recent consolidations, there are presently six local chapters: The Eastern Carolina Chapter which essentially covers the entire area east of I-95; The Raleigh Chapter; The Central Piedmont Chapter representing an area that includes Burlington, Greater Greensboro, Mount Airy, Lexington, and High Point; the Metrolina Chapter covering Greater Charlotte; the Western Carolina Chapter covering the Lenoir-Hickory-Morganton area; and the Land of the Sky Chapter for contractors in Asheville and in the western highlands of North Carolina and upper South Carolina. There once were as many as nine local chapters including Coastal/Wilmington, Triad/Burlington, and Sandhills/Fayetteville.



We invited comments from each of the six present local chapters:

**Western Carolina Chapter:** As a previous anniversary article covered, the Western Carolina Chapter of NCMCA predates NCMCA by a few years when a few like-minded masonry contractors in and around Hickory and Morganton, and a few of their suppliers began informally meeting for dinner now and then during the late sixties. Usually at the old Mull's Motel and Restaurant in Hickory. These masonry contractors were among the first in the Carolinas and the southeast to bid masonry turnkey, or as we like to say, "lump-sum." They had begun using reach forklifts and automatic scaffolding. In their search for innovative ideas, several of them began attending Mason Contractors Association of America (MCAA) conventions and tradeshow. In those days, MCAA was not particularly welcoming to non-union masonry contractors, but nevertheless, the Western group soon chartered as The Western Carolina Chapter of The Mason Contractors Association of America. In the early seventies, Western Carolina Chapter members led the effort to start the North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association.

Since that time, the chapter has produced seven NCMCA state presidents (Sipe, I. Griffin, A. Griffin, H. Townsend, W. Starr, L. Kirby, and B. Gates,) one MCAA President/Chairman (A. Griffin,) one member of the MCAA Masonry Hall of Fame (G. Sipe,) and one NCMCA executive director.

Years ago they decided that there is simply too much going on at Christmas time for a chapter Christmas party, so they instituted an Annual January Winter Social, a dress-up affair for members and their spouses when the accomplishments of the previous year are reviewed and longtime members are recognized with the chapter's "Founders' Award." Fourteen Western Carolina Chapter members have been so honored thus far.

In the eighties and nineties, the chapter always looked forward to at least one cookout at either Ivey Griffin or Hugh Townsend's Linville River cabin near the south end of the Linville Gorge. Beautiful surroundings, good fellowship, and always good food.



The Western Carolina Chapter has been one of the most generous contributors to the ongoing Executive Office Pledge, having exceeded the minimum annual donation requested by the board of directors for many years. Western has raised money by building masonry projects and by conducting raffles for shotguns, and one time, a John Deere Gator. The above picture shows a Western Chapter workday, where they installed a foundation as a fundraiser in March of 1999.

Since the early days of the chapter, Statesville Brick has hosted the Western Carolina Chapter for a summer cookout at their Lake Norman cabin at Sunset Point. Guests cook their own steaks on the massive charcoal grill.

In the late nineties, the chapter decided they could help recruit young people to masonry by producing a video. This was before the days of cheap video equipment and editing software. A professional video production company was hired at a cost of about \$10,000, a lot of money at the time. Chapter members starred in the production filmed in member companies' offices and on local job sites. The resulting video was titled "Don't Look for Something to Do, Look for Something to Be!" and was duplicated and mailed to every high school masonry program in the state.

For quite a few years, members of the Western Carolina Chapter would travel to the Greenville-Spartanburg area each fall to serve as judges for the Upper South Carolina Masonry Contractors Association's Annual Masonry Workmanship Awards. The Western Carolina entourage, usually led by Ross Gary, was guided on a tour of recent USCMCA member projects to develop a score that determined the winners of the award.

It is quite likely that Western Carolina Chapter member Carl Moser, Jr. has been affiliated with NCMCA longer than any other present NCMCA member. Now seventy-five, he began attending chapter meetings as a teenager working for his father's company, Carl Moser Masonry. Seventy-one-year-old Alan Griffin is a close second. Alan probably holds some sort of a record for serving as the Western Carolina Chapter Secretary/Treasurer for more than thirty-one years.

For the most part, the companies that were the core of the Western Carolina Chapter have faded away. But the chapter tradition of competitors becoming good friends remains strong. Second Tuesday of most every month. Just like it's been for over fifty years.

**Eastern Carolina Chapter** NCMCA Past President and MCAA Masonry Hall of Fame member Gary Joyner writes, "If you didn't know it, eastern North Carolina was represented in the organizational meetings of the NCMCA in the mid 1970's. NCMCA was rather dormant out our way until the early 80's. A supplier or two and a masonry contractor or two made up the Eastern Carolina Chapter. Adam's Concrete, Thomas Butts (original member,) Gary Joyner, and Stevie Harrington (once in while!) basically were the chapter.

"After attending several NCMCA conventions, the idea of attempting to become a lump-sum contractor (originating in the western part of the state) appealed to some of us. Eastern began to grow a little. We had contractors travel to Greenville to learn about conducting the masonry business as lump-sum contractors. Basically, it was a matter of turning the trowel into a balance sheet.

"Masonry meeting attendance was still a problem. The members were there, but 'throwing in the towel' was never an option. The Eastern chapter was kind of unique in that numbers (of people) did not matter.

"Keeping up with the Jones's (other chapters) was never a problem. In the early 90s when a full-time executive director was hired, each chapter was challenged with donating a substantial amount of money each year to support this hiring. Eastern Carolina kept up with the largest chapter, Raleigh, through the years.



“This generation's offspring started to emerge in the workforce / industry in the 1990's. Their leadership is growing the Eastern Carolina Chapter to one of the strongest in the state. Namely, Tim Manning, Manning Masonry; Chris Joyner, Joyner Masonry; Kendra Blackmon, Rush Construction; and Bryan Overman, JB Overman Masonry.”

NCMCA President-Elect Tim Manning adds, “As one who gladly received the passing of the baton, I was told that the chapter survived for three reasons:

1. We put the industry over ourselves
2. We knew how to raise money
3. We like to have a good time

“In terms of putting the industry needs first, I believe we owe that to the patriarchs who led the way. Gary has always been a beacon for our industry and particularly our chapter. Our chapter members have always had the innate ability to scratch and claw for work on bid day and yet forge unbelievable bonds of friendship along the way.



Members of the Eastern Carolina Chapter built masonry dugouts and knee walls on a softball field at First Christian Church in Greenville, NC as a chapter fundraiser in November 2011. Chapter members laid approximately 1,300 blocks and 9,000 brick in a day. Chapter President Tim Manning said labor, equipment, materials and lunch were all donated by chapter member firms.

“Fundraising for the state association has always been at the forefront of what we do. Perhaps there is a competitive spirit with the Capitol Chapter. We have always had to do more with less. With only 5-10 contractors spread out over 300 square miles, rallying the troops wasn't always the easiest. But every fundraising project exceeded expectations namely for one reason - the people. Whether it was a residential foundation, a ballpark project, or a fishing tournament, both contractor and associate members provided unbridled support. I still recall the first project I helped with. We laid all the brick and CMU at a record pace but when it came around to the steps, a \$50 stamp couldn't find a mason. As I recall it took me about two days to lay my first set of steps. Now we choose projects without steps. I am thankful most of our projects support the community. It seems like nearly every masonry-backstop wall in eastern North Carolina has been done by the NCMCA Eastern Carolina Chapter.



The Eastern Carolina Chapter's 2018 high school “Lineburner” competition underway in Goldsboro.



In 2002, members of the Coastal Chapter participated in the Blue Sky Foundation's demonstration of storm-resistant wall systems and “safe room” technology in Wilmington. NCMCA and the Coastal Chapter helped to sponsor the Clemson University “air-cannon” used in the demonstration. Examining the 2 x 4 “bullet” to be used in the cannon fired at test walls are (left to right) Andy Barnes, then-Chapter President Chris Barnes, Dwayne Sigmon and Brantly Rivers.

“A wise man once told me the NCMCA is a fraternity. Fraternities like to have fun and if we ever lose sight of that, it will not succeed. I think a quick glimpse into the history and personalities of the Eastern Carolina Chapter easily proves that theory. This business is a grind. 40-60 hours every week in the field or in the office is not an easy life. That's not counting the sleepless hours spent agonizing over payroll, or labor force, or general contractors' relationships. Just the ability to take a small reprieve to share a meal, a cup of coffee, or something a little stronger with a fellow mason contractor or vendor friend sometimes offers just the encouragement we need to get up at 4:30am and do it all over again. The fraternal aspect of this organization and its success cannot be overstated. The chapter and the association as a whole has served as the breeding ground for lifelong friendships and mentorships that I believe have proved invaluable to our success as a company and my quest to be a better human being. Little did I know walking into Professor O'Cool's on a random Tuesday night in August of 2002 would enrich my life for years to come. What was supposed to be just a lesson on flashing turned into my introduction to the fraternity; a badge that I wear with great honor.”

The Eastern Carolina and the Coastal Chapter (Wilmington area) merged in 2017.

**Raleigh Chapter** Past NCMCA President Danks Burton writes, “The Raleigh chapter was formed several years after the state association was formed (actual year unknown). The chapter has had twelve presidents (Millard Peoples, Bill Mitchell, Dan Hutchins, Danny Batten, Calvin Brodie, Doug Burton, Danks Burton, Howard Pope, Todd Carver, Ron Williams, Bo Black and Matt Cable) in the +/- 48-year history. Five chapter presidents have gone on to be state president (Danny Batten, Calvin Brodie, Doug Burton, Danks Burton and Bo Black). Interesting to note that four of these, Calvin, Doug, Danks and Bo, are still active attendees of chapter meetings. Our longest serving president was Ron Williams, 14 years, and our current president is Matt Cable. Our chapter counts five members as recipients of the prestigious Eleanor Flowers Upton Award: John Cramer, Jimmy Wall, Danny Batten, David McQueen, and Dwayne Bryant.

“The chapter meets on the first Monday of every month, nine months per year with average attendance of 35. We have met in BBQ joints, cafeterias, sports bars, steak houses, Italian and Mexican restaurants. A new tradition was started five years ago. Custom Brick hosts the chapter for steak night at Milburnie Fish Club every October.

“The strength of our chapter comes from having informative masonry related programs, which gets contractors to the meetings and in turn, encourages associates to attend.

“The chapter has hosted a golf tournament for 36 years and will be celebrating our 25th straight year in Myrtle Beach this January. The tournament is called Murdell. If you heard some of our eastern NC friends pronounce Myrtle, you will understand how it got the name. Also, Murdell rhymes with Steve Bell, a charter member. This tournament has raised over 148K dollars, which is used in the promotion of masonry. Doug has served as the chairman of the golf tournament Murdell since its inception. Many fun times, great stories, bus breakdown experiences have come from our Murdell trip. What happens in Murdell stays in Murdell. We have five people that have perfect attendance going to Murdell: Calvin Brodie, Danks Burton, Steve Bell, Bill Reed and Sheryl Crocker. We had 56 attendees last year and over the course of 25 years 191 different folks have attended.



Participants prepare to board the bus for the first Raleigh Chapter "Murdell" Golf Tournament in year 2000.



Left to right, Danks Burton, Freddy Koontz, Doug Burton, Gary Joyner, Jeb Burton, and Virginia farmer Buck Arthur enjoying Murdell Golf at the Raleigh Chapter's 2008 tournament. Danks Burton says, "Buck is Murdell famous for losing big in the poker game on the Murdell bus and stating 'Guess I've got to kill a cow when I get home.'"

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"The NC State Fair masonry apprentice contest is 70 years old and the Raleigh Chapter has served as the host for longer than anyone can remember. It's always a great day – Fall weather, Fair food, and young men and women showing off their masonry skills. This is the longest running masonry apprentice contest in the country. Calvin Brodie has served as chairman of the contest for 40 years and Doug Burton has served as head judge and master of ceremonies for about the same length of time."

**Metrolina Chapter** Chapter President Mike Doane writes, "Our chapter's success and continued growth would not be possible without the dedication and vision of those who came before us. Past Presidents and leaders have built a strong foundation, and we stand on their shoulders as we move forward. Their commitment to excellence has set the standard for our work, and their legacy inspires us to strive for even greater heights.

"We owe much to those who have given their time, energy, and expertise to guide our chapter. Their ability to adapt to challenges, mentor emerging leaders, and uphold the highest standards has helped our chapter remain a trusted and respected force in our industry.

"Each leader in our chapter's history has contributed unique strengths, from driving innovation to fostering a sense of community and collaboration. Their efforts have shaped who we are today and will continue to inspire future generations."



In the late nineties and early two-thousands, the Metrolina Chapter hosted an awards dinner for architects and general contractors to recognize outstanding masonry design in recent building projects. Attending left to right were Doby Chapman, Wesley Curlee, and Paul Seaver.





Left to right, Lee Amick, Gregg Swartz, Joseph Canitano, Todd Cox, and then-chapter president Chris Bruner celebrate the winners of the Metrolina Chapter's 2005 Annual Golf Tournament.

"Our past leaders have not only built our chapter but have set the course for our profession. Their work has made a lasting impact, and we're grateful for the enduring legacy they leave behind."

The Metrolina Chapter has produced four NCMCA state presidents: Red Brookshire, Ben Brookshire, Bob Gates, and Kent Huntley. Kent Huntley will soon be the Chairman of the Mason Contractors Association of America.



**Land of the Sky Chapter** Chapter President Micah Rogers convened a recent November breakfast meeting of a few past and present Land of the Sky members to talk about content for this anniversary article. He provided the following summary of their conversation, which he titled "The Journey of the Land of the Sky Chapter." Micah writes, "The Land of Sky Chapter's story began in the mid-to-late 1970's at Charlie Taylor's house, following a call from Bob Merrill, Monty Sneed and JD Silvers. They saw the local chapter as an opportunity to have friendly competition and to share experiences with each other.

"From those beginnings, the chapter quickly gained momentum, thanks to the leadership of its early presidents, listed in no particular order: Bob Merrill, Charlie Taylor, Jerry Bayne, Monty Sneed, Mike Rogers, Steve Stout, Robert Crawford, Mark Sneed, Donny Caldwell, and Gary Kitchen.

"When we got together to discuss our history for this article, two chapter members were in a discussion about a general contractor that is slow to pay, to which Charlie Taylor stated they were having the same conversations forty-plus years ago.

"Bob Merrill is the only member of the chapter to serve as president for the statewide organization. Bob was later inducted into the MCAA Masonry Hall of Fame, a testament to his dedication and service to the masonry trade and the community. Mike Rogers was in line to serve as president but had to resign due to a very serious ATV accident in 2007. He was recently elected as NCMCA secretary-treasure and has begun the cycle to become NCMCA President beginning in 2028. Donny Caldwell served as NCMCA Western Regional Vice President for many years. David Hart now holds this position. David Bass, who selflessly dedicated his time and efforts most of his career to serving his many customers in the region, is thus far the only recipient of the Eleanor Upton Award from The Land of Sky Chapter.

Group photo from a Land of the Sky Chapter Saturday workday fundraiser in 2007. Eric Gilliam says among the folks' pictures are Logan Gilliam, Ronnie Ewart, Kevin Craig, Justin Guy, Jeff Guy, Eric Gilliam, Joe Shively, Perry Guy, Tommy Shepherd, Mark Austin, Dean Rice, and David Bass. Photo by Don Caldwell.



The Land of the Sky Chapter raised funds during June and July 2000 by veneering an addition to the Macedonia Baptist Church near Asheville. Pictured (left to right) Reverend Dr. J. H. "Jim" Johnson, past NCMCA president Bob Merrill, and then-chapter President Mike Rogers. Doing masonry has always been a popular means for local chapters to raise funds.

“One of the chapter’s most comical moments involved Becky Hensley, who recruited a belly dancer for a chapter meeting one night. I heard that the next meeting was so full they had to use the overflow room. Becky spent a lot of time organizing events and speakers for the chapter’s meetings. Jeff Hartig is responsible for organizing a membership drive at Western Steer in the mid 1980’s. It was at this membership drive at Western Steer that James McCarson and Jerry Bayne were introduced to the chapter and became lifelong members. Another moment worth mentioning was when an OSHA consultant gave a presentation one night on safety and ended up getting drunk and breaking several things. One memory Charlie Taylor related was when a local general contractor invited him and another masonry contractor from the chapter to bid a project, at the same time. Charlie said the contractor’s intentions were to ‘pick a fight’ between the two members but it was in fact the opposite reaction that he received. Neither of them did the job for the contractor.

“As the chapter grew, so did its activities. Early members regularly participated in a NASCAR Southern 500 outing at Darlington, strengthening camaraderie and building lasting friendships. One memorable activity involved the members going on a cruise. One evening a dinner show on the cruise included imitating what was to be an earthquake as part of the show, to which James McCarson reacted by flipping the entire table over while holding his beverage and shouting ‘God save the queen!’ James McCarson was also responsible for the story that David Bass tells to this day, where David delivered Gatorades and waters to a project in the middle of the summer when the temperature was well over 100 degrees. When David told James what he had for the guys, James told David to get the refreshments off the job because the guys hadn’t worked hard enough to deserve any Gatorades.

“The chapter owes much of its success to the lifetime members who have been integral to its growth. These individuals, including Monty Sneed, James McCarson, and Charlie Taylor, played a crucial role in ensuring the chapter’s continued success and influence in the community. Donny Caldwell was nominated to be a lifetime member by the Land Of Sky Chapter at its most recent chapter meeting. Additionally, key local associate member firms, past and present, such as RMC, Metromont, Cemex, Adams Oldcastle, Casons Builders Supply, and Moland Drysdale, have made everything possible, contributing time, effort, and resources to further the chapter’s mission.

“Over the years, the Land of Sky Chapter has hosted guest speakers of the trade, and fostered relationships with local high school instructors and contractors at monthly meetings. One of the chapter’s proudest accomplishments is its Annual High School Contest, which has been running for 27 years consecutively, providing students with valuable experience and showcasing their talents. The chapter took a short break from hosting this event in the late 80’s to early 90’s.

“For twenty-plus years, Donny Caldwell has been responsible for raising funds for the chapter to distribute to needy folks in the community as part of the chapter’s annual Christmas celebration.

The Land of the Sky Chapter hosted past and present members of NCMCA along with their families and guests for their August 2010 chapter dinner meeting. More than sixty people attended. Then-NCMCA Western Regional Vice President Don Caldwell introduced the masons and other Asheville-area masonry industry leaders in attendance, sharing personal stories and recognizing contributions made by each to the Association and to the Carolina’s masonry industry. In the photo, left to right, Jerry Bayne, Charles Taylor, Warren Cochran, James McCarson, Bob Merrill, Jeff Hartig, J.D. Silver, and Don Caldwell.



Chapter members pose with the contestants of the Land of the Sky Chapter's Annual High School Masonry Contest in 2011.

“The Land of Sky Chapter members have donated their skills and resources to many local organizations over the years. These community outings consisted of installing foundations to non-profits such as Habitat For Humanity, and Elida Homes. Contractors and associates from the chapter have also been able to give back to the community by working at local churches and schools with various projects.

“As we celebrate 50 years, we honor the legacy of those who have contributed to its growth and look forward to continuing the traditions and spirit that have made this chapter so impactful.

**Central Piedmont Chapter** The Central Piedmont Chapter merged with the Triad Chapter (originally chartered with the North Carolina Secretary of State as “Triad Masonry Association” prior to NCMCA’s incorporation) in 2022. Both chapters have a long history of successful chapter fundraising golf tournaments that also served as important construction community social events. The Central Piedmont Chapter took the lead in the development and construction of the North Carolina Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park near High Point in the nineties. The Triad Chapter produced three state presidents: Richard Robertson and his son Dickey, and James “Red” McAdams. The Central Piedmont Chapter has also produced three state presidents from three generations of the same family: Belton Koontz and his son Freddy, and Freddy’s daughter Ashlee Koontz Moore. The Central Piedmont Chapter first introduced NCMCA to Freddie McMahan who developed the NCMCA Insurance Program, later also partnering with John Cramer’s firm.

NCMCA local chapters each have their own unique characteristics, reflecting the diverse regions of North Carolina itself. One could be forgiven if they didn’t realize the local meeting they attended in the east was part of the same organization as a local meeting attended in the west. That diversity adds to the strength of the association. The sum of the parts is greater than the total, ultimately enhancing the special fraternity that has always been at the heart of NCMCA’s success.



After his passing in 2000 at age 44, the Central Piedmont Chapter renamed their annual golf tournament in memory of Danny Koontz, a longtime active contractor member of the chapter. Family and friends gathered for a photograph at an early Danny Koontz Memorial tournament. Top Row, left to right, Wesley Davis, Roger Koontz, Craig Koontz, Cliff Koontz, Russell Buchanan, Freddy Koontz and Kent McGuire. Bottom row, left to right, Sabrina Koontz Beck, Jaime Koontz Davis, and Darin Koontz Hall.



For the 30th consecutive year, Dickey Robertson (left) chaired the Triad Chapter’s 2004 Annual Golf Tournament, which was generally held at the Shamrock Golf Club in Burlington. Left to right, Robertson, 2004 first-place winners Andy Andrews, Chuck Grant, and Sammy Horne congratulated by then-chapter president Red McAdams.

