

The Florida Mason

Vol. 2 Issue 2

Above & Beyond



2023 Journey With The Grand Master

STRONGER TOGETHER



The Official Magazine of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida



Grand Master's Message

Fraternal Greetings My Brothers,

Let me begin by thanking you for allowing me to serve you, and our Great Fraternity as Grand Master. It is a privilege that few get to experience, and one I value more than words can express.

By the time you read this, we will have completed our Intentional travels around this great Grand Jurisdiction, in the manner of Grand Master Official Visits. The First Lady and I cannot be more pleased with the outcome of each and every one of the Visits. From the very beginning we asked you to plan and execute an evening that represented your District(s) in a responsible manner. We asked you - to do you and you did! We recognize the diversity that comprises our State and by your actions you showcased what makes you best in a way that should make you proud. We also appreciate your generosity in all ways. Your outpouring of support means the world to both Lady Odessa, and myself. Your hard work, and your efforts are noticed and appreciated.

Our State has endured another hurricane season and thus far, as of the writing of this article, we have experienced minimal negative impacts to our Lodges. Some of our Brothers, and their families were impacted by Hurricane Idalia and in a few cases we provided emergency assistance. I would like to give a big shout-out to the Brother-to-Brother Program for their swift mobilization and response during Hurricane Idalia. Your kindness and your compassion to those afflicted during the most difficult of times is inspirational, and so very much appreciated. Many people talk the talk. You Brothers walk the walk, and lead by example. We are better because of you, and you help make us **"Stronger Together."**

My twenty-nine District Deputy Grand Masters have been busy making visits, and providing The Grand Line Essential Data on Lodge Health across the State. Your cooperation in taking an honest look at your individual Lodges, is not meant to be punitive, but rather to be a benefit to your long-term health, and well-being. Grand Lodge is interested in helping you be successful, and we can only do that if we are aware of what your needs might be. The D.D.G.M. Checklists, and the dialogue surrounding them are one way we gain that needed data and insight.

As we close out the calendar year, Lady Odessa and I want to wish you a Happy Holiday Season. Regardless of how you choose to celebrate – it is our fondest hope that you, and your family stay safe, enjoy the company of those whom you love, and remember, that we are **"Stronger Together."**

Fraternally,

M.:W.: Glen B. Bishop

Grand Master

Stronger Together



Grand Lodge of Florida

220 North Ocean Street
Jacksonville, Florida 32202
P.O. Box 1020 • 32201
Tel: 904.354.2339
www.GrandLodgeFL.com

GRAND LODGE OFFICERS 2023-24

GRAND MASTER

M.: W.: Glen B. Bishop
(Clearwater)

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER

R.: W.: Donald W. Cowart
(Valrico)

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN

R.: W.: Taleb "Tali" Atala
(Miami)

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN

R.: W.: Haskell R. Vest, Jr.
(Navarre)

GRAND TREASURER

R.: W.: Rudin "Rudy" J. Boatright
(Fleming Island)

GRAND SECRETARY

M.: W.: Richard E. Lynn, P.G.M.
(Jacksonville)

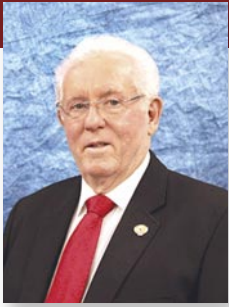
*All submissions
for future issues of*

*The Florida Mason
Above & Beyond*

*and Facebook submissions
should be sent to:*

R.: W.: Charles R. Jordan
publications@grandlodgefl.com
727-455-7195

*(Please use email address
provided here,
Do Not send text messages)*



Deputy Grand Master's Message

My Brothers,

I would like to start by thanking you for electing me as your Deputy Grand Master. It has been a humbling experience to not only work for you but to represent you and this great Fraternity.

This road that I have traveled for so many years to bring me to this point has offered me the opportunity to visit each of our Masonic Districts and many more of our Lodges across this great state. This journey has opened my eyes to the many opportunities and challenges we face daily in our Fraternity. Our Lodges rise and fall like a pendulum swinging back and forth between good times and bad, Member gains, and Member Losses; great progress and activity, and stagnation. These trends can be seen repeating themselves throughout the history of our Lodges. Why do these trends happen and why do they keep repeating themselves over and over again?

The lifeblood of every Lodge is based on the passion of the active Members of that Lodge. These are the men who attend the meetings, the practices, the fundraisers, District Schools, the Master's & Wardens Meetings, and put in the work day after day, week after week, and month after month. The passion of these Brothers is infectious and fosters excitement and motivation in the Craft; but these passions can and will falter over time, due to lack of support, loss of motivation, and burnout.

As a leader in our Fraternity, it is essential that we provide

our Lodges the tools necessary to be successful. Almost every tool necessary for a Lodge's success can be found in the Digest and in

the educational materials provided by the Grand Lodge; however, there are a few unwritten tools that are essential to make them work, and they comprise my theme for this year: Leadership, Accountability, and Commitment. These three words have always been important to our Lodges' success, but they are even more important when we apply them to our daily lives and actions.

Leadership, Accountability, and Commitment are the three words I would ask you to reflect upon each day and strive to live these words in your daily lives: for your family, for your career, and for your Lodge. Our Fraternity will thrive or die based on how these three words are executed and I hope and pray that we take these words to heart and make them important in our lives and Lodges once again.

Be the leader you have the potential to be – hold yourself and your Brethren accountable to your obligations and actions, and renew your commitment to yourself, your Brothers and your Fraternity.

May the Great Architect of the Universe watch over you and your families, our first responders, and military personnel wherever they may be. May God Bless our Brethren, our Lodges, Freemasonry, and the United States of America. ✠

Fraternally,

R. W. Don Cowart
Deputy Grand Master



Senior Grand Warden's Message

My Brothers,

I would like to thank you, the Craft, for allowing me the great responsibility of being your Senior Grand Warden. It is indeed a great honor to be able to serve you and it is a duty I take very seriously.

As I have said many times before as we travel around the great State of Florida, the future and well-being of our institution is in our collective hands. Ignoring or circumventing portions of our Digest of Masonic Law to fit our desires and placing our well-being and satisfaction above our Brothers and our Fraternity

is our road to perdition.

By following and implementing in our lives the lessons earned in our Degrees, by studying our Digest of Masonic Law, observing our Obligations and Charges, we will flourish. Without them, we will fail.

Like our Grand Master has stated this year, "*We are Stronger Together.*" ✠

Fraternally,

R. W. Tali Atala
Senior Grand Warden

Kurcbaum Family Gift To The Masonic Home

The family of W. Manek Kurcbaum, who passed on January 18, 2022, and his wife, Betty Kurcbaum, who passed on July 8, 2023, have made a generous donation to The Masonic Home of Florida, this fall. W. Manek "Morrie" served as Worshipful Master of Doric Lodge No. 140 in 1995, as well as having served in many other capacities within his Lodge. He was survived by his daughter, Dawn Faustini, and his grandchildren, Alana, and Sophia.

Betty Kurcbaum, who passed while residing in The Masonic Home, was survived by her sister, Rebecca Gorin, and her nephew, Edward Gorin, who always accompanied Manek to varied Masonic Events. ✠



Junior Grand Warden's Message

My Brothers,

What a fantastic journey it has been so far; since June, this great team of Grand Lodge Officers has hit the ground running, and are making Official Visits around the State, and beyond. From the Nation's Capital in Washington, D.C.; the Southern Conference in Montgomery; the Tri-State Degree in Dothan, Alabama; and Grand Master's Official Visits from Miami to Pensacola; we have been representing and visiting with all of you almost constantly. Thank you for your hospitality and keep in mind individual Lodge Visits are very important to us, so reach out, and let us know what is happening in your Lodge. Make sure if you have any questions or concerns to give us a chance to help.

At Dothan, Alabama, the State Champion Ritual Team, from the 11th Masonic District did an outstanding job of representing Florida to all the visiting Brothers, and Dignitaries in attendance. We are so proud of our team, they deserve a hearty congratulations.

Joyce and I would like to thank everyone who attended the Junior Grand Warden's Homecoming in Pensacola, it was an awe

some event. We were so happy to see you all, and hope you had a wonderful time.

I would like to mention a couple of websites that might peak your interest: MasonicHomeFL.com; The Masonic Home of Florida website, has many ways we can assist our Masonic Home Residents. Not just monetary, but in time, effort and goods. Take a look at the site and see where you, or your Lodge can help.

I am very excited to see the Past District Deputy Grand Master Association becoming more active in the State. The website: PDDGMAF.org is just getting off the ground and has sources to contact for further activities and information.

In closing, I look forward with great pleasure to greeting, and working with all of you in the coming years, as I serve this Grand Jurisdiction. Thank you for electing me as your Junior Grand Warden, I am truly humbled, your trust inspires me to work harder for you every day. ✖

Fraternally,

R. W. Haskell R. Vest, Jr.

Junior Grand Warden



Grand Secretary's Message

From the Grand Secretary,

I hope health and joy has shown its light upon each of you and your families. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Grand Secretary for another year.

I would like to extend a special thank you to the Grand Lodge Staff serving the Lodges and the Lodge Secretaries. They render an outstanding service to the Craft.

Often it falls upon me to explain our system of Grand Lodge Verses the Particular Lodges. The simplest explanation would perhaps be: the Grand Lodge operates by the authority of the Lodges and in simple terms is the agent of the Lodges and becomes a franchiser. The franchiser issues franchise agreements to Lodges referred to as a Charter. Much like a fast-food franchise, the owners agree to adhere to the agreement. The Masonic Charter is much like that agreement. By the issuance of a Charter, the Lodge agrees to adhere to the Constitution and Regulations of The Grand Lodge of Florida.

As Masons, we extend that agreement by the Lodge to ourselves; we as individuals take an obligation to adhere not only to the laws of our

country, the By-Laws of the Lodge a well and the Grand Lodge Rules and Regulations.

I urge you to take the time to read your Lodge Charter or Warrant; you may discover facts you were not aware of.

This year we will be holding Secretary, Treasurer, and Member Seminars across the state as well as a few virtually. Select one that will best suit you. Check the Grand Lodge Monthly Mail on our website for these announcements.

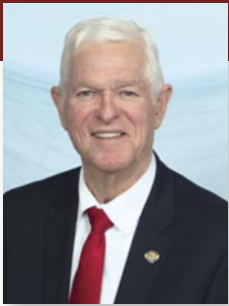
In closing, one of my proudest moments this past July was to be present when my grandson was initiated in the DeMolay. I hope you can share with me and witness your child or grandchild becoming a Member of a Masonic Youth Group; DeMolay, Jobs Daughters, or Rainbow for Girls. In today's environment the lessons they teach are needed more than ever.

I hope to visit with you in my travels and have the opportunity to grasp your hand in Fellowship and Brotherly Love. ✖

M. W. Richard Lynn, P.G.M.

Grand Secretary





Grand Treasurer's Message

Brethren,

It continues to be my honor to serve the Craft again this year as your Grand Treasurer.

It is that time of the year again. We will once again soon be balloting on new Worshipful Masters, Wardens, and other Lodge Officers for the upcoming year. We have great educational materials here at Grand Lodge to prepare your

new Officers so they can get a great start for their new positions. With the Purple Card (Master Mason Exams and Lodge Officers Training Courses) under their belts, they will have the Foundation they need to make their year a success. In addition, the Masonic Leadership Training Courses provide very valuable information on the day-to-day operation of a Lodge, and has many templates for the Lodge Officers to utilize. Additionally, we provide Secretary/Treasurer Seminars several times during the year.

During this time of year, please keep our service Members in your thoughts and prayers. Being deployed during the holiday season can be rough (I know), especially when small children are home without their father/mother. Additionally, many of our first responders will also be on duty during this time.

As I mentioned last year, we continue to improve and update our Grand Lodge Museum and add new items throughout the year. R. W. Leif Olsen has recently added new displays. We have many Masonic items found in our Grand Lodge Museum. Please contact the Grand Secretary or myself to set up a special tour for you or your group. I look forward to seeing you. ✕

Fraternally,

R. W. Rudy Boatright
Grand Treasurer



A Message from our Masonic Home Administrator

Greetings to All,

It is such a pleasure to bring you love and warm wishes on behalf of the Residents and staff of the Masonic Home of Florida. So many exciting events and changes have been happening here at the home and I hope you have been able to participate in some of our special occasions.

We started 2023 with the rekindling of the Masonic Home Day with our friends from the Grand Court of Florida Order of the Amaranth. In April the home celebrated with our annual Pilgrimage Day event. This event had not been held since 2019. We thank everyone who attended to celebrate the unveiling of three first lady projects including our new Movie Theater, Courtyard Golf Course, Restroom Upgrades and Resident Room Refurbishment. If you have not had a chance to visit and see the great work our First Ladies have accomplished please make space on your calendar, I promise you will not be disappointed.

This past year our Residents have been able to attend several outside functions including Pink Lodge and GMOV visits. Thank you to all the staff and volunteers who assisted in making this happen, they had an amazing time. Words cannot begin to fully express our thanks to all the Lodges, Districts and individual Brothers who have taken the time to visit our residents, donate items for Corky's Cupboard, the Treats Fund and our boutique. There is no better

feeling than seeing Members of this amazing Fraternity come together and give their time to our Residents. Of recent, the home has added two new programs on the monthly calendar. The Pinellas County Scottish Rite Club and High Twelve Club No. 702 both began hosting meetings at the Home allowing our Residents to stay connected and involved. We look forward to working with other appendant bodies in the near future so stay tuned.

Our end of year celebrations included an amazing Christmas in October event, Holiday party complete with Santa and his helpers and so many celebratory events there is not enough space to cover them all. Your support for the Masonic Home and our residents allows for a quality of life unmatched in the world of healthcare. Our mission remains true and our commitment those we care for will always excel as we remain stronger together. This past year the Masonic Home of Florida initiated an Outreach Program to assist in providing services to those remaining in their homes or in need of service connections within their county. As this program grows please reach out to our team with questions and program guidelines and watch our Masonic Home Facebook page for additional announcements. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the Administrator of the Masonic Home, this is truly an honor for me. ✕

Renee Verrier
Administrator

American Legion Presents 13 Folds Of The Flag For Craft

As part of Pineland Lodge's Americanism Program, American Legion Bert Hodges Post No. 45 Members presented the 13 Folds of The Flag for the Craft, and guests. It was an honor to host our Veteran guests. Their presentation was respectful, professional, and humbling. ✕



W. M. Shane Harrell pictured with our American Legion guests



The Grand Master's Travels • Stronger Together

Grand Masters, Past Masters, And New Master Masons

On September 7, 2023, at Nitram Lodge No. 188, in St. Petersburg, FL, we had the distinct honor, and privilege to host a Past Master Masons Degree, for one of our own as well as a courtesy Candidate from St. Petersburg Lodge No. 139. What made this evening even more special was having the involvement of M.: W.: Glen B. Bishop, Grand Master, M.: W.: Robert J. Lambert, P.G.M., and M.: W.: Richard G. Hoover, P.G.M.

The Grand Masters, along with other distinguished Members of the Grand Line, and many gracious Past Masters from around the Jurisdiction provided an experience for our newly Raised Brethren that was nothing short of momentous.

Our newly Raised Brother from Nitram Lodge, Manuel Penoliar, has been waiting for this day for quite some time. It was a chance to experience this great step in his Masonic Journey within his Home Lodge. For our courtesy candidate, Steven Stamberger, it was not only a great next step in his journey, but he experienced it as the Operative Masons would have intended, by travelling. We hosted 44 Brothers from all over the State, and our Junior Warden provided an outstanding meal to M.: W.: Bishop's delight, homemade Barbeque. The Degree Team Executed the Ritual with the highest standards of integrity and precision, led by W.: Ney Delgado-Arias. Our two

newest Master Masons then took upon themselves their Obligations, and were therein made Master Masons in due form.

W.: Bob Robertson from Nitram Lodge, and W.: Valentino Pine, from St. Petersburg Lodge, Presented the newly Raised Brothers with their Books and Dues Cards. W.: Don Harriott, Past Master of Wycoff Lodge, in New Jersey, Presented the Brothers with the Bibles on which they took their Obligations, and gave the Bible Presentation explaining the history and importance of the Holy Book and Freemasonry.

Following the meal and both sections of the Degree, the Brothers convened in Fraternal Harmony. The discussion and Fellowship that we had, made certain that there is so much more to Freemasonry than just putting on Degrees, and getting new Brothers through their Catechisms. The work we do in our Communities, such as funding supplies for elementary schools, road clean ups, and raising money for children's health causes, give us such a deeper meaning on our Fraternal Foundation. When we dwell together as friends and Brothers, we continuously strive to do good for the World we live in. These exemplary principles were shown in full force at the Master Mason Degree and we are eternally grateful to those who contributed to this noteworthy experience. ✖

Tri-State Degree Converged On The Town Of Dothan, Alabama

On July, 29, 2023, Masons from across the Great State of Florida, converged on the town of Dothan, Alabama, to attend the annual Tri-State Degree. The Tri-State Degree is a joint effort between The Grand Lodges of Alabama, Georgia, & Florida, where a team from each State Confers one of the Three Degrees. This year, Florida, and Members of the 2023 winning Competition Degree Team from District 11, exemplified the Entered Apprentice Degree. The Degree Team consisted of R.: W.: Kent Warman, as W.: M.:; R.: W.: Greg Jasmin, as S.: W.:; Brother Earl Higginbotham, as J.: W.:; Brother John Dugish, as S.: D.:; Brother Dan Abeyta, as J.: D.:; Brother Andy Cooper, as S.: S.:; Brother Steve Hosein, as J.: S.:; W.: Brother Erin River, as Chaplain; W.: Brother Mike Filz, as Treasurer; R.: W.: Marvin Thiele, as Secretary; and W.: Brother Jeffrey Smith, as the Tyler.

R.: W.: Randy Bolen, delivered the Lecture, and W.: Brother Jeffrey Smith, delivered the Charge.

On Friday evening Daleville Lodge No. 903 hosted an evening meal and offered Fellowship for all of the visiting Brethren. Saturday morning, the host Lodge, Dothan No. 466, provided a hearty breakfast, and after a brief welcome, the work for the day began. The Entered Apprentice Degree was followed by a Fellow Craft Degree Conferred by a team from Georgia. After a barbecue lunch, and more Fellowship it was time for Alabama to Confer the Master Mason Degree. All in all it was a great Masonic Weekend, meeting new friends, and reconnecting with old friends.

The 2024 Tri-State Degree is tentatively scheduled for July 27, 2024, and will be held at Tyrian Lodge No. 111, in Warner Robbins, GA. ✖



Florida Dignitaries in attendance:

M.: W.: Glen B. Bishop, Grand Master;
R.: W.: Don Cowart, Deputy Grand Master;
R.: W.: Tali Atala, Senior Grand Warden;
R.: W.: Haskell Vest, Jr., Junior Grand Warden;
M.: W.: Richard Hoover, P.G.M.;
R.: W.: Paul Stellrecht, Grand Marshal;
R.: W.: Jack Hampton, Grand Historian;
R.: W.: Billy Scott, D.D.G.M.;
R.: W.: John Miles, D.D.G.M.;
R.: W.: Bobby Kickliter, D.D.G.M.;
R.: W.: Jerry Rolling, D.D.G.M.;
R.: W.: Ted Barker, D.D.G.M.;
R.: W.: Juanito Augustin, D.D.G.M.;
R.: W.: Gary Huff, D.D.G.M.; and
R.: W.: Gary Gatewood, D.D.G.M.



The Grand Master's Travels • Stronger Together

Gulf Beach Lodge Hosts Firefighter's Master Mason Degree

Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge No. 291, hosted a Firefighter's Master Mason Degree on November 1, 2023, at their Masonic Temple located at 14020 Marguerite Dr., in Madeira Beach. The Firefighter Degree Team is in its 20th year, and has Conferred several Degrees on Firefighters who are also Freemasons. The Degree Team for this event included the following Firefighter Masons from the greater Tampa Bay area; Bro. Derryl O'Neal (Retired Chief from Madeira Beach Fire Rescue, and Member of Gulf Beach Lodge No. 291); Bro. Rick Wendling (Retired Firefighter from East Lake Fire Rescue, and Member of Sutherland Lodge No. 174); Bro. Rick Caravona (Retired Captain from Pasco County Fire Rescue, and Member of Dade City Lodge No. 48); Bro. Mark Goldfeder (Retired from Tarpon Springs Fire Rescue, and Member of Sutherland Lodge); R.:W.: Howard Knapp (Retired Captain from Hillsborough County Fire Rescue and Member of Gulf Beach Lodge); Bro. Alan Shedler (Retired Lieutenant from Seminole Fire Rescue, and Member of Gulf Beach Lodge); Bro. Tim Delaney (Retired Lieutenant from Hope Jackson Fire Department Scituate, R.I., and Member of Gulf Beach Lodge); Bro. Ray Hughes (Captain Hillsborough County Fire Rescue, and Member of Sutherland Lodge); Bro. Jim Tizzano (Retired Battalion Chief from East Brunswick Fire Department, NJ); Bro. Mike Manning (Retired Captain from Hillsborough County Fire Rescue, and Member of Hillsborough Lodge No. 25), Bro. A.J. Weldon (Captain Hillsborough County Fire Rescue, and Member of Windhorst Lodge No. 185, Tampa), and Bro. Dominic Bueller (Driver Engineer from Madeira Beach Fire Rescue, and Member of Gulf Beach Lodge). Others who took an active part in the evening's event were W.: Mark Niceley, Bro. Fernando Gonzalez, M.:W.: Richard Hoover, P.G.M., Bro. Bill Sundquist, Bro. David Neville and M.:W.: Glen Bishop, Grand Master.

The Master Mason Degree was Conferred upon Bro. Chip Crain, Captain from Hillsborough County Fire Rescue, and Member of Sutherland Lodge in presence of 56 Masons.

A number of notable Dignitaries of the Fraternity Ray Hughes were present to view and take part in the even-



ing's Degree. M.:W.: Glen B. Bishop, Grand Master, was in attendance, and took an active roll in the Degree after which the Firefighter Degree Team Conferred upon him an Honorary Fire Chief Title, and Presented him his own personalized Fire Chief's Helmet.

Others joining the Grand Master at the Degree, were Past Grand Masters, Richard G. Hoover and Robert J. Lambert, along with Grand Sword Bearer, Rick Wendling, Grand Musician, Bryan Shuler, Grand Marshal, Paul Stellrecht, and Junior Grand Steward John Drewett.

Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge No. 291 was Chartered in 1950, and has been an active force on the Gulf Beaches for over 73 years. ✕



Gulf Beach Lodge Hosts Grand Master And First Lady At Gala, And Present Checks

Members of Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge, located at 14020 Marguerite Dr., Madeira Beach, attended Grand Master, Most Worshipful Glen Bishop's, Homecoming in St. Petersburg, on Saturday October 7th. The Freemasons of Pinellas County (District 18) welcomed M.:W.: Bishop and First Lady, Odessa, to his home District at a Gala Dinner held at the St. Petersburg Marriott. Gulf Beach Lodge No. 291 donated \$500.00 to the Grand Master's Charity and the First Lady's Project, along with an additional \$250 for the First Lady's Project at an earlier date.

Gulf Beach Lodge has been a driving force on the Gulf Beaches for over 73-years, and takes part in providing holiday food baskets to the needy, sponsoring a 'Bikes for Books' Program at local elementary schools, provides an annual \$3,500.00 scholarship to a deserving High School Senior, volunteers at the annual Salvation Army Angel Tree, and many more charitable activities.

Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge No. 291 meets each Thursday evening at 7:30 PM from September through June. All local Masons, as well as visiting Masons, are invited to attend the Lodge Meetings. ✕



Further information can be found on the Lodge Website, www.GulfBeachLodge.org or by email: Secretary@gulfbeachlodge.org

The Grand Master's Travels • Stronger Together



Membership Awards

Brother Spang Receives His 60-Year Longevity Certificate

W.:M.: Dwight Brown, W.: Roger Turgeon, and W.: Jim Blum, of John Darling Lodge No. 154, F. & A.M., Presented Brother John "Jack" Spang, with his 60-Year Certificate and Pin, at his home in Seminole, Florida, on October 5, 2023. Brother Spang's wife, Marie, was present to see him receive his award, and take this photo. ✕



W.: Jones Receives His 25-Year Longevity Certificate

W.:M.: Dwight Brown, of John Darling Lodge No. 154, Presented Worshipful William P. Jones, with his 25-Year Certificate, and Pin, at the Lodge's Family Night on September 7, 2023. W.: Jones' family was present to see him receive his award. ✕



230 Years Of Dedicated Service To Freemasonry

Submitted by R.:W.: J. Paul Stellrecht

At a Called Communication in October 2023, Worshipful Master Tim Amdor & Most Worshipful Glen B. Bishop had the Honor, and Privilege of Presenting four Members of Star Lodge No. 78 a cumulative total of 230 years worth of Service Awards. Those being recognized were:

- Robert Lloyd Steiner, 25 Years
- Leonard Lee Ketchum, Jr., 40 Years
- R.:W.: John Hickey, 40 Years
- Carleton Weidemeyer, 60 Years
- George Feaster, 65 Years

These Distinguished Brothers with their family and loved ones, were treated to a delicious meal, prepared by the Junior Warden, and his family, prior to the presentation of service awards, and the evening concluded with smiles of happiness, a tear or two of remembrance for those who were not present - but in the end gratitude, laughter and joy filled the Lodge Room as we celebrated 230 years of well spent service to our Great Fraternity. ✕



Leonard Lee Ketchum



Robert Lloyd Steiner



Carleton Weidemeyer



John Hickey

Bro. Bobby Bethel Received 50-Year Masonic Service Award

Submitted by W.:M.: J. Edward Mann

The Officers and Members of Mandarin Lodge No. 343, had the pleasure of honoring and recognizing Brother Bobby Bethel, upon his 50-Year Service Award. W.:M.: J. Edward Mann, Worshipful Master of Mandarin Lodge No. 343, in the 9th Masonic District, Presented Brother Bethel, with his 50-Year Lapel Pin, and Certificate. The Brothers of Mandarin Lodge, in attendance, offered their heartfelt congratulations. ✕



Brother Cowan Receives His 65-Year Longevity Certificate

R.:W.: D.D.G.M. Billy D. Scott, W.: M.: Dwight Brown, and Brothers of John Darling Lodge Presented Brother Richard "Dick" Cowan with his 65-Year Certificate and Pin at his home at the Renaissance Assisted Living Facility on July 19, 2023. ✕



Brother Cowan Receives His 65-Year Longevity Certificate

The District 3 D.D.G.M., David York, Presented the 40-Year Membership Award to James Davis, of Okaloosa No. 312, F. & A.M. ✕



L to R: David York, James Davis and Mrs. Edith Davis

Membership Awards

R.: W.: Mort Wolfson Is Celebrated As He Turns 101



Right Worshipful Mort Wolfson on May 30th turned 101-years old. His Brothers, of RT Schafer Lodge No. 350, his family, and friends held a surprise birthday party in his honor. Right Worshipful Mort Wolfson was born May 30, 1922. He entered the U.S. Army in 1940, as a PFC and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1961. Brother Mort is a Veteran of three wars (WWII where he served in the Pacific, Korea, and Viet Nam). After Retiring from the Army Mort attended the University of Florida, where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in 1964, and Master's Degree in 1967, with the College of Education. He went on to serve as a faculty member at the University of Florida, for 17-years before retiring. The fund was established by Morton Wolfson in 2003, for the purpose of supporting an annual award to a University of Florida Faculty Member, selected by the Office of Student Affairs. The recipient should have

made an outstanding contribution in the assistance and/or support of students while teaching, advising, or working with undergraduate students.

Right Worshipful Mort Wolfson was Raised March 29, 1957, and is a 66-year Master Mason, Worshipful Master of RT Schafer Lodge No. 350 in 2004, D.D.G.M. 2005, a 33rd Degree Scottish Rite, and many other appended bodies. These are only a few of the accomplishments this distinguished man, and Mason has achieved during his lifetime. ❖

Affiliations / Contributions

(Not all are shown below)



Landmark Lodge Hosts 62 Brothers For 3rd Annual Master Master Mason And Kilt Night

On October 26th, the Brothers of Landmark Lodge No 383 hosted 62 Brothers in their 3rd Annual 100 Master Mason & Kilt Night. Guest speakers, R.: W.: District Deputies, and Brothers representing over 14 Lodges from around the State, were there for a cup of Brotherly Love. Great Fellowship was had by all.

Any time Brothers can gather for events like this, is a good time for the Fraternity one Brother was saying.

Special thanks to the kitchen crew, Brothers Sean Stenson; Jack Serfass, and Ruben Guzman. Several Presentations were made including Our Lodge's 8th Brother,

Don Hale, who received his Silver Card.

Receiving Master Mason Exam I, II, III, Brother Lew Junk, and Brother Jack were Presented a Wage Earner Gold Watch. ❖



Hirams' Daylight Lodge Presents 60-Year Service Award To W.: Hoopes

Worshipful Master David Barron of Hiram's Daylight Lodge No. 407 and Wor. Henry Jehan Present W.: Thomas W. Hoopes, III, with his 60-Year Service Award in Freemasonry. At the age of 14, he was Initiated into a DeMolay Chapter, advanced to the position of Senior Counselor, and has been honored with the Chevalier Degree, Legion of Honor Degree, and Cross of Honor in that order.



later he enlisted in the United States Navy. During his tour of duty in Hawaii, he received the Three Symbolic Degrees in Masonry, and was Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason in Pearl Harbor Lodge. In several Lodges, he has

held numerous offices, Elected and Appointed. He is a Dual-Member of South Seminole Lodge No. 364, and served as Worshipful Master in 2011. He found great pleasure in being a Charter, and Plural Member of Hiram's Daylight Lodge No. 407, where he presently serves as Senior Deacon. ❖



MORTGAGE

Low or No Down Payment

Loan Programs:

RESIDENTIAL LOANS

- Purchase & Refinance
- FHA loans (3.5% down payment)
- Conventional loans (as low as 3% down payment)
- Fannie Mae home path loans
- Bank statements or balance sheet loans
- Non – QM loans
- Jumbo loans
- ARM loans
- VA loans (0% down payment)
- Foreign National loans
- Investment property loans
- Hard money loans

COMMERCIAL LOANS

- Purchase
- Re-finance
- Construction
- Development
- Bridge loans

Respect is Earned.
Honesty is Appreciated.
Trust is Gained.
Loyalty is Returned.

*I look forward to working
with All My Fellow Brothers.
~ Berk*

.....
**Berk Ocal is one of Miami – Fort Lauderdale
and Palm Beach's leading mortgage banker,
and Real Estate Professionals.**
.....

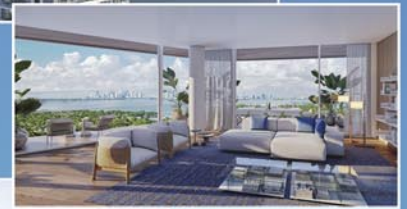
About Berk Ocal



Berk Ocal has been serving the Southeast Florida business and residential community for more than 17 years.


In addition to his extensive experience in finance and mortgages in residential and commercial real estate, he has been in the business for 21 years.


He is a former Traffic Homicide Detective for FHP. Berk has been an active member of Masonic Lodge for 13 years.



 **561.704.6478**

berk@berkocal.com

 www.berkocal.com

 www.instagram.com/berkocal/

Mon. - Sat. 7:00am - 5:00pm

18851 NE 29th Ave, Suite 104, Lobby

Aventura, FL 33180

NMLS#348809



NMLS#348809

Brother Angus Comes Home To Myrtle Grove For His 70-Year Service Award

All were gathered at Myrtle Grove Lodge No. 352, F&A.M. on Thursday May 25, 2023 to witness such a momentous occasion as "Charter Member," W.: Brother Angus Elsworth Comerford received his 70-Year Masonic Service Award. Being a "Charter Member" the Junior Warden, along with some Past Masters wanted to pay homage to our Lodge's Roots with a dinner for W.: Comerford, that would take him down memory lane. So a fish fry with all the fixings was in order, as we were known as the "Mullet Lodge."

W.: Jerry Garner & W.: John Hartley got together and planned out the fish fry, and asked the Junior Warden, W.: Michael Shorey, to handle the sides and service. The menu consisted of various fried fish, including some Mullet for our special honored guest, two kinds of Hushpuppies, BBQ, baked beans, cole slaw, potato salad, cheese grits, and an assorted dessert table, including W.: Comerford's favorite; "Mexican Fruit Cake."

He must of liked the "Silent Summons" piece on the Trestleboard a while back? Because talk about a Fire! One's burning desire to rejoin with his Brethren, W.: Comerford, was very insistent on traveling back to Pensacola. He wanted to receive his 70-year

Masonic Service Award in his Home Lodge; "I want to share this with my Brothers," not have courtesy work done by a local Lodge. This was so important to him, that he contacted the Lodge well in advance, to put Myrtle Grove on notice that he was coming back home! Mind you, Myrtle Grove's Principal Officers and then some would all be in Orlando, only mere 40 minutes away from where he resides, a few days later. So Brothers got on the phone and reached out to others, obstacles were overcome, arrangements were made, and a proud "Charter Member" got his wish!

After W.: Comerford received his Award, he gave a few words in thanks, told us he was pleased at the direction the Lodge was going, that it was apparent to him that it was in good hands, and then took us down memory lane. He told the story of how the deal was brokered to buy the property the Lodge sits on. When it was all said and done we were all pleasantly surprised to find out that they got it for well below current market value, and found out that one of the sellers was also a Freemason. He saved the best for last, and when the Worshipful Master asked if any other Brother had anything to offer, W.: Comerford said why yes,

Worshipful Master I do.

He spoke of his time as a Mason throughout the years, noting how times, and things have changed, some for good, while others not so good. He reminded us to stay ever vigilant through these times, always watching, and to guard our "West Gate." That even though you might be tempted to relax your standards, always remember your Master Mason Obligation! As he continued to speak, I had an epiphany and realized the true meaning of him coming home to Myrtle Grove Lodge; it was to pass onto us his knowledge, all 70 years' worth! Thank you W.: Brother Angus Elsworth Comerford. ✠



Front row: Brother: Errol Enrile, S.W., W.: John Hartley, P.M., W.: Angus Comerford, PM, R.: W.: Bruce Fortner, P.M.
Back row: W.: M.: John Hartshorn, W.: Arthur Hagg, P.M., W.: Michael Shorey, P.M.

First Lady's Tree Of Life Program



MISSION: To improve the quality of life of the Masonic Home Residents by providing supplemental funding for needed devices or services. The First Lady's Tree of Life Program is designed to promote the health and comfort of the Residents by allowing them to make a request of funds for healthcare items or services that will improve their everyday life. Eligible devices and services can include, but is not limited to, eye glasses, hearing aids, or dental care. Residents may also request specialty wheelchairs, walkers, orthotics or adaptive devices that would promote their comfort and wellbeing.

VISION: Residents of the Masonic Home often have specific needs for services or equipment that are not covered by Medicare or other insurances. These services or devices can be expensive and rather than do without them, they can request funding from the Masonic Home Social Worker. If approved, funds from the First Lady's Tree of Life Program can be used to pay for the needed health care expense or to arrange for the purchase of the needed service or equipment. If deemed eligible and funds are available, the Masonic Home Administrator can approve the request and grant funds to pay for the devices out of the First Lady's Tree of Life Program account. Rather than using the construction project model, where

funds are collected over time, then construction begins, this Program can be implemented immediately and Masonic Home Resident's lives can be improved, accordingly.

PURPOSE: Masonic Home Residents who are Masons, their wives, and their widows are eligible to participate in this Program. The funds raised, as a result of this Program, can go towards eye glasses, hearing aids, specialty shoes, dental needs, and adaptive equipment to help the Residents achieve their highest level of functioning. The First Lady's Tree of Life Program will allow your donations to go directly to the health and wellbeing of the Masonic Home Residents and improve their quality of life. The Masonic Home Residents have given their all, to their families, their jobs and to the Masonic Fraternity and now it's our turn to give back to them.

To fund raise for the First Lady's Tree Of Life Program is to affirm that we are **"Stronger Together"** in our support of the Residents at the Masonic Home.





EXCEPTIONAL ASSISTED LIVING AND SKILLED NURSING CARE



A Legacy of Caring

Our mission to take care of our residents is at the heart of everything we do, it's not just who we are today, it's who we've been for more than a century.

The best way to understand the strength of our community is to feel it for yourself. Let us give you a guided tour.

CONTACT US:
3201 1st St. N.E.
St. Petersburg, FL 33704
(727) 822-3499



**Masonic
Home** *of Florida*

www.masonichomefl.com

Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge No 291 Donates To Help Support The Alligator & Wildlife Discovery Center

Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge, located at 14020 Marguerite Dr. in Madeira Beach, recently made a monetary donation to The Alligator & Wildlife Discovery Center. The center, located at John's Pass Village in Madeira Beach, suffered a devastating fire in the early hours of July 13th, which took the lives of many of their animals.



Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge has been a part of the Madeira Beach Community for over 73-years, and has always been interested in supporting those in most need.

Travis Palladeno, co-owner of the Alligator & Wildlife Discovery Center, and a Past Master of Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge, was contacted by the Lodge and informed that his Lodge Brothers wanted to do a small part in helping him rebuild the business. The Lodge is hopeful that this important educational center will soon be returned to full operation and once again bring smiles to the young and old alike. ✖



Hiram's' Daylight Lodge Assisted G.R.O.W Healthy Kids With 738 Bags Of Sports Equipment

On Monday, August 21st, Members of Hiram's' Daylight Lodge Free and Accepted Masons, assisted the staff of G.R.O.W. Healthy Kids Program in packaging 738 bags of sports equipment to be distributed to several hundred elementary schools throughout the five-county Central Florida areas. In follow-up, on Thursday August 24th, the Brothers of Hiram's' Daylight Lodge assisted in distribution by delivering the bags from G.R.O.W. to the English Estates Elementary School, in Fern Park.

Hiram's' Daylight Lodge No. 407 was indirectly responsible for the development of the G.R.O.W. Healthy Kids Program. Shortly after being Chartered in 2014, the Lodge initiated a program to provide recess equipment to support active play at the English Estates Elementary School. The then principal of the school, and her friends realized that the need went far beyond the English Estates Elementary School, and from this G.R.O.W. was born as a 501(c)(3) Charity.

Each year G.R.O.W. receives requests for support from more and more schools. Although current resources limit them to just supporting the schools in Seminole, Orange, Volusia, Osceola and Lake Counties, this year they received requests from 2,100 teachers from 28 Counties representing more than 42,000 students across the State, a far greater demand than their resources can currently support.

In support of this important effort Hiram's' Daylight Lodge No. 407 is planning a continued relationship with G.R.O.W. Healthy Kids Program. ✖



Mokanna Lodge Hands Out 144

On August 8th at Lockhart Elementary School in Orlando, during their "Meet The Teacher Event", Mokanna Lodge No. 329, handed out 144 backpacks full of supplies to the incoming class of students.

Special thanks to W.: Mark Charlton for sourcing the backpacks, and W.: Rocky Williams for coordinating with the school. And as always, thank you to the Brothers and friends who helped with our fundraising efforts to raise money for this cause. ✖



Gulf Beach Lodge Award Bikes

Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge No. 291, located in Madeira Beach, began a "Bikes For Books" program in 2017, which has been named the "Bob Meeks Bikes For Books Program" in honor of the Lodge Member who began the program five years ago. This program provides a boy and girl from each grade level (K-5) at a chosen elementary school with a new bicycle purchased by the Masonic Lodge. The winner is the student who read the most teacher approved books throughout the school year. The winners at Orange Grove Elementary School in Seminole were announced and presented their bikes on Tuesday, April 18th, at the school. The runners-up were presented a gift card to Barnes and Noble bookstore by John Cone, III, a Member of Gulf Beach Lodge, in memory of his late wife Patricia, who was a Pinellas County School Librarian. Freemasonry supports public education, and the teachers who are tasked with educating, and molding the minds of children.

Orange Grove Elementary School works to academically challenge, stimulate creativity, and increase student achievement. They do this by working collaboratively with parents, and Community Partners, and by fostering a safe, and nurturing environment, where students are encouraged to reach their maximum potential. ✖

Our Communities

Backpacks To Incoming Students



In the photos are Dr. Monica Gordon, principal of Lockhart Elementary, and Mokanna Lodge Officers W.: Rocky Williams, Brother Dennis Ickes, and Brother Jeremy Henderson

Harry Jackson Lodge No. 314 Awards Three \$1,000 Scholarships To Graduating Seniors

On 10 May 2023 Harry Jackson Lodge No. 314 was please to award three (3) \$1000.00 scholarships to graduating seniors at Mosley High School in Lynn Haven, Florida. ✖

L to R: R.: W.: Gary Gatewood, Chairman of Harry Jackson Lodge No. 314 Scholarship Committee, W.: Matt Richardson, Worshipful Master of Harry Jackson Lodge No. 314, Princess Clark-Harvin, Makenzie Henderson and Jayden Arter, scholarship recipients



To Student Winners



Student winners, Lodge Members and school principal

Gulf Beach Lodge has been a driving force on the Gulf Beaches for over 73 years and takes part in providing holiday food baskets to the needy, sponsoring a 'Bikes for Books' Program at local elementary schools, provides an annual \$3,500.00 scholarship to a deserving High School Senior, volunteers at the annual Salvation Army Angel Tree and many more charitable activities. ✖



Gulf Beach Lodge Awards Scholarship to Graduating High Student, Alexis Winter

Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge No. 291, presented its annual Albert T. and Tupper MacMillan Scholarship, supported by the Ernest J. Freeman Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund.

The Scholarship was presented to Ms. Alexis Winter, a graduating senior at Hollins High School in St. Petersburg. Ms. Winter will be attending the University of Florida, in the Fall, where she will begin her studies in Psychology. Her future goal is to earn her degree in Psychiatry. Ms. Winter has volunteered over 161 hours in the Community, including many service hours for *Keep Pinellas Beautiful*. Ms. Winter has been active with several service clubs at Hollins High School, including being President of the Interact Club, as well as belonging to the Book Club, Crochet Club (which crocheted baby hats and blankets for babies in Sierra Leone), Garden Club (which worked towards beautifying the school grounds), and the Academic Team.

Scholastically, Ms. Winter earned Valedictorian this year, and was repeatedly on the Principal's List and Honor Roll, graduating with a 4.697 weighted GPA. She earned a Cambridge Diploma and was recognized with an 'Outstanding Cambridge Learner Award with Merit' in 2022. Ms. Winter has been recognized with a 'Rotary Youth Leadership

Award' and received a 'Congress of Future Medial Leaders Award of Excellence.'

Ernest J. Freeman Jr., Master of Gulf Beach Lodge in 1984, had a vision. This vision was to create a Scholarship Program that would grant deserving local students funds to assist in their college tuition. It was also his vision to create a program which would be self-perpetuating, thereby being a source of assistance well into the future. After the passing of Ernest Freeman, the Scholarship Program was renamed in his memory, and has helped support four college students each year since its inception. The annual scholarship winner receives \$2,000.00 to assist in their College or University expenses. ✖



L to R: Joseph T. Sosa, Master of Gulf Beach Lodge; Ms. Alexis Winter; Steve Johnson, Chairman of the Scholarship Committee

Florida DeMolay Celebrates Positive Growth



As of Saturday, September 30th, Florida DeMolay, had attained a “net-zero” for growth - considering the number of new initiates when compared with the number of Members lost to majority (age 21). Any Members Initiated during the last quarter of 2023, will yield net growth for the jurisdiction.

Additionally, Florida DeMolay is on the rise! With a new Chapter started in Live Oak (Barrett Lodge No. 43), in June 2023, in September 2023, new Resolutions of Sponsorships have been received from Orange Blossom Lodge No. 80 and the 11th Masonic District (Pataka and surrounding area), have been received and new Chapters forthcoming. This is an exciting time to be involved with DeMolay!



Masonic ties through sponsorship has never been stronger with the Jurisdiction of Florida, and the hard work of many leaders among organizations is beginning to pay off. DeMolay Executive Officer “Jody” Meguiar (P.M., Hillsborough Lodge No. 25), says: “It’s like turning a cruise ship. You have to be strategic with your actions, and steadfast in your direction. And ultimately, the hard work will begin to yield positive results.”

Should your Lodge be interested in Learning more about sponsorship, please contact fldemolay.org. Should you have a young man who is interested in becoming a DeMolay, refer him to www.BeADeMolay.org ✕

Brooker Community School’s (BCS)



Safety Patrol gets instruction for Flag protocol/patriotism from Freemasons Colin Coody, Bruce Kirby, and Ted Barber, (Representing Pine Hill Lodge, Lake Butler Lodge, and the American Legion Post 153), on Monday, August 14, 2023. The School Safety Patrol Coordinator / Teacher Ms. Shelhon, herself a Navy Veteran, had eight students receive instruction on the proper folding, and raising and lowering of the American Flag.

Dr. Felicia Moss, school principal, appreciated the Flag instruction and invites all BCS students to support patriotism. She believes BCS will be able to expand and support a pre-kindergarten and 6th grade in 2024. ✕

Stronger Together



Gulf Beach Lodge Welcomes Newest Master Mason, Brother Stanley Silverstein



Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge No. 291, located at 14020 Marguerite Dr., Madeira Beach, welcomes our newest Master Mason, Brother Stanley Silverstein, who was Raised a Master Mason, on Thursday May 25, 2023, by the Past Masters of Gulf Beach Lodge.

The evening began with a wonderful meal prepared by our Junior Warden, Brother Buck Owens, assisted by Brothers Jim Tizzano, and David Marrs. Following the meal, forty-seven

Members (including 21 Past Masters) and visitors retired upstairs for a wonderful Master Mason Degree. The most Senior Past Master present was W.: Don Harriott who was Master of his Lodge in New Jersey in 1963. The most Senior Gulf Beach Lodge Past Master, in attendance was W.: Mark Niceley, Master of Gulf Beach Lodge in 1988.

Brother Silverstein, is the Director of Gulf Beaches Library in Madeira Beach, and began his Masonic Degree Work last September. We congratulate Brother Silverstein on taking this important step and becoming a Master Mason.

Gulf Beach Lodge takes part in providing holiday food baskets to the needy, sponsoring a ‘Bikes for Books’ Program at local elementary schools, provides an annual \$2,000.00, scholarship to a deserving High School Senior, volunteers at the annual Salvation Army Angel Tree, and many more charitable activities. ✕

Above & Beyond Awards & Donations

Hirams' Daylight Lodge Donates To Their Adopted School

On October 12, 2023, the Brothers of Hiram's Daylight Lodge No. 407, presented a Grand Lodge Certificate of Recognition, and a donation check to Nancy Urban, Principal of English Estates Elementary School, in Fern Park, Florida. as part of the Adopt-A-School Program.

Hiram's Daylight Lodge also made a \$512.00 donation to the Principal's Discretionary Fund. ❖



Okaloosa Lodge Presents Check To First Year Teacher In Niceville, FL

Okaloosa Lodge No. 312 F.&A.M. annually adopts first year elementary school teachers in the Niceville, FL area. They are presented with a check to assist in establishing their first school room as a teacher.

The selected first year teacher from Edge Elementary is Cecelia Roff. ❖



L to R: P.M. Robert Anderson, Mrs. Melissa Kearley; Ms. Cecelia Roff (1st Year Teacher); W.M.: Timothy Kennedy, and Mrs. Norma Kennedy.

Harry Jackson Lodge Presents Bibles And Aprons to Three New Brothers

Harry Jackson Lodge No. 314, had the honor of Presenting Bibles and Aprons to Brothers David Taylor, Thomas Dean, and Russell Waters.

R.:W.: Gary Gatewood performed the Bible Presentation and R.:W.: Guy Pettis performed the Apron Presentation. ❖



L to R: R.:W.: Gary Gatewood, R.:W.: Guy Pettis, R.:W.: Raymond Pelletier D.D.G.M. District 5, W.: Matt Richardson, Master Harry Jackson Lodge No. 314, Brother David Taylor, Brother Thomas Dean, and Brother Russell Waters

Ice cream treats in the Historic District of Punta Gorda

A long-standing tradition. Punta Gorda Masonic Lodge No. 115 passes out ice cream on Halloween funded by a gift by Brother and former Governor of Florida Albert Gilchrist. This year we handed out over 2,200 ice cream treats in the Historic District of Punta Gorda. ❖



A Very Special American Flag Present To Browning Pearce Elementary School

The students and teachers of Browning Pearce Elementary in San Mateo, FL, returned to school under a new American Flag presented by the Brothers of Pineland Lodge No. 86.

This flag was accompanied by a certificate stating the flag had previously flown over Our Nation's Capital. Several of the students assisted in the raising of the flag,

and leading everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Browning Pearce is the adopted school of Pineland Lodge. ❖

Brothers pictured from L to R: John Dusigh, R.:W.: Kent Warman, W.: Raymond Winters, R.:W.: Ken Hinton, D.J. Burns (EA), Lee Gore, R.:W.: Randy Bolen



Giving Back To Our Communities

East Gate Lodge Spearhead Community Project For Children's Play Area For Hope Grove Co.

On Saturday, October 14, East Gate Lodge No. 355 F. & A.M. of Florida, performed a Community service project for Hope Grove Co., a Dunedin-Based non-profit that focuses on mental health support and private schooling for grades K-6.

The project, spearheaded by S.:W.: Lex Carr and W.:M.: James McGuire, included nine Brothers of East Gate performing various property improvement initiatives including general property maintenance, tree trimming, planting, ground leveling, installation of new play equipment, and laying over 8,000 lbs of mulch for the children's play area.

Significant contributions were made by Brother Chris Scott of Sure Shot Property Enhancement Services who provided resources, tools, and know how to direct the Brothers on site.

East Gate Lodge proudly supports non-profits in its hometown of Dunedin, FL, and meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm at 1297 Michigan Boulevard ✖



Halloween Fun At The Masonic Home



For Brother Brian Marshall, a Member of Gulf Beach Lodge No. 291, in Madeira Beach, and his wife Dee, paid a visit to The Masonic Home on October 30th to bring Halloween cheer to our Residents.

Dee, who dressed up for the occasion, passed out spooky Halloween glasses and wind up toys to the Residents. The visit, and gifts were well received and a good time was had by all.

Brian Marshall is the current Marshal at Gulf Beach Lodge, making him Marshal Marshall, a title the Brothers enjoy repeating often. Brother Brian, a Master Mason for 2-½ years, is an extremely dedicated Brother, and continually reaches out to assist in all Lodge Activities, and so much more.

We are proud to have him as a Member of Gulf Beach Lodge. ✖

Mandarin Lodge In Jacksonville Presents Scholarship To Honor Brother Carl Mankinen

Mandarin Lodge No. 343 in Jacksonville, Florida awarded Matthew Yee, a graduating senior from Mandarin High School, with a \$1000 scholarship in honor of recently departed Brother Carl Mankinen at the Mandarin High School Senior Awards Ceremony on May 18, 2023.

Cited by faculty and guidance counselors as a highly deserving, civic-minded student- athlete, Matt will pursue a degree in Computer Science at the University of Florida. Matt maintained a 4.5 GPA, earned the rank of Eagle Scout, and served on the Mandarin High School Student Leadership Team for two years. He was also a student of Mandarin High School AICE program, which is an accelerated program of studies, and was a 4-year Mandarin High School Varsity Swim Team competitor.

Worshipful Brother Todd Connor, Past Master representing Mandarin Lodge No. 343, Jacksonville, FL awards Matthew Yee Mandarin Lodges \$1000 scholarship check at Mandarin High Schools Senior Awards Ceremony. Matt was invited to Mandarin Lodge to be recognized in the Lodge also. Worshipful Master Ed

Mann, Mandarin Lodge No. 343, introduced Matt to the Lodge Brothers along with Mrs. Mankinen, Brother Carl Mankinen's widow, who was also in attendance. Mrs. Mankinen presented Matt with a certificate for an additional \$1000 gift if he maintains a 3.0 GPA or better at the end of his first year. ✖



Who was the first man in history to be what we now call a Mason? Some legends identify him to be Adam as he was endowed with knowledge forming what we describe as the arts and sciences. Some theorists assign honor to Noah, and go on to theorize that the first Grand Lodge was composed of Noah and his three sons. This theory is founded upon the concept that Noah was the architect of the first known substantial building project, the Ark, and by further legend found and preserved knowledge known and stored in contemplation of the Flood.

When I received the York Rite Royal Arch Chapter Degrees, I remember my reaction to the mention of Noah's sons. It was a stopper for me as I did not recall prior Masonic Ritual References to anyone so ancient. In later receiving the Allied Masonic Degrees Royal Ark Mariner Degree I was prompted to attempt to sort out Noah's, and Noah's Ark Masonic Place.

The Chapter Degrees mention three arks. They are the Ark of Safety, Noah's Ark; the Ark of the Covenant, associated with Moses; and the Substitute Ark, associated with Zerubbabel. This article will focus on Noah's Ark built by Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth under the supervision of Noah.

Our practices extract from ancient mystical disciplines Including those of ancient builders' guilds. The most obvious are practices modeled after the workmen at the construction of the temples in Jerusalem. Also represented are those of Egypt connected to the pyramids, elsewhere in the middle east as well as those of the Aztecs and Incas in our own hemisphere. Over time there is evidence that clerics of the day were also incorporated into their number. They are known to have combined over time not only the operative arts, but also spiritual applications. Perhaps such combinations produced associations involving systems of morality for the time of those civilizations. Historical records show that in fact, some did include spiritual elements. Common to many of these systems are dedication to the preservation of mysteries, secrecy, bonding of individuals, apprentice periods of personal sacrifice, adherence to strict codes and penalties for violation.

We have some idea that the first Freemasons were non-artisans admitted into Masonic guilds as an honorarium of sorts. Some names of those early admittees are even known to us. So perhaps, one of those may be credited as the first Freemason.

But truly who was the first Mason?

It is worth noting that there are multiple legends and great speculation that relate to how knowledge was preserved through the flood and Tower of Babel scenarios. The opinions vary greatly and speculate many possible historical persons. These scholars faced, as we do, the challenge of explaining how developed knowledge survived such monumental changes.

In researching and composing this article, I have concluded that the identity of "the first Mason" is best dealt with in other writings,

namely, Mackey's Masonic Encyclopedia – Noah; Universal Co-Masonry – The Historical Origins of Freemasonry; and Masonic Legends and Traditions- Chapter I – Origin of The Craft. These are only a sample of the many writings on the subject.

"Noahchites" is a term translated as "Children of Noah". As a result of the popularity of this term in America, one prolific non-American Masonic author used the term "Noah's Sons" early on in America to refer to Freemasons. This practice has not seemed to flourish and perhaps enjoys only historic reference today.

The story of the flood, familiar to us all, resulted in 8 human survivors, Noah, his sons Seth, Ham and Japheth and their wives. We are also taught that it is from them that humanity has descended, and by them human knowledge of the arts and sciences was preserved. Perhaps the most lasting of the impacts of Noah upon humankind and Masonry is his seven precepts that became a model moral code following the flood and remained natural law. Similar precepts are common to all belief systems throughout the world. They are:

1. Renounce all idols.
2. Worship the one true God.
3. Commit no murder.
4. Be not defiled by incest.
5. Do not steal.
6. Be just.
7. Eat no flesh with blood in it.

They were then supplemented by the Ten Commandments delivered to Moses for the Jews on Mount Sinai.

These principles played a significant role in the formulation of Freemasonry as they teach the avoidance of attachment to specific religions or systems of attaining immortality or eternal life. That quest is left to our own devices as we search for further light in Masonry.

Relevant literature disclosed that in the race for permanency in our practices Adam fell away first. There is a masonic tradition, and ancient literature, that it is Noah that is unjustly murdered and his three sons that raise him from the grave with particulars like our Hiramic practices of today. Practiced litanies existed, though not prevalent, into the early 18th century reflecting a prominent role for Noah and his sons.

It is my hope for myself and all of us that through Masonic diligence we may come to better knowledge and understanding of the mysteries we pursue and accomplish the goals of attaining more light in Masonry, including our Masonic heritage. Through these efforts we may further work in harmony and accord. And through sound moral training make good men better. ✕

Through the Eyes of Our Grand Orator

Submitted by R.:W.: Antonio C. Chavez, W.: Grand Orator 2023-2024

Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida 194th Grand Communication • Grand Oration

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master, Elected and Appointed Grand Lodge Officers, Revered Past Grand Masters, Distinguished East, Guests and my Brethren... good afternoon!

I am honored to stand here in front of you, humbled by the task before us, and thankful for the privilege and opportunity to serve the Craft with *“Fidelity in our Journey to the Future.”*

Most Worshipful Grand Master, I am grateful for the trust that you and the Brethren have bestowed upon me, and I am grateful for the truth, wisdom, and sacrifices borne of our Ancient Brethren who have gone this way before us.

I am standing here today by the grace of God, as testament to the love, and support I received from my family who are present here today. My oldest daughter Gina, the wonderful, and amazing model of kindness and generosity. My brilliant youngest daughter, Alex, is the pillar of compassion and strength. And her loving husband, who is my son in law, Brother Eric Bialik. Joining them is their adorably, cute, and smart two and a half year old baby girl, Yael Quinn. My pride, and joy, full of energy, my daily fitness trainer! It's truly an honor, and pleasure to have you all here today. Thank you for coming. I cannot thank you enough for your unconditional love, and unwavering support throughout my Masonic Journey. I am so blessed, and inspired to have you in my life. Your Mom is looking down, and so proud of you. I love you all. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I am also blessed with many friends, Brothers, mentors, and numerous people, with whom I have the privilege of serving, and knowing at the onset of my Masonic Journey. And while there are too many to name, I owe gratitude to many of you for your inspirational words of wisdom and guidance that have impacted me and made a profound difference in my life, and have made me who I am today.

My Brethren, there is a little known fact about me, that I don't often share. But given my esteemed audience, I will oblige. Some of you may be surprised to learn that I earned and obtained *“my PhD”* by the age of seventeen in the Philippines... Yes!... PhD as in *“Public High School Diploma.”*

Which brings us to one of the most frequently asked question about me throughout the State, from the Panhandle to the Keys. How have I become known as *“The Irishman?”* Well, today is your lucky day. I will confess. You see, I was really born and raised in waycross, *“NO... oh no!”* not Waycross, Georgia... It's *“way across the ocean”* the Pacific *Ireland”*... I mean, the *Pacific Island* of the Philippines.

That brings me to a story that happened in Ireland, in 1830, over the River Shannon, in Limerick County, when a four-arched bridge was being replaced. During the excavation work for the new structure, a surprising discovery was made. Beneath the Northeastern, corner of the bridge's foundation, a **Stone Mason's Square** was dug from the clay. Measuring 5-7/8" from tip-to-tip, it was badly corroded, but clearly inscribed with the date and text. The text engraved on the sides of the square and still legible, reads; *“I will strive to live with love and care,*

upon the level by the square” and the square bears the date 1507. The inscription as well as the location which it was buried indicates, that a Masonic Custom was being practiced in Ireland, more than 500 years ago. At present, the square is carefully preserved by Union Lodge No. 13 in Limerick, Ireland.

I love this story because it illustrates the tradition and longevity of Freemasonry, and as *“The Irishman,”* I appreciate the story and location.

We are here together in unity, to reaffirm and recommit our **Fidelity** to promote, and cultivate the greatness of our Fraternity. We all understand that greatness is never given, but rather earned. We earn it by our zeal for our Institution, *“by steadily persevering in the practice of those truly commendable virtues, Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth.”* Honoring and preserving unsullied the reputation of our Order, as delivered to us in the Opening Charge, that we should *“act with a dignity, becoming the high moral character of our Venerable Fraternity.”*

Today as we celebrate our 194th Annual Grand Communication, we also celebrate Memorial Day. A day of **remembrance, honoring** the brave men and women of our Armed Forces who **paid the ultimate price with their unselfish acts of courage.** They are the **“true heroes”** who after taking their oath of service, and duty, without any equivocation or mental reservation, wrote a blank check of *“up to including their lives”* to serve and safeguard the Constitution of the United States of America. Because of them, our Nation and its Citizens are protected from harms way against all enemies foreign and domestic. On this Memorial Day and every other day, we enjoy and cherish peace and freedom, *thanks to the heroes who exemplify true honor, and patriotic fidelity.*

With your kind permission Most Worshipful Grand Master, I'd like to ask all those who have served, past and present, to please rise in honor of those true heroes. **To you, my fellow Veterans, thank you, we appreciate you for your service to our beloved Country. We are eternally grateful.**

It is our Fidelity and zeal for our Time Honored Institution, that we are assembled here this week. Our Fraternity is in the midst of a changing world. From advancement of modern technology, to socio-economic and political climate. Some of us may agree or not, that our Fraternity is going through some difficult times. And need us to bond together to solidify its strength, and greatness. Despite the tireless efforts we put forth, we can all agree to some degree, that the current **“health conditions, and soundness”** of many of our particular Lodges, both in its **business operation and/or Ritual Work**, are in tough, and somewhat concerning situations. They are not just empirical, but fact-based indicators of a brewing unpredictability which we are currently experiencing in our Fraternity. Coupled in our attempt to find a remedy to these circumstances, we find ourselves faced with the task of making difficult and important decisions that will likely **shape the future and direction** of our Lodges.

Today, I ask you, my Brethren, to join me to rededicate and recommit ourselves, to reenforce our efforts and fortify that greatness

Continued →

Oration



by achieving the mission, and objective of our particular Lodge Charters, *“to take good men, inspire, and guide them to self improve to become better men.”*

It is incumbent upon us to find ways of creating measures and a positive course of action to provide the support and the necessary resources for our existing Lodges. We can start when we initiate *“the unregenerate man, groping in moral and mental darkness and seeking for the Light which is to guide his steps and point him to the path,”* the Candidate subsequently taking his Oath, and Obligation at our Sacred Altar, now a Brother, amidst the *“rough and rugged road”* he is about to travel... is at the utmost time he needs us. We must provide him with the proper resources to sustain, support, mentor, and *“to follow us, as Conductors to lead him, so he fears no danger... to point him to the path that leads him to duty,”* while he learns to navigate, and overcome the challenges of his journey. Thereby, our Lodge Charter's Mission of... taking and inspiring good men to self improve, and the expectations of them to become better men, are met... propelling us to Fraternal Excellence.

My Brethren, **we must not and cannot fail.** We must act now. Our **actions cannot betray our intentions.** And in order to succeed, we must **apply the basic principle** that **“the resources must meet the expectations.”** It is imperative therefore, that we provide the necessary resources from sufficient number of engaged knowledgeable Brethren as mentors and instructors, proficient Brethren to Confer Degrees, continuity in Lodge Officer preferment, sustained financial stability... to enumerate a few, thus enabling us to **meet our expectations** for that new Brother to **succeed** in his quest to self improve and become a better man, and come into fruition.

And from that valuable experience, and knowledge he gained, he would be more likely to become an active, and engaged Brother and mentor... who will be a component of those important **“resources”** that a Lodge **“must have to meet those expectations.”**

Both, are equally important and must align in order to **achieve and sustain** our never ending endeavor of Fraternal Greatness and convince the world of its good effects.

But how?

First and foremost, we must hold ourselves to the highest standards of Fraternal Excellence. We can begin by recognizing that **reforms are necessary** in our Noble Fraternity. We cannot cure, nor correct any deficiencies or wrongdoing, if we ignore them, or pretend they don't exist. Prudent **action** is the **very essence of achievement and success.** Both individually or collectively, like our “true heroes” we too, with **Masonic Fidelity**, must diligently keep and perform those promises we made in our Charges, Oath, and Obligations.

I say to you, that **these challenges** we face and the reforms we are about to tackle, are **not hyperbole, they are real.** They are many, and important. Some may not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this my Brethren, that we are *“a society of friends and Brothers, who best can work, and best agree.”* With conscious, deliberate, and determined effort of commitment to faithfully discharge our Oath and Obligations, in our continued efforts to improve oneself, a belief in the geometric love of truth and service to humanity, a profound adherence to moral philosophy for the betterment of mankind and our pursuit of excellence by a correct knowledge of its teachings in our duties, we owe to God, our country, our neighbor and ourselves... with patience and perseverance... **we will meet them.**



My Brethren, let us **continue to bond together** in close harmony to revitalize with devotion and fidelity, as we strive to achieve Fraternal Excellence. Let us understand and apply the profound **significance and meaning** of those words **Oath** and **Obligation** so we may uphold their integrity.

An **Oath**, as defined by Mr. Webster; is a solemn promise often invoking a divine witness regarding one's future action or behavior... *“in the presence of Almighty God”*... does that sound familiar to you my Brothers?

An **Obligation** is an act, or course of action to which a person is morally bound by a duty of commitment... let me say that again, morally bound by a duty of commitment, *“I further more promise and swear, that I will or will not...”* does that ring a bell?

We all did, my Brothers *“solemnly and sincerely promise and swear with a firm and steadfast resolution to keep and perform all those “furthermore” promises, without any equivocation, mental reservation or secret evasion”*... those words mean, that we are **morally and legally bound by a duty of commitment** to faithfully fulfill our promises... **that** my Brethren, is the **very essence** and true meaning of those words... **Oath** and **Obligation**, our constant reminder encapsulated in the French word **Fidelitas** or Fidelity, engraved on the Grand Master's Official Pin... and may God keep us steadfast.

It also means, when we asked the Great Architect of The Universe, which we promised toward the end of every Lodge Communication to, *“make us sensible in our renewed obligations... that may each one of us practice out of the Lodge, those great moral duties which are inculcated by our Fraternity and with reverence, study, and obey the laws which Almighty God has given us.”*

Most Worshipful Grand Master, you will recall the U.S. Air Force motto **“AIM HIGH”** so, let us aim high to join and link ourselves with an indissoluble chain of sincere affection. To echo the U.S. Marines... Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master, **“Semper Fi”**... **always faithful**, in the performance of our duties as careful custodians and watchful sentinels of the sacred traditions of our Honorable Institution.

The day I was initiated as a Freemason, stands out in memory as one of the many profound and significant event in my life. Henceforth, *“I was bound by the ties of a strong commitment to a moral obligation”* to strive and live in accordance with its teachings, to learn to improve myself with honor and humility, ever remembering to **keep and perform with fidelity and honor** my Sacred Obligation.

A part of the Closing Charge, reminds us, *“Forget not the duties you have heard so frequently inculcated and forcibly recommended in the Lodge.”* My Brothers, **remember** the obligations and promises we made at our Sacred Altar. Always cognizant, **never to forget** those time immemorial Charges we received. Most of all, be **mindful** and align ourselves in the appropriate path of the **virtues** in the acronym **HITCH**... which should be our lives' constant daily reminder... **Honor, Integrity, Truth, Character, Humility.**

I came across an article that expounded on the word **virtue**... It is the stone that builds the man and his temple. Virtue is the stone that binds our relationships and **it is by our virtues that we are measured.** Freemasonry simply, **is the very measure of a man.** Symbolized by the two measuring tools depicted in our emblems; the square and the compasses. Knowing that the true **Seeing Eye of God will take the true measurement** of our actions.

Continued on Pg. 22 →

Stronger Together



Giving Back To Our Communities

Gulf Beach Lodge Holds Oktoberfest For Bikes For Books Program

Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge, recently held its annual Oktoberfest, raising funds for its "Bob Meeks Bikes For Books Program." This program provides a brand new bicycle to 12 students at a local elementary school (a boy and girl from each grade level), who read the most books and/or show the most improvement in reading skills. The bicycles are awarded at the end of each school year, and the winners are chosen by individual teachers of each grade level.

The program is named for Lodge Member, Bob Meeks, who began the program 7-years ago.

Gulf Beach Lodge takes part in providing holiday food baskets to the needy, provides an annual \$3,500.00 scholarship to a deserving High School Senior, volunteers at the annual Salvation Army Angel Tree and many more charitable activities. ✕



Step Up To The Plate

You can get a Florida Specialty license plate for the first time; switch your existing specialty license plate; switch outside of your registration period or choose to include your annual registration renewal. You can also personalize your license plate (choose the characters you want on it or keep your existing plate number). All proceeds go to OUR Masonic Home of Florida. ✕



Through the Eyes of Our Grand Orator

Continued from Pg. 21

Memorization is an integral part of the fabric of our Fraternity. Committing our teachings to memory allows us to weave the Tenets of our Craft into our lives and the world at large. Though we dedicate time and effort into memorization, I am quite certain that some of us have experienced some degree of forgetfulness, especially when we reach a certain age in our lives.

Which reminds me of a story about three Brothers having a conversation. The first Brother explained that one day he found himself in front of the refrigerator with a bottle of mayonnaise in his hand. He forgot whether he was about to make a sandwich or put the bottle away. The second Brother shared a similar experience. While midway up the stairs in his home, his wife called out his name, and after answering, he couldn't quite remember if he was going up or down. The third Brother then said, "knock on wood, I'm glad I don't have that problem yet," three seconds later he started to walk away, "Excuse me!" he said, "I thought I heard someone knocking at the door."

Joking aside, to paraphrase a statement popularize in the 1700, by Brother Alexander Pope, a British poet, "*the hope that Freemasonry will attain its long-term goal or accomplish its self-imposed mission, which is the eventual emergence of a universal league of mankind or the establishment upon earth of virtuous men under the Parenthood of God, springs eternal in our Masonic breasts.*"

My Masonic breasts cheer and join the chorus of congratulations and best wishes to all clothed with the authority to direct the affairs of

this Organization. May everyone continue the fun, as well as the serious work of faithfully serving your Offices with humility and honor as we propel the advancement of this Venerable Institution.

And so today, we continue to focus on our "*never ending quest for nobler deeds, for higher thoughts, for greater achievements,*" a common bond that reaches into the farther most parts of the world.

It has been said that it was "*inspired by men who began it, dedicated men preserved it, perfectionist refined it, and the Craft followed it.*"

Then let us dwell together inspired in unity, dedicate to preserve, meet to perfect and refine these challenges, that we the Craft, may continue to follow and embrace with Fidelity and humility our solemn duty with gratitude, the Annual Commemoration of this inspiring occasion so that the generations to follow will live in a world far better than we have today.

It is with great hope that someday our children's children will be proud to say, that by the Grace of Almighty God, we endured the test of time. That we are at the forefront of Fraternal Excellence, refusing to surrender to hopelessness as we pass and go thru "*life's rough and rugged road of trials and tribulations,*" that with Fortitude, we continued on to travel with all of our might, tirelessly refusing to end our quest and arduous task... and that we carried, with **Fidelity** and greatness, the precious light of humanity in our **Journey to the future.**

"*Let it not be supposed that we have here labored in vain and spent our strength for naught... let us... all of us, be all of one mind, live in peace. And may the God of love and peace delight to dwell with and bless us always.*" ✕

Thank you.

WE ARE LIVE NOW!

MASONIC REGALIA ONLINE STORE

GRAND LODGE of F&AM Florida

Check out our new website



 <https://grand-lodge-of-florida.myshopify.com/> 



The Tenets Brotherly Love, Relief, Truth, are the solid foundational values, and the enduring principles of our Craft. These foundational values and principles have existed from time immemorial. We, as Freemasons, believe these Tenets to be true without argument or debate, or as Thomas Jefferson wrote, “we hold these truths to be self-evident.” These Tenets are also interconnected and are interdependent with each other. They exist in unison and harmony, and a transgression against one will likely result in a violation of all. Masons must be ever diligent and continuously seek to opportunities to put into practice these virtues and beliefs. For a Mason - and Freemasonry as a whole - to be successful, these principles must become a living reality, and not just a theory or philosophy. Each Member must inscribe these virtues upon his heart’s trestle-board so that he cannot ever be uninformed of his duties and responsibilities.

The ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates, postulated that human nature is universal and that thinking discloses a common nature and a common system of truth. These truths, to a Freemason, are natural law, meaning a body of unchanging moral principles that form the basis of human conduct and interaction. Within our Craft, the definitions of Antiquity and Universality within the Digest of Masonic Law reinforce the Socratic Philosophy.

Brother Albert G. Mackey described these Tenets in his book, *The Mystic Tie: or, Facts and Opinions, Illustrative of The Character and Tendency of Freemasonry*. He describes the tenet of Brotherly Love as a five-part duty of each Member of the Craft. The first duty he lists is to “cheerfully and liberally to stretch forth the hand of kindness to save a falling brother, and to relieve him in the hour of necessity.”¹¹ Mackey, Albert. (1849). *The Mystic Tie: or, Facts and Opinions, Illustrative of The Character and Tendency of Freemasonry*. Miller & Brown. Charleston, South Carolina. Pg. 113. Retrieved Hathi Trust Digital Library. The second duty of this Tenet, “to persevere, in despite of weariness, or sloth, in the active exercise of this kindness; to hasten with alacrity, to the performance of our ‘reasonable service’ of charity and love; and to turn not aside in our journey of affection, until we shall have accomplished all that a brother’s wants may require.”²² Ibid. pgs. 113-114. The third aspect that Mackey reveals is our fallibility as mortal men. He writes, “...we seek from God forgiveness for the past, strength for the present, and a promise for the future, to remember that our brother also needs the like forgiveness, strength, and promise, and join in our devotions, his name with our own.”³³ Ibid. pg. 114. The fourth aspect of this Tenet, Brother Mackey admonishes us to keep within ourselves the “secret and confidential communications” entrusted to you, and to guard “the honor of a brother with scrupulous care.”⁴⁴ Ibid. pg. 114. Lastly, he writes that we must support a Brother when he has been unjustly reviled and, in his presence, provide kind counsel of his error. Brother Mackey also writes that we should always, in his absence, defend his reputation.⁵⁵ Ibid. In the same text, Mackey posits the tenet of Relief is a natural consequence of Brotherly Love. He writes, “the love of our Brother will naturally lead us, to alleviate his misfortunes, to compassionate his misery, and restore peace to his troubled mind.”⁶⁶ Ibid, pg. 115. All of which is a true statement of fact and clearly demonstrates the interconnectedness of these Tenets. The sincere affection that our Order

has professed for centuries continues to bind us to our Brothers within it and to his relief during times of difficulty. The last of the Tenets of Freemasonry is Truth. Mackey describes it with the adjective of, Sublime, which means, “of excellence, grandeur, or beauty as to inspire great admiration or awe” (Merriam-Webster). The Latin phrase, *Lux e tenebris*, translates to English as, light out of darkness, clearly expresses the desire and quest of all Masons. The search for light, or truth is a never-ending desire of each Member of the Craft, and of the Institution of Freemasonry itself. Brother Mackey cites the ritual of the Red Cross Knights, “all other things are mortal, and transient, but truth alone is unchangeable, and everlasting; the benefits received from it are subject to no variations or vicissitudes of time and fortune.”⁷⁷ Ibid, pg. 116. We must remember that all knowledge is a mystery until it is sought by an individual at which time it ceases to be a mystery and becomes the light of knowledge. What may be lost will be found again through faith and hard work. As a Freemason, the never-ending pursuit of truth forms the foundation by which each of us seeks more light.

Contained within the book, *The Early Masonic Catechisms*, is a document that was discovered among the papers upon the sudden death of a Brother in England sometime in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. This document, published in 1724, related to the Catechisms required of our Masonic Ancestors. It reads,

Q: How many particular Points pertain to a Free-Mason?

A: Three; Fraternity, Fidelity, and Tacitly.

Q: What do they represent?

A: Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, among all Right Masons; for which all Masons were ordained at the Building of the Tower of Babel, and at the Temple of Jerusalem.⁸⁸ Knoop, Douglas, Jones, G. P., Hamer, Douglas. (1975). *The Early Masonic Catechisms*. The Second Edition, Edited for Quatuor Coronati Lodge. Published by Quatuor Lodge, No. 2076, London, England. Brother William J. Whipple, Esquire delivered an address on St. John the Baptist Day, June 24, 1819 to the Corinthian Lodge in Concord, Massachusetts. He wrote that Freemasonry regards “as essential and indispensable the great duties of Brotherly Love, relief, and truth, accompanied by the Christian graces of faith, hope, and charity.”⁹⁹ Whipple, William. (June 24, 1819). *Masonic Address Delivered Before Corinthian Lodge at Concord*. Printed by Caleb Cushing. Concord, Massachusetts. Pg. 12. Retrieved from Google Books on July 19, 2019. Volume II of *The American Quarterly Review of Freemasonry and its kindred sciences*, published in 1859, had this passage on Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth: We are informed, almost in the very beginning of our ritual, that Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth are the Principal Tenets of a Mason’s Profession. They are also called his Tenets, for it is only when he holds them (Tenets) that he rightly vindicates the character of the institution.¹⁰¹⁰ Mackey, Albert (editor). (1859). Volume II, of *The American Quarterly Review of Freemasonry, and its kindred sciences*. Robert Macoy, publisher, New York. Pg. 410 (editor’s note).

Continued on pg. 26 →

What Is The Legacy You Will Leave Behind?

Founded upon the principles of Freemasonry, The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls (IORG or Rainbow) set its legacy in motion in 1922. Now over 100 years strong, IORG continues to strive to prepare young women between the ages of 11 & 20 for responsible and purposeful adulthood, while also working with other Masonic youth organizations to develop character and leadership qualities, provide unselfish service to others, and promote teamwork and effective interpersonal communications. Girls are encouraged to participate in fun events and activities, keep up with new friends, and travel to different cities and jurisdictions to experience all the excitement that Rainbow has to offer. Girls are emboldened to share their gifts and talents with each other and the organization in the hopes that they can build a long-lasting legacy that younger girls can follow for years to come.

This year, Florida Rainbow wants to impress upon its Members, and the Masonic Fraternity, the beauty “Beyond the Mirror.” Our Grand Worthy Advisor, Keira Quinby, has asked the girls to look beyond the societal pressures and ideals and focus on what makes each of them unique and beautiful. Whether it be an artistic or musical talent, a passion for service, or a strive for success in their chosen field, Keira believes “every life and every person has a purpose, no matter how it is expressed.” Follow FLIORG on GWA TV and watch the legacy of Keira’s and her Grand Officers service and leadership unfold.



Perhaps the most vital part of the Rainbow journey is the service girls perform in their local communities. At its core, Rainbow is a service-based organization, and it is the service we provide to others that returns to us tenfold. Florida Rainbow is excited to continue our partner-

ship with Camp Boggy Creek (CBC), which has been Florida Rainbow’s statewide service project for over ten years. CBC has made it possible for children with serious illnesses to enjoy a camp experience in a safe, medically sound environment. Rainbow Girls in Florida not only work year-round to raise funds that help send children to camp, but they also collect items to support the camper programs, woodshop, fishing, boating, and the pool. FLIORG is proud to say we have sponsored over 75 children to attend Camp Boggy Creek.

Like most of our Fraternal Organizations, Florida Rainbow is always striving to increase Membership. Within the past year we have had the honor of instituting a brand-new assembly in the Live Oak area welcoming over 20 new Members who are already making an impact in their Community. This year our focus is on establishing our pledge program, with the objective being each assembly have an active pledge group moving forward. Pledge Programs, much like the Squires for DeMolay or the Jobees for Jobs Daughters, give younger girls (aged 7-10) the opportunity to support Rainbow through collaborative efforts while also doing their own ritual work and planning their own activities and events. We recently welcomed a new pledge group in Miami and hope to continue growing.

By working closely with our affiliated orders and focusing our efforts on guiding our younger girls to see the beauty in both our order, and in themselves, we can create a strong foundation on which we can grow and maintain our place within the Masonic Fraternity, knowing it is the strength we share with each other that helps us to flourish and leave our legacy for others to follow. ✦

*Stay connected; watch us grow,
and help us to continue
the legacy.*



We, as Masons, recognize the responsibility given to us by the Great Architect of the Universe that as men of a firm and steadfast belief in God that we love our neighbors and that it applies to all mankind. We take the additional responsibility upon ourselves for a special love for our fellow Members of the Craft. The bonds that are created through the obligations that we voluntarily take upon ourselves as we progress through the three Degrees may only be fulfilled through a deep and abiding sense of unity that is Freemasonry. We are taught from the very beginning to treat everyone with respect and love and that we will help aid, assist, and support one another, especially another Brother Mason. As the opening charge reminds us, let us ever remember that the great objects of our association are the restraint of improper desires and passions, the cultivation of active benevolence and the promotion of a correct knowledge of the duties we owe to God, to our neighbor and to ourselves. Let us be united, and practice with diligence the sacred Tenets of our Order.¹¹¹¹ Florida Masonic Monitor. (Corrected 2015). Pgs 14-15. The closing charge brings to our attention and reminds us as we leave our Lodge and mix once again with the world-at-large, remember that, at this Alter, you have promised to befriend and relieve every Brother who shall need your assistance. Remember also, that you have promised to remind him, in the most tender manner, of his failings, and to aid his reformation; to vindicate his character when wrongfully traduced; and to suggest in his behalf the most candid and favorable circumstances.¹²¹² Ibid, p 17.

The Tenet of Relief may be commonly thought of as being financial in nature in the minds of many. However, there many different types of relief other than financial. A Brother may need a kind word that

would provide the relief that is sought. It may be a need for advice or a suggestion that may assist him to set himself on the path to obtain the relief he may be seeking. It may be an understanding ear or to console him during a time of sorrow and despair. It may also mean a Brother needs aid and protection from harm. The bonds of the Brotherhood between Freemasons require our Members to render whatever aid and protection that is necessary and within their power to provide.

The Tenets of Freemasonry have survived the centuries unaltered and intact because of the unwavering beliefs and actions of our ancestors in the Craft. Our basic Tenets are unmovable, but moveable within each of us as we grow in knowledge. As these Tenets are a part of our very being and are seen in our actions and interactions with our Brothers and those that are not Masonic Brothers, but a part of the Brotherhood of man. As we grow in knowledge and the pursuit of truth, those basic Tenets within us also grow. Today, we must endeavor to continue to provide information, education, and the promise of Freemasonry to not only the Members of the Craft, but to be an example to the world. Noah Webster, when discussing education of the youth of America, said that education was sine qua non, meaning something that is absolutely necessary. If a Member of the Craft is to reap the benefits of Freemasonry, education is necessary. "What we get out of Freemasonry starts with our rebirth – the initiation. What we end up with depends upon ourselves."¹³¹³ Roberts, Allen E. (1974). The Craft and its Symbols: Opening the Door to Masonic Symbolism. Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply Company: Henrico, Virginia. ✖

¹ Mackey, Albert. (1849). The Mystic Tie: or, Facts and Opinions, Illustrative of The Character and Tendency of Freemasonry. Miller & Brown. Charleston, South Carolina. Pg. 113. Retrieved Hathi Trust Digital Library.

¹ Ibid, pgs. 113-114.

¹ Ibid, pg. 114.

¹ Ibid, pg. 114.

¹ Ibid.

¹ Ibid, pg. 115.

¹ Ibid, pg. 116.

¹ Knoop, Douglas, Jones, G. P., Hamer, Douglas. (1975). The Early Masonic Catechisms. The Second Edition, Edited for Quatuor Coronati Lodge. Published by Quatuor Lodge, No. 2076, London, England.

¹ Whipple, William. (June 24, 1819). Masonic Address Delivered Before Corinthian Lodge at Concord. Printed by Caleb Cushing. Concord, Massachusetts. Pg. 12. Retrieved from Google Books on July 19, 2019.

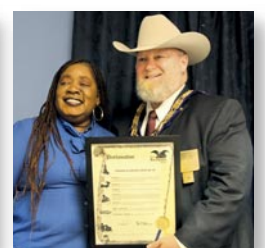
¹ Mackey, Albert (editor). (1859). Volume II of The American Quarterly Review of Freemasonry and its kindred sciences. Robert Macoy, publisher, New York. Pg. 410 (editor's note).

¹ Florida Masonic Monitor. (Corrected 2015). Pgs 14-15.

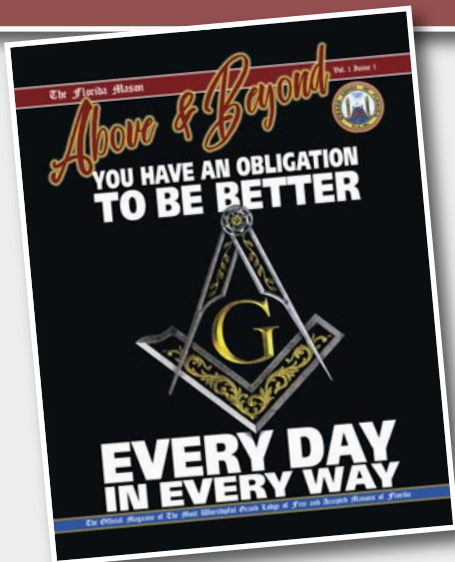
¹ Ibid, p 17.

¹ Roberts, Allen E. (1974). The Craft and its Symbols: Opening the Door to Masonic symbolism. Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply Company: Henrico, Virginia.

Stronger Together



The Grand Lodge of Florida is Offering Advertising Opportunities for Upcoming Issues of The Florida Mason *Above & Beyond* Magazine



*Don't Miss Out,
Limited Space Available...*



220 North Ocean St. • Jacksonville, Florida 32202
P.O. Box 1020 • 32201
Tel: 904.354.2339 • www.grandlodgefl.com

The Florida Mason *Above & Beyond* Magazine

Winner of the "2022 Masonic Renewal Committee of North America Best Newsletter/Newspaper Award"

Advertisement Form Complete form and email with advertising to: masonicpublications@grandlodgefl.com

Name _____ Florida Mason? Member Number _____
Company Name _____ Web Page _____
Address _____ Commercial Advertisement? Yes _____ No _____
City _____ State _____ Lodge Name / No. _____
Phone Number _____ Email _____ @ _____
Allied Body Name _____

COST:

- **Commercial:** Full page \$ 900.00 • Half page \$500.00
- **Masonic Lodge or Allied Body:** Half page \$300.00

ARTWORK SPECIFICATIONS:

- PDF or Tiff files (300 dpi) Ads ONLY received via email.
- CMYK or B&W, High Resolution, (PDFs @300 dpi Printer Quality) (to actual size) embed all artwork and fonts.
- **DO NOT USE REGISTRATION BLACK,**
Max density for black is 50c 40m 40y 100k no exceptions!

- **All media subject to the approval** of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge F. & A.M. of Florida and **MUST** be emailed to:
masonicpublications@grandlodgefl.com

SIZES:

Half page: 7.5" (w) x 4.9" (h)
Full page: 7.5" (w) X 10" (h) (**live area**)
Full page w/ bleed: 8.75" (w) X 11.25" (h)

Graphic design service for your advertisement is available for a nominal fee.
For a quote, please contact **Sharon Bendix: ebou@bellsouth.net • 904.829.9226**

"Your advertisement is a reflection of your business, so let's make it shine"

.....
All article submissions for future print or online issues of **The Florida Mason's Above & Beyond**,
or Facebook submissions should be emailed to: R. W. Charles R. Jordan at:
publications@grandlodgefl.com • 727-455-7195

Did You Know?

You can review the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge F.&A.M. of Florida's Proceedings in one location.

You can perform a topic search by year.

<http://gwm.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet/GWM-59-59>



Thank You To The:

THE • GEORGE • WASHINGTON
MASONIC • NATIONAL • MEMORIAL

gwmemorial.org

Ashlar Lodge Recognizes Three Outstanding Young Adults

Ashlar Lodge No. 98 of St. Augustine, FL, recognized three outstanding young adults in their Community in October.

The three amazing people are Angelyk Guterrez, St. Johns County Fire Cadet; Hannah Hopkins, St. Johns County Sheriff's Explorer; and Ben Wondracek, Lodge Chief, Order of the Arrow, Echokotee Lodge 200.

All three of these young adults, were selected by their affiliated organization for their outstanding performance and commitment to the Community.

Congratulations to all! ✖



*Ben Wondracek -
Lodge Chief, Order
of the Arrow*



*Angelyk Guterrez -
St. Johns County Fire
Cadet*



*Hannah Hopkins -
St. Johns County
Sheriff's Explorer*