

The Florida Mason

Vol. 3 Issue 1

Above & Beyond

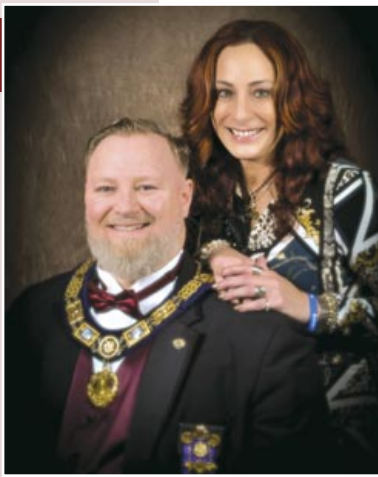


Not just
a man.
A Mason.

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



NOT JUST A MAN. A MASON.™



Grand Master's Message

Greetings My Brothers,

As I write this article, one might think my term is almost over, but I looked at my calendar and I am reminded that we have so many activities, events, meetings, and adventures left to accomplish. Lady Odessa and I have worked very hard to try and attend as many of your important occasions as possible, so that we may share in your successes. Thank you for giving us the opportunity— it has been both an honor and a privilege we will always cherish and remember.

To the new Lodge Officers, I congratulate you and ask that you work with your District Deputy Grand Master to complete the D.D.G.M. checklist. I realize that not much time has elapsed since the last time one of these was completed, but your Grand Lodge Officers are very much interested in your progress, your successes, and what needs you may have to better serve your Brothers and to make your Lodge stronger.

Our Annual Grand Communication is very much right around the corner. Several committees are hard at work to ensure your time is well spent and there is an overriding framework to ensure that we will be able to accomplish all that needs to be done. On April 3rd, we will be hosting a statewide Zoom Meeting to discuss Proposed Legislation and the Statement of Condition. Be sure to check the Grand Lodge Monthly Mailing for the link to the meeting. I would encourage you to host a “watch party” for your Lodge or even District. The Zoom meeting will be recorded and available for replay if that is more convenient.

Our Grand Secretary and his amazing team at the Grand Lodge Office are to be commended for their hard work and dedication to our Great Fraternity. We are so truly fortunate to have such a wonderful group of talented individuals working with us! Thank you all!

In closing, please know that our Great Fraternity is a reflection of who you are and what you do. Please make good choices, work hard for your Lodge and be a bright shining beacon for others to strive for. May the Great Architect bless you, your families, our First Responders, our Military, and the United States of America. ✠

Fraternally,
M.: W.: Glen B. Bishop
Grand Master

.....
Stronger Together
.....



Grand Lodge of Florida

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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)

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for future issues of
The Florida Mason
Above & Beyond
and Facebook submissions
should be sent to:*

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publications@grandlodgefl.com
727-455-7195

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



Deputy Grand Master's Message

My Brothers,

What a great year this has been. In traveling around this Grand Jurisdiction as your Deputy Grand Master, many of you have heard the message that was brought to the Craft of "Leadership, Accountability, and Commitment." It has been said that good leadership is the key to the success of any organization and Freemasonry already has the framework in place to develop effective leaders through its progressive line.

There are Lodges within our Jurisdiction that are thriving and achieving great success, while others are struggling to put Officers in chairs or put on any of our Three Degrees. Attendance is at an all-time low.

As leaders of our Fraternity it is essential that we provide our Lodges with the tools necessary to be successful. Almost every tool necessary for a Lodge's Success can be found in the Digest of Masonic Law, the educational materials and courses, such as Masonic Leadership Training, Lodge Officers Training, and Master Mason Exams 1, 2, and 3.

This year I have appointed 29 District Deputy's and 29 District Instructors whose charge will be to help these Lodges that are struggling to improve. We cannot solve all of our problems in the Fraternity quickly. It is my belief that together we can improve our Lodges and make a difference, one step at a time.

"Leadership, Accountability, and Commitment" are three words I would ask you to embrace, and reflect upon each day and strive to live by these words in your daily lives, and make them important once again for yourself, your Lodge, and this great Fraternity. Our Fraternity will thrive, or die based on how these three words are executed.

I look forward to seeing you in our future travels, may God bless each and every one of you, may God bless our Fraternity and may God bless the United States of America. ✠

Fraternally,
R.: W.: Don Cowart
Deputy Grand Master



Senior Grand Warden's Message

Dear Brethren,

As our Grand Lodge Session rapidly approaches, I would like to thank you all for your service to our beloved Fraternity.

This past February, as "Your Elected Grand Line Officers," we attended the Conference of

Grand Masters of North America in Seattle, Washington. A lot of very interesting and enlightening presentations were made. One subject that particularly caught my attention was a quote on membership retention.

"In Freemasonry, Education is the First Course and Entertainment is Dessert."

The outside world is seeking education, enlightenment, and a clean wholesome family atmosphere. We have been offering all the above since our inception. We have all the tools to be able not only to Initiate, but to retain all of our Members.

As the outside world seeks "Light," it is our responsibility to answer the call, if we don't, we fail. All the tools exist to be able to accomplish this.

Like everything in life, teamwork is the answer, no one Brother or Lodge alone can do all of it. Education alone or entertainment alone are not the answer.

It takes a full three-course meal to achieve success. So why don't we try this meal: "Appetizer: Education; Main course: Family and Community; Dessert: Entertainment."

"Education, Family, Community, Entertainment" ✠

Fraternally,
R.: W.: Tali Atala
Senior Grand Warden



Junior Grand Warden's Message

Brothers All,

It has been an exciting year of travel and Fellowship from the great State of Florida, to the Southeastern Conference, and the Conference of Grand Masters of North America. I am looking forward to the upcoming District Deputy Grand Master Orientation and very soon our Annual Grand Lodge Communication.

Joyce and I would like to thank you for your prayers of strength, and healing throughout my medical emergency and I will let you all know that by God's Grace I am well and traveling full-bore around the State and beyond. Prayers work, and I thank you with all my heart for your genuine prayers and concern for mine and Joyce's wellbeing.

At the Conference of Grand Masters of North America, we heard presentations and saw statistics relating to the overall health of our Fraternity. I was excited to hear the term "Masonic Renaissance" by a few of the Presenters, and that Fraternal Membership as a whole is starting to bounce back with an average age beginning to decline worldwide. This was attributed to many factors like educational opportunities, mentorship, getting back to basics, Community involvement, and so on. The single most important factor in all these statistics, in my opinion, was what I will call the "time" factor. How much productive time do we have to give to something we love?

Time is the most precious thing we have. We know that at any moment we could be in the hands of the Grand Architect of the Universe, so the time we spend helping here in active life is precious. A major part of our active life is about the time and diligent effort put forth to better something we love. Do you make time for your Masonic Fraternity? Do you make time for your Masonic Lodge? Do you make time for your Masonic Brothers?

The Lodges thriving and the areas of the world that are experiencing a regrowth have this one common factor. "Good men" are making the time to better their Lodges, their Brothers, and themselves. How? You might ask. By making time to get involved productively at any place, or in any situation they can be of assistance. Putting aside the time to attend, to study, to relate, to encourage, to teach, to help, to accomplish, and the list goes on and on. Your time is precious and priceless and needed. You are needed in your Lodge. Your ideas, Fellowship, thoughts, help, mentorship, and so on mean something to our Fraternity. With this thought in our hearts, I believe we can start a true renaissance at home.

I am looking forward to spending time with you in Lodge. ✖

Fraternally,

R. W. Haskell R. Vest, Jr.

Junior Grand Warden



Grand Secretary's Message

My Brothers,

It certainly has been a successful year. The sale of the Grand Lodge Building in Jacksonville has been completed. Many of you ask what now? First and foremost, we have a lease at no charge from the buyer for 3-years. The Grand Master appointed a very well-rounded Committee to research several possibilities. The Committee is

working diligently on all of our options. You can expect a report on the progress and recommendations at our Grand Lodge Session in May.

The Grand Lodge Office Staff is very professional in maintaining the records of Grand Lodge, and those of the Grand Lodge Officers. They are all very dedicated and committed to provide all of the services needed to assist the Lodge Secretaries and Grand Lodge Officers. I really look forward to seeing all my friends, and perhaps making some new ones at our upcoming Annual Grand Communication.

This year we have had Secretaries Seminars via video conference on Zoom which seem to be generally well accepted, of course like everything, they can be improved; rest assured they improve with each presentation. I wish to thank R. W. Jack Hampton; our Grand Master M. W. Glen Bishop; M. W. Jorge Aladro; and W. Jeremy Barnes of Amity. They have much to offer our Fraternity and are willing to do whatever it takes to assist the Secretaries and the Elected Officers of their Particular Lodges.

Check the Grand Lodge Monthly Mail for dates and times of upcoming seminars. Remember these seminars are designed to be beneficial to All Lodge Officers and Master Masons.

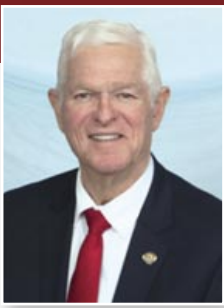
It is a pleasure to work with our current Grand Lodge Grand Officers. They are committed to lead or Fraternity towards great things in the future. It's hard to believe that shortly I have served 16 years as your Grand Secretary. It has certainly been a pleasure, and honor to serve in this Office and it has been very rewarding to me personally. I feel very privileged to be working with a superior staff at our Grand Lodge Office as they are dedicated and professional individuals. I hope we all can sit in Lodge together as friends, and Brothers in the very near future. My wish for you is for a Healthy Year and your families' continued health.

Please offer me the opportunity to clasp your hand in friendship, Brotherly Love, and affection, at the upcoming Grand Lodge Session.

If your presence doesn't make an impact, your absence won't make a difference. ✖

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

Grand Secretary



Grand Treasurer's Message

Brethren,

It has been such a privilege and honor to serve the Craft as your Grand Treasurer these last seven years. In addition, I want you all to know that you have a great staff here at the Grand Lodge supporting our Fraternity.

I cannot stress enough the importance of ensuring that your individual Lodge Records are backed up and archived. We have lost many Lodge Records to natural disasters and even some to arson. Your Grand Lodge provides this backup service free to every Lodge. Bring us your Lodge Minutes and we will scan them, make a DVD copy that we will store in our fireproof safe, and then return your minutes with a DVD copy to you. Additionally, the Grand Historian is available to visit your Lodge and provide a photographic record of your past Worshipful Masters and any important visual you may have.

Being a service member deployed for months can be rough, especially when small children are home without their father /mother. Please keep our service members in your thoughts and prayers. Additionally, our first responders face hardships year round, so please included them as well.

We have recently added additional displays to our museum. Please contact the Grand Secretary or myself to set up a special tour for you and/or your group.

I look forward to seeing you all at Annual Grand Lodge Communications this year. ✖

Fraternally,

R.: W.: Rudy Boatright

Grand Treasurer

Appalachian Trail Adventure Of Worshipful Master Rodney "Hot Rod" Wilkinson



What happens to a Past Worshipful Master that makes him want to walk 2,198 miles with nobody chasing him? Did the Brothers of his Lodge drive him over the edge? NO, but it makes me wonder. The thrill, blisters, sprained ankles (multiple), stomach viruses called Norovirus affect as many as 3 to 5 thousand people from drinking out of streams, hypothermia, just what drives people to do this?

This is the story of Worshipful Rodney "Hot Rod" Wilkinson, 57-years young and his daughter Ashley, 29-years young.

W.: Rodney is very active with Naval Lodge No. 24. He has sat in all the chairs, and is a dang good Senior Deacon for Degree Work! So why? It began as a dream and became a reality in March of 2022 when they went to an actual class on how to hike the Appalachian Trail in Asheville, N.C. This enabled them to plan and prepare for the journey. He had spoken to the Brothers about missing Lodge for a while, but doubted if few knew he was really headed to the mountains.

Some facts about the hike. I already mentioned the distance, but it's an 8.8 mile trek to the start. After supplying from REI outfitters and many study / meetings, and a few shakedown hikes, he and his daughter Ashley, were off.

They started just before Easter and ran into an ice storm. Close to hypothermia they were forced off the trail at Wayah Bald, N.C., one of many scary moments. I say one, 'cause there were many! Animals live in the woods! HA-HA. Bears with cubs are extremely dangerous and many were encountered and given a wide berth when they could however, as you go over a rise, BOOM, there they are. Also you never want to get between a mama and her cubs. I didn't realize but when setting up camp you never set up on the trail. Animals use it, and that could be dangerous. Deer like to lick the water off your tent during the night and aren't scared of people at all, but you can hurt yourself trying to get away from tent lickers.

Serious hikers try to make 10 to 15 miles per day on average. Due to heavy rains etc., this can be difficult, so if you only make a few miles one day it's a game of catch up. The trail has many rest areas, (bear magnets) and are spaced out to accommodate hikers. The bears have figured this out as they are good places to get a free meal. Many people gather there to "join up" with others but must be cautious with their food. These people are called Tramily. One such group was a single woman with 30 kids in tow on the A.T. Trail. Also, there are Hostels just off the trail where rest comes easy along with the needed baths and supplies. They are cheap and many provide services where they actually bring supplies to you at predetermined places. Hikers don't use the phrase No Pain, No Gain. They prefer No Rain, No Pain. It rains alot in the mountains so keeping feet dry is impossible.

There are so many beautiful sights to see but I'll mention a few of the odd ones you wouldn't expect to see. How about LongHorn (Texas) cattle or ponies in Virginia. So much to remember, and to make so many memories with your daughter.

Ashley posted pictures on line and many of the Brothers of Naval Lodge No. 24, followed their adventure and my feet never hurt and not the first blister. ✖

Lodge Investigating Committee – Accelerating His Journey

By R.:W.: Brother Wayne Spooner, Grand Lodge Membership Committee Chairman & Grand Lodge Masonic Awareness Committee Chairman, Grand Lodge of Illinois A.F.&A.M.

Some of the most important work that we perform for the growth and positive development of our Lodges occurs between stated monthly Lodge meetings. An image may come to mind of a Brother pacing in his basement while practicing Ritual Work for an upcoming Degree or a gathering with Brethren to host a community blood drive. Yes, these scenes are important to our work as Freemasons. However, **some of the most valuable work that we perform for Ancient Craft Masonry is serving on an Investigating Committee for a man who submits a petition to our Lodge.**

No matter how tenured we are in Freemasonry, many of us vividly recall the experience of a well-executed and engaging Investigating Committee experience back when we were Membership Prospects. The Lodge Officers and Brethren who take pride in the effective execution of these critical experiences embrace a fundamental responsibility and care in accelerating the timeless educational journey made from “Prospect to Candidate to Brother.” **This committee, comprising of the three Brethren appointed by the Worshipful Master, sets out on an expedition of fact gathering, information evaluation and imparting knowledge.** Why? To determine a verdict of “favorable” or “unfavorable” by the committee members regarding the Membership Prospect, and a similar conclusion is made by that man regarding the Lodge and Freemasonry. Yes, the Membership Prospect is evaluating us as well, and that experience should provide fuel for his decision to pursue Light “of his own free will and accord.”

This committee, comprising of the three Brethren appointed by the Worshipful Master, sets out on an expedition of fact gathering, information evaluation and imparting knowledge.

A critical success factor is viewing the Investigating Committee session with the Membership Prospect as a two-way dialogue. In particular, meet at his home; it is a space that is comfortable for him and provides a literal and figurative opportunity to invite Freemasonry into his personal life. In this conversation, we want to hear about why the Membership Prospect is looking to make being an active Freemason a priority for the rest of his life. Also, we want to acquire insights about why he has chosen our specific group of Brethren to associate with and befriend. Lastly, we want to understand him, as a whole person, covering the professional / work and personal aspects and aspirations about his life including any hobbies or exceptional talents. **If we are to become Brothers, then a wise and capable Investigating Committee knows not to leave that conversation as strangers.** Therefore, the committee members should share concise personal stories about their individual Masonic Journeys, talk about why they actively invest their time with Fraternal activities, cover information about their professional / work backgrounds, shed light on our complex Fraternal Organization, and outline specific next steps on the journey to become a full member of the Lodge and fraternity.

Even if clear “red flags” arise in the discussion or during probing questions asked regarding independently discovered information about the Membership Prospect, the Brethren on this committee have a duty to the Lodge and fraternity to set realistic and clear expectations about the balloting and Degree Completion processes. The Membership Prospect should not wonder about next steps; those items should be covered including expected time investments and financial requirements as an active Candidate and Master Mason. He should know about the requirements to study the history, philosophy and Degree Ceremony experiences including taking the oral Proficiency Exams. Also, the Membership Prospect should be informed that he will have a Lodge Intender, a teacher, mentor and coach by his side to help him through that learning journey. **Fundamentally, inspiring a Membership Prospect to approach his perfect entrance into the new world of Freemasonry with confidence is part of the Investigating Committee’s Work.** His concerns should be addressed and questions answered. Said differently, the Membership Prospect should acquire a fundamental trust in the process and ceremonies to follow.

Inspiring a Membership Prospect to approach his perfect entrance into the new world of Freemasonry with confidence is part of the Investigating Committee’s work.

Past Masters, Lodge Officers and Brethren, we have an important question for you to ponder — **Will the next Investigating Committee experience that you conduct be one in which the Membership Prospect will remember favorably as a positive launching point in his Masonic Journey that helped accelerate his understanding, love and admiration for our Speculative Craft of Builders?** The importance of this committee’s work cannot be overstated to impact the positive health and welfare of our ancient and honorable fraternity. **May your work be Square, Level and Plumb during these Investigating Committee Discussions to advance the discovery and reveal of the Perfect Ashlar that resides within the Rough Ashlar whom you encounter that day.** ✖

Gulf Beach Lodge No. 291, Unveils Barbara Salazar's Lodge Mural At Recent Gathering

Barbara Salazar, the talented artist and proprietor of “Art By Salazar,” recently captivated an audience of 56 individuals at Gulf Beach Masonic Lodge No. 291, (14020 Marguerite Dr., Madeira Beach), with an enlightening presentation on her masterpiece: “*The Construction of King Solomon's Temple*” mural commissioned for the Lodge, back in 2013. The mural, a labor of love, took Salazar an impressive three years to complete, encompassing over 1,100 hours of meticulous craftsmanship. Delving deep into her creative process, Salazar shared how she intricately incorporated hundreds of Masonic Symbols into the painting, demonstrating her profound understanding of the Lodge's Rich Heritage and Symbolism.

Salazar's dedication to authenticity was evident as she recounted her numerous journeys to Scotland and England, where she painstakingly researched and replicated the pillars at Rosslyn Chapel, ensuring utmost accuracy in her portrayal. As a self-trained artist, Salazar's achievement is all the more remarkable, showcasing her innate talent and unwavering commitment to her craft.

The evening commenced with a sumptuous chicken cordon bleu dinner, prepared by Lodge Junior Warden, Brother Tim Delaney, with the assistance of Lodge Stewards, Brothers Jim Tizzano, and Brian Marshall. Notably, the event also welcomed esteemed Residents from The Masonic Home, fostering a sense of Community, and love. Barbara Salazar's husband, Fernando Salazar, served as the Worshipful Master of Gulf Beach

Lodge in 2013, further highlighting the profound connection between the artist, and the Lodge.

Gulf Beach Lodge No. 291, exemplifies Freemasonry's Commitment to Community Service and philanthropy, actively participating in initiatives such as the “Keep Pinellas Beautiful” Adopt-a-Mile program, sponsoring annual scholarships for high school seniors, organizing elementary school “Bikes for Books” programs, and providing holiday food baskets to families in need. Such endeavors not only demonstrate the Fraternity's dedication to building a stronger Community but also underscores its fundamental principle of charity. ✘



Hastings Lodge No. 183 Presents Awards During Stated Communication



At a Stated Communication of Hastings Lodge No. 183, F.&A.M. on February 26th, Worshipful Master Raymond Winters, assisted by Worshipful Brother Tommy Kronz, presented Worshipful Brother Walton Pellicer, a Masonic Education Certificate from the Grand Lodge of F.&A.M. ✘



On the same evening, Worshipful Master Raymond Winters, assisted by Worshipful Brother Tommy Knonz, also presented Worshipful Brother David Dwyer, his Perpetual Membership Certificate from the Grand Lodge of F.&A.M. ✘

... And Tuxedos Were Worn By All At Lodge No. 44

Laurel Hill Lodge No. 44, is a Rural Country Lodge in the 3rd Masonic District. It is a tradition that we all wear our Official Laurel Hill Tuxedo for installation and the D.D.G.M. visit.



LEADERSHIP EXISTS BECAUSE OF PEOPLE.

It is for people and with people that we get the concept of leadership. Leadership does not exist as a concept in a vacuum; it exists because it is with this concept that we, as a people, are able to achieve great things.

Defining the term leadership has been, and is difficult. There may be as many definitions as there are studies on the subject. Here is a definition I offer for your consideration:

- The capability to create a vision and communicate that vision to others to share in making that vision a reality.
- Leadership is dynamic
- Leadership is not a function of level or position

Furthermore, leaders have certain fundamental beliefs and attributes:

- Leaders believe that honest and ethical behavior are foundational values of true leadership.
- Leaders use holistic thinking, communication, and account ability as the fundamental attributes of leadership
- Leadership is the ability to influence others by setting and inspiring example. The example is one that motivates people to pursue goals that benefit the organization. Typically, leadership involves creating a vision of the organizational future, devising a strategy for achieving that vision, and communicating that vision to all Members of the organization. When the vision is communicated, the leader must ensure the vision is clear so that everyone within the organization understands it. (*Published by Brother, Dr. Rick Weil in the International Journal of Business and Social Science, July 2011*)

We are all aware that our Fraternity is a volunteer organization. Good men come to us because of what each sees and hears from others that are Members of the Craft. The good works of each of the Lodges in their Communities and at the District, and State levels are readily apparent to all willing to do a small amount of research. Being a volunteer organization, we entirely rely on the various talents that each of us brings to the table to move our Lodges forward into the future. The same is true at the District, and State levels. We are the longest enduring Fraternity in the world and if we are to continue in the tradition of ancestors, we must have good leaders at all levels.

There has been much debate of whether leadership and management are different concepts. They are! Let's think of the difference in this way:

- Managers maintain the direction and oversee the various processes we use, thus creating stability.
- **Leaders create change and set the direction.** A leader can take people and an organization in a new direction with their leadership abilities. We are not talking about changing our Ritual, traditions, or anything of that nature. We are talking about moving ourselves forward into the future to ensure a vibrant and thriving Freemasonry in our State while maintaining our ancient traditions.

• **Leadership is dynamic.** Every Lodge is different, and every Lodge faces different challenges. Leadership involves relationships and their development. In this case, experiencing a sense of purpose and meaning in work that is beyond just the performance of tasks. It involves a sense of contributing to a greater Community, whether it is within the Lodge itself, the District, or our local Communities. It requires the Lodge Leaders to create a positive and energetic attitude among the Members within their respective Lodges. It does not mean having so many “irons in the fire” that Members feel overwhelmed by sheer volume. Focus on one or two Lodge Projects that enhance that sense of belonging and accomplishment.

When conducting practices for Degrees, or Teaching Catechism, do more than concentrate on the memorization, explain the esoteric meaning behind the Symbols and words. Give our modern-day Brothers that connection to our Masonic Ancestors and a deeper understanding of our Craft.

• **Leadership is not a function of level or position.** So many times, we associate a particular title with leadership. Please don't make that mistake. Our Craft has many Members that have knowledge, skills, and abilities that are desperately needed and are not “titled,” Do we discount their much-needed attributes because they haven't a particular Masonic Title? We hope not, but it does happen more than we may care to admit. A dynamic leader does not care about what other title a Brother holds. He already has the most important title – Brother.

In the fundamental beliefs and attributes area of our definition can be summed up as the basic tenets of our Craft – Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. We have a responsibility, no, a duty, to act in an honest and ethical manner in all our interactions with everyone we encounter. Let us square our actions by the square of virtue.

Holistic thinking is gathering as much information as possible to when a decision must be made. There is an old adage, “think outside the box.” I ask the question, what happens if the best answer is in the box?

Listen to understand, not to respond. To do this, a leader must communicate – clearly and concisely. Answer questions. Even if you get the same question from different people, answer it. Those questions may provide another avenue to solve, or resolve the issue. Explain the ‘why’ a decision is made. When others understand ‘why’ even if they disagree, they will understand why you decided as you did. “Because I said so,” should never be an acceptable answer. The only time that would be acceptable is in a life-or-death situation. I have yet to encounter a situation within our Craft where that response would be needed.

• **Accountability.** As Brother Albert Mackey wrote, “provide kind counsel” to all. Whether you believe he is in error, or you are asked for advice. President Ronald Reagan is quoted as saying, “there is no limit to what a man can do or where he can go if he doesn't mind who gets the credit.” A leader gives credit where credit is due. He understands that success has many fathers, and giving credit to others does not diminish him, it gives him gratification and satisfaction.

• **Leadership in our Fraternity begins at the Lodge Level.** We must endeavor to use our working tools to enhance our knowledge, skills, and abilities at all levels of our Craft. ✘



Outreach Services:

*Connecting Masons with
the Resources and Support
They Need at Home*

MEETING MASONS NEEDS RIGHT WHERE THEY ARE...



Masonic Outreach Services is the primary resource through which Masons and their loved ones in Florida are connected with relief and support services



The one-stop Outreach hotline connects callers with referrals to local services like doctors, veterans' benefits, local in-home care, and senior-transportation agencies.



The Care Coordinator helps navigate care needs. They provide regular check-ins, information about local programs and supports, and can help with securing senior housing in the community.

WHY CHOOSE US?

Outreach Services is a program to address the needs of Fraternal members who are 65 years of age and older. Masonic Outreach provides the membership access to the services and resources they need to stay safe and healthy in their homes or home communities.

CONTACT US



www.masonichomefl.com



outreach@masonichomefl.com



INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

Providing consultation over the phone linking callers to services such as home care, senior housing, public benefits, Medicare and Medicaid resources, veterans benefit counselors and transportation agencies.



CARE MANAGEMENT

Our team can provide ongoing support when a fraternal member is facing loss of a spouse, acute medical issues or other challenges. Support is provided to navigate the healthcare services/benefits system as an advocate for the member. As well as connecting the individual with lodge programs for visits and support.



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Through the non-resident relief application process short term financial assistance may be provided to a fraternal member. Support is need-based and applicants must meet financial criteria and must already be receiving all eligible public benefits.

Thank you! 😊



Hello,
My name is Melissa. In 2017, you so graciously awarded me a scholarship for college. I just wanted to reach out to let you know how eternally grateful I am for your contribution towards my education. I obtained my bachelor's degree in psychology with high honors at USF (go bulls!) in 2021. I am now working on obtaining my master's degree as a physician assistant. I am so grateful to be at this point in my life as I left Cuba with nothing but a suitcase and a dream to have a better life. Hopefully, I can pay it forward someday and help other students in their pursuit of a higher education. Thank you again for helping me achieve everything I once dreamed of as a child.

With gratitude,
Melissa

Getting to Know The Masonic Outreach Services Program

If you asked most Masons what The Masonic Home of Florida is, they will probably tell you the story of the century-old retirement home founded by M.:W.: Governor Albert Gilchrist in St. Petersburg that was once an orphanage. At one time, that would have been very accurate, but that's hardly a complete answer today. In fact, today only a part of the Masonic Homes' patrons actually 'live' on its campus while the rest are able to receive services from the Home without ever stepping foot in Pinellas County. How is that possible? Through a statewide relief program known as Masonic Outreach Services Program.

Masonic Outreach Services Program (MOSP) is the primary resource program through which qualified Masons, their spouses and their widows in the State of Florida are connected with free relief and support services. There are zero financial eligibility requirements for this assistance as well. Its programs include such benefits as: Information and referral assistance to federal, state and local services such as Medicare / Medicaid benefits, veterans' benefits, local in-home care, doctor's office referrals, attorney and accountant referrals, home repair referrals, real estate advisor referrals and location of senior-transportation agencies. Care need navigation through the assistance of an Outreach Coordinator who provides things such as regular virtual check-ins via telephone/email, information about local senior programs and support, and help

sourcing senior housing in their local community. In addition to the care management program, MOSP can provide assistance with applying for one-time needs-based financial relief to eligible Masons, spouses and widows through the Non-Resident Relief Fund.

Most services through The Masonic Outreach Services Program are currently geared towards Florida Masons age 65+, who have been in good standing for at least the past 3-years, have been an active Florida Mason for the past 10-years, and became a Mason prior to age 70, their spouses and widows. However, open to Masons of all ages, Masonic Outreach Services is here to help Members and their families navigate through life's challenges, and find the resources and solutions they need in their own Lodges, appendant bodies, and Communities. MOSP Outreach Coordinators can help identify resources for a child of a Mason with special needs and connect the family with local programs and public benefits while also assisting a Mason whose mother's health is rapidly failing and they are at a loss between what healthcare solution is the best option for her – Home Health or Hospice? In short, we're here to help Florida Masons and their families find the help they need, when they need it, and where they need it at no cost to them, and often, at no cost to The Masonic Home of Florida Outreach Program. ✖

Contact us today to learn more about your
Masonic Outreach Services Program Masonic Member Benefits and Services.

Outreach & Business Development Coordinator: Cristal E. Baer, MBA

Email: outreach@masonichomefl.com

(727) 308-4228

Website: masonichomefl.com/masonic-home-outreach-services/

**For support and information about the Masonic Home of Florida or
Masonic Outreach Services Program, or to learn about the various ways you can make a do-
nation to the Masonic Home Endowment Fund, call (727) 822-3499.**

To volunteer at The Home or with The Outreach Program,
email: renee.verrier@masonichomefl.com or cristal.baer@masonichomefl.com

Pilgrimage Day Celebration



2024



Pilgrimage Day Celebration Continues With...



Outpouring Of Love... and Goals Met Once Again!



Florida Widows Sons Chapters Present M.:W.: Glen Bishop, Grand Master, A Vest At The 2024 Pilgrimage Day Celebration.



For a full listing of Widows Sons Chapters: WidowsSonsInternational.Com/Directory



MEMORY GARDEN

The Memory Garden at The Masonic Home of Florida is an open, tranquil courtyard nestled within the center of the Masonic Home main building,

and is accessible by the Residents and visitors. Along the Southwest corner of the garden, a beautiful wall of Granite has been erected to honor and remember family members, Residents, Lodges, Brothers and Sisters. As an option to donate \$150.00 to the Masonic Home, each Granite Plaque is engraved with your special message.



TREE OF LIFE

There are two locations within the Masonic Home that display a Tree of Life. It is one of several charitable gifts programs initiated by The

Grand Lodge of Florida to benefit the Masonic Home and its Residents. For a \$100.00-dollar donation, you can purchase a brass Leaf on the Tree in honor, or in memory, of someone special. Inscriptions can recognize family, friends, Brothers, a Lodge, or a Resident of the Masonic Home.



BRICK COURTYARD

The Brick pathway, located within the outdoor Memory Garden, is decorated with personalized bricks in memory, or in honor, of a special person.

As an alternative to the Granite Plaque, the Courtyard Brick program requires a small donation of \$50.00 per brick, which is engraved and permanently placed along the pathway.

*So Many Ways
You Can Help Support
The Masonic Home*



Florida Masonic Youth Charity

Masonic Charities of Florida, Inc.

The Grand Lodge of Florida has always supported all forms of Masonic Youth Programs. Donations to the Florida Masonic Youth Charity are deposited into the Masonic Charities of Florida, Inc., Fund, a 501(c)(3) tax exempt charitable account, and used to support Masonic Youth Programs that are dedicated to education and the principles that will help build strong leaders for our future. A separate and special account was set up by the Grand Secretary to ensure that all donations are properly distributed to our youth and proper records maintained.

Charitable Gifts

additional ways to support The Masonic Home of Florida

WILLS AND GIFTS

One of the most satisfying things we can do is to leave a legacy for something we care about. Please consider including a charitable

provision in your will. The Grand Lodge has a list of attorneys within the Fraternity who are willing to assist in you. You may also want to consider making direct cash donation to the Masonic Home of Florida. This can include a one-time gift or ongoing donation to the Home.

MASONIC HOME ENDOWMENT FUND INC.

Proceeds from this tax-deductible fund provides income to fulfill our mission to provide charitable care and services as well as other on going expenses required to maintain the Home.

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

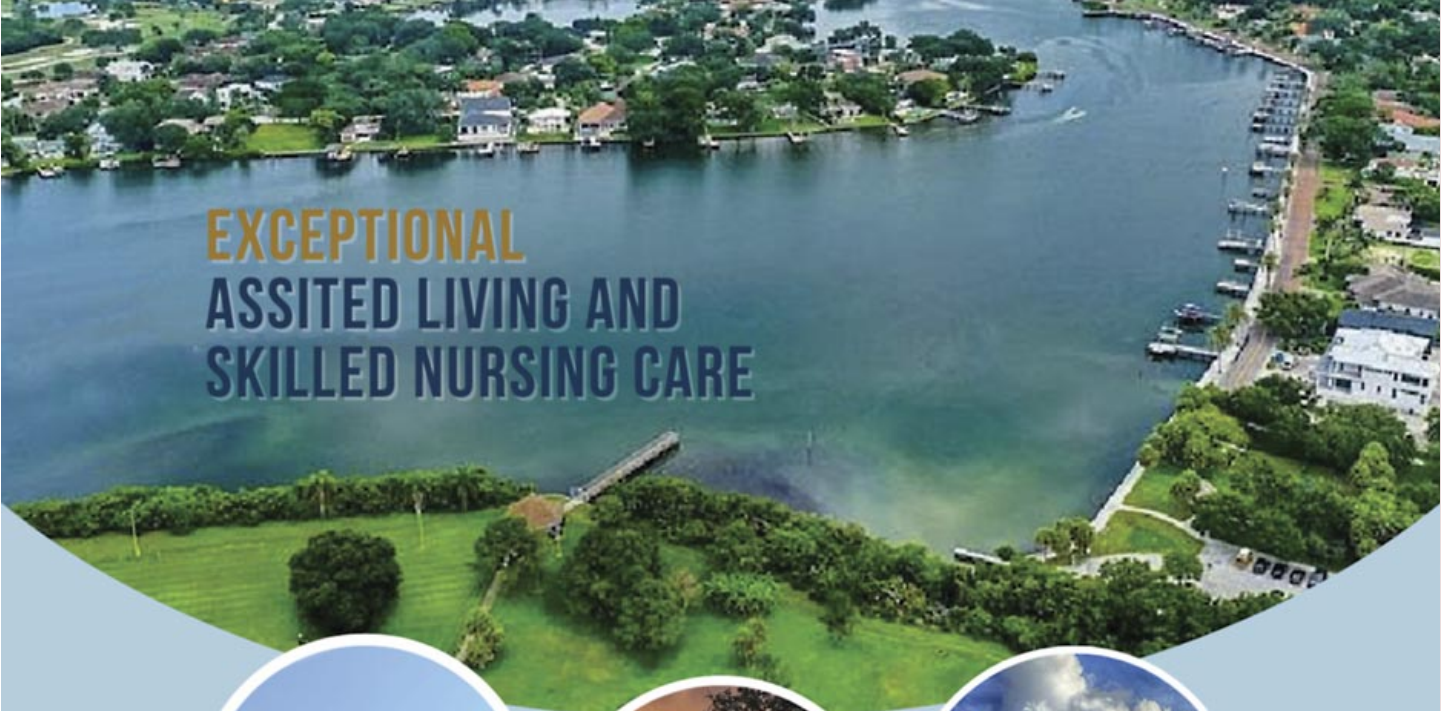
Gift annuities provide income for the rest of your life and may have tax advantages. The Grand Lodge has literature available which describes the Charitable Gift Annuity Program and the advantages of utility this gifting strategy.

FIRST LADY'S PROJECT

Each year the First Lady of Masonry choose and works to fund a special project for the Home. Your generous contributions enable the First Lady to improve the care and service throughout the year.

RESIDENT TREAT FUND

Funding for our treat fund allows for extra special programs and activities than cannot be supported by the Home's annual budget such as ball games, show tickets, fishing trips, etc. ✕



EXCEPTIONAL ASSITED 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

Dunedin Lodge No. 192, Keeps Alternate 19 In Downtown Dunedin Free From Litter

Dunedin Lodge No. 192 adopted the section of Alternate 19 which runsthrough downtown Dunedin from Wilson Street in Dunedin south to Commodore Street in Clearwater, through a partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation.

We meet at least four times a year to perform the clean-up under terms we signed with the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT).

On our July 22, 2023, clean-up, we picked up 15-pounds of litter. On our November 19, 2023 clean-up, we picked up 45-pounds of litter. On our February 10, 2024 clean-up, we picked up 30-pounds of litter.



DOT also installed signs at each end of our adopted section. Everyone that travels on Alternate 19 can see that our Lodge has adopted the section of Alternate 19 running through downtown Dunedin.

The Brothers from Dunedin Lodge No. 192, encourages other Lodges to contact either the Florida Department of Transportation or their local affiliate of Keep America Beautiful and adopt a section of roadway or other location that can be adopted. It is a way that a Lodge can perform a public service and obtain recognition readily seen by their Community. ✖



Appreciation Plaque Presented To Brother Taylor At Lodge No. 183 Meeting

On February 20th 2024 Harry Jackson Lodge No. 314, was pleased to present Brother Guy Tunnell, with his 40-Year Certificate and Pin and his son, Brother Jason Tunnell, with his 25-year Certificate and Pin. ✖

L to R: Brother Jason Tunnell, W.: Brad Clark and Brother Guy Tunnell



Behold, How Good And How Pleasant It Is For Brethren To Dwell Together In Unity!

On April 11, Boynton Lodge No. 236, hosted Thurgood Marshall Lodge No. 121, of The Most Worshipful Union Grand Lodge of Florida, Free and Accepted Masons, Prince Hall Affiliated, in the Third such Tyled Meeting of the kind.

A dinner full of Fellowship and Brotherly Love was followed by a Meeting that focused on Masonic Education.

In attendance were Brothers of The Grand Lines of both The Grand Lodges, including Right Worshipful Senior Grand Warden Tali Atala, as were the current Worshipful Masters of Harmonia Lodge No. 138, and Palmwood Lodge No. 303. ✖

*Submitted by
W.: Scott A Schwartzberg*



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GRAND LODGE of F&AM Florida

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🔍 <https://grand-lodge-of-florida.myshopify.com/> X | 🗣️





Have you ever just been sitting, and thinking how amazing it would be if there was just ONE place you could showcase your Articles and Lodge Stories, for the Entire State of Florida to see?



There is a place...

The Florida Mason *Above & Beyond* Magazine

All article submissions for future print or online issues or Facebook submissions should be emailed to:

R.:W.: Charles R. Jordan at:

publications@grandlodgefl.com

The Florida Mason Magazine is about you! About your Lodge, about your Members, It's about Retention of existing Members, and gaining the attention of Persective New Members.



195th Annual Grand Communications Schedule of Events



SUNDAY:

Registration (Ballroom Foyer)	9:00 a.m.
Ladies Registration (Ballroom Foyer)	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
.....	2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Church Service (Ballroom A)	11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Memorial Service (Ballroom A).....	<i>Immediately following Church Service</i>
Board of Trustees Meeting (Salon 13)	1:00 p.m.
Grand Master's Reception (Ballroom A)	7:00 p.m.

(A Grand Master's Reception will be held in lieu of a Banquet)

(FORMAL DRESS – Tickets Required)

MONDAY:

Registration (Ballroom Foyer)	7:00 a.m.
Official Opening of the Grand Communication (Grand Ballroom)	9:00 a.m.
Ladies Coffee & Bingo & Registration (Salons 5/6)	9:30 a.m.
Ladies Registration (2nd Floor Outside Salons 5/6)	9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Grand Lodge Session Breaks for Lunch.....	11:30 a.m.
Grand Lodge Session Reconvenes	1:00 p.m.
Grand Lodge Open Session	1:00 p.m.

*(Open to wives and non-Masons – Presentation of Report by the Administrator of The Masonic Home
and Grand Oration and Youth Presentations)*

Grand Lodge Session Call from Labor to Refreshment	4:00 p.m.
Actual Past Master's Degree (Grand Ballroom)	5:00 p.m.
Florida Lodge of Research (Salon 8)	6:30 p.m.

TUESDAY:

Registration (Ballroom Foyer)	8:00 a.m.
Grand Lodge Session Call from Refreshment to Labor	9:00 a.m.
Ladies Luncheon (Salons 7 & 8)	11:30 a.m.
Grand Lodge Session Breaks for Lunch.....	11:30 a.m.
Grand Lodge Session Reconvenes	1:00 p.m.
Grand Lodge Session Call from Labor to Refreshment	4:30 p.m.

Senior Warden and Junior Warden meet with the
Grand Lodge Officers (Grand Lodge Room).....Immediately following close of Session

WEDNESDAY:

Registration (Returns and Credentials – Salon 14).....	8:00 a.m.
Grand Lodge Session Call from Refreshment to Labor	9:00 a.m.
Installation of Grand Lodge Officers	10:30 a.m.

DRESS:

Church/Memorial Service	Business Dress
Grand Master's Reception	Formal Dress
Grand Lodge Session.....	Business Dress
Ladies Coffee & Bingo	Casual
Ladies Luncheon.....	Casual

The Masonic High Twelve Club Of Lake Worth
No. 316 • Celebrates Their 65th Year



Bernhard Kainer And
Roy Strohacker



Allan Mason, President



Group Photo Of
Attendees



Hair Goes... Fundraiser Grows...
At Middleburg Lodge No. 107, In District 11

BEFORE



AFTER



We're all familiar with fundraising and the effort and selflessness involved. But are there many that would go as far as W.: Michael Filz of Middleburg Lodge No. 107? The 11th Masonic District Association held fundraisers for a recent District Event. In a true act of altruism, W.: Filz volunteered to have his head and beard shaved ("leave the mustache") if the Brothers of the District

contributed \$1000. With the amount of Fraternal Love in the Elite 11th, it didn't take long to reach that goal. The story doesn't end there.

On the night of the Close Shave, our volunteer stylist Lucia Smith (a professional stylist, and wife of W.: Jeffrey Smith, Bunnell Lodge No. 200) offered the crowd the opportunity to cut a portion of W.: Filz hair, and beard for additional contributions. In all, \$1,500 was raised. Special thanks to Lucia, for offering her time and services. ✖

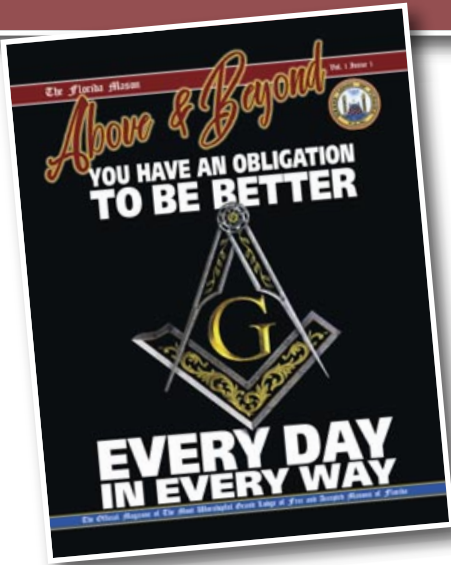


Step Up To The Plate

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. ✖



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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)

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.....
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

A Master Mason Degree To Remember

On the evening of 29 January 2024, something extraordinary happened at DeSoto Lodge No. 105 in Riverview Florida. The Worshipful Master and his Degree Team began a Master Mason (MM) Degree promptly at 7:00 PM, for two nervous Candidates. They were nervous, as we all are as we begin our journey into this way of life as a new Master Mason.


What they didn't know is that their Degree was slightly unique. The fact is that the Degree Team consisted of two Brothers of DeSoto Lodge who are Thirty-third Degree Scottish Rite Masons; an honor bestowed upon a Scottish Rite Master Mason who has

exhibited outstanding knowledge, passion and sacrifice to his Craft. R.: W.: Richard Vogt, and Paul Evancoe, were humbly filling positions as the Senior Deacon, and Junior Deacon for this Degree.


This says a lot that two highly distinguished Brothers of this Fraternity, who have already been honored for their significant contributions, still lead by example by voluntarily participating in the Raising of two new Master Masons. Their efforts left an unmeasurable impression on these two men and was an excellent example of commitment and service to not only Masonry, but also the Scottish Rite. ✖





R.: W.: Richard Vogt, Paul Evancoe, W.: George Grosskopf, Jr., Brother Mark Barthle, and Brother William Hannigan



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A Great Master Mason Degree At Renacer Lodge No. 410

On April 10th, 2024, Renacer Lodge No. 410, in Miami Springs, hosted A Great Master Mason Degree. It was a very solemn and well organized Degree, including the Fellow Crafts that Received the Degree, in total we had a total of 95 Brothers attending the meeting.

I think this picture shows how strong Masory is in Florida and how much Brotherly Love keeps growing in our Lodges," said M.:W.: Gilbert Paz. ✖



(this picture was taken before we opened the Lodge, a few of our Brothers are missing in the photo)

Thier Longstanding History Shines Bright At Trilby Lodge No. 141



A brief history of the Lodge shows that on January 17, 1894, Twin Lakes Lodge No. 141 was Chartered by The Most Worshipful Marcus Pender; Deputy Grand Master J. W.

Boyd; Sr. Grand Warden J. W. Hilliard, and Jr. Grand Warden Silas B. Wright with William N. Dowling; Worshipful Master, James Howell; Senior Warden, and Daniel M. O'Berry as Junior Warden. The Lodge met at the Member's Homes.

In 1902, the Grand Lodge of Florida sanctioned a change in the Lodge's Name to Trilby Lodge No. 141, and it moved to upstairs in O'Berry's Store, over the pond. When fire destroyed the building, the Lodge moved upstairs over Tom Blich's Store, and later they bought the building. In 1964, an acre of land opposite the old school was given to

Trilby Lodge. Following two years of construction by the Members, the present building was dedicated on November 11th, 1966.

It is the home of Most Worshipful Louis A. King, Past Grand Master, 2000, and a host of Right Worshipful District Deputy Grand Masters to include, but not limited to, R.: W.: Larry Barnes; R.: W.: Lynn Raposa; R.: W.: John Dragneff, and R.: W.: Roy Thornton, who holds Grand Rank from London, England.

The Lodge has always been involved in the Community and when called upon has makes every effort to help. ✖



Appreciation Plaque Presented To Brother Taylor At Hastings Lodge No. 183 Meeting

Worshipful Master Brother Raymond Winters, and W.: Brother Tim Williams, Presented an Appreciation Plaque to Brother Matthew Taylor, Junior Warden, at Hastings Lodge No. 183 F.& A.M. Meeting held on January 23rd. ✖



At the Annual Installation of Officers of Harry Jackson Lodge No. 314 held on January 6, 2024, the Worshipful Master was pleased to present three awards.

- Law Enforcement Officer of The Year
- Charter Academy Teacher of The Year
- Hiland Park Elementary School

Each were presented with a plaque, a certificate of recognition from The Grand Lodge, and each teacher's received a check for \$100.00 to be used in their classrooms. ✖

Annual Installation Of Officers Includes Three Awards Given For Excellence



L to R: Tiffany Trageser, Hiland Park Elementary School Teacher of The Year; Lisa Kaminskas, North Bay Haven Charter Academy Teacher of The Year.; Sgt. Steve Rhinehart, Bay County Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Officer of The Year; and W.: Matthew Richardson, Worshipful Master of Harry Jackson Lodge No. 314.

All submissions for future issues of *The Florida Mason Above & Beyond* and Facebook submissions should be sent to: R.: W.: Charles R. Jordan at email: publications@grandlodgefl.com • for additional info call: 727-455-7195

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

VIERA ELEMENTARY

Viera Elementary School Celebrates Cornerstone Laying With Masonic Ceremony



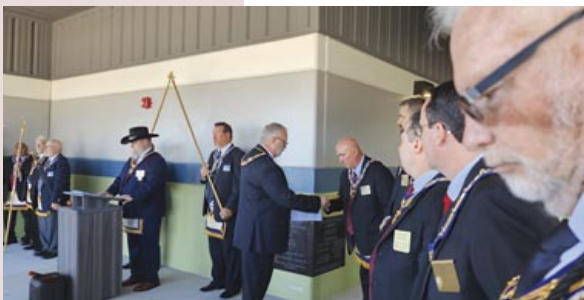
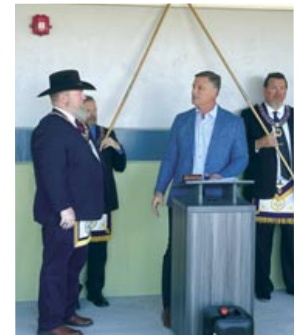
Brevard County held a momentous ceremony on April 12, 2024, at 12:15 PM, to celebrate the cornerstone-laying of Viera Elementary School.

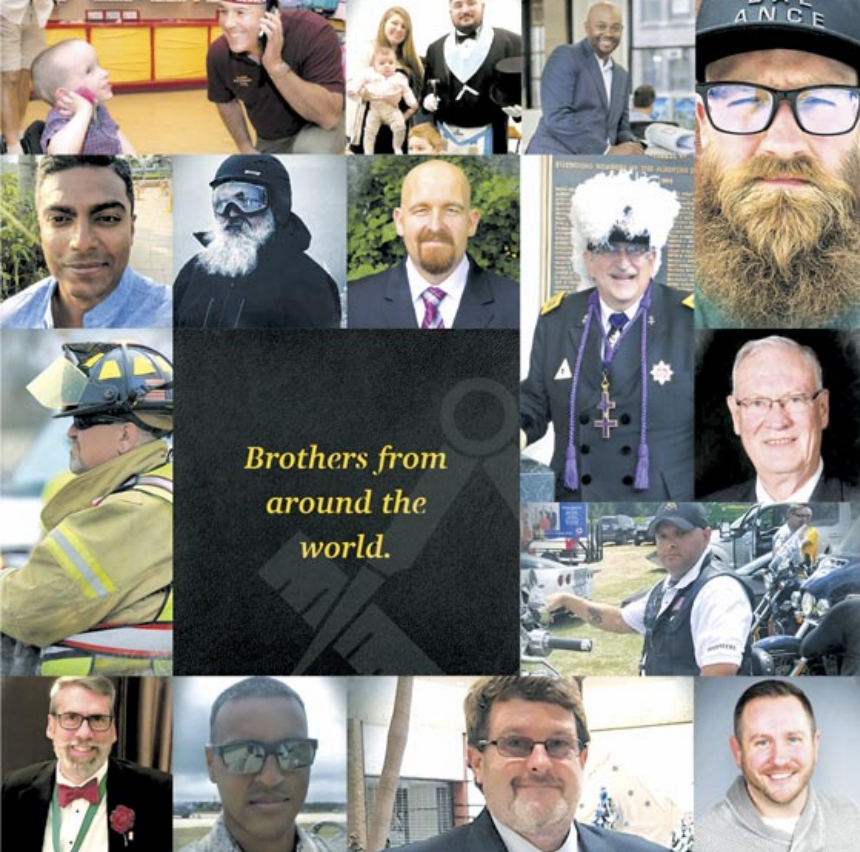
The ceremony was led by Most Worshipful Grand Master of Florida, Glen B. Bishop, and the Brethren of District 17. In attendance were prominent figures from the Brevard County Public School System, including School Board Chairperson Megan Wright, Board Member Matt Susin, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mark Rendell, and Principal Schwab of Viera Elementary. The celebration also included representatives from Wharton Smith, who managed the construction, and the Brevard County Sheriff's Office.

This prototype school, designed by RZK Architects, will be a testament to modern educational facilities. The building will feature solid concrete tilt wall construction for durability and will offer 900 student stations within its 119,000 square feet.

Situated on a spacious 28-acre site, Viera Elementary School promises to provide Brevard County's students with a stimulating and comfortable learning environment.

This cornerstone-laying ceremony marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for Viera Elementary School, which will undoubtedly provide an exceptional learning environment for future generations. ✖





Brothers from
around the
world.



GIVE-GET

The research revealed that 80% of men from coast-to-coast want to associate with an organization that enables them to become a better person while improving the quality of life for others.



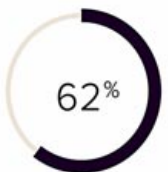
NICE GUYS

90% of men are interested in organizations built on the principles of integrity and justice.



LASTING FRIENDSHIPS

73% want to be part of an organization where deep and lasting friendships are formed regardless of race, religion, culture or geography.



DEEP CONNECTIONS

62% are looking for a bond of fraternity with ready support in times of need.



THEY WILL JOIN

When men are exposed to the authentic spiritual core of the craft through its values and tenets, 57% of research subjects said they would join or considering joining Freemasonry.



BeAFreemason.org

The Right Message about Freemasonry for Men Today

The need for personal interaction in identity groups is elemental to the human spirit. Even in our hyper-connected world, men have come to realize that they need real institutions with real human connection. The Path Forward research done in 2017 proved again and again that Freemasonry is a resonant and viable fraternal membership option for men today.

BeAFreemason.org opens a front door to Freemasonry, if you will. It is carefully crafted to guide a man on the first steps of his Masonic journey. The site is designed to be easily discoverable on the web and provide a visually compelling online experience. It is a place where men can discover the truths and rewards of Freemasonry. The referral system built into the site sends prospects to your Grand Lodge and the specific point of contact you provide.

The Prospect Engagement Process

STEP 1: PROSPECT VISITS BEAFREEMASON.ORG

The prospective Mason visits the BeAFreemason.org site and reviews our messaging and decides to inquire about how to join Freemasonry.

STEP 2: HE CLICKS THE "START YOUR JOURNEY" BUTTON

The prospect will then submit basic contact information, which identifies his Grand Lodge jurisdiction and will provide the Grand Lodge leadership the information needed to allow them to make initial contact.

STEP 3: THE PROSPECT'S DATA

The prospect's information is transferred via email to the appropriate contact(s) which have been identified by the Grand Lodge of that particular jurisdiction. Up to 10 contacts for each Grand Lodge can be submitted.

STEP 4: THE BALL IS IN YOUR COURT

With the information submitted by the prospect, your Grand Lodge membership team will be able to make contact and engage your prospective new member towards the petitioning process.

STEP 5: YOU HAVE A "HOT LEAD"

A prospect who submits information in order to join is known in the marketing world as a "hot lead." Proper and timely follow-up is in order. Local Lodge leaders work in conjunction with your own jurisdictional requirements to see that all processes surrounding the new membership are followed.

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>



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