

The Voice of Freemasonry

Volume 29, Number 3, 2012

IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL



CENTENARIAN STRIKES GOLD

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

**The Voice of
Freemasonry**

Volume 29, Number 3, 2012

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Joseph S. Crociata, *Grand Master*

MANAGING EDITOR

Mansour Hatefi, PGM,
Grand Secretary

The Voice of Freemasonry is an official publication of the Grand Lodge of Free And Accepted Masons (F.A.A.M.) of the District of Columbia. Unless otherwise noted, articles appearing in this publication express only the private opinion or assertions of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Grand Lodge. The jurisdiction speaks only through the Grand Master, and when attested to as official, in writing, by the Grand Secretary.

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

Articles are subject to editing and, when published, become the property of the Grand Lodge, F.A.A.M., of the District of Columbia. No compensation is allowed for any articles, photographs, or other materials submitted for publication.

Permission to reprint articles will be granted upon written request to the Editor from recognized Masonic publications and others. When reprinted, articles should note: "Reprinted with permission of *The Voice of Freemasonry* in the Nation's Capital, (volume), (number), (year)."

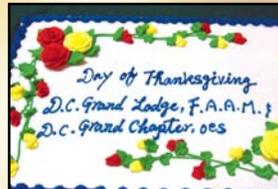
Please direct all correspondence to:

MANAGING EDITOR:
THE VOICE OF FREEMASONRY
5428 MacArthur Blvd., N.W.
Washington, DC 20016-2524

Graphic design:
JP DESIGN :: print | web
jpdesign1@verizon.net

On the Cover

This issue's cover illustration features our Grand Master, MWB Joseph S. Crociata, with WB Leslie J. Munro, who is the current holder of the Grand Lodge's Gold Fidelity Medal. The presentation of the medal took place on Saturday, November 17, 2012 at the Grand Lodge's Annual Communication. The Grand Lodge's Gold Fidelity Medal was established in 1937 and is awarded to a senior Past Master of the entire jurisdiction who resides in the Washington, DC vicinity. The medal is worn by the recipient for life and returned to the Grand Lodge upon the brother's death. For more on Worshipful Brother Munro, please turn to the article in this issue entitled: "DC Mason Achieves Three Significant Milestones".



In This Issue

Click on a title, page number or feature photo to "jump" to that article of your choice. Return to this page by clicking on a button located on each page. ▶

Grand Master's Message: <i>Work Left Upon the Trestleboard</i>	3
Combined Federal Campaign	6
From the Grand Secretary: <i>Freemasonry and Society</i>	7
In Search for a Deeper Meaning in Masonry	9
Thanksgiving and Remembrance	11
Visions, Dreams, and Reality	14
Thank You, Freemasonry	16
2012 Recipients of the Valentine Reintzel Medal for Meritorious Service	18
D.C. Mason Achieves Three Significant Milestones	21
A New Face in the Grand Line: Michael D. Nicholas, Sr. Elected Junior Grand Steward for 2013	22
Potomac Lodge Holds a Low Vale Lodge	23
St. John's Lodge Raises \$11,000 to Benefit Almas Transportation Fund	26
Happy Holidays	28

Art and Photo Credits: Photographs or images appearing in this issue, unless otherwise indicated, are the work of the official Grand Lodge Photographers, WB Jose Boggio and WB Bert Levy; Masterpiece Studios of Olney, Maryland; the contributor or subject of the respective article; or obtained from open sources.



Grand Master's Message

Work Left Upon the Trestleboard



As December approaches, we come upon the time of year that a Grand Master is expected to provide a closing message to the Craft that acknowledges their efforts, and gives an accounting of all of the Grand Lodge's successes of the year then ending. At the outset, I will take this opportunity to extol the efforts of the Grand Lodge Officers who have attended all of the Grand Visitations and provided the "horsepower" to bring success to the activities of the Grand Lodge. I also take the opportunity to acknowledge the hard work and imagination of the 2012 Masters and their officer corps: Freemasonry is practiced within our Lodges, and the Craft only grows and prospers through their efforts. Each of the Lodges has been pursuing our Noble Art in keeping with its own character, and the members of the Craft are to be congratulated for their efforts, and the benefits of their diligence.

And what Masons they are! The West Gates of our Lodges have opened to a new generation of brothers whose increase in numbers is exceeded only by their growth in diversity. They burn with a white-hot passion to pursue the search for Wisdom, Strength and Beauty with an intensity that older brothers wistfully recall from our own times as newly-made Masons.

Notwithstanding the Craft's successes, I would like to avoid recounting the programs and events of this year. (I invite you to review the Proceedings of our Annual Communication once they become available, and assure you that a full accounting of the year's Grand Lodge activities may be found in my formal report.) Instead, this final message will be devoted to an ongoing issue that has not been solved this

year, and remains for the designs and craftsmanship of those who will follow.

"The Generational Sandwich"

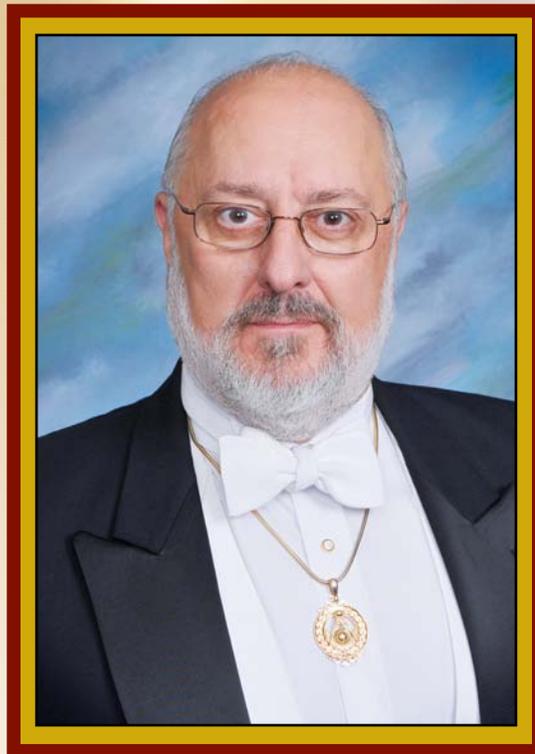
Our Lodges have been invaded. Those of us who are veteran Masons, gray and thinning of hair and expansive of girth, can easily recognize the invading forces. They are young, they are energetic and they are crusty traditionalists. They are mostly brothers in their 20's and early 30's, who are to a great extent assuming the leadership of our Lodges. But the "traditions" to which they hold fast do not arise from the experience of American Masonry of the first half of the last century, when the performance of ritual and the business operations of the Lodge were sufficient to fill our Lodges with Master Masons. The New Mason looks elsewhere for Freemasonry's identity.

He usually begins to develop his appreciation for Masonic tradition before he signs his petition for the degrees. His initial understanding of

the history and traditions of the Craft springs from the research he performed before making the decision to approach us. While it's true that much of that research is conducted via the Internet, I find that most often his efforts range far beyond electronic research before he approaches the West Gate.

From Wilmshurst to Coil and from Haywood to Newton, the New Masons take the time and interest to read from the books of the Craft's historians and philosophers. And therein lies the rub. Most of the authors and sources from which our youngest Entered Apprentices receive their first "instruction" are our elders, by multiple generations. Moreover,

continued on next page



**Most Worshipful Brother
Joseph S. Crociata**



many of the most influential of them were either practitioners of Continental Masonry, or were deeply influenced by European Masonic culture and practice.

In effect, circumstances have created what I will call a “generational sandwich,” in which the youngest members of our Fraternity arrive with two, conflicting influences. As to the first influence, the New Masons remain junior to us – seeking to apply the culture of their generation to a fraternity that is already vibrant and active. As to the second, the New Masons are our seniors – seeking to remind us of the traditions from which we spring, and bring existing Masonic practice more in line with the traditions that were brought to these shores 250 years ago or longer.

As to the first, they bring expectations of communications that are near instantaneous. Having little experience of life without the Internet, the 20th Century paradigms of electronic communication (in which broadcasters put forth information and entertainment for us to absorb as passive “couch potatoes”) must seem quaint to them. More senior brothers like myself probably share the same feeling when we see pictures of families gathered around the radio in the 1940's. For the new Mason, mass electronic communication is an active experience, in which his reaction to what he sees is as important a part of the process as the broadcast of the originator. Computers come with keyboards for a reason, and our younger Masonic brothers have known how to use them for as long as they can recall.

There are both benefits and dangers from this part of the “sandwich.” We are enjoying new developments in organizational efficiencies: “E-vites” remind us of approaching meetings and our responses help our Brother Stewards order and prepare the correct amount of food. Lodge minutes are more easily created and maintained, and any errors or omissions more easily corrected by our Brother Secretaries.

Upon the death of a Brother or the distress of his widow, listserv e-mails alert the entire active membership of the Lodge, so that they can fulfill their obligations to care for those in need.

On the other hand, there are problems. On occasion, Lodge members can be seen texting each other or persons outside the Lodge during meetings. Apart from showing a lack of respect for the Master and his role, the texting brothers are sacrificing much of the benefit of the Lodge experience for the privilege of their electronic whispers. Experience teaches that much of the value of what we do arises from the creation of a separation from the world.

The time and cadence of our opening ritual is an important part of creating a transition from the profane world to the sacred space of the Lodge. Indeed, in recent years many Lodges have preceded the opening with moments of meditation, music or silence to emphasize that transition. “Lodge texters” sacrifice that separation from the outside world.

They also lose the benefits of Unity. As a man develops as a Mason, he gains a sense of the Lodge as a whole. In a successful Lodge, the interactions of the brothers and the conduct of the officers become as harmonious as the simultaneous

melodies traced by individual members of an orchestra. While many of the instruments may play passages that are melodious on their own, when joined together with the other orchestra members, great symphonies can be the result. This is similar to the “unity” we seek in our Lodges. When two of the brothers withdraw from that unity to engage in texted “asides,” they not only lose all sense of unity for themselves, but they reduce the Lodge's collective energies in like measure.

And (lest you think I am singling out our younger Masons for criticism) anyone who has heard a couple of elder Past Masters chattering away in stage whispers during a Lodge's opening or closing knows that such disruptions don't require the use of a cell

In a successful Lodge,
the interactions of
the brothers and the
conduct of the officers
become as harmonious
as the simultaneous
melodies traced by
individual members of
an orchestra.



phone. Our younger Masons' distress with those whose appreciation and awe of the sacred space of the Lodge has waned over the years demonstrates the other influence making up the "generational sandwich." The philosophical or "esoteric" side of Masonry served only a part of the fraternal experience to recent generations of Masons in this country. Not so with the New Masons. I have observed that the new generations taking charge of our Lodges require and demand consistent and direct demonstration of the application of Masonry to a life well lived. To them, discovering and living a worthy "Masonic life" is the point of what we do, and they look to the originators and early history of the Craft for guidance as to how that life is to be found, and where.

I saw something recently online that illustrates the tensions between the electronic present and the philosophical past that pull at our younger Masons. As we all know, the "secrecy" we attach to our ritual is a function of respect for the experience it has held for all of us. We maintain the privacy of our ritual, not just to show fidelity to our brothers and respect for our obligations, but also to preserve the initiatory experience for those who will follow. Much of the power of our ceremonies comes

from the experience of receiving them directly from the hands of our brothers, without foreknowledge of what is to come. One would expect, then, that the New Mason would find that absolute privacy as to the initiatory experience is of paramount importance.

While online, I found some material posted by members of a young "traditional" lodge (self-styled) who have adopted the chamber of reflection as a part of their degree work, in order to emphasize the separation between the lodge room and the outside world. Notwithstanding their adoption of that ceremony (and their argument for its historical authentic-

ity), they published pictures of the chamber, for all prospective brothers to review. Therein lies the tension: while tradition drives them to seek that which is basic to the Lodge experience of the 1700's and 1800's, their 21st Century background compels them to communicate their traditions in a manner that risks diluting the fraternal experience for those who will follow.

Somehow, the Craft will need to find a voice that bridges the conflict between culture and history, and serves both the need for fulfillment of our current members and the need to preserve the gift of Freemasonry for generations to come. We will need to come to general agreement on how this is to be done. And we need to come to that agreement without regard to whether we were born in 1951, or 1991.

Fodder for the Trestleboard

Our current members are not only from different generations, but the vast majority of them come from separated generations. During my travels to other Grand Jurisdictions, I hear the same thing: we have plenty of Masons who are 55 and older, and a growing number of Masons (and Lodge officers) who are 35 and younger. There

are only a spare number of brothers between these two groups. I acknowledge that all of the observations in this article are made from the perspective of a 60 year old Mason. It's the only perspective I have, and I apologize for any unintended "us versus them" tone that may have resulted.

I also acknowledge that many of the "New Masons" will find my observations to be incomplete, apocryphal, or – to use a recently re-popularized political phrase – astounding malarkey. I urge that you "New Masons" respond within your Lodges with your own observations, and that you take the time and trouble to communicate them to those on the other side

Somehow, the Craft will need to find a voice that bridges the conflict between culture and history, and serves both the need for fulfillment of our current members and the need to preserve the gift of Freemasonry for generations to come.

continued on next page



of the “generational divide” as brothers, and not as sons or nephews. In the outside world we’re taught to treat our elders with deference. I can understand choosing to avoid the frustration of trying to communicate to the “Network TV minds” of Past Masters like myself in Internet-based language. But, given our current demographic, you do not have the luxury of isolating the older members or disengaging from them. You will need all of their work, and some of their wisdom. Make them hear you and engage in a joint process of moving your Lodge forward to new levels of achievement.

To my older brothers of so many years, I call upon you to avoid the temptation to withdraw into an ever-smaller group of “old timers.” I often joke about getting old enough to transition from “friends” to “cronies.” But, if you start sitting among the same group of brothers each time you go to Lodge, it’s time for a change. Engage the “New Masons” in your Lodge, and make the effort to convince them you are interested in what they think about Masonry, the Lodge, and the future of both. Take the time to know them, their families, their work, and the pressures that all of these bring to bear against their efforts to set aside time for Freemasonry. Most of all, recognize that you have much to learn from them. Treat them as brothers, and not as sons or nephews. They deserve nothing less, and (who knows) the experience may just be helpful in keeping you a bit younger than your years might otherwise dictate.

If all of you exert your influence upon the Craft in such a cooperative spirit of engagement, the proper designs will be inscribed upon the trestleboard by

our future Masters and Grand Masters, and brotherly love, relief and truth will prevail for generations to come.

Epilogue

Some might find these suggestions for the Trestleboard to be a bit thin for a departing Grand Master – after all, don’t we look to the Grand Oriental Chair as the primary font of Wisdom in the Grand Jurisdiction? I cannot speak for others, but I have found that any “wisdom” gained from the privilege of serving as your Grand Master has taught me how much more I need to learn about this Noble Art we call Masonry. Looking forward to passing the gavel along to my good friend, Brother and able “executive officer” of this year, RW Brother Teko Foly, I am filled with a sense of peace and satisfaction. Because although the problems faced by the Fraternity change from year to year, the fidelity of our brothers in meeting them is as constant as the movements of that celestial orb that provides a primary metaphor for Freemasonry, for the Lodge, and for life itself.

I thank you all for the gift of this experience, for the triumphs of your achievements, and for your generous tolerance of my mistakes. I am especially grateful for the indulgence and assistance of our “First Lady” Susan, whose sense of what is just and right has provided me the guidance of a different kind of compass, without which I could not have completed my service. As I return to my place among the brethren, I place my confidence in the glorious future of our Craft, and in all of you to lead us there. ■

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.



From the Grand Secretary

Freemasonry and Society

Public discussion of the influence of Freemasonry on society has persisted since the early 18th century. Moreover increasing attention is now being focused on the role that Freemasonry may play in world as mankind searches for peace, unity, and the social and moral advancement of mankind.

Scholars worldwide are studying the impact of Freemasonry on society. In response to the widening of interest in our institution, once a presumed bastion of secrecy, Masonic leaders are striving to inform the public of our institution, hoping that by so doing to change imperfect perceptions of the founding principles and current practices of the Craft.

Tradition-minded Masons have agonized over these developments. Many have declared that Freemasonry has no role other than to maintain its founding trust and to exert a benevolent influence over its members.

Some critics of the trends maintain that while Freemasonry may gain some public plaudits for its charitable and other philanthropic works in the community, they also aver that the most important image we can project is the one that individual Masons personally portray in public — that of being proud of their Masonic membership.

Admittedly, while we must convince ourselves that we are a force for good, we must be also seen to be so. This we can do successfully without compromising the Order's cardinal principles or jeopardizing its ancient mysteries. As Freemasons, we can and we must continuously accentuate the positive, always keeping in mind that membership in our prestigious Order is a privilege.

Having entered the second decade of a new millennium we must be steadfast in our adherence to our aims and principles. Let us never attempt to obtain pub-

lic acceptance through the promotion or pursuit of non-Masonic activities which can only, in the long term, prove our undoing. We must maintain our established standards while safeguarding our dignity. There can be no compromise in terms of quality with any facet of our institution. Let us hold firm to the symbolism of the Square and Compasses and let them



Mansour Hatefi, PGM
Grand Secretary

continue be the measure of thoughts and actions that establish the position of our fraternity in the societies of this world.

It cannot be denied that the universality of Freemasonry has had a profound influence on the advancement of life throughout the world. Moreover, in addressing socio-political issues as they evolve, Freemasonry is given an opportunity to participate in the search for appropriate solutions to the many problems facing civilization. It is essential that Masons cooperate by using our beliefs to enhance brotherhood in this turbulent world.

Freemasonry offers a plan of life-long development based on strong principles and moral values that perfect personal character and personality. The Freemason demonstrates his commit-

ment to these purposes by practicing tolerance, charity, and compassion, respecting the opinion of others and by attending to need as it evolves.

Although Freemasonry's stated goal is the improvement of the individual man, there is no doubt that through this emphasis on the advancement of the individual, society as a whole has benefitted. Whether this is due to the improvement of the individuals who take part in society, or by the broad application of Masonic principles on the evolution of institutions and the social order, is up for debate.

Traditional View:
We must be steadfast
in our adherence to
our aims and principles
and never attempt
to obtain public
acceptance through
the promotion or
pursuit of non-Masonic
activities which can
only, in the long term,
prove our undoing.

continued on next page



Freemasonry is a fraternal organization that simply seeks to elevate the character of men so that they may, in turn, improve the society around them. Our vision is simply to have Freemasonry recognized within the community as an organization of high moral and social standards, one that benefits both its members and the greater community at large.

It must be clearly understood by every member of the Craft that membership does not in any way exempt him from meeting his responsibilities to the society in which he lives. Every new Initiate is charged to be exemplary in the discharge of his civil duties, which extend throughout his private, public, business or professional life.

Freemasonry demands that members show a respect for the laws of the country in which they work and live. The principles of Freemasonry do not in any way conflict with the duties that they owe to the nations in which they live. There is and should be no conflict of interest between a Freemason's obligation and his public duty.

Our actions should be guided by spiritual values which are the *raison d'être* of Freemasonry. It was spiritual values which determined the significance of the work done by our forefathers. Driven by faith, they built their inner temples according to our philosophy and guided by spirituality went on to build better worlds of freedom and justice, all the while, following the example of Masons who fought, without self-interest, for the values and causes of free men everywhere. The desire for freedom, a universal and eternal cause, has no bounds, and it remains symbolized today by brothers around the world.

New interests create intense feelings and new directions, thereby offering our lodges wider boundaries of challenge and service. Satisfaction of these challenges provides Freemasonry new avenues of opportunity to continue our work in the interest of the betterment of society. The foundations laid and the principles upheld by our founders are guiding this evolution and controlling the nature and the rate of change. This will serve

us well for the future and ensure that we maintain the principles of our organization, while at the same time being relevant in society today.

Technological advances are a certainty for the future. It can be argued that, in the last decade alone, we have progressed farther and faster technologically than we have in the sum of the two centuries. The future is inevitable; it's coming whether or not we are ready, so we should prepare to address its challenges before they become overwhelming.

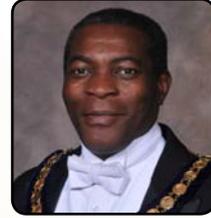
With the gradual opening of Freemasonry to the public, and with it, the spotlight on the myriad of virtuous and praiseworthy activities, Freemasonry represents changes in public perceptions of the Craft. Its influence on society is becoming more and more apparent to the public, which is, by virtue of the new openness of the Craft, now connecting Masonic history with the acceptable maturing of society generally.

We have confidence in the future and we remain determined to make Freemasonry a more and more potent influence for good in our national life. In fact we believe that the Craft, growing in numbers from a world-wide perspective, is now on the cusp of new greatness. The challenge to "do good unto all" persists; our response, without equivocation, must be positive. ■

The Progressive View:
Freemasonry continues to evolve in a steady but purposeful manner. The foundations laid and the principles upheld by our founders are guiding this evolution and controlling the nature and the rate of change. This will serve us well for the future and ensure that we maintain the principles of our organization, while at the same time being relevant in society today.



In Search for a Deeper Meaning in Masonry



Teko A. Foly
Deputy Grand Master

In 2011, the Grand Lodge of Washington DC celebrated 200 years of its existence. This auspicious occasion does suggest that a level of maturity has been reached which necessarily gives a basis to show a past full of events, that the typical 24 year old young Mason could refer to as distant or ancient. The Grand Lodge has grown by leaps and bounds to get to reach the milestone recently celebrated. We have garnered successes that can make us proud, but we could also, if we look very carefully, find some part of our past that is not as perfect as we would like it to be. One thing for sure is that our past, no matter how, should always serve as lessons and building blocks for a better future. Focusing on today, one can with pleasure and admiration, observe the great work and leadership of our Most Worshipful Grand Master, Joseph S. Crociata in charting a course for the next century of our Grand Lodge.

Recently, I have taken the time to collect my own thoughts following our 2012 leadership conference, which brought together more than 90 of our future and present leaders, to reflect upon what's next for Masonry in the District of Columbia. Many aspects of how the latest of this annual two-day event was received tend to confirm for me several suspicions I have concerning where we are and where we are going as a fraternity. What has retained my attention is the fact that our current lodge membership and future leaders are approaching Masonry with a slightly different magnifying glass, in trying to scrutinize the content of what Masonry has to offer. There have been times, in the not so distant past, when one would almost think words like spirituality, and mysticism ought to be considered as taboo and classified with subjects like religion and politics as unwanted in our deliberations. I am very encouraged these days to see that these subjects are not so repulsive anymore. I am not suggesting in any way that we should stop everything we do or change our ways altogether. As a matter of fact, it's my view that if the way you practice and relate to Masonry works for you, you should not change it, as practicing Masonry is a personal journey.

What excites my attention is that the renewal of Masonry here and elsewhere in the world is experiencing growth with younger members. The average age of membership is dropping rapidly. This change brings new challenges and opportunities for the Craft to stay relevant in this day and age. The newer member seems to want a deeper connection with the heart and soul of Masonry. Business as usual does not cut it anymore and the leaders of today's Masonry are brought to the realization that more thought and work need to be put

into coming up with programming that satisfies all. It is a credit of our Noble Craft that we can push harder and make necessary efforts to adapt to changing realities.

How did we get to the point today where humanity, and especially the young and upcoming generation, is in need of seeking a deeper meaning to life through psychological and esoteric studies? Astrology, one of the seven liberal arts and sciences which are recommended to our consideration in one of our Masonic degrees, may offer some explanation.

As I look into my own quest for inspiration, I looked up what it means for humanity to be entering "The Age of Aquarius". This question fits rather well with the period we have been going through since the advent of the year 2000 through to the present year, 2012 – which is being proclaimed in some quarters as the last. Feelings of imminent upheaval are attributed partly to the first stirrings of this new Age, as we enter it.

First of all, we should be reminded that the theory of Ages is based on a concept initially put forward by Plato. The theory states that the passage of time is cyclical and follows a succession of 'great years', each lasting 25,920 years, this being the length of time that the vernal point takes to travel through the twelve constellations of the sidereal zodiac. According to this principle, which draws on both astronomy and astrology, an Age corresponds to the length of time that this same point takes to travel through a constellation, this being 25,920 divided by 12 - or 2,160 years. It should nonetheless be made clear that this length of time is an average, because the constellations do not all extend equally across the sky.

Year one of our current calendar denotes the beginning of the Age of Pisces. The fact remains that, if we accept an Age as lasting on average 2,160 years, it means humanity would currently be at the end of the Age of Pisces. If we go by the oldest texts written on the theory of the Ages, then each of them has exercised a particular influence on humanity. Thus the Age of Pisces, saw a moving from a monotheism based on the veneration of a God external to humankind, to a monotheism oriented towards the God that is to be found inside everyone. Hence the expression: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you."

The Age of Pisces was preceded by the Age of Aries, which was marked by the gradual moving from polytheism to monotheism. As you know, it was in Egypt, the

continued on next page



great Pharaoh Ikhnoton, who championed this conversion among the people through the worship of Aton. The Tradition relates that it was in this same period that Moses left the land of the Pharaohs and returned to Canaan. During this exodus, which lasted forty years, he too set about converting the Hebrews to a belief in a single God, that he named Yahweh. He also received the Tables of the Law - the Ten Commandments - on Mount Sinai.

The Age of Aries was preceded by the Age of Taurus, with which we associate the flourishing of the Babylonian civilization. The general view is that it was during this Age that humankind moved from a pretty much archaic animism to a relatively structured polytheism. Having worshipped the forces of nature for a long time, most often out of fear, humankind came to venerate divinities that were likely to come up to its expectations.

The Age of Taurus was preceded by the Age of Gemini. Esoteric literature says that it was this Age that saw the appearance of writing, and of civilization. In other words, it was during this Age that the human being emerged permanently from animalism, and became aware of its humanity. In mystical terms, we may say that starting from this new cycle, the human being's individual soul became truly freed from the universal Soul, in order to fulfill its spiritual evolution.

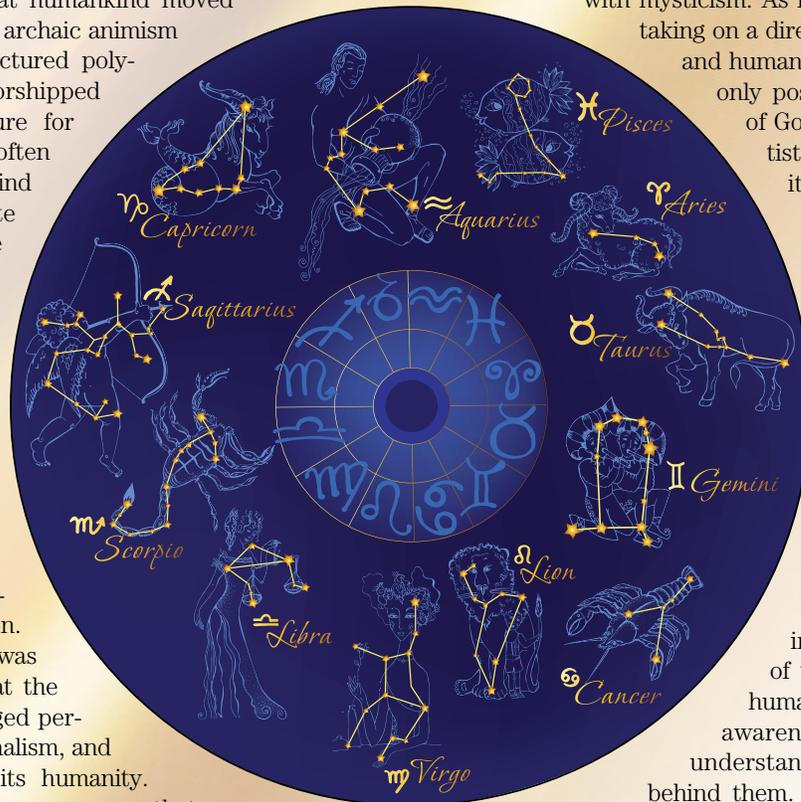
The Age of Gemini was preceded by the Age of Cancer, which takes us back to around 9,000 BCE. It was during this Age that the transition from prehistory to history occurred. You will note that the beginning of this Age coincides with the supposed disappearance of the continent Atlantis, which some mystics equate to the Great Flood described in the Bible. If we go by the Judeo-Christian Tradition, this Flood denoted the re-starting of civilization, after humanity had practically disappeared from Earth's surface.

The different influences mentioned in connection with the Ages of Cancer, Gemini, Taurus, Aries, and Pisces,

have to do with the transformation that gradually took place in humanity's consciousness, particularly in its ways of dealing with the mystery that it has always been confronted with, and which still confronts us, which is: Why do we live on Earth? As just shown, this lengthy quest, indeed - gave rise to civilization itself, and then saw the emergence of animism, polytheism and monotheism.

While the Age of Pisces has seen the development of a science that has become more and more materialistic, which has been placed at the service of private and corporate interests, the Age of Aquarius will reconnect with mysticism. As it does this, it will be taking on a direction that is spiritual and humanistic. Science will not only postulate the existence of God, which some scientists are doing already; it will also acknowledge - as something that is beyond question - the presence in humankind of a soul, which it will consider to be the spiritual energy that makes each one of us a living, conscious being. From that point on, science will be acknowledging the true extent of the universe and the human being, with a full awareness and complete understanding of what lies behind them. In this way, science and mysticism will have become one and the same in explaining the "how" of existence, and also the "why."

I also think that one of the great changes to be produced by the Age of Aquarius within human beings will be a widespread awakening to the very purpose of life. To be more specific, human beings will come to understand that we are on Earth to spiritually evolve: that is, to become aware of, and to express, the noblest virtues that are accredited to the most divine part of the human soul. Imagine what the world will be like, when each person strives to display tolerance, integrity, generosity, non-violence, and so on. The paradise that many religions refer to will no longer be something to be sought in the beyond: it will be on the way to becoming a reality here, in the form of what many philosophers have called the "ideal society." ■



The Astrological Zodiac



Thanksgiving and Remembrance

What follows is an address delivered by RWB Jeffrey D. Russell, Junior Grand Warden, at the annual observance of Masonic Day of Thanksgiving and Remembrance, which took place on October 14th, 2012, at All Souls' Church, Unitarian, in Washington, DC.



Jeffrey D. Russell
Junior Grand Warden

Thanksgiving and Remembrance are two very good reasons why we have come together in brotherhood this afternoon. So when I was asked to give this speech, I reflected and grappled with what Thanksgiving and Remembrance have to do with each other. Does one idea strengthen the other? Perhaps. Yet, each seems to be a distinct and separate concept on its own. What is the common bond between them? I thought about how these two themes can be related to each other, if at all. Thanksgiving and Remembrance – one concept is to give gratitude and appreciate the good things that we have in our lives and the other is to honor and commemorate those that have forged a path before us. We can certainly have one without the other. But together? As I explored and prepared for today, I discovered a somewhat surprising and inspirational relationship between the two. Thanksgiving and Remembrance on their own are meaningful but when allied, I posit that these two lofty concepts can indeed have the power to not only lift our spirits and change lives but make the world a better place to live for us and future generations.

Let me begin with Thanksgiving. Giving thanks simply put means gratitude. We may give thanks, we may say thank you, we may pray, but this seems like a fairly passive concept to me. There's really no action or big effort involved, but gratitude is a feeling that we seem to naturally have and also possess a strong desire to express it. This for the most part is human nature and seems to be universal throughout the world. Giving thanks is a very personal and individual experience. What I may be thankful for, may not be what you're thankful for. Each one of us has our own unique blessings and life experiences for which we want to give thanks.

Feeling gratitude
and not expressing
it is like wrapping
a present and then
not giving it.

So how does one give thanks? Do we simply say thank you or pray to God thanking Him? What is the pay-off of our giving thanks other than perhaps being polite like our parents taught us? And to whom should we give thanks? Well that one is a "gimme," I'll assume many, if not most of you here today on some level show appreciation and give thanks to God for the good things that happens in our lives. Does God really need us to give thanks to him or is it meant to help us in some way feel better about ourselves. What do we give up? What's the hard work in giving thanks? What is the

action? What do we sacrifice for this gratitude? Thanksgiving seems like a pretty easy thing to do.

There was a time when it wasn't that easy, per se, and people truly did sacrifice something when giving thanks. Back in the biblical days of King Solomon's Temple, one of the earlier sacrifices was called a Thanksgiving Offering. Interestingly enough this offering was not mandatory, but was a voluntary sacrifice and was performed specifically when

someone escaped from an extremely dangerous situation; such as crossing a desert or an ocean or recovered from a serious illness or survived a life threatening situation like child birth. In a nutshell it was done when someone experienced a personal miracle. Keep in mind that there was a real financial cost to this offering. The person had to buy or give one of their own expensive animals as the Thanksgiving sacrifice. It consisted of an entire cow or sheep or goat, plus forty loaves of four different kinds of bread. And how this sacrifice was used was a bit different than the others of the time. After ten percent was first given over to the priests, the rest of the food had to be consumed in one day and night as opposed to over a longer period of time, as were other Temple offerings. So how did one person eat all that? He couldn't do it alone, but it had to be done. The custom was to invite your friends and

continued on next page



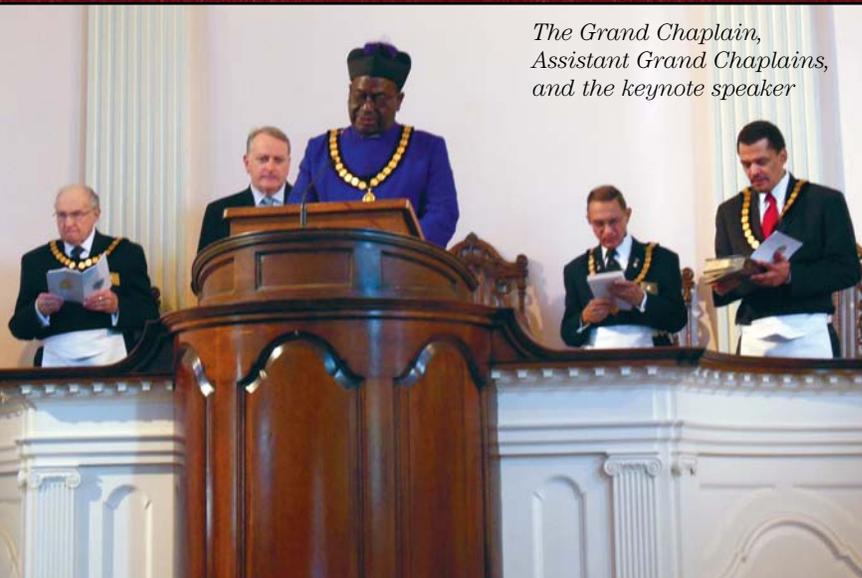
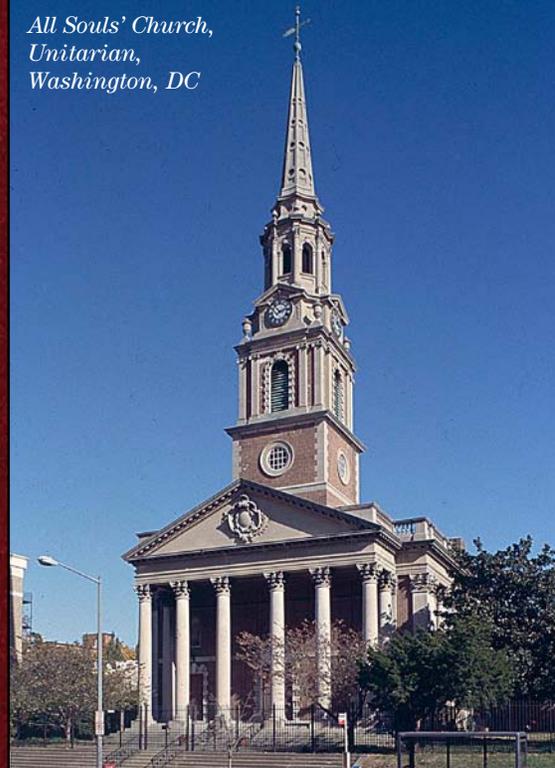
Scenes from the 2012 Masonic Day of Thanksgiving and Remembrance

(photographs by MWB Robert H. Starr)



The congregation sings a hymn

All Souls' Church,
Unitarian,
Washington, DC



The Grand Chaplain,
Assistant Grand Chaplains,
and the keynote speaker



The keynote speaker,
RWB Jeffrey D. Russell



The cake



First Lady Susan
Brackshaw and
the Grand Master,
with OES' Worthy
Grand Matron
and Worthy
Grand Patron

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



family and — have a big party. Your personal thanksgiving offering to God just became an epic block party. Of course guests would ask what happened to you and this was now an opportune time to re-tell the story of your personal miracle over and over and over, thus in effect spreading the word of God to others. This was the communal aspect to a very personal experience, as all those present would hear your moving, firsthand account of God's divine benevolence. Now that is not a very passive Thanksgiving, but in fact a quite action-packed event.

Giving thanks is a timeless concept. All cultures and religions have a concept of Thanksgiving and giving thanks can open one's heart to the Supreme Being. We've discussed the power of giving thanks to God, although today we do it through prayer and meditation, rather than a sacrificial offering. But it is also true that we give thanks to our fellow man as well — and that has another kind of power. When we do that, there is a special relationship or bond that is established between the person that does something for someone else and the person that reciprocates with a hearty and warm thank you. This human connection and experience has a tendency to perpetuate itself over and over. One good deed leads to another. Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and then not giving it. Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others virtues. The American philosopher and psychologist, William James, said the "The deepest craving of human nature is the need to be appreciated."

I think that being appreciative is a good thing and is one of the tools that helps us keep our moral compass heading in the right direction in this world. Through the act of giving thanks we continue the circle of life. We know as Freemasons that our deeds are measured by the positive effect we have on the world. In a way, our recognition and our acknowledgment of when something good happens to us shows that we are on the right path. It shows our humanity and it shows that we are not selfish. It shows that we have a deep appreciation of the bountiful world of blessings and of the everyday miracles. When we recognize the good works of mankind, we are recognizing God's hand as well. And that is the key. It's as if the act of giving thanks itself, advances man's good deed or God's small miracle to an even higher level. The bottom line is that there is no room for greed or selfishness in someone that is grateful. Being thankful prevents us from taking people and their favors for granted. That's why when the ancient Israelites made their Thanksgiving Sacrifice, it was a shared communal experience and men worked hand and hand with God to help shed his light even further. I daresay that being thankful is a part of

fulfilling our partnership with God to do His will and His work — and in doing His work we ultimately make the world a better place for all mankind.

As Masons, we are steeped in a proud history and an undying belief that we should recognize, appreciate, and strive for righteousness in the world today, especially for those that can no longer speak for themselves. Through Remembrance, we continue to highlight and build on the positive works of those who are no longer here and able to manifest a positive force for themselves. When we remember and honor the outstanding works of the good brothers and fellows who came this way before us, we are renewing and maintaining our memory, and keeping their contributions alive in us. This act of Remembrance hopefully inspires us — and perhaps even motivates us — to make our positive mark on this world. That is how we continue the cycle of life from generation to generation. This can be extremely powerful as our work in this world is magnified and imbued with the work of those that we keep alive in our memories. The Argentinean Poet, Antonio Porchia writes, "One lives in the hope of becoming a memory."

It is through this perpetual generational chain of unbroken gratitude and appreciation that the world will ultimately become a better place. As Freemasons it is incumbent upon us to not only make our life's story a good one through faith, hope and charity but also through remembrance and appreciation for those that helped paved the way for us. It is up to us to keep their legacies alive so their time with us was not for naught. We all want to believe we can make a positive contribution in this world. Sometimes it is difficult to think that we can make a difference — but if we make it a habit to be thankful, then that gratitude will be transformed into good works.

Then we spread that appreciation throughout the community for all to hear, just like the Israelites of old did. I'm confident that each one of us can and should be at peace with ourselves that we indeed did live a life of values.

I'll conclude with a story about the "Dash". A man stood at a funeral of his friend and he referred to the dates on the headstone, the date and year of his birth and the date and year of his death; from the beginning to the end. He then said, "But what truly matters in a person's life is the dash between those years. That little line is what represents the life he lived." And that is why I hope that we can all stand here this evening before the memory of our brothers and those that have served and say with confidence that we have lived up to their standards. That's a very big part of being a Mason. I ask you, how will your dash be remembered? Thank you. ■



Visions, Dreams, and Reality



Stewart W. Miner
Grand Secretary Emeritus

Having entered the approach to the sunset slopes of life, my thoughts frequently focus on that passage of scripture wherein it is suggested that our children will prophesy; that our young men will see visions; and that our old men will dream dreams (Acts 2:17). While I do not contest the general applicability of those observations, I nevertheless hold that we who are of advanced age can, even as we dream of the past, share the enthusiasm of youth for what is yet to be. In doing so it is imperative that our visions and dreams be properly tempered by adequate measures of reality.

Over the course of my retirement years my thoughts have increasingly focused on the impact of Freemasonry upon my life. That the fortunes of the Craft captivated my attention, decade by decade, cannot be denied. Initiation, for example, was for me a cornerstone experience; a watershed divide; a turning point in my evolving perspective of being and purpose. It gave me a new perspective, an enhanced appreciation of obligation to friends, neighbors, and to brothers in the fraternity. I knocked and the door of opportunity, service, and personal enrichment was opened. Thanks be to God.

In the years following my initiation I was afforded, as are all who willingly accept Masonic obligation, endless opportunities for self improvement. In consequence of that experience it became possible for me to preach and to teach, through the magic of the

written and spoken word, the worth of the tenets of Freemasonry. In that effort, I think I may have found a fraternal “fountain of youth,” one in which I have been able to maintain my enthusiasm for the many opportunities afforded by service in and for our institution. In that effort I have been truly blessed.

Over the course of my retirement years my thoughts have increasingly focused on the impact of Freemasonry upon my life. That the fortunes of the Craft captivated my attention, decade by decade, cannot be denied.

Over the recent past, while contemplating my Masonic experiences, I became increasingly desirous of preserving and sharing the fruits of my labors. Central to the satisfaction of that objective was my additional concern for the strengthening and the perpetuation of my work in those Masonic quarries within which I labored. After consideration of my objectives and means, I decided to preserve and share my work in digital format. That chore is now complete and the resultant CD is ready for distribution.

The central item on this CD is entitled “Talks and Thoughts.” In it some 200 manuscripts, subdivided primarily to reflect where they were first presented rather than by content. Hence there are presentations that focus primarily on the Symbolic Lodge, the Royal Arch Chapter, the Knights Templar, the Scottish Rite, as well as the

appendant Masonic Orders. These presentations reflect both my pervasive interests and those of the organizations in which they were presented. In sum, they testify to my concern for the well-being of the totality of a movement that is world-wide in scope.



I have included on this CD some work that I previously shared with my brethren in other media. The content of essays previously presented in the booklet entitled *“Let Your Work Become Your Mark,”* for example, are included here. So too is a series of essays on the exploits of the Antient Templars, originally prepared for the membership of Arlington Commandery. It is included on this CD because the *“Templar Tribune,”* in which they once appeared, is now out of print.

I have personal interest in the presentations included under the heading “Landmark Orations.” Therein are the texts of addresses I made when installed as Master of my lodge, as Grand Master, and as Grand High Priest. Also included in this segment of the CD are presentations dealing with the history of the

Grand Secretaries Conference, remarks offered at the time of my retirement as Grand Secretary; the oration I offered at the dedication of the newly constructed Masonic Home in Richmond; the Masonic Day of Thanksgiving and Remembrance address presented during the Bicentennial Year of the Grand Lodge; and other addresses of like import.

I would suggest to those who may choose to open this CD first look at my endnote comments (see below). Doing so will reveal my personal conviction that this CD is less about what I may have done for the Craft, but rather what the Craft has done for me. It will also reveal my prayer that the contents of this CD will, in some small way, be of use to those who seek perfection through Masonry. To those who do, I offer a full measure of success. ■

ENDNOTE from “Selected Talks and Thoughts on Freemasonry” by MWB Stewart W. Miner:

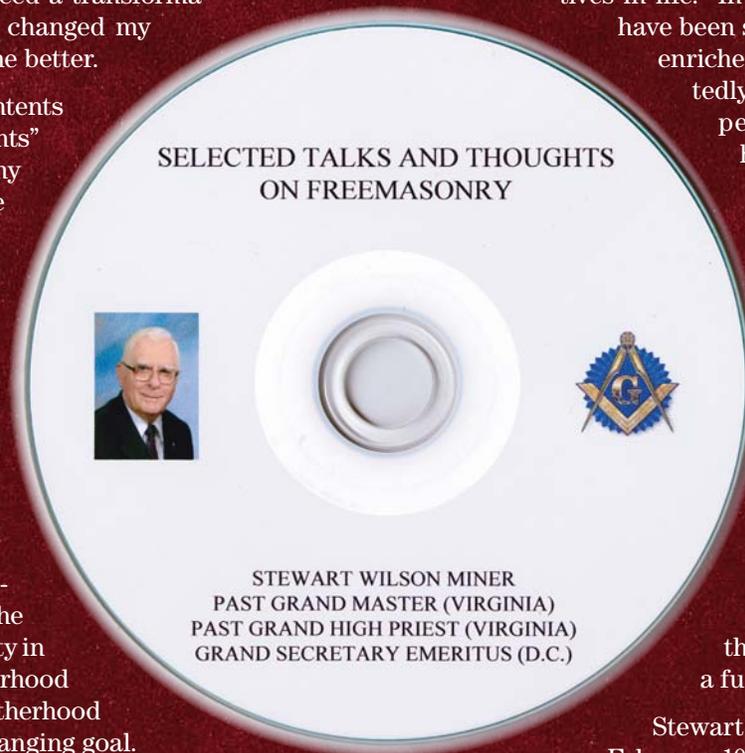
At the time of my initiation into Cherrydale Lodge, I was truly a “poor, blind candidate,” knowing far too little about the fraternity and its works and workings. On that evening, however, I experienced a transformation, one that truly changed my outlook on life for the better.

I believe that the contents of “Talks and Thoughts” properly chronicle my response to all those obligations that I accepted at that time. While they suggest in sum that I am neither a great speaker nor a great writer, I pray that they will attest to my unwavering determination to support Freemasonry’s eternal goal – the perfection of a society in which a true Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God is a never-changing goal.

It seems to me that my expressions of personal opinion testify not only to what I may have done in Masonry, but much more importantly, to what Masonry has done to me and to my perspectives in life. In the process my views have been shaped and immensely enriched, and while I admittedly remain far short of perfection, Masonry has immeasurably enriched my social and spiritual life.

I am appreciative and hopeful that the contents of “Talks and Thoughts” will, in some small way, be of use to all readers who seek personal and societal perfection. To each of those who elect to participate in this noble work, I wish a full measure of success.

Stewart Wilson Miner
February 10, 2012 ■



by Theodore M. Kahn, Grand Master 1985

Thank You, Freemasonry

Thank You, Freemasonry.

It started on July 7th when my father, Bro. Moses Eli Kahn, was initiated into Morrow Lodge No 265, F. & A. M., in Morrow, Ohio. He took his Fellowcraft Degree on August 4th, and was Raised a Master Mason on September 8th — all in the year 1900 — one hundred and twelve years ago. William McKinley of Ohio was President of the United States. The population of the United States was 76.2 million. It was only thirty five years after the end of the Civil War, and three years before the Wright Brothers' famous first flight.

My father was a member of Morrow Lodge when he died in an accident on January 3rd, 1927, when I was only six weeks old. Because of this tragedy, I never had the opportunity to know him — either as a father or as a Brother Mason. As I was growing up, my mother took me to visit his grave, and on his tombstone were the square and compasses. I asked my mother what these symbols were. Of course, she did not know, but she said they were symbols of Masonry, that my father had been a Mason, and that he enjoyed attending Masonic meetings, and finally she added, he was “a great and good man”. So, in my child's mind I equated greatness and goodness with Masonry, and resolved to become a Mason when I could someday.

Someday finally happened when I petitioned in 1955 and was Initiated, Passed and Raised in 1956 in the then Samuel Gompers Lodge No. 45 in Washington, D.C. As I took my obligations as a Mason, I realized that my father had taken upon himself the same obligations fifty-six years before me. At

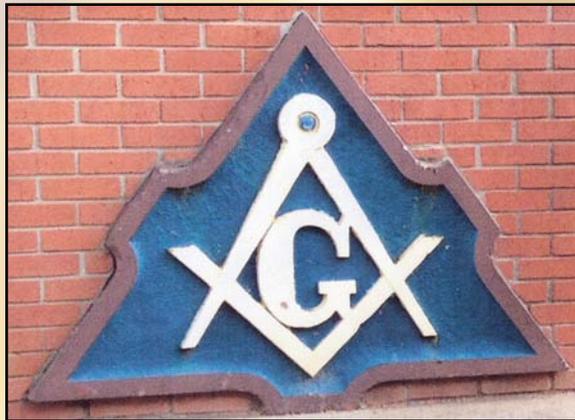
those moments, I felt a spiritual kinship with my father — a kinship which would have been impossible except for our mutual association in Freemasonry. Even to this present day, I feel that spiritual kinship whenever I attend a Masonic lodge meeting.

For a long time, I had wanted to visit Morrow Lodge, and on several occasions talked about going but plans somehow didn't work out. Finally it was my son, Bro. David Lowell Kahn, whom I had Initiated, Passed and Raised from the East in 1984, who urged me to go. I called MW Bro. Mansour Hatefi, PGM, Grand Secretary, and he secured the name and phone number of Morrow Lodge Secretary, Bro. Stephen Kaiser. Subsequently, calls and e-mails to Bro. Kaiser resulted in my visit to Morrow Lodge on June 2, 2012.

The officers and members of Morrow Lodge were very gracious and hospitable to me. They even made me an Honorary Member of Morrow Lodge. That dues card will appear next to my father's dues card for the year 1926. My hope is that my son, David will someday add his dues card to the collection. It is also my hope that David's son, my grandson, Joshua Eli Kahn, will become a Mason someday. That will make four generations of Masons named Kahn.

I cannot ever repay Masonry for the inestimable gift it has given me, but my efforts to do so will continue. My attendance at meetings will continue. My offer to help will continue. My participation in degree work will continue. In short, I will do whatever is in my power to advance the Craft and its goals.

Thank you, Freemasonry. ■



(top) This Square and Compasses emblem appeared on the exterior of Morrow Lodge's previous lodge hall at the time Bro. Moses Kahn was a member. (bottom) The current cornerstone of the new lodge hall visited by MWB Ted Kahn in 2012.



Morrow Lodge No. 265, F. & A. M.
 Morrow, Ohio, Nov 7 1925
 This is to Certify that
 Bro. M. E. Kahn
 is a member of this Lodge and declared to be in
 good and regular standing, and has paid the sum
 of Three Dollars for Dues in full to Nov. 30, 1925
 Dues in Masonic Lodges in Ohio are not paid in advance.
Will Parker
 Worshipful Master
W. Vance
 Secretary

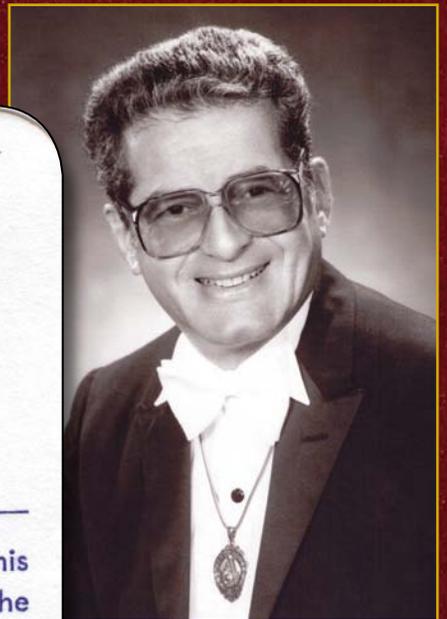
SIGNATURE OF MEMBER
M. E. Kahn



Bro. Moses Eli Kahn,
 raised in 1900

Morrow LODGE No. 265
 Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio
June 2nd, 2012
 THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
 BROTHER Theodore Marvin Kahn
 Has been elected an Honorary Member in appreciation of his
 courteous participation in the affairs of this Lodge and the
 Masonic Fraternity.
Bill Murray Steve Kusi
 WORSHIPFUL MASTER SECRETARY

SIGNATURE
Theodore Marvin Kahn



M.W. Bro. Theodore M. Kahn,
 raised in 1956, Grand Master
 in 1985

Congratulations

to Brothers Whitcomb, Volsky, and Rozsa, the 2012 Recipients of the Valentine Reintzel Medal for Meritorious Service

Citation – Edwin Jay Whitcomb

Born in 1935, Edwin Jay Whitcomb is a native of Silver Spring, MD. He is a graduate of Montgomery Blair High School. He received his BA in Economics from Roanoke College in 1957. In that same year he married his wife Nancy and they have three sons and a daughter. He served in the Marine Corps from 1957-59, and upon his discharge worked several jobs over the years before going into business for himself as a carpenter.

WB Whitcomb was raised in Joppa Lodge No. 35 in 1991, and served two consecutive years as its Worshipful Master in 1995 and 96, then as its Treasurer in 2005 and has served as Secretary of his lodge since 2006. He is also a founding member of Fiat Lux Lodge No. 1717.

WB Whitcomb is a 32nd Degree KCCH Scottish Rite Mason, where he is Assistant Director of the 18th Degree. He is a member of Almas Shrine, where he is a Trustee, and a member and treasurer of the Clown Unit. WB Whitcomb is also a member of the James F. Allen Chapter, Royal Arch Masons and the Montgomery Commandery of Knights Templar.

WB Whitcomb has served as an Appointed Grand Lodge Officer under Grand Masters Dan Frederick (1999), Grant Berning (2001) Jules Tepper (2003), Albert McNair Smith (2006), Jesse Villarreal (2011) and Joseph Crociata (2012). He currently serves as Assistant Grand Tyler. He is also the Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of Columbia, Baranquilla near our Grand Lodge.

Jay, as he is known by his Brethren, is well-known in Masonic circles as a dedicated laborer. He is always willing to assist the Grand Lodge in any capacity and has been called on by many Grand Masters to do just that.



In 2011, Jay celebrated his 20th year in the Craft, and we look forward to many more to come. The Latin phrase “Semper Fidelis” truly exemplifies this extraordinary Brother.

For his countless hours of distinguished service to this Grand Lodge, Grand Master Crociata is pleased to present Worshipful Brother Edwin Jay Whitcomb with the Valentine Reintzel Medal for Meritorious Service.

Citation – Roman Volsky

The Grand Master is pleased to recognize the contributions of Right Worshipful Brother Roman Volsky to his Lodges, to this Grand Lodge, and to Freemasonry in general. His willingness to serve and demonstrated capacity to lead have been unsurpassed in Masons of his generation, and merit recognition beyond the continued greater challenges that his role as a Grand Line Officer impose.

Roman Volsky was born in Odessa, Ukraine. He is married to his wife Tatiana, and is the proud father of two daughters.

He graduated the Odessa Marine Engineering University with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. After a period of compulsory service with the Soviet Navy, he established a private publishing company in his hometown, managing it until December of 1990, when he immigrated to the United States. When faced with the choice of residing within the Russian community in New York City or making his home instead in other locales that would require him to apply himself to perfect his use of the English language, he chose the latter. This willingness to accept and meet challenges is characteristic of Right Worshipful Brother Volsky, and informs much of his professional and Masonic success.



2012 Valentine Reintzel Medal recipients:
 WB E. Jay Whitcomb, RWB J. David Moses Rozsa, RWB Roman Volsky



In 1995, he formed a full service media and publishing firm that serves the US government, private industries, and international clientele, providing printed and digital material in various languages. Roman Volsky is also an accomplished linguist, holding the highest certifications as an interpreter in the Russian language. He provides linguistic services to the Courts, the Federal and State government and the private sector.

Right Worshipful Brother Volsky joined the Craft in 1997, when he was initiated, passed and raised in Benjamin B. French Lodge No.15 in Washington, DC. In 2004, as the Worshipful Master, he presided over the celebration of the Lodge's 150th Anniversary. His conduct of that celebration at the Ronald Reagan Center included combined elements of ceremony, the visual arts, music and opera, and made it a centerpiece of the Grand Lodge's welcome to the Grand Masters attending the North American

continued on next page



Conference hosted by our Grand Lodge. As a Past Master, he remains an active member of his Lodge and is involved in its many programs. After serving as the Grand Sword Bearer in 2008, and the Grand Marshal in 2009, Right Worshipful Brother Volsky was elected the Junior Grand Steward in 2010. He is presently serving the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia as its Junior Grand Deacon. Throughout his years of Grand Lodge service, his involvement in the public and fraternal celebrations of the Craft has added immeasurably to the cultural and fraternal life that we enjoy.

He is also active in our local Valley of the Scottish Rite, having served as the Venerable Master in Albert Pike Consistory in 2007. He is currently directing the 14th Degree of its Reunions. In 2007, he was coroneted a 33° Inspector General Honorary of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.

Given his consistent contribution to the important ceremonies of the Craft, it should be with the highest measure of pomp, circumstance and panache that this award is bestowed on him today. In recognition of his years of able service to the Fraternity, both in his Lodges and for the Grand Lodge, The Grand Master is pleased to award the 2012 Valentine Reintzel Medal for Meritorious Service to Right Worshipful Brother Roman Volsky.

Citation – J. David Moses Rozsa

The Grand Master extends special recognition to the contributions of Right Worshipful Brother J. David Moses Rozsa to his Lodges, to this Grand Lodge, and to Freemasonry in general. His willingness to serve and work diligently in the quarries of this Grand Lodge demonstrates a selfless sense of Masonic duty, which merits this award.

Born in Montréal to American parents, RW. Brother J David Moses Rozsa spent most of his childhood in New York City. He is married to Carolyn Grace Moses, and is the proud father of daughter Rachel and son Alexander.

He attended the University of Southern California as a National Merit Scholar, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy. He then attended the University of Iowa College of Law. After two years of law school, David moved to Northern Virginia and started a political campaign management and consulting firm. After a decade of managing the certification departments of not-for-profit organizations — including the National Association of Mortgage Brokers, National Concrete Masonry Association, and Association of Clinical Research Professionals — David founded

and currently serves as CEO of Metacred, Inc., an association management company specializing exclusively in credentialing program management. He holds numerous certifications in his field.

Right Worshipful Brother David was initiated, passed, and raised in Albert Pike Lodge No. 33 in 2004, and served as its Master in 2009. He distinguished his service to his Lodge in that year by the establishment of a rigorous program of Masonic education, and the Lodge was honored by the Grand Lodge in that year for its mentoring excellence. As a Past Master he remains active in the programs of his Lodge. He has served as President of the Masters and Wardens Association, and holds the 32nd Degree in the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, Valley of Washington.

In 2009, Right Worshipful Brother David was elected to the Grand Line as Senior Grand Steward, and continued to serve in the Elected Line for three years. During that period, he was intimately involved in several of the Grand Lodge's projects, including Vision and Mission project, Bicentennial celebration, Grand Lodge family picnic, and Independence Day parades. For the past four years, Right Worshipful Brother David has also organized the DC Freemasons' St. Baldrick's charity event.

If his entry into elected Grand Lodge Office deserves credit, his service as a Past Grand Lodge Officer merits this Award. After serving as Junior Grand Deacon in 2011, Right Worshipful Brother Rozsa became a Past Junior Grand Deacon upon the vote of this Grand Lodge. Where others might find discouragement, he proved his dedication to the enrichment of this Grand Lodge with his acceptance of appointment as the 2012 Grand Historian, and more especially as the Chairman of the Grand Lodge Code Revision Committee for this year. The work of this Grand Lodge in revising the Code is without precedent in any year of living memory, and could not have been accomplished without the diligent and thoughtful stewardship of Right Worshipful Brother Rozsa.

The selfless labor of Right Worshipful Brother Rozsa distinguishes him as a man and Mason whose interest in promoting the welfare of the Craft far outweighs any interest for personal honors or plaudits. This distinction makes him eminently qualified for the honor we have the pleasure of bestowing upon him today. In recognition of his continued service to the Craft and this Grand Lodge, the Grand Master takes great satisfaction in awarding the 2012 Valentine Reintzel Medal for Meritorious Service to Right Worshipful J. David Moses Rozsa. ■



D.C. Mason Achieves Three Significant Milestones

by Robin C. Bodie
Master, Potomac Lodge No. 5



L to R: WB Robert K. Armfield, PM; WB Robin C. Bodie, WM; WB Leslie J. Munro, PM; RWB Dean S. Clatterbuck, PM; WB Jeffrey G. Bodie, PM; Bro. David Cornwell at 100th birthday celebration for WB Munro, June 17, 2012.

The month of June, 2012 was an exceptional month for Potomac Lodge No. 5 member, WB Leslie J. Munro, P.M., as he observed his 100th birthday on June 16th and his 65th Masonic birthday on June 3rd. To assist in celebrating these first two auspicious events, several members of Potomac Lodge traveled to Ocean City, Maryland on June 17th to attend a reception for WB Munro given by members of his church. In addition to a birthday card to mark this occasion, the Master of Potomac Lodge, WB Robin C. Bodie, presented WB Munro with a suitably engraved replica George Washington Gavel. Representing the Lodge in addition to WB Bodie was the Lodge Chaplain and WB Bodie's father, WB Jeffrey G. Bodie, P.M.; RWB Dean S. Clatterbuck, P.M.; WB Robert K. Armfield, P.M.; and Bro. David Cornwell.

WB Munro was born in the city of Winnipeg in Manitoba, Canada, but his family relocated to the United States in 1927, settling initially in Lincoln, Nebraska. His father, a Scottish stonemason by trade, of necessity moved to where the work was, going from Nebraska to St. Louis, then to Chicago, and finally to Washington, D.C., where he worked on the National Cathedral, the National Archives Building, as well as other jobs. In each of these moves, he brought his family with him to the new location.

Graduating during the Great Depression, WB Munro, like millions of others, had difficulty finding employment, and finally accepted a job working with the a crew that had a contract for repairs on the Washington Monument. After repairs to the marble façade of the Monument were completed, it was necessary to wash down the areas that had been repaired, and WB Munro would perform the cleaning task while on a scaffold hanging on the outside of the Monument. For this high-risk position, he was paid \$0.50 an hour or \$20.00 per week. WB Munro ultimately was hired in 1935 by the Acacia Life Insurance Company, where he remained for 41 years until his retirement in 1976 as the

Company's Internal Auditor. At that time, Acacia, as the name suggests, was a largely Masonic-oriented insurance firm, with most top-level managers belonging to the Craft.

In 1939, WB Munro married and moved to the Maryland suburbs where he lived and raised his family until moving to Ocean Pines, Maryland, following his retirement.

WB Munro became a member of Myron M. Parker Lodge No. 27 in 1947, and served as Master of that Lodge in 1954. In 1959, he was elected Treasurer of the Lodge, serving in that position for 15 years until 1974, when Parker Lodge consolidated into Potomac Lodge No. 5. (RWB Clatterbuck notes that WB Munro is one of the few living Masons left who was present when he was raised in Parker Lodge in 1958.) WB Munro was also active for many years in the Virginia Scottish Rite and Shrine.

The third significant milestone occurred at the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge on November 17, 2012. Following the death on August 30, 2012 of WB Max Beloff, Past Master of Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge No. 45, the Grand Master in early October designated WB Munro to succeed WB Beloff as the recipient of the Grand Lodge Gold Fidelity Medal, which was duly presented to him on that occasion.

Since losing his beloved wife, Kathryn, in 2006 after 67 years of marriage, WB Munro has lived by himself in his home in Ocean Pines. He is still quite active and drives his automobile on a regular basis, often visiting his son who lives in the Indian Head, Maryland area. He regularly sings in the Atlantic United Methodist Church choir in Ocean City. He also sings with the Pine Tones Chorus, a local group specializing in a wide variety of classic songs. The Grand Lodge joins with the members of Potomac Lodge in congratulating WB Munro on these "noteworthy" events in his life and for his contributions to Freemasonry. ■



A New Face in the Grand Line:

Michael D. Nicholas, Sr. Elected Junior Grand Steward for 2013

Mike Nicholas will celebrate 35 years of marriage to Maryann Clair Nicholas this December. Blessed with two sons, 32 and 29, they also have one grandson and a daughter-in-law. Mike's hometown is Ocean City, NJ. He graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point many moons ago, and served in US Cavalry and Infantry command assignments for 12 years. He is currently an Information Technology manager in support of the Secretary of Defense at the Pentagon, where he was working on the morning of Sep 11, 2001.

He was raised in LaFayette DuPont Lodge #19 in August 2001, and served as Lodge Secretary for 7 years prior to serving as Worshipful Master in 2009 and 2010. He is currently a Lodge Trustee and Chairman of their Works and Lecture Committee. Mike was selected as the Grand Representative to the Grand Lodge of Sao Paulo, Brazil in 2010. He has also been a Trustee of the Masonic Foundation of the District of Columbia for 2011 and 2012. He was chosen by MWB Jesse Villarreal to serve as an Aide in 2011, and by MWB Joseph Crociata as the Grand Marshal for the Masonic Year 2012. He is also Treasurer of the DC Grand Chapter of the Widows Sons Masonic motorcycle organization.

Outside of Freemasonry, his limited time is spent with his family, and in riding his motorcycle as often as possible as the Treasurer for the American Legion Riders in Fairfax Virginia, whose focus is to raise money for Veterans' causes. He also enjoys road-cycling and racquetball, and he is an amateur genealogist and family historian. ■



*Right Worshipful Brother
Michael D. Nicholas, Sr.*



Potomac Lodge Holds a Low Vale Lodge



Dean S. Clatterbuck
Honorary Past Senior Grand Warden

In 1992, WB Ramon Zeender became the first Potomac Lodge Master in many years to hold a Vale Lodge meeting when a number of brethren assembled at his farm at Deep Creek Lake, Maryland, and conferred the Master Mason Degree. Following the meeting, the brethren celebrated the event with a feast of pit-cooked beef.

Some 17 years later in 2009, WB Jeremy Barnes revived the concept of a Vale Lodge by holding a Special Communication on September 1 of that year on Theodore Roosevelt Island and conferring the Master Mason Degree upon two Fellow Crafts. So far as is known, this was the first Vale Lodge ever held by Potomac Lodge within the District of Columbia itself. The weather fully cooperated and the evening was a great success. This event required the cooperation of the United States Park Service, to which the Lodge expressed its appreciation.

This year, under the leadership of WB Robin C. Bodie, the Lodge held a Low Vale Lodge in the Shenandoah Caverns in Virginia. After more than six months of advanced planning, 31 members of the Lodge, 4 Entered Apprentices, a Past Grand

Master of Vermont, and the Grand Lecturer, most accompanied by their ladies, assembled at the Hampton Inn in Woodstock, Virginia, at high noon on Saturday, March 31, 2012. At 1:30 p.m., the group departed the motel and traveled to *Route 11 Potato Chips*, where they were met by the owner, Ms. Suzanne Cohen. Ms. Cohen gave the group an overview of how potatoes are specially grown for making potato chips, the manufacturing process for producing potato chips, and how *Route 11* recycles, right down to agricultural use of the potato peels. The Company strives to be a waste-free facility. Her introductory remarks were followed by the opportunity to observe the potatoes being sliced, cooked, and packaged. Samples of all flavors were readily available and everyone had an opportunity to taste some freshly cooked chips. A considerable amount of *Route 11* product departed with the group as they continued on to Shenandoah Caverns.

Special Communication attendees gather after the meeting





WB Robin Bodie addresses attendees at banquet in American Celebration on Parade following the day's activities

Everyone wishing to do so was given a conducted tour of Shenandoah Caverns. As the only Caverns in Virginia to offer Caverns access by elevator, all members attending had the opportunity to take a tour. At the conclusion of the public tours, the Lodge members assembled in Bacon Hall, so named because of the formations that resemble sides of bacon. After the Lodge was set up, WB Bodie opened Potomac Lodge at a Special Communication for the purpose of conferring the Fellow Craft Degree. After reading Dispensations from the Grand Masters of Virginia and the District of Columbia authorizing the meeting, the Fellow Craft Degree was conferred upon Bros. Quinn Cooke, Justin Foote, Dan Havey, and George Perez. The Middle Chamber Lecture was delivered by the Grand Lecturer , RWB Christopher “Chip” Mahaney. After the conclusion of the Degree, WB Bodie, assisted by WB Dean Clatterbuck, presented a certificate of honorary membership in Potomac Lodge to MWB Richard E. Fletcher, Past Grand Master of Vermont and the recently-retired Secretary of the Masonic Service Association of North America. It was noted that while MWB Fletcher has been the recipient of numerous honorary memberships, this was the first one presented to him while he was 130 feet underground. By this time, most of the members were becoming keenly aware of the constant 54 degree temperature in the Caverns, and WB Bodie

hastened to close the Lodge. However, especially for the four Entered Apprentices who were passed to the Degree of Fellow Craft, the afternoon was a particularly memorable one.

Shenandoah Caverns is owned by Mr. Earl Hargrove, Jr., one of the founders of *Hargrove, Inc.*, a Lanham, Maryland, company started in 1946 to specialize in the creation of unique display windows for department stores. The company later evolved into the creation and production of large parade floats and displays used at trade association shows and political conventions. Residents in the Washington, D.C. area may be most familiar with the work of *Hargrove, Inc.* through their decorations of the National Christmas Tree on the Mall since 1954 as well as supporting the Easter Egg Rolls on The White House lawn each year. Mr. Hargrove has developed several attractions in addition to the Caverns to showcase some of his award-winning displays and floats.

While the Lodge members were involved in the Low Vale Lodge, the ladies toured *Main Street, U.S.A.*, a Shenandoah Caverns attraction that features the re-creation of department store windows that were popular displays at special times in many department stores in the country in the 1950-70's. From there, the ladies were transported to the *Yellow Barn*, yet another attraction, where they enjoyed

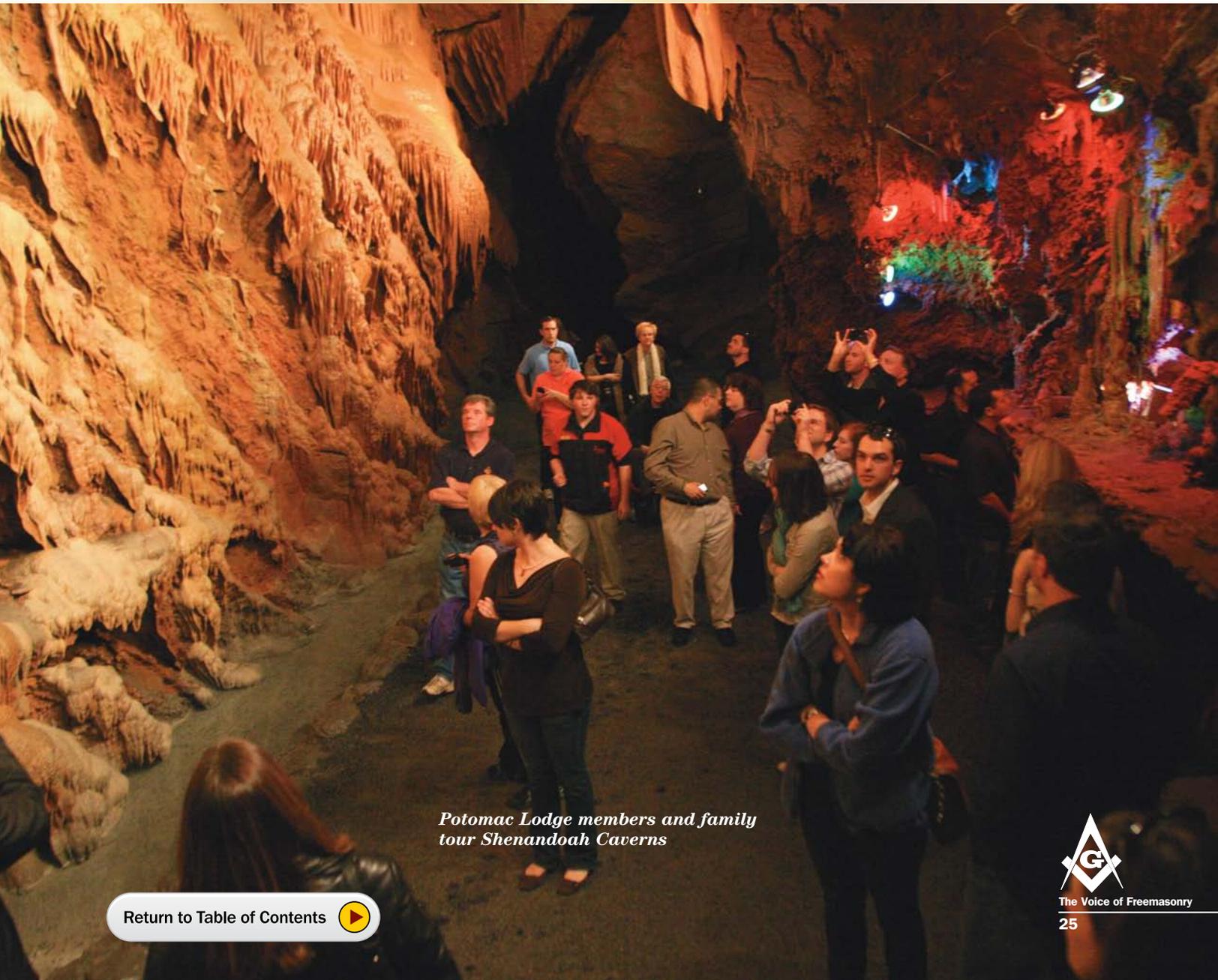


a wine and cheese tasting event, followed by the opportunity to view various agricultural exhibits and antique vehicles as well as an active bee hive located in that facility.

The ladies then proceeded to *An American Celebration on Parade*, a large building which showcases some two dozen or more floats that have appeared in many major parades, including the Rose Parade, the Philadelphia Thanksgiving Day Parade, and a number of inaugural parades. The men then joined the ladies and all enjoyed a reception followed by a buffet dinner featuring excellent Italian cuisine prepared by Chef Sal Di Roberto of Edinburg, Virginia, with the tables set in front of a huge American flag display that has appeared in several inaugural parades. At dessert time, WB Bodie presented WB Clatterbuck with a beautifully decorated cake in recognition of his birthday three days earlier. At the

conclusion of these festivities, everyone returned to the Hampton Inn, where WB Bodie hosted a hospitality room for the continued enjoyment of those present. Sunday morning, everyone followed their individual schedules to have breakfast at the Hampton Inn and either return home or do other sightseeing in the Shenandoah Valley.

Potomac Lodge is indebted to the Grand Master of Virginia and MWB's Jesse Villarreal and Joseph S. Crociata, of our Grand Lodge for granting the necessary dispensations. In an effort to make the Lodge as "portable" as possible, RWB Roman Volsky produced two banners replicating the pillars at the West Gate and another banner replicating the Middle Chamber canvas. Bros. Cristian Wicha and David Cornwell of Potomac Lodge developed easily transportable Lesser Lights, the letter "G," a sunrise machine and pedestals for the Master and Warden's stations. ■



*Potomac Lodge members and family
tour Shenandoah Caverns*



St. John's Lodge, No. 11

by Michael J. Gambale Jr., PM

Raises \$11,000 to Benefit Almas Transportation Fund

When St. John's No. 11 began its resurgence several years ago, we were challenged by the Grand Lodge leadership to become more active in our community and to start forming a lodge identity. One of things we did to facilitate this was to create an annual golf tournament. For the third year in a row, St. John's Lodge No. 11 organized a very successful fund raising golf tournament at Joint Base Andrews. Held on September 21st, the participants were also blessed with beautiful weather and the patriotic backdrop of military aircraft coming in and departing the area around the South Course.

The story of this year's tournament began at the beginning of the Masonic year. As is becoming customary, the Worshipful Master of St. John's chose the beneficiary of the tournament. WB Justin Russell

chose Almas, and more specifically their transportation fund. But WB Russell also challenged me as tournament chair to organize the tournament in such a way as it did not interfere with an extremely active year for initiating, passing, and raising many men in our lodge.

This year the tournament was a test of our will on many fronts. Most of all, getting corporate sponsors in this fiscal environment was extremely challenging. The St. John's Cup is blessed in that it has several repeat sponsors, two of which are members of St. John's Lodge. The premier sponsors of the event were RSDCGroup and Farfield Systems owned by Brothers Ryan Denmark and Ivan Roney. The Mason Harriman Group (Brother Teddy Vagias from Virginia) and my wife's company Customer Relationship

Brother Anil Patibandla and Worshipful Brother Michael Gambale present Michael Sterling, Bob Estes, and Ivan Abbott with the Past Masters Cup.



Associates also stepped up their level of sponsorships this year. These critical sponsors were the difference between raising a couple of thousand dollars, and our end result which we are proud to say was over \$11,000.

I am also pleased to share that with the help of Illustrious Brother Don Ferguson and Almas, we were able to coordinate the activities without detracting from the many degrees we did at St. John's over the past year. A growing lodge needs to be creative and think outside the box in order to keep up with the new demands of raising and educating new Freemasons while staying involved in things that build on our identity. While not easily done, I believe that we met that challenge last year.

As for the event itself, it was a low scoring affair as always, with Michael Sterling, Bob Estes, and Ivan Abbott taking home the championship. Mr. Estes and Mr. Abbott are both repeat winners as they were part of a winning team the first year. As we do each year,

their names will be engraved on the "Past Masters Cup". The banquet was an enjoyable affair where many prizes were distributed, the mission of Almas Transportation Fund explained, and I believe I heard more than a few conversations where men were asking Masons about the Craft. I also had the true pleasure of playing with my brother, Sean Gambale, a police officer from New Jersey who came down and played the game for the very first time. The good news is he only broke two of my clubs. Also, I know that Almas received at least one petition out of the event – mine!

I wish to thank the Almas Shriners, the brethren of St. John's No. 11, Naval Lodge No. 4, and all those who helped coordinate, volunteer, or support our tournament financially. As of right now, I believe we are on track to have the tournament again next year. Please keep our event in mind. We would love to see more lodges get involved. You don't have to be a great golfer. We make all feel welcome. ■



The Voice of Freemasonry

Grand Lodge, F.A.A.M. of DC
5428 MacArthur Blvd., N.W.
Washington, DC 20016-2524



NonProfit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 207
Dulles, VA

Visit us online at: dcgrandlodge.org

Grand Lodge of Free And Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia

Joseph S. Crociata, Grand Master **Mansour Hatefi**, Grand Secretary

*Wishing you a joyous
Holiday Season...*



...and a New Year of peace and happiness.



Scan with your smart phone.