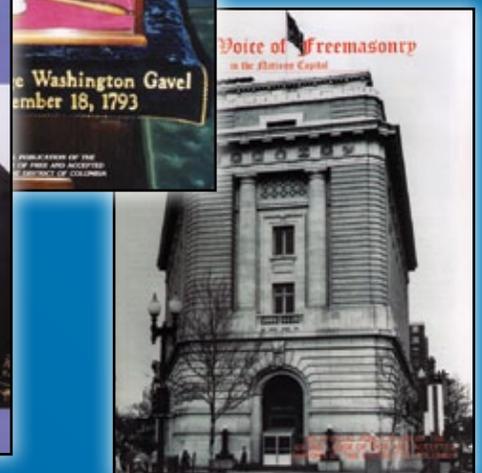
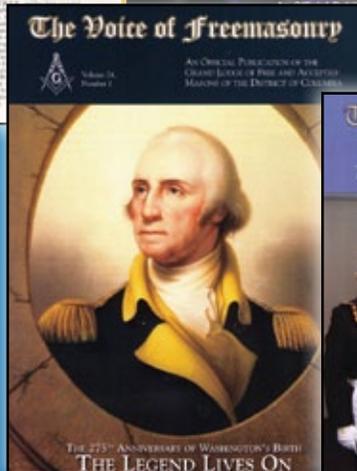
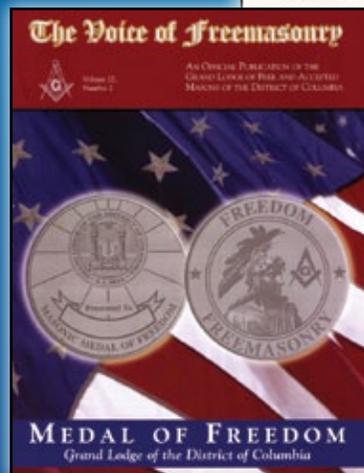
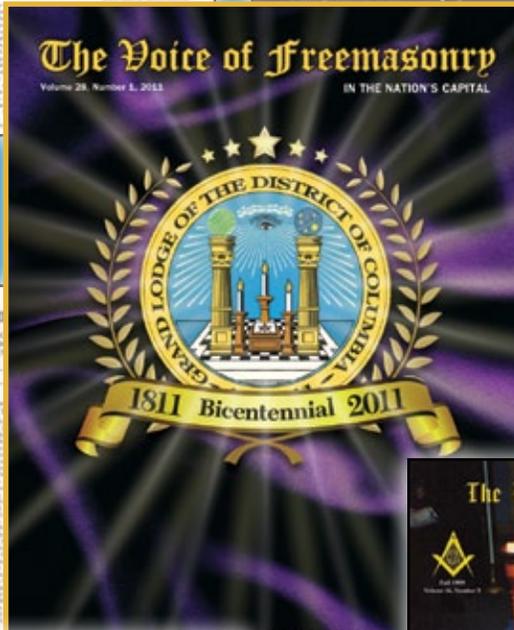
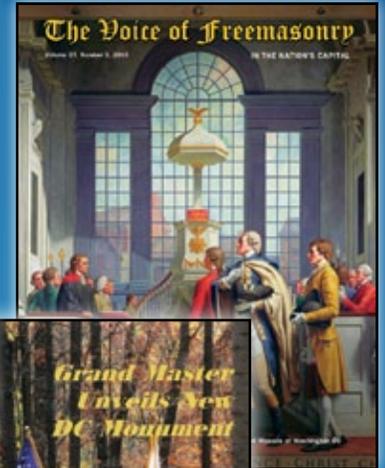
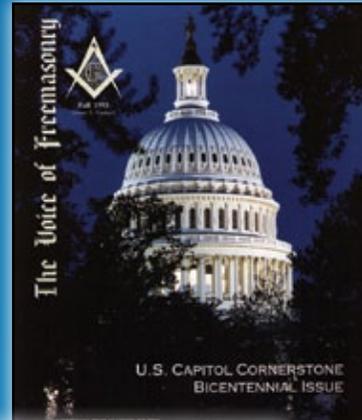
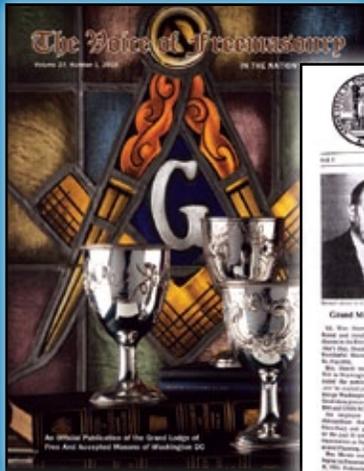


# The Voice of Freemasonry

Volume 28, Number 3, 2011

IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL



An Official Publication of the Grand Lodge of Free And Accepted Masons of Washington DC

**The Voice of  
Freemasonry**

**Volume 28, Number 3, 2011**

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The editorial staff invites contributions in the form of informative articles, reports, news and other timely information (of about 500 to 1000 words in length) that broadly relate to Masonic law, lore, customs, history, symbolism, philosophy, responsibility of membership, etiquette, current events, and/or general public interest. When possible, photographs that illustrate these informative articles should accompany the submission. Pieces submitted should be typed, double-spaced and preferably accompanied by a computer disk in a neutral PC format or via e-mail to:  
**grandlodge@dcgrandlodge.org**

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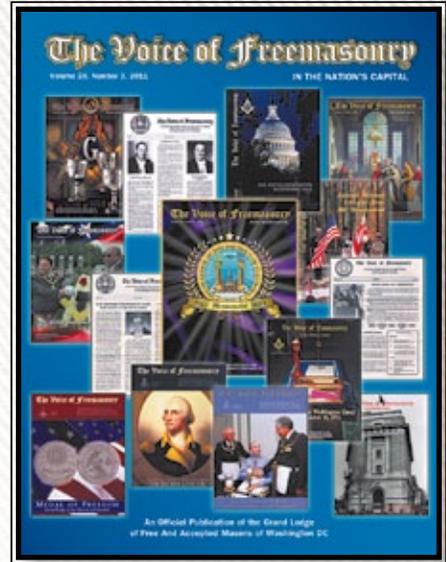
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**On the Cover**

The cover of this issue of *The Voice of Freemasonry* features a collection of cover images from various issues over the years. These illustrations serve as the "front door" to the periodical and are intended to be visually appealing and welcoming to the reader while enticing him to open up the publication and view the contents. Subjects for cover illustrations have ranged widely and included images of Washington, DC or Masonic landmarks and works of art; Masonic symbols, regalia, and awards; and photos documenting Masonic events or personalities. *The Voice* was first published in 1978 but then disappeared from the scene until it returned in 1985 under the leadership of then Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Theodore M. Kahn. For a brief history of *The Voice's* beginnings and evolution, please turn to the Grand Secretary's article on page six.

**Back Cover**

Union Station at holiday time.



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# Grand Master's Message



**VISION: "To unite men of different beliefs and cultures into one common society of friends and brothers under the guidance of the Grand Architect"**

**MISSION: "To unite men of different beliefs into a harmonious and productive community through the application of Masonic moral values and the practice of benevolence, intellectual development, and mutual respect"**

“*I have not yet begun to fight.*” and “*I wish to have no connection with a ship that does not sail fast, for I intend to go in harm's way.*” are two famous quotations attributed to the great naval hero and Freemason, John Paul Jones. A friend, who is a retired Marine Officer, sent me a third quote by Jones that is less well known, but one of the best: “*Sign on, young man, and sail with me. The stature of our homeland is no more than the measure of ourselves. Our job is to keep her free. Our will is to keep the torch of freedom burning for all. To this solemn purpose we call on the young, the brave, the strong, and the free. Heed my call, Come to the sea. Come sail with me.*”

I'm sure the references to sailing and the sea touch those with naval connections, but I return to that second sentence about how the stature of our country is determined by the measure of ourselves — not by news media commentary, opinion polls, the size of bank accounts, or political clout, but rather by the simple measure of ourselves. It is likewise in Masonry, where the stature of our fraternity in general and our Grand Lodge in particular, is determined by the measure of our members. It is our good fortune that we have walked and continue to walk among giants.



**Most Worshipful Brother Jesse Villarreal**

Nearly one year has passed since my installation as your Grand Master, an opportunity for service leadership for which I am whole-heartedly grateful. I cannot adequately express my appreciation to each and every member of the Craft for entrusting me with this leadership position. At the risk of trying your patience with additional nautical references, I observe our Grand Lodge as a ship at sea. It's sturdy, seaworthy, and manned by a dedicated crew. It should, perhaps, not have been a surprise, but I am constantly amazed by the spirit and talent of our members.

While our Grand Lodge is not the largest, both in terms of territorial area and membership, it seems that we are frequently at the cutting edge of innovation in programming, development, and Masonic thought, which enables our diversity and the youthfulness of our membership and leadership. With the renewed interest in the values and teachings of Freemasonry, our lodges are growing with young

men who are thirsty for the fellowship and teachings offered by our noble society. Time and again, I have been impressed this year with the insightful and inspirational writings coming from the Worshipful Masters of our lodges. Of the many phrases that have proven noteworthy, two in particular stuck with me all year. David Mazaheri, Worshipful Master of

*continued on next page*



Potomac Lodge No. 5, wrote that "Masonry is the mirror of man's soul." The other was by Neil Hare, now Past Master of Temple-Noyes-Cathedral No. 32, who wrote: "I thought I travel the road of life by myself and found in Masonry that there were more men in life that travel life in the same direction and with the same values". We don't have to read ancient texts to find words from a philosopher; all we have to do is pick up the various trestleboard messages from a Worshipful Master to his Lodge or sit in lodge. Together we use these teachings to set a course for our fraternity's future.

Values are critical because they make up the building blocks of our society. Acceptance, understanding and tolerance are important ingredients in the mixing of the mortar that binds us in friendship. We can be justly proud that our course in DC has been to build on the foundations of the past a diverse, values-based organization, that accepts men of different beliefs and cultures to form a society of friends and brothers. My message for this issue of *The Voice of Freemasonry* will first discuss my thoughts about the meaning and value of friendship. I will then conclude with some personal recommendations for our Grand Lodge.

When we reference ourselves as a society of friends and brothers, the focus has always tended to be on "brothers" and only rarely do we reflect or mention our brothers as "friends" or the friendships themselves with the love and affection they represent. Outside the fraternity when we introduce someone who is special, we often include as part of the introduction "He/she is also my dear friend, as in: "This is my wife and also my friend." Friendship seems to add a higher value to the relationship.

Robert Louis Stevenson said, "So long as we love, we serve; so long as we are loved by others, I should say that we are indispensable; and no man is useless while he has a friend."

My favorite author, Henry Van Dyke, in a poem states that a man is blessed when he sees the face of a friend: "Blessed is the man that beholdeth the face of a friend in a far country"; that we never realize friendship's value until we are surrounded by the multitude of an indifferent mankind, "I knew not the value of

the fountain till I found it flowing in the dessert, nor that of a friend till I found him in a distant land."

The greatest thing a man can have in life is love and friendship. Friends can lift our spirits on cloudy days. It is a comfort to know that we are needed by others, that we are more than just passing shadows, that we are important, to someone or something. Isn't it satisfying to live for others, instead of only ourselves? We do not really live life to the fullest unless we have friends surrounding us like a firm wall buttressing us against the foul winds that exist in this world. Masonry provides us with a wall of supportive friendships.

The idea of friendship, common to current and ancient writers, is not just a poetic concept, that the soul of a man is a fragment of a larger whole and it

goes out in search of other souls in which it finds its true completion. How often, as young men, did we dream of the inspirational friendships of "The Three Musketeers", "Robin Hood and His Merry Men" and other works of literature that invoked the concept of true friendship, rejecting the selfishness of one for the greater good of the whole, or, in other words: "One for all and all for one". Masonry fulfills our dreams.

To paraphrase another poet named Stephen D. Glass, "we walk among worlds unrealized, till we have learned the secret of love and friendship". Sometimes we seem to travel through life alone. With all the insanity of life that surrounds us, we feel that the values that we grew up with and hold dear are absent in today's society. Masonry provides us a means for that nobler connection. One of the secrets of Masonry is the opportunity we have to forge enduring and even holy friendships. The Craft binds us together, strengthens us, and comforts us. Thus the great joy we experience when we make the discovery that we mean something to another and another is everything to us. It is miraculous.

In the ancient systems of philosophy, friendship was an integral part of the equation. Aristotle makes it his culminating point. Out of ten books, he devotes two to the discussion of friendship. It's his link between his treatise called Ethics and Politics. To him, friend-

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ship was both the perfection of an individual's life and the bond that holds states together. It is as true now as it was in Aristotle's time when he said that no one, though he had all good things, would care to live without friends.

The history of mankind proves this. The author Hugh Black writes, "Mankind has been glorified by countless silent heroisms, by unselfish service and sacrificing love." And we know from the Holy Bible, John 15:13 specifically that "Greater love has no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends." This high water mark has often been reached. Men give themselves to each other, with nothing to gain, with no self interest to serve and with no keeping back a part of the price. Writes Black: "It is wrong and false to history to base life on selfishness, to leave out the list of human motives, the highest of all, friendship."

Friendship is spiritual; it is a free, spontaneous outflow of the heart. The method by which it comes about differs and depends largely on ourselves. Some friendships grow and ripen slowly and steadily through the years. Or it can come like love at first sight. We cannot tell where they begin or how. In Masonry, it comes at first light, with a strong grip and a kind word. We discover that within Masonry we are united and inspired by a certain companionship: that we understand and are easily understood.

Men put different values on the experiences they share, but we as Masons always place a high value on our Masonic experiences because we are a society of friends and brothers. A brother is a kindred or close friend and companion. A friend is someone we care about, someone we love, someone we trust. Let us continue to practice the art of friendship, that integral part of the mortar that cements us in a brotherhood.

Let us also always remember the teachings of our order and our oaths of obligation. How are we applying these principles in our daily lives? The history of our country is filled with the names of our Masonic brethren that stepped up to take leadership roles and direct our country. They did it with moral conviction, understanding, high principals, and respect

for the common man. Their common Masonic moral compass served them well. Masonry, as an organization did not do this, but our brethren did, those who learned the lessons of Masonry and like a good student, went out in the world to practice their craft. We are proud of our association with them, as they are with us. Our lodges and Grand Lodge continue to build leaders, not only for our lodges but for the community as a whole. Through following the teachings of our order, we strive to improve the human condition and thus make the world a better place for all.

With this in mind, I wish to share with you some recommendations that I hope we may act on, either as a whole or individually. The first is that we hold on to and regularly refer to our Vision and Mission Statements. They are the product of much hard work and dedication and constitute the soul of our fraternity. By embedding them in our hearts and minds, striving

to reach our vision through an earnest execution of our mission statement, we are better prepared to build a bright future for our Grand Lodge.

The second recommendation is that the Grand Lodge and each of the constituent lodges bring their fee structures more in line with modern realities. It is through the hard work, generosity, and foresight

of our predecessors that many of our lodges are fortunate to have endowments that are available for our use. I have heard that men that share experiences together sometimes view that experience differently and thus place different values on the shared experience. But without question we all have and place a high value on our Masonic experience. Why then are we not applying a realistic monetary value on that experience? A great number of our lodges charge fees that were set decades ago. Annual dues are set so low that if that was the only income a lodge had, the lodge could not exist. The Grand Lodge assessments are \$10 a year per member, yet that per capita sum doesn't come close to covering the costs of such programs as the leadership conference, the insurance bought by the Grand Lodge on behalf of each lodge, the publication of *The Voice of Freemasonry*, and the cost of many other services and overhead of the Grand Lodge. Additionally, many members have gotten used to their lodge subsidizing their attendance at a social function. Brethren, how much

Our Grand Lodge's  
stature is determined  
by the measure of  
our members.

continued on page 30



# *The Voice of Freemasonry:* An Organ of Information, Instruction, and Inspiration



**Mansour Hatefi, PGM**  
Grand Secretary

The 200th Anniversary of our Grand Lodge affords the opportunity to review, albeit briefly, the birth and growth of *The Voice of Freemasonry*, the official publication of the Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons, of the District of Columbia. This periodical is dispatched to each member of our constituent lodges making it effectively the only piece of communication received by *every* member of this grand jurisdiction. Apart from presenting articles of import and interest as well as timely reports, *The Voice*, in its present form, serves this Grand Lodge as a valuable communication tool for the dissemination of information to the membership, young and old, active and inactive, wherever dispersed, keeping them abreast of the various events, activities and developments in the jurisdiction.

With the arrival of new technologies and applications, it's quality of appearance and content has evolved greatly over the years – yet the mission remains the same: to successfully and forthrightly represent and speak for the Freemasons of Washington, D.C., capital city of the United States of America. Engagement in such an undertaking carries with it both a sense of pride and also responsibility. The search for excellence is unending and sometimes invites failures in its attainment. Even so, a quality journal of news and information remains the mark of a vibrant, well-governed, and forward-looking institution.

The first issue of *The Voice of Freemasonry* was published in February 1978. It was a decidedly humble beginning, consisting of a simple, four page newsletter in black and white. The front page was dedicated to the election and installation of the

Grand Master, M.W. Morris Franky Hewitt, (a Past Master of Potomac Lodge No. 5), and officers of the Grand Lodge, on December 27, 1977. Included in this issue was also a brief biography of then W.B. Theodore M. Kahn, as Junior Grand Steward, as a way of introducing the newest member of the Grand Line to the membership; a practice long since discontinued.

In this same issue, under the heading of: “A Statement of Purpose”, we read: “With this, the first issue of *The Voice of Freemasonry*, the Grand Lodge launches into a new field of fraternal service. This publication is designed to be an organ of information, instruction, and inspiration for all who hold allegiance to this Grand Jurisdiction. Comments and contributions, directed to the attention of the editors, care of the Grand Secretary, are invited. The deadline for news to be included in the next issue is September 1, 1978.”

However, the next issue of *The Voice* was not to be published until the winter of 1985, ostensibly due to a lack of funds. M.W. Theodore M. Kahn,

the Junior Grand Stewart at the time of the first issue, was then Grand Master and can be credited with the renewal of *The Voice*. This issue, six pages long, carried the story and images of the installation ceremony of the new Grand Master and Grand Line officers, on the front page and an array of Masonic tidbits in other pages. The hot topic of the day was the SOLOMON II program, borrowed from the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, in an attempt to remedy the declining membership malaise, which has generally continued to this day here and elsewhere, in the United States.

This publication is designed to be an organ of information, instruction, and inspiration for all who hold allegiance to this Grand Jurisdiction.



Subsequent issues of *The Voice* were published more or less regularly as spring, fall and winter editions, increasing to 12 pages for the first time in the spring of 1992. It should be noted that in the issues published in the last century, with the exception of messages and reports submitted by Grand Masters or Grand line officers, no mention is made of the contributors of the brief pieces and articles printed. It is also worthwhile to note that throughout the life of *The Voice* there have been just a few contributions from our ladies, namely the short articles submitted by the first ladies in 2000 and then in 2008; showing perhaps, that Freemasonry is still very much an organization for and about men.

In the issues published in 1992, perhaps as a result of increased funds, pictures appear in color for the first time and from the spring issue of 1993, there is a marked improvement in the quality of paper and print of *The Voice*, with better layout and graphics. Beginning around 2000, we find that its previous strictly newsy format gives way to more substantial articles pertaining to various aspects of our Craft.

As a journalist by profession, *The Voice* has always been very close to my heart and as such I began working on it as soon as I took up the position of its Managing Editor, subsequent to being tapped to serve as the Grand Secretary, in 2004. We were fortunate, indeed, that MWB Stewart W. Miner, my predecessor, long associated with *The Voice*, and a key factor in its development, continued to provide assistance in its production for sometime after he retired and he continues to be one of our major contributors to date.

It should be noted that since its inception a number of worthy Brethren have acted in one way or another, as editors, managing editors, chairmen and members of the editorial committee and editorial board of *The Voice*. The chronological list of such Brethren reads as follows: Stewart W. Miner, L. Robert Baker,

Lawrence Chisholm, Theodore Rothman, Hugh Y. Bernard, C. Brian Schwartz, Mickey Ander and Mansour Hatefi. However, in recent years *The Voice* has been produced and published in its entirety by the staff of Grand Secretary's office.

The format and illustrations of *The Voice* is varied and evolving. In addition to highlighting activities of the lodges and messages from the leadership, it has served as a journal of Masonic history, thought, and opinion, exposing our members to a diversity of perspectives, through informative and educational articles as well as exclusive interviews. There have been, on occasion, themed issues on topics such as Universal Brotherhood and special issues devoted entirely to a major activity, such as the World Conference of Masonic Grand Lodges or a personality such as George Washington. The images appearing on the cover have varied all through the years, showing in most part, the monuments, memorials, landmarks, statutes and other impressive sights and landscapes of our nation's capital as well as various Masonic symbols, insignia, regalia and scenes of Masonic events and activities within the Craft and in the community.

*The Voice* has served as a historical record of the happenings of this jurisdiction, documenting over time the gradual transformation of the jurisdiction to reflect today's demographic diversity in the fraternity.

In terms of quality and content, it is arguably among the top periodicals published by North American Grand Lodges and is considered one of the most respected Masonic publications with a number of its articles reprinted in other Masonic publications.

As we look to the future with all the changes it is bound to bring, the purpose of *The Voice* remains as it was depicted at the very beginning: "*This publication is designed to be an organ of information, instruction, and inspiration for all who hold allegiance to this Grand Jurisdiction.*" ■

## A Special Opportunity for Federal Employees:

Please consider including the Masonic Foundation of the District of Columbia as part of your charitable giving to the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). The CFC number for the Masonic Foundation is **48808** and is listed in the "local agencies" section of this year's campaign catalog.

If you are not a Federal Employee but know someone who is, please ask them to consider our Masonic Foundation.



# Between Alpha and Omega: The Grand Lodge Takes a Year to Look Back and Plan Ahead



**Joseph S. Crociata**  
Deputy Grand Master

The chords of triumphant celebration of Freemasonry in Washington, D.C. still ring in our ears, as our 200th year and its commemoration comes to a close. And then, we hear the silence of a new sunrise – and see the workers gather in expectation that we, as Masons, again will take up our tools to build an even greater future upon the foundation of a glorious past. Our ritual admonishes that we cannot know where we are in the history we are building. It is not given man to know the hour that he will be called away from his labors on this Earth. Similarly, not even the endurance of our noble fraternity is guaranteed us. We look to the fatherhood of the Grand Architect for both.

All we can know, is that we are somewhere between the Alpha of our beginnings in the operative lodges of the past, and the Omega we hope to mark by the perfection of our speculative lodges of the future. Yet, the passage of a century is a landmark of our history, and in that spirit, we look to the 201st year of our Grand Lodge as a sunrise of a different sort. We will take this year to look back upon the accomplishments of the past century, but also to recognize and seek to learn from our failures, so that the coming century will be marked by work that is plumb, that is square, that is level and pleasing to the Supreme Grand Artificer of all things.

Our 201st year will be marked by evaluation, planning, and laying a solid foundation for those who will come after.

### The Challenges of a New Century

“May you live in interesting times” sounds like a blessing, but is often said as an admonition to beware of challenges ahead. And we live in interesting times

indeed. In the current market, the investments of your Grand Lodge are subject to a volatility that is rare, if not unprecedented. The effects of that market are predicted to be lasting, as the developed world seeks to strike a new balance among factors such as diminishing sources of energy, increasing effects of energy’s use, debt and the aging of the population. These have a direct impact upon our Grand Lodge and its constituent Lodges.

Our Masonic buildings and facilities are vitally necessary for the continued health of our Lodges. And their continued availability to us requires that we meet multiple threats of increased taxes, looming maintenance and renovation costs, and our own lack of a committed plan to raise sufficient resources to restore or replace our Lodge rooms and meeting places. The records of our heritage are deteriorating day by day, often in places which are unsuitable for the preservation of the minutes, historical documents and images upon which future generations will seek to base their commemorations of our 300th, 400th and 500th years.

Yet, as the world struggles with an aging population and we struggle with more immediate issues, Freemasonry in

Washington, D.C. is in the midst of a renewal of youth. The man who enters the west gate of our Lodges is undeniably younger than his counterpart of the last century. More significantly, he is a *different* man from those who have gone this way before. Those of the last century were products of a world in which the passive experience of mass communication was symbolized by the ubiquitous television, often said to be the instrument of a world that turned men away from building social capital and the fellowship of the Lodge. The Mason of the new



century defines mass communication differently, as his accustomed internet and social networking opportunities draw him *toward* the kind of intellectual commerce of which the Lodge is a unique and irreplaceable source.

We must implement a plan to make sure that D.C.'s opportunities for a rewarding Lodge experience meets the expectations of this new Mason, and of the thousands of new Masons that will enter our Lodges over the next few years. And drawing the perfect design upon *this* trestleboard is the most daunting challenge of all.

#### **Planning a New Vision for the Future**

When you speak to Masons of long experience in D.C., you often hear concerns that our Grand Lodge's annual change in leadership might not be the most effective avenue to accomplish the long range planning and goals that the new century will call upon us to meet. Indeed, in recent history there have been efforts to create new systems in which our Grand Lodge would join the ranks of those with multi-year Grand Masterships. Being mindful of our recent history, our Grand Lodge has declined to do so, showing a willingness to sacrifice some measure

of efficiency for the more noble and glorious purpose of assuring that the Grand Master remains firmly grounded in the spirit of his Masonic people, heeding the age-old admonition, "*From the Craft you came, and to the Craft you shall return...*"

Your elected Grand Lodge officers have not only embraced this concept of a responsive Grand Mastership annually renewed, but they have also recognized the need for a sustained, multi-year effort to meet some of our greatest challenges. Time

and time again, your officers have shown themselves willing to work together in such sustained efforts, of which the Bicentennial celebrations are only the most recent and visible. In 2012, we will move further to adopt this spirit of cooperation into the way we plan for the future. The Planning Committee, as in past years, will consist primarily of officers of the Grand Line. In the coming year, however, it will also be comprised of an important subcommittee, a Long-Range Planning Task

Force. This group will be made up of some members of our Grand Line, along with leading Masons who have demonstrated their leadership abilities by able and successful work in their Lodges. The Task Force will be charged with the duty to present plans for meeting our long-term goals for fraternal growth and finance, including a building program that will emphasize establishing the availability of suitable Lodge facilities for the practice of Freemasonry in every quadrant of our Grand Jurisdiction. Their recommendations to the Planning Committee will be made a part of the Committee's report to you, the Grand Lodge, for approval and action.

#### **Management and Accountability**

There is only one measure for the effectiveness of any program of your Grand Lodge – a balancing of the value added versus the resources expended. Under the direction of RW Brother Teko Foly, our Grand Line Officers and candidates have stepped forward to act as project managers of the most important events and management goals of the coming year, and will be reporting their progress to the Grand Lodge as a whole, and from time to time at the

The Mason of the new century defines mass communication differently, as his accustomed internet and social networking opportunities draw him *toward* the kind of intellectual commerce of which the Lodge is a unique and irreplaceable source.

*continued on page 27*



# *Of Men and Masons: Why Freemasonry is not a Volunteer Organization*



**Marcus A. Trelaine**  
Grand Preceptor

It is sometimes suggested that Freemasonry is a “volunteer” organization. If by voluntary, one speaks from the perspective of liberally applying “charitable” generosity, benevolence, tolerance or even an enlightened altruism, than perhaps Freemasonry could be considered a volunteer organization. Indeed, one must willingly seek out the Craft by knocking at the door; to enthusiastically elicit its mysteries through purposeful labor and interpretative symbols; and finally set upon an arduous road of reflection and self-discovery in search of light. Every one of these critical actions must be voluntarily initiated and resolved if a man is to gain any benefit from our ancient and noble art.

Even the practical needs of regular attendance, service as an officer, and the very vows, rituals and ceremonies which we “voluntarily” take upon ourselves, require our own “free will and accord”. With so many voluntary considerations, it is understandable why Freemasonry could be considered a volunteer organization.

But if we pursue this line of reasoning more deeply, perhaps our first question to ask is, “To what extent does our volunteerism compel our obedience?” Do the obligations we repeat, with our hands upon the Volume of Sacred Law, allow us to apply our pledges

only when the time or purpose is convenient to our interest or need? Is a volunteer obliged by any bond to pay dues, contribute to the relief of others, or communicate lessons and emulate defined examples? Is it merely a voluntary exercise to help a brother in need, while holding no expectation for ourselves? Are we able to suspend our rules and customs

if they become too laborious, consuming, or conservative?

Moreover, if Freemasonry is a volunteer organization, does that not make all Master Masons volunteers? As volunteers, does anyone have a right to expect or insist on the actions of others if it doesn’t suit their personal interest? Is it acceptable for the officers of a Lodge to show up or conduct a meeting in any manner they choose, or even attend at all? After all, shouldn’t it be sufficient that any member voluntarily took time from their busy schedule to attend, much less take a station or place? Is it reasonable to presume the Master should present himself for election and instal-

lation in a highly qualified, prepared and experienced manner? Certainly, we could hold no expectations upon ourselves, or each other to perform, if Freemasonry were indeed a “volunteer organization”.

Fortunately, our Craft is a society of men who can best work and best agree. By sharing a common

Progression in  
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union of goodwill, service and duty we have mutually formed a sacred bond of brotherly love, relief, and trust in one another.

While there are indeed some voluntary aspects to the Craft, such as whether one will progress through the various bodies; serve as an officer — and more especially as Master of a Lodge; without the compelling attachments we make with one another we share only a free will and accord, but hold no obligation to serve the tenets of Freemasonry. However, the moment we kiss the Holy Book, these voluntary decisions become binding promises and take on the mantle of duty and responsibility. In this instance, Freemasonry sheds itself of its similarities with every other volunteer organization.

Accepting the increasing responsibilities of the role of Master Mason, elected officer, or Master of the Lodge was something accomplished of one's own free will and accord. It therefore inherently holds and necessitates the discharge of a higher standard in commitment, excellence and fidelity. Such agreements and advancements hold an expressed interest, ability and obligation to those whom have placed their trust and confidence in the “voluntary” acceptance of these roles.

Not every Mason will serve the Craft as a Worshipful Master; nor should they. Progression in Freemasonry does not specifically mean a steady advancement of chairs in a line of officers, but instead should more closely allude to the evolution of the mind, heart and soul of a man towards awareness and inner contentment. Thus, there should be neither embarrassment nor regret in passing an easy opportunity to sit in the

East if the knowledge, skills and ability to perform are not sufficiently developed to perform at the highest level possible. Indeed, it is a most conscientious and honorable man who is keenly aware of his limitations and the ways he may best serve his brother.

Perhaps the most visual example of volunteerism is the U.S. armed forces. Once commissioned or enlisted, the voluntary nature of service is transformed to one of duty. Gone are the days of sleeping in, calling in sick, quitting in frustration, or negotiating a “better deal”. Every man is expected to muster on time, obey the orders of superiors, courageously fight the battles, and ultimately win the campaign in which they are engaged.



Photography by Arthur W. Pierson, Falls Church, Virginia.

*“The moment we kiss the Holy Book, these voluntary decisions become binding promises and take on the mantle of duty and responsibility.”*

Men in arms expect and demand one another to perform, excel, defend and achieve — even when the situation appears hopeless. Freemasonry does no less in rendering its obligations upon the brethren. Although never by force of arms, there is a force of will in making a covenant with one another and to the Great Architect of the Universe to pursue a path of light that we may become the very best we are able to be.

While members of a “volunteer organization” may be willing to join together to work on behalf of others without pay or other tangible gain; members in Freemasonry are accepted into a fraternal society to take upon themselves the obligation to observe the landmarks and keep the secrets of Freemasonry. In short, every man “volunteers” to become a Mason, but every Mason must consent to the Order of the Craft. This is our pact. It is neither voluntary nor negotiable, and distinguishes a Master Mason from the rest of the community. ■





# Bob Drechsler:

## Quiet Servant of the Craft Receives Scottish Rite's Highest Honor



**Todd C. Duehring**  
Assistant to the Grand Secretary

At this summer's 2011 Biennial Session of the Scottish Rite's Southern Jurisdiction, the Supreme Council recognized Most Worshipful Brother Robert F. Drechsler's many years of service to the Fraternity by awarding him with the Grand Cross of the Court of Honor.

Recently I had the opportunity to sit down with Bob and talk with him about his life and Masonry. But first a little background: Most Worshipful Brother Robert F. "Bob" Drechsler was born on April 9, 1933 in Washington, DC. He was raised at the German Orphan Home in Washington and attended public schools in the city, graduating from Anacostia High School where he was tapped for the National Honor Society in his junior year. He graduated from the University of Maryland – College Park with a B.A. degree in horticulture. At U. of M. he was active in the university band and was a member and officer of Alpha Gamma Rho and Kappa Kappa Phi.

Bob was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason in 1954 in Anacostia Lodge No. 21 and served his lodge as Worshipful Master in 1969 and served as trustee of the lodge for many years. He served the Grand Lodge as Grand Master in 1997 and this year will be retiring from the office of Grand Treasurer as well as from the office of Secretary of Anacostia Lodge No. 21. Bob has been active in many appendant bodies including the Tall Cedars and the Scottish Rite.

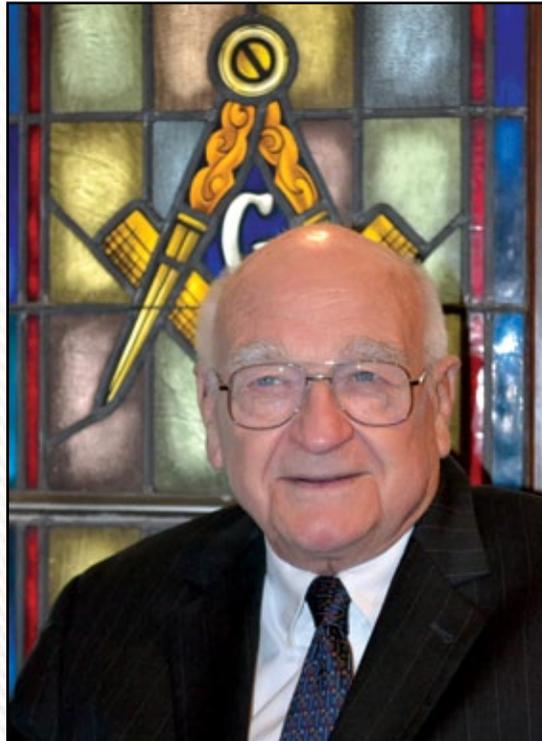
**Bob, please tell us a little about your childhood and background.**

At the age of four, I moved to the German Orphan Home in southeast Washington where my four brothers had already been placed after the death of our mother. Mr. George Washington Taylor Christman and his wife were the superintendent and matron. We called them Pop and Mom to give you some idea of what the resident children in their charge thought of them. They raised us with great care and interest in our future. I have many happy memories of my childhood at the German Orphan Home.

**What career path did you take after school? Please tell us something about your activities and interests outside of Masonry.**

I was privileged to attend the University of Maryland – College Park and received there a degree in horticulture. I worked my way through college by working at Mealy & Wood Florist, which was just across the street from the German Orphan Home. My interest in horticulture began at the Home where we tended gardens and helped cultivate a five acre "truck patch". Because I had received lessons on

the clarinet while I was in the Home, when I was eventually drafted into the Army, I was placed in the band. I had a six year obligation to the Army; two active, two active reserves (my last active reserve assignment was to be drum major for the District of Columbia National Guard Band at the John F. Kennedy's inauguration in 1961) and two years inactive reserves. When I was discharged from the Army, I



*M.W.B. Robert Drechsler, PGM, recipient of the Scottish Rite's Grand Cross in August of this year.*



obtained a job at the US National Arboretum in 1959 and worked as the curator of the National Bonsai Collection at the time of my retirement in 1996. I still work as a volunteer at the Arboretum and through the years I have served several times on the Board of Directors of the German Orphan Home.

**How did you happen to seek membership in the Masonic fraternity and when did you receive the degrees?**

While a student at Anacostia High School, I was active in Kiwanis's youth organization, the Key Club, and had the opportunity to participate in their convention in Miami, Florida. Several in our group were looking for a DeMolay meeting to attend and I wondered what was DeMolay? I soon learned that it was a youth organization sponsored by the Masons. Pop Christman was a Mason and would go to the Scottish Rite on Tuesday nights. I like the type of fellows in the Key Club and found out that most of them belonged to the DeMolay club in school as well as Anacostia Chapter of DeMolay which met on Tuesday nights. I asked and received Pop's permission to join DeMolay, which was rather unusual because no one at the Home was allowed to attend evening activities away from the Home. I soon joined, became active, and after several years was elected Master Councilor. As soon as I was eligible, at the age of 21, I petitioned Anacostia Lodge No. 21, was elected, and received the three degrees in June, July and August of 1954.

**Who were your mentors and what did they do for you?**

Pop Christman was the first. I can remember that one evening he was talking about the 24 inch ruler being divided into three equal parts, etc. I learned many lessons about life from him. I think my DeMolay advisors, who put in so many hours assisting the DeMolay chapter's activities, were also valuable mentors. I also received mentoring from the members of the Home's

Board of Directors, many of whom I later learned were Masons. Charles C. Weaver, Past Master of Anacostia Lodge was also a guiding light. When I served as an advisor to Anacostia Chapter of the Order of DeMolay, Brother Weaver was a lodge trustee. The Lodge gave the DeMolays use of Anacostia Masonic Temple for two nights a month. If we had a dance, taffy pull, or a pancake breakfast to raise money, he would charge us \$50.00 rent. I had many talks with him, often about the need for "tough love", responsibility, and accountability. He was right.

**What was Masonry in the nation's capital like in your early days?**

When I was young and just a new Mason? Well, for starters, I had 16 fellow candidates in my class progressing through the several degrees. We meet two nights a week with two different instructors -- Herb Bates met with us weekly at the temple on one night and I can not remember the name of the brother who instructed us in weekly meetings at his home. We stood proficiency for each degree in open lodge. All instruction was by word of mouth -- there was no cipher. Every Saturday we attended "Grand Lodge School". One lodge was assigned to open the lodge, purge the lodge, and close the lodge. All the line officers from each lodge were expected to attend this school --

and they did! This enabled all of us to meet and get to know members of the several lodges. There were several instructors who would work the three degrees in separate lodge rooms or give individual instruction.

**What areas of activities have you most enjoyed in the blue lodge?**

As an officer we learned our parts or we were dropped out of line. With my ritual work in DeMolay I got interested in the blue lodge degree work. We meet Sunday evenings at 7 PM the night before our communications. We had a great instructor, Grover



*Bob Drechsler making a point at a recent workshop for Lodge Secretaries*

*continued on next page*



Baldwin, who helped and assisted us in our work. He was not only an instructor but a close friend to all the officers. I remember that we would always give him a small token of appreciation for all the time he spent with us during the year.

**What has been your involvement over the years in the several appendant bodies?**

I joined a Royal Arch chapter before I became Master of Anacostia Lodge No. 21 but have not taken an active part in the Chapter. Over the years, I have done some ritual parts in the Scottish Rite Degrees but my real interest was in working with the stage crew and I served as Stage Director for 15 years. I was active in Capitol Forest No. 104 of the Tall Cedars of Lebanon, where I served as ceremonial director for several years and I made a set of scenery for the ritual work.

**How has the New Generation of Masons changed Freemasonry for the better or worse?**

This is a hard point to determine. I do see changes in our jurisdiction taking us away from being typical American lodges to lodges with a more European-style intellectual base. This has given me a feeling of wonderment and makes me hopeful that the fraternity's evolution will continue to bring us an understanding of close fellowship and

close friendships, not only intellectually but by close personal associations and respect for one another.

Of course, the new generation is bringing with it new, more varied modes of communication, which offer great opportunities for efficiency but also risks leaving some unconnected brethren in the dark.

**Soon you will be retiring as Grand Treasurer. What should or would you like our membership to know about the finances of Grand Lodge?**

The office of Grand Treasurer actually has very little to do with the financial holdings of the Grand Lodge. It's the Grand Lodge's Trustees who oversee the

investment of Grand Lodge funds. The Deputy Grand Master in conjunction with Budget and Cash Flow Committee drafts the annual budget. The Grand Secretary approves all expenditures and his staff reports on the status of the budget and prepares the checks as ordered. The Grand Treasurer is a co-signer on the checks. The real pleasure of the Grand Treasurer is with the activities of the Masonic Foundation. It is a pleasure to write checks in support of the many students who receive scholarships from the Foundation.

**You will continue to serve as curator/director of the Grand Lodge Library and Museum. Please tell us a little about the collection and its value as a resource for our members. What is your vision of the future for this asset?**

Our Grand Lodge Library is not used. We have a good collection of Masonic materials in our library but with the Scottish Rite Supreme Council's library so close, those wanting to research Masonic subjects can find more resources for Masonic information at that library. The museum has many collectables. It has been of interest to me just how few truly antique items of Masonic memorabilia we have in our collections. Through the years that I have assisted in the museum, I have tried to let our membership know of our interest in

Masonic memorabilia and the assurance of safe keeping and occasional displays of donated objects. All the objects we collect are donated to the museum.

**Are there any particular books or memorabilia in the collection that you would care to highlight?**

I would say that the most interesting items in the collection include three goblets that were given to the Grand Lodge by Benjamin Brown French for the cornerstone laying of the Washington Monument, a set of lead square and compasses removed from the casket of a continental soldier, and a copy of the

The real pleasure of the Grand Treasurer is with the activities of the Masonic Foundation. It is a pleasure to write checks in support of the many students who receive scholarships from the Foundation.

*continued on page 30*



# Masonry 2.0: Grand Lodge Unveils New Website

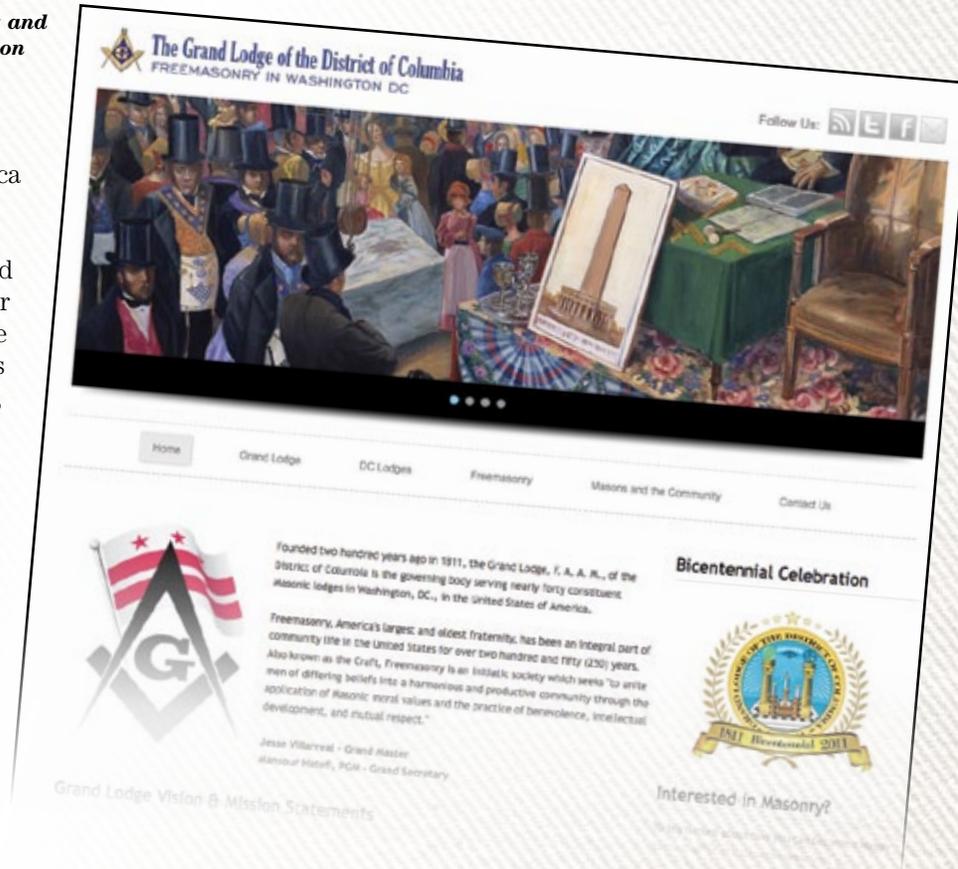
by Kevin P. Jay, Assistant to the Grand Secretary and Joseph Vidulich, Wm. R. Singleton - Hope - Lebanon Lodge No. 7

Consider this: Washington, DC is a mecca for Masonry.

Masons and non-Masons throughout the world look to our Grand Jurisdiction regularly for enlightenment on our ancient and honorable Craft. In the past, the interested amongst us would look to libraries, regular postal mail, or their fellow Masons to learn about the happenings and goings-on of this most noble grand lodge. These forms of education and communication would often be out-of-date and hard to come by. Today, there is no easier way for men and Masons to connect to our Grand Lodge than through the internet and our website, [www.dcgrandlodge.org](http://www.dcgrandlodge.org).

Our website is our Grand Jurisdiction's primary and most essential online presence. It is also the first impression many receive of the Craft in our nation's capital. Earlier this year, the Office of the Grand Secretary undertook the massive task of creating a dynamic new website that was up-to-date in design, user-friendliness, and functionality. Our Grand Secretary, Most Worshipful Mansour Hatefi, PGM, envisioned a website that would be a resource to both our brethren, our prospective brethren, and the community at large.

Brethren can now be better informed about Grand Lodge events, news, and notices through a current and up-to-date blog maintained by Grand Lodge office staff. The new website will be an ever-changing, dynamic, attractive, content-rich portal of information for members. The "Lodge Locator" portion of the website lists all the lodges by meeting place, and includes a color-coded map and link to your contact information and lodge website (if available). In addition, current and past issues of *The Voice of Freemasonry* are available for viewing and downloading in a very user-friendly, easy to read format. Brothers can also register for Grand Lodge Events via the website, and in the not-too-distant future will be able to obtain Masonic education material, regalia, and tickets for social functions.



Secretaries will likewise find new working tools at their disposal. The "Secretary's Desk" includes many of the forms necessary for your lodge's operation including the ability to submit their monthly and installation reports online. The website is a portal to assist Secretaries and Masters with lodge operations. Officers will be able to find summaries of the proceedings of the Grand Lodge communications, copies of "The Call" for their review, and periodic memorandums and notices from the Grand Master and Grand Secretary.

The revamped website is not the only footprint the Grand Lodge has on the Internet. Brethren can also stay informed via e-mail, Twitter, and Facebook as well.

[www.dcgrandlodge.org](http://www.dcgrandlodge.org) has already made a great first impression on many. In its first month of operation over 220,000 unique visitors have already stopped by the website to take a look, some from every corner of the globe. From all impressions, Washington, DC is indeed a mecca for Masonry. ■

# Scenes from Recent Events



1. Some cool cats at the Masonic Family Picnic  
 2. RWB Joe Crociata shares a joke with MWB Jesse Villarreal  
 3. WB Gary Ozbenian and RWB Ken Fuller  
 4. A clown entertains at the Masonic Family Picnic  
 5. Men in caps at the Lodge Officer Training Retreat

6. Participants at the 2011 Lodge Officer Training Retreat  
 7. RWB Joe Crociata organized and led this year's Retreat at the National Conference Center  
 8. The Grand Master presents Master Mason certificates to recently raised members of Hiram-Takoma Lodge No. 10  
 9. WB David Gregory and MWB Charles Iversen



# Around the Jurisdiction



10



12



11



13



14



15



16



17

- 10. Altar with Washington Trowel, B.B.French Chalices, Great Lights, and Washington Gavel
- 11. Tripod and stone display for Oct 18th House of the Temple cornerstone ceremony re-enactment
- 12. DGM Joe Crociata speaks at Oct 18th House of the Temple cornerstone re-enactment flanked by GM Ponzillo of Maryland and DGM Ellison of Virginia
- 13. DGM Ellison of Virginia, DGM Crociata, Sovereign Grand Commander Seale, GM Ponzillo of Maryland

- 14. 2011 Officers of Wm. R. Singleton – Hope – Lebanon No. 7 at the Lodge's Oct 15th Bicentennial Banquet
- 15. The 2011 St. Baldrick's Day participants raised over \$21,000 dollars to conquer kids' cancer.
- 16. The St. Baldrick's participants after head shaving
- 17. Grand Master Villarreal issued a challenge to raise \$10,000 to see his shaved – mission accomplished!



# *In Memoriam:* *M.W. Bro. Louis R. "Bob" Baker* **October 13, 1917 – October 6, 2011**



*Stewart W. Miner*  
*Grand Secretary Emeritus*

**M**ost Worshipful Brother Baker, the youngest of the four children in his family, was born in Alborn, Minnesota and grew up in Superior, Wisconsin. There he attended high school and the University of Wisconsin-Superior, where he earned a bachelor's degree. Later in life he attended the George Washington University, in Washington, D.C., where he was awarded a Master's degree in public personnel administration.

M.W. Brother Baker entered U.S. Government service in 1940 by acceptance of a position with the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, the predecessor of the National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA). In 1942 he took a leave of absence from that position to serve in the U.S. Army as a commissioned officer until 1945.

Subsequent to his military service, M.W. Brother Baker accepted employment as the recruitment and placement officer of the Naval Research Laboratory. In 1946 he transferred to the U.S. Information Agency (USIA). There he became the personnel officer of that agency, where he completed his career, in 1977, as the director of retirement and insurance.

M.W. Brother Baker was raised a Master Mason in George C. Whiting Lodge No. 22 on April 12, 1951. His immediate acceptance of responsibility led quickly to appointment as an officer in that lodge, which he served as Worshipful Master in 1960. Following his service as Worshipful Master, he served as the lodge secretary from 1963 until 1995, when George C. Whiting Lodge was consolidated with Potomac Lodge No. 5.

M.W. Brother Baker served the Grand Lodge of D.C. faithfully for many years previous to his installation

as Grand Master of Masons of the District of Columbia at the St. John's Day Communication of the Grand Lodge on December 27, 1986. Previous to his entrance into the elective line as Junior Grand Steward for the Masonic Year 1981, he had successfully served terms as the Grand Pursuivant in 1979 and as Grand Historian in 1980.



*M.W. Bro. Louis R. "Bob" Baker*  
*1917 – 2011*

His experience as a lodge officer and as a Grand Lodge officer, appointed and elected, served M.W. Brother Baker well as he adroitly handled all of the issues, expected and unexpected, that arose during his term as Grand Master. In the process he set in motion a number of programs designed to publicly project Freemasonry in a favorable light. It was largely because of his effort that the Grand Lodges of D.C., Maryland and Virginia participated for the first time in the 1987 Cherry Blossom Parade.

During his term as Grand Master, M.W. Brother Baker hosted a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution of the United States. By his invitation the Grand Masters, Deputy Grand Masters and their ladies of 12

of the original colonies of the country joined with the brethren and ladies of this Grand Lodge to celebrate that event. Included in the festivities was an exclusive showing to the group of the original four pages of the U.S. Constitution in the rotunda of the National Archives Building.

One of the most lasting of his many contributions was his effort to establish a leadership training program for the information and training of leaders in the subordinate lodges of the jurisdiction. At his invitation, on the first weekend in October 1987, some 80 of the officers then serving the lodges of the jurisdiction gathered at the 4H Conference Center in Front Royal, Virginia, to



participate in the first Leadership Training Conference of the Grand Lodge. Though the venue is since subject to change, the Conference continues nevertheless to this day.

In his great respect for the maintenance of complete and accurate records, M.W. Brother Baker took the lead in securing the approval of Grand Lodge to publish the 25-year extension of the history of the Grand Lodge that had been prepared by the Grand Historian, Carl R. LeVine. During his term he also assigned responsibility for the preparation and distribution of *The Voice of Freemasonry* to the Grand Secretary and his staff.

Upon completion of his term as Grand Master, M.W. Brother Baker made a number of recommendations, two of which, in retrospect, are especially worthy of note. The first of these resulted in the subsequent decision of the Grand Lodge to become involved in the provision of scholarships for D.C. High School graduates pursuing college-level educations. No less important was his recommendation that a search committee be appointed to find suitable space for the Grand Lodge office. Both recommendations were favorably received.

M.W. Brother Baker's fraternal interests were by no means confined to his lodge and the Grand Lodge. He was an active member of many Masonic-affiliated organizations, including those of the Scottish Rite, in which he served as the Venerable Master of the Lodge of Perfection; Mt. Pleasant Royal Arch Chapter No. 3; Adoniram Council of Royal and Select Masters No. 2; and Washington Commandery No. 1, Knights Templar.

In addition, he held membership in High Twelve Club No 576; A. Douglas Smith Lodge of Research No. 1949; Washington and Lee York Rite College No. 93; Old Dominion Chapter No. 364 of National Sojourners; the National Defense Masonic Club; the Pitman Masonic Club; the Masonic Book Club of Springfield, Illinois; the Southern California Lodge of Research; the Pythagoras

Lodge of Research in Washington, D.C.; the Masonic Veterans Association; the Knights of Mecca of Almas Temple; Capitol Forest No 104 of the Tall Cedars of Lebanon; and the Royal Order of Scotland.

M.W. Brother Baker was very proud of his association with the Grand Lodge of New Hampshire, which he served as Grand Representative of that Grand Lodge near the Grand Lodge of D.C. for many years.

He was no less proud of his long association with the Eastern Star as a member of Hope Chapter No. 30, where he served as Worthy Patron seven times, and as the Worthy Grand Patron of the Grand Chapter in D.C. in 1990. He was also Worthy Patron in Sharon Chapter No. 63 in McLean, Virginia in 1967 and 2006.

A few weeks before his death M.W. Brother Baker was presented his 60-year veteran's award by Grand Master Jesse Villarreal and Grand Secretary Mansour Hatefi at the Renaissance Gardens Rehabilitation Center. Had he lived only seven more days, he would have celebrated his 94th birthday.

M.W. Brother Baker and his wife Doris, who pre-deceased him, were members of the United Methodist Church in McLean, Virginia, where the Thanksgiving service was conducted in

1987 under the direction of the pastor, our former Grand Lodge Chaplain, David Balcom. Upon moving to the Greenspring retirement community, they became faithful members of the Village Church in that community.

M.W. Brother Baker and his wife are now at rest, following services in the Demaine Funeral Home Chapel in Springfield, at the National Memorial Park, 7482 Lee Highway, in Falls Church, Virginia. They are survived by their son, Bruce, and daughter-in-law, Darie Donovan, of Stamford, Connecticut, and by 19 nieces and nephews.

The will of God is accomplished. So mote it be. Amen. ■

One of the most lasting of his many contributions was his effort to establish a leadership training program for the information and training of leaders in the subordinate lodges of the jurisdiction.



DearFreemason:

# The Universality of Freemasonry



**Marshall N. Wilner**  
Grand Director of Ceremonies

Let me begin, once again, by saying thank you to the various comments received on the last article. If you would like to submit a question or comment, feel free to email me at [dearfreemason@gmail.com](mailto:dearfreemason@gmail.com). I will remind everyone again that it is important to include your name and Lodge Number so that I am able to know your question or comment to be valid.

*DearFreemason,*

*We spoke last week when you came to visit my Lodge. One of the topics you talked about at length was the Universality of Freemasonry. What exactly does this mean and why do you find it so important?*

*Fraternally,*

*Brother from a Far-away Land*

Dear Faraway,

With so many definitions of universal and universality, I think it is essential to start with a few operational definitions before even beginning a discussion of Universality in Freemasonry.

- Present or occurring everywhere
- Adapted or adjustable to meet varied requirements
- A behavior pattern or institution existing in all cultures

Wherever Freemasonry exists on this planet, there is a certain set of tenets under which we operate. The specific language may be different, but the message is crystal clear: brotherly love, relief, and truth. As with the definitions listed above, these three tenets are adapted to meet any number of circumstances.

For example, earlier this year I was tasked with organizing the Universal Brotherhood Lodge

Meeting. I believe most of you are familiar with this unique gathering of Brethren from our constituent lodges. This meeting showcases the diversity of languages represented by our various lodges. At this meeting we were able to see the chartering of a new lodge as well as witness the twinning of a lodge from this jurisdiction with a South American lodge. The affirmation of the diversity of our membership highlighted the unity of our Craft, is once again, an incredible thing of which to be a part. Keep in mind that although I had not met some of the Brethren who participated, the rehearsals and the meeting itself showed the supportive nature of the Craft.

During this meeting, I also had the privilege of spending time with visiting Grand Masters and Grand Lodge officers from various countries. With the help of Brethren from our bilingual Lodges who acted as interpreters, we talked about how Masonry operates in other parts of the world. It was interesting to discover that wherever Brothers call home, that Mystic Tie still binds brethren

together, regardless of religion, race, politics, socioeconomic status, etc.

Finding all of this on a global scale and inherently knowing this to be true within our own jurisdiction moved me to visit many of our bilingual lodges. These visits were eye-opening for me, as a new dimension of cultural awareness was revealed. Honestly, I did not always understand what was said, but the underlying message was loud, clear, and consistent – we are all trying to achieve the same general goals.

As I have mentioned in previous articles, I am a firm believer in individual lodge culture. The concept of



*DearFreemason welcomes your questions.  
Write to him at: [dearfreemason@gmail.com](mailto:dearfreemason@gmail.com)*



*Universal Freemasonry* has been the motto and modus operandi with which our Grand Lodge has brought about a true Renaissance of Freemasonry in the Nation's Capital.

the Universality of Freemasonry should never inhibit a lodge's own culture, but rather enhance it. This is highlighted over and over again in our ritual. For me, the most important lesson is the importance of brotherhood and our commitment to one another. This is why the Universality of Freemasonry is important to me. In closing, below is some of the text used in the letter to the Worshipful Masters in this jurisdiction when being invited to participate and also when being thanked for being a part of the Universal Brotherhood Celebration earlier this year:

*Universal Freemasonry* has been the motto and modus operandi with which our Grand Lodge has brought about a true Renaissance of Freemasonry in the Nation's Capital. Twenty-one years ago, in 1990, the Grand Lodge in a historic move chartered Mehr Lodge No. 90, the

first bilingual Lodge in modern times. The oldest bilingual Lodge, Arminius Lodge No. 25, our English/German speaking Lodge, was chartered in 1876. Since 1990, the Grand Lodge has chartered 16 new Lodges in our jurisdiction, three of which sojourned in later years to help form the Grand Lodges of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Today, our Grand Lodge is a living proof of Freemasonry Universal. As we celebrate 200 years of our Grand Lodge's history, we reaffirm our commitment to the ideals of our Noble Fraternity and to the Universality of the Craft.

I think that sums it up pretty well.

Fraternally and Sincerely,

DearFreemason ■

## WB Bill Turner Installed as National President of the National Sojourners

Our Grand Lodge is proud to have one of our own rise to a position of leadership in a national appendant body – the National Sojourners, Inc. Worshipful Brother William “Bill” G.L. Turner, PM – Freedom Military Lodge No. 1775, was installed as National President of the National Sojourners at their 2011 Annual National Convention in Richmond, VA, this past June. His year will have him traveling along with his “bride,” Patti, from Hawaii to Maine, and from Southern Florida to Southern California, with many points in between. The Sojourners are Master Masons that typically also have a military or Dept. of Defense affiliation, although they also have members that demonstrate a great love of country and flag. Their motto is, “Proudly serving the cause of Patriotism,” which they do through their various Flag Programs, Color Guards, and participating in parades. The Sojourners are also known for their dedicated efforts to educate our youth through Leadership Conferences and Essay contests. Bro. Bill was heard to say recently, “It gives me great pleasure to serve our Order and share my affiliation with our great Grand Lodge of DC with others.” He has served as Grand Standard Bearer and Grand Provost, while being Treasurer of FML No. 1775. ■



# Social Issues: Safe for Lodge? No, No, No!

by Charles S. Lazar

Hiram-Takoma Lodge No. 10

In a recent article entitled “Social Issues: Safe for Lodge” (*Voice of Freemasonry*, Vol. 27, No. 3), Worshipful Brother Mark Shapiro proposes that it is time we, as a fraternity, lifted the ban on social issues, i.e., politics, as a subject for open discussion in lodge. Social issues are politics, and politics are social issues. The founding fathers of Masonry were very wise to ban the discussion of religion and politics in lodge. Both topics are divisive and not what Masonry is all about. Masonry is about building men of high character. The goals of Masonry are promoting good morals, brotherhood and teaching a man the proper way to live, act and treat others. It is the one time that the expression “all about us” is correct. I tell everyone who asks “What is Masonry about?” that it is an organization that teaches by allegory and example a way of life and how one should live. The real essence of Masonry is to be a “good man.”

The question of religion is not directly at issue here, but I’ll take this opportunity to comment on it. We are a brotherhood of men that believes in the existence of a supreme being. It does not matter what we call that supreme being or how we, as individuals, choose to worship the supreme being; and it does not matter what form that religion takes as all are accepted. A brother’s beliefs are his own and should never be questioned. We as a brotherhood have been persecuted for this belief in the past. The fact that Masons subscribe to no particular creed means that Masonry is no threat to the organized religions.

Politics is a different matter and affects us much more directly.

There is no objective discussion about politics and/or social issues. Outside of lodge and in the social halls, these topics are fair game. A brother can walk away or participate as he chooses. Inside a lodge he is a captive audience. Why would one discuss politics or social issues? It is done to sway another’s opinion to conform or agree with one’s own, or to reach

a conclusion which can be justified as somehow Masonic in its foundation. What if all lodges disagree? Worshipful Brother Shapiro is wrong in his belief that an objective discussion can be had. Yes, as Fellow Craft Masons we are taught about logic and rhetoric, but this is to make the Fellow Craft a better person. Once we start taking positions on social issues within the lodge, we lose the essence of being “special”.

Hitler attacked Masonry and Freemasons just as he did anyone else who disagreed with him. He did not fear Masonry *per se*, but rather, he feared each and every individual who was a Mason. Why? Because of our teachings: each Mason

was a free thinker. Hitler knew that individual Masons could be dangerous to his hold on power. We are free thinkers; we are taught to be such. But no individual lodge is a threat to its government. We are informed before taking each obligation that it will not conflict with our politics or the allegiance we owe to our country. We are admonished to obey the civil authorities. If we, as a brotherhood, were to take a political stand on a social issue, we become a political orga-

If a brother wants to engage in debates on social issues in the lodge, let him join an ethical society or some other group where such activities are part of the program.



nization lacking adherence to the principal tenets of Freemasonry. We are organized for education; we teach but we do not debate.

While it is often stated that many of our country's Founding Fathers were Masons; it is interesting to note that there were, in fact, members of the Craft who were "Tories" and opposed a political separation from Great Britain. While there is little written record to document the role Masonry played, either directly or indirectly, in the American Revolution, there is no doubt that Masonic philosophy as espoused by the great Enlightenment thinkers is evident in the founding documents of America. Though many of the influential men of the era were Masons, one never hears or reads anything about Masonry taking one side or the other in the war for American independence. Politics was never discussed, just as it should not be today.

When politics is made open for discussion, and the purpose for discussion is to convince others of the validity and rightness of one's own opinion, one necessarily changes the nature of Masonry in the greater community. There is no way to avoid hot button issues; all social issues are hot. A lodge is the place where farmer, banker, grocer and doctor are all equal. Remember, what is the purpose of discussion? It is to sway positions, and then declare what the lodge's position is. This would go directly against the principals of our Fraternity.

If a lodge takes a stand on a social issue, it's doing so on behalf of all of its members. It becomes a public statement of position that is open to the whole world. What happens to those brothers who disagree? Then there is the matter of the Master's right to govern his Lodge. Do we allow the Master to choose the social issues he wants to discuss?

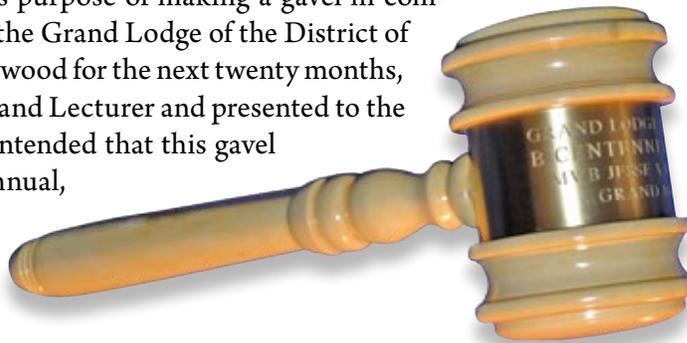
A lodge may give money to charity, but it does not take a stand on that charity's policies. Lodges must carefully select the recipients for its charitable giving. If Worshipful Brother Shapiro wants lively and timely discourse, there are many possible topics pertaining to a lodge and its operation that would make for an outstanding discussion.

If a brother wants to engage in debates on social issues in the lodge, let him join an ethical society or some other group where such activities are part of the program. He should not look to Masonry and his lodge as an outlet to discuss and promote his political or social agenda. There are other excellent organizations devoted to such a purpose.

The change that is being proposed is just too out-of-bounds to the precepts of our fraternity. Worshipful, if you must discuss social or political issues, take them to your social hall and not to your lodge room. ■

## *The Bicentennial Gavel*

**I**n the late summer of 2009, the two large American Holly shrubs that flanked the front doors of the D.C. Scottish Rite Center were cut down and two palm trees were planted in their place. A two foot long section of the trunk from one of these holly shrubs was rescued from the rubbish pile by the Grand Lecturer, Right Worshipful Brother Christopher K. "Chip" Mahaney for the express purpose of making a gavel in commemoration of the Bicentennial of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia in 2011. After drying the wood for the next twenty months, this gavel was hand made by the Grand Lecturer and presented to the Grand Master in April, 2011. It is intended that this gavel be used to preside over the Semi-Annual, Annual, and Third Communications of the Grand Lodge and then donated to the Grand Lodge Library and Museum. ■



# Max Bartoli: Master Mason and Filmmaker



**Walter R. Hoenes**

Assistant to the Grand Secretary

*A member of Italia Lodge No. 2001 since 2001, film director Max Bartoli chats with WB Walter Hoenes about his career and how being a Mason affects his approach to his work.*

**P**lease tell us something about your background and family. I understand that your family is deeply rooted in the arts.

I did classical studies and I've got a Law Degree with a major in Media Law, but I come from a family of artists from both sides I'd say. I'll tell you just one anecdote to explain it. My father's grandfather was one of the best actors of his time, but he was also an incredible writer and a painter. During the Second World War he was an official of the Italian cavalry and he was captured in Kenya by the Brits and hospitalized in one of their camps because his back was badly injured. He was forced to stay in bed for months wearing a cast. During this period he managed to get a 'primitive' canvas, found a couple of brushes and made a frame using only the material of his cast, some water and salt. He painted a triptych picturing himself as a prisoner of war, the Holy Mary, and his family home. The colors were made using natural products like fruit. We still have that painting, it's amazing. The artistic genes were transmitted to his daughters both very talented actresses and to my dad, who's been singing professionally for ages until he decided to get "a serious job" and marry my mom. So you understand now where all my 'craziness' is coming from!

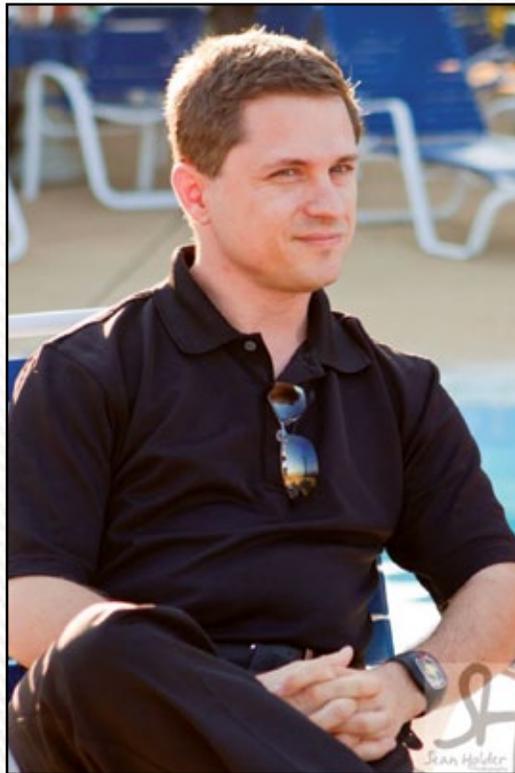
**Have you always been attracted to the film industry? What prompted you to begin a career in this field and how did you get started?**

I guess so. Like they say here in Hollywood "once you have the 'bug' there's nothing you can do about it!" When I was 16 years old, I started writing just for the pleasure of it. I've always loved to tell stories and writing was definitely a first important step in

my career as a storyteller. At 20 years old during the official press conference of my second published novel, the famous Italian writer Alberto Bevilacqua — who has written the preface of the book — said publicly that I could either become a good writer or a good director. I remember him getting angry at me a few years later when I told him I wanted to become a film director. But even after that decision it really took me years to finally start directing. Life is strange and the Lord, or how we call Him, the Great Architect, has his own way of providing things to us. So before I could walk on my first set as a director I approached showbiz from a slightly different angle: the musical theater industry. I tried to put together a musical on Broadway. My musical was showcased Off-Broadway, in the London's West End and in several other cities throughout the US. That was the closest I could get to Broadway; but even if that project really did not work the way I wanted, it served me to learn how to raise money and manage resources, both human and financial.

In 1999 my very good friend and now business partner, Peter Teale, called me to London to work in his company, a small advertising and marketing communica-

tion agency. My role was to put together and manage a production crew and the budgets of each project. Peter had just turned me into a producer. In 2002, I started working for a big Italian advertising company and I also started studying "directing". I did it reading manuals, watching as many "behind the scenes" of movies as possible and constantly asking questions of the people I was hiring (it's kind of difficult to say "Shut up!" to the person who gives you your check at the end of the day!) Late in 2003, I started directing commercials, videos, etc.



Brother Max Bartoli



### Who are your mentors? Who do you look to for inspiration in your chosen field?

My real mentor was and is Peter Teale who has been the only person — outside of my family — who believed in me and invested huge amounts of money on me. In terms of inspiration, I've always looked at the best in this field both of the present and of the past. It's a long list and it starts with the pioneering film director and film theorist, Sergei Eisenstein. There is no need to reinvent the wheel so I always try to study and learn from the masters of this art. It's an endless process. The day I'll feel pleased by what I know, I'll quit.

### Given that you have reached a level in your profession usually occupied by much older men or women, how has your relative youth affected how you do things and your approach to your job?

Well first of all thanks for still considering me “relatively young” and for assuming I reached a good level in the industry. I feel like I've just got started, but thanks anyway. The only thing I can say about it is that showbiz and in particular the film industry are the most competitive industries in the world. In Hollywood they are used to saying that two thirds of the world is covered by water and one third by people wanting to break into showbiz, and it's true. The competition is amazing out here. The age factor might count a bit, but at the end of the day it all gets down to the quality of the work you are able to produce.

As far as I'm concerned I want to spend my time prepping myself for each job; regardless of who's involved in it, the age of the other members, etc. Even if, as an Italian, I'm at ease improvising, I never want to improvise on a set unless it becomes strictly necessary. My approach is very simple: perfection is the goal, you'll never reach it but a good way to get close to it is to walk on set as much prepared as possible. In other words I must do my homework first. On the top of that, being a Freemason works as a further motivation in my career. We are by definition “builders” and like our predecessors we want to build something that can hopefully last for a long time, something that can help people see things in a different light. I know shooting a movie is not the same

as building a cathedral but still a film can influence a lot of people, so...

### Has recruiting and holding onto investors been a difficult challenge?

It's the part that I hate the most of the business but it's also the most important, because without money there are no movies. Because I had no one to do it for me I had to learn how to do it myself. My law degree has helped me a lot during these years to see at least where the “booby traps” were. In terms of the approach used to find investors, I strongly believe in being honest and transparent and even more so when you ask people to invest their own money in your project. People who invest in films do it because they trust the director and/or the producer(s). Never betray that trust. Moreover, this field is regulated by strict and very specific laws, which means that you don't want to mess around at all. Hiring some of the best lawyers in this field became a must for me.



*Brother Max Bartoli on the set of Atlantis Down*

### What has been your biggest professional challenge or disappointment so far?

The challenge was producing *Atlantis Down*. In Los Angeles everyone I went to said it was not possible to produce it with the budget and within the shooting schedule I had planned. Too many sets, too many locations and computer generated imagery (CGI shots). I told them I could do it and I did it going under budget (my original

budget, not theirs!) and completing principal photography one day earlier. Disappointments? I don't really know. Things don't always go the way we would love them to, but there is a reason for everything and usually there is a lesson to be learned. I'm learning mine so that's fine. I try not to look at what disappointed me but at what I've achieved, where and what I must improve and at what I want to achieve next. Life is short; I have no time to look back and complain.

### Conversely, what has been your biggest success?

Well, success is a “big word”. Personally I feel privileged for what I was given, for having a great supporting family, and for what I've achieved so far. A lot of small little steps, but they're all important to me. The most memorable experience was holding auditions for my musical *On-Broadway*, looking at a line of more than

*continued on next page*



500 people (the first day only) stretching around a block waiting to be auditioned... by my very good friend Gianluca Cucchiara and I!

In terms of “success” my short film was watched and praised by the current Pope (who congratulated me with a personal letter), two Italian Prime Ministers, won 25 award both nationally and internationally and eventually allowed me to enter Hollywood. I entered from a small hatch (not even from a door or a window) but it does not really matter, since I’ve gotten in. Now I have to work my way up there and that is another story. So my shortfilm Ignotus can definitely be considered the milestone of my career.

**Your recent film, a science fiction thriller called Atlantis Down, has received rave reviews. What would you like our readers to know about Atlantis Down?**

*Atlantis Down* is a small, ambitious sci-fi thriller that tells the story of the crew of the space shuttle Atlantis in 2025, a close future where the shuttle program has been privatized and the ships work as taxis. Our crew encounters some anomalies in space and get teleported on what looks like earth but is not. Once there each crew member will have to deal with an alien entity who will play with their primal fears and deepest memories in a lethal game.

*Atlantis Down* is not a monster movie or a stereotypical alien-movie; it’s more a psychological thriller where the audience is left to wonder what’s going on until the last five minutes provide an answer, still leaving the audience the opportunity to come up with their own explanation to what has just happened.

**I understand that you co-wrote the script, and served as both director and producer for Atlantis Down. What was your favorite part of working on this project and why?**

To be honest with you, what really fascinates me is the whole creative process. Each job has its own pros and cons, but it’s terrific being able to put together something from scratch and being the one with the vision of the final product. Personally I find directing more interesting and fascinating, but being (or having been) a producer and a writer can always become a useful tool and helps you out understanding the others’ need on a set.

**What advice would you offer to someone who is interested in pursuing a career in the film industry?**

Oh my... this is difficult one. I’d say be ready to bite a lot of dust because you will, think twice before quitting your day job (if you’ve got one) to pursue an ambitious dream; be ready to learn from everyone but at the same time don’t be intimidated by anyone; and last but not least, great preparation is ninety percent of the work on a set, so study, study, study, never be satisfied and always aim for perfection.

**You were raised as a Master Mason in October of 2001. Please tell us your thoughts about Freemasonry and your experience as a Mason during this last decade.**

Our fraternity played a key role in my life, not only because of what it taught me, but also because it helped me find great people with whom I share the same values, and with them I started a new path. During the past ten years I realized every day more and more that as Masons we are presented with a huge opportunity to change the world we’re living in, turning it into a better place. Never before has the need for a ‘bridge’ to other cultures, religions, races been so strong. Religions are ‘suffering’, societies are suffering the passage into a new era, this is the right time for our institution to do a bigger step to awaken people’s consciences and help them to build a better future. I know, it sounds romantic and perhaps it is, but I am a romantic person and I do believe we can do it.

**What are you working on now or what is your next project?**

The next project is a treasure-hunt/adventure film entitled “Code Name Oracle”. It will be

shot in Rome, Morocco and Malta and will feature never before seen locations underground Rome. It’ll have a lot of symbolism, especially masonic. The Brethren around the world will be able to recognize it, the others won’t. I’m currently working on the financial structure of the film and on how to protect the investors’ investment in it.

**Where do you see yourself in ten years?**

Hopefully with a family, with a bigger bank account, and hopefully with my second Oscar... yes, because the first one, my Dad, gave me my life. The second, if I ever get it, will change it forever. ■



*The independent sci-fi thriller, Atlantis Down, was written, produced, and directed by Bro. Max Bartoli.*



## Between Alpha and Omega

*continued from page 9*

individual Grand Visitations that each Lodge of our Grand Jurisdiction will receive.

With respect to Grand Lodge finance, the process of 2012 will be defined by the letter of Code Section 54. The Budget Committee will present a budget to this month's Annual Communication, *and* recommend additions and adjustments at the Semi-Annual Communication in 2012. The goal is a simple one: to make sure that no amount is recommended to this Grand Lodge that isn't examined and justified by the benefit that it will provide to its programs, one budget line at a time. It is the job of this Grand Lodge to provide the resources to maintain the existing Grand Lodge building, to guarantee the continued use of existing Lodge rooms, *and* to acquire and put lodge facilities into use in areas of this city from which Freemasonry has retreated over the past one hundred years. The existing Grand Lodge accounts will have to be managed in a way that provides the resources for such long-term goals. The concept is a simple one: maximizing the yield of our current resources, and not spending them elsewhere.

### New Initiatives

The benefits of planning and management of our resources should be quick to emerge. The fine work begun by the Code Reorganization Committee will culminate in a Special Communication of the Grand Lodge in March, at which proposed changes to the Code will be presented, discussed and voted upon by the Grand Lodge. A new Master's Handbook and pocket guide will be made available to assist the pillar officers of our Lodges. In a Lodge Outreach Program, an Award in the thousands of dollars will be given to the Lodge that most effectively brings its character to bear upon the area surrounding its meeting place, and grows Freemasonry on its "home turf." The Grand Lodge will provide the resources for Lodges to image and preserve their minutes, historical documents and images for future generations.

### Fun

The program for 2012 will be based upon two assumptions: First, that Freemasonry – and the vast majority of its valuable programs – occurs in the *Lodges* of this Grand Jurisdiction. Second, that so long as it does not compete with its constituent Lodges, the Grand Lodge can provide a welcome and needed avenue to encourage brothers of the several Lodges to gather together for social and

ceremonial enjoyment, and (most importantly) to share their ideas and experiences for the benefit of the Craft as a whole. In 2012, there will be many such opportunities.

On January 21, our Masonic First Lady will host an informal luncheon of the Significant Others of the Masters of our Lodges at the Willard Hotel. (Excluded Masons such as myself will retaliate with a simultaneous smoker up the street at Shelley's.) From there, the events will unfold as the year progresses: February's dedication at Mt. Vernon, a (self-funded) tour of Sicily in early April, the Universal Brotherhood Celebration in mid-June, the St. John's Table Lodge later that month, with our Fourth of July celebrations rounding out the spring season. September will start with the Grand Lodge Picnic at Glen Echo on September 8th, at which you will see the rollout of the major charity event of our Masonic Year by the First Lady and RW Brother David Han. RW Brother Foly's Officer training Conference will take place on the 22nd and 23rd of September. October will see the Day of Thanksgiving on the 14th, leading up to our Annual Communication on November 17. The Grand Lodge Banquet on December 7 will provide the finale both to the Grand Lodge Charity Project and to the Masonic Year.

Add four Grand Lodge Communications and the myriad of events and opportunities provided by our Brothers of the York and Scottish Rites and the Shrine, and no Mason will suffer for the lack of fellowship and Masonic cheer in Our Nation's Capital during 2012.

### A Final Thought

Through two hundred years, we have done so much. With energy and vision, we can do so much more. A man can spend a lifetime exploring the wisdom to be found within his Masonic library, but real Masonry doesn't begin until he comes together with his brothers to work in unity and harmony. Our most important goals are not within the purview of any single Mason, and cannot be accomplished in any single year. Only those honors that we earn together - and that belong to all - will permit the Craft to endure. Let our efforts of the coming year be undertaken in that spirit, so that the next hundred years will prove that at this moment between the Alpha and the Omega, we were able to best work, and best agree. ■



# Wm. R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon Lodge No. 7: A 200th Birthday Celebration



**Perry Blatstein**

*Wm. R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon Lodge No. 7*

On Saturday October 15, 2011, the Brethren of William R. Singleton – Hope – Lebanon Lodge No. 7 came together to celebrate a once in a lifetime occasion: the bicentennial of the Lodge’s chartering! What is now known as William R. Singleton – Hope – Lebanon Lodge No. 7 came to existence from the consolidation of a series of Lodges, each with their own storied history. After nine members of Federal Lodge No. 1 received the Lodge’s blessing on October 7, 1811 to form a new Lodge, Lebanon Lodge No. 7 was chartered by the Grand Lodge on October 8, 1811.

To begin the recognition of the momentous occasion of the Lodge’s 200th birthday, six new men were “reborn” on Saturday morning, as Singleton raised them to the sublime degree of Master Mason, previous to which, the Brethren of the Lodge enjoyed a breakfast feast cooked by Brothers, including our own 2011 Worshipful Master, Ryan Work. That evening, the Brethren gathered for a banquet celebration at the Organization of American States building located on the National Mall.

Many Brothers were surprised when they entered the building to find a picture displayed by the OAS appearing to show Brother Theodore Roosevelt, our country’s 26th President, laying a cornerstone for what was then called the “Pan-American Union Building”! Additional research in fact confirms that

the cornerstone was laid May 11, 1908, in the presence of President Roosevelt, Nobel Peace Prize-winner and then-Secretary of State Elihu Root, and Andrew Carnegie. At the ceremony, Secretary of State Root observed that “Temples of religion, of patriotism, of learning, of art, of justice, abound; but

this structure will stand alone, the first of its kind — a temple dedicated to international friendship... May all the Americas come to feel that for them this place is home, for it is theirs, the product of a common effort and the instrument of a common purpose.” Further, the essential purposes of the OAS, as defined by their Charter, include many ideals that touch on Masonic principles, including working for peace and justice, defending human rights, promoting and strengthening democracy, and strengthening collaboration. I do not think we could have found a more excellent and symbolic venue for the evening!

After cocktail hour and as dinner was served, Worshipful Brother Work officially welcomed the evening’s guests, thanking everyone for their atten-

dance, and speaking on the history and future of Singleton Lodge. The keynote speech was presented by Most Worshipful Brother Jesse Villarreal, Grand Master of Masons of the District of Columbia, who spoke about the strengths of the Lodge, and urged continued good Masonic work in the jurisdiction. Throughout the evening, an exceptional presenta-



*Worshipful Master  
Ryan Work*





*The Past Masters of No. 7 assemble for a Bicentennial photo*

tion of artifacts and pictures from Lodge history, prepared by Brother Joe Vidulich, was viewed on a projector screen. After an introduction by WB Work, Brother Vidulich switched to a presentation on the current members and the future of No. 7. Both presentations are available for viewing on the Lodge's website, ([www.SingletonLodge.com](http://www.SingletonLodge.com)). Following the presentations, Brethren and their guests danced the night away, finishing the evening with custom Lodge cigars and custom Lodge desserts from Georgetown Cupcakes. More thanks than can be given are owed to Brother Win Keller and Brother Larry Mosley for their flawless execution of the planning of our special event.

The Brothers of William R. Singleton – Hope – Lebanon Lodge No. 7 are truly grateful to be a part of a Lodge with such rich history, and a Lodge that can celebrate that history while looking

towards the future. Our young line of officers strives to leave a lasting legacy, such as that left for us by generations of our Brethren who may have been present for the centennial celebration. We only hope that the Brethren who attend the tercentennial are as proud to be members



of No. 7 as we are today. Thank you to everyone who helped us celebrate our milestone throughout the year, and we look forward to continued partnerships throughout the jurisdiction.



*The Bicentennial celebration included custom Lodge cigars and custom Lodge desserts from Georgetown Cupcakes*



## Grand Master's Message

*continued from page 5*

longer are we going to find it acceptable to short-change our fraternity's future by drawing water from wells we did not dig and picking fruit from orchards we did not plant and cultivate?

Yes, the Grand Lodge and a good many of the lodges have endowments we tap into to obtain funds for these activities. But costs continue to go up and we cannot continue to do business as we have been. To continue to grow and secure our future, I hope that the lodges will see fit to raise their own fees and dues. I also urge the lodges raise the Grand Lodge assessments to a reasonable amount of at least \$100 per member. Many other Grand Jurisdictions have done this; can we do less? Some may feel this proposal is outrageous; what is outrageous is when a member says that he will not attend a function unless the lodge pays at the least a portion of the fee. I know some lodges that do not pay anything towards the fees of a function, yet they participate, in numbers, in them all.

The third recommendation is that we reinvigorate and re-focus our charitable donations (both individual and lodge donations) to our existing Masonic charitable foundations. The St John's Mite Association assists lodges by providing matching funds

in order to provide relief to worthy individual lodge members that are found to be in need of assistance, financial or medical. The Masonic Foundation of the District of Columbia provides funding to a number of worthy causes on behalf of DC Freemasonry, including educational scholarships to worthy DC high school graduates and grants to charitable organizations proposed and approved by the members of the Foundation. The Masonic and Eastern Star Home Charities, Incorporated (MESH) supports a wide array of charitable pursuits. I urge all of our constituent lodges to select representatives to each of these fine institutions and ensure that their representative attends the meetings and is actively engaged in their good works. These are our main charitable institutions, yet very few of us make donations to them. I ask that you consider them with an annual donation, individually and as a lodge.

Our Grand Lodge's stature is determined by the measure of our members. A tape measure has not been built that can measure us. I am proud to call each of you a friend and bother and know that we can look to the future with confidence and assurance that those that come this way after us will look back with wonder, pride and awe at our accomplishments. ■

## Bob Drechsler

*continued from page 14*

original printing of Anderson's Constitutions, on display in the library.

**Congratulations on your recent receipt of the Scottish Rite – Southern Jurisdiction's Grand Cross, an honor very few have received. What does this recognition mean to you and your continuing labor in quarries of Freemasonry?**

This is very difficult for me to think that I am worthy of such an honor. I have through out my Masonic career, been the guy who helped out behind the scenes. I have tried and continue to try to do those things that take time and in most cases do not stand out from the overall outcome but rather assist in assuring an outstanding result.

**What advice might you give to a young, newly raised Master Mason?**

I feel that a newly raised Master Mason should work in his mother lodge. Get to know the members and

the nature of the lodge. My advice is to resist joining other lodges or Masonic organizations until you have a good knowledge of Masonry in its basic three degrees.

**What advice would you offer to a brother about to be installed in the oriental chair of his lodge?**

Learn all the ritual work, funeral, opening, closing, purging, receiving of Grand Lodge officers. Once you have this mastered, then you can lead the Lodge in its activities without taking time out to learn ritual work. Rising leaders should observe the activities of the lodge as they come up the line and see what you like and what you think can be improved. Make up a detailed schedule of lodge activities for your year in the East and respect the customs and traditions of your lodge in your planning. ■



# Upcoming Grand Lodge Events:



Visit us on the web at:  
[dcgrandlodge.org](http://dcgrandlodge.org)

- **Grand Lodge Membership Banquet**  
Friday, December 9, 2011 – 6:30pm  
Renaissance Washington DC Downtown Hotel
- **GL Volunteers for Wreaths Across America**  
Saturday, December 10, 2011 Arlington National Cemetery  
For information about how to participate, contact Dustin Rawlins at [drawlins126@yahoo.com](mailto:drawlins126@yahoo.com)
- **GL Third Communication and Installation**  
Saturday, December 10, 2011 – 5:00pm  
DC Scottish Rite Center



*Mark Your Calendar!*

# Bicentennial Commemoratives

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Jesse Villarreal, Grand Master    Mansour Hatefi, Grand Secretary

**Wishing You a Joyous Holiday Season  
and a Happy New Year**

*Union Station at holiday time*