

JUNE 2026



Connecticut FREEMASONS



**In This Issue: Biography of MWB Shane Dufresne
Publication Changes to Connecticut Freemasons
Grand Masters Classic Car Contest (on Grand Masters Day)**

Grand Lodge of Connecticut, AF & AM
69 Masonic Avenue
Wallingford, CT 06492

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Connecticut FREEMASONS

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Letters, articles, and advertisements may
be sent to the Editor Frank Way
at submissions@ctfreemasons.net
and are due on the 10th of the month prior
to the next issue.

Not just a man. A Mason.

Biography of MWB Shane Dufresne

180th Grand Master of the Grand Lodge AF&AM of Connecticut

Most Worshipful Brother Shane Dufresne was born in Waterbury on February 7, 1968, to Robert and Marylene (Dube) Dufresne. He attended Waterbury schools and graduated from Sacred Heart High School in 1986. He has a son, Drew Dufresne

MWB Shane started working as a Foreman for the City of Waterbury Parks Department on July 25, 1988. He was later hired by the Waterbury Police Department on December 12, 1997. After graduating from the Connecticut Police Academy on April 14, 1998, he began a successful and fulfilling career, during which he held many assignments. This included working in the Patrol Division and the Community Relations Division. He was later assigned to the DEA in New Haven as an undercover narcotics officer. His last assignment as a Patrol Officer was as the director of the department's Police Athletic League (PAL). On March 9, 2009, he was promoted to Detective, a rank he held until his retirement from the department.

After retiring from the Waterbury Police Department, he immediately began a new career with the Western Connecticut State University Police Department, where he worked until joining the Plainville Police Department on November 23, 2015. He is currently assigned as the School Resource Officer (SRO) for the Middle School of Plainville.

MWB Shane held several community roles in Waterbury. He was President of the Bunker Hill Sports Association for 5 years, during which he coached several teams. He was also a Cub Scout and Boy Scout leader for Pack 20 and Troop 40 at Blessed Sacrament School, where he coached the baseball team for six years. For the last ten years, Shane has shared his life and made his home with his longtime girlfriend, Michelle Sutzenberg,

MWB Shane began his Masonic career upon being initiated as an Entered Apprentice in Harmony Lodge No. 42 in Waterbury on April 18, 2002. He was passed to the degree of Fellow Craft on May 16, 2002, and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on June 20, 2002. He entered the officer line at Harmony as Senior Steward in 2004, progressing to the East, where he served as Harmony's Worshipful Master in 2009.

He was commissioned as Right Worshipful District Deputy of the Grand Lodge AF & AM of Connecticut for District 3A in 2010-2011 by MW Charles Buck and reappointed for 2011-2012 by MW James McWain. MWB Shane served as President of the 3rd District Blue Lodge Council for three years from

2011 to 2013. He later served as Treasurer of Harmony Lodge No. 42 from 2012 to 2014 and as its Almoner in 2017. He was appointed Grand Marshal for 2014-2015 by MW Thomas Maxwell and Grand Almoner from 2015 through 2019. MWB Shane was awarded the Robert S. Walker MWPGM Award as the Mason of the Year for Harmony Lodge No. 42 on November 7, 2013. He also received the P.M. Jeter Hines Community Service Award from Kellogg Lodge No. 5 Prince Hall in April 2010. He was awarded the Pierpont Award in Bronze in January 2024 by MW Joseph Porco.

In 2019, he was appointed Grand Junior Steward and has served in the progressive Grand Lodge line since then. He has also served on various Grand Lodge committees, namely Action Programs from 2005 through 2007, Community Action from April 2019 to April 2023, EMR Committee from 2019 to present, Ritual and Ceremonies Committee from 2023 to 2026, and Budget and Finance from July 2023 to present.

Apart from Blue Lodge, MWB Shane has been a member of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, Valley of Waterbury, and the Lafayette Consistory in Stratford since June 2003. He has attended all of the 29 AASR degrees. He is also a member of Pyramid Shrine No. 9, AAONMS in Stratford. He is a member of the York Rite bodies in Meriden, Keystone Chapter No. 6 of Royal Arch Masons, Hamilton Council No. 9 Royal and Select Masters of Connecticut, and of St. Elmo Commandery No. 9, Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Connecticut. He is also a member of the Zindah Grotto in Waterbury.





CONNECTICUT FREEMASONS FOUNDATION, INC.

A 501(c) (3) Tax Exempt Organization

of the GRAND LODGE of ANCIENT FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS
of the STATE of CONNECTICUT



Shane Dufresne
Grand Master 2026



PO Box 69
Wallingford, CT 06492

My Brothers, Family, and Friends,

June,1 2026

We are taught that Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth are the foundational principles that unite us in this great fraternity. These principles are the basis for the formation of the Connecticut Freemasons Foundation, Inc., our 501(c)3 charitable arm. It is my honor this year to appeal to you to support the vital charitable activities of our Foundation by making a tax-deductible contribution to the Connecticut Freemasons Foundation, Inc.

I have singled out three options for your special consideration. You may split your gift if desired. Please check the choices in the return section and indicate the amount of your gift that you desire to restrict to that category. A gift of any size is meaningful, so please consider contributing whatever is within your means. Thank you for your consideration of this appeal.

- First is our Grand Almoner's Fund. We are reminded continually of the importance of providing for "the relief of poor, distressed Master Masons, their widows, and orphans." Our Almoners provide a focus for ensuring this duty is carried out, and the fund is an important element of that relief.
- Second is our Matching Grant Program. It is designed to encourage Lodges to actively support charitable causes in their local communities by having the Foundation match the cash gifts made by the Lodges to those 501(c)3 charities. The size and scope of this activity will depend on the support you give to it in this Appeal. The goal is to raise enough to match up to the first \$1,000, on the dollar that Lodges' gift to qualifying entities.
- Third is our General Endowment Unrestricted Funds Option, which enables the Board of Directors to utilize the funds for any pressing circumstance that arises. In the past, we have provided help to relieve human suffering caused by devastating hurricanes, tornadoes, and fires. We are one fraternal body, wherever so dispersed.

Fraternally,

Shane Dufresne
M.W. Grand Master 2026

*The CT Freemasons Foundation is a 501(c)3 corporation organized to accept tax deductible contributions. **Your gift may be restricted by designating your specific charitable choice from the above list in the memo section of your check.***

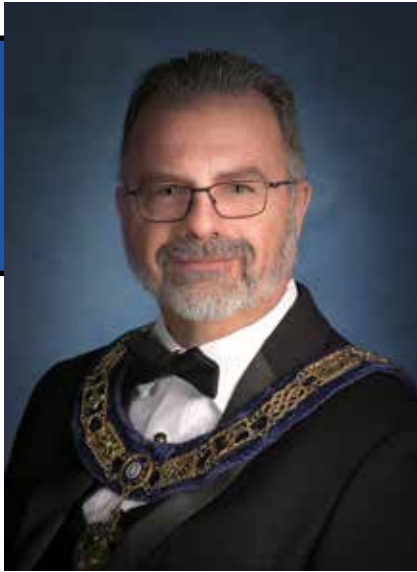
Your support for 2025 included donations to:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ◆ Grand Almoner's Fund | ◆ George Washington National Masonic Memorial |
| ◆ Grand Lodge Matching Grant Program | ◆ Masonic Medical Research Institute |
| ◆ CT Freemasons Foundation General Endowment | ◆ Masonic Model Student Assist Program |
| ◆ CT DeMolay | ◆ Masonic Service Association |
| ◆ CT International Order of Rainbow for Girls | ◆ Masonic Organ Donor Program "Donate Life" |
| ◆ Masonic Charity Foundation/ Quality of Life | ◆ Shriners Hospital: Boston Burns Unit/Hospital for Children, Springfield |
| ◆ 32 nd Degree Children's Dyslexia Center of CT | |

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NOTE: Donations can be made via PayPal on the Grand Lodge Website www.CTFreemasons.net Located under "About Us" "The Connecticut Freemasons Foundation"



Grand Master's Message

by MWB Shane Dufresne

At the time of this writing, people are planting their gardens, whether vegetable or flower. As any good gardener knows, this is the beginning of a long process and not the end of the work. It will

require dedication, care, attention to detail, and patience to achieve the end result of what hopes to be a successful garden. Along the way, there will be some difficulty and maybe some frustration. But knowing what the potential can be, it is good and rewarding work. Not working results in a dead garden

These comparisons can be made to Freemasonry. This time of year, many lodges are looking to complete their degrees for the summer. We do degrees, especially the Entered Apprentice Degree, to get them started. But this should not be the end of the work. It is just the beginning. During the summer, we should still be working with our new Entered Apprentices, Fellowcrafts, and even the newly raised Master Masons to nurture them along the way. They still need some light and some work to help them grow. Masonically speaking, if we neglect them, they wind up withering and dying or not reaching their full Masonic potential. This can be frustrating to both the individual and the fraternity as a whole. Summer is the perfect time for brothers to get together informally and mentor those who are new to the fraternity. It is a great time to get to know them better personally and for them to better understand the fraternity. We can show them how a lodge operates, how and why things are done a certain way.

This can be done without the pressure of it being done in a regular stated communication. If we put in the work, the end result will be a success. Not working with our brothers equals a dying fraternity.

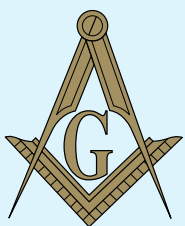
The success of a new Mason largely hinges on having a good mentor. A mentor can be compared to the gardener. They are there with them right at the beginning, once they are voted in to begin taking their degrees. The mentor should be a brother who has the patience to work with a new brother. They should want to take on this role, not "have to" or be coerced into taking on the responsibility. A proud gardener looks on with pride when their work proves successful and their garden flourishes. The same can be said for a mentor who watches his protégée flourish and bloom. I owe all my accomplishments and achievements to those mentors who helped me grow over the years.

We had three years of Blue Wave and a membership movement where we were looking to attract men to our fraternity. That was the first part of the work. Now comes the hard work. Nurturing and educating them about the fraternity and helping them become better men, which will result in them being better fathers, husbands, and community members. But we know the hard work will pay off in the end. This is how we build our garden for future generations.

Brothers, let's continue to work on our gardens in the coming months. We are all responsible for the future of the fraternity. Not working will end in a dead garden.

Please enjoy your summer. Be safe in your travels and your endeavors.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW BROTHERS!



Moriah Lodge No. 15
Khone S. Thoumany

Washington Lodge No. 19
Jonathan Wintsch

St. Alban's Lodge No. 38
Emery John Pavel

Putnam Lodge No. 46
Marcelo Oliveira Rosado

Ansantawae Lodge No. 89
Nicholas Anthony Dascola
Douglas Xavier Holland

Anchor Lodge No. 112
Fritz Dumapias Acurantes
Nickolos Peter Daniolos
David Anthony Rubino

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Publication Changes to Connecticut Freemasons

On April 11, the 2026-2027 budget for the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Connecticut was approved at the Annual Communication. This budget included some changes to the way the *Connecticut Freemasons* newspaper will be published.

The newspaper will still publish 11 issues a year (we do not publish an August issue). However, beginning immediately, the *Connecticut Freemasons* newspaper will publish only six issues a year in hard copy, sent by US Mail. The hard copy issues will be **January, March, May, June, September, and November**. These will be printed and will arrive in mailboxes as they always have. Some extra copies will be available at Grand Lodge as always.

Five issues per year will be digital-only, available on the Grand Lodge website in PDF format. These issues are **February, April, July, October, and December**. No hard copies will be available. If brothers have an email address on file with Grand Lodge, in Grand View, they should receive a notification email when the issue is available on the website.

PLEASE NOTE: Submission deadlines have not changed. The deadline is still the 10th of the month prior to publication (i.e., June 10 for the July edition, etc.). Submissions formats have not changed. We still want Word documents or plain text files attached to an email, and photos in JPG or PNG format attached to an email. **PLEASE DO NOT submit written content in the body of the email.**



Part-Time Drivers/Monitors Needed to Join a Busy Livery Company

Requirements:

- Monday-Friday availability.
- Must be 21 years or older.
- Valid CT Driver's License for three consecutive years,
- Clean driving record.

Must Pass: a DCF Background Check, the Sex Offender Registry, a DMV Background Check, and a DOT Medical Exam.

We offer our Team Members Paid Training, 401k, and Uniforms. Pay rate: \$19 per hour upon endorsement approval. All our vehicles are DMV inspected.

Interested applicants apply online at curtintransportationgroup.com

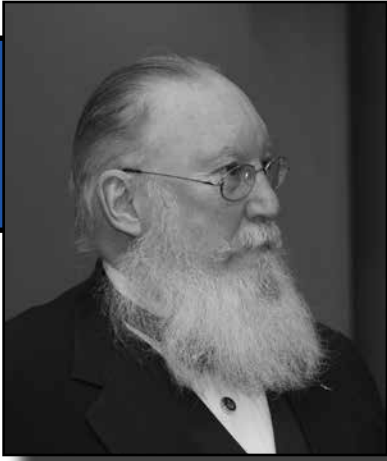
Safe and Reliable
Since 1918.



Do You Know A Hero?

The Grand Lodge of Connecticut is proud to re-introduce the Hometown Hero Award. If there is a Brother or member of your community you feel is a Hometown Hero, we encourage you to nominate him or her for this special award to service. Whether a first responder or someone who has made a difference in your hometown, we want to pay him or her, special recognition for their achievements.

The application can be found in the Resources section on GrandView. We look forward to recognizing YOUR Hometown Hero in the near future!



The Grand Chaplain's Message

by WB Harold A. (Hal) Elwell

Brothers,

Memorial Day has passed, and summer is upon us. I'm hoping that my message last month to look within

and strengthen our internal foundation of virtue, discipline, and wisdom struck a chord and that at some time during the recent holiday weekend, you took some time away from the parades, picnics, celebrations, and mattress sales to reflect on the solemn nature of the day. It was a time to remember the efforts and sacrifices of those who came before us, ensuring that we can now enjoy the freedoms and opportunities they secured.

Have you lately considered our legacy of leadership? Start with the number of founding fathers who were Masons. Count the number of presidents and political leaders who were and are Masons. Think of all the outstanding artists, athletes, entertainers, educators, and scientists among our Brotherhood. We know that over the past few decades, our membership has been trending downward, but we are all striving to reverse that trend. Now it is time to look forward and think about how we can meet the challenges of continuing to build that legacy of leadership for the future.

Many of our Blue Lodge and appendant body rituals allude to the fact that the ideals that we espouse are precisely those needed

to make this world a better place. To paraphrase a passage from a Scottish Rite degree set during our Civil War – “If discord and dissension cause the ruin of this country, the Masonic fraternity shall remain an indestructible brotherhood. When this war has passed into history, Freemasons will strive together to restore to this land the peace, the harmony, and the goodwill that should exist among the whole American people.” While we are not engaged in a civil war, discord and dissension are surely still with us, and we are obligated and charged to do all we can to overcome them.

We are exhorted to practice outside the lodge that which we learn within it. With most of our lodges preparing to take our summer break and with fewer regular meetings to attend, the opportunities abound to show the rest of the world what it means to be a Mason. We are coming to the apex of the celebration of the 250th anniversary of our independence. Support the activities. Enjoy the festivities. Foster and encourage the brotherhood, harmony, and unity that we symbolize. Follow the advice given in another bit of Scottish Rite ritual – so live your life, day by day, that the commonwealth shall be prospered through your industry, established through your fidelity, and honored through your integrity. Be a proud, visible Mason and lead by example. Let the Masonic light that you have received shine as a beacon of brotherhood, just as our country shines as a beacon of liberty.



We offer our condolences to the family and friends of those brothers who have been called by The Grand Architect of the Universe.

David J. Barth

Washington Lodge No. 70

Richard C. Burke

Union Lodge No. 5

Edward O. Clark, Sr.

Fayette Lodge No. 69

Fred C. Frueh

Richard E. W. Vargoshe, Sr.

King Solomons Lodge No. 7

Dwight Charles Mertens

Friendship Tuscan Lodge No. 145

Robert I. Ritchie

Anchor Lodge No. 112

David W. Shoaf

Old Well St. Johns Lodge No. 6

Bernard Sippin

Washington Lodge No. 19

Raymond E. Wisneski

St. Johns Lodge No. 2



Grand Historian's Corner

Bro. David J. Stewart

Becoming a Lifelong Learner

You will never know it all, and that is not a weakness but a divine design. It is an invitation to embrace the journey of life, and more importantly, your journey into the wonderful world of Freemasonry.

From the moment you entered this world, you were placed upon a path of instruction. You begin as children, learning the simplest truths. You advanced through elementary understanding, passed through the formative trials of youth, and for some, pursued higher education. Yet even beyond institutions, beyond degrees and titles, the greatest truth remains that we continue to learn until our final breath. "You will never, ever get it done, you can never ever get it done." Oh, but the journey will be well worth the effort.

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom: and with all thy getting, get understanding." Proverbs 4:7. This is not a temporary command; it is a lifelong charge.

In Freemasonry, we are not merely encouraged to learn; we are obligated to learn. We are called to be diligent students of the Craft, seekers of light, and laborers in the quarry of self-improvement. Each degree, each symbol, each allegory is not an endpoint, but a doorway leading us into the light and deeper into understanding.

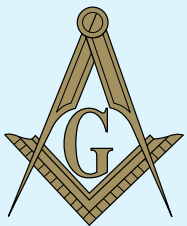
The working tools we are given are not just for operative use, but speculative reflection. They shape not only how we act, but how we think, perceive, and ultimately, who we become. Through the wisdom and study of "the history of freemasonry," both operative and speculative, we will gain that much-needed edge to become the enlightened being we strive to be. How can we fulfill that duty if we cease to learn? How can we grow if we believe we have already arrived? Freemasonry is not a destination; it is a lifelong journey, and it asks difficult questions.

Are you making yourself a better man and Mason? What have you truly learned about yourself? Have you shaped your rough ashlar, or merely admired the tools? Are you seeking light, or are you comfortable in partial illumination?

Each lesson within our Craft builds upon the last, not in isolation, but in harmony, guiding us toward self-awareness, discipline, and truth. It is a progressive system that reveals itself only to those willing to study, reflect, and apply. Knowledge without application is like a temple without a foundation; it cannot and will not stand.

Be not satisfied with what you know today. Seek further light. Study your lessons. Reflect upon your journey. And above all, remain humble enough to understand that the more you learn, the more you will realize how much there is yet to know. For the true Mason is not the one who has learned everything but the one who never stops learning. Read the ritual and ponder – what did it say, what is the symbolism, and what does it mean? When all else fails, ask a brother for help, and you shall be rewarded!

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 50-YEAR MEMBERS!



Richard M. Balogh
Raymond A. DaDalt
Ionic Lodge No. 110

Austin P. Clark
Daniel J. Falotico
Wyllys St. Johns Lodge No. 4

Michael George Fitting
Montgomery Lodge No. 13

Samuel D. Gerber
Corinthian Lodge No. 63

Gregory B. King
Putnam Lodge No. 46

Roger P. Kruger
Granite Lodge No. 119

Nicholas Victor Milione, Jr.
Annawon Lodge No. 115

Phillip Edward Rathbun
Coastal Lodge No. 57

Stephen I. Watkins
Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88

From the Desk of Bro. Jon-Paul Venoit

President & CEO of Masonicare

June 13 is circled on my calendar. Not once. Not twice, but three times. Let me explain.

In the morning, we will welcome residents, staff, friends from the community, and distinguished guests from the Masonic Fraternity to Masonicare Health Center in Wallingford for Grand Masters Day festivities. The annual festival offers fun for all ages but, at its heart, is a celebration of and for our residents. We will be joined by Most Worshipful Grand Master Shane Dufresne and the Honorable Daniel L. Blackmon, Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Connecticut, F & AM.

In the afternoon, about 60 other Masonicare employees, family members, and I will head across town to the campus of Gaylord Specialty Healthcare for the Gaylord Gauntlet 5k and Obstacle Run. The Masonicare contingent typically consists of two groups. The first takes its sweet time, strolling from obstacle to obstacle, like mud pits, cargo nets, and a waterslide. The other group is our runners, who leave the rest of us behind in a mad dash for the finish line. Last year, Masonicare won an award for Toughest Workplace, a title we aim to defend!

Then, after a much-needed shower, I'll show my support for a valued community partner, the Wallingford Family YMCA, at their 2026 Gilded Gala fundraiser. Proceeds from this event will help Wallingford residents in need access critical health and human service programs.

We received some great news recently that Masonicare Health Center's short-stay rehabilitation program was now rated FIVE STARS by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). This program specializes in bridging the gap between hospital and home, providing physical, occupational, and other therapies to help older adults recover from illness, injury, or surgery. Along

with Bro. Ed Dooling, Masonicare's Chief of Healthcare Services, I'm incredibly proud of the gains that Administrator Courtney O'Sullivan and her team have made in making Masonicare Health Center a top-rated facility for sub-acute rehab.

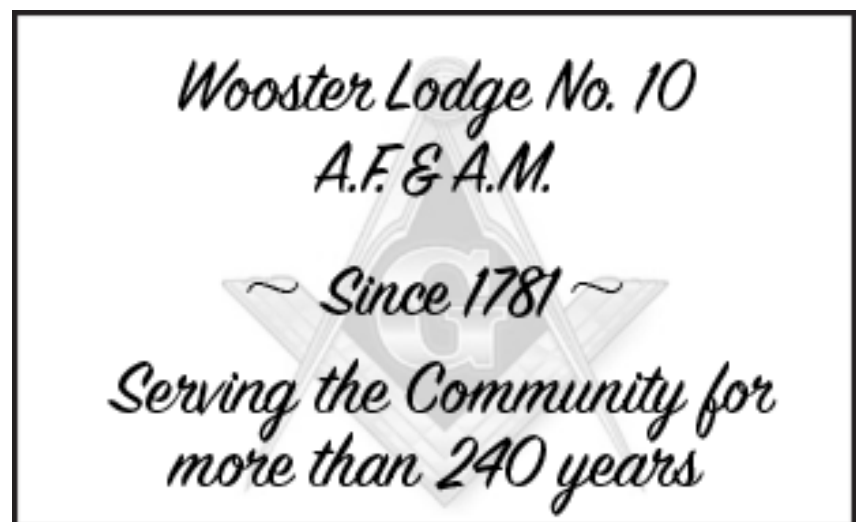
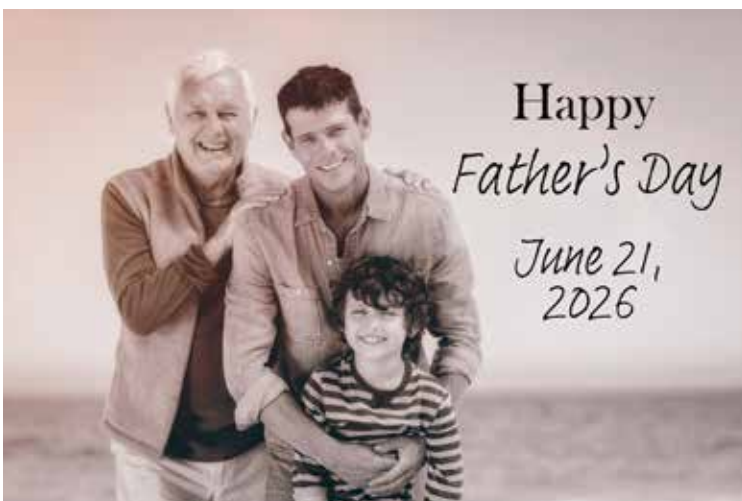
Remember: when you or a loved one is discharged from a hospital, you have the right to choose where to go for rehabilitation. Call me biased, but I hope you'll choose Masonicare.

Finally, on behalf of everyone at Masonicare, I want to thank our event organizers, generous donors, and valued sponsors for making last month's Beer, Wine, and Bourbon Tasting at Ashlar Village such a tremendous success. The travel-inspired event drew over 300 "passengers" and raised over \$250,000 to support the vital programs and services funded by The Masonic Charity Foundation of Connecticut. If you enjoyed seeing me and other members of Masonicare's leadership team dressed like an airline flight crew, you'll love what we have in store for next year.

Yours fraternally,



Jon-Paul Venoit





The Concentric Circle has Grown!

New move-ins:

Masonicare is offering a 24-month, 5% discount on base monthly fees (excluding healthcare charges) in our Residential Living communities!

Eligibility requirements:

You must be a Mason for 5 years; applies to Masons, widows of Masons and OES

Additional Concentric Circle Benefits include:

- **PRIORITY ADMISSION / ACCESS** to Masonicare following the "Concentric Circle" guidelines for Connecticut Freemasons, relatives, and appendant bodies
- **REDUCED PRICING** on applications for our residential communities - 5% off base rental rate for 24 months
- **FREE HEARING SCREENINGS** in the Masonicare Hearing Center
- **FREE BALANCE ASSESSMENTS** in the Masonicare Health Center Outpatient Rehabilitation Department
- **WAIVED ADVANCE PAYMENTS** on Masonicare at Home (in-home, non-medical homemaker-companion services) and 5% off base service fee for first three months
- **\$5,000 OFF ENTRY FEES** for Masonicare at Ashlar Village and Masonicare at Chester Village

Masonicare 

An Ageless Commitment to Caring

22 Masonic Avenue | Wallingford, CT 06492

Masonicare.org    



Residential
Living



Healthcare
Services

SILENCE – THE RIGHT HAND SPEAKS

by John A. Amarilios, membership@lafayetteconsistory.com

With the winter and spring degree seasons behind us, the Valley of Bridgeport will now focus on Family Events, which are not only fun but in most cases family-friendly, so spouses and kids can come along and have a good time!

This summer's activities commence with a dinner cruise around Manhattan on July 18. (There is already a waiting list for this event.)

August 7 is our semi-annual Cigar Night at the Stamford Cigar Bar. On August 9, we will see the opera Tosca at the Morgan School in Clinton, followed by dinner at the Café Allegre in Madison.

August 15 is the annual clambake picnic in Orange, and the season wraps up with the annual installation dinner at the Riverview Bistro in Stratford on September 12.

For more details, payments, and reservations for these events, please contact the Consistory office at (203) 375-0064.

Fall degrees will start on Monday, September 28, with the 6th Degree performed live, followed by a video rendition of the 7th Degree. Dinner starts at 6 p.m. at the Shrine next door. Hope to see you there!



In ancient times, silence and secrecy were considered virtues of the highest order. The Egyptians honored Hippocrates, the god of secrecy, and even constructed altars in his name. The Romans of antiquity also esteemed these virtues of which the distinguished Latin poet wrote: “for faithful silence also there is a sure reward.”

The phrase appears in the *Ahiman Rezon*, which states that the right hand espouses the characteristics of wisdom, trustworthiness, and moral improvement. In Pierson's *Traditions of Freemasonry*, he further explains that an oath taken with the face to the east (the emblematic source of the creative power) was deemed to be more solemn and binding than when taken with the face toward any other cardinal point. One can now understand the inherently profound nature of the oaths taken by all of us when we are initiated, passed, and raised.

The *Ahiman Rezon* further explains that the right hand, in all ages, was deemed an emblem of fidelity and that the ancients worshiped a deity under the name Fides. They recognized fidelity to be one of the highest attributes of the Godhead, and this virtue was often represented by two human figures holding each other by the right hand.

The qualities of faith and fidelity were thought to be resident in

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the right hand, and oftentimes the image of two little men shaking each other's right hand was deemed to represent deity. The modern practice of shaking hands after a deal is consummated may very well have its origins in these interpretations. The earliest known expression of this was found on a 9th-century BC Assyrian relief showing a king sealing a pact with a Babylonian leader. It originated as a gesture of peace and trust, showing both parties held no weapons.

The *Ahiman Rezon*, whose name has been derived from Spanish, translated as “There is the full account of the law,” bears a thorough perusal. Written by Laurence Dermott and published in 1756, it is the foundational text for the antient Grand Lodge of England and served as its Book of Constitutions. It was adopted by the Grand Lodges of Pennsylvania and South Carolina, amongst others. It serves as a guide to their Masonic principles, rituals, and regulations.

Currently, the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania offers a copy for less than \$4 on a well-known e-commerce website. There are many other versions and editions with a plethora of binding options, but, of course, at a higher cost. Well-worn copies can also be found in used bookstores if you are given to book hunting.

FIAT LUX!

Dr. Maria Kontaridis Receives David Wooster Medal in Silver

by Shane Dufresne

On Saturday night, April 11, at the Annual Session's Saturday night banquet, Dr. Maria Kontaridis received the David Wooster Medal in Silver from MWB Shane Dufresne for her extraordinary work in the medical research field.

Dr. Kontaridis is the executive director for the Masonic Medical Research Institute. MMRI's research is focused on understanding the mechanisms that cause congenital heart diseases, heart failure, diabetes/obesity, autism, autoimmune disorders, gastrointestinal diseases, and cancer. They have achieved significant breakthroughs in cardiovascular, autoimmune, and metabolic disease research in the last couple of years. Although she is the executive director, Dr. Kontaridis first considers herself a scientist.

Based in Utica, New York, MMRI was founded by the Grand Lodge of New York in 1958. It is primarily funded and supported by Masons from all over because of its exceptional medical research.



(l-r) Paul Huck, president of the board of directors for MMRI, Dr. Kontaridis, RWB Robert Hogan, Deputy Grand Master of New York, and MWB Shane Dufresne.

From the Quarry: Breaking the Stone

by Paul Ladd

Some of the habits that shape our lives were formed so quietly we hardly remember when they began: A quick word spoken in frustration. A tendency to interrupt rather than listen. A moment of impatience that becomes easier the next time it appears.

Most of these habits do not arrive with much fanfare. They gradually settle into our behavior, often without much notice. Over time, they begin to shape the way we react to people, to challenges, and to the ordinary frustrations of life. It is easy to assume these patterns are simply part of who we are. Yet experience often shows us something more hopeful.

There are moments when a man recognizes that a habit he has carried for years no longer reflects the kind of man he intends to be. Sometimes another person helps him see it. Sometimes the realization arrives afterward, in the quiet reflection that follows a reaction he wishes he had handled differently.

Those moments can be uncomfortable. They can also become the beginning of real progress. The Craft gives us a tool that speaks directly to that work. The common gavel.

In the hands of an operative mason, the gavel was used to break away the rough and unnecessary parts of a stone so it could be shaped into something useful. It was a tool not of destruction but of refinement. The builder used it carefully, removing only what did not belong so the stone could better serve the structure. The same idea applies to the shaping of character.

Every man carries habits that formed easily but no longer serve the man he is trying to become. Change begins when a man decides to work on what he has noticed, a decision that requires honesty and patience. A builder does not expect the stone to take shape after a single strike of the tool. Character is refined the same way, through steady attention over time, most often in small moments of awareness.

Habits are rarely reshaped all at once. They change gradually through repeated decisions made in quiet moments when no one else is paying attention. And if we are honest, most of us can recall a moment when we recognized one of these habits in ourselves. Perhaps it appeared in a familiar situation or during a conversation that did not unfold as well as we hoped. Those moments are not failures. They are invitations to continue shaping the stone.

The gavel reminds us that refinement takes time. Over time, those small adjustments begin to change the stone. What once appeared rough becomes more defined. What once caused difficulty begins to fit more naturally into the structure being built. The process requires patience. It also requires persistence. A builder does not abandon his work after the first strike of the tool. He continues patiently until the stone begins to resemble the form he intended.

Reflection

Which habit in your own conduct might benefit from the steady, patient work of the gavel?

Eight Companions Anointed to the Holy Order of High Priesthood by Arnie Grot

The 177th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Convention of Anointed High Priests in Royal Arch Masonry was held at York Masons Hall in East Hartford on May 2. The officers anointed, consecrated, and set apart eight Excellent Companions to the Holy Order of High Priesthood in RAM.

Similar to the Blue Lodge Past Master degree, this is the chair degree for those who will serve as High Priests of their respective Chapters. Each was in turn personally congratulated and presented with his Bible and lifetime membership card by EP Dan Loft. EP Loft then thanked his officers for their fine work of the evening.

The eight Companions who were anointed were Christopher Britland, Steven J. Chippalone, Paul Pereles, Fritzner Erauda, G. Randall Hornaday, David S. LaFargue, John J. McManus, and Corey Rice.

After the degree the following 2026 Officers were nominated and installed: Arnold S. Grot, Most Excellent President; Gregory Whitehouse, Excellent Vice President; Harold Elwell, Excellent Chaplain; William L. Miller, II, Excellent Treasurer-Recorder; William E. Weisert II, Excellent Master of Ceremonies; W. Stephen Matthews, Excellent Conductor; David S. LaFargue, Excellent Herald; Corey Rice, Excellent Steward; Eric H. Hoy, Excellent Sentinel.

Immediate Past Excellent President Tom Dulcos was presented with a Past Excellent President Jewel by Bill Miller.



Tom Dulcos is presented with his jewel by Bill Miller.



(front l-r) David S. LaFargue, Steven J. Chippalone, Fritzner Erauda, Paul Pereles, Christopher Britland, John J. McManus, Corey Rice, and G. Randall Hornaday (rear l-r) Arnie Grot, Tom Dulcos, Bill Miller, and Greg Whitehouse.



(front l-r) David S. LaFargue, Steven J. Chippalone, Fritzner Erauda, Paul Pereles, Christopher Britland, 026 003.jpg: Companions attending the ceremony, including Grand High Priest Jason R. Rieger (2nd from left, front row) and Most Puissant Grand Master Michael D. Sabia (2nd from right, front row).

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A Visit to Pahrump Lodge No. 54 F&AM, Pahrump, Nevada by Francis G. Way

Some Masons begin traveling almost immediately after they are raised, especially as the Perfect Ashlar program encourages brothers to get out and visit other lodges. Over the last 30 years, I have done my share of visiting, but have never visited a Blue Lodge outside of Connecticut.

Until Friday, May 1.

The recent visit of the Nevada Grand Master, MWB David Bechtel, to the annual Connecticut Grand Lodge session was a surprise when I heard of it that morning. The Worshipful Master of my lodge, WB Alberto Dieguez, texted me to say that the Nevada Grand Master was there. Shortly after, Ill. Bro. Howard Turner, 33° MSA, texted me: "I'm with the Grand Master of Nevada, he wants to know what town you live in." I responded that I lived in Pahrump.

Pahrump is a town in Nye County, about an hour outside of Las Vegas, on the border with California, named after the indigenous people who populated the area, and there are two lodges in town. Pahrump Lodge No. 54 (chartered in 1985) and Sandy Valley Lodge No. 57. Sandy Valley is also a town on the border of California, but in neighboring Clark County. Their lodge moved to share Pahrump Lodge's building several years ago.

After a few minutes, I received another text from Ill. Bro. Howard: "The Grand Master says join the lodge."

Well, to join the lodge, I first needed to visit the lodge. I set about making contact.

To deal with a rash of email scamming, Pahrump Lodge maintains only one email address on its website. I sent an email to that address. Within an hour, the Worshipful Master of Pahrump Lodge, WB Bill Cookston, responded to me, offering several possible dates to visit in addition to their next stated communication on May 14. I decided the Master Mason Degree on May 1 would be a good night to visit. The lodge would open at 5 p.m., have dinner at 5:30 p.m., and begin the degree after dinner.

I arrived just before 4:30 p.m. to allow for time to prove myself a Master Mason. That proved easy enough, my Grand View digital dues card coming in handy. I was warmly greeted by the Master and other brothers, who made me feel at home immediately. Their hospitality rivals any Masonic body that I have visited, and I was soon engaged in conversation with several brothers, learning a bit about the history of the lodge, their relationship with Sandy Valley Lodge (very close – a lot of cooperation between the two lodges), and about Masonry and life in Nevada in general.



I was given a tour of the lodge room, which, in my opinion, was a beautiful space. LED lighting allows for various hues during degree work and also brightens one area of the lodge as work is being done there, then another area as work moves. The entire room is brightened up for business meetings, but degrees use a

Continued on page 16

A Visit to Pahrump Lodge No. 54 F&AM, Pahrump, Nevada continued from page 15

lower level of lighting. The various extra touches (lit representations of the position of the Sun behind the Master and Wardens stations as described in ritual, for example) provide an impressive space in which to labor.

The opening was a bit different from the Connecticut standard ritual, both in wording and in some of the procedures. While I could write an entire article on the differences, it is worth noting that every brother is asked the pass (Junior and Senior Deacons handle that), and then the pass is communicated to the Worshipful Master by the Senior Deacon. The preparation room is referred to as the Inner Door (“there is an alarm at the inner door”), and the anteroom is the Outer Door. All the differences made the evening interesting, as ritual has always fascinated me, and some of the procedures really drive home the Deacons’ duties of “carrying messages” or “carrying orders,” much more so than in the Connecticut ritual.

The degree was very well done, even accounting for the absence of a couple of the brothers who normally do specific parts. WM Cookston presided over the first half, and Bro. Tarek Schoner handled the MEKS part in the second half. Bro. Russell Whitehead was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason in a degree that was very enjoyable to watch and no doubt very memorable for him. He was also treated to the Historical Lecture (what we call The Beehive Lecture).

After the degree, first-time visitors (there were two of us) were greeted by the Master west of the altar, officially welcomed, and presented with his pin.

My first visit to a lodge outside of Connecticut could not have gone any better. I am planning on returning for their next stated communication, and I am looking forward to enjoying the fellowship and brotherhood that is on display in our little corner of Nevada.



National Sojourner's New London Chapter No. 58 Initiates Two Brothers by Greg Webster

National Sojourner's New London Chapter No. 58 initiated two new Brother Veterans in April. Chapter President Bro. John Moore presented membership certificates to Bros. Mike Northup and Austin Ladd. QM3 Bro. Northup served in the U.S. Coast Guard, and PVT Bro. Ladd served in the U.S. Army Infantry.

They were initiated at the regular monthly dinner and meeting in Groton with numerous brothers and ladies present. Brother Veterans represented all the U.S. military services with many combined years of service and experience.



Nowhere does one become more convinced of the strong hold which Freemasonry takes upon the minds and lives of those aging workers in the Craft who have attained its highest honors and of their firm belief in the power of its teachings to purify the soul of men and raise them to a new dignity and to greater heights of spirituality and practical morality.
-George Washington

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District 1

Lodges 3, 5, 6, 8, 19, 65, 67, 85, 104, 107, 142, 144, 149



Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge No. 142 Passes One by Kraig Gray

On a beautiful Saturday, April 18, the brethren of Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge No. 142 in Easton passed Bro. Thomas Pitera to the Degree of Fellowcraft.

The morning began with a hearty breakfast, and the degree, held under inspection, was attended by several visiting brethren. The lecture work by SD Anthony Nunes, and Stewards Robert Hill and Matt Regney, was exceptional and reflected the lodge's continued commitment to quality ritual.

Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge has recently begun holding select Saturday morning degrees, allowing longtime organist Brother John Deer to be present. His music once again added a sense of harmony to the ceremony, which the WM Bob Curwen and all the brothers deeply appreciated.



Temple Lodge Trotters Tackle the Minuteman 5K

by Jonathan Achar

Despite the cold and blustery breezes whipping off the Long Island Sound, several runners from Westport's Temple Lodge No. 65 ran and walked in the early morning Minuteman 5k held on April 26 near Westport's Compo Beach and Longshore Park.

The event features a 5K, a 10K, and a kids' run, and participants come from across the state. This year, despite the rough weather, there was a good turnout, and Temple Lodge held its own, with all the brothers crossing the finish line. For their efforts, they enjoyed warming refreshments and snacks at an impromptu tailgate after the race.

Lodge participants included WM Bruce Duff, Bros. Richard Ruggiano, Gary Ecsedi, Dave Urban, Thomas Belden, Ernesto Cruz, Nico Hatsiandrou, Brian Clay, Jay Mountain, and Jon Achar.

This was the 47th running of the Minuteman 5K, presented annually by the Westport Women's League, with proceeds going to multiple worthy charities in Connecticut.



Temple Lodge No. 65 Initiates a Brother by Jonathan Achar

On April 23, Temple Lodge No. 65 of Westport conducted an Entered Apprentice degree, welcoming new brother Aaron Kling to the Craft.

Many brothers participated in the lectures and ceremonial oratory, with WM Bruce Duff presiding over the degree and a final word of welcome from RWB Waldemar “Wally” Jimenez, District Deputy for Masonic District 1A.

The degree was well attended, and the entire group enjoyed dessert and refreshments in the dining room afterward. It was, by any measure, a great evening at the lodge.



Washington Lodge No. 19 Travels to Present 50-Year Pin

Recently, brothers from Washington Lodge No. 19 in Monroe traveled to Bro. Ken Barrachina's home in Danbury to present his 50-year pin.

RWB Mark Hawkins, Grand Senior Warden, presented Bro. Ken with his pin. It was a beautiful day, and Bro. Ken was surrounded by his family and brothers.



Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge No. 142 Supports “A Taste of Ukraine” by Kraig Gray

For several years, Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge No. 142 in Easton has quietly opened both its building and its membership to humanitarian efforts connected to Ukraine. What began as a simple willingness to help ultimately grew into a remarkable series of community events centered on culture, education, compassion, and relief.

Several years ago, WB Eric Farrell received a request to host a concert for Ukraine at the lodge. Through the dedication and sponsorship of Gail Papageorge, the concert became an annual event for three consecutive years, bringing members of the community together in support of humanitarian aid efforts.

Last year, through the Masonic connections of WB Adam Plotnick and Bro. Mark Yurkiw of Temple Lodge No. 65, Bro. Yurkiw attended the concert. In addition to his Masonic involvement, Bro. Yurkiw heads the local nonprofit Ridgefield Responds and has been deeply involved in humanitarian work related to the war in Ukraine, particularly in helping organize



Continued on page 15

Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge No. 142 Supports "A Taste of Ukraine" continued from page 14

and transport critical medical supplies into war-affected regions. During that concert, an important connection was made.

Indi Nunes, a high school student and the child of Bro. Anthony Nunes was introduced to Bro. Yurkiw became inspired to become involved in the humanitarian effort. What initially began as a school project quickly grew beyond the confines of the classroom. Even after the assignment's grading period had ended, Indi Nunes continued the effort with determination and purpose.

That inspiration ultimately led to a three-part series of community events: a speaking engagement at Indi Nunes' school, a war-inspired theatrical performance at the Easton Public Library in cooperation with the Easton Arts Council, and ultimately "A Taste of Ukraine," a cultural evening hosted at Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge.

Along the way, many individuals contributed to the effort, including Gail Papageorge, the broader Easton community, Indi's peers, and brothers of the lodge. The effort demonstrated what can happen when young people are encouraged to engage with the world around them rather than turning away from suffering and hardship.

In addition to raising enough donations to fund approximately half of a shipping container of humanitarian supplies destined for Ukraine, the events also helped raise awareness in the local community — particularly among younger generations — about the human cost of war on civilian populations.

Freemasonry speaks of "making good men better," and events such as these serve as a reminder that the Craft is about more than stated communications and dinners, but especially about acts of charity, fellowship, and service to humanity.

The lodge remains proud to have played a small role in helping these efforts grow and in demonstrating that even simple acts of openness and goodwill can have a meaningful impact. Perhaps most meaningful is that the epicenter of all these acts of brotherly love was simply a lodge opening its doors and heart for a worthy cause.



Indi Nunes



Anthony and Indi Nunes



District 2

Lodges 13, 18, 21, 39, 40, 48, 49



St. Peter's Lodge No. 21 Hosts Presentation for New District Deputy by Peter Cleary

St. Peter's Lodge No. 21 recently held a warm and memorable District Deputy Presentation in honor of RWB Matthew Fitzgibbons of Masonic District 2A. The event brought together Masonic brothers from across the region in a strong display of fellowship, tradition, and support for Connecticut Masonry. Also joining the evening's festivities was new Associate Grand Marshal, WB Jerry Myers.

The highlight of the evening was the presence of MWGM Shane Dufresne and his suite of officers, including RWB F. Matthew Heinrich, Jr., Deputy Grand Master. RWB Fitzgibbon's mother, Rosalie, and son Brendan were also there and added a meaningful family dimension to the evening's celebration.

The ceremony reflected the enduring values of Freemasonry — brotherhood, charity, integrity, and service. Remarks throughout the evening recognized the dedication and commitment that RWB Fitzgibbons has demonstrated throughout his Masonic journey and his continued efforts in supporting the lodges and brethren of District 2A.

St. Peter's Lodge continues to play an active role within Connecticut Masonry, hosting events and programs that strengthen the bonds of brotherhood while honoring the traditions and principles of the fraternity.



District 3

Lodges 7, 11, 12, 42, 47, 55, 64, 78



King Solomon's Lodge No. 7 Initiates a Brother

by Douglas Barry, Jr.

King Solomon's Lodge No. 7 in Woodbury initiated a new brother on May 6. It was a wonderful evening of brotherhood.

After dinner, WM Stephen Saxton opened the stated communication for the Annual Inspection on the Entered Apprentice Degree. The lodge initiated Bro. Walter A Zelanin, III. Twenty-seven brothers, seven of whom were Past Masters, attended, and the degree work was excellent across the board.

The evening was a reminder of the lasting bonds of brotherhood that make the lodge so special.



King Hiram Lodge No. 12 Donates to Connecticut Freemason Foundation

At the Annual Session, brothers of King Hiram Lodge No. 12 in Shelton made a generous donation of \$15,000 to the Connecticut Freemason Foundation, the philanthropic branch of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut. King Hiram Lodge has done this several times in the past, and their generosity in helping others is admirable.



District 4

Lodges 1, 9, 16, 22, 30, 38, 63, 66, 77, 79, 87, 89, 97, 115, 125, 332, 401, 500



Ansantawae Lodge No. 89 Celebrates Three Fifty-Year Brothers by Bill Roots

On April 17, three brothers from Ansantawae Lodge No. 89 in Milford received their 50-year service pins. MWB Charles Buck, Jr., WB Charles Gagle, and Bro. William Byers were recognized for their half-century of service to the Craft.

(l-r) WB Gagle, MWB Dufresne, MWB Buck, Bro. Byers, and WM Jeffery Scepanski.



Trumbull Lodge No. 22 Hosts District Deputy Presentation by Grant Gould

Trumbull Lodge No. 22 in New Haven hosted the District Deputy Presentation for newly appointed District Deputy RWB Kirk C. Trofatter, Jr., and his Associate Grand Marshal, WB Amos A. Brooks. The presentation was conducted by RWB Nicholas H. Ives, Grand Junior Deacon, and was attended by more than 60 people, including MWGM Shane Dufresne and his entire line of officers.

The lodge extends best wishes to RWB Kirk and WB Amos, both Past Masters of Trumbull Lodge.



Ansantawae Lodge No. 89 Mother's Day Breakfast

by **Bill Roots**

WM Jeff Scepaniski and his officers hosted a Mother's Day Breakfast at Ansantawae Lodge No. 89 on Mother's Day. Smiles abounded as mothers were honored and treated to breakfast.

Bro. Jeff Holton bought a Mother's Day breakfast for his whole family.



District 5

Lodges 14, 29, 33, 36, 101, 128, 140, 146, 148



Sequin-Level Lodge No. 140 Supports Newington Memorial Day Parade

by **Larry S. Baker**

The Town of Newington Memorial Day parade is a long-standing tradition that began in the 1960s and was organized and funded by World War II veteran Frank Zuraski. Sequin-Level Lodge No. 140 has supported this annual event again this year. The lodge thanks the Newington Town Parade Committee for their tireless donation of time and resources in making this parade a total success.

Tim Manke, Jim Hannifan, Ken O'Brien, James Lavery, Louis Hilerio, Greg Stelmak, Larry S. Baker, William Roman, Fran Evon, and Eric Evon.



Valley Lodge No. 36 Hosts Annual Easter-Eve Breakfast Event

by **Nathaniel Jillette**

On Saturday, April 4, Valley Lodge No. 36 hosted another highly successful annual Easter-Eve Pancake Breakfast and Egg Hunt for the local community. More than 120 guests attended the festive morning event, enjoying a complimentary breakfast of pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, bacon, and fresh fruit.

Nearly 40 children enthusiastically participated in a variety of activities, including a popular photo booth, a massive egg hunt with nearly 2,000 eggs, and a special visit from the Easter Bunny. Families and friends gathered for fellowship, fun, and community spirit, continuing a cherished Valley Lodge tradition that grows each year.

Members of the lodge extend their gratitude to all volunteers, families, and community members whose support helped make the event another outstanding success.



(l-r): Shane Dawe, Bill Gleason, Nick Dethlefsen (Easter Bunny), WM James Tsapsinos, Guy Whelchel, Lisa Bohman



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District 6

Lodges 4, 25, 28, 70, 73, 88, 145, 400



District Deputy Presentation Masonic District 6A

by John DiCioccio

It was a full house at Friendship Tuscan Lodge No. 145 in Manchester on Saturday, April 25, for the reception to honor the new District Deputy and Associate Grand Marshal of Masonic District 6A. District Deputy RWB Christopher C. Ramsey and his Associate Grand Marshal WB Deepak C. Saluru were officially welcomed. MWGM Shane Dufresne and several other Grand Lodge officers attended. The ceremony was presided over by RWB F. Matthew Heinrich, Jr., Deputy Grand Master. Brothers and friends from the 6th District and beyond wished RWB Chris and WB Deepak a most successful term of office.

Following the ceremony, everyone enjoyed a delicious luncheon.



Columbia Lodge No. 25 Passed Two Fellowcrafts by Arnie Grot

On April 15, SW Jeff Spooner stepped up in the East, and Columbia Lodge No. 25 performed a Fellowcraft Degree, passing Bros. Caleb A. Guinn and Michael Ashia.

Acting WM Jeff Spooner found the two candidates in waiting who were then passed as Fellowcrafts. Bro. Vijay Pachamuchu gave the Approach Lecture, RWB Earl Evans delivered the Coming to Light Lecture, WB Jack Ranney presented the Working Tools, Bro. Brian Dikun delivered the Staircase Lecture, RWB Dave LaFargue presented the Letter G, and Bros. Dikun and Jesse Gay gave the First Section Lecture. RWB Earl Evans delivered the Charge.

The new Fellowcrafts were given their lecture books, and Acting WM Spooner congratulated them on their advancement. Bro. Guinn thanked the lodge and said he is excited to continue his journey. Bro. Ashia echoed Bro. Caleb's comments. WM Chris Gness also congratulated the new Fellowcrafts, commended the officers for a fine job, and thanked the kitchen crew for a great dinner.

RWB Robert C. Dodge, District Deputy of Masonic District 6B, congratulated the lodge on a fine degree and told the new Fellowcrafts how much work goes into preparing for a degree, emphasizing that this work is done for the candidates and the lodge brothers will always be there for them. He especially congratulated SD Brian Dikun for his presentation of the Middle Chamber lecture.

RWB, F. Matthew Heinrich, Jr., Deputy Grand Master, also congratulated the new Fellowcrafts and told them that the more they put into Masonry, the more they will get out. He commended the officers, and especially Acting WM Jeff Spooner, for doing a great job in his first time sitting in the East for a degree. RWB Heinrich presented the lodge with a commemorative coin from the Masonic Medical Research Institute (MMRI), thanking the lodge for its donation to the 3-5-7 campaign.



(L-r) RWB Heinrich, Bro. Chong Johnson (FC from Wyllis-St. John's Lodge No. 4), RWB Dodge, SD Dikun, Bro. Ashia, SW Spooner, Bro. Guinn, WB Grube, RWB Beebe, Bro. Spooner, and JD Crump.

Friendship Tuscan Lodge No. 145 Attends the Feast of the Pascal Lamb by Don Wills

On April 2, WM Jeffery Mayer of Friendship Tuscan Lodge No. 145 in Manchester, who is also Most Wise Master of the Cyrus Goodell Chapter of Rose Croix, Valley of Hartford, AASR NMJ, received permission to move the lodge charter to the Valley of Hartford in Newington. He opened Tuscan Lodge and went to refreshment. Tuscan Lodge then received Masonic education by witnessing the Scottish Rite's "Feast of the Pascal Lamb," which commemorates Scottish Rite brothers who have laid down their working tools, and is a semi-public ceremony.

The evening provided an opportunity for non-Scottish Rite brothers to see the Valley of Hartford cathedral and witness the Valley's work.



Brothers of Hartford No. 88 Visit Lexington and Concord

by Pat Jones

On a beautiful April Saturday morning, about 45 brothers and their significant others from Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88 took a bus trip to the Scottish Rite Museum and Library in Lexington, Massachusetts. The Museum was well worth the trip, having an abundance of displays and artifacts of Masonic history and culture. The museum also recognizes other national fraternal organizations, such as the Elks.

After the morning activities, everyone enjoyed a buffet lunch at the historically famous Concord Inn in Concord. After lunch, a short walk from the Inn brought the group to the Old North Bridge, Louisa May Alcott's house, and the "Old Manse" of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Ralph Waldo Emerson fame. Concord was founded only about 15 years after the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, and it was easy to imagine being in this area in colonial days. The tour guide clearly knew the area and brought it alive. Henry David Thoreau's Walden Pond is a short trek from the center of Concord.

The town of Concord is a living museum with historic buildings and sites. Lexington is well known as the site of "the shot heard round the world" and as the site of the first American victory in the American Revolution. WM Duane Mason promised an interesting, fun, and educational day, and he delivered. It was the perfect time for this trip, as the country is set to celebrate its 250th anniversary.

Earlier in the month, Hartford Evergreen initiated four new brothers. Bros. Brandon Velasco, Nicholas Bean, and Michael Green became members of Hartford Evergreen Lodge and Bro. Nicholas Vassalo joined Composite Lodge No. 28. It was especially satisfying to have some of the lodge's newest brothers take on some important parts in the ceremonies. Bros. Kirt Ciantar and Jonathan Hayes did a masterful job with the First Section Lecture, while Bro. Daniel Jacques was outstanding presenting the Charge. He also worked tirelessly at a recent fund-raising event and has repeatedly volunteered in many areas despite having been raised only about six months ago. WM Mason has encouraged preparation and training, and these brothers have grown. Not to be overlooked, Bro. Patrick Chagnon of Washington Lodge No. 70 did an outstanding presentation of the working tools. It's always a pleasure to have brothers from other lodges working together.

At the end of April, the brothers celebrated the 100th birthday of Bro. Aaron Gersten, who has been a Mason for more than 67 years. Bro. Aaron is loved by all his brothers and has been a standard of excellence and an inspiration to everyone. Grand Lodge presented him with the Oliver Wolcott Award for Community Service this year. It was a well-deserved honor for a wonderful brother.



Bro. Daniel Jacques



Bro. Aaron Gersten celebrates his 100th birthday.



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District 7

Lodges 2, 43, 51, 81, 95, 112, 119, 131, 151



Brother of Washington Lodge No. 81 Receives 50-Year Pin by Jeffrey A. Blayman

On a temperate day in May, brothers from Washington Lodge No. 81 in Cromwell, Warren Lodge No. 51 in Portland, and Anchor Lodge No. 112 in East Hampton visited WB William D. Stafford at his home as he received his 50-year pin. RWB Jeffrey A. Blayman, Grand Junior Steward, made the presentation on behalf of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut.

WB Stafford is 88 years old, lives in Portland, and was raised in 1976. He was surrounded by many family members, the brothers of Washington Lodge, and the 7th Masonic District. Grand Lodge is proud to congratulate and honor him for his service to the Craft.



Washington Lodge No. 81 Celebrates 100 Years at 325 Main Street by Richard Gorman

On April 23, Washington Lodge No. 81 in Cromwell gathered to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the lodge occupying its current location at 325 Main Street.

The lodge served dinner and was blessed with visiting brothers from Warren Lodge No. 51 in Portland, Anchor Lodge No. 112 in East Hampton, and St. John's Lodge No. 2 in Meriden, along with visitors from Grand Lodge.

Family members also attended, and everyone enjoyed an evening of brotherhood, camaraderie, and fellowship. Brothers presented a brief history of the first 75 years of Washington Lodge and of the building, constructed mainly through the gifts and generosity of brother Masons.

While Washington Lodge is celebrating 100 years in its current location, this year marks the 170th anniversary of its charter in 1856.



Warren Lodge No. 51 Supports Portland High School Tennis Team by Jeffrey A. Blayman

When Bro. Brian Anzellotti's daughter showed promise as a member of the Portland High School tennis team, he wondered how the team could benefit from some modern technology. He found the Ace-Mate tennis robot, which simulates realistic play by serving and catching balls for every skill level, using cameras for shot tracking and omnidirectional wheels for movement.

Thanks to the efforts of WM David L. Rutter, Jr., and the brothers of Warren Lodge No. 51, they raised funds with the support of numerous Portland-based businesses and family friends. The robot was purchased and donated, along with 150 tennis balls bearing the Warren Lodge logo. This equipment was a game-changer for the team.

Warren Lodge would like to thank the generosity of Demir at Campagna Restaurant, Paul at Portland Ale House, Lorraine Anzellotti, Brian & Lucille Vibberts, Chris Shallow, Jim & Christine Wilkinson, Brian & Suzanne of Schultz Electric, Jonah & Jen Piascik, Robert Krawic, Howard Swanson, Daniel Alexander, Primary Landscaping, Glendinning Marine Products, and Karl with a K from NAPA of Portland.



District 8

Lodges 10, 31, 34, 57, 102, 116, 150



The Coat Of Arms of St. James Lodge No. 23 by Greg Webster

In April 1961, a black-and-white ink drawing was presented to St. James Lodge No. 23 at the Norwich Masonic Temple by its artist, WB Lester W. Bensen. RWB James Royal Case, Grand Historian, gave a presentation on Masonic symbolism. The shield itself was conceived by Bro. Leslie H. Gordon, Historian of St. James Lodge from 1959 to 1966. The ceremony was acknowledged by the Connecticut Square and Compasses magazine.

St. James Lodge was named in honor of St. James the Apostle. The motto, “Laborare Est Ora-re” translates to “The Greatest Labor Is To Pray.”

Upper left quadrant: The Mountain Laurel, the state flower of Connecticut.

Lower left quadrant: The patriotic Minuteman, ready to serve at a minute’s notice.

Upper right quadrant: “As above, so below.” The square represents the Earth, the compasses represent the heavens, and the “G” denotes geometry in the physical plane and God in the spiritual realm.

Lower right quadrant: The rose signifies the dawn and emphasizes that life and its strength come from God. Norwich is also known as the “Rose of New England.”

A large color painting of this Coat of Arms hangs proudly in the foyer of Somerset-St James Lodge No. 34, beside the Coat of Arms of Somerset Lodge. The St. James Coat of Arms ink drawing was preserved from the destruction in the Norwich Masonic Temple by WB Charlie Tefft, Past Historian of St. James Lodge.



District 9

Lodges 15, 24, 46, 60, 69, 110, 113, 122



Moosup Ye Olde Table Lodge by Brian Keith

On Saturday, April 4, Putnam Lodge No. 46 and Moosup Lodge No. 113 joined forces to present the 29th edition of Moosup’s Ye Olde Table Lodge entitled “Powder,” honoring the 250th anniversary of the nation’s independence, recounting two extraordinary exploits in the life of Major General Israel Putnam.

The house lights dimmed, the sound of fifes, drums, and marching soldiers filled the lodge room, and three colonials in tricorne hats became visible at the top of a hill in the west: General Israel Putnam flanked by two of his militia. With the sounds of battle increasing, Putnam stirred the troops with his now-famous speech: “Conserve your powder. Ensure a proper line of sight, and above all, do not fire until you see the whites of their eyes!”



Continued on page 26

Moosup Ye Olde Table Lodge continued from page 25

The room plunged into darkness again, the sounds of the battle and the wounded echoing. The house lights came up, revealing the battlefield filled with smoke, the hill emptied by the retreating soldiers, and one patriot face down on the hill where he paid the ultimate price for America's freedom.

RWB Rob Eubanks, Grand Junior Steward, served as Table Lodge Master for the evening, flanked by then RWB Shane Dufresne, Deputy Grand Master, and a distinguished East perched just above the Wolf's Den, where in 1742, Putnam crawled into a cave to face off with a she-wolf responsible for killing over 70 of his sheep in a single night.

Following the evening of good food, good company, and good drink, Putnam (portrayed by WB Ken Stilwell) reappeared and entered Wolf's Den, where he concluded the evening's salute by shooting what is widely believed to have been the last remaining wolf in Connecticut.

Each guest left with a collection of custom coasters printed for the occasion, featuring a logo of the memorial statue of Putnam in Brooklyn above a wolf's head.



Fayette Lodge No. 69 Hosts Blue Lodge Council and Mason of the Year Presentation by Cody Baumgartner

Fayette Lodge No. 69 in Ellington hosted the Blue Lodge Council for District 9, as representatives from the lodges of the Quiet Corner came together, with officers from the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, including MWGM Shane Dufresne and the RWB F. Matthew Heinrich, Jr., Deputy Grand Master.

This meeting was the final meeting for Council president WB David Boland, and the election of WB Christopher Britland as the new president. The meeting featured a presentation by the MWGM Shane Dufresne and his officers on the financial health of Grand Lodge, a proposal by RWB Rob Eubanks relating to the character and composition of the Actual Past Master's Degree held within District 9, a presentation by Perceived Paranormal East Coast, and the presentation for the Mason of the Year for District 9B, Bro. Cody Linnell of Fayette Lodge.

Bro. Linnell was joined by his fiancée Anne, and young daughter, Morgan, as his service and excellence were recognized by the Council. Bro. Cody served his first full year after being raised as Junior Deacon with excellence and distinction, and has excelled as Senior Deacon in 2026, assisting multiple lodges and excellently performing the long-form Middle Chamber lecture. He has also committed himself above and beyond by spearheading and managing multiple food drives, assisting with and participating in Fayette Lodge's regular bood drives, and, in general, committing himself to the local community.



Bro. Cody Linnell, and family (center) receives the Mason of the Year award.

The meeting concluded with the presentation by Perceived Paranormal East Coast, an organization that seeks to "humanize the grave" by not only investigating and researching paranormal phenomena that could potentially be attributed to supernatural causes, but also presenting that evidence, information, and findings to the public at large.

If you or anyone you know might have evidence that paranormal activity can be recognized and investigated, you can reach out to the team (which includes a Masonic brother) at perceivedparanormal@gmail.com.

Craft at Refreshment

For more details about any of these events, please contact the lodge directly. In many cases, reservations are required, and they may or may not be open to the public.

All event information is supplied by the lodges and pulled from various calendars. The "Connecticut Freemasons" newspaper is not responsible for errors. When traveling, please contact the secretary of the lodge to verify all times and events.

Recurring Events

Every Thursday, Putnam Lodge No. 46,
Putnam, 7 p.m., Thursday Night Meeting
Socializing, Rehearsing, Prepping.

Recurring Breakfasts

First Sunday of the Month, Sequin-Level Lodge No. 140,
Newington, 7 a.m., SBA Breakfast Fundraiser

First Thursday of the Month, 8th Masonic District,
Groton, 9 a.m., *Groton Townhouse Restaurant*

Third Saturday of the Month, Frederick Franklin Lodge No. 14,
Plainville, 8 a.m., *Uncle Bob's Ham & Eggers, 2 Linden Street, Plainville*

Events

Tue., June 2, 10:30 a.m., DeMolay Golf Tournament, Wallingford,
The Farms Country Club, 180 Chesire Rd, Wallingford, CT 06492

Sat., Jun 6, 9 a.m., Brainard Lodge No. 102, New London, *Great Strides Walk (Cystic Fibrosis), Ocean Beach Park, 98 Neptune Ave, New London.* <https://fundraise.cff.org/newlondon2026>

Sat., June 6, 2 p.m., Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88,
South Windsor, 200th Anniversary Celebration and Rededication

Sat., June 13, 9 a.m., Grand Masters Day,
Wallingford

Wed., June 17, 6 p.m., Columbia Lodge No. 25,
South Glastonbury, Summer Picnic

Fri, Jul 31, 6:30 p.m., 4th Annual Masonic Family Day Ball Game, Dodd Stadium, Norwich, *Fundraiser at Norwich Sea Unicorn Baseball Game.* Contact Jeffrey Blayman for tickets, jblayman@gmail.com or call (860) 334-5277

Craft at Labor

*All dates, times, and locations, are supplied by the lodges. If there is a dinner, the time in the heading reflects that. The Connecticut Freemason newspaper is not responsible for errors. **When traveling, please contact the Secretary of the lodge to verify all times and events and to inquire about dinner reservations.***

Entered Apprentice Degrees

Sat, Aug 29, 4:30 p.m., Harmony Lodge No. 42,
Waterbury, *Colonial EA Degree at New Haven Annex, \$60 pp,*
contact lodge for details

Tues, Sept 22, 7 p.m., Acacia Lodge No. 85, Greenwich

Fellowcraft Degrees

Thurs, Jun 25, 6:30 p.m., Hiram Lodge No. 1,
New Haven, Dinner

Master Mason Degrees

Mon, Jun 1, 7 p.m., Oxoboxo Lodge No. 116, Montville

Sat, Jun 6, 8:30 a.m., Ashlar Aspetuck Lodge No. 142, Easton

Sat, Sept 12, 1:45 p.m., Coastal Lodge No. 57, Stonington,
Outdoor Master Mason Degree. Contact lodge for detail

Table Lodges

Thur, Aug 13, 6:30 p.m., Hiram Lodge No. 1, New Haven,
Pizza Table Lodge



Let The Right One In – Seeking the Right Brother, Not Just Another Brother by Justin Duffy

*“Let the right one in
Let the old dreams die
Let the wrong ones go
They cannot do what you want them to do*

*Let the right one in
Let the old dreams die
Let the wrong ones go
They do not see what you want them to*

*Let the right one in
Let the old things fade
Put the tricks and schemes (for good) away”*

I was sitting in lodge last fall listening as the District Deputy waxed poetic about then Grand Lodge’s latest membership initiative: the *Blue Wave*. He emphasized that the Grand Master’s primary goal was to bring in as many new members as possible. “After all,” he concluded, “our lodges won’t survive if we don’t attract as many new members as we can.”

His words immediately brought to mind the lyrics from Morrissey’s 1992 song, *Let the Right One Slip In*. In it, Morrissey urges his friend to stop seeking love in all the wrong places and to let go of outdated habits and limiting expectations. Only by doing so, he suggests, can the right one truly slip in. His friend’s past experiences and preconceived ideas were clouding his search and obscuring his path.

This analogy struck me as unexpectedly relevant to our current predicament in Freemasonry. In our rush to attract new members, are we truly letting the right ones in? Or are we, in our eagerness, allowing quantity to eclipse quality?

Historically, Freemasonry has never been a numbers game or a mass movement. It was intentionally selective. The ideal candidate was not just a man of sound body and mind, but one of integrity, humility, and sincere intent. Admission into the Craft was a considered process, designed to ensure that both the candidate and the lodge would benefit. Yet today, many lodges face declining numbers, and in response, recruitment initiatives sometimes mirror marketing campaigns more than sacred traditions. The push becomes about increasing headcount rather than fostering brotherhood.

Our strength has never come from how many sit in our lodges, but from the character, commitment, and integrity of those who do. Every man we bring into the Craft should reflect and reinforce the values we hold sacred: brotherly love, relief, and truth. But what

happens when we let in the wrong ones? When we focus only on increasing membership, we risk weakening the very foundation that makes Freemasonry unique. The wrong candidate, however well-meaning, can erode harmony, dilute our teachings, and shift our focus from internal growth to external appearances. We would see disengaged members who rarely attend meetings. We’ll experience a decline in ritual quality when new brothers are rushed through degrees without true mentorship. We will risk fracturing the fellowship when members do not share common values or respect for the institution. A lodge that grows too fast without discernment can hollow out just as quickly.

This is not to say we should resist all growth or turn away every inquirer with a raised eyebrow. On the contrary, the right candidate may not always look like a traditional Mason. He may come from a background we have not seen in our lodge before. But he will bring with him the qualities that transcend background: curiosity, moral character, a willingness to serve, and a desire for personal transformation. The right man seeks light. He strives to be made better. He challenges us to live our obligations more fully, and he strengthens the bond that unites us as brothers.

Freemasonry is not for everyone, and it was never meant to be, so letting the right one slip in requires readiness. Not just in the candidate, but in the lodge. Are we cultivating a culture of mentorship, education, and accountability that will nourish a good man once he enters? Are we offering him more than degrees and dues? Are we offering him true light?

Perhaps it’s time to refocus. Freemasonry does not need a *wave*; it needs a *tide*. One that rises slowly and steadily, bringing with it men who will anchor us for generations to come. We must be patient, discerning, and intentional. Let us prepare the way, not for more, but for better. One worthy brother who lives by our principles contributes more to the Craft than 10 who simply wear the apron. Let us never forget it is not about how many enter our doors, but how deeply they walk the path once inside. Let us, as Morrissey says, let the right ones slip in.

Officers of the Grand Lodge AF & AM of Connecticut ~ 2026-27



Front Row L-R: James M. Anderson, RW Grand Secretary; Matthew F. Griffin, RW Grand Senior Deacon; F. Matthew Heinrich Jr., RW Deputy Grand Master; Shane Dufresne, Most Worshipful Grand Master; Mark H. Hawkins, RW Grand Senior Warden; James A. Moran, RW Grand Junior Warden; Thomas Gondek, RW Grand Treasurer.

Row 2 L-R: Gregory K. Whitehouse, RW Deputy Grand Secretary; Jeffrey A. Blayman, RW Grand Junior Steward; James A. Saracenic, RW Grand Marshal; Nicholas H. Ives, RW Grand Junior Deacon; Robert S. Eubanks, RW Grand Senior Steward; Brian E. Beals, RW Deputy Grand Treasurer; Mark W. Dzurnak, Assistant to the Grand Master.

Row 3 L-R: Donald M. Wismann, RW Grand Organist; Daniel W. Nichols, Associate Grand Tiler; Michael Abrahamson, Associate Grand Tiler; Richard C. Memmott Jr., RW Grand Tiler; Charles A. Miller, III, RW Associate Grand Tiler; Jonathan L. Collingwood, RW Associate Grand Tiler; Harold A. Elwell, RW Grand Chaplain, Rev. Carl H. Anderson, RW Grand Almoner.

Brothers not pictured above



David J. Stewart,
RW Grand Historian;

Grand Masters Gala at the Aqua Turf

by Shane Dufresne

On Saturday evening, April 18, the annual Grand Masters Gala was held at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville. This was a change of venue after many great years of the gala being held at The Woodwinds in Branford. I tried to greet everyone as they came in. I also attempted to visit each table as the night went on to personally thank everyone for being there. As you can guess, this proved to be a daunting task, and I missed getting to a few tables. But I am truly appreciative of all who were there and a part of the celebration.



This year's gala had a final count of about 405 attendees. By all accounts, the brothers and guests had a great time. I heard nothing but great things about the food, the beautiful facility and grounds, and the wide openness of the room. I also heard nothing but great compliments on the staff.



I am truly humbled by the turnout at the gala and the support I have received thus far. I look forward to my travels throughout the state to attend many more functions and be with my brothers and sisters.



I would be remiss if I did not thank the gala committee, who made the gala an enormous success. I cannot thank them enough. Bros. Gary Byram, Al Podzunas, Michael Kenausis, WBs Kevin Kazlaukas, Kyle Podpolucha, Chris Martinelli, Joseph Pisani, Jason Gadue, and RWBs Mark Dzurnak and Fred Marotti made this an evening that Michelle and I will never forget. As always, RWB Michael Abrahamson and WB Dan Devoe were top-notch with the video and audio technology.



Continued on page 31

Grand Master's Gala at the Aqua Turf continued from page 30



Continued on page 32

Grand Master's Gala at the Aqua Turf continued from page 31



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