

November 2020



Connecticut FREEMASONS

*Not Just a Man.
A Mason.*



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Letters, articles and advertisements may
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Not Just a Man. A Mason.



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Historic Semi-Annual Communication Held in Scottish Rite Cathedral and Cyberspace *by Francis G. Way*

The 2020 Semi-Annual Communication of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the State of Connecticut, like almost everything else in 2020, was ground-breaking, a bit strange, and punctuated with masks, social distancing, and adherence to state guidelines.

At 9 a.m. on October 17, Most Worshipful Grand Master Stephen Petri opened the Grand Lodge, with the assistance of his Grand Lodge officers, in person, in the Ill. Bro. Warren J. Blessing, 33°, Auditorium at the Valley of Hartford, AASR in Newington, and virtually to over 300 brothers online. Social distancing was the norm with the few in-person attendees well spaced over the 250 seats of the auditorium and elbow bumps replaced traditional handshakes. Two types of online viewing were provided: a Zoom web stream for voting members, and a Grand View livestream for those brothers just wishing to view the Communication.

In the weeks leading up to this historic event, voting members of the Grand Lodge were required to register on the Grand

Lodge website, after which a mail-in ballot would be sent to them for the secret ballot voting to elect Grand Lodge officers, board members, and legislation. The ballots were required to be received in the Grand Lodge office by October 10. For the votes to accept reports, all in-person attendees received the ubiquitous voting cards, and all Zoom attendees were offered an on-screen poll with choices (Yes/No). Internet results were available within seconds of the completion of the voting.

While the early part of the meeting was hampered by sound issues online, microphone issues, sound bleedover here and there, and one suspenseful network freeze, as the meeting progressed those issues were, for the most part, resolved. For such a large online undertaking, the overall process was remarkably smooth.

After opening, the roll of the workmen was called and four Most Worshipful Past Grand Masters did not answer to their names. MWBs Carpenter, D'Amico, Carlstrom and Walker were remembered, and the altar was draped.



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Historic Semi-Annual

continued from page 3

Various reports, including the Grand Master's report, the Grand Treasurer's Report, and the Grand Secretary's report, were all read, and voted to accept. The online portion of the voting was smooth, quick, and efficient, and in no way held up any of the proceedings.

MWB Bill Greene, chairman of the tellers, addressed Grand Lodge with the report on the legislation. As he was starting to give the numerical results, the network froze. Footsteps in any brave, new world are not always without stumbles, but things were shortly returned to normal. MWB Greene again gave the results:

- The vote to charter Ouroboros Lodge U.D. passed.
- The four legislation changes (nominations for Grand Treasurer and Grand Secretary, and three changes relating to Grand Lodge Assessments and return dates) were passed.

The Grand Trustees and Grand Almoners reports were given and accepted.

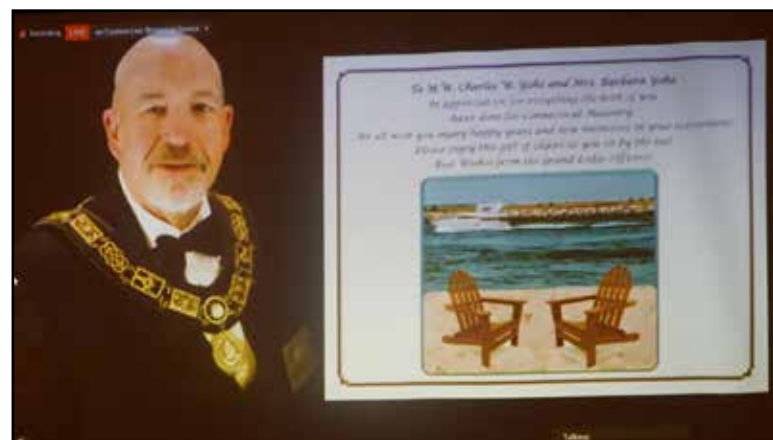
RWB Nick Ives outlined the efforts of the Education Committee during these challenging times, highlighting many of the online offerings available through Grand View.

RWB Les King, Grand Junior Deacon, spoke about the advantages of lodges incorporating. By incorporating a lodge can increase its protection, and that of its officers, against lawsuits. However, a lodge can only be incorporated with Grand Lodge approval. For lodges wishing to learn more about incorporating, they can contact the Grand Lodge office.

MWB Ted Nelson presented the Trial Commissions report. The one action this year involved a brother who had been duped by a relative in a real estate scam and who had pleaded guilty to the charges. Multiple character witnesses attested to the brother's good character and good works, and the recommendation of the Trial Commission was to reinstate the brother. This was passed.

Standing committee reports were passed easily and efficiently in person and online.

A special guest, RWB Tim Wheeland, Senior Grand Warden of Ohio, presented a detailed statistical analysis of membership in Connecticut, highlighting the fact that Master Masons raised in one-day classes have a better rate of retention than those raised in the traditional manner. The study was indeed thought provoking.



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Grand Master's Message

by Stephen W. Petri

A Historical Semi-Annual Communication

On Saturday, October 17, the Grand Lodge of Connecticut made history holding its first Grand Session with the majority of members attending via a Zoom webinar or live streaming through Grand View. The voting for Grand Lodge officers, legislation, Masonic care and other items, which is normally in-person, was done by paper mail-in ballots. Subsequent voting for items such as accepting reports and approving the budget was done using Zoom's polling feature for online voting members and the familiar paper cards for those in the room. Reports and documentation were distributed electronically via Grand View or email. All of this because of the pandemic and the state's guidelines to limit the spread of COVID-19.

It is hard enough putting together a Grand Lodge session, but this one added a whole new layer of complexity. I want to give a special note of thanks to a number of people who worked tirelessly to make the session a success. First, I want to thank the Valley of Hartford, AASR NMJ, for the generous use of their theater, building, and Zoom account; RWB David LaFargue for his expertise in the sound booth; WM Michael Abrahamson for his video knowledge, equipment, and can-do attitude; Bro. Doug Barry, Jr. for his technical skills connecting Zoom, securely streaming the live feed through Grand View, and general support. Also, RWB Mark Hawkins for being my go-to guy and fielding the online questions in real-time; the Grand Lodge staff, Debbie and Erica who did so very much; and the Grand Lodge officers for the many tasks.

But I need to give a very special thank you to WB Tony Angelica. Tony worked tirelessly with Zoom guest lists, voting member lists, registrations, sending notices, training attendees before the start, working as the "Digital Tyler," creating, and running the Zoom polls for online voting, and so much more. A very big part of the session's success is due to his labors. Because he was guarding our digital gate, I made WB Tony an Associate Grand Tyler. Just what he needed, more responsibilities and labors.

Where is the Gavel?

That is how the Semi-Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge started. RWB Bohman saw me searching around the East and asked me what I was looking for. I told him I could not find a gavel to open the session. He commented "What a singular circumstance, has this ever happened before?" Not knowing I asked the Grand Historian, RWB Andrew Melillo, if ever such a thing had previously occurred?

He said that yes that it had and proceeded to tell us the story about a similar event that had happened 130 years earlier to MWB John Henry Swartwout. MWB Swartwout was also a brother and Past Master of my mother lodge, Union Lodge No. 5 in Stamford. On Page 42 of the 1890 "Proceedings of the Grand Lodge" there is a passage describing the Centennial Celebration of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, held

in New Haven on July 10, 1889, "at the Hyperion Theater at three o'clock P.M." On that page there is a note from Grand Master Swartwout saying,

"At the opening of the exercise a very pleasing circumstance occurred. Finding no gavel provided with which to call the assembly to order, I espied the Worshipful Master of Union Lodge, No. 5, who cheerfully presented his gavel for use. It thus happened that the gavel used at the Centennial, was not only from my own lodge, but the one used by me, while Master of the lodge and as Grand Master of Masons in Connecticut. The value

The exercises incident to the centennial were held at the Hyperion Theater, at three o'clock P. M., and consisted of an historical address, a poem, and an oration, interspersed with appropriate and highly effective vocal music, beautifully rendered by an admirable double quartette of male voices from Boston.

At the opening of the exercises a very pleasing circumstance occurred. Finding no gavel provided with which to call the assembly to order, I espied the Worshipful Master of Union Lodge, No. 5, who cheerfully presented his gavel for use. It thus happened that the gavel used at the centennial, was not only from my own lodge, but the one used by me, while Master of the lodge and as Grand Master of Masons in Connecticut. The value of that gavel has materially increased. Among our guests, were representatives from the Grand Lodges of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Utah.

of that gavel has materially increased."

Taking my cue from MWB Swartwout and knowing that WB Richard Gross, the Worshipful Master of Union No. 5, was in the audience I asked WM Gross if he happened to have a gavel on his person. To which he answered in the affirmative, "Yes, I do! I have Union Lodge No. 5's gavel with me." I then preceded to ask if he would be so kind as to lend me Union Lodge No. 5's gavel so that I could open up the Semi-Annual communication of the Grand Lodge. He told me yes and that it would be his pleasure. I then asked him to proceed to the stage of Grand East where I met him west of the



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That The Generations Might Come To Know Them... *by Francis G. Way*

Being elected Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in any given jurisdiction is a singular honor. The number of men upon whom that honor has been bestowed and who became Grand Masters, relative to all the men who have ever taken the obligation of a Master Mason, is very small.

Perhaps rarer still is a Grand Master who is related to a previous Grand Master. In this jurisdiction, many brothers are familiar with MWB Gail N. Smith, who first served in the Grand East in 1989. His father, MWB Gail L. Smith, served as Grand Master of Masons in Connecticut in 1968. Fewer still may remember MWBs James Desmond and Thomas Desmond, the first Connecticut father-son Grand Masters. In Connecticut Freemasonry they are a singular circumstance.

But what if that relative lived farther back in time? And what if that relative is somewhat famous?

MWB Harry Truman might be the first guess. It is said that Brother Harry (as he preferred to be called) drove his Secret Service detail crazy on those occasions when he attended lodge. Supposedly only one of his detail was a brother, and that brother could, of course, accompany him into lodge, much to the dismay of the others who had to sit outside. Then again, this story may just be apocryphal.

But what if that relative lived even farther back in history? Say, a relative from the American Revolution?

It is not that unusual. Many brothers, including this author, have relatives who fought in that war. There are, no doubt, many brothers who also belong to the Sons of the American Revolution. It is not out of the realm of possibility.

But what if that relative was not just a sergeant in the Continental Army but was one of the “movers and shakers,” one of the men who helped birth the cause, and who participated in the actual planting of the Tree of Liberty and the forming of this great experiment in democracy?

As a 10-year old boy, Grand Master-elect William E. Bohman heard frequent stories from his great grandmother, Clara Richardson Hooper, of his relation to Paul Revere. She could also recite Longfellow’s “The Ride of Paul Revere” from memory, and that, according to Brother Bill, “at the drop of a hat.” Like most boys, Grand Master-elect Bohman was far from overjoyed at having to stand and listen. Years later, as an adult, he thought that the story might have been as apocryphal as the story of President Truman’s protective detail. And there really

was no easy way to find out. But then he happened to mention it to Grand Historian RWB Andrew Melillo, who remarked that it was fairly easy. Shortly thereafter, RWB Melillo presented Brother Bill with a genealogy.

The document began with Isaac de Revoire, born approximately 1660 in Aquitaine, France. Paul Revere, grandson of Isaac de Revoire, was born on December 21, 1734 (OS) in Boston Massachusetts, to Apollos de Revoire and Deborah Hitchbourn. Paul Revere’s brother, Thomas, was born in Boston on January 10, 1740. Seven generations later, on December 18, 1953, William E. Bohman was born to Frank E. Bohman and Marjorie Pack. Brother Bill’s mother Marjorie’s lineage goes back to Thomas Revere, brother of Paul Revere.

Most all of the profane know of Paul Revere. Fewer of them know that he was Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts from 1795-1797. This spring, when Grand Master-elect William E. Bohman is installed, the 7th-great-grandnephew of Most Worshipful Past Grand Master Paul Revere will become 175th Grand Master of Masons in Connecticut.

That is a singular circumstance...

Ed Note: This story was almost never published. It began earlier this year, when it came up in a casual conversation with RWB Bill that he might related to Paul Revere. A few months later, in another conversation, when I was saying how much I enjoyed RWB Andrew Melillo’s articles, RWB Bill informed me that RWB Andrew had done a genealogy for him and indeed proved his relation. Thus began my quest to get the story in print, as I found it fascinating and historical all at the same time. I think RWB Bill tired of my nagging because he has finally allowed me to tell it.



Grand Chaplain's Message

by Very Rev. Joseph Krusienski



(Psalm 133:1-3) Behold, how good and how great it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard that went down to the skirts of his garments. As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

Psalm 133 reminds us that how important it is to live in peace and harmony. As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday when we will be together with friends and family, I remind you of how the pilgrims and the indians lived in peace and in harmony. Unfortunately, because of human greed there have been many controversies. Once again, we need to reevaluate our thinking so that there can be peace in the world.

In many of our Masonic teachings, we find so many references in how we treat others. I especially look at the tenet of Brotherly Love by which we are taught to regard the whole human race as one family, the high, the low, the rich, and the poor; who, as created by one Almighty Parent, and inhabitants of the same planet are to aid, support, and protect one another. Masonry unites men of every country, sect, and opinion, and conciliates true friendship among those who might have remained at a perpetual distance. I truly hope that once again that the world may live in peace and harmony and wish to everyone a peaceful Thanksgiving holiday as the Lord commanded.

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

Lester Louis Auchmoody
Iberty-Continental Lodge No. 76

Douglas A. Beals, Jr.
Frederick-Franklin Lodge No. 14

Irving E. Brainerd
Jeptha Lodge No. 95

William H. Collier
Warren Lodge No. 51

Irving H. Degraw
Ark Lodge No. 39

Alvin Heinrich Dralle
Washington Lodge No. 81

Frederick Warren Ellis
Manchester Lodge No. 73

John L. Gilbert
Warren Lodge No. 51

Walter E. Hassenmayer
Ansantawae Lodge No. 89

Lee Rand James
Washington Lodge No. 70

Fletcher Wrightner Kinsley, Jr.
Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88

Burton Frank Kramer
Sequin-Level Lodge No. 140

Henry Laurence Long, Jr.
Federal Lodge No. 17

Clayton Arthur Luf
Washington Lodge No. 19

Ron L. Marquis
America-St. John's Lodge No. 8

E. Thomas McKinney, Jr.
Uriel Lodge No. 24

Robert Charles Moffat
Sequin-Level Lodge No. 140

Ernest Frederick Peterson
Warren Lodge No. 51

Ernest F. Petrusaitis
Fidelity-St. John's Lodge No. 3

Leonard A. Savastio
Columbia Lodge No. 25

Kenneth C. Seely
Evening Star Lodge No. 101

Edwin Frank Sheldon
Putnam Lodge No. 46

Allen Morse Sherman
Putnam Lodge No. 46

Samuel B. Walker
Estuary Lodge No. 43





Grand Historian's Corner

Andrew R. Melillo

CHANGES WERE OCCURRING!

These are the words that Case and Tapley wrote on page 304 of their bicentennial publication. The chapter is titled, "The Present Day Challenge 1963 – 1989." The trend has remained unchanged – the last time there was a net gain in membership was in 1957. That was the same year that a height of membership in Connecticut Masonry was reached at 48,394 members. During that year – 1,660 members were added to the rosters of the various 132 lodges in the state, while 1,474 members were lost due to death, non-payment of dues or dimits – resulting in a net gain of 164 members.

Not all changes are welcomed or desirable – but one thing in life is constant: change will always happen. To this day, Masons continue to puzzle and ponder why the trend is occurring, and has persisted for so long. The early decline in membership was primarily due to deaths in membership, but many NPD's and dimits also occurred. Many of the brothers that made up, and helped achieve the peak in membership of 48,394 members, were raised in the early years of the 20th-century. By the time 1960 arrived they were in their twilight years and departing the terrestrial realm. The following decades witnessed a great shift in cultural harmony – while the United States was achieving great technological and economic advancement, it also witnessed the many turbulent years of cultural conflict. Moods were shifting in America. To quote Grand Master Anders Jacobson who wrote to the Craft as early as 1938,

To cherish and practice the principles of the Order, to take them seriously, and mark them well at a time when a new philosophy was appearing to challenge the 'Faith of our Fathers.'

In 1963, after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, Most Worshipful Grand Master Frank Linsley, on behalf of Connecticut

Masonry, lamented the death of the president and sent word to Mrs. Kennedy and President Lyndon B. Johnson, expressing Connecticut Masonry's sympathy and condolences to them. That same year, another loss occurred: 1,051 members laid down their working tools in Connecticut. The next year 1,075 did the same – among them were two Past Grand Masters Frank L. Wilder and Samuel A. Moyle.

In 1965 – 1,073 members died. In 1966, there were 1,056. In 1967, a total of 1,091 members died and each year the trend continued, with usually over a thousand brothers being stricken from the records due to death, though 1969 was an especially difficult year when over 2,000 members laid up their working tools. And with the successive loss in membership more lodges began to merge, and a contraction and consolidation of lodges was beginning to take place – as with Shephard Lodge No. 78 and Salem Lodge No. 136 in 1972 in Naugatuck – and Commonwealth Lodge No. 129 and Roosevelt Lodge No. 130 in Stamford. And while this took place, the Masonic Home dedicated its Wooster Building, which provided more space, for an ever-increasing aging population in the Connecticut fraternity.

And while many brothers in the membership were old, so too was the state of Connecticut. It being one of the 13 original states of the Union, and with so many patriots who had fought to create this nation having also been active members in Connecticut Freemasonry (even before it existed) – the bicentennial celebrations of 1976 were especially a proud moment. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania had sponsored an exhibit of historic memorabilia from the Revolutionary War, and Connecticut sent down artifacts to put on display. During the American War for Independence, Connecticut was a strong center for fierce patriot resistance and to this day many forget how important Connecticut was to the success of the American cause of independence. In 1976, Connecticut Freemasons needed no reminders about its

importance. Do not take the Grand Historian's word for it, go and ask many of the brothers who are members of the Connecticut 5th Regiment reenactment group – and ask them how they remember that year – or ask many of the brothers who are also members of the Sons of the American Revolution and what their ancestors did to achieve American independence. (As Most Worshipful Brother Ted Nelson once said to me, *In Masonry, we are all brothers. In SAR, we are all cousins.*)

With an uptick in spirit with the bicentennial year, the trends in membership continued, although not everything was in decline, not all was negative. In 1977, correspondence was taking place between a group of brothers in Wolcott and the Grand Lodge, and dispensation was granted. A year later, Wolcott Lodge No. 146 in the town by the same name, was chartered on October 7, 1978. In the same year, the Grand Lodge purchased The Square & Compasses, magazine, and this resulted in the publication you are now holding. The magazine was in the few, but capable hands of Brothers Arthur (Bud) Simpson and William C. Neu (and their committee). After Brother Neu retired, Bud Simpson went at it alone until 1988 – which is when the job of editor went to Most Worshipful Brother Merle P. Tapley (who after Right Worshipful Brother Case's death, took it upon himself to help finish the bicentennial book of the Grand Lodge's history that Case had started). Today the magazine publication is in the hands of many capable brothers – namely its Editor: Right Worshipful Brother Francis G. Way – whose patience and ability with so many different submissions and writers – as well as the stubborn, meticulous, and grumpy Grand Historian trying to meet submission deadlines, is always very much appreciated.

In 1978, James M. Desmond was Grand Master. His election marked a historical significance in the sense that his election marked the first time that a son of Past Grand Master was so too elected Grand Master. This

Continued on page 11

Grand Historian's Corner *continued from page 10*

would not occur again until Most Worshipful Brother Gail N. Smith was elected to the Grand Oriental Chair in 1989. And as the year 1989 approached, many did not realize what a pivotal and transformational year that would become. It would be a year that not only another son of a Past Grand Master was elected to the Grand East, but also mark an historic occasion where the principles of

Universal Fraternity were made more manifest and brighter. As Connecticut Masonry once again stood on the brink of showing the global Masonic fraternity how it both preserved and acted out the principles of Freemasonry – James Royal Case was gone – and Gary Andrew Littlefield was to assume the office of Grand Historian. It was to be a year of historic consequence and one that showed to

the nation how Connecticut Masonry was asserting the excellent and useful tenets of the order into manifest reality. How as Masons, all belong to the Brotherhood of Man, under the Fatherhood of God

The York Rite Dilemma

by Michael D. Sabia, Jr.

For years I always wondered why there is such a dilemma with brothers and their willingness to join the York Rite. Of all the major appendant and concordant groups in the Craft, the York Rite has always had the (totally erroneous) stigma of exclusion and seems to be of less interest to the majority of brothers. But why?

One of the greatest concerns to many has always been the Commandery of Knights Templar, the fourth body of the York Rite. Due to the Orders of Christian Knighthood being the culmination of rituals conferred, it has been wrongly assumed for generations that one must be Christian in order to join the entire York Rite. This could not be further from the truth. The Commandery, is only one part of the many groups that are part of York Rite Masonry.

Many do not know that the final agreement made at the reunion of Antients and Moderns in England, that formed the United Grand Lodge of England, came to this conclusion: there are but three degrees in Freemasonry; the Entered Apprentice, the Fellowcraft, and the Master Mason together with the Holy Royal Arch. This means that a Master Mason is not complete in his journey as a Master Mason without the august teachings of the Royal Arch Degree, which is only conferred in the Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the York Rite.

The Royal Arch Degree is important to the Master Mason because it confers that which was lost in the Master Mason degree. And of note, the only requirement joining a Chapter of Royal Arch is the same as joining Freemasonry: the belief in a Supreme Being. A brother does not need be a Christian to complete the Circle of Antient Craft Masonry, and without this step, so much

is lost to the inquiring brother who obliged to always seek further light in Masonry.

The next body in the York Rite, the Council of Royal & Select Masters, also only requires a belief in deity. Their degrees are known as the Degrees of Preservation. This group holds the keys to the mysteries revealed in the Royal Arch, and give a deeper analysis of higher principles missed by the casual observer in the Blue Lodge.

Now, regarding Templary, one could say that of all the bodies in the York Rite, it does seem to be more inclusive to Christianity. And there is some truth to that. However, as current Templary is practiced, there are Brothers in Connecticut of Jewish and Islamic faith who have been knighted and have really enjoyed the impressive teachings of what I believe is one of the greatest

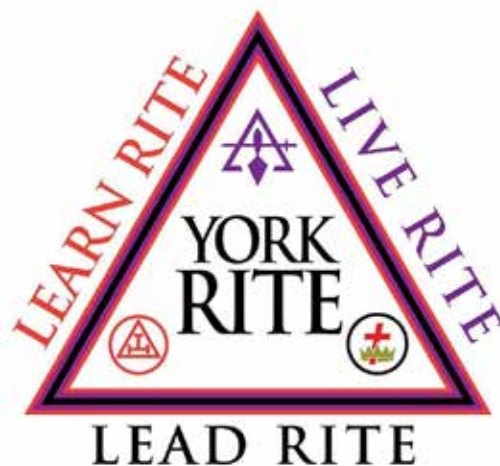
rituals in all of Masonry. If one were to be uncomfortable in joining because of the Christian nature of this body, that can be more than understood; but to miss out on the important Degrees of the Chapter and Council because of this is a disservice to yourself in my opinion.

Earlier I mentioned there were four bodies in the York Rite. In fact, all Masons in this jurisdiction are already York Rite Masons. The three degrees in the Blue Lodge are the York Rite versions of those degrees. Very few jurisdictions in the U.S. confer the Scottish

Rite versions, for example, New Orleans. So every brother in this jurisdiction has already made the first steps to completing the Masonic journey to gain further light.

For those interested in pursuing such ventures, reach out to local York Rite Bodies at www.yorkritect.org, or ask the brothers in your lodge who are members.

Seize the moment my brothers, and keep the search for that which was lost!



From the Desk of Bro. Jon-Paul Venoit

President & CEO of Masonicare

I was recently invited to meet with a panel of legislators and local officials, including Senator Chris Murphy and Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, to talk about Masonicare's experience with COVID-19: our challenges, our successes, and the steps we're taking to stay prepared for the next wave. The uptick in positive cases statewide and within our own continuum suggests that the next wave has arrived.

We have a new leadership team in place at Masonicare Health Center, and they are certainly getting their trial by fire by joining us in the middle of a pandemic. Patricia King, vice president of Healthcare Services and Continuum Integration, is responsible for making sure that our residents and patients move through the continuum seamlessly and that we're providing healthcare services as efficiently as possible. The new administrator, Courtney Wood, brings valuable prior experience in multiple facets of the long-term care industry, including administration, admissions, marketing, and recreation. Donna Daniels is settling in as the new director of nursing, a position she's held at other long-term care and rehabilitation facilities.

What Pat, Courtney, and Donna no doubt learned before arriving at Masonicare Health Center is that working in this industry demands an ability to adapt to rapidly changing conditions. Take, for example, the state Department of Public Health's decision to begin allowing indoor, in-person visits at long-term care facilities and nursing homes. We knew that this would come as very welcome news to Masonicare's residents and their loved ones, and that we would need to implement the policy in a way that would not put at risk those we are entrusted to serve. Within days of starting indoor visits, we received word that an MHC employee had tested positive for COVID-19. Following

DPH guidelines, we immediately suspended indoor visitation and began contact tracing to identify, monitor, and support any residents or coworkers who may have been exposed. Although a positive test result is never good news, I'm pleased at how quickly and efficiently our leadership at MHC and elsewhere has responded in situations like this.

On October 6, we held our first Leadership Forum of the fiscal year – a virtual gathering of Masonicare's managers and supervisors. We welcomed MWGM Bro. Stephen W. Petri, who offered heartfelt thanks to our employees for their efforts during this public health crisis. Knowing that the Masonic community has our backs is one more reason why I know we'll get through this.

I wish you all good health and thank you, again, for your support of Masonicare.

Sincerely and fraternally,



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A KID LIKE ME

by John A. Amarillos, membership@lafayetteconsistory.com

Have you completed your prerequisite requirements to sit for 32nd Degree? Lafayette Consistory is now scheduling 32nd Degree presentations for brothers who would like to attain to the rank of Prince of the Sublime Secret. Due to capacity restrictions you must call the Consistory office and make a reservation for one of the available dates. In the meantime, for those who wish to start on their Scottish Rite journey, the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction is offering online virtual reunions so that you can begin taking the degrees from the comfort and safety of your home. If you visit the very substantial home page of the Rite at: <https://scottishrittenmj.org/> you can find online petitions, as well as a portal to gain admission to the online degrees, and anything else Scottish Rite that you might want!

The next online reunion is on November 14 at 7:30 a.m. and you can take the 4th, 12th, 29th and 31st Degrees that morning. The Consistory will offer, the following Monday, November 16, the following screened degrees at the Stratford Theatre: 4th, 6th and 24th degrees. Reservations are mandatory and seating is limited. Please call the Consistory office well ahead to make arrangements. No meals are offered before the degrees at this time.

A Kid Like Me

The Board of Governors of the Connecticut Children's Dyslexia Centers have begun an online fund raising campaign this year. As you can imagine, this has been a difficult year in many ways, but your centers continue delivering much needed tutoring services to all of their pupils despite the health emergency. Your help is needed and greatly appreciated. Please visit: charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/connecticut-a-kid-like-me

Every dollar helps, and your board and the kids greatly appreciate your support!

We must remember that much Masonic ritual is allegorical, not literal. The building of King Solomon's temple alludes to the process of building a perfect temple within us that is balanced and symmetrical – one which is equally guided by the personality or

conscience, as well as the soul. In other words, a balance between the immortal element within us and the finite mortal personality, which will cease to exist upon our transition.

The mortal exists to provide the immortal part of us with experiences and lessons with which we may attempt to proceed to our individual perfection. The immortal part of us must manage and guide the mortal part to ensure health and longevity so that the immortal part will have a span of existence, which will permit it to "Do the Work." They work in unison as one supports the goals and missions of the other.

Neglecting or engaging in self-destructive behavior of the mortal part, reduces the quality and time of the soul's sojourn on the material plane, thus denying the immortal part the experiences and lessons that it requires. Neglecting the immortal part on the other hand, denies the soul the opportunity to awaken and strengthen its faculties. It's all a matter of perfect balance. The stones in a building are arranged into such proportions and configurations, by the Architect, so that he attains the harmony

of symmetry and beauty, or the disharmony of ugliness and deformity. You are the architect of your temple – YOU are its creator. Will you willingly and intentionally create harmony and beauty by consciously working on the meld between YOUR two resident elements of mortal and immortal?

As always, Lafayette Consistory, and the Valleys of Bridgeport, New Haven, and Waterbury stand 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 the email address above, or call the Consistory office at (203) 375-0064.

LAFAYETTE CONSISTORY



Attention all Master Masons!
SCOTTISH RITE DEGREES
Nov. 14, 2020: Virtual Reunion Online
at member website. Opens 7 a.m.
Degrees at 9 a.m.
Nov. 16, 2020: Degrees at the Theatre (on screen)
Opens at 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 7, 2020: Degrees at the Theatre
Opens at 7:30 p.m.
For reservations at the Theatre, call the office early
due to seating limitations.
Contact the Office@LafayetteConsistory.com or call 203-375-0064.

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

Valley of Bridgeport 2422 Main Street Stratford, CT 06615 Office@LafayetteConsistory.com 203-375-0064	Valley of New Haven 285 Whitney Avenue New Haven, CT 06511 Kirk_Trofatter_Jr@yahoo.com 203-269-0336	Valley of Waterbury 529 Highland Avenue Waterbury, CT 06708 cdoneill@snet.net 203-754-8209
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For more information, contact the Valley near you or email Membership@LafayetteConsistory.com.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 50-YEAR BROTHERS

Corey J. Bush
Montgomery Lodge No. 13

James W. Bussey
Unity Lodge No. 148

Frank Cavallo, Jr.
Day Spring Lodge No. 30

Kenneth W. Dalling
Fidelity-St. John's Lodge No. 3

Frank DeFazio
Ivanhoe Lodge No. 107

Milton A. Drexler
Jerusalem Lodge No. 49

Charles August Eckert
Sequin-Level Lodge No. 140

David Osgood Elliott
Hiram Lodge No. 18

Donald J. Floyd
Hiram Lodge No. 1

Louis G. Gouda
Somerset - St. James Lodge No. 34

William B. Hazard
Valley Lodge No. 36

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Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88

James A. Johnson
Unity Lodge No. 148

Paul E. MacDonald
Unity Lodge No. 148

George Alexander William Nousiainen
Temple Lodge No. 16

Alejo Flores Ortega
Moosup Lodge No. 113

Roy Rode
Federal Lodge No. 17

William R. Sears
Sequin-Level Lodge No. 140

Michael C. Shippee
Wooster Lodge No. 79

Dennis W. Shippee
Moosup Lodge No. 113

Edward Anthony Varjabedian
Hartford Evergreen Lodge No. 88

Richard Whitcher
Washington Lodge No. 19

Christopher G. Wich
Jeptha Lodge No. 95

Walter K. Wieland
Jerusalem Lodge No. 49

Robert J. Wimmer
Union Lodge No. 40

Lawton B. Wood, Jr.
St. Paul's Lodge No. 11



WANTED: ADMINISTRATOR FOR MASONIC LODGE BUILDING

JOB DESCRIPTION:

To oversee the maintenance, safety, upkeep, and overall day to day running of the New Haven Masonic Temple while working closely and communicating with the Project Manager, staff, vendors, and Masonic Temple Association. The ideal candidate will coordinate all needed maintenance and improvements while ensuring that the property complies with all applicable City, State, and Federal regulations. Additionally, you will coordinate building usage of owning organizations for meetings, events, and storage in addition to non-owner usage. Candidate must be motivated and committed to ensure and maintain the history, beauty, and tradition of this jewel of a building.

This is a part time job based on 25 hours per week. Flexible hours.

JOB DUTIES:

- Maintaining a safe environment with proper lighting, structures, and access.
- Drafting and updating emergency plans and evacuation procedures.
- Overseeing security, fire prevention, and other safety systems.
- Scheduling regular building maintenance and custodial work.
- Assisting the Project Manager and vendors for repairs and improvements as needed.
- Assisting the Project Manager to ensure proper completion of work by vendors and staff.
- Oversee grounds and property for seasonal upkeep.
- Providing training for building employees as needed.
- Evaluating employee performance and providing direction, correction, or additional training to ensure proper maintenance of the building.
- Scheduling contractors and employees.
- Resolving complaints, problems, and requests from building's owners.
- Maintaining records of tenants, rentals, and calendar.
- Work with the Project Manager to regularly inspect the building for signs of damage or wear.
- Performing regular cleaning, maintenance, and handyman work for minor repairs.
- Communicate electronically as needed with staff, vendors, and employer.

BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS:

Self-Motivated, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Detail Oriented, Negotiation Skills, Customer Service Experience, Management or Human Resources Experience, Strong Leadership Skills, Maintenance Experience, Understanding of Building Codes and Safety Regulations, Ability to Set and Meet Goals, Results Oriented Behavior, email, calendar, computer skills, On-the-Job Experience, Strong Written, Electronic, and Oral Communication Skills.

This position will provide competitive pay for part time hours which are flexible for the right candidate.

Please send your resume and cover letter detailing your experience and availability to:

Steven Allinson at steven.allinson@yahoo.com

Grand Master's Message

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altar, (because the camera angle was best there), where we exchanged the gavel and handshakes. I then preceded to open the Semi-Annual Communication using the gavel of Union Lodge No. 5, my mother lodge.



MWB John Henry Swartwout entered Masonry through Union Lodge No.5, where he was raised April 16, 1871, and served his lodge as Master from 1879 through 1883. Elected Grand Junior Deacon in 1884, he became Grand Master in 1889 and declined a reelection. In Grand Chapter, R. A. M., he reached the position of Grand Scribe. Brother Swartwout's death occurred at the Masonic Home in Wallingford April 24, 1925.

History Needs to be Recorded

We are living in a significant historical period, one that will be remembered for many decades or more. Many brothers have commented that in our lodge and Grand Lodge records there is hardly any mention of the Spanish Flu, a similar event. Some suggest that is because we were at war and did not want the enemy to know we were weakened. Whatever the reasons, it is a loss to us not having that information to see how Masonry handled such events. We cannot learn from the past if it is not recorded. In like fashion the future cannot learn from us if we do not record the history that is happening to us right now. Please think about including how the lodge is being affected in your lodge records.

Be careful and be safe.

Historic Semi-Annual

continued from page 4

Following acceptance of the special committee reports and a surprise presentation to the Grand Almoner's Fund by the Widows Sons, the Grand Lodge was called to refreshment for the purposes of the Masonicare annual meeting. RWB Bob Polito reported that all on the ballot (part of the ballot that went to voting members) were elected. Both he and WB JP Venoit related how Masonicare had fared to this point during the COVID-19 crisis. WB JP related that all Masonicare employees would be awarded the David Wooster Medal for their heroic efforts in coping with COVID-19 at Masonicare, and that the award would be displayed in each facility.

Just before the return to labor, MWB Petri and MWPGM Mel Johnson made a virtual presentation to MWB Charlie and Barbara Yohe. The Yohe's now reside in Florida and as a token of Connecticut Freemasonry's appreciation of all their efforts, two chairs, suitable for enjoying the outdoors, would be delivered to them from Grand Lodge.

Following the return to labor, MWB Chip Stamm presented the report of the Fraternal Relations Committee. The first motion, to "clean up and solidify" all the fraternal recognitions that had been made by Grand Master edict over the years, was ratified. The second, to recognize five Grand Orients in Brazil, also passed.

MWB Chip introduced MWB Raffy H. Timonian, Grand Master of Lebanon, who spoke briefly about Lebanon, and the universality of Masonry. Following his moving speech, the Craft voted amity with the Grand Lodge of Lebanon. MWB Petri indicated he would like to visit Lebanon to enjoy their beaches, and the new fraternal relations.

With the business winding down, MWB Petri and MWPG Johnson presented the Charter to RWB Nick Ives, Worshipful Master of Ouroboros Lodge No. 151. RWB Ives outlined some of the challenges the new lodge faced when the Annual Communication last spring was cancelled due to the pandemic.

RWB Edward C. Page, Grand Senior Deacon, presented the Perfect Ashlar Awards, both in-person and virtually.



Continued on page 7

Historic Semi-Annual

continued from page 6

MWB Bill Greene, in one of the last items of business, returned to the podium and gave the results of the election:

- RWB William Bohman was elected as Grand Master
- RWB Bruce Bellmore was elected Deputy Grand Master
- RWB Joseph Porco was elected Grand Senior Warden
- RWB Edward Page was elected Grand Junior Warden
- RWB Newton “Bud” Bucker was elected Grand Treasurer
- RWB Grant Gould was elected Grand Secretary
- MWB Charles Yohe re-elected as Grand Lodge Trustees

Following the passage of the budget, and with many thanks

to the brothers who made the virtual portion of the meeting possible, MWB Petri closed Grand Lodge.

Despite the strangeness of these COVID-19 times, and the novelty of an in-person and online Semi-Annual Communication, Connecticut Masonry continued in its steadfast ways, with the Grand Master congregating and opening his Grand Lodge, doing its business, and closing until next spring. May the Grand Architect of the Universe grant that we all may meet in person when that day comes. So mote it be!



Masonic Casual Trail Riders

by Tom Accuosti

"Hey, that was pretty cool. We should do this again."

A lot of plans start off with such words, but the warm summer weather, plus the necessity of being outside to socialize led to some of the brothers of Friendship Lodge No. 33 in Southington to make it a reality.

When a few brothers decided to get together to celebrate the retirement of WB Dave Edman, Bro. Thom Damon-Smith suggested a pub crawl... except as a bike ride to some pubs along the local Farmington Valley Heritage Trail. The initial ride was half a dozen brothers, and only six miles, but during the open-air pub stops, the idea came up to make the pub rides a more regular thing.

Several such meetups later, the Masonic Casual Trail Riders was born.

"This isn't for those guys who are wearing spandex jerseys and trying to race each other on the trail," said Bro. Damon-Smith. "These are casual rides along the local trails. The idea is just to get outside for a few hours, get some healthy exercise, and to have some fellowship while rehydrating with some local brews."

The group has managed to pick up some regular riders, including brothers new to riding, and a few experienced riders who enjoy the casual aspect. The group really didn't get started until September, which meant that they didn't have much time to get many formal rides in before the riding season ends. However, the members plan to keep meeting up until the cold weather makes it impractical.

Next season, the group plans to invite more brothers from other lodges in the area to join them on rides. You can watch for updates on their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/962160974252068>. Masonic Casual Trail Riders



WELCOME TO OUR NEW BROTHERS!

**Fidelity-St. John's Lodge No. 3
Craig Steven Grannan**

**America-St. John's Lodge No. 8
Matthew Nord Phelps**

**Harmony Lodge No. 67
James A. Mitchell**

**Corinthian Lodge No. 104
James Allan**

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or any member of the Valley.

Brothers Helping Others

by Jeffrey A. Blayman

On October 2, a day as gray as a battleship, the Kiwanis club of New London held its annual golf tournament fundraiser at Shennecossett Country Club in Groton. As the street in front of clubhouse filled with cars, golfers unloaded their clubs and headed to the hot coffee and registration tables to check in. A host of volunteers was on hand collecting registration money and selling all the usual mulligans, raffle tickets, and 50/50 tickets in an effort to raise money for the N.B. King Scholarship Endowment and the John Kashanski Community Service Fund.

After a brief word from the golf pro regarding the rules for the tournament, the golfers dispersed to their tees for the shotgun start. The event was attended by many Masonic brothers

including MWPGM Marshall K. Robinson and MWPGM Theodore J. Nelson, who is also a board member for the Kiwanis Club of New London.

After nine holes the sun came out and warmed the backs of the damp and dedicated golfers at the turn. The second half of the day was absolutely perfect. As the round drew to a close the participants headed inside to check their raffle tickets and enjoy a meal from the Par 4 restaurant courtesy of the Kiwanis Club.

Thanks go out to all the wonderful people who volunteered, attended or sponsored this fabulous fundraising opportunity. If you would like to sponsor or participate in this tournament next year, please reach out to MWPGM Brother Ted Nelson.



District 2

Lodges 13, 18, 21, 39, 40, 48, 49, 61, 64



St. Peter's Lodge No. 21 Attends Golf Tournament

by Eric Olsen

St. Peter's Lodge No. 21 thanks WB Craig P. Dumont and the brothers of Wolcott Lodge No. 146 for organizing their Golf Tournament on September 27. St. Peter's Lodge brothers had an excellent time, loved the cigars, and look forward to next year!

District 4

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



Hope and Courage to Face the Adversity of COVID-19

by Stephen M. Thal

"I am not throwing away my shot."

– Hamilton, the Musical

When COVID-19 devastated America and a national emergency was pronounced on March 13th, Ashlar Lodge No. 332 did not go dark. Rather it opted to face the pandemic with hope and courage.

As Worshipful Master, I witnessed our brothers face the challenge by creativity and the innovation of Zoom to maintain contact. Ashlar Lodge has 104 members, 15 of whom live out of state. Zoom was challenging, stimulating, and exciting.

Being new to the Masonic District 4, I contacted all the members of Ashlar in March and April to meet and greet. I also explained the challenges of keeping the lodge active during the pandemic. This communication was vital due to the 'shelter in place' status. Our older brothers rose to the occasion learning the concepts. We are still learning and with hope and courage, even more brothers can tune in. Communication with all brothers continued with the help of RWB Carl Anderson and WB Garret Post in the months that followed.

Ashlar Lodge started conducting meetings in April via Zoom. With our assistance of the Secretary, WB Russell George, we were able to include Brothers outside Ashlar Village, in the community at-large, and in various states.

In September the lodge completed its Virtual Awards Program whereby celebrating brothers shared their masonic experiences.

During the October meeting, WB Jack Stevens (a career submariner) and RWB James Spencer discussed their military time served in the Navy as submariners during WWII.

During some Zoom meetings, the lodge has been fortunate to have J.P. Venoit, President and CEO of Masonicare, Peter Morris, VP Residential Operations of Masonicare, and RWB and Reverend Carl Anderson, VP Mission Effectiveness of Masonicare in attendance, who kept us current with steps taken to maintain comfort and safety at Ashlar Village and Masonicare during this unprecedented time.

The November meeting will recognize Masonic veterans. We will also be contacting all our members to insure that our brothers are doing well and ask if they need assistance.

Even though no one knows what the future will bring, it is pleasing to observe the officers and brethren use their skills of brotherly love, relief, and truth. We are learning from our lessons that have occurred by exercising hope and courage for more light in Masonry.

Intolerance: Freemasonry's New Foe

by W. E. Gutman

Freemasonry is the world's oldest and largest fraternal society. It encourages its members to improve themselves by embracing ethical principles and working for the welfare of humanity. In its lodges, men and women of diverse backgrounds labor in harmony.

Guided by universalistic principles Freemasonry promotes free thought and democracy, it fosters civic responsibility and teaches tolerance and respect for the dignity of all individuals. Its optic is holistic. The eye through which it peers is all-encompassing. The truths it seeks and promotes are founded on logic, reason, and empiricism, not authority or dogma.

Yet, from its earliest origins, Freemasonry has faced social, political, and religious hostility. Often unrelenting and violent, antagonism has focused on its advocacy of progressive ideas—liberty, equality, fraternity—with tolerance being the overarching Masonic virtue. Its fiercest enemies, people who never set foot in a lodge, also contrived to thwart the spread of key objectives: freedom of conscience, the pursuit of knowledge, rational discourse, the cultivation of truth, and the separation of church and state.

Persecution of Freemasons has always been fiercest in times of social and religious turmoil, and during those great upheavals that have led men to war, epochs marked by an absence of “light,” by a noticeable decline in the civilizing effect of reason, and by fits of collective madness.

The Inquisition, the Vatican, Hitler, and Stalin were rabid foes of Freemasonry. Nazis and fascists regarded it as a tool of socialism. “Communists” viewed it as an elitist agent of bourgeois values. It had already been dealt a mortal blow during the 1917 Bolshevik uprising. Fearful that clandestine lodges might have survived in Russia, Stalin, a dangerous sociopath, banned affiliation under penalty of death. Freemasonry disappeared or lay dormant in post-war satellite nations until the collapse of the Soviet Union. Spasms of anti-Masonic rage resurfaced during the Dreyfus Affair, which nearly led France to the brink of a civil war. It is still frowned upon or banned under totalitarian and theocratic regimes.

Inspired by intolerance and religious fanaticism, an anti-Masonic crusade has resurfaced in America on two fronts. Fire-and-brimstone preachers can be heard haranguing against Freemasons on AM and short-wave radio stations and in houses of worship across the land. Some of the enormities leveled against the Craft are as deranged as they are untrue.

More insidious is a subtle profanation of tolerance that took decades to bear fruit when American Freemasonry veered away from its European roots, when it ceased to be an instrument of

enlightenment and social justice, when it turned inwardly and changed from a body of open-minded, progressive, erudite men into a bastion of religious and political extremism out of tune with the Craft's founding fathers, original tenets, traditions, and objectives.

Worse, as religious fundamentalists continue to malign and defame our ancient brotherhood from without, a new generation of Freemasons is laboring from within to turn Freemasonry into an agent of ultra-right-wing ideology.

Regrettably, tolerance, the guiding principle of Freemasonry, is endowed with a troubling flaw. Like democracy, which endures the existence of undemocratic ideas and institutions, tolerance too can be self-defeating if it allows the proliferation of doctrines and attitudes that are inherently anti-egalitarian.

Victor Hugo—a humanist, agnostic, social activist and “Mason without an apron” [his father was a Mason] understood both reality and idealism. But his concept of idealism was neither mystical nor abstract. His reading of the stirrings that carry men to lofty heights was tangible and goal oriented. It called for – as his monumental works, *Notre Dame de Paris* and *Les Misérables* attest—an unshakable commitment to tolerance and social justice, compassion for the poor, the voiceless, the disenfranchised, and the persecuted. He urged people to agitate against predatory economic policies, political harlotry, and censorship. What Hugo warned is that tolerance must not be a clearing house for intolerance.

Mahatma Gandhi, the architect of India's independence from Britain, said that “*intolerance is a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit.*” Though not a Mason himself, brotherly love, relief, and truth were his creed in life which he not only preached but unfailingly practiced. His assassination in 1948 dramatizes the hatreds that fuel intolerance and subvert the truth in the name of patriotism. Intolerance has no place in society, in government, and least of all in a lodge of Masons. Silence in the presence of intolerance is a form of complicity.

Born in Paris, W. E. Gutman is a veteran journalist and published author. Raised in 1989, he is a past member of King Hiram Lodge No. 12 (Shelton, CT), Jerusalem Lodge No. 49 (Ridgefield, CT), and Lancaster Lodge No. 437, and Tehachapi Lodge No. 313, both in southern California. From 1994 to 2006, he was on assignment in Central America where he covered politics, the military, and human rights. He is a former press attaché at Israel's Consulate General in New York. He labored in France, Israel, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Barbados, and Grenada. His father was one of the founding members of Thébah 347, Grand Lodge of France.



Meridian Lodge No. 77 Cleans Up East Cemetery

by Nicholas A. Valinsky

In February, prior to COVID-19's shutdown of in-person meetings, the brothers of Meridian Lodge No. 77 met after their stated communication to pour over some newly found documents. During the move in 2018, when Meridian Lodge relocated from 112 E. Main Street to 35 Pleasant Street in Meriden, many previously unknown historic documents, came to light. One such artifact was a lodge register that recorded, in each brother's own hand, their names, birthdates, occupations, date of death, and places of burial, including those of all 13 of Meridian's founders from 1851. Interestingly, 11 of those 13 founders were found to be buried in the same location: East Cemetery in Meriden, less than a mile away from the lodge room.



Exploring this curious coincidence, RWB Nick Ives did an on-site inspection of the cemetery to find that that it was in serious need of up-keep. Although the cemetery had been in existence since the very early 1800s, it had not had a regular caretaker since the 1960s. In fact, after reviewing local records and newspapers, the brothers found that despite the City of Meriden owning the property since 1845, it had not discovered that fact until 2008 thus leaving this place of honor in need of some serious tender, loving care.

Once the ground thawed and COVID restrictions eased enough to allow it, on October 3rd, the brothers of Meridian Lodge showed up in force at the East Cemetery to give the land a proper sprucing up.

Equipped with weed whackers, chain saws, leaf blowers, and good

Continued on page 27



Meridian Lodge *continued from page 26*

old-fashioned rakes, 15 Meridian brothers cleared the land of tall grass, weeds, downed trees, poison sumac and ivy, and restored some dignity to the historic cemetery. It was a job well done that left all who attended proud of having made a real difference in their community. Special attention was paid to the graves of Rev. John Parker, Meridian Lodge's inaugural Worshipful Master and Bro. Charles Parker, Meriden's first mayor and Meridian Lodge's first elected Worshipful Master.

On the morning of October 10 Meridian Lodge hosted a memorial ceremony at the cemetery to honor its founders and the city they called home.



Widow's Son Lodge No. 66 Collecting Toys for 'Toys for Tots' *by* *David Cole*

Widow's Son Lodge No. 66 in Branford is collecting new, unwrapped toys for the Marine Toy for Tots Charity Foundation on November 18 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the lodge.

Brothers do not have to wait until then to donate toys. The lodge will set a table up and collect toys through November 18.





Hospitality Lodge No. 128 Meets in Temporary New Home *by Francis G. Way*

Hospitality Lodge No. 128 of Wethersfield had not meet in person since March 11. Except for a summer evening's "spontaneous" gathering of "friends" in the parking lot, the brothers had not seen each other save for Zoom.

But on October 14, following all proper procedures and protocols, the officers were in their stations and places, and, with Worshipful Master Alberto Dieguez congregating his lodge, the lodge held their first in person Stated Communication in seven months. In New Britain. At their new temporary home.

Hospitality Lodge normally meets in the Solomon Welles House, a colonial era home owned by the Town of Wethersfield and available for rent for groups and special events. During their seven month Zoom hiatus, the town informed the lodge that the home was no longer available to rent, until after January 1, 2021, at which time the town would reevaluate opening the home, all due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the Wethersfield Community Center also unavailable for rentals, the lodge reached out to other lodges in District 5B. Their own hospitality on display, Friendship Lodge No. 33, Frederick-Franklin Lodge No. 14, and Unity Lodge No. 148 all offered space and a temporary home to Hospitality. As New Britain was the closest, the lodge chose to meet there until the situation in Wethersfield could be sorted out, and they requested and received dispensation.

The brothers simply did business – after seven months there was a lot to attend to – and had no program planned. But the simple act of balloting on a candidate, planning their awards night and upcoming EA degree, and enjoying the good natured jovial banter that only comes when brothers, long separated, return to the warm fraternal joy of fellowship, was a wonderful oasis in the craziness of these times.

With Grand Lodge restrictions on food, a few of the brothers had gathered earlier at The New Britain Diner for dinner. This too might become a tradition, as the simple joy of sharing a meal with brothers seemed to nourish the spirit as well as the body. More laughs, especially over the amount of coffee consumed by several brothers who shall remain nameless (the Diner did have to "put on a fresh pot"), and good conversation reminded them of what they had been missing, and what Zoom cannot, and will never be able to, replicate.

Hospitality Lodge No. 128 meets on the second Wednesday of the month. Their upcoming EA degree (and perhaps Annual Inspection) will take place on November 11, and their Annual Meeting on December 9, all at Unity Lodge No. 148.



Grand Lodge of Connecticut



GRAND VIEW

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Our Grand View membership system enables all Grand Lodge of Connecticut brothers to access their own records and update their contact information (address, email, telephones). You will also be able to view your Masonic history and any offices you held.

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Master Path Program, the Master Ritualist Award information, and the Official Lodge Directory, among other items.

Under "**Seminars**" you will see a number of informational Masonic lectures that you may view at your leisure.

So join your other brothers in this new and exciting way of coming together with your lodge!

To access your record, go to:

- The **Grand Lodge of Connecticut website** at <https://ctfreemason.net> and select "**Member Portal**". This will bring you to the Grand View sign in page, **select Member Registration at the top right and follow the directions.**

- If you have any problems, please call the Grand Lodge office at 203-679-5903 or email at grandlodge.ctfreemasons.net for person to person help.

District 5

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



Hospitality Lodge No. 128 Bids Farewell to Brother Jim Payette *by Francis G. Way*

Hospitality Lodge last met in person for their stated communication on March 11. Since that time, they have met via Zoom, although an impromptu informal gathering of friends did take place in the parking lot at the Solomon Wells House in Wethersfield one summer evening. Lawn chairs replaced officer chairs, and shorts and golf shirts were the uniform. Each brother, correction, "friend," brought his own food. One of those friends who attended was Hospitality Lodge's Tyler, Brother Jim Payette.

Brother Jim was a member of the original Hospitality Lodge, and had rejoined recently, helping to bring in one of the lodge's newest members, Brother Joe LaRosa. Brother Jim was a Navy veteran of the submarine service, and a retired firefighter. He was active in the Shrine Band and had also played in the Governor's Foot Guard band. It seemed natural that he stepped right in and helped the lodge by taking the office of Tyler.

Earlier this fall, Brother Jim had a stroke, and as often happens with elderly brethren, the situation worsened, and despite the prayers of his

brethren for a full recovery, Brother Jim answered the Summons of the Grand Architect of the Universe, to the Celestial Lodge Above, on Friday, October 2.

Hospitality Lodge had not met since March, but when asked to perform a Masonic service for their brother, they quickly ensured that they could answer the call.

Saturday, October 10 was a beautiful day, sunny, with a breeze and temperatures in the mid-70s. The Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home in Wethersfield was creative, and after having calling hours inside, they set up under the portico outside. Brother Jim's family and friends and brothers were able to participate in a service. The lodge performed the funeral service, honored to be able to bid farewell to a brother in that manner all Masons know.

Brother Jim will be missed greatly. This author, who served as Junior Deacon last year, will particularly miss Brother Jim's smile whenever it was time to "inform the Tyler."

Hospitality Lodge is grateful for the opportunity to say goodbye, and thankful that the funeral home was creative in their planning and able to accommodate all, especially in these still strange times.

The Seven Liberal Arts & Sciences: Music

by Jaime Paul Lamb

Music teaches the art of forming concords, so as to compose delightful harmony, by a proportional arrangement of acute, grave, and mixed sounds. This art, by a series of experiments, is reduced to a science, with respect to tones and the intervals of sound only. It inquires into the nature of concords and discords, and enables us to find out the proportion between them by numbers.

(Preston, *Illustrations of Masonry*, 1772)

It has been said that “architecture is to space what music is to time”: a particularly astute observation when we consider that music has been defined as “the science or art of ordering tones or sounds in succession, in combination, and in temporal relationships to produce a composition having unity and continuity”; a definition that accords with the analogous spatial considerations of architecture, particularly in the Vitruvian sense of the craft. Many of the terms in the above definition – “ordering,” “succession,” “temporal” and “continuity” – imply sequencing or, in some way, describe the arrangement of events in time; specifically, tonal elements organized such as to happen in a regular chronological sequence.

The earliest known empirical evidence of instrumental music-making was discovered in a 1995 archeological dig near Cereno, Slovenia. The *Divje Babe* bone flute, or the “Neanderthal flute,” to which it is sometimes referred, is a cave bear femur bone flute, featuring regularly spaced keys, and is estimated to date from the Late Pleistocene Epoch, and to be at least 41,000 years old. Other specimens of wind, percussion and stringed instruments have been found in China and the Indus Valley dating to as early as 7th and 8th millennia BCE. The earliest extant piece of notated music is the anonymous *Hurrian Hymn to Nikkal*, dating to approximately 1400 BCE. This artifact features a primitive form of musical notation inscribed in cuneiform script on a clay tablet. The artifact includes lyrics dedicated to *Nikkal*, the Canaanite, and later Phoenician goddess of orchards or fruit, along with instructions for both vocal and *sammûm* (nine-stringed lyre) accompaniment.

In the domain of music, Pythagoras is believed to have pioneered the art’s quantitative study, specifically in terms of experimentation and the application of practical mathematics in an effort to establish a formal theory – truly connecting the art and science of music for the first time on record. The legendary impetus for Pythagoras’ study of music and its intervallic relationships was said to have occurred one day as he was passing a blacksmith’s workshop, whereupon he had heard four smiths hammering simultaneously and perceived alternating patterns of consonance and dissonance in the resultant tones. Hammers *A*

and *B*, when struck together, produced a consonant interval, as did hammers *C* and *A*; however, when hammers *B* and *C* struck simultaneously, they produced a dissonant interval. Hammers *D* and *A* seemed to be producing the same tone in different registers. Determined to find out the cause of this phenomenon, Pythagoras weighed the hammers, noting that hammer *A* was 12 pounds, *B* was 9 pounds, *C* was 8 pounds, and *D* was 6 pounds. Armed with this data, Pythagoras was able to deduce the following ratios: *A* and *D* = 2:1, *A* and *B* = 4:3, *A* and *C* = 3:2, *B* and *C* = 9:8, which we have come to know as an octave, a fourth, a fifth and a second, respectively.

The English word music comes from the Greek *mousikē* (*technē*), meaning “(art) of the Muses.” In classical Greek mythology, the Muses (Greek: Μοῦσαι) were the goddesses of creative inspiration, as the knowledge underlying all poetry, lyrics, music and the myths themselves was attributed to them. In English, the term is sometimes used in reference to one who inspires an artist, writer or musician. By most accounts, including those of Homer and Hesiod, the Muses are said to be nine in number: *Cleio*, *Euterpē*, *Thaleia*, *Melpomenē*, *Terpsichorē*, *Erato*, *Polymnia*, *Urania* and *Calliopē*. According to Hesiod’s account, the Muses were the nine daughters of Zeus and Titan goddess Mnemosyne (the female personification of memory), an association which may allude to the function of the mnemonic art in Epic poetry transmission, involving the modular structure of oral-formulaic composition. The Muses were also periodically referred to as the *Pegasides*, a name stemming from a myth involving the winged horse, Pegasus, who, stamping his hooves into the ground at Helicon, caused four sacred springs to issue forth, from which the Muses were born. Sometime during Hellenistic period (321-31 BCE), the nine Muses were each officially assigned their corresponding domain of the arts; history to *Cleio*, lyric poetry and flutes to *Euterpē*, pastoral poetry and comedy to *Thaleia*, tragedy to *Melpomenē*, dance to *Terpsichorē*, love poetry to *Erato*, sacred poetry to *Polymnia*, astronomy to *Urania*, and epic poetry to *Calliopē*. Due to the Muses mastery of metrical speech, and the orderliness it communicates, both Plato and the Pythagoreans viewed philosophy as a sub-category of *mousike*. Hence, we get an idea of the length of the ancient’s reverence for the organizational principles underlying music; principles expressed in stone as well as sound; principles they saw as being naturally intrinsic to reality.

If the reader would like, they could, perhaps, devote this month to listening more acutely to music; try to differentiate each of the instruments in a composition and take note of their interactions in consonance and dissonance; try to hear the “architecture” of the composition.

Valley of Hartford, AASR

by David R. Blythe, Sr.

Have you received the COVID-19 Training Manual from the Valley Secretary? Have you complied by reading it, signing the form and returning it? The Training Manual outlines the procedures and processes that we are required to put the place to keep the Valley of Hartford, AASR in compliance with the State of Connecticut and Grand Lodge guidelines. They were created to combat the spread of the COVID-19 virus and to keep your safety in mind while participating in any of our events. Hopefully, if everyone reads the manual and signs the form, we will be in a position to reopen the Valley in the near future.

Now for Valley news!

The Valley continues to receive applications for membership via the one-day classes that the Supreme Council is providing over the internet. Hopefully, more Master Masons will apply for membership and take the third one-day class which will be held on Saturday, November 14, from 9 a.m. to noon.

The 32nd Degree, the final degree required, will be held in December. If the Valley is not able to fully reopen, attendance will be limited to just the candidates, and those from the Fall and Spring class who were unable to see the portrayal in April, by invitation only.

It is hoped that during this shutdown, when the Valley is unable to hold any Family Life Events, and can only meet with a limited member of members in attendance, that you have taken advantage of the activities provided over the internet. So far we have shown a movie, "The Man Who Would Be King" which revealed how Masonry existed world wide, and in October, the 5th Annual Spirit of Katharine Hepburn Award presentation to Cher. The November activity has not yet been announced. But until things get back to normal, you can expect to find an activity each month so I hope that you and your family can take advantage of the offering.

Until we can once again meet on the level without restrictions, stay safe, pray for an early end to the COVID-19 virus, and have a happy Thanksgiving.



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**LOOKING FOR MORE KNOWLEDGE
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**The Valley is accepting applications for
membership in the Scottish Rite.**

This fall, in connection with the Supreme Council, NMJ, we are offering a chance for Master Masons to join the Scottish Rite by taking a one-day class on **Saturday Nov. 14, from 9 a.m. to noon**

For more details about this event contact Valley Secretary,
Bro. Tony Angelica
at (860) 666-0712 or
Office@valleyofhartford.com

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO YOU
and YOUR FAMILIES**

For more information about becoming a member of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite or to receive a Scottish Rite informational DVD, contact Tony Angelica, 32°, Valley Secretary, Valley of Hartford AASR.
(860) 666-0712 Email: office@valleyofhartford.com
www.valleyofhartford.org





Connecticut Freemasons Have the Power to *DONATE LIFE*SM



National Donor Sabbath Month

by Richard F. Denno

Each year in November National Donor Sabbath Month is observed. This three-day observance seeks to include days of worship for major religions practiced in the United States. Although it is usually celebrated the two weekends before Thanksgiving, from Friday through Sunday, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed some plans this year. Whatever time during the month that works for your group is perfectly fine.

If your place of worship is holding services inside, materials can be provided for distribution. Information for virtual services are also available. During National Donor Sabbath, faith leaders from many religions, donor families, transplant recipients and donation and transplantation professionals participate in services and programs to educate the public about the need for the lifesaving and healing gifts passed to others through transplantation, while also encouraging people to register their decision to be organ, eye, and tissue donors.

There is a myth that “my religion” does not support organ donation. The most informative website I have found is www.donate-life.net/organ-donation-and-religion/. There you'll find information on most religions and their thoughts on

organ donation. There is also an excellent short video featuring religious leaders titled ‘A Matter of Life.’

For example, in the Jewish faith, organ donation is considered a Mitzvah. A Mitzvah is the Hebrew word that refers to a commandment commanded by God to be performed as a religious duty. In other words, a kindness done to another.

Another creative and informative website is www.donatelife.net/nds. Here you'll find an overview, fact sheets, music and bulletin copy, and social media images. All are designed to make your National Donor Sabbath Month successful. This is one of those community relationship projects that involves lodges with the religious faiths.

If you or your lodge would like to get involved contact:

Caitlyn Bernabucci

860-286-3120

cbernabucci@nds.org

Remember, Don't Take Your Organs to Heaven – Heaven Knows We Need Them Here.



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Craft At Labor

To have your lodge events appear in the newspaper, please update your lodge website Google calendars prior to the 10th of the previous month. If your lodge needs assistance accessing the website please have the Master or Secretary or Calendar Admin contact the Help Desk: <https://ctfreemasons.on.spiceworks.com/> portal.

All times 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.

Note: Due to COVID-19 it is highly essential that any brother wanting to visit another lodge for a degree contact the Secretary or

Worshipful Master. Numbers are still limited, and while the event may be published here, it may not actually be happening.

ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREES

Wed., Nov. 11, 7:30 p.m., Hospitality Lodge No. 128, Wethersfield. *Degree is TENTATIVE and will be held at Unity Lodge No. 148 in New Britain if held.*

Tue., Nov 24, 7:30 p.m.,
Fayette Lodge No. 69, Ellington

FELLOWCRAFT DEGREES

Thurs., Nov.19, 7:30 p.m., Harmony Lodge No. 42, Waterbury

MASTER MASON DEGREES

Thur., Nov. 19, 7:30 p.m., Hiram Lodge No. 1, New Haven

The Return of 'Craft At Labor' and 'Craft At Refreshment'

With the shutdown of Freemasonry in Connecticut last March when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the relevance of "Craft at Refreshment" and "Craft at Labor" became moot. With no in-person meetings and any Masonic activity "at refreshment" prohibited, it made no sense to run those columns. However, as restrictions have been somewhat lifted and as lodges are starting to run in-person meetings, and even degrees, these columns are becoming relevant again.

Events listed in the two columns have always been pulled from the individual lodge calendars. Often, lodges will fill their calendar months in advance. Just as often, the only entries for a lodge are their stated communications, filled in by admins based on the stated days and times. In many cases there are still dinners listed, and events that center around food. While these events may be permissible if catered, that is impossible to ascertain from a calendar listing.

So, while the columns have returned, please be very aware of the following:

1. Events listed may or may not be happening. Accuracy of events listed IS NOT GUARANTEED. Lodges

may or may not have updated their calendars since the lifting of restrictions. The event that is published is based on the calendar listing as of publication time. Contact the secretary or Worshipful Master to confirm that an event listed may actually be taking place.

2. COVID-19 restrictions are still in effect, and those limit the amount of attendees. Contact the secretary or Worshipful Master to ensure your visit will not put them over the limit.

3. Events centering around food (i.e., table lodges, ladies at table) have not been published. Lodges meeting the Grand Lodge requirements for these events and wishing to have their event publicized should utilize the Grand Lodge emails for that purpose until such time as non-catered food events are again allowed.

As always, "Craft at Labor" and "Craft at Refreshment" are published as a courtesy, and the Connecticut Freemasons are not responsible for the accuracy of information lodges publish to their calendar.

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Grand Lodge Proceedings for the Year 2018
For Bro. Marshall K. Robinson
M.W. Grand Master

A limited number of soft bound printed copies are available for purchase for \$26 each plus postage and Connecticut sales tax for a **total of \$31.27**. Proceedings are no longer sent to each lodge or to the permanent members in this jurisdiction.

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Two Hundred Thirtieth Annual Report

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You spoke and we listened. There is now a PayPal dropdown *Connecticut Freemasons* **Booster** form on the Grand Lodge home page (ctfreemasons.net) just below the PDF version of the paper. Use the dropdown to select your level, click the "Pay Now" button and then follow the directions. You can pay with credit or debit cards or a PayPal account. The funds are used to help cover the printing and mailing expenses of the paper.

Walking For Children With Dyslexia

by Donald M. Casey, Jr.

Scottish Rite Masons held their annual Dyslexia Awareness Walk and Fundraiser in the Town Plot section of Waterbury, Connecticut on October 4.

This annual walk is designed to bring awareness to dyslexia around the state, so families who have children who are struggling to read and write because of dyslexia can apply to the Children's Dyslexia Centers of Connecticut. Once accepted, they will receive one-on-one professional tutoring at no cost.

These centers provide the highest quality multi-sensory reading and written language tutorial services for children with dyslexia through a network of nationally recognized centers of excellence.

Walking together brings awareness of this disorder so school-aged children diagnosed with dyslexia will realize that there is help available for them. They need help now and the Scottish Rite is here to provide them with these professional services.

The main Dyslexia Center is in Waterbury with satellite centers in Bridgeport and Farmington. For questions and/or concerns, or to make a charitable donation in support of this program, please contact the main Dyslexia Center in Waterbury at (203) 465-0830.





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Take a Hike. No, Really, Take a Hike...Redux

by Francis G. Way

September 29. My birthday. Standing at a trailhead in restricted territory, and yeah, I'll have to fill out a form when I get back to keep the governor happy. But no sign of COVID-19 out here, though...too hot, too barren, and way too sunny. Everything you need for an awesome hike.

Eleven miles in on the 13-mile scenic loop road around Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area outside of Las Vegas, Nevada, is the Pine Creek Canyon trailhead. It's not a long hike but covers surprisingly varied terrain (more varied than one would think, in the desert). It's hot – just over 90°, and that's about five degrees warmer than normal for late September.

This time I'm not alone; my wife Kim and daughter Rachel, who works as a kayaking and hiking guide in the Las Vegas and Lake Mead area, are with me. We're properly equipped, with plenty of water, good hats, sunscreen, packs with the essentials, and we're ready to go. Then I remember that the desert also has rattlesnakes...and laugh a bit.

The first quarter-mile of the trail is downhill, and introduces the great conundrum of desert hiking. With rocks and some stone steps here and there it is essential to keep an eye on one's footing. But with huge sandstone cliffs rising up all around, it is also essential to keep an eye

up to take it all in. So going is a bit slow at first, punctuated with "wow," and "oh my God look at that." So different than hiking "the green tunnel" in the northeast!

Once we're down on the level we pull to the side to allow a small group of hikers to pass going the other way. It dawns on me, after we've exchanged greetings and they have passed, that hikers are a lot like Masons. It's definitely a group whose members have very similar interests, and a language all their own, with certain rituals in common. They will always stop and help a hiker in distress, even sharing water and other supplies in an emergency. Each hiker on a trail experiences the same journey but comes away from it learning different things. Passing other hikers on the trail feels, to me, similar to meeting a brother in a public place.

After we get going again, we're in a rhythm of sorts – pausing to take photos, resuming the trail. About half a mile down the trail we take a small spur trail, the Eco Fire loop. The loop runs through an area that was purposely burned in the mid-90s, to see the effects of the fire and regrowth, and also to see its effectiveness in eradicating an invasive species of bush. The trail led right to the banks of Pine Creek, dry most of the time except after a heavy rain. In a few steps we went from open desert to a very dense area of



bushes and brush. It was hard to believe that the Forest Service had intentionally set a fire there 25 years ago. Some of the taller trees were still charred, but the area seemed very abundant with greenery and the ubiquitous little lizards that roam the desert floor.

Shortly before the loop returned to the main trail, something flew by my head that sounded like a WWI biplane. Rachel, far more expert in the flora and fauna of the area, said, "Oh, that's a tarantula hawk." "A what???" I asked. Tarantula hawks are a large species of wasp (two inches long at least) that sting and kill tarantula spiders and then lay their eggs inside the carcass. While they do not often sting humans (Rachel said you'd really have to swat at it a lot), its sting is one of the most painful imaginable. We saw several more on the



Continued on page 34

Take a Hike *continued from page 33*

rest of the hike, but they were intent on finding tarantulas and not humans.

A little further down the trail we came to an old gatepost. One of the highlights of this hike is an old foundation of an abandoned homestead, the Wilson Homestead, and the gatepost signaled that we were getting close. Just beyond the gatepost we stopped in a some shade for water and a Snickers bar (one of the best hiking snacks of all time). As I pushed into the bushes to give everyone some room in the shade, Rachel said, Be on the lookout for snakes, Dad.” Snakes. Um, ok. We didn’t see any but did have an opportunity to check out the trees and bushes that are prevalent in the area – juniper and holly were instantly recognizable. I never figured holly for a desert plant, but over the course of the hike the trail did a “green tunnel” going through holly bushes well taller than my head.

We soon came to the Pine Creek loop. It’s a mile-long loop that goes way into the canyon at the base of the cliffs and Mount Mescalito, and then comes back around through “the meadow.” It was here that we saw the foundation of the abandoned homestead and could only imagine what life must have been like for the inhabitants. The loop itself was incredibly interesting, with more and more bushes and trees, and large sandstone boulders.

Then, surprisingly, we heard yelling. At first we could not tell whether it came from farther up the trail, or from up above on the cliffs. Hundreds of feet above our heads, the Bridge Mountain trail would be nearing the summit of Bridge Mountain (along with Turtlehead Peak, Bridge Mountain is one of the most spectacular points in the area). The trail to Bridge Mountain can have a lot

of exposure and some scrambling so we immediately wondered if someone was in distress. With no cell phone signal, it would have to be a quick hot hike back out to summon help, if so. We waited in silence for a bit, listening for any kind of distress signal (three whistles, three gunshots, etc.). Finally, we heard someone calling a name. It came from our right and up. From our left we heard a

the far bank. Rachel’s choice went to some stone steps down to the creek bed, and a trail continuing on the other side. Kim’s trail had dead-ended at a boulder and so we took Rachel’s trail. Further exploration on a topographical map of the area afterward revealed there are half a dozen other trails that lead to spots where rock climbers will climb known routes up the cliffs.



A steady uphill on Rachel’s choice, which in fact, turned out to be the loop, brought us 30 or 40 feet above the creek, with the trail running in and out of thick, tall, bushes (again, mainly juniper and holly) until we finally

response, “I’m safe.” We relaxed, and that was the last of the shouting that we heard. The mystery of what exactly was going on still remains.

At the farthest point of the loop, deep in the canyon, it became a “choose your own trail” exercise. A small clearing had several trails exiting. We split up and explored. My choice went to the creek bed with a steep but fairly easy scramble down, and a small walk up to a connecting trail on

descended, crossed the creek by a stagnant pool of water fed by a trickle from a natural spring (an important find if we had needed water and had our water filters with us) and hit the tall grass in “the meadow.” A short jaunt through the lush green of the meadow brought us to the end of the loop and back to the main trail. We continued back to the trailhead and up to the car. It

Continued on page 35





was an awesome way to spend my birthday, and a most memorable hike I will never forget.

We finished the day by continuing a new tradition. Rachel and I took Kim for pizza and beer at Cottonwood Station, a great little place in the small oasis town of Blue Diamond. Rachel and I had gone there on the advice of some other hikers after our hike in March. It is now the official ending to any of our Red Rock hikes. Did I mention that the beer was really fresh and cold, and that the people were warm and friendly?

Masons should ever remember that the beauty of nature is the work of the Author of All Creation, and there is much light to be found in those works. Getting outdoors and clearing my head on a hike is a very powerful tonic. There are few things in life I love more. I would urge everyone to get outside and walk, even just around the neighborhood. And just think, around here you won't have to worry about tarantula hawks!

Lodges at Refreshment

by Ted Nelson

Each month our Editor scans the CT Freemasons Google calendars for specific information under a variety of categories to share with the Craft. Lodges at labor (degree work) and lodges at refreshment (social events) are normally the two areas of the largest content. With less activities come less reports. Meetings are fewer and those that take place in real time are shorter. Those that take place virtually on Zoom or some other audio/video conferences are also shorter and somewhat awkward when you can't read someone's body language, or when brothers talk over each other. So the rules of social norms have changed since this virus hit our shores.

I miss the promotion of the Golden Rule, but I still live by it: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. It really works, even in the 21st century with the social short cuts we take in text messages, emails, Facebook posts, Instagram, twitter, etc. For instance, when did it become ok to answer your phone at the dining table? When did it become fashionable to call people names in any of the above mentioned platforms which you would

never, in good conscience, say to their face?

As human beings we have always taken risks. As Masons we do as well. Think about it, my brothers, once upon a time you took a risk to apply to your lodge to become a Mason. You took a risk trusting these men, most of whom you didn't know and suffered yourself to be in the most vulnerable of positions to take your degrees. Yet, you took the risk. Why? I like to think that you weighed the options and felt that the reward was greater than the risk. But best of all, a wonderful thing happened. Upon taking your obligations you became a brother to us and we to you. At that point our fellowship was enhanced and we took refreshment together. Unfortunately that part, and some of the parts of our labor, have been curtailed by the mandates of Governor Ned Lamont. For better or worse this is what we have to work with.

Somewhere along the line, some would say in the last eight months while others might say for years or decades, our state and federal leaders have been trying to mitigate risk on the part of the citizenry. Everybody wear seatbelts, no cell phone use while driving, gun permits required, wear bike helmets, and for God's sake don't let your children or dogs ride in the back of your pickup truck.

We as leaders are under enormous

pressure to do the right thing by our constituents. We should point out the risks to make us aware of what we have to lose. But always remember that with freedom and liberty we risk the bad behavior of some and that's why we have laws, both civil and Masonic. We, the people, decide how we want to be governed. If we give away those rights we have no one to blame but ourselves.

This brings me full circle back to refreshment. We need it like the air we breathe. No human being can work eight to 12 hours a day without stopping for rest and refreshment. Nor can Freemasons. It's part of our culture, our sense of belonging and in the seeking of approval from our peers and superiors. While I miss our Masonic refreshment at the lodge, we have all, for those willing to take the risk, been getting some of it at our local restaurants. These institutions are licensed by our local health departments and are abiding by the governor's mandates. At least there we can stand together, six-plus feet apart with masks on and say a public prayer and pledge to the flag of our beloved country. Until this dreaded disease is over we will just have to, for the safety of our elderly and health compromised members, wait to have refreshment at lodge buildings.

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