



VOLUME 33, NUMBER 1, 2016

# The Voice of Freemasonry

IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL



## The Apron The Highest Honor a Mason Can Receive

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE  
OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF WASHINGTON DC



## THE VOICE OF FREEMASONRY

VOLUME 33, NUMBER 1  
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# The Voice of Freemasonry

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The Apron is one of the most recognized symbols of Freemasonry. While most of its deep symbolism is derived from its representation as a "plain, white, leather or lambskin," often they are given as gifts from one brother to another, and these tend to be highly ornamented. In this issue, we present just such an apron, along with a short essay on the symbolism of the Apron from Brother Luke Young.

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# GRAND MASTER'S Message

The need for Freemasonry in our society is ironically highlighted by the recent arrest of a would-be terrorist. He had formed a nihilistic equation of the number of lives he needed to take in exchange for his own, and was seeking to purchase weapons to allow him to kill the maximum number of people possible at a Masonic center in Milwaukee.

This is a fanaticism that has no place in civil society. And in fact this man's attempted physical attack is a natural outcome of numerous spurious attacks against Freemasonry from its political and religious opponents. We are not alone. There are any number of other religious, nonprofit, healthcare and voluntary associations under attack with lies and violence every day.

As the Grand Master of Masons of the District of Columbia, I would prefer this message be the typical enumeration of plans, programs and priorities for the Masonic year ahead. However, this is not the time for such a message.

The message we need to hear as Masons and which we, in turn, need to speak to the world, is that of humility, inclusion, brotherhood, tolerance and forbearance. This society of ours (as are many societies around the globe), is under great



Most Worshipful Brother Kenneth D. Fuller



We must find nourishment in all that is just, kind, gentle, true, loving, charitable and pure. These are virtues upon which all religions and every rational philosophy agrees.

pressure from extreme, demagogic tyrants and those who would foster disharmony, divisiveness, anger, fear and loathing in order to divide and conquer us.

The temptation to find self-worth by dehumanizing others is seductively sweet. It feeds on the rancid meat of prejudice, envy, resentment, ignorance and greed. A diet of such poison sickens the individual who feeds on it, and corrupts any society that turns to it for spiritual sustenance.

We as Freemasons must reject this table of ungodly delights. Instead, we must find nourishment in all that is just, kind, gentle, true, loving, charitable and pure. These are virtues upon which all religions and every rational philosophy agrees.

In our own lives, we as Freemasons must set an example. Let no prejudiced opinion fall from our lips. Let no crude posting be seen on our Facebook page. Let us not circulate

vulgar caricatures of those ideas and people with whom we disagree. Let us give honor to all our leaders, and give the benefit of the doubt to those who do not share our own political agenda, our religious commitments or our economic understandings. Let us do good to all. Let us wish well for all whom we encounter. And let us spread the cement of love upon all society. ▲

# Message from the Grand Secretary

*No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a cellar or under a basket. Instead, we put it on a stand, so that all those who come near may see the light.* – Luke 11:33

It is my personal belief that Freemasonry holds in our teachings and philosophy, our rituals and practices, an incredible vehicle for self-improvement; and through them, the betterment of society as a whole. From them we learn the equality of all mankind; that despite our surface differences, we share more than we take. We learn to walk uprightly in our several stations in life. We learn to be good men in the world, fathers, brothers, husbands, and employers, wherever our path might take us. And we learn to subdue our passions and hold our lives in balance, always striving for our better selves and the enlightenment which this journey brings.

Freemasonry in the District of Columbia is a wonderful beacon of light, shining brightly in the Capitol City. We have a unique make-up of brethren drawing from the inherent cultural diversity of a great capitol city. And we bring together Masons that practice our craft in many tongues; French, Spanish, Italian, German, Turkish and Farsi. Inside our Lodges, men of many faiths call each other Brother; Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindis and Christians alike. We leave these vast differences at the door and work as one, supporting and proving the American ideal that no matter the difference, anyone can peacefully coexist when they come together to form a community. Together, we have created a unique Masonic experience that is the envy of the Masonic world, leading the way and standing as an example of the true universality of man.

And yet we keep our light under a basket. Or, we keep it as I like to say, “terminally subtle.”

Every year, our Masonic Foundation awards scholarship funds to children from the D.C. public school systems on the order of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars per. A newsworthy event to be sure, but little is said to the public of our efforts. So, it goes largely unnoticed.

For men seeking Masonry, there is sometimes little information given as to how to join. We don't ask, we don't solicit, and we don't advertise – lest we be accused of interfering with a man's own free will and accord. It's not strange to hear of families not knowing of a loved one's membership until he has passed away, and someone was going through his personal belongings.

I recently met a man, and when he noticed my Masonic ring, he told me that his father was a Mason, but that he never joined because his Dad never invited him. He seemed to hold a sense of sadness that his father didn't think he was good enough to be a Mason.

Our forward face to the community needs to be improved. Some of the most enjoyable efforts I have made with Masons in the District have been at public, community-based events. As I have walked the parade route on the Fourth of July, I often have heard

“Look, it's the Masons!” or “Here come the Masons.” This is often followed by “What's a Mason?” Sadly, a great deal of the population has no idea about our Fraternity and the positive ripple effect it has through an individual to their community, to the world.

It's time we put our light on a stand for all to see.

I would like for Masonry to rise to the eminence it once enjoyed – to be held in such regard that no one would question its existence or its good effect. And in order to achieve that goal, we need to start from the beginning – in our Lodges, and in the communities where they sit.

Even though our membership comes from the suburbs to the District, perhaps only for meetings, I encourage you to act for the community in which your lodge exists here, in the city. Over time, once you have faithfully reached out to work for and with that local community, they will value and exalt our gentle Craft. And when that day comes, don't be ashamed or afraid to take the credit you will well-deserve. Display our light proudly, and it will continue to grow.

Finally, my brethren, as we continue with our Masonic labors, I would like for everyone to keep one word in front of our actions: harmony. Harmony is the strength and support. I have seen lodges torn apart from within; either as a resistance to change, or the Lodge becoming a personal plaything of individuals. Remember, change is inevitable and the growth and vibrancy of the Lodge depends on new ideas and actions while old ones die and fade away. It is only the natural order of life repeating itself *ad infinitum*.

We need to stand united, into one sacred band or society of friends and brothers, a temple of living stones among whom no contention should ever exist, save that noble contention, or rather emulation, of who can best work and best agree. **Together** we can build a stronger fraternity in the District that will continue long after anyone reading these words today has left our company. ▲



JEFFREY D. RUSSELL, PGM  
Grand Secretary

# From the Editor



It's almost summertime in DC, which means that even though the weather remains a stochastic mess, the masses of tourists tell us that life is inevitably returning to the Nation's Capital for the year. And so it is with *The Voice of Freemasonry* – dormant for a while, and now ready to return in full bloom.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. My name is Jason Van Dyke. I'm a Past Master of The Colonial Lodge, No. 1821 (a Lodge I helped found) and a member of Benjamin B. French Lodge, No. 15 (my Mother Lodge), and recently, I came to work here in the Office of the Grand Secretary as the Director of Communications.

Previously, I was the Assistant Director of Communications and the Assistant Director of Education for the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite. While there, I ran the Scottish Rite's Masonic education effort (the Master Craftsman Program), acted as the media relations contact, and wrote and edited for their magazine, *The Scottish Rite Journal*, among a myriad of other small duties.

Here in the office of the Grand Secretary, I bring 11 years of experience working for the Craft on a national level. As was the case with the Scottish Rite, I'll have a lot of sundry duties, but mainly I will be involved in the planning and execution of our events and, when necessary, liaising with the media on behalf of the Grand Lodge. Most importantly, though, I will be working to improve all of our communications efforts both internal and external; the most noticeable of which is this very magazine.

Bringing together a magazine like this can be a Sisyphean challenge. Publications are insatiable in their need for content, and content can be hard to come by – especially in an organization like Freemasonry, where almost everything is accomplished through the charitable work of volunteers. And that's where you come in, dear reader. (Come on, you knew I'd be asking you for something at some point, right?)

We need your help. Specifically, we need you to submit your best ideas and stories about Freemasonry in the District of Columbia for publication on these pages, because other readers really want

to hear about them. And more importantly, I want to help you reach them.

So, let me give you some ideas to get you started:

1. What's going on in your Lodge? Did you have a great speaker that delivered a particularly important or inspiring lecture to your Lodge recently?
2. What does your Lodge have planned for the future that this magazine might help you promote?
3. Do you have a cool story about the history of your Lodge or an important/famous member that you'd like to share with a wider audience?
4. Have you done some Masonic research that begs to be shared with the larger community?

And that's just a quick start. We want anything you can give us, because as I said, the magazine is ALWAYS hungry for content (especially when it comes with graphics and pictures!).

So as we look forward to the sweltering heat of DC in the summertime, I hope you'll burn with equal intensity to help us deliver the best and most engaging version of *The Voice of Freemasonry* that we can. Thanks for your help in advance, and I'm looking forward to continuing the tradition of delivering you one of the best Masonic magazines in the world.

Sincerely and Fraternally,



Jason Van Dyke, PM  
Managing Editor ▲

# The Grand Master's Charities

Relief is a central tenet of our Craft, and as such, care is given each year as the new Grand Master of Masons in the District of Columbia chooses the charity for which the Grand Lodge focuses. This year, our Grand Master, Kenneth D. Fuller, has chosen The Knights Templar Eye Foundation and Safe Shores as his charities of focus.

*It was the goal of Most Worshipful Fuller to engage and support charities that would provide assistance both in the local community and across the country. So, while Safe Shores provides intervention, hope and healing to children and families affected by abuse, trauma and other violence in the District of Columbia, the Knights Templar Eye Foundation provides funds to improve vision through research, education, and supporting access to care on a national level. –ed.*

## THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR EYE FOUNDATION



*Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.*

1033 Long Prairie Road, Suite 5 • Flower Mound, TX 75022

The Knights Templar Eye Foundation, incorporated in 1956, is a charity sponsored by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar. The Foundation is governed by a Board of Trustees comprised of the six elected officers of the Grand Encampment, all Past Grand Masters of the Grand Encampment, and six trustees-at-large elected from and by the membership for a term of nine years. It is exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501 (c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code and contributions made to the Foundation are deductible by donors.

The original mission of the Foundation was "to provide assistance to those who face loss of sight due to the need for surgical treatment without regard to race, color, creed, age, sex or national origin provided they are unable to pay or receive adequate assistance from current government agencies or similar sources and to provide funds for research in curing diseases of the eye."

On December 31, 2010, the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., by direction of the board, shifted the Foundation's focus from providing individual assistance to those who face loss of sight and adopted a new mission statement "to improve vision through research, education, and supporting access to care." The Foundation now only participates in direct patient care through the Seniors Eye Care Program in partnership with EyeCare America and the Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology. With this change, the Foundation is benefitting untold millions in generations to come through grants that support research and education.

The Foundation's research dollars have helped develop new, nonsurgical, treatments for strabismus (crossed eyes) and ophthalmologists have reported that the Foundation's funding of pediatric ophthalmology research has been the primary reason that there are fewer and fewer surgeries for strabismus. The

Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., annually announces its call for research grant applications. The Foundation invites eligible investigators to submit applications for pediatric ophthalmology research grants for the award period which normally runs from July 1 to June 30. From the applications received, the Scientific Advisory Committee, a group of volunteer ophthalmologists and scientists, recommends to the Trustees which requests should be funded.

In 2012, the Board started investing in endowed professorships at leading research universities or teaching hospitals focusing on ophthalmic education. Selected institutions have matched the Foundation's \$2 million commitment. At this time, endowed professorships have been awarded to the Mayo Clinic and the Wilmer Eye Institute John Hopkins Hospital.

In pursuit of its mission, the Foundation has partnered with the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the largest ophthalmic organization in the world, to create a Pediatric Ophthalmology Education Center. This Center, a part of the Academy's Ophthalmic News and Education (ONE) Network, will be comprehensive in scope and global in reach. Its purpose is to ensure a strong educational foundation for current and future generations of ophthalmologists, and by doing so, eliminate a lack of ophthalmic education as a contributor to global blindness.

Since its inception, the Foundation has expended over \$142 million on research, patient care, and education. Research grants totaling in excess of \$25 million have been awarded to researchers working in the fields of pediatric ophthalmology and ophthalmic genetics.

*For more information visit [www.knightstemplar.org/ktef/](http://www.knightstemplar.org/ktef/) ▲*

# SAFE SHORES – THE DC CHILDREN’S ADVOCACY CENTER: Responding to Child Abuse in DC with Care and Compassion

Rebecca, a smiling 8-year-old girl, came to Safe Shores on a summery autumn day after telling her mother the night before that their older cousin had hurt her several times. The cousin visited the home regularly as a loved and trusted relative. Rebecca's story shocked her mother Anne, who found it difficult to believe that the cousin would harm anyone, especially Rebecca. But, the allegation prompted Anne to call DC's child abuse hotline immediately, which resulted in Rebecca coming to Safe Shores the next day.

Each day, Safe Shores – The DC Children's Advocacy Center serves children and families affected by sexual and physical abuse in the District of Columbia. This year marks the nonprofit's 20th anniversary of serving children and families in need.

"For two decades, Safe Shores has been on the front lines, providing intervention, hope and healing for children and families affected by abuse, trauma and violence in DC. And more recently, we've set our sights on preventing abuse through education and training," says Michele Booth Cole, J.D., the nonprofit's executive director.

Safe Shores serves as the hub of a team of public and private partners that includes DC's Child and Family Services Agency, Children's National Medical Center, the Metropolitan Police Department, the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia, and the United States Attorney's Office for DC.

As the lead agency, Safe Shores brings together the investigative team to listen to each child in real time via closed-circuit television while a skilled interviewer provides a respectful, listening ear in a safe, quiet space for that child to talk about what happened. The purpose of bringing together all the team agencies is to minimize the trauma a child victim experiences and to achieve better outcomes for that child and in that case.

When a child is brought to Safe Shores, the organization's Family Advocates respond to the variety of needs that child and his or her family bring — from new clothes, to school supplies, to food, to applying for crime victims' compensation. "Our Fam-

ily Advocates give clients respect, compassion, reassurance and needed-information in the midst of a life-altering situation," Cole says.

Safe Shores also provides clinical therapy services to children free of charge. Safe Shores' therapists are experts in helping child victims heal by teaching them how to process and let go of the pain and shame that can come from abuse and by helping parents and other caregivers so they can support their children.

This year more than ever Safe Shores wants to make the point that protecting children is everybody's business. "Child abuse is a community problem that demands a community solution. My hope is that everyone will be part of the solution. To start, that means asking why DC ranks second worst in the nation in the rate of child maltreatment and, in the next breath, asking what we can do about it," says Cole.

Safe Shores wants to ensure that children, such as little Rebecca, get the care they need to heal from the trauma of abuse and that all children are safe from harm.

To learn more about how you can help protect children, please attend one of Safe Shores' Coffee for Kids events. This free morning session held every other Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. takes visitors on a tour of the organization's mission. To RSVP, please email [edrucker@safeshores.org](mailto:edrucker@safeshores.org).

*Author's note: The child abuse case described in this story uses aliases and changes some details in order to protect the confidentiality of Safe Shores' clients. ▲*



# Humility in New Masters and Old

As we embarked on the Masonic journey and committed ourselves to rolling up our sleeves to be active in the speculative building of our temple, we should pause, now and then, to reflect on our accomplishments and re-evaluate our strategies. We must individually ask ourselves the following questions: Can I be objective enough to give a fair grade to myself, uninfluenced by the perception of others? Have I, at least to some degree, achieved the plan I have drafted or the goal I have envisioned, which I first promised myself to accomplish? If not, what are the obstacles that have hindered me, and what is now preventing me from arriving at my destination and fulfilling my obligations?

Numerous lectures have been given, many articles have been written, and myriads of publications have been issued. I would hereby like to contribute my Masonic two cents on this subject: the importance of character and appropriate demeanor, as I perceive it, to build a sound edifice on a solid ground, for as our Masonic Brother Johann Wolfgang von Goethe pointedly reminds us in his novel *Elective Affinities*, "When erecting a building, the foundation must be sound. ...the foundation is the mason's business... it is the chief business in the entire undertaking." Applied to character, we must lay out our consequences as individuals as a foundation, the better to erect our image as a whole.

Many of us often react unreasonably when we experience unfavorable criticism and rush to staunchly defend ourselves, right or wrong, to satisfy our own identity and temporarily feel good about ourselves. As I am writing this article, I recall negative comments I have received, from time to time, deflating my ego, which I have received from more informed and experienced brothers or past masters. When I was master of my lodge in 1990 and 1991, one evening, while in session struggling in the hot seat in the East, a past master stood up and publicly shouted at me: "The only reason we are now listening to you is that you happen to be in the East", and then he sat down with a victorious and smug smile. The blood rushed to my head and my face must have turned bright red. What a bold comment directed straight to me as master of the lodge, and how embarrassing it was in front of the rest of the members; luckily, there were only eight brothers present at the time. Stunned for a minute, I felt like throwing the gavel directly at the face of the old man for his insolent remark. However, I took a deep breath, faked a pale smile, and replied: "Thank you, WB Tactless," we will call him for the purpose of this article. "I will take note of that."

When I went home that same evening, I reflected seriously on the incident which had taken place at the stated communication and examined my way of running the lodge as a novice worshipful master. I realized that, although Br.: Tactless's manner of correcting me in such an aggressive way may have been unseemly, he was quite right. I knew the ritual, yet I lacked the full infor-

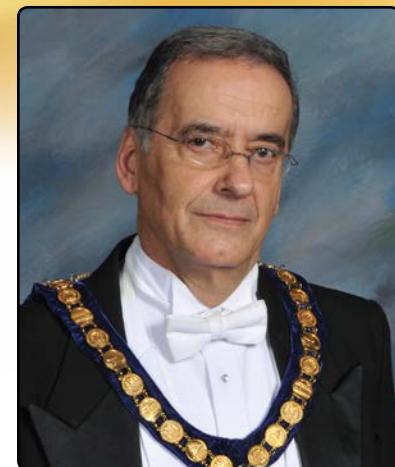
mation to run a lodge, and I should be humble to receive advice from those experienced ones — i.e., the past masters.

After realizing there was justice in Br. Tactless' remark, I decided to take action instead of entrenching myself into reaction. I picked

up the phone, called Br. Tactless, made an appointment with him and discussed my weaknesses, and at the same time reached out to other prominent past masters, soliciting them for advice and guidance. Brother Tactless's remonstrance actually alerted me to my lack of experience and prepared me to avoid a potentially more serious mistake in the future. For that, I was grateful to him. Subsequently, he and I became close friends and often I gave him a ride to the lodge. I benefited tremendously from his skills and experience while we discussed lodge matters on our way to the meetings. Brother Tactless, through my taking his outburst as constructive criticism, had become Brother Reliable.

Imagine how rewarding it was to see my lodge under my leadership to have a regular attendance of forty and some members instead of seven or eight. Occasionally, I even counted eighty-five people attending special lodge event! Meetings became fun and entertaining instead of painful and boring. Negative comments were transformed into positive ones. At the end of my second term, when I found out that the brethren were planning to elect me for a third term, I humbly declined to make room for new Brethren to gain leadership experience in the East.

As leaders, my brethren, your attitude can make a significant difference. Look not for praise and flattery as these may be a trap of ignorance; rather be attentive to constructive negative comments as these will help you to improve your skills and alert you to change directions when you are swimming against the current. Do not be discouraged when you fail, but swiftly get back on your feet and seek help if you encounter complications. Always remember that humility is an essential duty incumbent on all Masons, and a major key for success. Those who seek a leadership position to promote their own interests and boost their ego are sadly still in existence, yet their realm is very short-lived, and their departure at the end of their term is a relief to the fraternity. If you become a leader, you cannot be labeled smart just because you become a Master of your Lodge, or a grand master of a certain jurisdiction; you can be smart if you are humble, approachable, and knowledgeable when dealing with all situations, and you must possess a good attitude toward the Craft as a general rule to maintain peace



CHARBEL T. FAHED  
Junior Grand Warden

(continued on page 19)

# THE DEAD HORSE TREE

by Ken Fuller, GM

When the first appears at one hundred yards, it can be mistaken for a small or medium sized white rock, strange against the sage and thin grass. But as you ride up to the solitary tree on the 8,000-foot high Whiskey Rim, more and more appear and can be clearly identified as bones and bone fragments. They are not at all like a winterkill elk, with bits of flesh and hide clinging. These bones are blanched, broken and weather rounded. The educated eye knows that these bones are horse bones. They are the remains of generations of hard worked horses. Years ago the tree they surround, the Dead Horse Tree, was the place where ranchers, loggers, cowboys and tie-hacks brought their weary, suffering horses to put them down.

The horseman would ride up on a healthy horse and hobble him a bit away, and then lead the worn out horse to the Tree, where he'd tie him with the lead and dispatch him with a merciful bullet. Depending on the horse and the human this could be a heartless practicality, for others a sad but necessary mercy, and for yet others an emotional farewell to an old and dear friend. Taking the lead, the human would walk back to his mount and leave the dead horse to the coyotes, bears, raptors and ravens. Soon only a fresh set of bones would be visible and the cycle of nature would spin again on Little Whiskey above the Torrey Creek.

The local cattle ranchers and dude ranches no longer use the Dead Horse Tree, but I have visited it on horseback from Ring Lake Ranch in Dubois, WY. It is now a snag harboring more life than when it lived. But the bones remain.

They are symbolic to the meditative mind of its own mortality; the Tree is also emblematic of the spiritual discipline of self-evaluation and self-improvement, essential to building the moral and spiritual temples of our second lives. In truth, we all need a Dead Horse Tree out in the world of our contemplative landscape.

From infancy, self-centeredness is a survival skill. From birth, we know how to demand attention. I don't know if we are born with prejudices, outrageous ideas, and ingrained behavior, but we certainly adopt them as our own with our mother's milk. Some of us believe ourselves to be truly special, unique, and indeed, quite important. Others of us are just as certain of our unworthiness.

We have become certain of many facts, truths, realities, rules, laws and assorted sordid certainties that are just not so. We are all mental, spiritual and moral flat-earthers in our deepest, most lizard-like souls. We believe such absurd assertions as "smoking

(continued on next page)

*Ken Fuller, Grand Master, rides to Little Whiskey*



helps me stay thin;" "the poor could do as well as I do, if they just worked as hard as me;" "another drink will make me feel less depressed;" and, "all my problems would go away if only they\_\_\_\_." Every wrong-headed belief, every inane unexamined thought pattern, each self-serving moral judgment of others, and all of our irrational pre-judgements about the world around us and the people we encounter, every one of these hobby horses, carries us away from the trail that leads to the Eternal. They are in fact the assassins within us, killing the beauty, strength and wisdom we so longingly seek. Because they are part of us it is difficult to see them as they are. We love them and honor them. We even dedicate ourselves to their service, but these assassins will never deliver upon their promises.

It is in fact the purpose of Freemasonry to think deeply, to gather wise counsel, to look rationally at our lives, and then to truly assess our own spiritual, moral and ethical health. On the Masonic Journey to the dawn of light in the East, from our

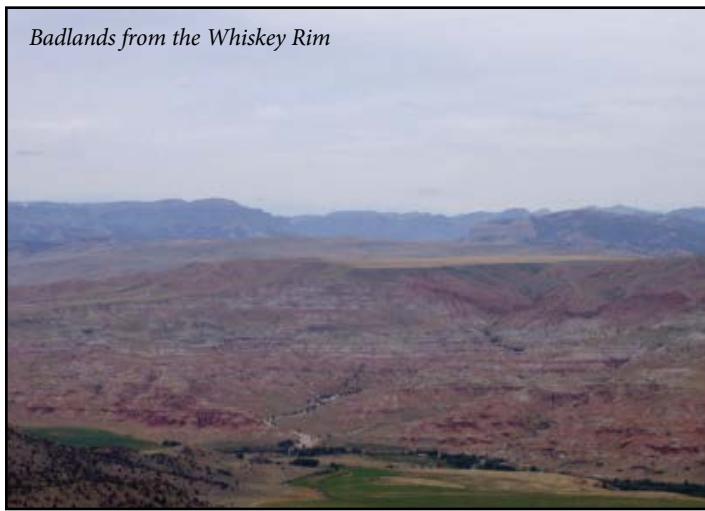
It is in fact the purpose of Freemasonry to think deeply, to gather wise counsel, to look rationally at our lives, and then to truly assess our own spiritual, moral and ethical health.

place of darkness in the West, we must put these pervasive, persuasive, false and suicidal behaviors to the test of light. What behaviors alienate us from that which is good and pure and loving? What ideological follies keep us from viewing the eternal truths of brotherhood, relief and truth? What prejudices separate us from good and true men, who with the slightest sign of good

will on our part would become true brethren and companions on our journey? What overwrought and false passions blind us to our own responsibility for "that which ails the world"?

When we identify, examine and isolate these terrible burdens, it is time to take them to the Dead Horse Tree, on the mystic mountain of the imagination, and consign them to oblivion, leaving them a prey to the beasts of the field and the vultures of the air. Then without a glance back we can continue our quest for that eternal light that dawns in our hearts and which brings into this world the loving beauty of the plans of the Grand Architect of the Universe. ▲

*Badlands from the Whiskey Rim*



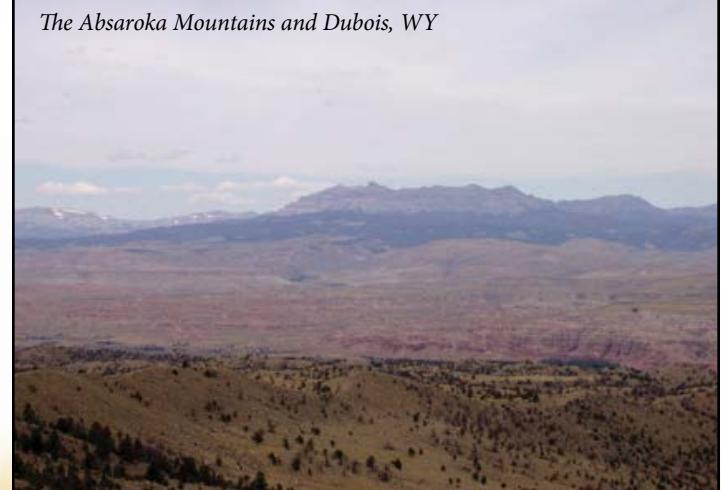
*Nature's beauty in Little Whiskey*



*Little Whiskey (Whiskey Rim) in Dubois, WY*



*The Absaroka Mountains and Dubois, WY*



# From Ukraine with (Brotherly) Love

The Grand Master has many roles to fill during his year in the Grand East. One of those roles is as the Head of State, representing all the Masons in his district when he travels. And when he travels, he usually takes gifts to pay respects to those he meets on these official visits – a gesture his counterparts often reciprocate. (Conversely, the same is true when other officials visit the Grand Master in his home district.) This is a longstanding tradition in not only Freemasonry, but in diplomacy in general. And as such, the Grand Lodge of Washington, D.C. has an extensive collection of gifts that have been presented to Grand Masters dating back to our first Grand Master, Valentine Reintzel in 1811.

Pictured here is an apron presented to Most Worshipful Kenneth D. Fuller, Grand Master of Masons in the District of Columbia, from R.W. Anatoli Dimchuck, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of the Ukraine. The leather apron is hand tooled and decorated, and its case, as pictured, has been custom made to fit it.

If you'd like to see the apron in person, this gift and many others like it can be seen in our Grand Lodge museum, located at the Grand Lodge offices on MacArthur Blvd in Northwest D.C., which is open to the public, Monday through Friday, from 10am to 3pm. ▲



# The Apron and the Rite of Investiture: The Highest Honor a Mason Can Receive

BY BRO. LUKE YOUNG, SENIOR WARDEN, LODGE OF THE NINE MUSES, NO. 1776

During the 16 years that I have thus-far been a Mason, I have, like many brethren, accumulated a wealth of titles and honors, each more ultra-superlative and grandiose sounding than the last. This extravagance of titles in Masonry has been the result of an interwoven history of Freemasonry over the centuries with various other fraternities, each that carry their own complex hierarchy, heraldry, and symbolism.

During the initiation of an Entered Apprentice, the new brother is provided by the Master with a white lambskin or leather apron, and is told that it is "an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason; more ancient than the Golden Fleece or Roman Eagle; more honorable than the Star and Garter, or any other order that can be conferred upon you at this or any future period..." The ceremony of giving the apron to the new brother is traditionally known as the "Rite of Investiture" or the "Clothing."

Brother Daniel Sickel, in his 1868 *General Ahiman Rezon*, notes that the orders referred to in the ritual were among the most august and ancient in Europe. The Star and Garter was instituted by King Edward III of England in 1344 as the highest order of chivalry. "The Order of the Golden Fleece has ever been ranked among the most illustrious and distinguished Orders of Knighthood in Europe." Brother Robert Hanson notes on the Grand Lodge of England website that "in 1701, Frederick I of Prussia founded the Order of the Black Eagle. The number of knights was limited to thirty, exclusive of the princes of royal blood."

Therefore, the ritual is stating that the investiture of the Masonic Apron is of a more profound nature than the highest ranking profane Orders. Turning to Brother Mackey's *Symbolism of Freemasonry*, we see that this is because the investiture of the Apron is that of a spiritual, rather than a worldly honor.

Brother Mackey devotes Chapter 19 of his *Symbolism of Freemasonry* to the subject of the Rite of Investiture, and I encourage all of the brethren to read it in its entirety. Mackey notes that "this rite of investiture, or the placing upon the aspirant some garment, as an indication of his appropriate preparation for the ceremonies in which he was about to engage, prevailed in all the ancient initiations."

Brother Mackey compares the Apron to the Abnet. The Abnet was the "band or apron, made of fine linen, variously wrought, and worn by the Jewish priesthood" which was received "as a part of the investiture of the priesthood." In Freemasonry, which is so replete with symbols, this white apron, "is the first gift which the aspirant receives — the first symbol in which he is instructed." The Lecture of the First Degree says that the white apron is of lambskin because "the lamb has in all ages been deemed an emblem of innocence." "Though thy sins be as scarlet," says Isaiah, "they shall be white as snow."

Brother Albert Mackey



While there was not a standard form of apron during the times of our Ancient brethren, by the 19th century the form of the apron came to be standardized as composed of a rectangular body and a triangular flap. This clearly recommends to the mind a reference to the numbers 3, 4, and 7.



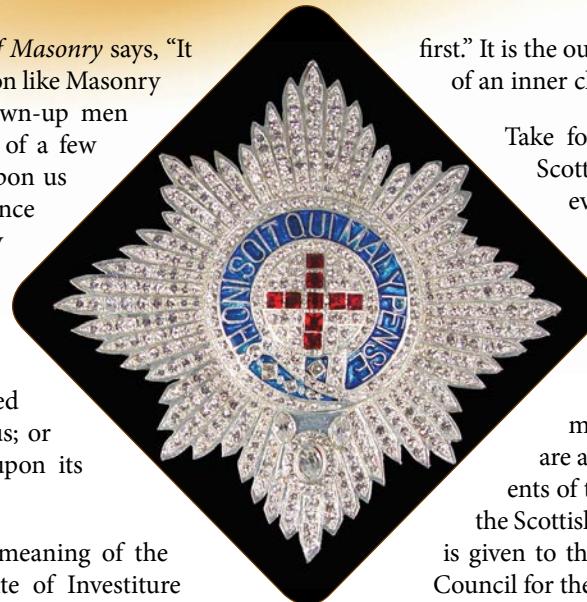
In the Entered Apprentice Degree, the lodge has 7 officers, and the ritual statement of their duties and positions in the lodge is what formally opens and closes the meeting of the lodge. The new brother is informed that the 3 principal tenets of our institution are Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth — also that our lodge is supported by the 3 pillars of Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty. The First Degree also presents the brother with the 4 virtues of Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice. The Apron can be seen as a hieroglyph of these virtues.

Brother Wilmshurst in *The Meaning of Masonry* says, "It is absurd to think that a vast organization like Masonry was ordained merely to teach to grown-up men of the world the symbolical meaning of a few simple builders' tools, or to impress upon us such elementary virtues as temperance and justice: — the children in every village school are taught such things; or to enforce such simple principles of morals as brotherly love, which every church and every religion teaches; or as relief, which is practiced quite as much by non-Masons as by us; or of truth, which every infant learns upon its mother's knee."

Wilmshurst goes on to say that the meaning of the Apron is far more profound; the Rite of Investiture is itself a symbol of Birth. "The physical form with which we have all been invested by the Creator upon our entrance into this world... is the real 'badge of innocence' the common 'bond of friendship,' with which the Great Architect has been pleased to invest us all... the badge which is 'older and nobler than that of any other Order in existence."

Wilmshurst also gives an impassioned charge to all brethren: "...to regard your apron as one of the most precious and speaking symbols our Order has to give you. Remember that when you first wore it, it was a piece of pure white lambskin; an emblem of that purity and innocence which we always associate with the lamb and with the newborn child. Remember that you first wore it with the flap raised, it being thus a five-cornered badge, indicating the five senses... but indicating also by the triangular portion above, in conjunction with the quadrangular portion below, that man's nature is a combination of soul and body; the three-sided emblem at the top added to the four-sided emblem beneath making seven, the perfect number."

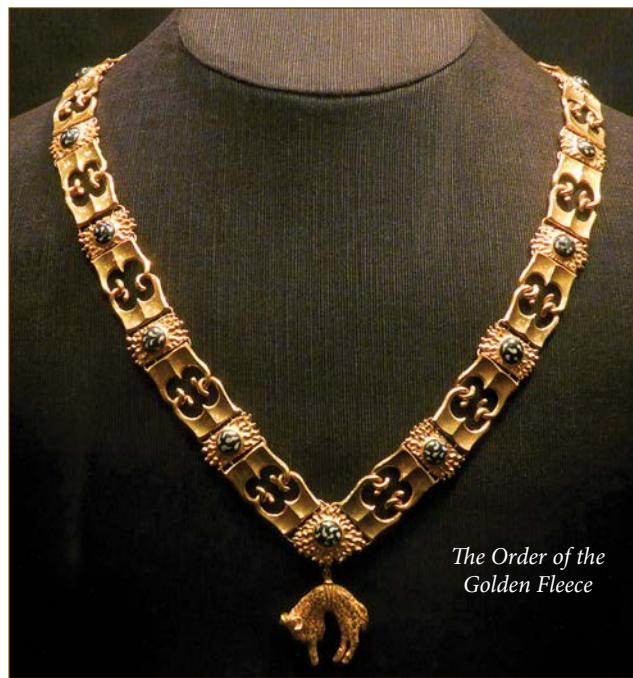
While much symbolism and learning is to follow the new Mason through his exploration of the craft, this primary symbol of the apron will never lose its importance, no matter how many ceremonies he may partake. Indeed, as the Great Teacher Yeheshua stated, "the first shall be as the last, and the last shall be made



*The Order of the Star and Garter*

first." It is the outer badge of an inner quest; the outer sign of an inner change.

Take for example, a Masonic ceremony of the Scottish Rite, which is performed publicly every two years, the Investiture of the Rank of Knight Commander of the Court of Honor. This ceremony is similar to a Masonic degree, but is specifically referred to as an Honor rather than a Degree, and the ceremony is therefore public — family, non-masons, and masons alike can attend. Masonic secrets are alluded to, but are not revealed. The recipients of the Honor are "32nd Degree" members of the Scottish Rite. The Honor, designated by a red cap, is given to those brethren recognized by the Supreme Council for their service to Masonry. It is from the ranks of the KCCH that brethren are later chosen to receive the 33rd Degree — designated by a white cap.



*The Order of the Golden Fleece*

Further on in this ritual, upon presenting the honoree with a gold rectangular badge encrusted with three diamonds, the ritual of the Investiture of the Masonic Apron is referred to, and the honoree is told: "It may well remind you of the scene in the lodge of apprentices, when you were invested with the lamb skin, an emblem of innocence and the badge of a mason, or of the Zenar or sacred thread, or the aprons of our ancient brethren of Egypt."

Here, near the end of a journey full of titles and honors, upon receiving one of the highest honors conferred by a Supreme Council of Illustrious Brethren, the Mason is told to recall one of the most pivotal moments in his life. As he has so many times on this journey, he is asked to remember that moment when he was born into that Order more honorable than any — that of Brother Mason — and to further remember, and never forget, the Badge of a Mason, the White Lambskin Apron.

So, even in Masonry's most glorious and exclusive honors, the humble apron remains the highest and most revered honor bestowed on a man. In fact, the apron perfectly represents the idea of Freemasonry in its elegant outer simplicity which perfectly encases a deep and resonant meaning hidden inside, available only to those that actively seek to know its true significance. ▲

# A Poem

BY W. BRO. TED BERRY, PM



For those that don't know him, Worshipful Brother Ted Berry, Past Master of Benjamin B. French Lodge, No. 15, is a Mason from the "old enlightenment days" mold; a true renaissance man. W. Bro. Berry is a financial advisor by day, but in his free time, he devotes himself to the diverse study of interests such as esoteric philosophy, mixology, Tango dancing, and poetry.

In his poetry, W. Bro. Berry, like all good writers, takes events and experiences from his own life to inform his art. In the example printed below, W. Bro. Berry plays on a Masonic theme (in three stanzas, no less!).

But the true beauty of the poem lies in the fact that while it loses no meaning for the uninitiated, it contains a much deeper and more meaning full prose for those who have seen the light.



## *Something Lost*

BY TED BERRY

I lost  
something the other day.  
(or perhaps I just misplaced  
it.)  
  
It was something I thought  
Everyone had.  
  
But it appears that I was  
mistaken,  
because as I ask around,  
I am certain  
no one else has it either.

It seems quite a shame,  
because what I lost  
was pretty valuable.  
(or at least so I thought.)  
  
but now that it is gone,  
I can't really recall  
quite what it was.

Anyway,  
here I am  
looking for this thing  
that I lost.  
(and you don't appear to have  
it either.)  
  
Maybe if we look together,  
we will have better luck  
finding it.

# Freemasonry As I See It

by Dominador S. Carreon, Master, Maynilad Lodge No. 1521

It was in 1980 while on active duty with the U S Navy and stationed at the naval base in Yokosuka, Japan when I became interested in joining a local masonic lodge. I had always known that masons were good people, charitable and God loving. Several of my buddies were actively attending a local Philippine lodge at the navy base and it seemed natural that I join also. I'm glad I did.

While the core values of masonry are many; the three that caught my fancy were, universal charity, providing opportunities for self-development, and building friendships with like-minded folk. It wasn't until I joined Maynilad Lodge, No. 1521 in Washington, DC and also recently retired, that I finally felt able to more actively enjoy the fruits and workings of freemasonry.

I grew up in the Philippines close to Manila; however, I was attracted to the town of Padre Garcia about 60 miles south-east where I had family. The area was beautiful. It was entirely agricultural. The citizens were mostly farmers with small plots of land, maybe a cow or two, several goats, a few chickens and always a couple of pigs. Americans would call the economy... subsistence farming.

Often, I thought I'd like to devote my life towards the betterment of conditions for this community. So, after retiring from the U S Navy, I started to help this village with some of its needs.

In 2012, I shared these efforts with the brethren of Maynilad Lodge. Several of our brothers immediately offered to contribute. Then the suggestion was made that Maynilad Lodge could take on the project as an official lodge charity venture. Our brethren in the Norfolk, Virginia area got on board and sponsored annual golf tournaments to help raise money. So far we have had three, and this year will be our fourth in the Norfolk area.

Likewise, several of our brethren living in the Manila area of the Philippines started participating and devoting time and effort to

the Padre Garcia project. Now, these lodge brethren – all golfers – are sponsoring another annual golf tournament, this time in the Philippines during January when it is dry and average temperatures are in the 80's.

To date, through our efforts, two local school buildings in the village of Padre Garcia which were quite dilapidated after several hurricanes have been rebuilt and totally refurbished. This year, our charity will concentrate on providing school supplies, book bags, preschool school books and hygiene kits for each of the 200+ students in Padre Garcia.

For these four years, the mayor of the town has issued a proclamation welcoming the brethren of Maynilad Lodge. He has also presented each year a most beautiful certificate of appreciation. Our brethren are happy we have been able to bring together our Norfolk contingent as well as our several brothers living in Manila for this project. To the brethren of Maynilad this is what freemasonry is all about! ▲





KURT TUCHOLSKY

# Journalist, Humanist, and Mason

by Dr. Thomas Lothes, German Department, German School of Washington, D.C.; translated and supplemented  
by Dr. Mark Dreisonstok, Master, Arminius Lodge No. 25 (the German-speaking Lodge of Washington, D.C.)

Kurt Tucholsky was a German journalist from the 1920's who was also a Mason. Tucholsky's role as journalist should be understood as social critic, satirist, and literary artist, and in this sense is perhaps similar to H.L. Mencken, the Sage of Baltimore, who wrote and enjoyed notoriety in the same era for his unique combination of journalism and keen social observations. Mencken, of course, is quoted today for humorous definitions like "Puritanism is the haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy;" for common-sense aphorisms like "there is always a well-known solution to every human problem—neat, plausible, and wrong;" and for universal truisms: "Love is like war: easy to begin but very hard to stop."

While Mencken was of a libertarian bent and Tucholsky a figure on the democratic left, both were free-thinkers, and Mencken's wry, witty, and sardonic statement on the human condition also marks journalism as Kurt Tucholsky understood it. On describing men and women, with political correctness decades in the future, Tucholsky writes that "the human race is divided into two parts: a masculine one which will not think and a feminine one which cannot think;" he pokes fun, as Mark Twain did, at both the English and German languages, in his *Lehrbuch: Deutsch für Amerikaner* – that is, his "language textbook" of German for Americans; and in describing the "group-think" of Nazism, Tucholsky produces a caricature of a Nazi-brainwashed school boy who lionizes "Goethe and Hitler," with the satiric comment that the former now stands only in pale contrast to the latter.

Yet Tucholsky's works are often darker and at times more cynical than Mencken, for Mencken wrote in the prosperous Roaring Twenties of America. Tucholsky, by contrast, put pen to paper in the 1920's in a Germany already in the grip of devastating inflation and economic deprivation, and with a view that the rise of the Nazis was inexorable. "Nothing is more difficult and demands more character," he wrote, "than to find oneself in the public sphere

in opposition to the trends of one's time and to proclaim loudly: "No!" Tucholsky was indeed an idealist, and this side of Tucholsky's writing and personality perhaps cannot be entirely appreciated without a purview of his interest and participation in German and French Freemasonry.

Kurt Tucholsky, one of the most insightful German literary journalists and one of the most artful masters of words writing in German in the first half of the twentieth century, was born on 9 January 1890 as the son of a prosperous businessman in Berlin's Moabit district. Owing to his father's wealth and early death, Tucholsky was able to embark on a career path without regard to financial considerations.

Though he would attain a Doctor of Jurisprudence, Tucholsky ended his law studies early and abandoned himself to his passion: to become a politically engaged journalist and writer. His publishing career was interrupted by the outbreak of the First World War, which he refused to greet with the patriotic hullabaloo of many other writers and poets of his time. His experience of the cruelty of war strengthened his determination to oppose all varieties of militarism, leading him so far as to exclaim, if somewhat bombastically: "All soldiers are murderers!"



Castle Gripsholm, Sweden, in a detail from the cover of an edition of Tucholsky's novel *Schloss Gripsholm*. Tucholsky's remains were interred on grounds behind the castle after he died in Swedish exile.

After the Great War (as World War I was then called), Tucholsky became one of the most prominent journalistic if not literary voices of the Weimar Republic. As co-publisher of the journal *Weltbühne*, or "World Stage," he proved himself to be a social critic in the tradition of Heinrich Heine. He wrote under numerous humorous pseudonyms, such as Peter Panther, Theobald Tiger, Ignaz Wrobel, and even Kaspar Hauser (this last *nom de plume* being the name of a nineteenth-century German young man who it was said grew up in total isolation from all human beings). Satirist, cabaret author, lyricist, novelist and critic of literature, film, and music – Tucholsky was all these professions and more. He was a democratic socialist and pacifist who had a prophetic sense of where Germany was headed

continued on next page

in the 1930's: with the rise of reactionary politics, a National Socialist government, and Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler. Prophetically, Tucholsky stated before Hitler's ascension to power: "The world for which we have worked and to which we belong no longer exists. The world to which we belonged is dead."

Tucholsky was born into a Jewish family, though he would later convert to Protestantism. It might be fair to say, however, that he looked to the portals of the Masonic Lodge to inspire his ethical and his humanistic idealism. He was initiated into the Lodge *Zur Morgenröte* in Berlin. This Lodge was chartered under the Grand Lodge *Freimaurerbund zur aufgehenden Sonne* (Masonic Association of the Rising Sun), a Grand Lodge which had been founded to reform a Freemasonry which in Germany had become in some ways perhaps no longer relevant for its members. As a reform, the Rising Sun Grand Lodge followed the lead of the *Grand Orient de France* and began using the "White Book" – a book of blank pages which could represent not only the Bible on the altar ("the rule and guide of faith" in American lodges) but *any sacred book* which might be important to an individual Mason's beliefs. In this way, the Rising Sun Grand Lodge introduced into German Freemasonry a lodge system based on humanism in an effort to keep the Craft free of sectarian dogma. (It should be noted to American readers that Germany did not have "separation of Church and State" to the degree of or in the same way as the United States, and therefore this would have been an issue in German Freemasonry in a way that would not have been the case for American lodges of the same period.) The older, more traditional lodges in Germany had retained their nationalistic tendency, rejected resumption of fraternal relations with foreign Grand Lodges, and would not recognize



*Masonic stamp collectors take note: Despite being political rivals, both the German Democratic Republic in the East and the Federal Republic of Germany in the West produced commemorative stamps of Kurt Tucholsky during the Cold War. Kurt Tucholsky is one of the few twentieth-century Masons to appear on multiple stamps issued by a communist country.*

the Rising Sun Grand Lodge, which had made no bones about its pacifist principles.

In 1924, Tucholsky became Paris correspondent for the newspapers *Weltbühne* and *Vossische Zeitung*, and he would reside in Paris until 1929, the watershed year of the upheaval of the U.S. stock market crash.

Mindful of what he viewed as intolerant and nationalistic tendencies in German Freemasonry, Tucholsky in his Paris years took up contact with French Freemasons. Writing under the pseudonym of Ignaz Wrobel, Tucholsky wrote his first journalistic piece on Freemasonry under the title "The First Handshake." In this article, our Paris correspondent waxed highly critical on a Mason of Frederick the Great Lodge in the Orient of Berlin, Gustav Stresemann, whose behavior Tucholsky felt ran counter to free-thinking ideals held by Tucholsky himself. Tucholsky was bolstered by the tolerance and *humanité* he saw exhibited by the *Grand Orient de France*, and this marks Tucholsky's shift from interest in German to French Freemasonry. More generally, he felt himself drawn to the spirit of freedom exhibited by the French people, and thus he began to see France as *Freimaurerland*, the Masonic country par excellence, where ideals of *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité* still flourished.

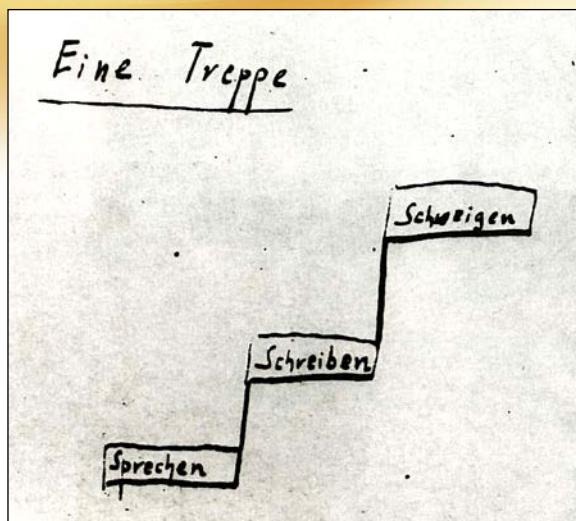
On April 24, 1924, Tucholsky began associating with *L'Effort Lodge* in Paris and in March of 1925 petitioned the Parisian Lodge *Les Zélés Philanthropes* for affiliation, which was granted. It was in this latter Lodge that Tucholsky was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason. French Lodges of the Grand Orient, unlike Lodges of the German and Anglo-American traditions, are open to political dialogue, and in a Lodge setting Tucholsky voiced support for a United States of Europe – an idea which was a kind of forerunner

Despite his later Masonic association with France, Kurt Tucholsky has not been forgotten by Masons in Germany. Kurt Tucholsky Lodge No. 1060 is the youngest lodge under the Grand Lodge of British Freemasons in Germany and conducts Emulation Ritual in the German language. Lodges in Germany sometimes hold evenings with public readings from Tucholsky's works.

to today's European Union. He also defended conscientious objectors and condemned the use of chemical weapons. He continuously raised human rights issues which he felt were being neglected by the world community.

From 1929 on, Tucholsky lived in Sweden, but his application for citizenship was never approved. Tucholsky, who believed in the ability of human beings to change and in the power of words, a man who hated all forms of conformity as well as violence, began to write less and by 1931 had become silent by ceasing to publish. The books of this avowed pacifist were banned and indeed burned by the Nationalist Socialists, and Tucholsky's German citizenship was revoked for political and anti-Semitic reasons. Sadly, he did not receive much support from the French or the Swedish, although interestingly enough, the Swedish monarchy was intimately connected with Freemasonry. At the end of his life, a disillusioned Tucholsky realized that his tireless pleas for *humanité* had had little effect. On December 21, 1935, Kurt Tucholsky closed his eyes forever, having taken an overdose of sleeping pills.

On December 19, 1935, a few days before his death, Tucholsky's Lodge *Les Zélés Philantropes* in Paris was about to suspend Tucholsky's lodge membership for non-payment of dues. Shortly



*Translation of last entry in Tucholsky's journal: Speaking. Writing. Being silent. Interestingly for Masons, silence is located at the top of these three steps.*

thereafter, realizing Tucholsky had died, the Lodge entered the notation "deceased" into the records of the Lodge.

In the summer of 1936, the ashes of Kurt Tucholsky were interred in Sweden beneath an oak tree on the grounds behind Castle Gripsholm - appropriately, the name and setting of his novel *Schloss Gripsholm*. The tombstone now bears this inscription from *Faust, Part II*, written by another German Mason, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: "Everything transitory is but a parable." Yet this inscription was etched only after the end of the Second World War. Tucholsky himself in 1923 wrote the satire "Requiem," in which he suggested the following

epitaph for himself: "Here reposes a heart of gold and a mouth of iron. – Good night! –"

Finally, to close this article, it is worthwhile to quote the last entry in Tucholsky's journal, as it may have Masonic significance, as three steps or levels is a staple of the Blue Lodge of Freemasonry. The page features a rude sketch of three steps with the words: "Speaking. Writing. Being silent." Interestingly for Masons – and of a significance for Tucholsky alone to know –silence, a unique virtue in Freemasonry, is located at the top of these three steps. ▲

## Humility in New Masters and Old (cont'd from page 8)

and harmony – to "keep your head when all about you are losing theirs," as Br.: Rudyard Kipling wrote in his masterful poem "If."

Many experienced past Masters have a tendency to extend their patronage, long after their terms are over. They adamantly remind the new comers of how superior they were when they were masters of their lodges, and thus intimidating the newer generation to follow their old practice; and if their imposed and ill advice is opposed, they could lose their temper and threaten to cease their support to the lodge. How unfortunate when such situations arise! It does not take a genius to figure out the consequences. I beg you my guru brethren to allow the new leaders to make their mistakes, and then, eventually, whisper a good council in their ears without embarrassment and irritation. Try to persuade but not force, pull but not push, convince but not impose. Always remember the various phases in learning you went through and the different steps you traced to climb the echelon of leadership.

I have witnessed, on many occasions, that some brothers display unpleasant arrogance toward others, in which they tend to look down toward their fellow Masons and ignore them completely as if saying: "Who are you that I may come down on your level and talk to you?" Then, when those ignored or snubbed brethren do not return, those who are in charge of running the lodge

complain that the sideliners do not meet their obligations by attending the regular meetings. Can someone please explain why should such a neglected brother come back to the lodge when he has been marginalized in a condescending manner? Do such leaders need these sideliners always to be present just to be adored as superior, to be applauded, or to have egos pumped? Those who possess such attitudes have missed the whole purpose of being Masons, and in my opinion, they are not sincerely following their obligations.

We should all bear in mind, my brethren, that it is the responsibility of all of us to be encouragers and promoters of the Royal Art. All of us are responsible for the success or failure of our lodge. To be meritorious, we should have that positive attitude and care to promote passionately our character, and then help others succeed to promote and improve theirs. If we are not active and do not know what to do as Masons, we must seek out those who are well informed for guidance. We must ever remember to reflect calmly when corrected by others, even if the form of correction is in a manner which we would style other than peaceful and harmonious to the lodge. ▲



# Freemasonry Universal



In response to recent questions posed to this Grand Lodge on the qualifications and eligibility of men seeking membership in our constituent Lodges, we offer this statement of unwavering principles: Admission to membership in our lodges is extended to men of faith based upon their personal merit and good character, without reference to race, creed, sexual orientation, specific religion or national origin.

The Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia dedicates itself to the diversity of the brotherhood of men who practice and study the initiatory rites and deep symbolism of Freemasonry in an effort to make ourselves better men – socially, morally and intellectually. Our Grand Lodge is a society of men who use single-gendered camaraderie and fellowship to provide motivation and drive for self-improvement, especially in the practice of our key aspirations: brotherly love, relief and truth.

The universality of our practice is reflected in the broad range of backgrounds to be found here. Lodges here not only work in English, but in French, Spanish, German, Italian, Farsi, Turkish and Armenian. Our membership hails from every continent and represents every race and creed, as well as a broad range of national origins. Masonic visitors to this international city find unparalleled opportunities to visit a Lodge that reminds them of home – wherever that home may be.

However, the concept of universality is not only an international paradigm. It enjoys equal importance in our welcoming of men whose varied backgrounds and practices in their private and professional lives would normally keep them at a perpetual distance. The diversity of our membership, in terms of race, creed, sexual orientation, specific religion and national origin is thus seen as an asset, rather than a liability. Civility and kindness is the rule for all

interaction, thus discussions of politics, religion and business are prohibited in the Lodge room. In this way, we hold that men become brothers by leaving divisions at the door, and taking strength from a shared appreciation of the common aspirations of all men for their own betterment, and for improving themselves through service as respected members of their communities, despite their outward differences.

Our dedication to diversity was not born in Washington, DC. Worldwide Masonic law and practice from the days of

Anderson's Constitutions clearly disfavors the exclusion of men based upon modes of belief, backgrounds or bold lifestyles that enjoy legal protection in their societies.

Therefore, today we say, "Any man can be a D.C. Freemason, but not every man can be one." And our tradition of over five hundred years of inclusion continues to patiently await those with the imagination, will and energy to dedicate themselves to the elevation of the human race.

PROMULGATED BY ORDER OF THE GRAND MASTER, JEFFERY D. RUSSELL, THIS 11TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2015. ▲



# ANNOUNCING THE FIRST ANNUAL... Grand Lodge Ritual Competition

Are you the best ritualist in the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia? 2016 is the year you can prove it! The Grand Lodge is hosting the first ever Ritual Competition on September 17, 2016 at Almas Shrine Center at 14th and K Street, NW.

We have recruited a top panel of ritual judges to adjudicate the competitions, and it's a great opportunity to hone your ritual skills, or show off your already polished skills to others in the jurisdiction. Registration forms are due August 1 and will soon be available on the Grand Lodge website. The registration cost for each competitor will be \$25, and includes the competition itself and dinner where the winners will be announced. There will also be an open bar and snacks throughout the day.

## The Competitions

There are two types of competitions: individual and team. Individual competitions will be on the Middle Chamber Lecture, the Entered Apprentice Degree Obligation and Charge, the Fellowcraft Degree Obligation and Charge, the Master Mason Degree Obligation and Charge, an Obligation Trio (which would be all three obligations without the respective charges), and the Funeral Oration.

Team competitions will be on the Middle Chamber with G lecture, the Purge of the Lodge, the Reception of the Grand Master, and the Opening and Closing of a Lodge on the Master Mason Degree.

Each competition has specific rules and requirements which will soon be found on the members' only section of the Grand Lodge Website. At this writing, they are still in development stage. Teams may be made up of members of the same lodge, or composed of members of multiple lodges.

The contest is open to Masons in good standing of a constituent lodge of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, and Brothers are allowed to compete up to their degree level. For example, an Entered Apprentice Mason could compete in the Entered Apprentice Obligation and the Charge, but not the Fellowcraft Obligation and the Middle Chamber.

## The Mechanics of a Ritual Competition

A ritual competition will allow Brothers to compete against one another to see who is the best at doing a particular part from the Masonic ritual. The competition assesses the ritual presentation in three different areas: words, direction, and performance.

Starting with 1,000 points, 5 points will be deducted for each error. Judging on words is a simple measure of whether or not the words being said are precisely correct according to the ritual. For example, deductions for words could include not saying the correct word, saying extra words or saying words out of order.

For example, if someone were competing in the pledge of allegiance and they were supposed to say, "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America;" but instead said, "I pledge my allegiance to of flag the United States of America." The person would have three word errors: 1) they added the "my" before allegiance, 2) they missed the "the" before flag, and 3) they said "of" between "to" and "flag." In this case, the competitor earned 985 points after 5 point deductions for each error, totaling 15 points in deductions.

Direction refers to floor movement and body direction. Staying with our example of The Pledge of Allegiance, if during the pledge you are supposed to place your hand over your heart, you lose 5 points if you fail to do that.

**STOP COMPETING  
WITH OTHERS.  
START COMPETING  
WITH YOURSELF.**

Performance is perhaps the most subjective of all the adjudication. This focuses on things including the acting of the part, the volume, effect, and quality of the voice, if the pacing was good, and if the expression was consistent with the

ceremony at hand. It also takes into account appearance or polish of the presentation. For team competitions this can also include how the team works with one another in putting on the ceremony, if there is good synchronization with the Master of the lodge and the Senior Deacon.

## Next Steps

If you are interested in having a presentation on the upcoming Grand Lodge Ritual Competition, please contact RWB Alan L. Gordon at [AGordon@DCGrandLodge.org](mailto:AGordon@DCGrandLodge.org) and a member of the committee will be happy to present to your lodge and answer any questions you may have.

Good luck we look forward to seeing you there! ▲



# AU and Freemasonry: An Ongoing American Partnership

BY PETER W. BRUSOE, SECRETARY, AU LODGE, U.D.

Throughout the United States today, more and more Grand Lodges are featuring Lodges whose membership has a particular university affinity. Some of these include Boston University Lodge and Harvard Lodge in Massachusetts, Patriot Lodge (George Mason University) in Virginia, and The Colonial Lodge (The George Washington University) here in Washington. These Lodges not only appeal to younger candidates, but provide another way for alumni and staff (many of whom were involved with Greek-letter fraternities during their school years) to continue to connect using the university experience as a common interest.

Recently, seeing this trend show excellent results for other university Lodges, several American University alumni took the opportunity to create a new lodge that would provide a unique Masonic experience for students, faculty, and alumni of their own beloved alma mater. The working group held several meetings in the winter of 2016, and on March 12 a new chapter in the history of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia began with the formal installation of the officers of AU Lodge, UD.

The new Lodge is composed of brothers who have an affiliation with or an affinity for American University. Current members of the Lodge include current students, alumni, faculty, staff, community supporters, and their relatives. Installed as Worshipful Master was W. Br. Perry Blatstein; as Senior Warden, Adam Tager; as Junior Warden, W. Br. Dustin Rawlins; Secretary, Peter Brusoe; and Jesse Ouellette as Treasurer. The Installation was

held at the DC Scottish Rite using furniture generously loaned by Albert Pike Lodge No. 33, was presided over by RW Br. Richard J. Bautista, Senior Grand Warden, who was assisted by RW Br. Christopher "Chip" Mahaney, Grand Lecturer.

Following the installation, MW Br. Leonard Proden, PGM, in his role as Sovereign Grand Inspector General in Washington, DC for the Scottish Rite, presented a very generous check to the Lodge to support the Matthew C. Shlonsky Memorial Fund established at American University's School of International service. As pictured, the Worshipful Master and Senior Warden presented that check to the Dean of the School of International Service on April 15, 2016.

## A Partnership from the Start

The recent birth of AU Lodge, UD and its first installation of officers is far from the beginning of the relationship between Freemasonry and American University. In fact, that relationship stretches back to the earliest days of the university, starting with a powerful friend who got things moving...

## Masonic U.S. Presidents and American University

After being chartered by an Act of Congress in 1893, American University needed to raise a critical amount of money in order to begin operations. Luckily, President William McKin-

Principle officers of AU Lodge, U.D. Pictured from left to right – Jesse Ouellette, Treasurer; Adam Tager, Senior Warden; Perry Blatstein, Master; Dustin Rawlins, Junior Warden; Peter Brusoe, Secretary



ley was a Freemason and a major champion for the school. In fact he was such a driving force behind the school that American University amateur historian Marc Tomik compares McKinley's contribution to A.U. to what Jefferson made to the University of Virginia. Indeed, McKinley was raising money for a proposed "Ohio" building when he was assassinated. In honor of McKinley, the proposed building was renamed "McKinley" and the cornerstone was dedicated by President Theodore Roosevelt, another active Freemason.

While laying the cornerstone, Roosevelt said, "I would be glad to address you at any time, in any place. But I am doubly glad to address you here; and I most earnestly wish you well in your purpose to plant here a great American University – a university that shall fulfill the dream of the greatest and first American president, George Washington."

President Warren G. Harding, yet another Mason, participated in commencement exercises at the university, and Worshipful Brother Franklin Delano Roosevelt hosted several students and faculty members while in residence at the White House. Brother Gerald Ford visited campus several times to speak about public policy, and President Bill Clinton, while not a Mason, is a Senior DeMolay, and presented his famous "Back to Work" speech at American.

## Building Dedications & Scholarships

On October 21, 1896 the cornerstone of Hurst Hall was Masonically laid by the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia using the very same gavel that George Washington used to lay the cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol in 1794. (*That gavel is still the proud property of our own Potomac Lodge, No. 5, here in the District. – ed.*)

On February 12, 1958 the Scottish Rite Supreme Council, SJ presented a contribution of \$20,000 to endow a professorship in American Studies at the School of International Service. Sovereign Grand Commander Luther Smith, 33° shared that "The new School of International Service appeals to the nearly one-half million Scottish Rite Masons of the Southern Jurisdiction as a further opportunity for them to aid in implementing their convictions and teachings. We are glad to make this contribution to this great university for undergraduate training in these important subjects."



# AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

The relationship between the Scottish Rite and American University continued well into the 1960s with the Scottish Rite participating in a building dedication for the School of International Service building, making a \$14,000 gift to the program in 1967, and even attending an invitation-only reception to honor UN General Assembly President Dr. Charles Malik.

More recently, on March 1, 2011, the Grand Lodge of Washington D.C. laid a memorial stone at the recently rebuilt School of International Service. This full Masonic ceremony included members and officers of the Grand Lodge as well as a number of Masons who were alumni and current students.

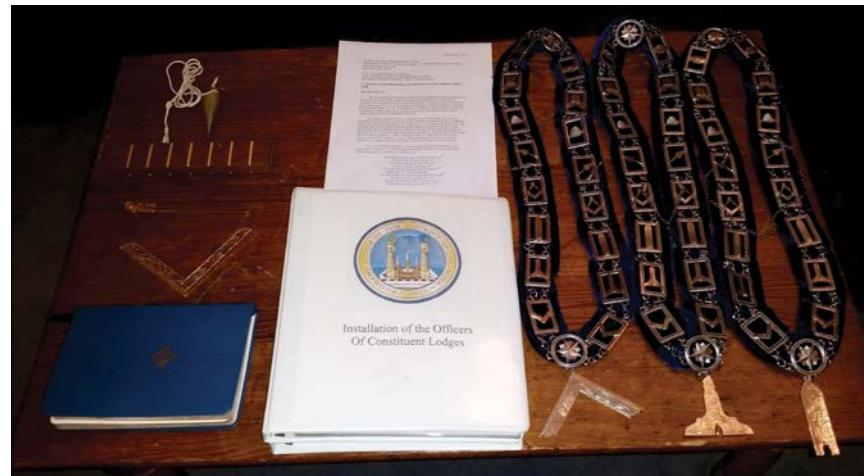
Then, on November 11, 2014, the Masons gathered again to support American University. The Masonic & Eastern Star Home Charity provided a generous grant to support the AU Student Veterans' Initiative. With the drawdown of our military forces across the world, many of our veterans were looking to return to school. Veteran students faced unique challenges including navigating the federal and university bureaucracy to use their benefits and meet the University's requirements. This grant

provided resources to support our student veterans and ensure that they were successful in this process.

Finally, in 2016, the DC Scottish Rite created a new scholarship in honor of Charles and Eleanor Iversen. (MW Charles, of course, is a Past Grand Master of DC and an Emeritus member of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite). This scholarship program provides students with an interest in international service and demonstrated financial need the opportunity to study at American University.

## A Vision for a New Lodge

While AU Lodge is just getting started, it holds great promise. Tomorrow's leaders, whether they are in the fields of business, diplomacy, politics, or other professions, are largely born in the university system. By galvanizing this community of young leaders with the moral and philosophical grounding that Masonry offers, lodges like AU Lodge seek to benefit no less than the whole of mankind. If you have an affiliation with or affinity for American University and would like to be involved with this new Lodge, contact the Grand Lodge Offices at 202-686-1811 or by email at: [grandlodge@dcgrandlodge.org](mailto:grandlodge@dcgrandlodge.org). ▲



*Installation paraphernalia carefully laid out and ready for use*

# Civics and Freemasonry

In the heat of a presidential election year many of us have politics and civic issues on our mind. It is important of course, for all citizens to take part in critical national conversations such as these, but they are more especially important for Freemasons. It is easy to give in to the frenzy and fervor that too frequently comes along with these horse races, and this year has been more brutal and uncivil than any election in recent memory. As we watch candidates for high office launch vicious attacks on each other, and leaders in both parties refuse to reach across the aisle, it is easy for us to indulge in similar argumentative back-and-forth exchanges. (As a former local elected official, I was able to watch first-hand some of the worst of what now passes for standard civic conversations — citizens yelling at each other out of sheer frustration and quickly discarding simple courtesy.) But as Masons we have a unique opportunity to pick up the mantle of our forebears and become leaders in restoring civility to our civic community. And further, as Masons in our nation's capital, we have not just a local, but national, even international, role to play in revitalizing the tradition of civil discourse.

Civic engagement is intrinsic to our Craft, and is inculcated to our candidates throughout our ritual and obligations. Look no further than the Entered Apprentice degree, wherein each of us is reminded to "be a quiet and peaceful citizen, true to your government, and just to your country," "not to countenance disloyalty or rebellion," but "patiently submit to legal authority and conform with cheerfulness to the government" and legal system in the country in which we live. These aren't idle words, but are intended to bring to mind the importance of our civic involvement; not just that we are engaged, but how we are engaged. Being upright and active citizens strengthens the health of our communities while enriching the ties we have to our neighbors.

The meaning of these charges expands further than the exoteric or literal meaning of the words on paper. The instruction to be peaceful citizens and true to our government is a call to project peace, and to disagree with others without being disagreeable. The injunction to conform to the government and legal system is a call to dwell within our laws and the electoral system, without indulging in verbal violence towards those with whom we may disagree. To be just to our country and not countenance disloy-

alty also means to look out for national and not sectional interests, and to resist temptations to undermine the legal and electoral systems. In the hardest of times, when we may be dismayed by the decisions of our leaders and candidates, this civic loyalty is best expressed by becoming more engaged and not walling ourselves off.

By keeping these charges in mind we can all impact our communities. By refusing to engage in uncivil discourse we can help to change the prevalent tone, conversation by conversation, within our circles. By being certain to listen and attempt to understand those with whom we disagree we can set an example for our peers, Masons and profane alike.

These may seem like trite or obvious tactics, but they are simple personal exercises that have a much larger impact than we may initially realize. With a membership of over four thousand there is an opportunity for Masons in the District of Columbia to have a significant impact on the tone and productivity of modern civic conversation. If only one person sees each of us displaying these most Masonic tenets the ripple effect would be profound.

And because of our proximity to the annals of power and national leaders, the impact has the potential to be greater still. Many of our brothers here in DC are leaders outside the Craft: elected public officials, staffers to local and national politicians, civil servants, lobbyists, military personnel, and more. The impact of these brothers can be felt far and wide if properly practiced.

As the political season continues to unfold through November I hope we can all keep the charges of the Entered Apprentice degree in mind and use caution whenever we find the opportunity to discuss public policy or political issues. We are reminded at the opening of the Entered Apprentice lecture to ever strive to stand as just and upright Masons, and taking steps to elevate our civic dialogue may be one of the most lasting ways we can do so. ▲



MORGAN P. CORR, PM  
Grand Marshal



# St. John's Mite FAQs

Relief is a central tenant of Masonry. We are there to help our brothers, their spouses, and their dependent children at their greatest time of need. While a majority of relief is funded directly by the brother's Lodge, sometimes the need may be greater than an individual Lodge can afford to give. To assist in these situations, the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia formed the St. John's Mite Association. St. John's Mite provides additional monetary relief above and beyond what the Lodge provides. Lodges who wish to submit a request to the association should have their Secretary transmit a formal letter of request from their Lodge to the St. John's Mite Secretary.

## Who is eligible for relief?

Any Mason in good standing with his DC Lodge, the surviving spouse of a DC Mason, or his dependent children under the age of 18 are eligible for relief.

## How is relief granted?

The relief process begins when the Lodge requests it. The secretary should transmit a request for relief to the secretary of St. John's Mite. The executive committee may consider the request in between quarterly meetings and will try to expedite relief as quickly as possible.

## Who serves on St. John's Mite?

St. John's Mite has a representative from every Lodge in the District of Columbia. The representatives elect four officers – President, Vice-President, Secretary, & Treasurer – who oversee the operation of the Mite in between quarterly meetings.

## Is it confidential?

Yes, the work of St. John's Mite is confidential. Members of the Mite swear confidentiality about the meetings, applicants and type of relief given. The relief amount, but not the reason or cause, that is given to individuals is disclosed on our 990-PF,

which is filed with the Internal Revenue Service. These documents, however, are not made public.

## Is it a straight match?

St. John's Mite is not limited in giving a dollar for dollar match. At the discretion of the Mite, relief may be less than or greater than what the Lodge has given depending on the need for relief.

## What expenses are eligible for relief?

Under the constitution, St. John's Mite can provide food, clothing, shelter, fuel, medical assistance, burial and other means of relief. The Mite exists to help and will work with you and your Lodge to provide the best succor available to our brothers and their families.



## What is not eligible for relief?

Under the Constitution of St. John's Mite, we may not consider relief for personal indebtedness to banks, credit card companies, loan companies or any other financial institution.

## How is St. John's Mite Funded?

St. John's Mite is fortunately supported by an assessment levied on every mason in the District of Columbia. This assessment, managed by the Grand Lodge, allows us to provide a majority of the relief requested. We also receive contributions from various Lodges and individuals. As a 501(C) 3 charity, these contributions qualify as a deduction on your income tax return.

## What if we have questions?

Please reach out to your Lodge's St. John's Mite Representative or contact Josh Poole ([jpoole@scottishrite.org](mailto:jpoole@scottishrite.org)), the St. John's Mite Secretary. ▲

# GRAND LODGE, F.A.A.M. OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## Distinguished Service Award for 2015

### George Joseph Stoklas, Jr.

Right Worshipful Brother George J. Stoklas, Jr., is a native Washingtonian who resided in the Washington metropolitan area for many years before relocating to Charlotte, North Carolina in 2005 after retiring as the successful owner of Embassy Camera, Inc., a premier camera and photography source in Washington, D.C.

RWB Stoklas became a Master Mason in 1992 when he was raised in William R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon Lodge No. 7. In 2000, he served as Worshipful Master of that Lodge and was elected Secretary in December, 2004 and continues to serve in that important office. In addition to his membership in No. 7, he is a member of Italia Lodge 2001, Justice-Columbia Lodge No. 3, and Harmony Lodge No. 17, where he currently serves as the Lodge Treasurer. RWB Stoklas also is a member of William R. Singleton Chapter No. 4, RAM, the Scottish Rite, the Royal Order of Scotland, and Almas Temple Shrine. He served as President of the St. John's Mite Association of the District of Columbia for three years, from 2003-2005.

In 2001, RWB Stoklas was invested as a Knight Commander Court of Honor in the Valley of Washington and in 2010, he received the DeMolay Legion of Honor. He is currently awaiting his installation as a Knight Companion in St. Simeon Stylites Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine.

In addition to his Masonic work in this Grand Jurisdiction, RWB Stoklas also contributes his time and energies to many Masonic bodies and other charitable and fraternal organizations in North Carolina. He is active in Shrine activities in Charlotte, North Carolina and is also a member of the Elks, the Moose, and the Lions.

His services to our Grand Lodge have been numerous, and with no end in sight. He served as Grand Lodge Photographer for three years, from 2000 through 2002, as Grand Sword Bearer in 2003, as Aide to the Grand Master in 2004 and 2011, Grand Pursuivant in 2005, Assistant to the Grand Master in 2010 and 2012 and Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies in 2013. In

2014, he was elected Grand Treasurer of the Grand Lodge and continues to serve in that capacity. In 2002, he was designated by MWB Robert H. Starr as a recipient of the Valentine Reintzel Medal. A particular and largely unsung service that he has rendered to our Grand Lodge and numerous Grand Masters has been to manage the Grand Lodge Hospitality Room on the weekend of the Third



Right Worshipful Brother  
George J. Stoklas, Jr.



Grand Lodge  
Distinguished Service  
Award

Communication of the Grand Lodge, a job he has performed for more than ten years. In this effort, he is ably assisted by his very supportive and lovely wife, Peggy. The importance of this service to every Grand Master and indeed, to every Grand Lodge officer, cannot be overestimated, because he has become the "face" of hospitality to the frequent and numerous guests who attend the Third Communications.

The dedication of RWB Stoklas to D.C. Masonry and our Grand Lodge is evidenced by his willingness to travel to D.C. from North Carolina several times every month in order to support Grand Lodge and other Masonic activities and to perform his duties and responsibilities as Grand Treasurer.

RWB Stoklas never seeks the limelight, and most of his significant accomplishments are done quietly in the background and without any fanfare or expectation of reward whatsoever. He is known to be reliable and dependable in every undertaking. RWB Stoklas is a credit to Masonry who continuously demonstrates his deep interest in our Craft by his many contributions.

In recognition of his sustained and exceptional contributions to Freemasonry, our Grand Lodge, and his communities both here and in North Carolina, this Distinguished Service Award is presented to Right Worshipful Stoklas with the unanimous approval of members of Grand Lodge, F.A.A.M. of the District of Columbia on this Twelfth day of December, 2015, A.L. 6015. ▲

# Save the Dates: Sept. 10th & 11th

**THE 2016 GRAND LODGE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE  
WILL BE HELD SEPTEMBER 10TH AND 11TH  
AT THE BOLGER CENTER IN POTOMAC, MARYLAND**

**WHAT:** The 2016 DC Grand Lodge Leadership Conference

**WHEN:** September 10-11, 2016

**WHERE:** Bolger Center - 9600 Newbridge Dr, Potomac, MD 20854. Free parking on the premises.

**WHO IS INVITED:** Wardens and Deacons only.

WB Porter is a founding member and Past Master of Enlightenment Lodge 198 in Colorado where he works as a homicide detective. He is also recognized nationally for his work in teaching and presenting on the areas of subconscious communications as it relates to personal interactions and communications. He has worked cases gaining international attention, been featured by the Biography Channel, and has lectured Internationally for the United States government and military, state and local law enforcement, private corporations, churches, and spiritual centers. He has had published a number of writings and is the author of the books *The Secret Psychology of Freemasonry: Alchemy, Gnosis and the Science of the Craft*, Masonic

**FEATURED SPEAKER:** WB Cliff Porter is the invited speaker, who has already presented at a DC GL Leadership conference several years ago and left an indelible impression on those who attended. His presentation, at times controversial, was inspiring, practical and thought-provoking. It is time for a refresher.

Baptism: A Postmodern Ritual for an Ancient Craft, and 10 Easy Steps to Being a Heretic.

A Festive Board is scheduled at the end of Conference activities on Saturday, which will be followed by the spirited (in a literal sense, as well) socializations at Pony Express, the bar.

Registration Information: The lodging price for those willing to share a room with a brother is \$85; those wishing to be left alone in the room pay

\$115 (There is a VERY limited number of these single rooms).

You can register and pay on our website at:  
<http://www.dcggrandlodge.org/event-registration.html> ▲



*The Bolger Center's Franklin Ballroom*

**The Voice of Freemasonry**  
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## Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia

Kenneth D. Fuller, Grand Master   Jeffrey D. Russell, PGM, Grand Secretary



**GRAND LODGE OFFICERS**

**1st Row (L to R)**

Annas F. Kamara, Junior Grand Steward. Alan L. Gordon, Junior Grand Deacon. George J. Stoklas, Jr., Grand Treasurer. Charbel T. Fahed, Junior Grand Warden. Roman Volsky, Deputy Grand Master. **Kenneth D. Fuller, Grand Master.** Richard J. Bautista, Senior Grand Warden. Jeffrey D. Russell, PGM, Grand Secretary. Christopher K. Mahaney, Grand Lecturer. Michael D. Nicholas, Sr., Senior Grand Deacon. Daniel A. Huertas, Senior Grand Steward

**2nd Row (L to R)**

Carpenter Arpa, Asst. Grand Chaplain. Eloi P. Kpamegan, Asst. Grand Tiler. Asadur Tufeckgian, Grand Jeweler. Andre Vainqueur Asst. to the Grand Master. Randall A. Schoch, Asst. Grand Chaplain. Andrew Hammer, Grand Chancellor. W. Frederick Gore, Spec. Asst. to the Grand Master. Gerhard Meinzer, Grand Tiler. Morgan P. Corr, Grand Marshal. Sylvanus Newstead, Grand Almoner. Jean-Paul Dongmo, Asst. Grand Director of Ceremonies. Anand Trivedi, Asst. Grand Lecturer.

**3rd Row (L to R)**

Yazan Jarrar, Aide to the Grand Master. James Frederique, Grand Photographer. Zade Jarrer, Grand Photographer. Frankel Petit, Grand Sword Bearer. Matthew Matyjek, Aide to the Grand Master. Chetin Durak, Grand Pursuivant. Glen Alexander Crowther, Grand Provost. Joseph G. Baroudi, Grand Preceptor. Royes L. Gernandt, Asst. to the Grand Master.

**4th Row (L to R)**

Perry J. Blatstein, Grand Standard Bearer. Kevin Jay, Asst. Grand Lecturer. Adam Tager, Asst. to the Grand Master.

Scan with your  
smart phone.

