NOVEMBER 2026

Connecticut FREEMASONS







In This Issue

Photos from the Semi-Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, AF&AM, of the State of Connecticut, October 17, 2026

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Most Worshipful Grand Master

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RW Deputy Grand Master

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RW Grand Senior Warden

Bro. James A. Moran, Jr.
RW Grand Junior Warden

Bro. Thomas J. Gondek
RW Grand Treasurer

Bro. James M. Anderson
RW Grand Secretary

Bro. Matthew F. Griffin
RW Grand Senior Deacon

Bro. Nicholas H. Ives
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Bro. James A. Saraceni
RW Grand Marshal

Bro. Robert S. Eubanks
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Deputy Grand Secretary

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Assistant to the Grand Master

Not just a man. A Mason.

Connecticut FREEMASONS

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THE GRAND LODGE OF CONNECTICUT AF & AM

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Letters, articles, and advertisements may be sent to the Editor Frank Way at **submissions@ctfreemasons.net** and are due on the10th of the month prior to the next issue.

Grand Lodge 2026 Semi-Annual Communication

by Bob Furce

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Connecticut AF&AM was opened at 9 a.m. on Saturday, October 17, in the Hartog Auditorium at Ashlar Village in Wallingford. The Grand Chaplain offered a prayer for all departed brothers, and the Grand Master welcomed all attending brothers. He then recognized the Past Grand Masters. He then recognized the District Deputies, Associate Grand Marshals, District Almoners, and District Lecturers.

Having determined a quorum was present, he requested the tellers to retire to prepare for elections. He announced that the Grand Secretary, RWB James Anderson, was retiring after this year and that the Deputy Grand Secretary was interested in filling the vacancy. Votes were cast and collected by the District Deputies.

The Grand Treasurer, RWB Tom Gondek, presented the proposed budget for the upcoming year. In order to have a balanced budget, the Grand Lodge needed about $400,000. He further explained the details of the budget and made 11 recommendations and resolutions:

1. Increase the annual per capita assessment from $65 to $90 per assessed member ($25 increase). The assessment has not been increased in 10 years, and the proposed assessment will help address higher operating costs incurred during that period.

2. Apply a standard 3% annual Consumer Price Index adjustment to the per capita assessment to help Grand Lodge manage rising costs, including changes in interest rates and utility costs. The estimated CPI for 2026 is 3.4%

3. Authorize Grand Lodge to collect the per capita assessment for Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts listed on the membership rolls as of December 31 each year.

4. Approve a one-time $100 membership fee for new Entered Apprentices as part of the degree cost and for members affiliating with the Grand Lodge of Connecticut from other grand jurisdictions.

5. Collect the existing $25 donation at initiation or affiliation, rather than when the member becomes a Master Mason. Of this amount, $20 will support the Connecticut Freemasons Foundation and $5 will support the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Fund.

6. Provide Masonic passports at no charge to Master Masons raised during the calendar year, with Grand Lodge paying the $10 donation to the Masonic Medical Research Institute (MMRI). The fee for established Master Masons will remain $10.

7. Discontinue the Lifetime Membership Program.

8. Beginning in FY 2028-2029, discontinue the property and liability insurance opt-in for Section 501(c)(2) title holding companies. Lodges that directly own their property and improvements without a title holding company may continue to participate in the Grand Lodge master policy.

9. Request all Section 501(c)(2) title holding companies to provide Grand Lodge with a certificate of insurance showing that the lodge property and improvements are insured.

10. Continue the current publication schedule for the *Connecticut Freemasons:* six printed issues and five digital issues through FY 2027-2028. This will provide reliable cost information and support accurate planning for any schedule change for FY 2028-2029.

11. Change the fiscal year reporting period from March 1 – February 28 (29) to April 1 – March 31 to ensure budgeted income and expenses are associated as closely as possible with the installation of the Grand Master and to reduce expenditure by the outgoing Grand Master outside their budgeted fiscal year.

The budget and resolutions were voted and passed.

At 9:45 a.m., the Grand Master called the Grand Lodge from labor to refreshment, and RWB Chris Earle and WB Jon-Paul Venoit held the Masonicare Corporation Annual Membership meeting. Trustees were elected, and the Masonicare Board of Trustees and executive staff were recognized.

Grand Master Dufresne thanked Masonicare CEO Venoit for all the help to Grand Lodge and presented him with the Oliver Wolcott Award for Community Service, in recognition of the outstanding service to the community that exemplifies the Ancient Masonic teachers' concern for the well-being of Mankind and belief in a worldwide brotherhood of man.

WB Venoit spoke to the Craft, reminded them of the enhancements to the Concentric Circle, and directed them to https://www.masonicare.org/i-am-mason. He explained how Masonicare helped Grand Lodge with the expense of the *Connecticut Freemasons* newspaper. He also spoke of the new golf simulator and how brothers can reserve time on it for $25/hour.

Masonicare trustee elections saw MWB Bruce Bellmore, WB Kerry Brown, and Sister Bonnie McWain elected to 3-year terms. The Masonicare meeting was then adjourned.

The Grand Lodge received donations: WB Kyle Podpolucha presented $ 9,500 to Donate Life for the one-day skydiving event. WB Jerry Nero of Annawon Lodge No. 115 presented a $13,000 check to House of Heroes. MWB Chip Stamm and the Widows Sons of Connecticut presented $1,000 to the Grand Lodge Almoner Fund.

Continued on page 4

Grand Lodge 2026 Semi-Annual Communication continued from page 3

The Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master presented the Master Builder and Master Craftsman awards to Washington Lodge No. 19 and Widow's Son Lodge No. 66. Bro. Roland Mason, MWB Gary Arseneau, and Bro. Anthony Nunes received Mentor Awards. The Trestleboard of Excellence Award was presented to Trumbull Lodge No. 22, Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge No. 142, and Friendship-Tuscan Lodge No. 145. The Grand Master presented an Award of Appreciation to Hartford-Evergreen Lodge No. 88. Twenty-two Perfect Ashlar Awards were also presented.

The results of the 2027 Grand Lodge officers were returned, and all elected graciously accepted their positions: Grand Master-elect RWB F. Matthew Heinrich, Jr., Deputy Grand Master-elect RWB Mark H. Hawkins, Grand Senior Warden-elect RWB James A. Moran, Jr., Grand Junior Warden-elect RWB Matthew F. Griffin, Grand Treasurer-elect RWB Thomas J. Gondek, and Grand Secretary-elect RWB Gregory K. Whitehouse.

RWB Hawkins presented the new Safety and Awareness Program CHIPS under COCA. The new CHIPS 3.0 program will focus on protecting children and seniors. The program will include a Silver Alert Kit and a Child ID kit. They are looking for district representatives to lead as program managers. The new program has two focus points: identification and abuse.

Two lodges surrendered their charters to merge. St. Andrew's Lodge No. 64 will merge with Seneca Lodge No. 55, and Wolcott Lodge No. 60 will merge with Uriel Lodge No. 24.

RWB Robert Eubanks of the Fraternal Relations Committee informed the Craft that they are reviving the role of Grand Representative. Opportunities will be posted, and visits to the Grand Jurisdiction must be made within 5-year periods; a written report will be required within 90 days of the visit. This is to strengthen Masonic relations abroad.

MWB Stamm spoke about fraternal relations and explained to the brethren that there is a process to follow and that traveling brothers should provide travel plans and obtain the proper paperwork. They should not just go knock on doors at their destination.

RWB Beals presented two pieces of proposed legislation, R&R 7013 (adding a section under those activities not requiring dispensation for parades) and R&R 3513, closing the life membership program to any new applications. Both proposals passed.

The Grand Master summarized his report, stating he is a man of few words and directed brothers to read the full report in the handout.

The Grand Master then closed Grand Lodge at 11:55 a.m.

Welcome to Our New Brothers!

St. Peter's Lodge No. 21
John Cavanaugh
Igor Marinho
Vilson Vataj
Conor Patrick Whelan

Trumbull Lodge No. 22
Julian Vernon Myers

Ark Lodge No. 39
Gene F. Morrell
Connor James Stackpole

Warren Lodge No. 51
Alvah Dane Abbott
Mark Anthony Fontaine

Coastal Lodge No. 57
Marc Andrew Bosse
Trevor Anthony Doubek
Gianni Lorenzo Pezzolesi

Corinthian Lodge No. 104
Quamere Brantley



Grand Master's Message

by MWB Shane Dufresne

As the last of the autumn leaves fall to the ground, and the air turns crisp, the days get shorter and the nights get longer. But for one day, our nation pauses to observe one of its most sacred traditions, Thanksgiving.

For centuries, this time of year has brought families and friends together to reflect on their lives. It's time to be thankful, count our blessings, and offer prayers of gratitude to the Great Architect of the Universe.

This year, as I look back on the labor of the brothers and lodges across our state, my heart is filled with profound pride, thankfulness, and gratitude. Gratitude is woven into the very fabric of our ritual. Gratitude is the foundational stone upon which our moral edifice is built. From the moment we first knelt at the altar, we were taught never to undertake any great or important endeavor without first invoking the blessing of Deity.

But for me, first and foremost, I am thankful for the support that I receive from you. I am also grateful for the fellowship of this fraternity. In a world that often feels fractured, divided, and chaotic, our lodge rooms remain a sanctuary for peace and harmony. I have witnessed firsthand the genuine affection with which brothers greet one another, meet on the level and part on the square.

I am equally thankful for the spirit of Relief that defines our fraternity. Throughout this year, I have watched our brethren quietly step up to care for people in their communities, to help, aid, and assist our brothers and widows facing adversity. Not just here in our jurisdiction, but elsewhere.

In September, I asked the brothers and lodges of Connecticut to consider donating to our brothers in Indiana whose Grand Lodge and Scottish Rite building were vandalized. A brother questioned if it was appropriate or necessary because they have "more Masons and more money than us." That there was insurance for things like this. But for me, that wasn't the point. It wasn't necessarily about the money. I didn't set a goal for how much to raise. Nor did I care how much was raised and donated. It was simply to show solidarity with them, that they were not alone. That this can happen to us. This is what Masons do. Because of the brothers and lodges of Connecticut, we were able to give them a generous donation, for which they are extremely grateful.

To the unsung heroes – our lodge secretaries, the mentors who instruct our newly raised Master Masons, and the brethren maintaining our temples, you have my deepest admiration and gratitude.

Finally, I am thankful for the families who support us. The strength of Freemasonry relies on the patience, love, and support of our spouses, partners, children, and loved ones. I know without the support of my wingman, Michelle, my journey this year and the last several would be impossible.

As you gather around your respective tables this Thanksgiving, please convey to your families my deepest gratitude for the support they give you as you do our great work.

Let us carry the warmth of this holiday into the winter months ahead. I challenge each of you to reach out to a brother you haven't seen in the lodge room lately. Call a Masonic widow to ensure her needs are met.

May the Great Architect bless you, your families, and our great fraternity this Thanksgiving season, and always.



Connecticut Freemasons

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF CONNECTICUT, A.F. & A.M.

Use the New Apps!

The **Connecticut Freemasons** has moved to a hybrid distribution model. Subscribers can easily read the newspaper on their phones or tablets.

The **FREE CTFM Reader App** is available on both the Google Play Store for Android devices and the Apple App Store for iPhones and iPads. It provides easy, convenient access for phones and tablet devices.



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A Note of Thanksgiving Gratitude To Our Contributors

by Francis G. Way

Thanksgiving will be here soon, and I'd like to send a note of gratitude to everyone who has submitted articles or helped publish the *Connecticut Freemasons* newspaper.

We sometimes mention that another jurisdiction or Masonic organization requests permission to reprint some of our content. We have at least one other jurisdiction that archives our newspaper in their Masonic library. News about what we do as Connecticut Masons travels far and wide.

What we hardly ever mention is just how unique we are across this great land of ours. Other Grand Lodges have publications. Some are mere four-page Word documents that are published irregularly. A few are fancy, glossy magazines published quarterly; a couple have no publication at all. But hardly any have lodge news, and those that do have lodge news might have perhaps one article, sometimes six months out of date.

Our publication shows active Connecticut Freemasonry. It shows brothers at labor; it shows brothers, families and friends sharing fellowship during refreshment; it showcases our philanthropy; it highlights the gem we possess in Masonicare – in short, it shows how just and upright and alive Connecticut Masonry is.

It could not show any of that without the contributions of all of you who've helped.

On behalf of Grand Lodge Publications, thank you, and we wish you a Happy Thanksgiving.

Congratulations to Our 75-Year Members!

Basil Deligeorges
Brainard Lodge No. 102

Alvin J. MacBrien
King Hiram Lodge No. 12

Congratulations to Our 50-Year Members!

Kenneth S. Barrachina
Washington Lodge No. 19

Bruce Raymond Bellmore
Hiram Lodge No. 1

Ronald E. Dube
St. John's Lodge No. 2

Christopher John Earle
Trumbull Lodge No. 22

Carl Richard Efland
Cosmopolitan Lodge No. 125

Thomas Merle Evans
America St. John's No. 8

Charles T. Gagel
Ansantawae Lodge No. 89

Russell Ward George
Compass Lodge No. 9

Alan Bruce Goldstein
Friendship Tuscan Lodge No. 145

Robert W. Grieve
St. Peter's Lodge No. 21

Leonard R. Katz
America St. John's Lodge No. 8

Gerald J. Lagace
Frederick Franklin Lodge No. 14

John R. Lewis
Shepherd Salem Lodge No. 78

Sterling J. MacPherson, III
Uriel Lodge No. 24

Sanford G. Meiseles
Cosmopolitan Lodge No. 125

David Felix Poulin
Harmony Lodge No. 42

Mark Q. Smith
Ionic Lodge No. 110

William D. Stafford
Washington Lodge No. 81

Thomas Hanford Stevens
King Hiram Lodge No. 12

Theodore H. Trutnau, Jr.
Hiram Lodge No. 1

Ralph L. Weed, Sr.|
Union Lodge No. 5

Walter C. Whipple
Evening Star Lodge No. 101

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

Sherwin Kenneth Baril
Temple Lodge No. 16

Robert L. Berlepsch
Corinthian Lodge No. 63

Stephen M. Brandt
Montgomery Lodge No. 13

Stephen F. Brittain
Harmony Lodge No. 42

Robert P. Carver
St. Johns Lodge No. 2

Ronald A. Glifort
Ansantawae Lodge No. 89

Patrick Francis Griffin
Columbia Lodge No. 25

Harry J. Howard
St. Peters Lodge No. 21

Raymond W. Mather
Uriel Lodge No. 24

John W. Merrick
Union Lodge No. 31

Salvatore Passeggiata
Day Spring Lodge No. 30

Clarifications and Answers About the New Publishing Schedule/Method

We have been using our hybrid publishing method for the *Connecticut Freemasons* newspaper for a few months now. There have been some questions, so to help get the word out, we'll answer them here and hopefully reach everyone.

The hybrid schedule is this:

Hard copy in January, March, May, June, September, November. Six editions. They will appear in your mailbox between the 1st and the 7th of the month, usually, depending on how the Post Office operates.

Digital only in February, April, July, October and December. Five editions. They will be available on the Grand Lodge website on the 1st of the month. If you are making use of the CTFM Reader app on your iPhone or Android, it will automatically become available in the app when it is available on the website. (Note: you may have to pull down to refresh).

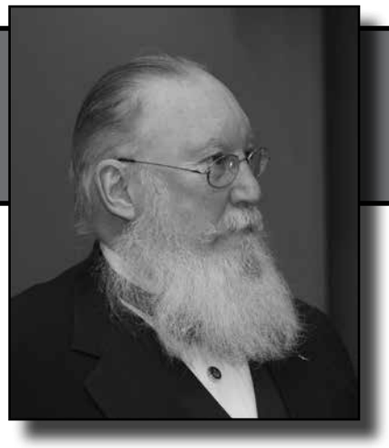
Who receives a hard copy? What if I'm a Booster?

In the past, when editions of the paper were sent only in hard copy to brothers over a certain age, being a Booster made it possible to receive a hard copy if you did not meet the age requirement. That is no longer the case. Digital only is digital only. If for some reason a brother needs to have a hard copy of a certain digital-only edition – perhaps a special family event is covered in that edition – it may be possible to obtain a hard copy from Grand Lodge, but be aware they only have a few copies for archival purposes. This should not be abused.

What if I no longer want to receive a hard copy?

With the phone/tablet app available now, some brothers may no longer wish to receive a hard copy of the newspaper in the U.S .mail. If they wish to be removed from the *Connecticut Freemasons* newspaper mailing list, they can contact the Grand Lodge office to request removal.

If other questions arise, please do not hesitate to contact us. Printing and mailing expenses have become exorbitant, and digital-only distribution helps to prevent those huge expenses. If you haven't tried out the CTFM Reader app, it's available on the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. Look for the QR code in the ad in this edition of the *Connecticut Freemasons*, on page 6.



From the Desk of the Grand Chaplain

by WB Harold A. (Hal) Elwell

November is a time to reflect and give thanks. It is the beginning of one of the busiest times of the year – Thanksgiving, the Christmas season, New Year's Eve, and Super Bowl Sunday. It is a wonderful time of year, but it can also be exhausting.

Veterans Day was established as Armistice Day in 1919 and is observed every November 11. It is an opportunity to recognize and thank the men and women who have served in the armed forces of our country. The distinction between Veterans Day and Memorial Day is often blurred, but there is an important difference. Memorial Day is set aside to remember those who died while serving our nation, particularly those who gave their lives in military service. Veterans Day, on the other hand, honors all those who have served, whether in wartime or peacetime, whether they served for a few years or made the military their life's work.

We should not confine our recognition of their service to a single day or two but whenever the opportunity presents itself. A simple thank-you is worthwhile, but so is a willingness to listen to their stories, to support those who need assistance, and to remember that the freedoms and opportunities we enjoy have not always come easily. As Masons, we speak often of service to others, charity, and our obligations to our fellow man. Our veterans provide us with a powerful example of what it means to put something larger than ourselves ahead of our own convenience.

In my last article, I discussed boredom and suggested that having some time on our hands might not be so bad. We have become so accustomed to filling every available moment that we sometimes forget the value of simply sitting quietly and allowing our minds to wander. But what happens when we have so much to do that we hardly have time to think at all?

We want to make Thanksgiving special for our families. We want to find just the right gifts for Christmas, attend the gatherings, visit the people we care about, and keep up with our usual responsibilities at the same time. We may even feel we have somehow failed if everything isn't done just right. As a result, a season meant to bring us together can leave us tired, anxious, and wishing it were over.

We need to remind ourselves that the holidays are not a competition. The value of Thanksgiving does not depend upon the number of dishes on the table, and the meaning of Christmas is not measured by the number or cost of the gifts beneath the tree. What matters most is the time we spend with those we love, the kindness we extend to others, and the memories we create together.

As Masons, we are taught the importance of moderation, of exercising control over our passions and desires, and of maintaining a proper balance in our lives. We are reminded that we should not become so absorbed in our own pursuits that we lose sight of our duties to others or neglect the care of our own minds and spirits.

This is not an argument for neglecting our responsibilities. Our families need us, our lodges depend upon us, and our communities benefit when we are willing to give of our time and effort. But we must remember that we are human beings, not machines, and we need to recharge. Masonic fellowship can be part of the answer. A lodge meeting should be more than another appointment to squeeze into an already crowded evening. It can be an opportunity to step away from the pressures of everyday life, spend time with good friends, share a laugh, play a game of cribbage, and remind us that we are part of something larger than our individual concerns.

We should also remember that not every brother experiences the holiday season in the same way. For some, it is a joyful time filled with family and celebration. For others, it may be a reminder of loved ones who are no longer with us or of family members who live far away. A thoughtful phone call, an invitation to share a meal, or simply taking the time to ask how someone is doing can mean more than we realize.

This Thanksgiving we give thanks for our families and friends, for our health and our homes, for the opportunities we have been given, and for the people whose service and sacrifice have helped make our lives possible. As Masons, we can appreciate the friendships we have formed, the lessons we have learned, and the opportunities we have had to make a difference in others' lives. We can be grateful for the chance to serve our lodges and communities, while recognizing that the greatest value of that service often lies not in what we accomplish, but in the lives we touch along the way.

And let us not become so busy preparing for the holidays that we forget to enjoy them.

May you and your families enjoy a peaceful, meaningful Thanksgiving, and may we all find a little time to rest, reflect, recharge, and give our thanks to the Grand Architect of the Universe.



The Grand Historian's Corner

Bro. David J. Stewart

The Version of You Who Shows Up Tired

Perhaps there is no greater journey in life than the one we take within. Many of us strive to build temples of knowledge, success, and service, and yet too often we neglect to build the most sacred temple of all: the one within ourselves.

Learning by oneself can take years. In that process, many of us forget who we truly are or even why we exist. Life's burdens, responsibilities, and disappointments can cloud our sense of purpose. We lose touch with our inner compass, and with that, peace seems distant.

Sometimes, it's just been a long week, where everything asked of you is more than expected and nothing gets accomplished. You're behind on sleep, behind on everything else, and the last thing your body wants is to put on that suit and drive to lodge. But you said you'd be there, and so you go.

This version of you who is tired, slightly irritable, and running on obligation rather than enthusiasm is the most honest version the lodge will ever see. The well-rested brother who arrives eager and energized is easy to see. He requires no real effort. His patience costs him nothing. His generosity flows from surplus. On the other hand, the tired brother is different. Every virtue he manages that night is genuinely earned.

Freemasonry is full of men who perform beautifully under favorable conditions. They are patient when patience comes easily, generous when generosity is comfortable, and present when presence requires nothing. These are fine qualities. They're just not the ones that reveal true character.

Character reveals itself at 10 p.m. on a Thursday after a hard week when a newer brother needs something, and you're the one available to provide it. When the meetings run long and your back hurts, you'll still respond to that newest member's question, giving him your full attention because it's the right thing to do.

The working tools don't include a rest clause. The obligation didn't specify favorable conditions. The craft asks the same things of you tired as it does when well rested, which is either unreasonable or profound, depending on how seriously you take what you signed up for.

Most brothers never realize that their tired evenings in lodge are doing more good work than their enthusiastic ones. The nights you showed up anyway. The moments you held your tongue when you had nothing left. The times you served the lodge while being on empty rather than full. Just as the operative mason shaped rough stones to fit into the Temple, the speculative mason is called to shape his character and conduct to fit harmoniously into the structure of his lodge.

When our time is balanced, peace and harmony will usually follow. When our words and deeds are in harmony, peace becomes our natural state, and we understand that we all travel on the same level. We live squarely; our hearts and minds rest easy, for peace is born of a clear conscience.

Those are the nights that built something. You showed up tired and did the work anyway. The version of you that manages that is the one worth becoming.

To all veterans reading this, I offer my heartfelt love and respect. Thank you for your service.

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From the Desk of Bro. Jon-Paul Venoit

President & CEO of Masonicare

Connecticut's population is aging rapidly, with about a quarter of all residents age 60 or older. And the number of older adults is continuing to grow.

Not only is Masonicare and our industry peers already experiencing a shortage of caregivers and homecare workers, but we're also projecting that the demand for independent living and assisted living units is going to far exceed new construction over the next decade. Nationally, and particularly in Connecticut, there could be significant shortages by 2030-35 if development doesn't pick up.

Helping address the looming shortage of senior housing is central to Masonicare's strategy for future growth. This might include repurposing unused or underutilized space at Masonicare Health Center in Wallingford or expansion of our communities in Chester and Mystic, both of which are at or near capacity. And we remain open to the possibility of acquiring senior living communities in Connecticut (and beyond!) so that we can further share our commitment to exceptional care and service.

Ensuring that Connecticut has enough housing for its aging population will take a team effort from the public and private sectors, non-profits and for-profits, senior living operators, developers, and others. The challenges are significant, but so are the potential opportunities for Masonicare.

I was very happy to receive a note recently from Kelsey Torres, Director of Behavioral Health Social Services at Masonicare, recounting her family's experience securing short-term rehab services for Kelsey's grandmother at Bishop Wicke Health Center in Shelton. She described how everyone, particularly in Admissions and Nursing, made the family feel informed, supported, and cared for.



"My granny is remarkably sharp, alert, and independent at 95," Kelsey wrote. "As a retired nurse, she knows quality care when she sees it. She is not someone who gives compliments lightly, yet she repeatedly told our family how happy she was with her care. Too often in healthcare, we hear about concerns and challenges. I wanted to take the time to highlight excellence. Throughout this journey, it truly felt like my family was being cared for by family. My Granny has made impressive progress. As both an employee and a granddaughter, I could not be more proud of our organization, and I am deeply grateful for the care my family received when we needed it most."

The work of creating a more seamless experience for people moving through our continuum is never done. But this feedback truly made my day by showing how our staff collaborated to deliver the right care, at the right time, with dignity, kindness, and respect.

My thanks to everyone at Bishop Wicke Health Center, and to Kelsey for sharing her family's story!

Yours fraternally,

Jon-Paul Venoit

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Of Secrecy and Silence, No. 3

by John A. Amarilios, membership@lafayetteconsistory.com

Mark your calendars for Monday, November 16, when there will be a live presentation of the 27th Degree, followed by a video presentation of the 23rd Degree. Degrees start on Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m., preceded by sumptuous repasts at 6 p.m., with a suggested donation of $10.

The degree season culminates with a live presentation of the 32nd Degree on Monday, December 2. This is always heavily attended, with all seats spoken for in advance. Please contact the office to reserve your dinner and degree seats. There are three seatings for dinner: 5-5:45 p.m., 5:45-6:30 p.m., and 6:30-7:15 p.m. Please reserve a seat for one of these showings as soon as possible.

Further, a reminder that on November 26, Thanksgiving morning, at 7:30 a.m., we have the Annual Turkey Trot 5K Road Race, which starts and ends in front of the theatre and supports our Children's Dyslexia Centers. On December 5, we travel to New York's Radio City Music Hall for a 90-minute Christmas spectacular at the Rockefeller Center, and then on December 18, there will be the Annual Holiday Party and fundraiser for Connecticut Children's Dyslexia Centers at the Woodwinds Banquet Facility in Branford

If you have questions or would like to make reservations, call the Consistory Office at (203) 375-0064 during business hours for further information and to check on availability and cost.



Last month we discussed how the worrying mind interferes with the instructions previously given to the subconscious faculty. This interference is directly attributable to anxiety and is the result of our nervousness and passion for a given result. Subdue the passion, and the interference is eliminated. This process is called non-resistance. Non-resistance is defined as a calm confidence – not as despair or submission, which is a form of passivity. Resistance is akin to pushing against an object – this creates an equal pushback. Fear and struggle are forms of resistance that keep us in debt, in sickness, or in some form of conflict.

The idea is to cast the burden over to the subconscious – to deliberately transfer it from the intellect to the super consciousness (soul). Recognizing your personal inability to effect a desired outcome, then verbally releasing the desired outcome from one's mind instantaneously and entirely is the key. Mentally revisiting the matter, worrying, or strategizing contingencies is tantamount to taking back the burden. It is vital to remain still and quiet about the desired outcome. Do not discuss or allude to the desired outcome before it has fully coalesced and solidified. If you transgress this period of silence, you are acting in such a way that releases compression from an engine or pressure from a stove-top pressure cooker. This will yield a loss of power and direction.

When you cast a desired outcome to the super consciousness (soul), the desires and outcome begin to move above the heavy and dense atmosphere of the collective's fear and pervasive negativity. The only way to stay above that deleterious environment is to exercise vigilance against the collective's doubt, gossip, envy, and egotistical pressure to control outcomes for others.

This can only be attained through the complete suppression of the passions. No fear or resistance should be allowed to surface internally, and if they do, they should be immediately reset and silenced. If they are allowed to resurface, the process must be restarted, which may yield a further delay.

Try this and see how it works for you. You don't have to aim for an elaborate outcome at first. I have often used this in pedantic settings, like finding parking spaces in densely over-parked urban areas or gas stations in sparse rural locations. They miraculously turn up when you least expect them – and in the nick of time. Remember, you must cast the burden aside immediately and wipe the anxiety or thought from your mind. Complete silence and a void of anxiety are key.

What are you here to do, brother? To subdue my passions and improve myself in Masonry!

Fiat Lux!

As always, the Valley of Bridgeport stands ready to help further your understanding of the three degrees of Freemasonry. Should you have questions about the Scottish Rite, please feel free to contact me at Membership@Lafayetteconsistory.com or call the Consistory office at (203) 375-0064.

LAFAYETTE CONSISTORY



Attention All Master Masons!

2026 SCOTTISH RITE DEGREES
Reservations required.

Call the Consistory Office at (203) 375-0064.

Mon Nov. 16, 27th Degree (live) 23rd Degree (video)

Mon. Dec. 7, 32nd Degree (live)

For the latest copy of the Lafayette Consistory News visit https://ctfreemasons.net/appendant-bodies/lafayette-consistory/ or scan the QR code at the bottom of the page.

Contact the Consistory Office to arrange for seating and meals for any of the degree events.

Valley of Bridgeport	Valley of New Haven	Valley of Waterbury
2422 Main Street	285 Whitney Avenue	529 Highland Avenue
Stratford, CT 06615	New Haven, CT 06511	Waterbury, CT 06708
Office@LafayetteConsistory.com	Kirk_Trofatter_Jr@yahoo.com	sharky53@snet.net
203-375-0064	203-269-0336	203-565-3024

For more information, contact the Valley near you or email Membership@ LafayetteConsistory.com.

Valley of New Haven

SCOTTISH RITE™

NEW HAVEN MASONIC LODGE
285 WHITNEY AVENUE



Greetings Brothers,

On behalf of the Valley of New Haven, welcome to our new page. It's been very busy around the Masonic Temple in New Haven these last few months with our country's Semiquincentennial Celebration and the building's 100-year Centennial. Our Valley has been very involved in helping to plan and execute these and many other events.

If you're a Master Mason in Connecticut and want to get involved in a journey through the many degrees of the Scottish Rite, now's a great time to do so! Scottish Rite is a regional organization broken up into "Valleys." In Connecticut, we have five Valleys. The best thing to do is to find the most convenient location. We're here in New Haven, but there are Valleys in Bridgeport, Waterbury, Hartford and Norwich. We all do the exact same 29 degrees, and every Valley in Connecticut has a schedule to perform these degrees so brothers can travel and see as many as possible over time. Some brothers do them over years, and some get them done way quicker by traveling outside our state. a

The degrees are more like plays than what you're familiar with in lodge. This creates many opportunities to be involved in performing, directing, lights and sound, stage crew and scenery creation, costumes and props. Everything done in the local community theater is fun and rewarding, while instilling Masonic values.

The Scottish Rite Valleys also allow you to expand your circle of brothers and friends outside your home lodge. Since there are men from other lodges involved in those Valleys, you witness degrees together, work together, raise money for charity together, and expand your understanding of our amazing fraternity together. Just like lodge, you can become as involved as you want. Just like lodge, the more you put into it, the more you get out of it. When you get involved in Scottish Rite, you will definitely get more involved in Connecticut Masonry. Imagine how many more brothers you'll know at the next Grand Lodge meeting or at a Blue Lodge Council meeting. There are so many more friends and brothers you need to get to know.

If you thought it was all about you, all the Valleys do "Family" and "Social" events that include spouses, family, and friends. Trips, theater shows, parties, fundraisers, and many other events await you and your families.

If this sounds like fun, reach out to one of the brothers below, who can connect you to the next step in New Haven or refer you to another Valley so you can continue your Masonic journey closer to home.

Bro. Sal Ferrigno

Valley of New Haven:

Membership Chairman: Bro. Kirk Trofatter - kirktrofjr@gmail.com

Secretary: Bro. Jerry Gruenbaum - office@valleyofnh.com

Emails:

kirktrofjr@gmail.com

office@valleyofnh.com

VALLEY OF NEW HAVEN AASR
2026 EVENTS

Sat., Nov. 7, Quincy Market Trip to Boston

Mon., Nov. 9, Meeting and Degrees, 13° & 9°
New Haven Lodge

Sun., Nov. 15, Brunch for Vets,
New Haven Masonic Lodge

Mon., Dec. 7, Reunion - 32° at Lafayette Consistory,
Stratford Theatre

Fri., Dec. 18, Annual Holiday Party,
Woodwinds, Branford

Thur., Dec, 31, New Year's Eve Gala,
Anthony's, New Haven

Council of Deliberation Meeting, September 2026

This year's Council of Deliberation, the governing body of the Scottish Rite Valleys in Connecticut, was hosted by our Valley in New Haven. We chose the beautiful and stately New Haven Country Club as our venue. The clubhouse is just up the hill from Lake Whitney and was built in 1890, giving it an old charm and warm, comfortable accommodations for our activities. While the brothers held their Annual Meeting, the ladies enjoyed some fun entertainment in the lounge. Unfortunately, we couldn't go outside on the expansive patio because an unruly Nor'easter blew through the state. We continued the evening with a cocktail hour, some presentations, and a wonderful meal to finish the day.



Recipients of the "Masonic Service Award" sporting their new red caps and jewels while the officers of the COD offer their congratulations. Our own, Bro Earle Ehrentraudt is this year's recipient from the Valley of New Haven. (3rd from the right)



Cyril Embil, Chris Earle and David Cole present our annual donation to Mrs Cheryl Sharkis, Director of the Children's Dyslexia Centers in Connecticut.



Sal Ferrigno, Jerry Gruembaum, Al Johnson and Charlie Ehrentraud show off the newest Valley of Excellence award for our fourth year in a row. Well done to all!

New London Chapter No. 58 National Sojourners Installs New Officers

by Greg Webster

On September 21 at the Groton Town House restaurant, New London Chapter No. 58 National Sojourners installed a new line of officers. MWB Ted Nelson, a Past President of New London Chapter, presided over the installation. President Greg Webster succeeds Past President John. F. Moore, who did an outstanding job over his tenure during his three year term.

A larger number of brothers, ladies and guests enjoyed the great food and wonderful fellowship.

004 NS 58 Install 001.jpg: (l-r) MWB Ted Nelson, Bro. Greg Webster, Bro. Howard Turner (First VP), Bro. Frank Saviano (Second VP), Bro. John Stogden (Secretary).



(l-r) MWB Ted Nelson, Bro. Greg Webster, Bro. Howard Turner (First VP), Bro. Frank Saviano (Second VP), Bro. John Stogden (Secretary).

From the Quarry: The Circle of Self-Mastery

by Paul Ladd

The greatest battles a man fights are rarely with others. More often they take place within himself.

From the outside, many struggles appear simple. A disagreement with a colleague, a moment of frustration in traffic, a difficult conversation that stirs emotion. These situations can feel like conflicts with the world around us. Yet when one pauses long enough to examine them honestly, one often discovers something deeper.

The real challenge lies in how a man responds. Every man carries within him a wide range of impulses. Patience and irritation, generosity and pride, understanding and judgment. In one moment, the better side of his nature may lead the way. In another, a reaction may appear more quickly than he intended. Learning to guide those moments wisely is part of the lifelong work of character.

The Craft offers a symbol that speaks clearly to that effort: The Compasses.

For the operative Mason, the compasses allowed the builder to draw boundaries and maintain proportion within the work. It ensured that the design remained balanced and that each part of the structure stayed within its intended limits. The symbolism points to something equally important in the life of a man.

Self-mastery begins when one learns to place thoughtful boundaries around one's own passions. Anger, pride, and impatience are familiar to everyone. They appear quickly and often without invitation. Yet when guided with discipline, those same emotions can be kept within proper bounds.

The compasses remind the Mason that discipline creates space for better judgment. When a man learns to pause before reacting, he begins to gain greater influence over the direction of his conduct. That pause may last only a moment, yet it often determines whether a situation improves or deteriorates. Over time, that small habit becomes a powerful form of self-mastery.

A thoughtful man begins to recognize the situations where his reactions tend to move ahead of his judgment. With practice, he learns to slow those moments down. Instead of allowing frustration or pride to take the lead, he creates room for patience, understanding, and perspective.

That kind of discipline develops gradually. It grows through repeated effort and honest reflection. A man notices when his temper rises more quickly than it should. He becomes aware of the moments when pride makes it difficult to listen. With time, he learns to draw a boundary before those impulses take control. The compasses invite every brother to approach those situations with greater awareness.

By learning to guide his own reactions, a brother begins to shape the atmosphere around him. Conversations become calmer. Disagreements remain respectful. Situations that once escalated quickly begin to resolve more easily.

Self-mastery does not remove the passions of human nature. It allows us to keep them within proper bounds.

Reflection

In which situations do your reactions most often move ahead of your judgment, and how might a moment of pause change the outcome the next time they appear?



Distinguished Public Service Award

The Grand Lodge of Connecticut is proud to introduce the Distinguished Public Service Award. If you know a brother or a someone in your community who has made an impact, we encourage you to nominate him or her for this Distinguished Public Service Award. Whether a first responder, a medical professional, an educator, or anyone who has made a difference in your community, we want to pay them special recognition.

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Connecticut Masonic Scouters Association Recognizes Eagle Scout

by Jonathan Glassman

Congratulations to new Eagle Scout Jacoby Daniele, recognized on September 19 at a Court of Honor held by Troop 43! He was presented with the Connecticut Masonic Eagle Scout Commendation on behalf of the Connecticut Masonic Scouters Association and the Grand Lodge of Connecticut!
Well done, Scout!



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The Jewel That is Masonicare

by Charles Yohe

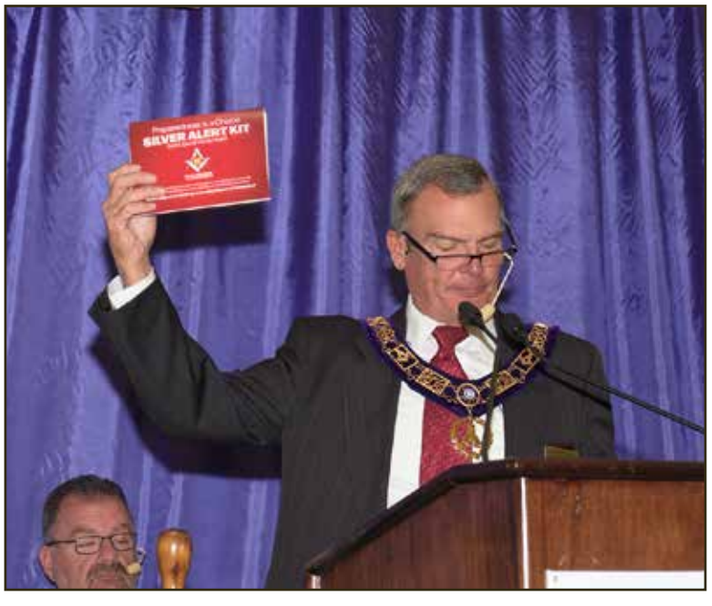
We Connecticut Masons are so fortunate, and most of us probably take it for granted. Thanks to excellent leadership, caring employees, and a wonderful variety of properties, Connecticut Masons has one of the best continuum-of-care communities available anywhere! It's ours, and it's called Masonicare. From independent living apartments and cottages, through assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing, whatever one's needs are, it is here – and Masons have priority to this continuum. For much of the state, it also includes a home health and hospice option.

When I first became a Mason in 1974, our Masonic Home & Hospital in Wallingford was pointed out with pride as being one of the "perks" of my membership. As a young Mason in my 20s, I saw it as a nice place, but not something I expected to use. A handful of years later, I became more intimately familiar with our facilities as I moved through the Grand Lodge line. As an elected Grand Lodge officer, I served on the Board of Trustees for several years. Additionally, I served on The Masonic Charity Foundation board. In 2015, I was once again privileged to serve on the Board of Trustees. In 2017, I was appointed to a 9-year term on The Masonic Charity Foundation board of directors and have been privileged to serve as chairman for the past 6 years. I am deeply humbled and honored to have been so intimately involved in this organization. As my board service concludes, I want to publicly express my gratitude to our CEO, Jon-Paul Venoit; Board of Trustees chairmen Robert Polito (past); and Christopher Earle (current); the entire Masonic Charity Foundation staff under the Directorship of Carrie Fuller-McMahon; and the employees of Masonicare for making my years of service so successful and memorable.

I have had the opportunity to observe the facilities and services offered by Masons in other jurisdictions, and none of them compare! I have also heard of the unfortunate demise of facilities and programs in other states due to a lack of enlightened leadership. Please understand how precious this thing we call Masonicare is! If circumstances permit, please donate to support this great philanthropy. Make yourself available to serve on one of the boards. Service is voluntary, but the improved quality of life for those we serve makes it well worth it, and you will never regret it. And when you see JP, Chris, Carrie, or any of the more than 2600 wonderful and dedicated employees of Masonicare, tell them thank you! The jewel shines brightly for you and me because of them.

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Child and Senior Community Safety Awareness Program

by Mark Hawkins

For many years, the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, through the Committee on Community Action, supported the Child Identification Program. Lodges across Connecticut provided families with Child ID kits and resources designed to assist law enforcement in the event that a child goes missing.

For many years, lodges hosted these events with tremendous community support. This represented something fundamental to who we are as Masons: seeing a need in the community and stepping up.

While participation in the traditional Child Identification program has declined in recent years, the need for community safety education has not. In fact, that need has grown.

Recognizing this, WM Victor Barile, Bro. Patrick Chagnon, and the members of Washington Lodge No. 70 in Windsor took the initiative to build on the foundation of the Child Identification Program and create something broader—a Community Safety Awareness Program focused not only on protecting children but also on another vulnerable population: our seniors.

Through the partnership of COCA, CT Freemasons Foundation, and Masonicare, we are developing the educational materials and resources needed to bring this expanded program to communities throughout Connecticut. These resources will include:

- Child and Senior ID Safety Kits providing practical information and resources to families.
- QR-code business cards that will direct people to a dedicated online resource page where they can access additional information about this program, the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, Masonicare Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living, DeMolay and Rainbow, and downloadable Safety Kits
- Community Safety Awareness Program event tents, provided to each district for lodges to help bring this program directly into our communities.

But materials alone will not make this program successful. We need help from Connecticut brothers.

We will identify brothers in each district who will serve as Community Safety Awareness Program Managers. This brother will be responsible for coordinating the materials and the district tent to lodges within their district. We need at least one brother representing districts 2, 4, and 8

In addition, district and lodge Almoners will receive awareness training on the risks facing children and seniors. They will become an important

Continued on page 19







Child and Senior Community Safety Awareness Program continued from page 18

local resource for families and community members who need information, guidance, or assistance.

A pilot training session was held on August 22. Twenty-two brothers representing eight lodges came together to learn about the program and prepare themselves to serve. That turnout was encouraging.

Ultimately, this program's success will depend on the leadership and participation of our brothers throughout their districts, making our entire jurisdiction a great success.

This is where each of you comes in.

This program has the full support of the Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, Grand Senior Warden, and the Grand Junior Warden. In fact, the entire Grand Lodge line supports this program today and for years to come.

As the program materials become available, COCA is respectfully asking each district to conduct at least five Community Safety Awareness Programs during the upcoming year.

Five events per each of our 9 districts: 45 opportunities to reach families, 45 opportunities to educate our communities on the challenges our children and seniors face. And potentially, 45 opportunities to make a difference when it matters most.

With your leadership, your participation, and your commitment, we can bring this program to communities across Connecticut—and continue the proud Masonic tradition of serving, protecting, and strengthening the communities in which we live.

I would like to recognize and sincerely thank those who have helped bring this program to life within the Grand Lodge of Connecticut. Thank you to the Grand Master, the Grand Lodge officers, Masonicare, CT Freemasons Foundation, and also Bro. Patrick and WB Victor and Washington Lodge.

And a special thank you to the *Masonicare Integrated Marketing Team*—Ann, Jameson, Maria, and Steve—for their dedication, creativity, and countless hours of work in helping us turn this vision into a program that our Lodges can take into our communities.

Brethren, this is our opportunity to serve and let our actions speak for who we are as Masons.

If you're interested in becoming a District Safety Program Manager, please send me an email with your contact information and your District at markhawkins@ctfreemasons.net

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Publication of Candidate Names (In the *Connecticut Freemasons* Newspaper)

by Francis G. Way

In the Grand Lodge Rules and Regulations, Section 4125 reads:

> **Section 4125. Publication of Names of Petitioners or those Awaiting Degrees, When Forbidden.** The publication under the title "Trestleboard" or in any other way, either by written or printed bulletins, or notice of the names of persons who have petitioned for initiation and whose petitions are pending action by the Lodge or the names of those who are waiting to receive the first degree of Masonry, is contrary to the principle and spirit of Masonry and should not be practiced by Lodges. Names may be published of candidates waiting to receive their second or third degree.

As written, it seems a bit more complex than it really is: one long clause before it tells you "no." In regular people language, if you've got candidates who have NOT YET TAKEN their Entered Apprentice degree, you cannot publish their name. Period.

In terms of the Connecticut Freemasons, that means that if a candidate waiting for his EA is helping out the lodge at a charitable event, you cannot list his name in the article; we cannot put his name in the caption of a photo. If he's at a lodge picnic or outing and appears in a photograph, don't put his name in the photo.

On the other hand, when that candidate becomes a brother – he has taken his EA degree, then his name SHOULD appear in the article about his EA degree and the rest of his degrees! To be honest, when it comes to degree articles, no one really cares what the lodge ate for dinner; no one really cares who did the Middle Chamber, the Stewards Lecture, the Working Tools, or the Charge. There might be an exception for the Beehive Lecture since it is so rarely given in Connecticut. No one cares who the dignitaries were at the degree. But on the whole, the entire reason for the existence of the article in the first place is the brother who was just initiated, passed, or raised. Nothing else really matters, and if that is not there, why bother? It used to be that the newspaper never published degree articles at all. Now we do, mainly so the new brother has a keepsake of his evening to hold on to and share with family.

So it's simple – before the EA? Don't give us his name. From the EA to raising as an MM and beyond? Name, name, name! Especially if it is an article about a degree, the name of EVERY candidate (not just those of the host lodge) should be in that article.

As for dinner, everyone assumes it was green beans anyway.

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What Do You Do at Four in the Morning?

by Ray Geer and Pat Kalinauskas

Some people wake up in the middle of the night and ask, "I wonder…" So, they get up, turn on the computer, and when curiosity is satisfied, return to bed knowing a good deal more.

One person who has an insatiable curiosity about history is Bro. Ray Geer. One of his recent late-night curiosities was about the origin and history of the Pledge of Allegiance, and it is worth passing on. A member of Franklin Lodge No. 20 in Westerly, Rhode Island, and Rhode Island's Grand Historian, Bro Ray also attends Union Lodge No. 31 in Niantic. – Pat Kalinauskas

The Pledge of Allegiance has been part of American life for more than 130 years. Although many Americans associate it with the Founding Fathers, the Revolutionary War, or the early days of the Republic, its origins are actually much more recent.



Francis Bellamy (1855-1931), a minister, writer, editor, and Freemason, wrote the Pledge in 1892. It was originally intended to help schoolchildren celebrate the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas.

Bellamy worked for The Youth's Companion, a popular family magazine published in Boston, Massachusetts.

In 1892, the magazine was promoting a nationwide celebration of Columbus Day. One goal was to encourage American schools to display the United States flag and participate in patriotic ceremonies.

Bellamy was asked to write a short pledge that schoolchildren could recite during these celebrations.

His original words were:

> "I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Bellamy deliberately kept the language short, making it easy for children to memorize.

One aspect of the Pledge's origins is sometimes overlooked. The United States was still dealing with the Civil War's aftermath when Bellamy wrote it. The phrase "one nation, indivisible" was especially meaningful because the country had fought a devastating war over whether the Union could be divided.

On October 12, 1892, schools across the United States participated in Columbus Day ceremonies marking the 400th anniversary of Columbus's voyage. The celebration included patriotic speeches, flag-raising ceremonies, and recitations of Bellamy's new Pledge. The Pledge quickly became popular in public schools and eventually became a familiar part of the American school day.

Interestingly, Bellamy's Pledge was not the first American pledge to the flag. In 1887, George T. Balch, a Civil War veteran, had written an earlier patriotic pledge for schoolchildren. However, Americans adopted Bellamy's version.



The original Pledge was accompanied by a gesture called the Bellamy salute. Students extended an arm toward the flag as part of the ceremony. During the 1930s and early 1940s, this gesture became increasingly controversial because it resembled the salute used by Nazi Germany. In 1942, Congress established the hand-over-heart salute as the appropriate civilian gesture during the Pledge.

The Pledge underwent several important revisions. In 1923, the National Flag Conference recommended changing "my Flag" to "the Flag of the United States," and in 1924, the wording became "the Flag of the United States of America." Congress formally recognized the Pledge in federal law in 1942 and established the hand-over-heart salute. In 1954 Congress added the words "under God," producing the version recited today. The change came during the Cold War, when the United States and the Soviet Union were engaged in a worldwide ideological struggle.

The current wording is:

> "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

This version is established in Title 4, Section 4 of the United States Code.

Sources: Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History; U.S. Congress; and historical records concerning Francis Bellamy and the Pledge of Allegiance. The American Legion, Wikimedia, The Grand Lodge AF&AM of British Columbia and Yukon, Historical research, and some article preparation assisted by ChatGPT.

"Are You Doing OK?"

by Francis G. Way

Late this past week I realized a brother who I communicate with regularly had not responded to my last couple of emails.

Around the same time, we had a full day of rain out here, measuring just over 2 inches. In Connecticut that's a puddle. Out here in the desert, that's flash floods, rivers running down both sides of our road and a lake at the bottom of the hill where our street intersects with the main road. Desert valleys handle two inches of rain much differently than New England. And I guess the flooding in Las Vegas (and here) made the news. I later saw some of that footage, and it was kind of spectacular.

So, as I was writing a text to the brother I hadn't heard from, saying "Hey, are you ok? Are you just really busy or do you need some help?" I received a text from another brother asking, "Are you guys, OK?"

I hadn't realized the flooding event had made national news, so it took me a minute to think, but once I did, I was very touched and grateful for that brother reaching out.



Flooding on the main road. My street intersects just beyond the last evergreen tree on the left."

In fact, those few words made my morning, and I think I literally smiled all day – it hasn't been an easy year and feeling cared about like that was very comforting.

We as brothers sometimes don't realize just how fortunate we are, especially in today's world. We all made a choice however many years ago to pursue membership in this fraternity, to take the opportunity to better ourselves and help where we could. That choice brought with it a benefit that we may not have realized at the time. Brothers will reach out and say "hey, are you OK? Do you need some help?" To use the words of a profane friend of mine, "that's GOLD."

We're approaching the holiday season. Always a wonderful time if you have family and friends, but it can be very stressful. For our brothers who may be alone, it might be a not so wonderful time, especially if that brother might have recently suffered a loss of a loved one.

Enjoy the holidays and rejoice in the warmth of family and friends and all the activities this time of year provides. But also, don't be shy about reaching out to a brother you may not have heard from, or one who hasn't been to lodge in a while, and say, "Hey, are you OK?" If you follow it up with "we're here if you need anything" or better yet, an invitation to a meal or holiday gathering, that would be gold.

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National Sojourners – A Masonic Organization for Veterans

by Joe Grieco

National Sojourners is a Masonic organization specifically for veterans. Their Mission Statement reads "The purposes of National Sojourners shall be to organize current and former members of the uniformed services of the United States and Honorary Members, who are Master Masons, into Chapters, for the promotion of good fellowship among its members, for assisting such as may be overtaken by adversity or affliction, for cultivating Masonic ideals, for supporting all patriotic aims and activities in Masonry, for developing true patriotism and Americanism throughout the nation, for bringing together representatives of the uniformed services of the United States (past and present) in a united effort to further the military needs of national defense, and for opposing any influence whatsoever calculated to weaken the national security."

They began as an informal group called the Sojourners Club in 1900, formed by Masons from North Dakota heading to the Philippines during the Spanish-American War, and were originally for Masons serving in or having served there. Today they include the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, and Reserves, Public Health Service, and Coast and Geodetic Survey Officers. It officially became National Sojourners, Incorporated in 1931. Any Master Mason who currently serves or has served in any of the above uniformed services may petition for membership. Meetings are open to guests, and visitors are only asked to leave the room for the obligation during new members' initiation.

National Sojourners sponsor recognition of high school JROTC and college ROTC students, youth leadership conferences, and high school essay contests. They also present programs for Masonic and non-Masonic groups such as: Building the Flag – the meaning behind the stars and stripes, Historic American Flags, Folding the Flag – what each of the 13 folds denotes, a Toast to the Flag, Flag Retirement Services, Color Guards, and the history of the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance. Within Masonic bodies, they also offer a Lodge of Military Tribute Ceremony.



Today there are chapters throughout the United States, including two in Connecticut – Hartford Chapter No. 56 and New London Chapter No. 58.

For information regarding these groups, email 56@nationalsojourners.org for the Chapter Secretary in Hartford and 58@nationalsojourners.org for the New London Chapter Secretary.

We look forward to seeing you.

SOME OBSERVANCES IN NOVEMBER:

NOVEMBER 3 – ELECTION DAY

NOVEMBER 11 – VETERAN'S DAY

NOVEMBER 26 – THANKSGIVING.



The Perfect Craftsman Degree Portrayed at Blue Lodge Council

by Jeffrey Blayman

Recently, the 4th District and 7th District Blue Lodge Councils, led by Presidents WB Tullio Milani and WB Jerry Nero, held a joint meeting at the Meriden lodge to portray the Perfect Craftsman Degree. More than 50 brothers attended, and 29 candidates for the degree were present; RWB Nick Ives presided and led the degree with poise, supported by numerous brothers.

Following the degree, the Councils dispatched some minimal business, and the enjoyable evening spilled over into the parking lot as brothers said their goodbyes before making the trek home.







District 2

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

Hiram Lodge No. 18 Passes a Fellowcraft

by Fred Marotti

On September 16, WM Jerry Nero and the brothers of Hiram Lodge No. 18 in Sandy Hook passed Bro. Leonard Corso, a Brother of St. Peter's Lodge No. 21 in New Milford, to the degree of Fellowcraft. RWB Robert Gorman, Jr., District Deputy of Masonic District 2 B, also inspected the lodge that evening.

Bro. Zach Merrill of Granite Lodge No. 119 in Haddam presented a flawless Middle Chamber, Bro. Brenton Vaughan handled the Letter G lecture, and Bros. Ryan Silveira and Lucas Fritsche presented the First Section Lecture. WM Nero gave the Charge.

Everyone enjoyed the evening and the fellowship.



District 1

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

Passing the Gavel in the Blue Lodge Council of the First Masonic District

by Kraig Gray



On September 23, the First Masonic District Blue Lodge Council passed the gavel to new leadership after a successful year marked by strong coordination, communication, and cooperation among the district's lodges.

At the council's annual meeting, WB Dean Buzzell, who served as vice president in 2025-2026, was unanimously elected president for 2026-2027. He succeeded RWB Christopher Holms, whose leadership strengthened communication and collaboration across the district. A highlight of his tenure was a new volunteer call-out list for funerals, which helped lodges provide dignified Masonic funeral services on five occasions.

WB Ashante McPherson was elected vice president. RWB Raymond Roche and Bro. Kraig Gray will continue as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. WB Buzzell thanked the brethren for their confidence and pledged to do his very best to serve the Craft and the lodges of the district.

The transition reflects the Council's continuing mission: to bring the lodges together, strengthen communication, encourage cooperation, and support Masonry throughout the district. With a strong start on modernizing communications over the past year, the Council looks forward to building on that momentum in the coming year.

Temple Lodge No. 65 Enjoys the Fairfield County Hunt Club

by Jonathan Achar

Temple Lodge brothers and guests enjoyed a perfect late-summer Saturday of polo and socializing at the Fairfield County Hunt Club. The informal gathering was an afternoon of fellowship, food, and refreshments, with the chance to watch competitive polo between the local Gold's Dragoons and the historic Squadron A team from New York City.

The athleticism and equine skill of the players and their mounts were thrilling to witness in person. The brothers, spouses, and friends had a memorable day on the polo field.





Universal Fraternity Lodge No. 149 News

by Robert Pauleus

Universal Fraternity Lodge No. 149 of Stratford enjoyed several meaningful occasions of community service, Masonic growth, and fellowship from August through October.



On August 22, eight brothers participated in a back-to-school event at Went Field Park in Bridgeport, distributing more than 100 backpacks filled with school supplies to families needing assistance. Alongside other participating organizations, the brethren helped children prepare for the school year while putting Masonic charity into action.

On September 19, during Step-Up Night, Senior Deacon Nathan Dudley presided in the East to confer the Entered Apprentice Degree upon seven candidates in one evening—a significant occasion for the lodge and an encouraging sign of its continued growth. Welcoming Bros. Rene Junior Andre, Guimel Guirand, Rony Gustave, Joalner Louis, Kaukuton Millien, Jacques Richeme, and Qua'von Marquis Alexander Williams into the lodge made this an especially memorable night. The lodge extends its sincere thanks to the Grand Lodge of Connecticut for granting the necessary dispensation, and to RWB Chris Holms, District Deputy for District 1B, for facilitating the request.



On September 23, twelve brothers made a strong showing visiting Ivanhoe Lodge No. 107 in Dairen, gathering for a photo with MWGM Shane Dufresne. The visit celebrated the fellowship and connections that unite Brethren across Connecticut.

On October 10, 48 brothers gathered for a Table Lodge at the lodge. Before the festivities began, Bro. John Shekitka, Ph.D., Secretary of Wappingers Lodge No. 671 in Wappingers Falls, New York, and an assistant professor at Manhattanville University, presented a talk on the United States Presidents who were Freemasons. His presentation added a meaningful educational dimension to an evening of fellowship and brotherly love.







District 4

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

A Century of Brotherhood

by Jeffrey Blayman



On October 3, a vibrant autumn morning, Freemasons and their invited guests gathered at the lodge in New Haven for its rededication in honor of its historic 100-year anniversary. Grand Lodge officers, led by MWGM Shane Dufresne, consecrated the symbolic lodge in due form. Displaying lodge paraphernalia dating back to the early 1800s enhanced the special nature of the day.

After the ceremony, the Craft, family, and guests enjoyed a festive board in the dining room.

The New Haven Temple has been the home for many lodges and appendant bodies, and a starting point for parades and other civic gatherings over the last century. It is the personification of Freemasonry in stone and a home away from home for many a traveling man.













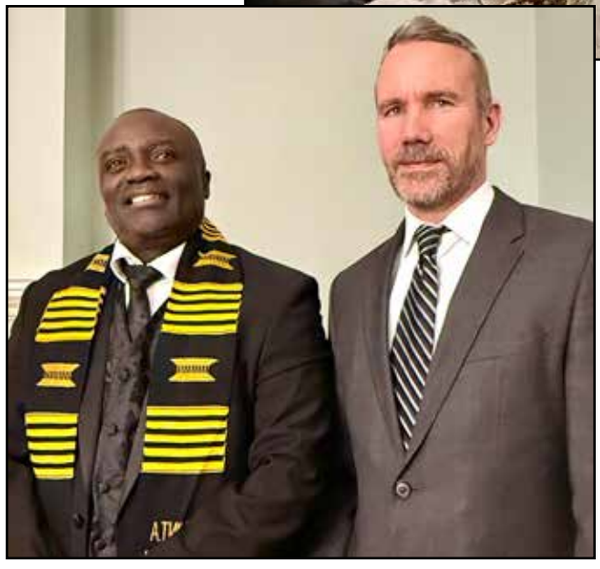
Quinta Essentia Lodge No. 500 News

by Jonathan Glassman

Brothers and guests of Quinta Essentia Lodge No. 500 in New Haven enjoyed a wonderful evening together for their September Festive Board. The lodge welcomed Bro. Angel Millar, who led a fascinating discussion entitled Masonic Initiation and the Supernatural Woman.

The lodge would like to thank Bro. Angel for traveling from New York City to lead this intriguing, thought-provoking conversation.









Sequin-Level Lodge No. 140 Holds "Festive Board for Dummies"

by Larry S. Baker



On October 1, at Sequin-Level Lodge No. 137 in Newington, 48 brothers and guests attended a "Festive Board For Dummies" specifically to celebrate the country's birthday. This was a non-tiled event, and non-Masons were encouraged to attend. To make the evening, Ills. Bro. Christopher Hodapp, s 33°, Author of Freemasons for Dummies, was the guest speaker. He did an incredible program entitled "Daring to be Masons in the 21st Century." The program was riveting and truly made brothers think of their position within the community and the rest of the world. Challenges lie ahead, but nothing the fraternity cannot overcome. The gathering was also fortunate to have MWB Shane Dufresne and RWB Matthew Heinrich present.

The seven-course meal was spectacular and received rave reviews thanks to WB Jim Bailey and the kitchen crew. Last but definitely not least, a hearty thank you goes to the festive board Master for the evening, MWB Chipp Stamm (who is also currently the Worshipful Master of the lodge), for keeping everyone in line and staying on track.







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6th District Masons Man Water Station at the EverSource Hartford Marathon

by Arnie Grot



Brothers offering water to the runners.

Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88 staffed a water station in front of the lodge in South Windsor until the Hartford Marathon Foundation changed the marathon course in 2023.

Since then, they have handled the water station near the 14-mile mark in front of Don Wills' house on King Street in East Hartford. This year, WB Don recruited brothers from the 6th District Masonic lodges (Columbia Lodge No. 25, Washington Lodge No. 70, Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88, and Friendship Tuscan Lodge No. 145) along with family and friends to work the water station on the morning of October 10.



Lodge banners were displayed at the station, Bro. Arnie Grot points to the Columbia Lodge banner.



Brothers at the water station.

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Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88 Awards Night

by Pat Jones



Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88 in South Windsor recently held its Awards Night 2026, a popular event that is always filled with excitement and anticipation. More than 50 brothers and their significant others attended.

RWB F. Matthew Heinrich, Jr., Deputy Grand Master, was Master of Ceremonies, assisted by WM Duane Mason and WB David Larsen. WM Mason asked WB Larsen to present all the 5-year pins, as he was Worshipful Master when they were initiated. This 5-year group included WM Mason and Bros. Michael Kehayias, Michael McClellan, Eliad Johnson, Gregory Araujo, Pietro Cerone, Christopher Packer McCarthy, and Matthew Redding.

One surprise of the evening was the lodge receiving the Grand Lodge Trestleboard of Excellence Award, presented by RWB Heinrich.

Bro. Joseph Noti was named the Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88 Mason of the Year for 2026. Raised in July, he has volunteered and helped with virtually all of the lodge events and activities, including taking on important parts of ritual during degrees. On Awards Night, everyone enjoyed his delicious cooking.

Lodge ritual awards were presented to Bros. Daniel Jacques and Jonathan Hayes for their command of Masonic ritual. Each has been a Master Mason for less than two years.

The following brothers received Masonic service pins: 10 years – WB Khamphiou Phimvongsa and Bro. Lou Lamphear; 15 years – WB Jason Elkhay; 20 years – Bro. Steve Varjabedian; 25 years – Bros. Bart Blonstein and Justin George; 30 years – Bro. Pat Jones; 35 years – WB Eric Pogg and RWB Gregory Stump; 40 years – Bro. David Locke; 45 years – Bro. Paul Saari; 60 years – Bros. Dennis Gray, Stanley McFarland, and Victor Plagge; 65 years – Bro. John Matthews.

This was a night that made one proud to be a Mason!

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A Historic Master Mason Degree in South Glastonbury

by Arnie Grot

by Arnie GroA district-wide Master Mason Degree was performed on Saturday, October 3, for the 6th Masonic District at the Elks Club in South Glastonbury. Twenty-one new Master Masons were raised. The degree was conducted in the outdoor pavilion, properly concealed and tiled, and in the Elks Lodge Room.



The cast and seven candidates from Friendship Tuscan Lodge and two from Columbia Lodge and several additional brothers in the Elks Lodge Room.

The first section of the degree convened in the pavilion for all 21 Fellowcrafts. After the first section and a Builders Lodge were performed, a mime of the Fellowcrafts from Friendship-Tuscan Lodge No. 145 and Columbian Lodge No. 25 went up the hill to the Elks Lodge Room to be raised. The other 12 brothers, from Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88, Composite Lodge No. 28, and Wyllys-St. John's Lodge No. 4, remained in the pavilion to be raised there.



Commemorative coin, obverse.



Commemorative coin, reverse.

All gathered again at the pavilion for the tragedy, the Master Mason Lecture and Charge. Commemorative coins, struck for the occasion, were presented to everyone who attended the degree. RWB Christopher Ramsey and RWB Robert Dodge, the Deputies for the district, presented the 21 newly raised Master Masons with MWGM Shane Dufresne's pin.

This undertaking required much coordination and hard work from all the officers and brothers involved, and it was very well done.



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Columbia Lodge No. 25 Initiates an Entered Apprentice

by Arnie Grot



l-r) SD Brian Dirkun, JD Phillip Crump, Tiler Keith Carlough, WB Jack Ranney, Bro. Tucker Muzzulli, Historian Dave Lockard, WB Don Wills, Bro. Caleb Guinn, WM Chris Gness, SW Jeff Spooner, Treasurer Rich Beebe, Marshal Rodney Spooner, Peter Glacek, WB Mike Hudson, Bro. Michael Ashia, Bro. Vijay Pachamuthu, and JW Jeff Flynn.

Columbia Lodge No. 25 initiated Bro. Trevor A. Muzzulli on Wednesday evening, October 7, with the regular officers in their places and stations.

WM Chris Gness presided in the East for the degree. RWB Rich Beebe gave the Approach and the Coming to Light Lecture, WB Mike Hudson presented the Apron, RWB Jeff Flynn delivered the Penniless Lecture, Bro. Vijay Pachamuthu presented the Working Tools, Bros. Julio Florez and Jesse Gay gave the First Section Lecture, and WB Walter Grube delivered the Charge. Bro. Muzzulli received his lecture books, and WM Gness welcomed him to the lodge.

Bros. Caleb Guinn and Michael Ashia, who recently took their Master Mason degree, received their leather aprons after being called to the East. Bro. Peter Glacek, who was raised last year, was also called to the East and received with his Master Mason Certificate.

WM Chris Gness informed the Craft that brothers taking all three degrees in this 250th anniversary year of the United States automatically become members of an honorary lodge, Lodge No. 1776, and will receive a commemorative coin and pin. Other brothers may also join that lodge for a cost of $17.76.

Columbia Lodge No. 25 Passes Two Fellowcrafts

by Arnie Grot



(l-r) Bros. Phillip Crump, Don Wills, Brian Dikun, Keith Carlough, RW DGM F. Matthew Heinrich, Jr., Dave Lockard, FC Charles Moreland, Jeff Spooner, Rich Beebe, FC Sal DiPersio, Walt Grube, Chris Gness, Dave LaFargue, Rodney Spooner, John DiCioccio, Jack Ranney, Vijay Pachamuthu, Jeff Flynn and Doug Ewen.

Columbia Lodge No. 25 initiated Bro. Trevor A. Muzzulli on Wednesday evening, October 7, with the regular officers in their places and stations. On Wednesday, September 16, Columbia Lodge No. 25, with SW Jeff Spooner stepping up to the East, passed Bros. Salvatore DiPersio and Charles H. Moreland, IV to the degree of Fellowcraft. RWB Jeff Flynn gave the Approach Lecture, RWB Rich Beebe delivered the Coming to Light Lecture and the Charge, WB Jack Ranney presented the Working Tools, Bro. Brian Dikun delivered the Staircase Lecture, RWB Dave LaFargue presented the Letter G, and Bros. Julio Florez and Jesse Gay gave the First Section Lecture.

Bro. Moreland said that being a Mason has changed his life, and he is looking forward to the MM Degree. WM Chris Gness, who sat in the South for the degree, congratulated the degree team on their fine work and thanked stewards Julio Florez and Jesse Gay for a good meal.

A special guest for the evening was WB Doug Ewen, Past Master of Orient Lodge No. 62 (now part of Columbia Lodge) in 1984 and 2004, who now lives in Maryland.

Bro. F. Matthew Heinrich, Jr., Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master, congratulated the new Fellowcrafts and told them the Masonic Journey never ends. He encouraged them to begin work on their Perfect Ashlar awards and to attend the upcoming Sixth District Blue Lodge Council meeting

Open House at Warren Lodge No. 51

by Jeffrey Blayman



Since so many men have questions about Freemasonry, WM David L. Rutter, Jr. of Warren Lodge No. 51 in Portland organized an evening for brothers to bring interested friends to learn more. WB Mark Fernandes led the evening's discussion, offering insights into the fraternity's founding and its development over the centuries. After a thoughtful discussion, he fielded questions from the assembled guests.

Everyone left a little wiser and, with any luck, a few will decide to stop by again on some other third Thursday to ask for a petition.









The Farm Degree In Stonington

by Jeffrey Blayman

The brothers of Warren Lodge No. 51 in Portland offer their gratitude to Coastal Lodge No. 57 in Stonington for the courtesy of raising their two Fellowcrafts to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason, at their Farm Degree.

WM Dante Pezz and his degree team portrayed the outdoor Master Mason Degree at WB Phil Bauman's farm, for five brothers including Warren Lodge members Bro. Alvah D. Abbott and Bro. Mark A. Fontaine.

It was indeed a long day but a fine culmination of the Blue Lodge degrees, and the beginning of a lifetime of Masonic experiences for all of these fine brothers.



(l-r) WM Dante Pezz, RWB Michael S Masselli, Bros, Alvah D. Abbott, Mark A. Fontaine, Patrick J Cofer, and RWB James H. Landry.

America's 250th Anniversary Celebration in Ellington

by Cody Baumgartner



The town of Ellington hosted a special celebration on October 3 that brought together over 40 local groups and businesses, the high school band, local municipal and first responders, Armed Forces, the Governor's Foot and Horse Guard, and Connecticut's Freemasons.

Brothers from Fayette Lodge No. 69, who were joined by brothers from Uriel Lodge No. 24, Composite Lodge No. 28 and Putnam Lodge No. 46, along with Syria Grotto M.O.V.P.E.R. of Suffield, marched in the parade.

Following the parade, during remarks from the town gazebo, a special copy of the Declaration of Independence, delivered by a member of the Governor's Horse Guard, was read by WB Cody Baumgartner and Right Worshipful Brother Ray Chouinard. They also offered closing remarks and spoke about Freemasonry in the Revolutionary period.

More than 1,000 people attended the event, and spectacular conversations were shared with the Daughters of the American Revolution, members of the Armed Forces, and many, many visitors. Fayette Lodge extends its deep and hearty gratitude to the brothers who shared the day with the town and made the celebration special.





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Golfing for a Good Cause

by Jeffrey Blayman



The members of the Kiwanis Club of New London gathered for their annual fundraiser at Shennecossett Golf Course in Groton. MWPGM Ted Nelson took a moment to thank all the sponsors and assembled guests just before the golfers made their way out to their tees. Numerous brothers from Connecticut Freemasonry joined in the fun and fellowship on a beautiful afternoon for a fantastic fundraiser.

After the round everyone went into the clubhouse to enjoy the remainder of the evening while dining and awaiting the announcement of the winning team. To be part of the fun next summer, make sure to reach out to MWB Ted to be part of the fun next summer.

















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Or, scan the QR Code on the right with your smartphone to go directly to the Connecticut Freemasons page on the website. Scroll down and follow the instructions indicated ** above. The funds are used to help cover the printing and mailing expenses of the paper.

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

Fellowcraft Degrees

Master Mason Degrees

Thur., Nov. 5, 6:30 p.m., Harmony Lodge No. 42, Waterbury, Dinner

Mon., Nov. 16, 6 p.m., Compass Lodge No. 9, Wallingford, Dinner

Tues., Nov. 17, 6:30 p.m., Seneca Lodge No. 55, Torrington

Officer Installations

Sat., Dec. 5, 2 p.m., America St. John's Lodge No 8, Stratford

Sat., Jan. 2, 2027, **11:30 a.m**., Washington Lodge No. 19, Monroe

Sat., Jan. 2, 2027, 3 p.m., Fidelity St. John's Lodge No. 3, Easton

Thur., Jan. 7, 2027, 6:30 p.m., Old Well St. John's Lodge No. 6, Norwalk

Sat., Jan. 9, 2027, 9 a.m., Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge No. 142, Easton

Sat., Jan. 9., 2027, 12 p.m., Corinthian Lodge No. 104, Stratford

Wed., Jan. 13, 2027, 8 p.m., Ivanhoe Lodge No. 107, Darien

Sat., Jan. 16, 2027, 6:30 p.m., Universal Fraternity Lodge No. 149, Stratford

Other

Sun., Nov. 15, 10 a.m., Harmony Lodge No. 42, Waterbury, Grand Order of the Sword of Bunker Hill, *Portrayed by the newly reactivated Nutmeg Order No. 106, $30 lifetime membership fee.*

Sat., Nov. 21, 5:30 p.m., Washington Lodge No. 19, Monroe, Table Lodge and Game Dinner. Lodge open on EA degree.

Education – CME

Nov. 7, 8:30 a.m., Meriden Masonic Lodge, Meriden, Secretary Seminar, *first floor auditorium at Masonicare Health Center on the Masonicare campus, 22 Masonic Ave., Wallingford.*

Nov. 28, 8:30 a.m., Meridian Lodge No. 77, Meriden, Leadership Seminar

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 times, dates, and event information are supplied by the lodges. The Connecticut Freemasons newspaper is not responsible for errors. When traveling, please contact the Secretary of the lodge to verify all times and events. For recurring events and breakfasts, they may not take place during the summer months – call to check.

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

Wed., Nov. 11, 6:30 p.m., Hospitality Lodge No. 128, Wethersfield, Holiday Food Drive before Stated Communication *Bring non-perishables and items for the Holiday Food Bank*

Sat., Nov. 14, 6 p.m., Seneca Lodge No. 55, Torrington, Ladies At Table. *Torrington Country Club, 250 Torrington Rd, Goshen*

Sun., Nov. 15 10 a.m., Trumbull Lodge No. 22 & Lafayette Consistory New Haven, Brunch for Vets. *$25/pp, $10/children, Vets free admission. Benefits Rivers of Recovery. Text Chad (203) 260-9048 for tickets: cash, check, Venmo*

Tues., Nov. 24, 6 p.m., Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge No. 142, Easton, Friendsgiving Dinner.

Sat., Nov. 28, 8:30 a.m., Ashlar-Aspetuck Lodge No. 142, Easton, Pancake Breakfast with Santa and Fundraiser

Dec. 18, 6 p.m., Valley of Bridgeport, Branford, Annual Holiday Party. *The Woodwinds, 29 Schoolgrounds Rd, Branford. $50/pp, $500/table. Contact the Valley for more info.*



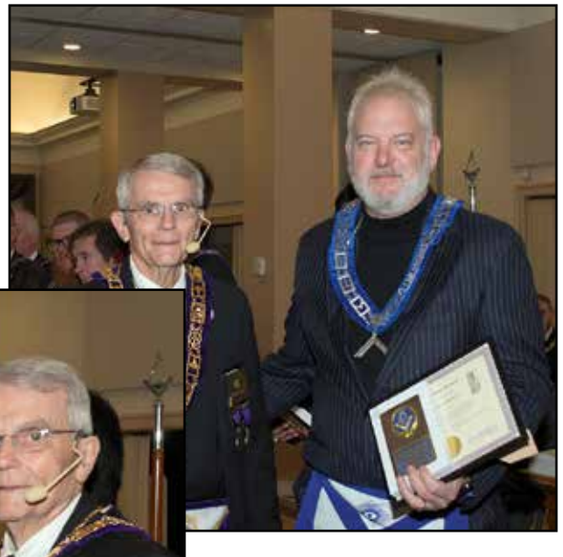


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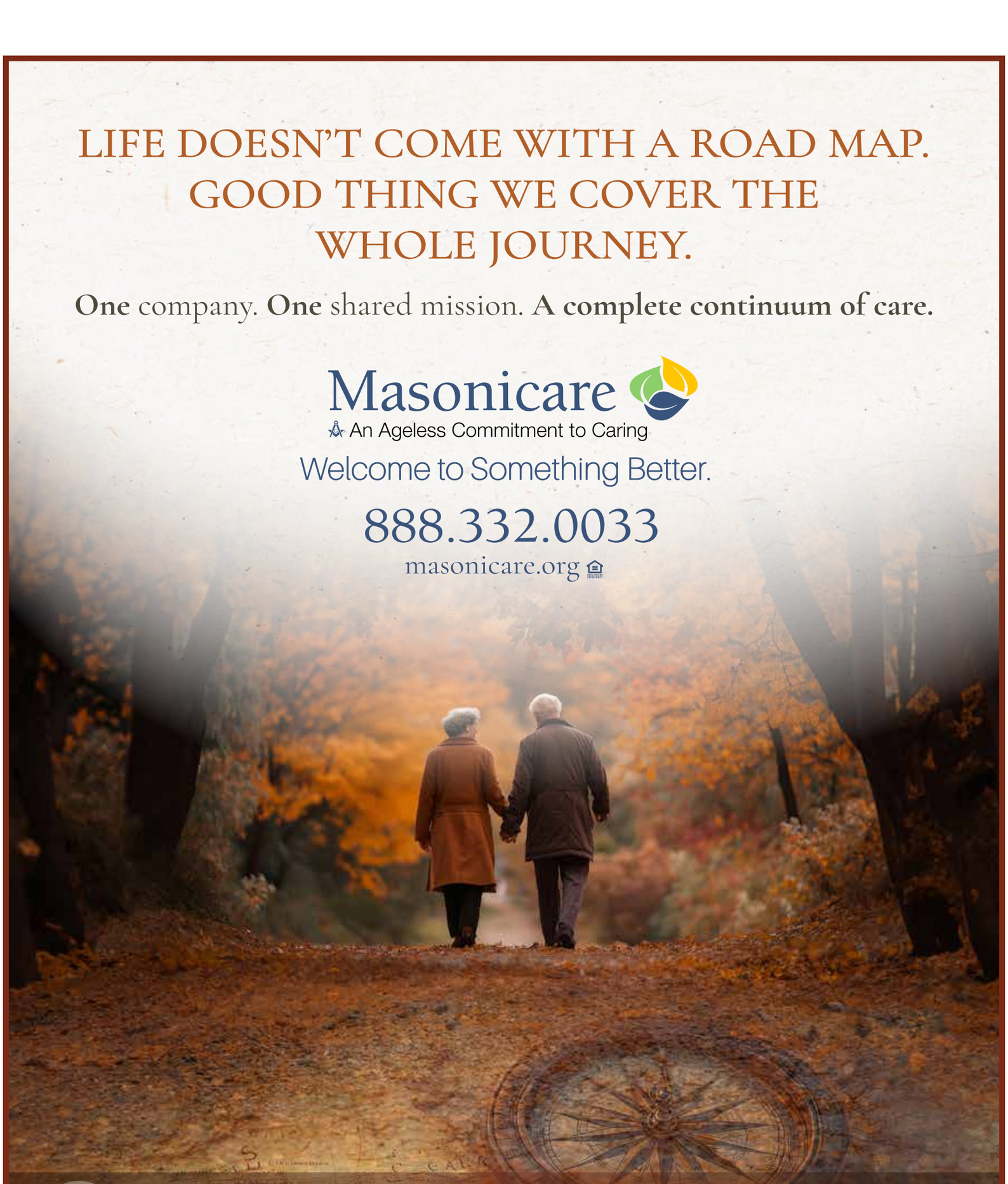
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