

MARCH 2020

# rite now

THE MAGAZINE OF THE VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH



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THE MEMBER EXPERIENCE

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# In Memoriam

Since our last issue, the following members of the Valley of Pittsburgh have been called home:

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Joseph L. Betz	Jerry C. Marchitello
Alvin M. Bodek	Howard R. McFarland Jr.
Dean H. Bork	Harry C. Meyers
Earl E. Bruner	James B. Miller
Elmer B. Burger II	John H. Miller
Edmund O. Campbell	Daniel E. Parkinson
Donald B. Christopher	Robert R. Perry
David G. Churchill	Wilbert John Scott
Edward N. Cochrane	Raymond F. Scully
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Gerald E. Lindenmuth Jr.	Milan J. Yenko
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# riteNOW

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### about this issue

Each of us in the Scottish Rite has witnessed the same degrees. Just what those degrees mean to us, though, and how they take root and shape us as Masons is very different. The Scottish Rite *Member Experience* is unique to each man.

What we learn at the Valley through interpersonal contact, viewing or participating in degrees, working closely with others, and supporting Valley events helps to shape the men we are. Who we are then becomes the face of Freemasonry to the world.

It is easy to see why the member experience is so vitally important to who we are. It must be carefully cultivated so that it can help each of us grow into the best man and Mason that we can be.

# The Active

A message from the Supreme Council Active for Pennsylvania

SUPREME COUNCIL

## Coming Soon to a Theater Lodge Near You

By Paul J. Roup, 33°



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“In a busy world where men struggle to find meaning...” sounds like it could be the opening voice-over to a movie trailer, but the sentiment it conveys was the impetus for Supreme Council to create the Rite on the Road kit.

After listening to feedback from many within the Craft, it became evident that attending a weekend reunion was a barrier to entering the Scottish Rite. The reasons varied. For some, the weekend was reserved for family events, and tying it up entirely with a reunion wasn't ideal. Some cited the distance of travel and the need for lodging as prohibitive. For Valleys, the costs and manpower associated with a reunion were becoming difficult to bear.

The Rite on the Road kit allows Valleys to bring Scottish Rite to you. The kit consists of a projector and memory stick with all of our prerecorded degrees in one place. It enables Valley officers to visit Lodges, Districts, and other events and make Scottish Rite Masons on the road. A Master Mason only needs to pay the required fees and watch the 4th Degree to become a Scottish Rite Mason!

The bookend concept still applies, so he would still need to see three other degrees, either at the Valley or other on-the-road events before witnessing the 32nd Degree and becoming a Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret. How and when he

The Rite on the Road kit allows Valleys to bring Scottish Rite to you.

sees those degrees is up to him. Think of it as self-study Scottish Rite. The Valleys which have tested this approach have had an overwhelmingly positive response. The Valley of Dayton had a class of over 250 when they conferred a live version of the 32nd in the fall.

Rite on the Road is not just for video degrees. It includes guidelines and tips for adapting live degrees to off-site lodge room settings. New members can see more than one degree in an evening, so they can start making strides toward filling their passport the night they join.

The kit is just one more tool in the Scottish Rite toolbox to be wielded in the way that works best for the Valley.

If you are interested in having a Rite on the Road program at your lodge, please let your Ambassador know, or contact the office at 412-939-3579. □

# The Chief

A message from the Commander-in-Chief of Pennsylvania Consistory

## CONSISTORY

### We Have an Apathy Problem

(But Do We Even Care?)

By Samuel C. Williamson, 33°

I've been a Mason for a long time—since 1951, to be precise. That's almost 70 years. I have had the good fortune to preside over my Lodge, the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, and the Valley of Pittsburgh when all were at or near their prime. When we had gatherings, they would be filled to capacity. Each of our Scottish Rite classes took in between 400 and 500 members, and that was at a time when we required two straight weekends to confer the



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degrees. We commanded the respect of the public at large.

Some of you may be quick to point out that we were a larger fraternity then, and that would be true. At our high-water mark, the Valley of Pittsburgh was about five times larger than today. It would stand to reason then that our current classes should each be 80 to 100 new candidates, but that is simply not the case. Why is that?

Quite simply, it's apathy. Sure, today's man has a lot more demands on his time than his counterpart from a generation or two ago, but we make time for what matters. And since you're a member, there's a part of you that knows that Scottish Rite matters.

The member experience in the Valley of Pittsburgh is second to none. We have pageantry in our degree work—numerous places for brothers of diverse talents to use those talents to make a difference. We offer programs for almost any interest. We sponsor nights of musical entertainment, golf, car cruises, community theater. We hold cigar mixers, Oktoberfests, sports outings, and beer tastings. There is more going on in the Valley now than at any other time in my Masonic memory. Yet our attendance is sparse,

and our numbers continue to decline.

On the inside cover of this issue of *RiteNow* are the names of 52 brethren who have passed on. Our last class had only seven candidates. At that rate, we aren't going to be around very long.

It won't happen in my lifetime, but it very well could in some of yours.

I know I have painted a bleak picture, but it is a very real assessment of where we are. *The good news is that it is not too late to make a change.* Each of us holds the key to the solution, and it's straightforward: We have to care.

We need to put away the excuses for not coming

to reunions, meetings, and events. We must try to reconnect with just what brought us to the Rite in the first place. And once we remember what drew us to Scottish Rite, it is imperative that we share it with others. Only 20 percent of blue lodge Masons belong to the Scottish Rite. That means that 4 out of 5 of the members of your home lodge are candidates for the next class. Talk to them about Scottish Rite. Refer them to our Ambassadors if you aren't sure what to tell them, but start the conversation.

We can defeat apathy by caring. The question that remains is, "Do we care?"



There is more going on in the Valley now than at any other time in my Masonic memory.



VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

# Children's Christmas Party

Santa put the elves in charge of toy production at the North Pole just long enough to stop into the Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center and the Children's Christmas Party hosted by the Princes of Jerusalem line.

He brought a sleigh full of presents and made sure each child had a gift to take home. He even took a few minutes to listen to their wish lists before hopping back in the sleigh for the long flight north.

The children and their families sang carols, enjoyed pizza, cookies, and beverages, and then experienced the magic of Billy Heh.

Santa promised that he would come back as well, so plan to attend this year's party on December 12th!

□



# The Potent

A message from the Thrice Potent Master of the Gourgas Lodge of Perfection

LODGE OF PERFECTION

## Every Experience Is Unique

By Jeffrey R. Jones, 32°

The experience one gets from the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite tends to be as diverse as its members. We view ourselves as an organization of men, banded together to aid and uplift humanity. Some of us might say that the intrinsic value of the Scottish Rite is in the art of the ritual degree work, adorning and improving the soul and mind, as it comprehends the whole range of beliefs. For others, the Scottish Rite is purely a moral and benevolent association whose focus is the development and cultivation of the moral sentiment, a higher reverence for deity, and a stronger fellowship with man. While still for others, the draw of membership is the theatrical productions of the ritualistic degrees. As you know by now, we present the fourth through thirty-second degrees

with the use of stage, actors, drama, and lectures, appealing to both the ear and eye, to explore the great truths which Freemasonry professes. So why are you a member of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite?

Despite its name, you don't have to be of Scottish heritage or go to Scotland to join, and quite frankly, it isn't Scottish at all—it actually gets its origins from the French. The name is rumored to have come from the influence of the Scottish Masons living in exile in France during the early 1700s. The term "Scottish" is said to be a translation of the French word "*Eccossais*" which is in the French

titles of some of the degrees of the Rite of Perfection. *Eccossais* (pronounced ay-koh-say) is generally translated into Masonic terms as "Scottish Master." However, it was not until 1763 and the creation of the Order of the Royal Secret by Stephen Morin of France

that the ritual we practice today began to coalesce into a form recognizable to a modern Scottish Rite Mason.

As the members of the Scottish Rite, we strive to be better men within our communities by supporting different organizations and charities. Although everybody's personal experience in the Scottish Rite is unique, the Valley of Pittsburgh creates opportunities for its members to flourish and grow. Through self-study opportunities and fellowship, each Scottish Rite Mason should be

Although everybody's personal experience in the Scottish Rite is unique, the Valley of Pittsburgh creates opportunities for its members to flourish and grow.

able to find his own path forward as he ascends through the mountains and valleys of his Masonic career. It is our hope that every man who decides to take this journey will strengthen his personal faith in whatever religion he chooses to practice—thus while making him a better citizen and a better man.

You don't have to be a Scottish Rite Mason for very long before you come across the motto "*Spes Mea In Deo Est*." And unless you have an overwhelming affinity for speaking Latin, this phrase might not be immediately understandable to you. However, its English translation, "My hope is in God,"

*continued on page 47*



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# The Sovereign

A message from the Sovereign Prince of the Pennsylvania Council of Princes of Jerusalem

PRINCES OF JERUSALEM

## The Joy of Giving

By Robert M. Polander, 32°

Supporting our charities can be one of the most rewarding aspects of the Scottish Rite experience. The Valley of Pittsburgh has a lot of dedicated and charitable Masons who have donated varying sums of money to support the Children's Dyslexia Center (CDC). As an officer of the Valley, as well as the chairman of the CDC Board of Directors, I (and the children) can't thank you enough. In the next issue, you will hear from those children and their parents on just what your assistance has done for them. I asked for a "report card" on the CDC, and I will post their responses.

The CDC provides specialized training to children with dyslexia. Since dyslexia varies from child to child—from severely to mildly dyslexic—each child receives one-on-one tutoring. Public schools teach in a classroom and everyone gets the same teaching technique. That doesn't necessarily help a child with dyslexia. After applying at the center, a child that has dyslexia gets on a waiting list for the program. Once they are accepted, the child will come to the Center two days a week.

Our tutors use the Orton-Gillingham approach to reading. Orton Gillingham (OG for short) is not typically taught in public schools and is very effective

for children with dyslexia. For an illustration of one aspect of how OG works, please see page 33.

The CDC has several fundraising programs that you should be aware of: a spring flower sale, an Easter candy sale, a Donor Snap program, and the *One Leaf, One Life* fundraiser which allows you to buy a leaf to help put foliage on a large tree we display at the Center. Check out our Facebook page for more information.

Since dyslexia varies from child to child, each child receives one-on-one tutoring.

Through the help of a very generous donation from the Valley of Pittsburgh, we are going to refresh the Dyslexia Center's rooms with new paint and new carpet to match the branding of

our national organization. Work should begin this summer, and we are looking for volunteers to help tear out the old and put in the new. If you would like to help, please contact me or the Valley Secretary. Many hands make light work.

Finally, the Princes will be conferring the 15th Degree at the upcoming reunion. We would love to see you there. You are also welcome to attend our rehearsals to support your brothers—even if you don't have a part. This goes a long way in cementing the bonds of brotherhood. Encouraging your brothers is another big part of the member experience after all.

□



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# TheWise

A message from the Most Wise Master of the Pittsburgh Chapter Rose Croix

ROSE CROIX

## Getting Involved

By Matthew A. Boice, 32°

I was raised a Master Mason, and have now continued my Masonic journey by joining the Scottish Rite. So what's in it for me? What will I get out of it? The answer is simple. You will get out of Scottish Rite the same things that you will get out of Lodge, church, Rotary, Elks, Lions, the VFW, a golf league, a bowling league, etc. All are great organizations, but if you join and don't get active, you will get nothing from any of these. Membership is more than paying dues, wearing a ring, and carrying a membership card. You have undoubtedly heard it before, possibly when you became a Mason: You get



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out of it what you put into it. The Scottish Rite offers many opportunities in which to participate, learn, help, aid and assist.

So how can you get involved? Read the newsletters, magazines, notices, and emails that come to you from the Scottish Rite. There you will find numerous events and activities which you can attend, support, or assist with. Here are but a few. On the first Thursday of February, April, June, September, and November the Valley of Pittsburgh holds stated meetings. On these evenings, you are encouraged to attend and bring a guest or your significant other.

There is always an excellent dinner and post-meeting entertainment. The Valley also offers numerous social and fellowship opportunities including the monthly Fellowship Breakfasts which support the Rainbow and DeMolay youth organizations, golf outings, cigar nights, a Walk-a-thon to raise funds for Dyslexia support, the Children's Christmas parties, Adult Christmas luncheons, and Wild Things baseball games/tailgate parties. Several times a year, the Valley offers entertainment opportunities in the form of concerts, theater productions, ocean cruises, car cruises, and motorcycle rides, to name a few.

All of that being said, however, the true rewards don't come with what

you get. To quote the Grinch, "Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more." In this case, the little bit more is what you can give to the Fraternity.

For the last two days, I have been sitting in my home lodge overseeing a crew of men participating in the FITS (Furlough Into Service) program where men who have been incarcerated and are on work release do projects for community non-profit organizations. In our case, we are getting plastering and painting done in our building. With just a little effort, I am helping these men transition back into society and helping my lodge get necessary work done at minimal expense. And while I'm sitting here, I am writing this article. The true reward is not in what you receive but what you give. When you give of yourself, the rewards are returned tenfold. We all have gifts of time and talent to offer. To paraphrase President John F. Kennedy, *Ask not what the Fraternity can do for you; ask what you can do for the Fraternity.*

Membership is an opportunity to serve, to commune with your Masonic Brothers and their families, and to enjoy the Brotherhood across the globe in the greatest fraternity this world has ever known. Get involved. Start small if you wish, but get involved. □

The true reward is not in what you receive but what you give.

# The Office

A message from the Secretary of the Valley of Pittsburgh

VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

## How Can We Help You?

By David W. Morgans, 33°

The membership experience is intricately woven through the Valley office. It is the office that keeps all the records: the petitions, personal contact information, passport records, demit certificates, suspensions, and, sadly, death records. Yes, each member's journey through the Scottish Rite leaves footprints through the office. We certainly hope that your experiences with the staff have been and will be pleasant. Darlene, Bob, and I want to serve you to the best of our abilities.

As you journey through the landscape of the Scottish Rite, you



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will experience different things that you will want to share with others. Our Fraternity offers many varying opportunities to experience good fellowship and to grow personally in qualitative ways through the influence of the teachings in our degree work. These experiences don't just take place in the Valley of Pittsburgh; they can happen anywhere, no matter the Valley, no matter the Lodge. In fact, you needn't even be at an official gathering of Masons to have a great Masonic experience. All it takes is an interaction with one other Mason to expand your horizons through a Masonic experience.

The world experiences Scottish Rite Masonry through the words and actions of Scottish Rite Masons like you. The world is a better place because of the individual Scottish Rite Masons who experience life through the lens of chivalry, integrity, and brotherly love. Each of the twenty-nine degrees of the Scottish Rite exemplifies some aspect of righteous living to which all Scottish Rite Masons are called to live. No matter if you've seen degree work recently or decades ago, the timeless lessons taught are valuable in molding each of us into becoming better men and Masons.

When we experience the world walking shoulder to shoulder with our Brothers, we can shape the world and each other into something great. As of the writing of this article, there are approximately 650 Brothers in our Valley who have not paid their

dues for the current Scottish Rite year. These Brothers risk the chance of being suspended at our June meeting. They are in danger of not being able to experience the world with Brothers by their side. Many of those who are behind in their dues have just overlooked the three dues notices they have received to date. I hope they realize their mistake and either send their

payment to the office, log into the Member Center on the Northern Jurisdiction website and pay by credit card, or call the office and pay by credit card over the phone.

There are others, however, who haven't paid, not because of oversight but, because they are experiencing issues in their lives that hinder them from paying. For those Brothers, I sincerely hope that they contact the office to share with us the issues they face so we can remit

their dues for the year. After all, we are here to help. Not one Scottish Rite Mason benefits from a member being suspended. We are far better together than we are separated from one another. Please don't let your Scottish Rite experiences end because of suspension. We are Brothers. We stand together, and we lend helping hands to those who need them.

Let us continue our Masonic experiences united in the hope that Masons working, walking, and banded together can make this world a better place. □

We are  
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# Managing Uneven Lies— Uphill-Sidehill and Downhill-Sidehill

By Eric S. Teasdale, 33°

▶ IN THIS ISSUE, I will focus on uphill-sidehill and downhill-sidehill lies. As I stated in the previous article, if you live in Western Pennsylvania, you will experience these two shots regularly and your scoring success will depend on becoming more consistent with these shots. Again, hitting solid golf shots from uphill-sidehill and downhill-sidehill lies is not difficult providing you make the correct changes to your posture and alignment at address. The main goal is to adjust your set-up position to make the lie “level,” or similar to hitting golf shots on a flat surface. Also, I always prefer to have the spine perpendicular to the shaft angle at address.

Next, you have to take into consideration that the trajectory of the shot will also be heavily influenced by the severity of the slope. There is a golf ball flight law when dealing with sidehill lies which is: if the golf ball is above your feet (uphill-sidehill lie), it will have a tendency to go to the left for a right-handed golfer, and if the golf ball is below your feet (downhill-sidehill lie), it will have a tendency to go to the right. That means you will not only need to adjust your set-up but also your alignment.

Please refer to the following photographs on how to successfully hit solid golf shots from uneven lies.

## Managing Uphill-Sidehill Lies



### Proper Set-up Position and Alignment:

Here you will see that I made the lie level—spine angle is perpendicular to the shaft angle. Also, you must align your feet and body to the right of the target line for a right-handed golfer. You will need to choke down on the club because the distance to the golf ball will be shorter. Make sure to stand a little taller and have a little more weight toward your toes at address. This will help keep your spine aligned to the slope and improve balance. Lastly, because you will be swinging on a flatter club path, you will need to give your arms more room during the downswing, so stand a little farther from the golf ball.

“Achievements on the golf course are not what matters, decency and honesty are what matter.” —Tiger Woods



Eric S. Teasdale, 33°



### Improper Set-up Position

The mistake that I see in a lot of amateur golfers is that they will aim directly at the target and bend over too much instead of staying tall. This puts too much weight on their heels and will cause the player to lose balance and come out of the shot resulting in topped or thin shots. Another common mistake from this set-up position is for the golfer to stand up on the backswing and not maintain spine angle. This will almost always result in a heavy or “fat” shot with an extreme loss of distance.



### Swing Path

When the golf ball is above your feet, the adjustments made to your set-up will promote a more rounded or inside to out swing path. You will strike the inside of the golf ball which will make it draw (right to left ball flight for a right-handed golfer). That is why you must aim to the right of the target. Also, your head must be behind the ball at impact. You must maintain spine angle through impact, and you must maintain balance throughout the shot. The result will be a golf shot that is struck solidly with good distance control. In the picture (which is right after impact), you will see the golf ball starting out to the right of the target line and the result was perfect.

## Managing Downhill-Sidehill Lies



### Proper Set-up Position

Here you will see that I again have my spine angle perpendicular to the shaft angle which makes the lie “level.” To achieve this, you will need to bend more from the waist than you usually would and stand a little closer to the golf ball. Make sure to hold the club as far up the shaft as possible. Also, put a little more weight on your heels and maintain your knee flex to improve balance and maintain spine angle. Lastly, because your set-up position will promote a more upright, or steeper, swing plane, you will need to aim to the left of the target for the right-handed golfer.



### Improper Set-up Position

The mistake I see most often in amateur golfers for this lie is that they have a tendency to sit down with too much weight on their heels. As you can see, the amateur will then have to slouch their shoulders to reach the golf ball. This allows no room for the arms to swing freely. They will then have to make compensations to hit the golf ball, usually by standing up on the backswing resulting in a loss of spine angle. When the spine angle changes, inconsistency is the result. The golf ball will either be hit fat or thin.

### Club Selection

When selecting a club, the first things to consider are yardage, elevation, and wind. For sidehill lies, you need to consider the severity of the slope. For uphill-sidehill lies, since you will be choking down

on the club, the length of the shaft will be shorter which will result in less leverage and less distance. For downhill-sidehill lies, since you will have a little more weight on your heels at impact, your lower body will be less active which will result in less distance. I always recommend



### Swing Path

When the golf ball is below your feet, the adjustments made to your set-up will promote a more upright or outside to in swing path. You will strike the golf ball slightly on the outside which will make it fade (left to right ball flight for a right-handed golfer). That is why you must aim to the left of the target. Also, your head must be behind ball at impact, and you must maintain spine angle through impact. Further, focus on keeping your heels on the ground. This is essential for maintaining balance throughout the shot. In the post-impact picture, you will see the golf ball starting out to the left of the target line and the result was, again, perfect.

that golfers take one more club and hit it smoothly. In my experience, since you are adjusting your posture to accommodate for the change in the lie, it is better to swing with an even tempo and focus on maintaining posture.

### Summary

Remember that the goal for managing sidehill lies is to make solid contact for good distance and directional control. Keep the following in mind:

- ✓ Get into a posture that simulates hitting a golf ball on the level. For uphill-sidehill lies, stand a little taller and have more weight toward your toes. For downhill-sidehill lies, bend more at the waist and have a little more weight toward your heels.
- ✓ Second, remember the golf ball flight law when hitting sidehill lies. If the golf ball is above your feet, it will go to the left for a right-handed golfer. If the golf ball is below your feet, it will go to the right.
- ✓ Third, you want the clubhead path to match the changes made at address. For uphill-sidehill lies, your path will be a little more rounded. For downhill-sidehill lies, your path will be more upright.
- ✓ Finally, the position of your head has to be behind the golf ball at impact, you must maintain spine angle, and you must have proper balance through impact. Also, remember to have a smooth even tempo during the swing. The result will be a solidly struck golf shot with good distance control.

Golf is not a hard game, but to improve, proper practice and technique are essential. If you are still struggling with managing sidehill lies, please consult your local P.G.A. Professional. □

**Eric Teasdale is the resident P.G.A. Professional at Shannopin Country Club in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.**

# Understanding Medicare

## Part II

By Kristin M. Douglas, MBA, 32°





Kristin M. Douglas, 32°

In the first part of this article, we went over the basics of Medicare and the timeframes for signing up for services.

Our second installment will cover the different options that are available to you once you have signed up for Medicare. As we mentioned previously, after you have enrolled in Parts A and B, you then have to decide on whether to stick with original Medicare, take out a Supplement/Gap plan, or go with a Medicare Advantage plan. We will also discuss Part D Prescription Drug plans and how they interact with each. Let's dive back in by first going over the Medigap or Supplement plans.

### What is a Medigap Policy?

Medigap or Medicare Supplement Insurance policies are sold by private companies. They complement original Medicare by filling in the gaps or paying for items such as deductibles, coinsurances, and copayments. The plans are standardized in all but three states (Minnesota, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin). All plans with the same letter have identical coverage. For instance, if you purchase a Plan G from insurance company A, it will cover exactly the same benefits as one from insurance company B. The only difference between the two will be the premium that you pay each month.

Medigap/Supplement policies are guaranteed renewable. As long as you pay your premium, they cannot cancel your coverage. They can, however, raise your premium each year. Another nice feature

with gap policies is that there is no network to adhere to. You are free to utilize any provider across the nation. If they accept Medicare, they will accept your plan. Medigap plans only work with Original Medicare. You must continue to pay your Part B premium each month in addition to these plans. If you have other coverage (Medicare Advantage, employer or union), you may not need a Medigap plan. Most Medigap plans do not include vision, dental, hearing, or gym memberships. Gap policies also do not include prescription drug coverage, so a stand-alone plan for drugs will be necessary.

Most Medigap plans do not include vision, dental, hearing, or gym memberships.

Beginning in the month you turn 65 AND are enrolled in Part B, you have a one-time 6-month window to enroll in a Medigap plan with no questions asked. Remember, you can delay enrollment in Part B if you have other credible coverage. Your open enrollment period for your Medigap plan would thus begin once you elect to take your Part B. Again, this period gives you a one-time only guaranteed right to buy any Medigap policy sold in your state regardless of your health status. In most cases, once this period starts, it cannot be delayed or restarted. If you do not enroll

into a Medigap plan during the Open Enrollment Period, there may be restrictions once you decide to sign up. These can include answering health questions that may lead to the insurer denying coverage.

### **What is a Medicare Advantage Plan?**

Medicare Advantage plans are health plan options (like PPOs and HMOs) that are approved by Medicare and run by private companies. The plans are part of the Medicare program and provide Medicare-covered benefits. They often include additional benefits such as prescription drug coverage, dental, vision, gym memberships, and more. The plans are also referred to as Part C. When utilizing a Medicare Advantage plan, you receive Medicare services through the plan. You are still in the Medicare program and you continue to enjoy all rights and protections of original Medicare. The plans work with a network of doctors and hospitals. The benefits provided and cost sharing may differ from Original Medicare. A few things to keep in mind with Advantage plans are that plan benefits and cost sharing can vary between providers and they are not guaranteed renewable. If the plan leaves Medicare, you can then join another Medicare Advantage plan or return to original Medicare.

To join a Medicare Advantage Plan, you must have Parts A and B. You will also continue to pay your Part B premium each month. Unlike Medigap policies, Advantage plans require the use of a network of doctors and hospitals and you may need a referral to see a specialist. Most of the plans offer comprehensive coverage and many offer prescription drug coverages as well. Also, you can only join and leave the plans during certain periods. Please keep

in mind that Advantage plans DO NOT work with Medigap policies.

### **Part D Prescription Drug Coverage**

Part D prescription drug coverage is optional. However, if you do not have credible prescription drug coverage, you may face a penalty if you attempt to enroll later in life. Credible coverage includes that which you may have through the Veterans Administration (VA), an employer, or through the State Pharmaceutical Assistance Program (PACE). As mentioned above, many Medicare Advantage plans include Part D coverage. Medigap plans, however, do not, so a separate stand-alone drug plan will need to be added.

### **Enrollment in Medicare Advantage Plans and Part D plans**

The timeframe for enrolling in a Medicare Advantage plan or a Part D stand-alone prescription drug plan is the same. The first occurs during the 7-month Initial Enrollment Period when you first turn 65 and are taking Part B. Another period occurs every year during the Annual Enrollment Period from October 15th through December 7th. Coverage begins January 1st. There are also Special Enrollment Periods that allow you to make changes to your plans should you qualify. Finally, starting in 2019, between January 1st and March 31st, certain changes can be made during the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period.

### **Extra Help and Part D**

There are programs available to help cope with the costs of your prescription drugs. Many seniors on a fixed income find paying for their prescription drugs their biggest challenge.

To see if you qualify for extra help on your prescription drugs, call:

- **Medicare at 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227)**
- **Social Security at 1-800-772-1213**

To see if you qualify for PACE or PACENET, call:

- **PA Department of Aging at 1-800-225-7223**
- **Enroll online at <https://pacecares.magellanhealth.com>**

To see if you qualify for Veterans Administration (VA) benefits:

- **Apply at your local VA facility**
- **Apply online at [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)**

## Bringing it Together

As you can see, turning 65 and going on Medicare for the first time can be a little unnerving. With a basic understanding of how the different parts work and which plans and options are available, you can make a more informed choice in selecting the best route forward for you and your family. I hope that this article helped make some of Medicare's basic framework more understandable, I also hope it is now clearer which coverage options are available to you and how and when to go about signing up for them.

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Unlike Medigap policies, Advantage plans require the use of a network of doctors and hospitals and you may need a referral to see a specialist.







Dr. Glenn D. Miller, 33°

# Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy

By Dr. Glenn D. Miller, II, 33°

I AM SURE THAT EACH OF YOU HAS EITHER USED or heard the phrase “he/she died of a broken heart.” The phrase refers to a spouse dying shortly after the other spouse has passed away or when a parent dies shortly after losing a child, irrespective of that child’s age. Well, in some instances, this phenomenon is more than just a coincidence. It turns out that there is a temporary heart condition brought on by either emotional or physical stress. This heart condition is known as Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy, also known as stress cardiomyopathy or “broken heart syndrome.” This condition was first reported in 1990 in Japan and is now recognized as a cause of acute congestive heart failure, potentially lethal cardiac arrhythmias, and rupture of the heart wall.

**The exact cause of  
Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy  
is not yet fully understood.**

Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy gets its name from the term “tako-tsubo,” which is the Japanese term for octopus trap or octopus pot. It was so named because the left ventricle of the heart takes on the shape of a traditional Japanese octopus trap during this syndrome. The left ventricle dilates with a bulging-out of the apex and takes on a balloon shape (apical ballooning). The majority of the left ventricle becomes hypokinetic with a resultant decrease in the heart’s pumping ability. However, the base of the heart becomes hyperkinetic with the resultant appearance of a narrow neck. This narrow neck with a dilated round bottom portion of the heart is similar in appearance to a traditional Japanese octopus trap.

Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy occurs worldwide. It is a rare condition, affecting only 1.7-2.2% of people who present with an acute coronary syndrome. The syndrome is significantly more prevalent in females who make up approximately 90% of the cases. Additionally, the syndrome is much more common in postmenopausal

females with a typical age of onset in the 58-75 years age bracket and an average age of 66 years (less than 3% of cases occur in the under 50 years age bracket). This postmenopausal predominance suggests that a decrease in estrogen levels may be a contributing factor in older females.

The exact cause of Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy is not yet fully understood. However, stress (emotional or physical) appears to be a major contributing factor with more than 85% of cases associated with either an emotionally or physically stressful precipitating event. Examples of potential stressful precipitating events include the death of a loved one, relationship conflicts or breakups, loss of a job, sudden loss of money resulting in financial worries or debt, domestic abuse, acute medical illness or life-threatening medical diagnosis, recent cocaine use, opiate drug withdrawal, excessive stimulant drug use, recent surgery, recent head trauma including stroke, involvement in a fierce argument, recent motor vehicle accident, recent asthma attack, recent chemotherapy, recent exhausting physical event, extreme fright such as the fear of public speaking, or being involved in a disaster such as a tornado or terrorist attack. Positive stressful events such as a wedding, birthday, surprise party, reunion, starting a new job, and winning the lottery or a jackpot have also caused cases of Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy.

The pathophysiological process that affects the heart muscle in Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy is not completely delineated. It is believed that a stress-induced sudden massive surge of catecholamines (adrenaline/epinephrine, norepinephrine, dopamine) plays a central role by “stunning” the heart. It is hypothesized that these high levels of catecholamines result in damage to the myocytes (heart muscle cells) which leads to heart muscle dysfunction that contributes to the cardiomyopathy. Another theory is that the mid-ventricular wall thickens and causes an outflow obstruction of blood when the heart contracts. The theory that is receiving the most

attention currently is that there is dysfunction of the coronary arteries at the microvascular level where they are not visible by current coronary artery visualization studies (cardiac catheterization). The theory is that the catecholamines could induce vasospasm of the microvascular coronary arteries resulting in inadequate oxygenation of the heart muscle which, in turn, results in the abnormal heart function.

The typical presentation of a person with Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy is very similar to that of a person presenting with an acute anterior wall myocardial infarction. They can present with chest pain, chest pressure or tightness, pain in or radiating into the arm and shoulders, shortness of breath, and/or nausea and vomiting. The 12 lead electrocardiogram (ECG) classically reveals ST-segment elevation in the anterior leads mimicking an acute anterior wall myocardial infarction, possible T wave inversion, and possible QT interval prolongation. Blood tests show a moderate increase in the cardiac enzymes Troponin I and Troponin T in about 90% of patients with Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy (elevation is less than that seen with an acute ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction). Cardiac catheterization will fail to reveal any significant blockages in the Left Anterior Descending coronary artery to account for the electrocardiographic findings. The left ventriculogram during the cardiac catheterization and/or the echocardiogram will reveal the aforementioned anatomical abnormalities as well as the pathognomonic wall motion abnormalities of normal or hyperkinetic contractility involving the base of the left ventricle with severe hypokinesis vs akinesis vs dyskinesis affecting the remainder of the left ventricle.

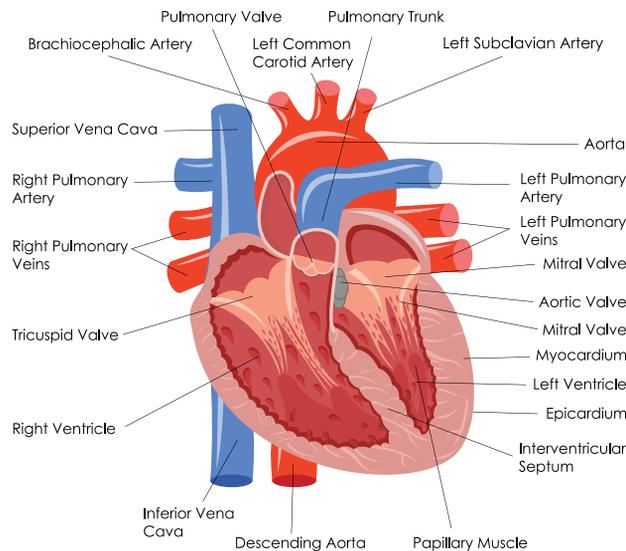
Treatment of Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy is, in general, supportive since it is a transient syndrome. Patients often need to be hospitalized for 3-7 days. Treatment

is dependant upon whether patients develop congestive heart failure or acute hypotension and cardiogenic shock. For patients that develop acute congestive heart failure, diuretics, angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors (ACE inhibitors), angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs), and beta-blockers are considered standard therapies to promote heart muscle recovery although there is

some controversy as to whether beta-blockers are beneficial in Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy. The use of anticoagulant medications may prevent the formation of a thrombus (clot) in the heart that could dislodge and cause a stroke. For patients with cardiogenic shock, treatments could include aggressive fluid administration and phenylephrine for those with echocardiographically documented left ventricular outflow tract obstruction or inotropic therapy with dobutamine or dopamine in those

without left ventricular outflow tract obstruction. Mechanical support with an intra-aortic balloon pump (IABP) can also be utilized to maintain an adequate blood pressure.

Despite the fact that some patients develop life-threatening complications such as cardiogenic shock, lethal ventricular arrhythmias, heart valve problems, and ventricular wall rupture, the vast majority of patients will make a complete recovery within 1-3 months with no subsequent cardiac limitations. A small percentage of patients will continue to experience symptoms such as tiredness, chest pain, and fatigue because their hearts have permanently changed shape. Frequently, patients are prescribed long term beta-blocker or anti-anxiety medications to help control the release of stress hormones and prevent subsequent episodes. Despite this, 10-15% of patients will experience a recurrence at some point in their lifetime. □



Human Heart

# Our Youth

News and information about the Masonic Youth in our Valley

## Kickstarted

In the late part of 2019, Pennsylvania DeMolay requested a grant from the Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation because they had an idea for a membership-based program. The program allows prospective members to join DeMolay free of the initial lifetime membership fee. Each new member will also receive a gift bag, known as the DeMolay “Kickstart” bag, which will give them a few items to get them excited about DeMolay. The kits consist of a “More than just a Fraternity” T-Shirt, a PA DeMolay lapel pin, and a DeMolay ritual book, all of which are placed in a nice red drawstring bag.

The program started on December 7, 2019 at the annual Grand Master’s Induction Class and is currently planned to run through December 31, 2020. If the program proves to be successful, Pennsylvania DeMolay has committed to continue the program.

### **Do you know a young man who may be DeMolay age (12 to 21)?**

Then, now is the time to talk to him about joining. To find a DeMolay Chapter near you, visit the PA DeMolay website at [pademolay.org](http://pademolay.org) or contact PA DeMolay Executive Secretary, Dave Berry, at [dwberry@pademolay.net](mailto:dwberry@pademolay.net).

DeMolay is more than just a fraternity. It’s an experience like no other. □



[pademolay.org](http://pademolay.org)

## Rainbow Gets Girls Ready For Life

PA Rainbow is part of the International Order of Rainbow for Girls. The International headquarters and Supreme Temple are in McAlester, OK. Supreme’s marketing campaign slogan is “Rainbow Gets Girls Ready For Life.”

“Rainbow Gets Girls Ready for Life.” Rainbow strives to teach what matters most in life: leadership, confidence, and service to others. Rainbow uses fun events, challenging workshops, and ritual meetings to empower girls to be the best they can be. Girls learn what it takes to make a difference and to become a better person and leader.

Rainbow membership has given numerous girls an advantage in many life situations. Recently a girl interviewing for a military academy appointment said she “felt cool, calm, and confident throughout the whole process.” After the interview, she told her parents, “Rainbow prepared me for that!” She even said, “I talked about Rainbow to the people on the panel and they were impressed with my poise and my ability to work well with others.”

Many girls have benefitted from their Rainbow experience when giving school presentations. Rainbow Girls memorize ritual parts and learn how to speak up and speak out. They learn to present with clarity and confidence. This is often surprising to the student until she stops and thinks, “Rainbow got me ready for this.”

Rainbow gives girls an unfair advantage. They make friends, go places, and do things that their peers don’t. These and many, many other experiences make up today’s Rainbow. More information is available at [parainbowgirls.org](http://parainbowgirls.org). □



[parainbowgirls.org](http://parainbowgirls.org)



## VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

**Christmas Luncheon**

Shannopin Country Club was filled with holiday cheer once again when the Valley of Pittsburgh held their Christmas Luncheon on December 21st. This annual semiformal event is a chance for Valley members and their guests to drink cocktails, catch up with each other during the holidays, and enjoy a delicious three-course meal in Shannopin's beautifully decorated ballroom.

Attendees got to listen to the musical stylings of Bob Addleman and Bill Dorfner as they sang and played holiday tunes.

Watch for details of this year's event in upcoming issues of *RiteNow*.

□



# Membership

A message from the Chairman of the Membership Committee of the Valley of Pittsburgh

VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

## All About Membership

By Kristin M. Douglas, 32°

### Membership

By the Numbers

year	membership
2008	<b>7,088</b>
2009	6,684
2010	6,344
2011	6,212
2012	5,975
2013	5,757
2014	5,325
2015	4,848
2016	4,515
2017	4,593
2018	4,323
2019	<b>3,908</b>



Kristin M. Douglas, 32°

kmd980@yahoo.com

On February 1st, the Valley of Pittsburgh sponsored a workshop focusing on officer development and membership. Many of our brethren know that over the past few years, the Valley of Pittsburgh has seen a sharp drop in membership.

At one time in the mid-1960s, the Valley had close to 30,000 members.

Today, we stand at just over 4,300. Over the past decade, we have brought in an average of 133 new members each year. On the flip side, between deaths, suspensions, and demits, we have lost on average 520 annually. That means that from 2008 until now, we lost more than 3,100 members. Clearly, this is not sustainable and paints a very dark future for the Valley unless we are able to stem the tide and make meaningful strides in membership development and retention.

This was the focus of the afternoon session on February 1st. We first had a presentation by George Taylor, Director of Membership and Valley Relations for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, on the resources that were available to the Valley. George provided many new ideas for attracting new members, including

the Rite on the Road kit that the Valley can use in the field to initiate new members.

We then heard from Brother Randy Clark, Executive Secretary for the Valley of Dayton, on how they have been able to implement these resources and conduct successful membership drives. Their last class in the fall brought in over 250 new

members, a good portion of whom were a direct result of changing how they went about recruiting new members and conducting reunions.

The next step for the Valley of Pittsburgh is to implement some of these new techniques and develop a membership system that works for us.

...from  
2008  
until now,  
we lost  
more than  
3,100  
members.

Our next scheduled meeting will take place on March 2nd at 7:30 PM at the Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center. Changing the way we go about recruiting new members will be key in our ability to stop the sharp decreases we have been experiencing up to this point. Every additional voice and able body helping implement the program will ensure our success going forward. If you would like to be included in our newly formed committee, please e-mail me at kmd980@yahoo.com. □



# Fall 2019 Reunion Honors Illustrious Vito A. Urso, 33°

The Valley held its fall reunion November 15-16, 2019. Members of the class witnessed the 4th, 12th, 14th, 16th, 18th, 21st, and 32nd Degrees performed live on stage as well as videos of the 26th and new 17th Degrees.

Vito A. Urso, 33°, Hospitaler, was this year's Class Honoree. Vito is a member of Corinthian Lodge No. 573. He served as the Valley's Thrice Potent Master in 1995, as a Trustee from 2011-2017, on the Reception Committee, the Hospitalers since 2004, and was the Lead Hospitaler since 2009. He was

coroneted a 33° Mason in 2006. He is a veteran of the United States Army serving from 1958-1960. He is also a member of the York Rite bodies (Past Sovereign, Past Master of Mark Lodge), Tall Cedars (Past Grand Tall Cedar), Masonic Veterans (Past President) and the High Twelve Club (Past President).

"It is a great honor and privilege to have this Class named after me," Brother Vito said. "I have met and made so many friends and mentors that led me

through my Masonic education and I will cherish their friendships forever. I am eternally grateful of this class held in my honor." □



Vito A. Urso, 33°, Hospitaler

Front Row (L to R): David W. Morgans, Secretary; Robert M. Polander, Sovereign Prince; Matthew A. Boice, Most Wise Master; Vito A. Urso, Class Honoree, Samuel C. Williamson, Commander in Chief; Paul J. Roup, Active for Pennsylvania; David L. Moore; Deputy Master; Jeff A. Biddle, Class Marshal. Back Row (L to R): James B. Reed, II; Jan R. Tesauro; N. Jason Reddington; Walter B. Hall; John H. Lewis, Jr.; Mitchell Yancec; Michael R. Whitaker Jr.; James H. Andrews; Gary B. Shelton; Jean Paul Rios (courtesy degrees for New Castle)



# Membership, Service, and Rewards: The System Is What We Make It



Austin R. Shifrin, 33°

## The membership experience in Freemasonry is a fascinating dynamic to study.

### **In some regards, it is quite similar to the organizational psychology that operates in other corporate bodies.**

At the same time, Masonry being an uncommon institution, we believe there are aspects unlike what you might encounter elsewhere. The question is, in the relationship between the member and the organization—who benefits, and how? What can we do to make sure it's a symbiotic relationship, healthy for both parties?

There's one perspective on the membership experience I have been thinking of for years, and I'm glad for this opportunity to put it into writing. It is the idea of Freemasonry as a mechanism that channels men's energy and ambitions toward good deeds, a greater good, a higher purpose. This, in a way, takes the old adage about taking good men and making them better and kind of turns it on its ear. What do we know about a prospect before he joins the blue lodge? In theory, he's known intimately by his recommender, and then gets thoroughly vetted besides. Despite our suggestion (or even prohibition) that he shouldn't have been recommended unless he was a good man, let's agree that if he's a man of energy and ambition, those could have been expended toward his own self-centered goals – say, career advancement or material gain. But if he truly throws himself into Masonic life and culture, then he must buy into a system that rewards him for advancing the goals of the fraternity.

As a man progresses through positions of authority and responsibility in our various bodies, he receives titles and jewels as rewards. And what is he being rewarded for? He's being rewarded for his service—for choosing to allocate his time and energy toward the purposes of the organization rather than (only) his own. Now what might the organization's purposes be? What was required of him may not clearly answer our question. To do what he did and get where he got was probably not only a test of character; he likely had to meet ritualistic standards as well. But right now, I am focusing mainly on his contribution in terms of the sacrifice of time and energy and the attendant opportunity cost. I would argue that the

### **As a man progresses through positions of authority and responsibility in our various bodies, he receives titles and jewels as rewards.**

outward trappings of the recognition he receives are evidence of the gamification aspect of Freemasonry. Gamification is taking an approach to an activity that applies elements of game design and gameplay to that activity—such as having a point system, competition, and/or public leader board. (And I say all this bearing in mind that we have a lecture that alludes to the only setting in which competition among brothers should be permitted, maybe even encouraged.)

I assert that including outward trappings in the recognitions we award to people who make sacrifices for the fraternity makes them a public example for others to emulate and that this part of our institution helps reinforce a system that channels men's efforts into upholding the precepts of Freemasonry. Some recognitions are unrelated to serving in leadership positions. They may be for charity, community service, or strictly ritual accomplishments. In my mind, leadership and service recognitions reinforce the value of perpetuating the fraternity itself, while (ironically) it may be the other less historic recognitions that do more to reinforce Masonic values directly. Incidentally, I will offer that if someone disagrees with my assessment of what's being rewarded and reinforced, it behooves us to identify what *is* being rewarded.

Now, thrown into this mix, I wish to add a perspective I have only been exposed to much more recently. I learned about the typical characteristics of Adult Children of Alcoholics (or otherwise dysfunctional families), and while I acknowledge I'm cherry-picking from the laundry list of common characteristics of these Adult Children, I'd like you to consider a few in particular:

- *We became approval seekers and lost our identity in the process*
- *We have an overdeveloped sense of responsibility, and it is easier for us to be concerned with others rather than ourselves*

I would argue that many, if not all, organizations consider it a lucky break when they can recruit candidates who are willing to subordinate their goals—maybe even their own identities—to elevate those of the organization. Sometimes this happens even when it is obvious that the participating individual isn't entirely healthy and could use some aid and remediation!

I think on some level this can't be helped. Maybe we will always have among us some people whose motivation to strive and achieve is, in fact, a compulsion rooted in trauma from their youth. If that's the case, the question in my mind is: What will Freemasonry be for them? Will it be an institution that takes advantage of their misfortune to get as much work as possible out of them even when that relationship is unsustainable? Or will it be a place where they can heal, learn to delegate, and learn to trust and value themselves? I believe there's more openness in public discourse today about mental and emotional health than ever before, and within the fraternity, we should consider it part of our sworn duty to look out for each other's well-being and take that obligation very seriously.

### **What makes a man feel as though Freemasonry belongs to him?**

Lastly, I will return to another aspect I have thought about for quite some time: The premium that our fraternity places on uniformity and what room this leaves for individualism. I assume we all recognize the emphasis on uniformity from the dress code to the pronunciation of a simple English word like "direct." And I think one outcome that may result from this is that I haven't often encountered a lot of artists or especially eclectic individuals in Freemasonry. Here I am speaking of those who take the plunge to commit the lion's share of their time to creating, maybe even their primary source of income, and thus consider it the chief aspect of their identity, not hobbyists. I know this observation is fairly anecdotal and far from a rigorous survey. You don't see a lot of folks who might adopt the motto "dare to be different," or who are willing to march to the beat of their own drum even when they might be looked at quizzically by

society because their inner makeup is less compatible with the gentle but insistent culture of uniformity in Freemasonry.

Simply put, a person who enjoys creating and is willing to make their output public has to have outsize confidence in the value of what they have to say (with the exception of some unusual cases we may also recognize, such as actors or artists who are socially withdrawn and shy). And if they're possessed with that outsize confidence, they may not be very at home with the notion of being conformist or a follower. The few people I know, however, who do fit this bill have very much enriched my Masonic experience. I am especially interested in what the Fraternity could do to make such members feel more welcome—to help endow them with a feeling of an ownership stake.

One error we make in thinking about membership is that it's not only important to ask what makes a man

feel as though he belongs to Freemasonry, but I think it's as important or more so, to ask ourselves: What makes a man feel as though Freemasonry belongs to him? If you ask a brother what Masons do, he may respond, "They do X and Y." There's a subtle but profound difference if he replies, "*We* do X and Y."

In conclusion, I believe the membership experience is one in which the Fraternity stands to benefit a great deal from our participation and incentivizes us to contribute. We should, however, be ever-vigilant regarding who and what it rewards, and who it may discourage so that together, we may all have the opportunity to come to the mature understanding that it is an institution and mechanism that belongs to us—and that we ought to wield it to make the world a better place, and better ourselves by extension.

□



# Confessions of

# a Masonic Iconoclast

For many years I have fought an internal battle.

By PJ Roup, 33°

I was first drawn to Freemasonry because of its history and tradition. I was enamored of the time-immemorial precepts that we seek to live up to and into, the idea that we have traveled the same road as others who sought admission, and of course those *others* themselves—men at the top of their chosen fields whether soldiers, artists, thinkers, patriots, or any other of the multitude of laudable professions.



PJ Roup, 33\*

I thrilled at the idea that Washington, Franklin, Mozart, Voltaire, and I practiced the same Freemasonry. I mean, the language was different, but the *Masonry*? It was the same, right? After all, we wear our rigid inflexibility like a badge of honor. If that is true, then what I vowed at the altar was surely the same as what they vowed. And what was expected of them was the same as what we ask of modern men. *Au contraire, mon frère!* In our early days, there was a commitment of time. Brothers were expected to be at lodge if they were in town. If you missed, you better have had an acceptable reason. Today, we would squeal with glee if we achieved 15% attendance with any regularity.

What about the cost? It must also have been similar (adjusted for inflation, of course). In the early days of the Grand Lodge era here in Pennsylvania, a man had to devote a considerable portion of his pay to belong to a lodge. Not so today. Assuming a man makes \$10 per hour, he must work an entire day and a half to pay for his Blue Lodge dues. Think about that: his annual dues paid with one-and-a-half days of labor!

I love our Masonic past. I love the idea that men were expected to make a commitment of both time and treasure to enjoy the privilege of being a Mason. My struggle is not whether to cling tenaciously to a past that no longer exists—that simply will not work. The real dilemma, as far as I can tell, is just how much we can adapt to today's culture without losing ourselves in the process. Put another way, what do we need to tear down and rebuild better?

### **The times, they are a-changin'!**

Don't misread me here. I am not one of those get-off-my-lawn guys who does nothing but complain about how things are now and how much better they used to be. And I am certainly not foolish enough to think that things can go back to the way they

were simply by raising the dues and demanding the presence of already-stretched-too-thin men at our meetings.

What I am saying is that we need to rethink the Scottish Rite (and the blue lodge) experience. The recipe for success that we have been cooking with for decades is quite clearly no longer satiating our prospective members. If we continue to serve the same roast beef and green beans Masonic experience, we will find our tables empty of the modern men whose tastes have obviously changed.

### **Today, we would squeal with glee if we achieved 15% attendance with any regularity.**

If we look at our culture as a whole, it is relatively easy to spot the differences between now and a generation ago. First, there is less free time. Today's man often works more than 40 hours not including an ever-lengthening commute as our highways struggle to keep up with our growth. Many families have two working spouses, and the schedules of the children are often more chaotic than those of the parents. Lodge events need to be carefully chosen and scheduled to maintain the delicate balance of the family calendar. It is a rare situation where a man can disappear to Lodge four or five nights a month without at least passive resistance from or a very real hardship on his family. It is crucial then that we tailor at least some of our events to families.

Next is the experience. A generation ago, a Masonic function was a duty call, but today, it is often the quality of the event that will determine whether a man (and his partner and family) chooses to attend. Making experiences worthy of his time, then, is critical. If time is the modern Mason's most precious commodity, we must use it wisely. That

begins with starting and ending our events on time. There can be chaos in the planning meetings and the hours leading up to the event, but once it is go-time, it must come off without a hitch. That takes work. It takes planning. Most of all, it takes commitment from the officers to give the membership the best experience possible, no matter what the event.

## We need to rethink the Scottish Rite experience.

Finally, we need to talk about our message. Scottish Rite truths are timeless. The lessons of our degrees are as relevant today as when they were written (sometimes more than 100 years ago). But just as there may be great truths hidden within a book written in a foreign language, those truths don't do us any good if the message is not decipherable.

Ten-hour days in a dark theater watching biblical degrees in King James Bible English is not what today's young man wants. The theater has evolved. Drops and legs have given way to set pieces and video projections. Think *Oklahoma!* vs. *Hamilton*. Both have great stories to tell, and both featured an immensely talented cast. Yet, if we could somehow forget that we ever saw the former and introduce it as a new musical today, it would not enjoy the success that it has. Why is that? Because theater is different. It is now a high-energy, visually stunning experience. We must strive for that on the Scottish Rite stage.

### There's a better way. Find it.

I will start by saying that I don't have all the answers. I am not sure if I even have any of the answers. But the road to the answers begins with asking the questions.

Are we listening to our members (our customers)? Are we exceeding their expectations every time we engage with them? Are we making sure that the quality of the member experience is second to none?

Are we continually tweaking what we do to make it better, or are we doing what we've always done because it used to work just fine?

Answering these questions will help us write our future. One thing is clear to me: The time for small, incremental steps has passed. We need bold action. I am not talking about shattering the landmarks of the Craft, but I am suggesting that we reassess everything we do to see if it should be left alone, improved, modernized, or eliminated. And we must remove our rose-colored glasses when we do. We can't view our reunions, meetings, and events through the mists of sentimentality and expect to enact meaningful change, or even note the deficiencies where they may exist.

## Ten-hour days in a dark theater watching biblical degrees in King James Bible English is not what today's young man wants.

Change is difficult, but change can be good. None of us wants to roll back the medical advances we have seen in the last hundred years, preferring to bite a leather strap than receive anesthesia. No one would say that we would be better with the technology of a century ago. Yet when it comes to Freemasonry, we view everything we do as being carved in stone, unable to be altered in the least way.

I am an iconoclast—not the kind that wants to tear down our beloved institution, but one who seeks to challenge the status quo in search of a new and better normal. I know that there is a better way for us. Let's go hand in hand to find it. Together, we can remake what we have into something modern and relevant with a nod to our rich and storied past.

Who's with me? □

# The Center

A message from the Director of the Children's Dyslexia Center—Pittsburgh

VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

## Orton-Gillingham Teaching for Pronunciation

By Patricia Broskey

For more information:

412-931-3181

Patricia Broskey, Director  
pittsburgh@cdcinc.org

The well-known song “Do re mi” says “Let’s start at the very beginning, a very good place to start.” Fluent readers naturally read words and recognize them with a “start at the beginning” approach. However, struggling readers often need to decode words, especially longer words. For this task, it is important to start at the end. The syllable type “drives” or determines the sound of the vowel. Closed syllables have a short vowel sound. Open syllables end with one long vowel. Syllables with the vowel-consonant-e pattern have a long vowel sound and the ‘e’ is silent (often referred to as magic e). There are also vowel team syllables, r-controlled syllables, and the stable final syllable with the consonant-l-e pattern. These are the six syllable types in the English language.

Both real words and nonsense words can be accurately decoded and subsequently pronounced correctly when following the syllable type. The way to determine the syllable type is by looking at the last letter (or 2 or 3 letters) of the word. This also applies to multi-syllable words once syllable division patterns are learned. A closed syllable is described as one short vowel followed by one or more consonants (the student is also taught this description by using his hand to show the syllable type). The real words *lip*,

*past*, *fetch*, *truck*, and *stop* all follow this pattern and have a short vowel sound. The nonsense words *tod*, *rist*, *blan*, *nuck*, and *tret* also follow this pattern and therefore are pronounced with a short vowel.

Likewise, the words *she*, *hi*, *go*, *fly* are all open syllable words ending with

one long vowel, as are the nonsense words (or syllables) *va*, *ro*, *spi*, *stu*, *e* (as in *vacation*, *rotate*, *spider*, *student*, *edict*). Thus, students learn to identify syllable types in longer words and apply the same pronunciation rules.

As they progress through the curriculum, students learn prefixes, suffixes, Latin roots, and Greek combining forms, along with meaning and parts of

speech. Students then learn to identify the base word which the affixes are connected to and can still pronounce based on syllable type.

Here at the Children's Dyslexia Center of Pittsburgh, our tutors are certified in the Orton-Gillingham approach, and we also train new tutors in OG. Our curriculum includes teaching syllable types as well as syllable division. These are some of the techniques our students employ for successful word decoding. These techniques are also helpful for effective spelling. It is always thrilling to witness the progress of our students on the road to fluent reading. □

Our curriculum includes teaching syllable types as well as syllable division.



# Big Magic

by D. Todd Ballenger, 33°

**This past summer, when my family and I were in Boston, we decided to day-trip up to nearby Salem, Massachusetts.**

Yes, that Salem, Massachusetts—home of ghosts, goblins, and all manner of witches and weirdness. Actually, it's a relatively quiet little town just a short train ride north of Boston, and we found it filled with wonderful people and fascinating artisans. We arrived a bit early for our haunted walking tour and were browsing one of the many boutiques ranging from costumes and supplies for the spiritual mediums to some unique shops with an even more eclectic flair. However, it was the bowler hat that caught my eye (I confess, I've always wanted a bowler hat!). There in the window of the side street shop was a fantastic bowler with an emerald green band. Surely even more treasure must be waiting just inside! So in I went. What a place - hats of all kinds, both men's and women's, morning coats, pocket watches, straight razor kits, Tiffany lamps, glass apothecary vials, sword canes, and—Zoltar!

I couldn't believe it. It was really him, seated regally beneath an iridescent gold turban, those mysterious eyes peering at me over a dark, curling goatee and bejeweled hands hovering above a glowing crystal ball.

For those of you unfamiliar with carnival midway oddities or the Tom Hanks movie, *Big*, Zoltar is a coin-operated fortune teller who listens to your petition, considers the cosmos, and for a piece of coin, deciphers the ancient mysteries and offers you a glimpse at your future on a convenient (and slick looking) card. Zoltar has the answers; Zoltar sees the mysterious portents of the universe; and if you believe Tom Hanks, Zoltar can make you feel big.

## **The Fortunes of Zoltar**

I think being a Freemason can be a lot like discovering the wonder of Zoltar. At least in my case it was. I remember my



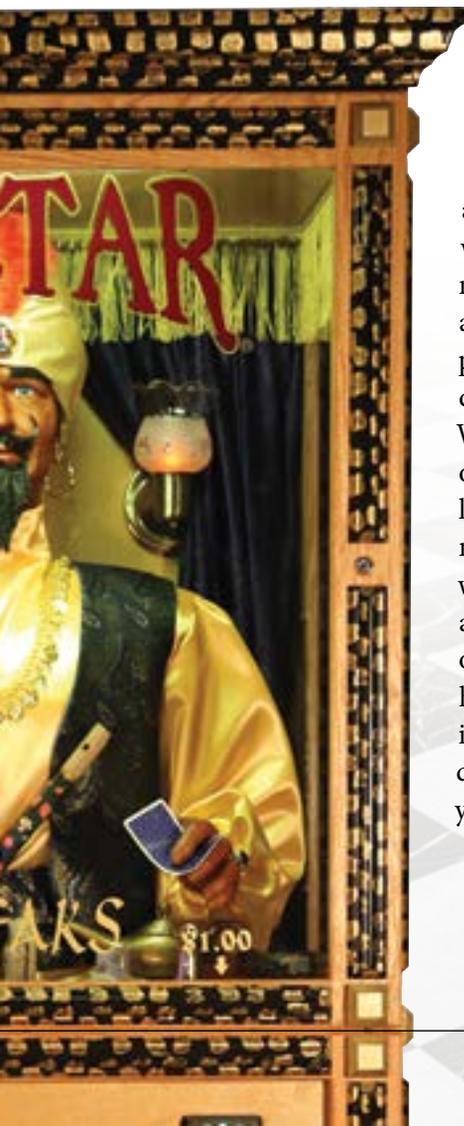


D. Todd Ballenger, 33\*

first experience in Lodge—the mystery, the excitement, and my mind racing as those strange and exhilarating words wove a mist in the very air around me. As a young man first discovering the workings of the Craft, I see myself as the boy first approaching the Zoltar machine. He knows it’s a mechanical device, made of plastics and clockwork, but somewhere deep inside there is that glint of wonder that if you put a bit of faith behind your wish, then when you drop your coin, you’ll receive a fortune that will guide you to success.

But sometimes I come across Brethren who, either in their maturity or haste to reach some imagined end goal, have become jaded and altogether forgotten the

wonder in their experience. The fortunes they once sought have sifted to the bottoms of their minds and occupy space with boardroom motivational sayings and fortune cookie philosophy. Do not despair, though! While the fortunes of Zoltar may seem light and trivial, they may have wisdom worthy of your attention. Like much of the advice you hear in Freemasonry, its usefulness may depend heavily on your own perspective.



### **“An Enjoyable Journey for You Soon”**

Whether you have an idea of what to expect or meet the situation by total surprise, it is human nature to feel anxious about experiencing something new. Some people think this is nervousness, others, excitement. After years of speaking in public, performing on stage, and reciting Masonic ritual, I can honestly say that I still get butterflies every time I feel the spotlight turn on me. Does it bother me? Nah, it’s all part of the excitement of enjoying what I happen to be doing at the time.

While the fortunes of Zoltar may seem light and trivial, they may have wisdom worthy of your attention.

I remember telling my father-in-law that I wasn’t nervous about taking my First Degree. I had been in a college fraternity after all and totally had this under control, I explained. He laughed at me. “Yeah,” he said, “I know you were. Let me share something with you—it’s nothing like that. In fact, it’s nothing like you’ve ever experienced before.” Darn it if the old guy wasn’t right, too. Once I began my journey, I confess, I couldn’t get enough. For me, the desire to learn, to understand the hidden mysteries, to be able to speak those same phrases that captivated the lodge room the night I joined was treasure just waiting for me to collect.

### **“A Man is Working to Make Things Come Out Right for You; A Stranger Who Will Turn into A Good Friend”**

The Masonic fraternity is a surprising place. In my time, I have seen men put personal enmity aside for the sake of working together with a common goal in mind, then say, “Why weren’t we doing that all along?” I have seen the goodwill of men from different backgrounds and professions surface as one to help a Brother who lost his house and belongings in a fire. I have witnessed

Brethren take time off work to visit a family from another state in the hospital, not because they knew them, but because they didn't—and that Brother's family was in need. I have seen men build houses for the poor, teach children to read, take families to the doctor, and bring food and gifts during the holidays to those who are wanting. Why? Because that is part of what Freemasonry teaches - not necessarily to always give to charity, but to make the change within your self to be charitable of your time, of your abilities, and of your senses. Too often we take things for granted that we do not deem to be important. But simple human kindness, to some, is a treasure to behold. To share it freely with another is a gift of love.

### “A New Friend Will Mean the Turning Point in Your Life”

Each one of us approaches his journey in Freemasonry differently, and your experience in the Craft evolves from the path you choose to take. For me, I enjoyed the mystery of learning something new and the challenge of sharing that knowledge with others. I soon found myself traveling to other lodges and having discussions with Brethren who shared a similar interest in the Fraternity. This inevitably led me to the Scottish Rite, where I found myself among even more like-minded individuals who were sharing similar journeys. It was here that I met the friends who have helped me become

a better person. They continually challenge me to think and to evolve, to grow and influence others to do the same. Couldn't I do that anywhere? Sure. But these men are special. We have a bond forged in fraternity. Those same mysteries that make some roll their eyes or complain that “it takes too long to learn” are what bind us together as Brothers, and what makes them so important in my life.

### “The Best Friend You Have Will Help You”

My very best friends are Masonic Brothers. They know who they are—I don't have to say it. But what's even better is that some of my other best friends are also Brothers, and they don't even know it. They don't have to. I can go anywhere in the world and feel at ease among a group of Masons, knowing that they will welcome me as I would them. I have shared meals and laughed with men from different cultures and backgrounds while barely speaking each other's language and never felt ill at ease. I have experienced the generosity of the Fraternity and paid it forward whenever possible. But my best friends, my Brothers, have helped me far beyond the mere conveniences of daily life. I am better, and continuously grow, because of them.

Freemasonry still holds that same intrigue that captured me from the beginning.

### A Heart Full of Wonder

I see a lot of similarities between how men approach Freemasonry and my friend Zoltar. Some find it silly, anachronistic, and an opportunity to laugh at funny sayings that no one really understands or takes seriously. Still, it's a pretty decent group to share dinner with, and they can't make you do anything you don't want to do. Kind of like that crazy Zoltar; drop a little money, have a laugh, and pretend that some crazy words can change your life, right? But for some guys like me I suppose, Freemasonry still holds that same intrigue that captured me from the beginning. I'll gladly offer my money for the opportunity to go on a journey and watch my fortunes come to life. The challenges that come make me better and the excitement I feel describing my experiences is something I never get tired of sharing. It's just like seeing Zoltar all over again. Zoltar has the answers; Zoltar sees the mysterious portents of the universe; and I believe, just like Tom Hanks, that I'll go on enjoying my own peculiar perspective. That's the magic that makes me feel big.

□



# Salute to Veterans

A message for Military Veterans of the Valley of Pittsburgh

VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

## Healthcare for Veterans

By Robert B. Ruff, 33°

Is there a topic you would like to hear about or have addressed in future articles? Are you proud of your service experiences, Lodge visits, or do you have pictures you want to share with others?

This column is intended to be about YOU and your service. Your responses will shape the future content of Salute to Veterans.



**Robert B. Ruff, 33°**

Rruff2u@gmail.com | 412-621-0872

With a new year comes new changes in your health care. If you are a veteran and are eligible for Medicare, you have several, often confusing, options available. Likewise, if you are retired military, you may have TRICARE which really can boggle the mind and try your patience when navigating the system. Add in a disability (service-related or not) or have a little too much money when you retire and it is like you fell into a deep black hole with no way of getting out!

There are several nuances to the government system and everyone has different circumstances, but there are basic things all veterans should do.

You never know when your health will change, so being proactive is better than playing catch-up.

First, register your DD214 at your county of residence. I went over this in a previous article. Second, visit the veteran's medical administration near you and register whether you are eligible for healthcare through the VA system or not. Then take a look at your options. Many veterans don't realize that they can use both VA benefits and Medicare.

As a veteran, you may use both health care systems, but the VA benefits and Medicare do not work together. Government agencies (Medicare/VA) are not allowed to bill each other for services. Medicare doesn't pay for the services that you receive at the VA nor does Medicare pay for 100% of your coverage,

only about 80% unless you converted your original Medicare to an HMO. Aside from those with TRICARE, and then only on an individual basis, everyone eligible should enroll in Medicare Part A (hospital coverage) and Part B (medical coverage). If a veteran were to lose their VA coverage and subsequently decide to enroll in Medicare Parts

A&B (or leave TRICARE), then a 10% late enrollment fee applies.

The Medicare articles in this and the previous issue of *RiteNow* explain in great detail what is covered by Medicare and how to enroll, but as you can see, it can be different for veterans. For further information, contact the VA near you, consult a Medicare advisor, or reach out to me. I am happy to help.

Spes Me in Deo Est. □

Many veterans don't realize that they can use both VA benefits and Medicare.

# St. Cyprian

A message from the St. Cyprian Consistory #4, of the USC, AASR of FM, NJ, PHA

St. Cyprian Consistory #4

## Beginnings and Endings

By George M. Calloway, 33°

Thank You, thank you, thank you to Ill. PJ Roup and the staff of *RiteNow* for giving us, St. Cyprian Consistory #4, of the USC, AASR of FM, NJ, PHA, the opportunity to write the first article for this new column. It is the continuation of the fellowship that has existed between the two Scottish Rite Jurisdictions in Pittsburgh for several years.

And, as the author of this first article, I, Ill. George M. Calloway will add this honor to my legacy of Masonic firsts during my Masonic career. It is an honor for me to do this article because I feel that some of my past activities have contributed to me having been given this task. I

am delighted to have been given this opportunity to share with all of the readers of this publication that the Scottish Rite Masons of St. Cyprian Consistory #4 have the same values and Masonic ethics that are espoused by this Fraternity called Freemasonry. More will be forthcoming.

This opportunity just adds to the long legacy of mine starting when I was initiated a Master Mason in 1956, where I learned about the tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. And, later, a favorite verb of mine: *respect*. Since that beginning, having served in various local offices, I have been Grand Master, an Active Scottish Rite Mason for 28 years, and an Illustrious Scottish Rite Deputy for nine years. I have

enjoyed the privilege of serving the brethren of this Prince Hall Fraternity to the very best of my ability and hopefully gaining their respect.

Also, during this career, I have met many brethren of the Right Worshipful Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania and the Scottish Rite Valley of Pittsburgh who

have shown me the value of Brotherly Love and Respect. Brethren such as Samuel Williamson, Thomas Labagh, Lawrence Breletic, Herbert Wolstoncroft, Thomas Sturgeon, PJ Roup and many others. Samuel Williamson has a special place in my heart, for he was very instrumental in many major activities of my career. Thanks to you, Sam!

I am proud. I am grateful that this opportunity has been offered to me to participate in this special occasion of having this column. It is one of the joys of my life that I belong to a Masonic Fraternity which respects us all as Brethren.

But, all good things must come to an end. Unpleasant decisions must be made and I have made one. Due to age and medical issues, I have submitted my resignation as Deputy for the Orient of PA, effective May, 2019. It has been a pleasure to have served in that capacity.

Finally, I have enjoyed every moment of this Masonic Career and the fellowships that have developed. I thank each and every one of you for your support, love and respect. □

It is  
one of the  
joys of my  
life that  
I belong  
to a  
Masonic  
Fraternity.



George M. Calloway, 33°

# UniontownUpdate

A message from the Thrice Potent Master of the Valley of Uniontown

▶ VALLEY OF UNIONTOWN

## My Niche

By Kiley B. Sexton, 32°

In Life, we all experience unique journeys with many highs and many lows. We learn from our mistakes and grow as people which makes each of us stronger. To be a member of the Freemasons is also a learning experience. As in life itself, we grow as people, we foster friendships, we gain knowledge, and we enter into a family of not only friends but brothers. Being a Freemason is unique. No matter where you go or who you see, you are always referred to as “brother” within the organization. When I hear those words spoken, I always feel welcome. I believe we all try to find our niche in life, to see where we fit in, to see where we belong. As a member/brother of the Freemasons, I have found my niche. I see where I fit in, and I know I belong to an organization, a fraternity of men, with the same goals and interests that I have.

Being a member of the Freemasons is a bond, and that bond is family—a family that looks out for one another. Family takes care of each other, and family always has your back. Freemasonry is all that and more.

They say you only get out of something what you put into it. That is exactly what our fraternity offers each man: the opportunity to grow as a person, to gain knowledge through experience, and to have the wisdom to pass that experience and that knowledge down to new members. To share your journey as a Mason with others enlightens their view, so they, in turn, have a path to follow and create their destiny.

I have learned a lot from the fraternity. I pay attention to those who have been here before me. I watch how they conduct themselves among peers, and I see the respect given to others. Likewise, these same fraternal feelings are returned. To give respect is to gain respect. As a Mason, that is not only a saying but a way of life.

Before I became a Mason, I felt that I had made a lot of friends in

my life; friends from high school, friends from college, and friends from work. After joining our great fraternity, it really opened my eyes to what it means to be a true friend. Our Masonic family encourages positivity, teaches us to be there for each other, encourages us to help others, and that a handshake is not just a greeting,

but a promise to be fulfilled. What I have learned over the years is that in my journey, I have made a lot of really good acquaintances along the way, a few friends who are always there for me as I am there for them.

I belong to an organization, a fraternity of men, with the same goals and interests that I have.

The relationships that I have developed and the friends I have made after joining the Masons are priceless. There is a bond that connects each brother, and that bond is the promises that we, as well as the men before us and men after us make. The promise that I am referring to is that we will take good men and make them better. My advice to any new member is simply this: Lead by example, follow those who have been down the path before you, and always give back. Giving back is the greatest reward of all. □

# Valley News

A collection of recent happenings in the Valley of Pittsburgh



## Clarence Gets His Wings

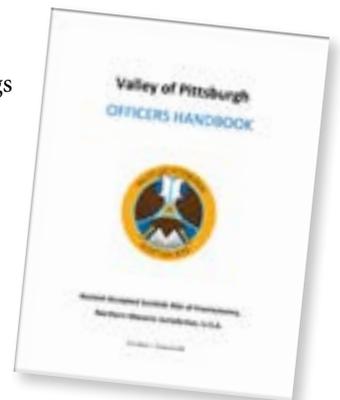
The WVOP studio was in full swing again this Christmas as Ghost Light Productions brought the magic of *It's a Wonderful Life—A Radio Play* to the Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center stage. Sixteen actors and three Foley artists made the sleepy town of Bedford Falls spring to life. Branden Plesh made his directorial debut in this entertaining four-show run which reminded the audience that it's the little things that matter a whole lot.

For information on upcoming shows, follow Ghost Light on Facebook or visit their website: [GhostLightPGH.com](http://GhostLightPGH.com).



## Officer Seminar

An officer seminar was held in conjunction with the Ambassador training. Valley officers received a copy of the first draft of the new *Valley Officers Handbook*. Developed by Eric Teasdale, Dave Morgans, and Rodney Boyce, the new handbook details the mission and vision of the Scottish Rite, the inner workings of each of the bodies in the Valley, and the expectations placed on our officers. Sample meeting agendas and the bylaws of the Valley are also included as a reference.



If you wish to receive an electronic copy of this booklet, please contact the office.



*George T. Taylor IV, Director of Membership & Valley Relations, Supreme Council, 33°, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, NMJ, USA, speaks to the group.*



*J. Randolph Clark, 33°, Executive Secretary, Valley of Dayton, Ohio, speaks to the group.*



### Gold Passports Awarded

At our Stated Meeting in April, Brothers Bob Ruff, Bill Trushel, and Scott Delval received their Gold Passports along with a certificate of recognition for having witnessed all 29 degrees.



### Ambassador Program

The Valley of Pittsburgh Scottish Rite Ambassadors attended a training seminar on February 1 at the Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center.

The purpose of the Ambassador is to serve as a liaison between the blue lodges and the Scottish Rite. They can answer questions, inform the Lodges of upcoming Valley events and help to coordinate Rite on the Road events as they are scheduled around the area.

If you are interested in serving as an Ambassador, please contact the office.



### New Fourth Degree in Production

In January, Supreme Council completed principal photography on the new fourth degree, *Builder*. Upon its release this April, it will replace *Master Traveler* which will be reedited as a recruitment piece.

The new movie features actors from 13 Valleys in seven states of the Northern

Masonic Jurisdiction, including our own Dave Morgans, who was chosen to play the role of Samuel in the production.

*Builder* will make its big screen debut in the Valley at the upcoming Spring Class so be sure to mark your calendars and come see the premiere!



Valley of Pittsburgh Ambassadors wearing their medallions pose with the new Rite on the Road kit.



# The Latest

Important happenings coming soon to the Valley of Pittsburgh

**MAR**

**28**

**Reservations are not required.**  
For questions please contact the Valley Office: [secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org](mailto:secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org)  
412-939-3579

## DeMolay Induction Class

Join us as we welcome new members into DeMolay and Squires. Pittsburgh Chapter of Rose Croix hosts this annual event when an all-star cast of DeMolay members from Western Pennsylvania perform their induction ceremonies. Open to everyone who is 21 years of age or older.

TIME: 2:00PM  
LOCATION: GPMC  
COST: Free  
RSVP: None required.

**APR**

**2**

**Reservations are required for Dinner only!**  
Please contact the Valley Office: [secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org](mailto:secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org)  
412-939-3579

## April Stated Meeting

At the April Stated meeting, we will hold the annual election of officers. You and your lady are invited to join us for dinner and entertainment, soon to be announced.

TIME: 6:00PM/Dinner, 7:00PM/Meeting  
LOCATION: GPMC  
COST: \$15/Dinner  
RSVP: **March 31**

**APR**

**18**

**Reservations are requested.**  
Please contact the Valley Office: [secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org](mailto:secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org)  
412-939-3579

## Spring Class

This year's Spring Class will be One Day Class. The 4th, 9th, 15th, and 32nd Degrees will be conferred live, and the new 17th Degree video will be shown.

TIME: 8:00AM  
LOCATION: GPMC  
COST: Free  
RSVP: **Requested.**

**MAY**

**18**

**Reservations are required!**  
Please contact the Valley Office: [secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org](mailto:secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org)  
412-939-3579

## Children's Learning Center Picnic and Graduation

Join us for a picnic-style dinner as we celebrate the current and graduating students of the Children's Dyslexia Center—Pittsburgh. All members and officers are invited to attend.

TIME: 6:00PM  
LOCATION: GPMC  
COST: Free  
RSVP: **May 13**

## Fellowship Breakfast

You can't find a better breakfast with better company that supports a better cause. The breakfast is cooked and served by our local DeMolay and Rainbow and the proceeds benefit those organizations.

TIME: 9AM to 10:30AM  
LOCATION: GPMC  
COST: \$7/person (all you can eat)  
RSVP: None required

**MAR**

**28**

To have an event listed in future issues, please contact the Valley Office at 412-939-3579, or by email at [secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org](mailto:secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org)

**APR**  
**5**

**Reservations are required for Dinner only!**

Please contact the Valley Office:  
[secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org](mailto:secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org)  
412-939-3579

## Story of the Crucifixion

The members of the Valley of Pittsburgh recount the events leading up to the death of Jesus in this haunting Lenten favorite. Join us for this family event which is followed by a traditional Easter dinner.

TIME: 3:00PM/Play, 5:00PM/Dinner

LOCATION: GPMC

COST: \$15/Dinner

RSVP: **April 1**

**JUN**  
**4**

**Reservations are required for Dinner only!**

Please contact the Valley Office:  
[secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org](mailto:secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org)  
412-939-3579

## June Stated Meeting and Installation of Officers

At the June Stated meeting, we will hold the annual installation of officers. You and your lady are invited to join us for dinner and entertainment, soon to be announced.

TIME: 6:00PM/Dinner, 7:00PM/Meeting

LOCATION: GPMC

COST: \$15/Dinner

RSVP: **June 2**

**APR**  
**25**

**MAY**  
**30**

**JUN**  
**27**

# Looking Ahead

**APR**  
**25**

## Council of Deliberation Officers Seminar

SATURDAY, APRIL 25  
Masonic Conference Center,  
Elizabethtown, PA

**JUN**  
**27**

## Valley Golf Tournament

SATURDAY, JUNE 27  
Butler's Golf Course, 9AM, \$95

**JUL**  
**5**

## Spring Car Cruise

SUNDAY, JULY 5  
GPMC, 11AM-3PM, Free

**JUL**  
**11**

## Pennsylvania Council of Deliberation

SATURDAY, JULY 11  
Valley Forge Casino Resort,  
King of Prussia, PA

**JUL**  
**18**

## Washington Wild Things Baseball Game and Tailgate

SATURDAY, JULY 18  
Tailgate-5PM, Game 07PM  
Washington, PA

**SEP**  
**6**

## Fall Car Cruise

SUNDAY, SEPT 6  
GPMC, 11AM-3PM, Free

# Fraternal Classified Services Directory

These listed businesses subscribe to providing high quality customer service, delivered with a sense of warmth, friendliness, individual pride, respect, honesty, and the fraternal spirit.

## ACCOUNTING & TAXATION

Richard A. Reynolds, CPA 412-795-4194  
www.RichReynoldsCPA.com

## ADVERTISING SPECIALITIES

Grimes Advertising 412-921-1325  
Eddie Grimes

## ATTORNEYS

Henry Miller, III, Esq. 412-566-2565  
Wills, Estates, Real Estate millerhiii@aol.com

Quinn Logue LLC/Trial Lawyers 412-765-3800  
Attorney Matt Logue info@quinnlogue.com

West & Associates, P.C. 412-486-2800  
C. Arthur West III www.west-legal.com

## AUTOMOTIVE

American Classics/Street Rods 814-268-1234  
Dennis A. Liegey, 1026 3rd Ave., Brockway, PA

## BEARINGS & POWER TRANSMISSION

Gipson Bearing & Supply Co. 412-462-7960  
Craig Gipson www.gipsonbearing.com

## CATERING

Hudson's Catering 724-438-2025  
Richard Hudson www.UniontownCatering.com

Party Line Catering 412-882-7110  
Brian Meador

## CHIMNEY REPOINTING & REBUILDING

Coffey Contracting Co. Inc. 412-341-1127  
Tom Coffey thomas.coffey3@verizon.net

## DISC JOCKEY

DJ Nick Barcio 814-860-1258  
www.DJBarcio.com

## ENVIRONMENTAL, GEOTECHNICAL, AND ENGINEERING CONSULTING

J. Scott Bush Company, P.C. 724-246-8879  
Scott Bush President/CEO 724-984-1881

## FINANCIAL PLANNING

Family Wealth Mgmt Group, LLC. 724-743-6170  
John T. Daley, ChFC® FamilyWealthGroup.com

## FUNERAL SERVICES

Jefferson Memorial Cemetery & Funeral Home  
Pleasant Hills 412-655-4500

George Irvin Green Funeral Home  
Munhall Donald Green 412-461-6394

Readshaw Funeral Home 412-882-3850  
Pittsburgh - Kevin R. Dieterle

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# CigaRite

An evening of Fellowship and Cigars

When:

**Friday, March 20, 2020**

7-10PM

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3525 Washington Road  
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August 1, 2019 - July 31, 2020

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### Allegiance

The bodies of the Scottish Rite, sitting in the Valley of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, acknowledge and yield allegiance to the Supreme Council, 33°, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States of America whose Grand East is in Lexington, Massachusetts, and whose Officers are: Ill.: David A. Glattly, 33°, Sovereign Grand Commander, Ill.: Robert J. Bateman, 33°, Deputy for Pennsylvania. Other Active members for Pennsylvania are: Ill.: Thomas R. Labagh, 33°, Ill.: George Nakonetschny, 33°, Ill.: Keith E. Parkinson, 33°, and Ill.: Paul J. Roup, 33°.

## ThePotent continued from page 8

is dramatically revealed to us in the allegory of the 32nd degree. When someone asks you about your Scottish Rite membership experience, this degree should be at the forefront of your mind. It describes the victory of the exemplar that represents each of us, eager to serve humanity, but caught between self-interest, the call of duty, and the eventual supreme sacrifice.

The Scottish Rite offers answers and solutions through the lessons of its degrees. The journey into Scottish Rite gives a man more knowledge through lessons of duty, the practicing of Masonic virtues, and being faithful and just. He learns to be tolerant, to perform good deeds without recognition, to be true, and to love liberty. He is humbled while protecting the widow and the orphan, strives to better himself, loves honest work, practices compassion and patience. He reconciles all differences and quarrels with all people, loves God, and aspires to true Brotherly Love.

So what is your Scottish Rite membership experience? Is there one specific word or degree that sums that up for you? Or is it perhaps a combination of things that make you the Scottish Rite Mason that you are today? Whatever it is, your experience is personal and it belongs to you and you alone. Cherish it, hone and refine it, and use it to inspire others in the Craft. □

**Valley of Pittsburgh**  
**Gourgas Lodge of Perfection**  
Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center  
3579 Masonic Way  
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*Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite*  
**Charity Golf Tournament**

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**Saturday, June 27**  
**Starting at 9AM**

Butler's Golf Course  
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**\$95** / per Golfer

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Open to Men, Women, and Non-Members. Foursomes are recommended, however individual golfers are also welcome. Deadline for registration is June 8, 2020. If you have any questions, or if you would like to register for the tournament, please call the Valley of Pittsburgh Scottish Rite Office at 412-939-3579.