Founded In 1949

THE PROFESSIONAL LOCKSMITH

The Official Publication of the
Greater Philadelphia Locksmiths Association

WWW.GPLA.ORG

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Please join us for our next meeting!

In-person or via Zoom (see Page 18)

Date: Monday, April 20, 2026
Meeting Time: 7:45 PM (No cost to attend)
Location: Tiffany On The BLVD
9010 Roosevelt Blvd
Philadelphia, PA 19115
Dinner: Arrive at 6:30 PM for dinner
Cost: $5.00 per member / $25.00 per non-member
Program: Nexkey, Chris Braun

Congratulations! LAB Pinning Kit Winners



February Winner:
Tony Buenaflor



March Winner:
Paul Kline

We would like to once again express our sincere appreciation to LAB for their generous donation.

March 2026 Newsletter Corrections

In the March 2026 Newsletter, a few corrections are required:

- In the meeting minutes and in the "Meet Our New Membership Applicants" section, Kristoffer "Frenchie" Sequin was listed as working for "Groupe Gonville" and "Canadian Security Network." These should be corrected to **Gunnebo Group**.
- In the meeting minutes under Health and Welfare, it was incorrectly stated that "Bob Mock's wife passed away." I sincerely apologize for this error. The individual who passed away was **Marie Unger**.



Below are links where you can upload photos and, if you wish, share a short memory or story. Some reflections may be included by the Life Celebrant during the service as we honor the impact Cliff had on all of us.

Photo Upload: https://www.dropbox.com/request/TQVl4hGa5vc5ftOLYcl5

Share a Memory or Story: https://forms.office.com/r/M8jtqjXmte

We hope you can join us as we come together to remember and celebrate his life.

President's Message

Hello Members,

During the last meeting, several members requested that the Board vote on permanently closing GPLA. This motion was brought to the Board at the meeting on **08 Apr 2026**. The results were **8 votes to remain open** and **2 votes to close**.

While the Board includes many new members and some early missteps are understandable, we remain committed to strengthening GPLA as a cohesive, supportive, and educational organization.

Several new initiatives are currently under discussion, including:

- Vendor discounts for members
- An online forum for discussions, Q&A, events, training, and equipment exchange
- Expanded use of online meetings and virtual classes

The Board welcomes ideas, feedback, and suggestions as we continue working to enhance the Association.

With best wishes,
Paul J. Kline
GPLA President
Email: paul@lightninglock.com

NEW Membership Benefit Added

We're excited to announce that **IDN Hardware of Philadelphia** has generously extended an exclusive offer to all GPLA members.

Members will now receive an additional 5% discount on top of IDN's already competitive pricing.

To take advantage of this benefit, simply provide your GPLA member number when placing your order.

Learn more about IDN's Philadelphia location here:

https://www.idn-inc.com/locations/idn-philadelphia

Keep an eye on this section of the newsletter for more benefits to come.

GPLA CPR Certification Class – May 16, 2026



GPLA is committed to empowering its members with the skills to help others and potentially save a life. Please mark your calendar for the GPLA CPR Certification Class:

- **Date:** Saturday, May 16, 2026
- **Location:**
  Philadelphia Airport DoubleTree Hotel
  4509 Island Avenue
  Philadelphia, PA 19153.

- **Time:** Two sessions available
  - Morning Session: 8:30 AM
  - Afternoon Session: 2:00 PM

- **Cost:** $25.00 donation per participant.
  - GPLA will cover most of the cost of this training
  - Typically, this class is $250.00 per student

Space is limited to 15 participants per session.
Reservations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.
To reserve your spot, please contact Sven Hellwig at 215-669-6444.



March 2026 – Membership Meeting Minutes

Meeting Overview

Date: March 16, 2026
Location: Tiffany On The BLVD, Northeast Philadelphia, PA
Time: Start 7:40 PM – End 8:55 PM (1 hour 15 minutes)

Presiding: President Paul Kline
Recording Secretary: John D. DePew

Members in Attendance: 23

- In-person: 14
- Online (Zoom): 9

Guests: 3

- Marie Nimmo and Gina Melendez & Jessica Miller from HLC

Call Meeting to Order & Opening Formalities

- President, Paul Kline called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm.
- Barry Wilensky standing in for the Sergeant-at-Arms led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Welcomed guests: Marie, Gina, and Jessica
- Quorum was NOT achieved.

Program

- Jessica Miller and Gina Melendez from Hudson Lock presented CodeSource software and HPC Blitz.

Previous Meeting Minutes

- February 2026 membership meeting minutes were distributed via Newsletter.
- Motion made and seconded to approve.

Treasurer's Report – Sven Hellwig Sr.

- Reporting period – February 1 to 28. The report was accepted.
- Constant contact annual fee paid.
- 12 full members and 9 shop members unpaid.
    - Final dues notice issued; deadline is end of the month.
    - $10 reinstatement fee after 90 days.

President's Report – Paul Kline

- Review of GPLA history and expansion beyond Philadelphia.
- Proposal to create a member forum for collaboration and engagement.
- Acknowledgment of:
  - Loss of key members.
  - Need to preserve institutional knowledge.
- Bylaw limitations identified:
  - No provision for Zoom-based closed-ballot voting.
- Membership voting for new applicants tabled until compliant process is defined

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Board of Directors Report – Sven Hellwig Sr.

Sven Hellwig Sr. reviewed recent activity from Board meetings.

- No board meeting held last month (weather-related).
- Next board meeting scheduled for April.
- Special board meeting (hearing) scheduled for next week.

Membership Report – Mike Nimmo

Applicants introduced:

- Christopher – recommended for full membership.
- Cameron – apprentice applicant.
- Dan (Dan's Lock & Key) – active automotive locksmith with multi-vehicle operation.

Notes:

- Vetting requirements under review.
- Possible waivers based on industry participation.
- No formal votes conducted due to ballot procedure limitations.

Correspondence – Jim Handschuh Sr.

- CPR Class scheduled at DoubleTree (upcoming)
- Cliff Shafer's Celebration of Life:
  - April 12, 12–4 PM
  - Whistler's Inn, Cinnaminson, NJ
- Newsletter corrections noted and updates requested

Communications

- Review of Constant Contact usage (possible discontinuation).
- Proposal for role-based email addresses for board and officer positions.
    - Improve professionalism, continuity, and security.

By-Laws

- Bylaws require updates to address:
    - Remote participation (Zoom).
    - Voting procedures.
    - Outdated rules and expenses.
- Standing rules to be revised without full membership vote where applicable.

Newsletter – John D. DePew

- Corrections needed to March newsletter.
- Asked members to provide information and subjects for newsletter.

New Business

- **Pricing Strategy Discussion**
    - Rising key blank costs.
    - Recommendation to adjust pricing above big-box competitors.
    - Emphasis on professional value vs. price competition.
- **Industry Observations**
    - Growth of big-box (Costco) automotive key services.
    - Continued advantage of professional locksmith expertise.

Tips and Tricks

- **Safes:**
    - Manufacturers SSR changing lock bodies.
    - Use Ryan Taylor drill guides, more accurate than others.
- **Automotive:**
    - 2015 Nissan Altima has secondary key with different part number (but same FCC). This is special part different from standard one.
    - EAATA 360 Pro is being evaluated by Paul. Problems with Ford found.

Raffle

- LAB Pinning Key (won by Paul Kline)
- Raffle $25.00 (Marty)
- Hats, Swag bag, Safe pictures.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Ron and seconded by Steve.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
John D. DePew – GPLA Recording Secretary

--- END OF MEETING MINUTES ---

Locksmith Humor



GPLA's new "Escape Room" challenge

Don't Do That!



Tip & Tricks Corner

A recurring column for practical locksmith wisdom

Each month, we'll share quick, field-tested tips from across the locksmithing world; residential, commercial, automotive, and safe work. These are the small techniques, clever shortcuts, and professional habits that make the job smoother, safer, and more efficient.

🏠 Residential

- Rekey Faster & Cleaner
  - Always pre-sort pins by depth before starting (use a pinning mat).
  - Keep a "common keyway kit" pre-built (Kwikset, Schlage SC1/SC4).
  - Use a follower with magnet tip to prevent springs flying.

🏢 Commercial

- Master Key Systems (Avoid Costly Mistakes)
- Before pinning:
  - Verify key hierarchy twice.
  - Use color-coded pin trays.
  - Keep a printed bitting chart on-site.

🚙 Automotive

- Always check battery voltage (vehicle + programmer)
- Keep a jump pack connected during programming.
- Some vehicles (e.g., certain Nissan models):
  - Same FCC ID ≠ same key.
  - Always verify part number, not just FCC.

🔐 Safes

- Always Start Non-Destructive
  - Before drilling, Try manipulation
- Check for:
  - Relocker triggers
  - Loose handles
- Drill Strategy, Use:
  - Scope camera whenever possible
  - Drill small pilot hole first → confirm location → widen

If you have a favorite trick, shortcut, or technique you'd like to share, send it in—we'll feature member submissions in future editions. This column grows stronger with your contributions. Email to: newsletter.gpla@gmail.com

Fellow Locksmith Associations

South Jersey Locksmiths Association:

https://sjla-inc.org/

SJLA is sponsoring Mandatory CEU Classes.

Date: Wednesday, April 29th, 2026
Time: 09:00am – 04:00pm
Location:

WESCO
7884 Browning Road
Pennsauken, NJ 08190

See the next page for the SJLA's flyer for NJ mandatory CEU class.

New York Masters Locksmiths Association

http://www.nymla.org/
https://www.clearstar.com/

Yankee Security Convention Inc.

https://yankeesecurity.org/

Yankee Security Convention 2026

Dates: October 20-24, 2026
Location: MassMutual Center
Springfield Massachusetts

For more information visit: https://yankeesecurity.org/

Attention

All New Jersey Locksmith Licensee's

SJLA is sponsoring the Mandatory CEU Classes. These classes will give you 10 CEU credits towards your 2028 license renewal. You will receive 2 certificates.

When: Wednesday, April 29th, 2026
Time: 09:00am – 4:00pm

Location: Wesco
7884 Browning Rd
Pennsauken, NJ 08109
**Class is limited to 20 people

Instructor: Tom Demont

Price: Members SJLA/GPLA $375.00 Non members $425.00

For Class Info Contact: Bob Cornine @ 609-879-9845

****Payment must be made by April 15th to ensure receipt of your CEU certificate****
Class Starts Promptly at 9:00am. No one will be admitted after 9:00am. No Exceptions!!
Must Bring ID and NJ State License to insure CEU Credits

Cut along Line and send bottom portion with check Made Payable to: SJLA

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Business Name: _____

Business Address: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____ Member # SJLA ☐ GPLA ☐ MLA_____

New Jersey License #: _____

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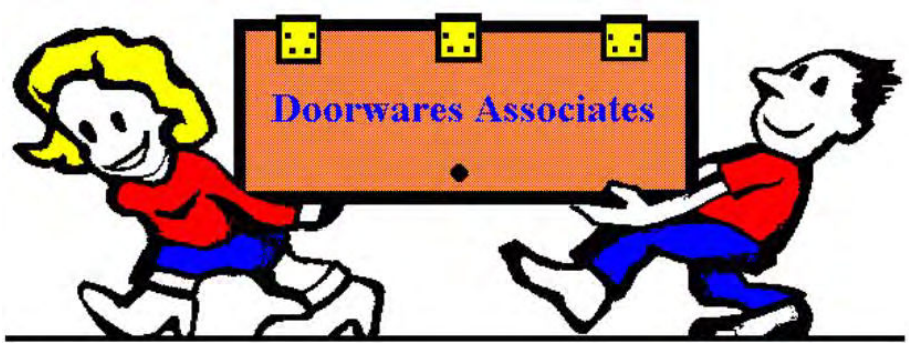
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At GPLA, we are committed to providing exceptional value to our members. Thanks to the generous support of our Web Advertisers and Convention Sponsors, we can continue offering meaningful programs, resources, and opportunities to our community.

We would be honored to include your company as a valued GPLA supporter by becoming a Web Advertiser on our professionally managed website, GPLA.org. Your advertisement will be prominently displayed and linked directly to your company's website, giving you increased visibility among our engaged and growing audience.

In addition to appearing on our website, your advertisement will also be featured in our monthly GPLA newsletter, further expanding your reach within the locksmith and security professional community.

The annual cost for this advertising opportunity is $300.00.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the benefits of becoming a sponsor, please contact John at: newsletter.gpla@gmail.com

How to Apply

To become a GPLA Web Advertiser, please provide the following information along with a high-quality company logo or advertisement image:

- Company Name:
- Contact Person:
- Phone:
- Email:
- Web URL:

Please send your completed request to:
John D. DePew, Newsletter Editor
newsletter.gpla@gmail.com

Why Join GPLA Meetings on Zoom?

Although we always enjoy seeing members in person, we understand that it isn't always practical.

That's why joining the meeting via Zoom is a great option—it lets you stay involved without the drive, traffic, or scheduling stress.

Joining GPLA meetings via Zoom allows you to participate from your shop, home, or anywhere using a computer, tablet, or smartphone. You're still counted for attendance and can ask questions, join discussions, and vote when required—just as if you were in the room.

Zoom makes meetings more convenient and comfortable. No rushing, no late-night drives, and no missing important updates. It's free, easy to use, and you don't even need a Zoom account—just click the link or scan the QR code to join.

Most importantly, Zoom ensures your voice remains part of the conversation, so you don't miss out when decisions are made or topics affecting your association are discussed.

To make things even easier, we've created the **GPLA Zoom Meeting Access & Participation Guide**, which is emailed to members along with the GPLA Newsletter.

We look forward to seeing you—whether in person or on Zoom—at the next meeting.

If you have any questions or comments about Zoom participation, please email meeting.gpla@gmail.com.

Calling All GPLA Members: Your Voice Belongs in the Newsletter!

The GPLA newsletter is more than a monthly publication—it's a reflection of our community, our craft, and the collective knowledge of locksmiths who take pride in their work. Each issue becomes stronger, more informative, and more enjoyable when members like you share your experience, creativity, and insight.

We're inviting all GPLA members to contribute content for upcoming editions. Whether you've been in the trade for decades or you're just starting out, your perspective adds value.

What You Can Contribute

- Industry News & Updates
- Articles & How-To Pieces
    - A unique job you completed
    - A tool you rely on
    - A technique you've perfected
    - A lesson learned the hard way
    - Even if you only have an idea, send it along. We can help shape it into a full article.
- Locksmithing Tips & Tricks
- Industry Trends & Insights
- Humor, Jokes & Lighthearted Content

Why Your Contribution Matters

- It strengthens the knowledge base of the entire GPLA community
- It highlights the professionalism and expertise of our members
- It preserves the history and culture of our trade
- It helps newer locksmiths learn from seasoned professionals
- It keeps the newsletter vibrant, diverse, and worth reading

Your voice helps shape the identity of GPLA. Even a short submission can make a big impact.

Ready to Contribute?

Simply email your content—or your ideas—to the newsletter editor at **newsletter.gpla@gmail.com**

If something doesn't fit this month's issue, it will be saved for a future edition.

Let's continue building a newsletter that reflects the skill, humor, and dedication of the GPLA membership. Your contribution is not just welcome—it's appreciated.