



# LAFAYETTE CONSISTORY NEWS

FROM THE VALLEYS OF BRIDGEPORT,  
NEW HAVEN, AND WATERBURY  
OLDEST CONSISTORY IN THE NORTHERN MASONIC JURISDICTION

Issue No. 44

SUMMER 2025



## ***HIGHLIGHTING BROTHERS AT WORK***

**Staying Cool with Jerry Nero!**

**A Jolly Masonic Mug.**

**Lafayette Consistory Attends Die Fledermaus for the  
200th Birthday of Johann Strauss II.**



**LAFAYETTE CONSISTORY NEWS** FROM THE VALLEYS OF BRIDGEPORT, NEW HAVEN, AND WATERBURY  
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Lafayette Consistory News is the official publication of the Valley of Bridgeport and Lafayette Consistory, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, USA © The Board of Trustees of the Valley of Bridgeport.

**ALLEGIANCE**

The Bodies of the Scottish Rite, sitting in the Valley of Bridgeport, State of Connecticut, acknowledge and yield allegiance to the Supreme Council, 33°, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States of America whose Grand East is in Lexington, Massachusetts.

ILL. WALTER F. WHEELER, MSA, 33°  
Sovereign Grand Commander

ILL. KEVIN J. HECHT, 33°  
Deputy for Connecticut

ILL. BRUCE T. WORK, 33°  
Active for Connecticut

ILL. HOWARD D. TURNER, MSA, 33°  
Active for Connecticut

ILL. RICHARD V. TRAVIS, 33°  
Active Emeritus for Connecticut

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Active Emeritus for Connecticut

ILL. DAVID L. SHARKIS, 33°  
Active Emeritus for Connecticut

ILL. GAIL N. SMITH, 33°  
Active Emeritus for Connecticut

Attest: ILL. BRUCE R. BELLMORE, MSA, 33°  
Secretary for the Valley of Bridgeport

ILL. JACK J. S. FARKAS, MSA, 33° Secretary Emeritus

**Lafayette Consistory**

ILL. Harold A. Elwell, MSA, 33° - Commander-in-Chief  
ILL. Erik P. Meyer, MSA, 33° - 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Commander  
ILL. Steven P. Schreck, MSA, 33° - 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Commander  
ILL. Guy O. Whelchell, III, MSA, 33° - Orator  
Raymond J. Savoy, 32° - Chancellor



*"Class of 2025" Indianapolis, Indiana*  
New Illustrious 33°s, l to r: Jason Allan Fletcher (VON), Steven Michael Allinson (VONH), John Edward Stogden (VON), Scott Bruce Bumps (VONH), Robert Francis Polito (VOB), Erik Pennington Meyer (VOB), Frank James Saviano (VON), Gary Dean Shepard (VOB), Harold Alan Elwell (VOW), and Frank Dlugoleski (VOH).

ILL. Martin Ede, MSA, 33° - Master of Ceremonies  
Colin C. Souney, MSA, 32° - Engineer and Seneschal  
ILL. Carl H. Anderson, 33° - Organist

**Dewitt Clinton Lodge of Perfection**

Gary Ecsedi, 32° - Thrice Potent Master  
John H. Kelley, 32° - Deputy Master  
Michael S. Abrahamson, MSA, 32° - Senior Warden  
Travis E. Gerald, 32° - Junior Warden  
Alexander J. DeFranzo, 32° - Orator  
Michael D. Sabia, Jr., 32° - Master of Ceremonies  
David H. Cooper, 32° - Captain of the Guard  
Henry T. Hittle, 32° - Master of Entrances

**Washington Council Princes of Jerusalem**

T. Woodford Hittle, 32° - Sovereign Prince  
R. Scott Nocerino, 32° - High Priest  
Colin C. Souney, MSA, 32° - Senior Warden  
Michael L. Todd, MSA, 32° - Junior Warden  
William W. Roots, 32° - Orator  
Bermann Thelison, 32° - Master of Ceremonies  
Isack Waserman, 32° - Captain of the Guard  
ILL. Robert J. Furce, MSA, 33° - Master of Entrances

**Pequonnock Chapter Rose Croix**

David V. Papp, MSA, 32° - Most Wise Master  
William E. Schueler, 32° - Senior Warden  
Pedro Garcia, II, 32° - Junior Warden  
David C. Gianetti, 32° - Orator  
Isack Waserman, 32° - Master of Ceremonies  
Darrin D. Silhavy, 32° - Captain of the Guard  
John A. Radziunas, 32° - Master of Entrances  
Colin C. Souney, MSA, 32° - Standard Bearer

**Valley Officers for all Bodies**

ILL. Robert J. Furce, MSA, 33° - Treasurer  
Gavin Forrester, III, 32° - Assistant Treasurer  
ILL. Bruce R. Bellmore, MSA, 33° - Secretary  
ILL. Jack J.S. Farkas, MSA, 33° - Secretary Emeritus, Associate Secretary

**Valley Officers cont.**

ILL. David B. Urban, MSA, 33° - Hospitaller  
ILL. Gary D. Shepard, MSA, 33° - Tyler & Class Marshal  
Harvey J. Hartin, MSA, 32° - Assistant Tyler  
ILL. Carl H. Anderson, 33° - Director of Music  
ILL. Guy O. Whelchell, III, MSA, 33° - Choir Coordinator  
ILL. Raymond J. Dolyak, MSA, 33° - Manager, Stage & Properties  
Joseph S. Lengyel, MSA, 32° - Assistant Manager, Stage & Properties  
Andrew P. Kolaski, Jr., MSA, 32° - Lighting Manager  
Michael S. Abrahamson, MSA, 32° - Sound Manager  
Gavin B. Forrester, III, 32° - Membership Chairman  
R. Scott Nocerino, 32° - Family Life Chairman  
Gary Ecsedi, 32° - Family Life Assistant Chairman  
ILL. John A. Amarillos, MSA, 33° - Newsletter Editor

**Valley of New Haven**

Albert R.R. Johnson, MSA, 32° - Thrice Potent Master  
Gerardo Nero, 32° - Sovereign Prince  
Charles G. Ehrentraut, Sr., 32° - Most Wise Master  
Salvatore R. Ferrigno, MSA, 32° - Treasurer  
Jerry J. Gruenbaum, 32° - Secretary

**Valley of Waterbury**

Patrick Donnelly, 32° - Thrice Potent Master  
Alexander J. DeFranzo, 32° - Sovereign Prince  
ILL. Harold A. Elwell, MSA, 33° - Most Wise Master  
Eric M. Bogert, 32° - Treasurer  
Daniel D. Sharkis, 32° - Secretary



# A JOLLY MASONIC MUG

~ Hilary Anderson Stelling, Director of Exhibitions and Collections,  
Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library

Over two hundred years ago, potters at Sunderland Pottery, a firm owned by John Phillips, created this transfer print-decorated mug with the Masonic consumer in mind. Part of the collection of the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library since the late 1980s, this drinking vessel is on view at the museum in the exhibition, “Looking Back, Moving Forward: Fifty Years of Collecting.”

Starting in the mid-1700s and through the 1800s, English ceramics manufacturers produced mugs, plates, and pitchers decorated with transfer-printed images specifically designed to appeal to Freemasons. Sold in Great Britain and around the world, these goods were also popular in the United States. On this mug, enclosed by a border ornamented with swags of flowers, is an image of a monumental building, King Solomon’s Temple. Two columns topped with globes and figures personifying justice (holding scales) and prudence (with mirror in hand) flank the temple, along with depictions of Masonic symbols. Fundamental to Freemasonry, the story of building King Solomon’s Temple is central to the ritual of the first three Masonic degrees. The objects depicted on this mug, such as a square, compasses, a ladder, and beehive, are all symbols familiar to Freemasons.

An oval between the columns contains a verse of “The Entered Apprentice’s Song,” a well-known Masonic song. London-based actor and Freemason Matthew Birkhead (d. 1723) wrote the lyrics, probably in the late 1710s. Initially published in the 1720s, the song soon achieved widespread popularity and continued to be printed well into the 1800s. Instructions that accompanied the first published versions of Birkhead’s lyrics dictated that brethren could sing the song, with permission of the lodge’s Master, only once the thoughtful work of a meeting was complete.

To add to its appeal, the maker of this cup added a surprise—a lifelike green ceramic frog attached to one



*Mug, 1807-1820. J. Phillips & Company  
Sunderland Pottery, Sunderland, England.  
Special Acquisitions Fund, 87.28.  
Photograph by Michael Cardinali.*

of the mug’s interior walls. This unexpected feature was intended to trick the unwary, and—with luck—prompt a hilarious reaction. Just as singing “The Entered Apprentice’s Song” signaled the end of serious lodge business, the frog within this mug indicated it was intended for the most social--and jolly--kinds of Masonic gatherings.

Learn more about exhibitions and collections at the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library at [srmmml.org](http://srmmml.org).



*Interior, Mug, 1807-1820. Special Acquisitions Fund, 87.28.  
Photograph by Michael Cardinali.*

# STAYING COOL WITH JERRY NERO!



## HOSPITALER'S CORNER



Bro. Gerardo (Jerry) Nero was born on November 21, 1965, in Caserta, Italy, and immigrated to the United States with his family at the age of three. The family settled in Hamden, Connecticut, where he still resides.

Jerry attended Hamden High School. After graduating in 1983, Jerry went to work cooking in restaurants for many years. He then decided to pursue a career in HVAC and enrolled at TCI (Technical Career Institute) in West Haven, CT. After graduating and

receiving his certificate in 1985, he went to work for ABC Mechanical for two years, gaining hands-on experience in the field. At that time, his (biological) brothers and he decided to open their own company in 1988. Over the years, he stepped back as owner and now work as an employee, while the future of the company remains in the hands of his nephews, his older brother, and his wife. The Neros certainly maintain the core values of respect for family in their business.

Jerry decided to become a Mason in 2021 and was raised as a Master Mason later that year. Since then, He has progressed through the Degrees of Royal Arch, Cryptic Council, Knights Templar, and Scottish Rite. He has served as the Worshipful Master of St. John's Lodge No. 2 and as the Sovereign Prince



of the Elm City Chapter for Scottish Rite in New Haven, while also being a member and active participant in many York Rite bodies. He values supporting fellow members and lodges, traveling to meet new brothers, and the ongoing pursuit of higher knowledge.

Your gifts to the Hospitaler Fund assist David in helping out local brothers who are members of the Consistory. Unfortunately, there never has been a greater need. If you have experienced good fortune in the past year, why not pass a portion of it forward to help a brother in need. Many are struggling with age-related debilities, as well as misfortunes of every kind.

Please make your contribution payable to

**Lafayette Consistory**

and mail to

**ILL.: David B. Urban MSA, 33°,**

**Hospitaler**

**P.O. Box 309**

**Stratford, CT 06615**

# VALLEY OF BRIDGEPORT & MASONIC BODIES



STRATFORD  
MEMORIAL DAY  
PARADE 2025



JUNE 17, 2025  
AT UNION  
LODGE NO. 40  
IN DANBURY



COLONIAL  
FELLOWCRAFT  
DEGREE TEAM



CONNECTICUT  
**walk**

Children's **Dyslexia Center**

**Annual Walk**

**for Dyslexia Awareness**

*For 23 Years, Making a Positive Difference in  
the Lives of Children with Dyslexia*

**Sunday, October 5, 2025**

90+ Tutors  
Certified  
Hundreds of  
Children  
Served

Waterbury Masonic Temple  
531 Highland Avenue  
Waterbury, CT 06708  
Registration 12:00 Noon  
1:00 PM Step-off

\$4M In  
Services  
Provided Free  
of Charge!

For Registration or Sponsorship Info Contact

**Dave Sharkis      203-739-9357**

**Waterbury Center      203-465-0830**

**To Donate Online**

Scan the QR Code Below

Select Connecticut - Waterbury from the "Pull-Down"

Enter "Walk" in the "Additional Instruction" box



*The Children's Dyslexia Centers, Inc. is a tax-exempt 501(C)(3) charitable organization.*

# What a Spectacular Day for the Lighthouse Tour!



The Consistory,  
July 19, 2025





# 150th Installation of the Woodwinds, Branford



# The Valley of New Haven Dinner ~ August 18, 2025



AUGUST 14,  
2025

# VALLEY OF B ANNUAL APPREC



STRATFORD

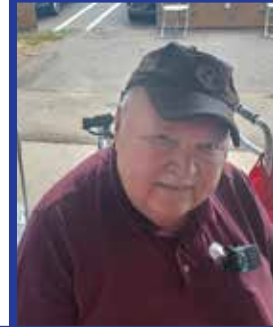


# BRIDGEPORT CIATION DINNER

# RIVERVIEW BISTRO



# Scottish Rite Families Enjoy Summer



August 16, 2025



# Summer Fun at the AASR Clambake



## Orange Fairgrounds



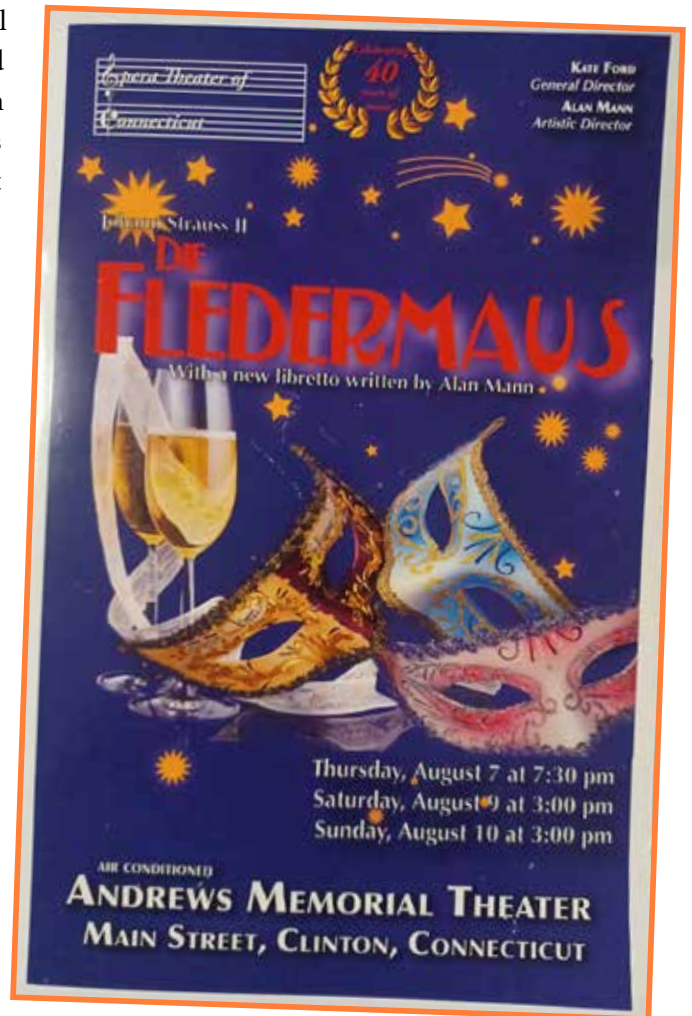
# LAFAYETTE CONSISTORY ATTENDS A PERFORMANCE OF DIE FLEDERMAUS FOR THE 200TH BIRTHDAY OF JOHANN STRAUSS II

The sold-out performance which took place at the Andrews Memorial Theater on Sunday, August 10 in Clinton was a delightful way to spend a summer afternoon. Johann Strauss II, born on October 25, 1825, in Vienna, was destined to become one of the most celebrated composers of the 19th century. His father, Johann Strauss I, was already a prominent composer and bandleader who had revolutionized the Viennese waltz and opposed his son's entry into the world of music. In 1849, Johann Strauss I died unexpectedly of scarlet fever. It's at that time that his career took off. He merged his own orchestra with his father's, solidifying his position as Vienna's premier composer of dance music. Over the next few decades, Johann became the leading figure in the Viennese musical world, creating waltzes, polkas, and operettas that captivated not only Austria but the entire world.

Johann's waltzes were revolutionary. Whereas his father had elevated the waltz to aristocratic salons, Johann II refined and widened its emotional depth, turning it into a symbol of Viennese culture. His most famous waltz, The Blue Danube composed in 1867, became an instant success and remains to this date one of the most iconic pieces of classical music ever written.

As his fame grew, Johann turned his attention to operetta, a genre of light opera that blended music with humor and social commentary. His masterpiece, Die Fledermaus (1874), is regarded as one of the greatest operettas of all time, combining sparkling melodies with a witty libretto.

After the performance, the Consistory members headed to Madison's Cafe Allegre for a sumptuous dinner and wonderful camaraderie.





# “Take Me Out to t



## AASR at Yankee Stadium, Bronx, New York, June 6, 2025

### FAMILY LIFE EVENTS ~ 2025



Please note that details are not yet available for some of these activities.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>
9/14/25	Sun	8 a.m.	<b>Buffalo Bills at the New York Jets</b> at Metlife Stadium, NJ. <b>SOLD OUT.</b>
09/21/25	Sun.	9:30 a.m.	<b>Fishing Trip on the L.I. Sound</b> , \$20/person in advance, “Lucky Lady,” Clinton, CT, Limit of 35, plus \$5 for pool, no glass bottles or bananas per order of Captain.
10/04/25	Sat.	3:30 pm	<b>Essex Clipper Dinner Train</b> , Essex, Ct. Ride for 2-2 1/2 scenic journey while served a 4-course meal in beautifully restored 1920’s Pullman diners, pulled by a vintage diesel locomotive. Leaving Leo H. Lohrman, II, Theatre, Stratford at 3:30 pm. \$75/person. <b>WAIT LIST.</b>
11/27/25	Thu.	7:30 a.m.	<b>Annual Turkey Trot 5K Road Race</b> , Thanksgiving morning, supports the Connecticut Children’s Dyslexia Centers, and other local charities.
12/13/25	Sat.	3 p.m.	<b>Boston Pop Holiday Concert at Symphony Hall</b> , a performance filled with holiday music favorites, the traditional sing-along, and a visit from Santa Claus himself. Shopping or dinner on your own at Faneuil Hall Market Place afterward. The bus leaves The Leo H. Lohrman, II, Theatre in Stratford at 10 a.m. Limit 40 people. \$95/person.
12/19/25	Fri.	6 p.m.	<b>Annual Holiday Party</b> and fundraiser for CT Children’s Dyslexia Centers, Woodwinds Banquet Facility, Branford, CT to include cigar rolling and silent auction. Formal dress, black tie for men, ladies: formal holiday dress. \$40/person.

# the Ball Game..."



## New York Yankees vs Boston Red Sox



### VALLEY OF BRIDGEPORT 2025-2026 DEGREE SCHEDULE

**DATE**

2025

Mon. Sept. 15	9th Degree (live), 10th Degree (video)
Mon. Sept. 29	7th Degree (live), 13th Degree (video)
Mon. Oct. 6	Stated Meeting, 20th Degree (live), 29th Degree (video)
Mon. Nov. 17	25th Degree (live), 31st Degree (video)
Mon. Dec. 1	32nd Degree (live)

2026

Mon. Jan. 26	4th Degree (live) TBA (video)
Mon. Feb. 16	26th Degree (live) TBA (video)
Mon. Mar. 9	18th Degree (live) TBA (video)
Mon. Mar. 23	10th Degree (live) TBA (video)
Mon. Apr. 13	19th Degree (live) TBA (video)
Mon. May. 4	32nd Degree (live)

Dinners are at 6 p.m., Degrees at 7:30 in Stratford unless otherwise noted. Dinners before the Bridgeport degrees on Mondays are at 6 p.m. in the Shrine building, unless otherwise noted,

- 4th Degree video as needed for new candidates available.
- New candidates must register 45 min before degree. \$10/per brother.
- Monday candidates must fill out the application by Noon on Friday.

RSVP required for meals.  
**Email: [Office@LafayetteConsistory.com](mailto:Office@LafayetteConsistory.com)**  
**or call 203-375-0064.**

# Own This Beautiful Knife and Donate to the Scottish Rite Charity!



You will love this beautiful knife with a wooden and metal handle that has the 32° Double-Headed Eagle engraved on one side and the Square and Compasses on the other. For your donation of \$90, \$25 of which is a tax deductible contribution to the Children's Dyslexia Center's of Connecticut plus \$6.95 shipping & handling.

Please use the coupon below,



I would like the 32° Double-Headed Eagle/Masonic emblem knife for a donation of \$90 each plus \$6.95 s/h each and please mail to:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

I would like (quantity) \_\_\_\_\_ knives at \$90 each plus \$6.95 s/h My check or credit card info is enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Send your check or credit card information with this coupon to **Lafayette Consistory, PO Box 309, Stratford, CT 06615-0309**

**CREDIT CARD INFORMATION** Charge my credit card

CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

SECURITY CODE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_





SAVE THE DATE TO PLAY IT AGAIN AT THE

## HOLIDAY PARTY

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2025

6 -10 P.M.

WOODWINDS, SPECIAL EVENTS VENUE

A Holiday Buffet Dinner

At the Woodwinds by Chef Silvio

And Dancing with a DJ

Four Hour Premium Open Bar

Cocktail Hour, Hot and Cold Hors d'Oeuvres

Salad Station & Pasta Station

Farfalle with Sunday Sauce, Tortellini Alfredo

Entrée Station

Chicken Marsala, Chicken Florentine, Salmon Champagne

Carving Station

Prime Rib & Stuffed Roast Pork

Complements Station ~ Herb Roasted Potatoes,

Seasonal vegetables Medley, Rice Pilaf

Desserts ~ Assortment of Cookies and Pastries

Served with Coffee, Tea, or Espresso

**DRESS IS FORMAL**

ONLY \$40.00 a person (cost the same as last year)

Reserve your place today.

Silent Auction and a Cigar Roller after dinner to  
benefit the Children's Dyslexia Centers of Connecticut.

CALL the Scottish Rite Office today to

RSVP: 203-375-0064

Limited Space so RSVP Early by Friday, December 12.



Lafayette Consistory  
P.O. Box 309  
Stratford, CT 06615-0309

## ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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From the Valleys of Bridgeport, New Haven, and Waterbury

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203-375-0064



### BROTHERS REMEMBER

Whether traveling from in or out of the state it is easy to get to the Stratford Leo H. Lohrman, II, Scottish Rite Theatre via Metro North. Our Theatre is located right next door to the Stratford Station. Avoid I-95 traffic and parking concerns. Consult the Metro North Train Schedule at: <http://www.mta.info/schedules>.

For those who drive to the Theatre, the street address is **2422 Main Street, Stratford, CT**. The building is clearly marked with the name at the top of the building. There is limited handicap parking in front and there is parking behind the Theatre.