

Summer 2022

rite now

THE MAGAZINE OF THE VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH



III. Samuel C. Williamson, 33°
December 23, 1926 – July 3, 2022

valleyofpittsburgh.org

In Memoriam

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

Ill. Robert E. Dunkelman, 33°

Ill. Samuel C. Williamson, 33°

Calvin C. Goss, MSA

Bruce R. Aaron
Kenneth D. Benner
Daniel S. Boehme
Robert P. Churchill
Wilson B. Cramer
Earl J. Dowden
Edward O. Ferrebee
John W. Flick
George C. Geiselhart Jr.
William H. Glas Jr.
William A. Glessner Jr.
Ralph A. Greco
George Lee Hafner
Frank W. Hardt Jr.
Emery C. Harper
Richard W. Healey
George C. Holben
Frederick P. Holzer
Robert S. Huegli
William E. Jack
Francis R. Johnston
James B. Koch
John R. Koehnke
Joseph Krauser

Dale B. Larson
Raymond C. Lewis Jr.
Robert A. Lotz
John E. Martinson II
Jack N. E. Merling
Walter E. Muschar
John A. Nort III
Charles E. Oakley
Jon N. Palley
William A. Peoples
George T. Rogers
John R. Rovesti
Thomas C. Sloan
Edwin W. Speicher
Charles E. Stacey
Donald J. Stratton
Denny L. Swigart
Robert T. Timmins
Richard C. Wallace
David H. Watson
Joseph G. Webb
Raymond J. Wickline
John U. Young, Jr.
Henry W. Zipf



riteNOW

Vol. XXXI, No. 5
Summer 2022

Paul J. Roup, 33°

Editor
pjroup@valleyofpittsburgh.org

Rodney E. Boyce, 33°

Creative Director
rboyce@valleyofpittsburgh.org

Columnists

D. Todd Ballenger, 33°

Vic Baronie, 32°

Rodney E. Boyce, 33°

Kristin M. Douglas, 32°

David A. Eichelberger, 32°

Mitchell D. Goldstein, 32°

David L. Moore, 33°

David W. Morgans, 33°

Paul J. Roup, 33°

Austin R. Shifrin, 33°

Contributors

John Dinkel, 32°

Joseph A. Pullin, 32°

Helen Snedden

Photography

Joseph A. Pullin, 32°

Charles F. Zurcher, 32°

inside



The Modern Vitruvian by PJ Roup, 33°

Samuel C. Williamson, 33°
Right Worshipful Past Grand Master

14

20

Your Health by Dr. Glenn D. Miller, II, 33°

Avascular Necrosis
Part 1



Upon the Checkered Pavement by D. Todd Ballenger, 33°

On Justice

28

34

More Light by Austin R. Shifrin, 33°

Justice, Justice
You Shall Pursue



Feature by John Dinkel, 32°, HGA

Brother of the Forest
24th Degree

36

TheActive	4
ValleyofExcellence	5
TheChief	6
TheWise	8
ThePotent	10
TheSovereign	12
TheOffice	18

SpringClass	24
TheWord	26
UniontownUpdate	32
OurYouth	33
ValleyNews	42
TheLatest	44
TheCenter	46

Classifieds	47
AnnualGolfOuting	48

RiteNow magazine is the official publication of the Valley of Pittsburgh, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, District of Pennsylvania, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, USA. Opinions expressed are those of the individual author(s). Information is obtained from correspondence, press releases, Masonic publications and miscellaneous sources, which in many cases, cannot be verified. **RiteNow** magazine is published four times a year. © 2022, Valley of Pittsburgh, 3579 Masonic Way, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15237. Phone: 412-939-3579. Email: secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org

about this issue

This issue of *RiteNow* is devoted to the Scottish Rite Core Value of Justice. As you will read, there are many different perspectives on what is just, fair, and right. It is our hope that these articles will cause you to stop and think about exactly what each of those words mean and whether you are living those ideals in your day-to-day life.

Typically, our cover is evocative of the theme. We have instead chosen to feature the Valley of Pittsburgh's own Ill. Samuel C. Williamson, 33°, RWPGM who passed to the celestial lodge above on July 3, 2022. Perhaps it is fitting that he adorn the cover since he was one of the most just and fair men any of us could have known.



You can read more about Brother Sam on page 14.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *RiteNow*.

The Active

A message from the Supreme Council Active for Pennsylvania

SUPREME COUNCIL

Excellence!

By Paul J. Roup, 33°

It is with great pride that I announce that the Valley of Pittsburgh—your Valley—has been named a Valley of Excellence by the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. The Valley scored an admirable 91.18 out of 100 to earn this coveted award. For a more on the Valley of Excellence program as well as a breakdown of the scoring, please see the following page.

It is no small feat to achieve Valley of Excellence status; if it were easy, there would be no pride in earning it. Our officers and members had to work exceedingly hard to meet the often-rigorous benchmarks in place for each category. For example, for a Valley of our size, the recruitment goal was 60 new members. While this feat is not an impossible one, it was one of our most challenging as the numbers indicate. Kudos to those of you who recommended a Brother Master Mason for the Scottish Rite.

Another area that was challenging was in the Brother to Brother engagement.

We were tasked with contacting almost 1,800 members during the year—no small feat. Thanks to the hard work of Brother Jordan Frei as the chair of the Ambassador Committee for encouraging, coordinating, and documenting those contacts so that we could exceed that benchmark.

Excellence is more than a destination, it's a mindset. It's the shared belief of both our leaders and our members that we owe it to ourselves and each other to be the best we can be. Achieving Valley of Excellence status is not a once-

Excellence is more than a destination, it's a mindset.

and-done proposition. It is an annual accountability of best practices, and it is designed to enhance the Scottish Rite experience for all of us.

We are one of only 45 Valleys to achieve this distinction this year. It took desire, determination, and dedication on the part of many, and for that, you should all be proud.

So today we celebrate this victory. Tomorrow, we rise to meet the challenge of earning it again. □



Paul J. Roup, 33°
proup@srmnj.org

VALLEY OF EXCELLENCE

Acheiving the Valley of Excellence!

The Valley of Excellence award recognizes Valleys in the Scottish Rite, NMJ that go above and beyond in their endeavors. With focuses on areas of membership, service/philanthropy, leadership development, and operations, this program encourages Valleys to deliver a premier Scottish Rite experience to their members.

Below is the scorecard for the Valley of Pittsburgh. It gives a detailed breakdown of the areas where we excel as well as those places where we fell short. The race has already begun for next year. If you have expertise or talent in any area listed below or even just a calling to help, contact the office and get involved. It's a team effort, and every little bit helps.

MEMBERSHIP : 50%

AREA	WEIGHT	GOAL	ACTUAL	SCORE
Recruitment	20%	60	35	11.67
Engagement - Reunions	4%	2	2	4.00
Engagement - Family Life	4%	6	6	4.00
Engagement - Rite on the Road	4%	4	4	4.00
Engagement - New Member Orientation	4%	2	2	4.00
Engagement - Brother 2 Brother	4%	1,769	1,780	4.00
Restoration/Preservation	10%	41	39	9.51
Total				41.18

SERVICE & PHILANTHROPY : 25%

AREA	WEIGHT	GOAL	ACTUAL	SCORE
Blue Envelope	5%	265	268	5.00
Grand Almoners Fund	5%	7,074	7,074	5.00
Champion a Charity	5%	7,074	72,876	5.00
Sweetheart Program	5%	2	2	5.00
Service Events	5%	4	4	5.00
Total				25.00

LEADERSHIP & DEVELOPMENT : 15%

AREA	WEIGHT	GOAL	ACTUAL	SCORE
State Participation	5%	4	6	5.00
Membership Education	5%	177	203	5.00
Mentoring Program	5%	1	1	5.00
Total				15.00

OPERATIONS : 10%

AREA	WEIGHT	GOAL	ACTUAL	SCORE
Finances	2%	1	1	2.00
990's Annual Reporting	2%	1	1	2.00
Presiding Officers	2%	1	1	2.00
New Member Registration	2%	10	2	2.00
Communications	2%	20	23	2.00
Total				10.00

Grand Total

91.18

The Chief

A message from the Commander-in-Chief of the Valley of Pittsburgh

CONSISTORY

Change Is Awesome

By Rodney E. Boyce, 33°



As my time of service as the Commander in Chief of the Valley of Pittsburgh comes to a close, I find myself reflecting upon the accomplishments the Valley has achieved. When I was preparing for my term as Commander in Chief, I could have never imagined it would have looked anything like what it has been.

I thought I was well prepared and had planned my two years of service. However, due to unforeseen circumstances not of my making, I was installed one year earlier than initially expected, and I took office at the beginning of the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Everything changed. The Valley officers and the Executive Committee worked to develop a plan to keep the Valley active and engaged in a time of isolation and quarantine.

Change is awesome.

I am sure you and I are much alike in that, as we grow older, we try to avoid change. In that respect, I think our Valley is also much the same. As it grows older, change is harder to initiate. Yet, I am so very proud of the work we have accomplished and the changes we have facilitated.

Change is awesome.

During the immediate shutdown, we renovated the **Children's Dyslexia Center** with new paint, carpet, and signage. I wish to thank all who were involved, including the entire Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center staff for their hard work and dedication to this project. The Center is now a much brighter and cheerier place for our students to learn.

I thought I was well prepared and had planned my two years of service.

We worked to develop innovative ways to continue to conduct Valley Business, Stated Meetings, and Committee Meetings. Through the efforts of our **Technology Committee**, we created virtual and hybrid meetings. We

held virtual gatherings, degrees, and happy hours. And once the pandemic had subsided, we began hybrid meetings, where some attended in-person and others attended virtually. A concept that will continue for all future meetings.

We created an **Officers Handbook**, a living document that provides every Valley officer with specific descriptions of their duties and expectations. This committee's work will help the current and prospective leadership, now and in the future.

We created a **Membership Committee** that developed incentives for membership. They initiated the *Rite on the Road*



Rodney E. Boyce, 33°
rboyce@valleyofpittsburgh.org



campaign which takes our degree work on the road and into Masonic Districts and Lodges to initiate members remotely. And they refined the Valley's One-day Classes, honoring Grand Master Gamon last year, and our own Grand Master Wonderling this year.

Our **Budget Committee** worked hard and developed balanced budgets each year which placed our Valley back in the black and better prepared us for the future. They found a way to facilitate the changes in the Valley's activities and the changing use of previously budgeted funds for new and inventive activities. Thank you to the entire budget committee for their diligent and dedicated efforts.

Our **Trustees** continued to keep the Valley on a strong foundation during a very volatile period of widespread panic and change. Thank you to Brother Brian Maxwell and all the trustees for their outstanding work.

We initiated the **Ambassador Program** by organizing and identifying men who now serve as Scottish Rite Ambassadors. We emphasized the Supreme Council's **Valley of Excellence** program and worked diligently to meet its expectations and requirements to better our Valley. And it now

appears we have achieved this goal! Congratulations to all!

We continued to find fun ways to engage our membership with social activities like **CigaRite**, **RiteLightning**, and **Afterglows**.

We created a **Personnel Committee** and an incredible **Personnel Handbook** to serve the officers and employees of the Valley. Thank you to Illustrious Brothers Eric Teasdale, Pat Blackwell, and Brother Jim Wehrhiem for their in-depth work.

We changed the depth of the **Valley Officer** lines and the make-up of the **Executive Committee**, both to better reflect the current position of our Valley. Thank you

to the entire officer corps for your cooperation and vision!

And finally, we updated the **Rules and Regulations** to incorporate these changes to the Valley.

There are many other things that are changing in your Valley. And our future looks very bright.

Change *is* awesome.

I wish to congratulate the newly elected and appointed officers of the Valley of Pittsburgh. I wish you incredible success as you lead our Valley into the future. You will be great!

I also wish to sincerely thank the officers and members of the Valley of Pittsburgh who have given their support over these past two years. I especially want to thank: Illustrious Brother Dave Moore, Thrice Potent Master; Brother Mitch Goldstein, Sovereign Prince; and Brother Kris Douglas, Most Wise Master, who all served an extra year in office. I could not have asked for a better group of presiding officers.

I want to thank you—the members—for your dedication and continued membership in the Valley. You are open to new ideas, very supportive, and have adapted to the changes. Thank you for being a fellow passenger on this memorable trip. And what a journey it has been.

I wish to sincerely thank my family—my father Ervin, my mother Jean, and my sister Kim. They each have helped me through my difficult health struggles these past several months. I love each of you very much. Thank you.

Lastly, as my Scottish Rite and Masonic journeys come to a close, I want to thank my dedicated friends and brothers who listened when I needed to talk; who helped when I needed help; and who encouraged me when I needed encouragement. Your friendships will remain with me forever. Thank you.

Change *is* awesome.

Together we are one.



TheWise

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

ROSE CROIX

Order Out of Chaos

By Kristin M. Douglas, 32°

It's hard to believe but we have finally reached the end of our extended terms as presiding officers in the Valley of Pittsburgh. Covid really threw everyone a curve ball and made the last two years extremely unpredictable and difficult to navigate. Due to these extenuating circumstances, I feel like I was not able to accomplish nearly as much as I wanted to as Most Wise Master, even with the extra year to do so. Looking back now, it all seems like blur. I can't believe how fast it went by.

When I was a junior officer on the line, it seemed like it would be forever until I was able to be the top guy. Now, I've served two terms and it was all over in the blink of an eye. I would like to take this opportunity though, to express my sincere gratitude to our Valley for allowing me the privilege to serve as Most Wise Master in particular, and on the Rose Croix line in general. It was an honor I will never forget, and I look forward in continuing to serve the Valley in whatever capacity I am needed going forward.

For our final article for the magazine, we were asked to think about the Core Value of Justice or some aspect of it that has meaning in our own lives or the lives of our Brethren. I have chosen to discuss the idea

of order out of chaos and how I can directly apply it to my time of fellowship within the fraternity.

Instead of dwelling on a darker topic such as membership and dwindling numbers, I'd rather go out on a high note and talk about how this Fraternity has become my order in a chaotic world. For many of us today, the world is a very different place than the one we grew up in. In some cases, it is drastically different. I'm not here to really discuss the good or the bad of these changes. I do think its important though, to think about how Freemasonry can become a beacon of light, a calming order, in a chaotic and hectic world.

For many of us today, the world is a very different place than the one we grew up in.

As our everyday stressors and life events wear us down, we as Freemason's should always be able to look to the Craft for solitude and a system of norms and morals that have stood the test of time. I know in my own life, no matter how bad things can seem at times, there is nothing more comforting than being able to retreat to the lodge or Valley to mingle with my fellow Brethren and to take a short break from life. The Fraternity seems like a place of solace and safety in an otherwise out of control world.

Many of you know that I love



Kristin M. Douglas, 32°
mwm@valleyofpittsburgh.org

to perform ritual. For me, being immersed in conferring a degree or acting as part of a degree team on stage completely removes the outside world if only for a while. It lets me get back to many of the beliefs I hold dear that are celebrated by Freemasonry. When I walk through my lodge doors on a Monday night for practice or attend an official visit with the District Deputy Grand Master, it brings me back to center and shows me something that is familiar and comforting when all else seems crazy and out of control. No matter how down I am or how bad a day I had, seeing my Brothers and friends gathered together can almost instantly remove the despair and bring a much needed smile to my face. I don't think many people who join our Fraternity do so originally for this purpose. Only though time spent within it with our fellow Brethren does this important benefit become apparent.

Since joining the Craft roughly eleven years ago, I am amazed at how many people I have met who have become not only my Brothers but also my best friends. Freemasonry has a way of seeping in and slowly permeating every aspect of your life. If you truly get involved, it will touch you in ways you never even thought possible. You will meet men from across the generations and participate in rituals that have remained unchanged for the better part of 300 years. That level of permanency and adherence to older values and social norms is exactly what I mean when I talk about order

out of chaos. In my last article, I mentioned that today's world really needs Freemasonry. Good men need our Fraternity, they are thirsty for it. It provides something that is almost nonexistent today. It is a portal into the past, a way to connect with those who have gone before, those that are now on a new journey that we too will someday take. Bearing that in mind, if you feel like I do about this great endeavor, if you see a fellow man who is yearning for this same type of experience and solace, take it upon your self to introduce him to Freemasonry and bring him into the fold of Brotherhood.

**Freemasonry
has a way
of seeping in
and slowly
permeating
every aspect
of your life.**

Lead him to the water, share with him the order and solitude that is the Craft. In today's world, that just about as great a gift as we a Freemasons can share with our fellow man!

Again, I want to express my sincere thanks for allowing me to serve you for the

past two years as Most Wise Master of the Pittsburgh Chapter of Rose Croix. Even though it was a highly irregular time for all of us, I believe your Valley officers carried forth in the spirit of the Scottish Rite and it's founding principals and led the organization forward through the storm. I am excited to see what our incoming officers have in store for their terms. Hopefully, they will be able to again lead the Valley forward and leave it in just a little bit better shape than they found it. I know all the retiring officers will continue to be there to help them in any way we can. I wish all of you only the best and I look forward to seeing you around the Valley in the future. □

The Potent

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

LODGE OF PERFECTION

Justice and Mercy

By David L. Moore, 33°

I sit down to write this article just a few days following our Spring Reunion to honor our own Jeffery M. Wonderling, RWGM. It was so nice to be able to gather together once again and perform degree work. It was great to be able to renew old friendships and create new ones.

It is hard to believe that my time on the Lodge of Perfection Line is coming to an end. I would like to take a moment to thank all those who have supported me on this journey and wish those who will be assuming leadership roles the best of luck. Enjoy your time; it goes quickly. With Brother Eric Teasdale taking over as Thrice Potent

Master, the Lodge of Perfection line is in good hands. I look forward to changing lines and continuing my Scottish Rite Journey as I become 2nd Lieutenant Commander of the Pennsylvania Consistory. It will be a pleasure to serve the Valley for another six years.

Hopefully, you have been able to take advantage of some of the fun events we have had over the summer. We are all anticipating the fall to see what events the newly-installed officers have planned for us.

Justice is one of the Cardinal Virtues of Freemasonry and one of the Core Values of the Scottish Rite. We are charged to be just in our dealings with each other, more especially our Brethren. Sometimes it is challenging to be just if we feel we are not being treated that way ourselves. It is easy to feel aggrieved and seek

vengeance to make ourselves feel good and put justice aside. It is very tempting to want to make others suffer when they have wronged you; I am just as guilty of this as the next guy. It is a very human emotion to want to see the person that wronged you suffer so that you can feel better about the suffering they have caused you. Sometimes we must come to terms

Justice is one of the Cardinal Virtues of Freemasonry and one of the Core Values of the Scottish Rite.

that it is not always up to us to dish out justice. We, as Masons, have sworn to be peaceable and dutiful citizens who adhere to the laws of our country. We also profess a belief in a Supreme Being and the Volume of the Sacred Law, each of which has its own expectations on Justice and how it is to be carried out. We must conform to these beliefs and trust that we are doing the right thing and that justice will be had.

One of the best examples of Justice as a Core Value in the Scottish Rite



David L. Moore, 33°
tpm@valleyofpittsburgh.org

is the 7th degree. Of the Lodge of Perfection degrees, the 7th degree is the one that clearly demonstrates the value of Justice. You may remember the 7th Degree, *Provost and Judge*. It is a story of a dispute between workmen where honesty and justice prevail. In this degree, the workman in the quarry are finishing work at the South Gate when the Keystone comes up missing and is found in another Brother's possession. Most of the degree takes place in the courtroom during a trial where there is an accusation of one Brother against another for the theft of his work and the subsequent loss of wages. Eventually, the wrong is righted, and the aggrieved Brother asks for leniency in the judgment levied against his Brother Master Mason. This degree teaches us to judge righteously without respect to person, and that one law and one custom should apply to all. Justice should be impartial and tempered with deserved mercy.

Justice may perhaps be the most difficult of the Cardinal Virtues to adhere to, given the personal level that most of these situations take on. But we should always strive to behave in a just manner to our Brethren and remind him in the most tender manner of his failings. □



The Sovereign

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

PRINCES OF JERUSALEM

The Saga of the Second Temple

By Mitchell D. Goldstein, 32°

Who may ascend the hill of the LORD?

Who may stand in His holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart,

who does not lift up his soul to an idol

or swear deceitfully.

—Psalm 24

King David wrote this Psalm attributed to him in the latter part of his life. By this time, he was already aware that



Mitchell D. Goldstein, 32°
sp@valleyofpittsburgh.org

his intention to build the Temple at Jerusalem was not met with favor by the Great Architect. David worked tirelessly to secure his kingdom and build a prosperous nation so that peace might reign and that his wise son might accomplish the great undertaking. As the slayer of Goliath of Goth and the general of armies under King Saul, and also due to his many indiscretions, King David would have to be content with his accomplishment of securing materials for the edifice that would not be built in his lifetime.

Masonic tradition informs us that the first Holy Temple was built without tools of iron—this was to distinguish craftsmen from the soldiery and ensure that the edifice was a house of peace. As historians told us, the Holy Temple stood for nearly 400 years, passing through the life of king after king, finally coming to a cataclysmic end during the reign of the last monarch to rule Judah, King Zedechiah. After a siege on Jerusalem of thirty months, The Babylonian commander Nebuzaradan ordered the city plundered, the temple to be looted and destroyed, and all Judeans fit for work to be captured and returned to Babylon as slaves.

Thus began the story of the Babylonian Diaspora and the setting for the work of the Princes of Jerusalem.

Thus sayeth Cyrus, king of Persia: “The Lord God has charged me to build a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may God be with him, and may he go to Jerusalem and build the house of the Lord God of Israel.”

—Ezra

In 538 BCE, the Judeans, led by their new princes, returned under the edict of Cyrus to Jerusalem and found the City of Zion in utter chaos. Unlike Solomon’s temple, built in seven years, the second temple took twenty-two years to begin.

Historians affirm that the second temple was not nearly as impressive nor assembled with such great precision as the first. Due to many factors, the needed materials were not so widely available, and due to the pandemonium that gripped the land during the absence of those captured, the work on the second temple must have been slow, laborious, and dangerous. During the building of the first temple, no tool of iron was used and no sound of war was heard. During the construction of the second temple, there was not such good fortune. The temple was built “with a sword in one hand and a trowel in the other,” and the noise of war must have been a severe impediment to the holy work.

In addition to its lack of adornment, we are told in the Book of Ezra that the furniture of the first Holy

Temple was not returned and that only the golden ‘temple vessels’ came back with the Princes from Babylon. This meant that the second temple did not have a “Holy of Holies,” nor the magnificent golden Ark of the Covenant, and as such, never enjoyed the direct indwelling presence of the Lord God as did the first Holy Temple.

Nonetheless, the temple was begun and dedicated in 515 BCE. The Book of Ezra tells us that the great Sovereign Prince himself, Zerubbabel, directed the rebuilding of the Holy Altar so that the Levites and Kohanites might again rekindle the sacrificial flames as instructed by Moses in the Torah. The altar was completed first so the Jewish people might finally eat ‘kosher’ meat, ritually slaughtered by a priest, and the proper rituals performed to satisfy the law. Two years later, the temple’s foundations were laid, and the true labor had begun. The Book of Ezra opens with these events.

And all the people responded with a great shout when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. Now many of the older Levitical priests and chiefs of the fathers’ households who had seen the first temple wept with a loud voice as the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes, though many others shouted exuberantly for joy.

—Ezra

The enemies of Judah were not idle. When they found out that the Jews had returned from exile and intended to lay claim to the land of Israel, they harassed the builders mercilessly, forcing them to use tools of iron to build the new edifice. Cyrus having perished some time

ago, his descendant King Artaxerxes did not recognize the edict that gave the land back to the Jewish people in 444 BCE.

Nehemiah was a member of Artaxerxes’ court as his cup-bearer and was, like Daniel, one of the Judeans who did not return from exile. Upon hearing of the difficulties besetting the building of the temple, he appealed to Artaxerxes and was permitted to return to Jerusalem to oversee the work. His tale is woven in the book that bears his name.

The book of Nehemiah is not the book of a prophet but the book of a builder, the book of a planner. I extend to all Brethren of the world, no matter what their personal beliefs, to take the time out to read this book, one of the few written in first person and told as a compelling and complex story. The book is about oppression, redemption, the power and meaning of prayer, and the benefits of charity and duty to our community.

“O Lord, God of the heavens, that austere and mighty God who remembers his covenants and shares eternal, steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments: let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant.”

—Nehemiah’s Prayer

Sadly, I must lay down my virtual pen as my time as the Sovereign Prince will have come to a close. My journey to becoming a presiding officer has been longer than the building of the first Holy Temple—some nine years in the making. I want to thank my fellow presiding officers for our term most fraternally and warmly and show gratitude

to all the officers and members for their dedication, trust, and patience. The Princes’ line could not be in better hands, and I wish the newly installed Sovereign Prince much luck as he continues the work that the Past Sovereign Princes of their day had begun. My love goes to all past officers of the Council of Princes of Jerusalem who have supported and helped me through my journey and future ones who will continue to make our Valley a shining example of the positive energy of the Scottish Rite.

I would have failed in my mission if I did not reiterate my thanks to three Brothers whose positive influence on me is immeasurable. Brother Erastus Allen found me and introduced me to the currents of Traditional Observance and Scottish Rite, and for that, I will be forever indebted to him. Two brethren, alas, are no longer among the living members. My predecessor, PSP Robert Polander, was kind, thoughtful, and inspiring to me as I moved up the line behind him. His sudden loss was the extinguishing of a great light in my Masonic career. Of course, I close my last article by remembering an amazing man and an icon of Freemasonry, Ill. Brother Eric K. Cohen, PSP. His influence on me, my music, the Valley, and the entire Craft will never be forgotten.

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and on his Law he meditates day and night.

—Psalm 1

□





PJ Roup, 33°

Ill. Samuel Carlson Williamson, 33° RWPGM

December 22, 1926 to July 3, 2022

This issue's Modern Vitruvian is dedicated to the memory of my friend and mentor, Ill. Samuel C. Williamson, 33°, RWPGM. I do not believe that I have met a Mason that more embodies the values of a Modern Vitruvian than Sam. He was bold and progressive but also firmly grounded in tradition. He understood the need for change and the need for constancy and he knew just where and when to apply each.

When he was Grand Master, Sam was instrumental in laying the groundwork for Prince Hall recognition when in 1983 he and his counterpart at Prince Hall, MWGM George Calloway, arranged for the DeMolay and Knights of Pythagoras to begin working together. It was the accomplishment he was most proud of.

Sam received many fraternal honors. In 1977 he was coroneted a 33rd degree Honorary Member of the Supreme Council, Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. He was invested with the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania's Benjamin Franklin Medal in 1984 for outstanding service. A similar recognition, the Daniel Coxe Medal, was awarded to him in 2005 by the Grand Lodge of New Jersey. In 2006 he was honored with the DeMolay Grand Cross. In 2013 he was given Honorary Membership in the Prince Hall Scottish Rite Council of Deliberation. In 2016 was inducted into the DeMolay International Hall of Fame, and in 2019 he became only the 46th recipient of the Scottish Rite Supreme Council Medal of Honor.

That is only a partial list of the Masonic accomplishments of this great Mason. He wouldn't want us to dwell on those though, so instead I will focus on Sam, my friend. What follows is the eulogy I delivered at his funeral on July 9.

Sam was the youngest old man I ever met.

I spent the week following his death trying to figure out precisely when I met Sam Williamson. It was probably in the late 1990s, not long after I had become a Mason. Our paths surely crossed at a few District events, and I am certain that I timidly approached him (knowing him only by his reputation as the consummate Mason) and introduced myself. I am also certain that I had no expectations of becoming lifelong friends with this man who was at the time more than twice my age. For the next several years we would exchange pleasantries whenever we would meet. "Why Brother Pee-JAY," he would say (he always had a unique way of pronouncing my name with the accent on the J), "How are things at Plum Creek?" I cannot tell you what it meant to me that this "Legend of the Craft," as our Grand Master likes to call him, knew my name.

It wasn't until I became District Deputy that our friendship really took off. He approached me at an Official Visit and casually suggested that we should have lunch. One doesn't say no to an invitation like that. I suggested a local brew pub and Sam agreed. We

enjoyed lunch and a beer—and yes you read that right, a beer. At the time, I had no idea about Sam’s intense dislike of beer, but he had one because I did. That was who he was. He choked down a beer to make me feel comfortable and I can guarantee that it was the last one ever to cross his lips.

Soon after, we began carpooling to events. I cherished the time in the car with him because we had the chance to talk uninterrupted by the outside world. A wry smile would cross his lips, and that signature twinkle would appear in his eye. He would regale me with stories about the Grand Lodge that few living people knew. On those trips around the city and the state I learned more from him about Freemasonry, the Grand Lodge, and how to truly live into the ideals we champion than I could ever have hoped. He was the keeper of all the institutional knowledge of the organization back into the 1950s when he first joined the Grand Lodge Guest committee, and his memory was unrivaled. It was a Master Class, a TED talk, and a Ken Burns documentary all rolled into one. I eagerly soaked it all in.

But Sam would usually try to turn the conversation around. He was always more interested in what I was doing, in life and in Lodge. He was an unequivocal

supporter of everything I did. Within the last year, he would tell me that he didn’t always agree, but he wanted to let me make my own decisions—and sometimes my own mistakes—to help me grow.

Perhaps that was what Sam did best. He nurtured the people he loved. Whether it was the youth, his friends, or his protégés, he cared for us like bonsai trees—carefully shaping, pruning, and feeding us. And like a skillful master gardener, he knew just when to step back and allow us to grow to our full potential.

**He cared for us like bonsai trees—
carefully shaping, pruning,
and feeding us.**

Sam was the youngest old man I ever met. I firmly believe that one of the secrets to his longevity was that he surrounded himself with younger friends. It forced him to stay up to date. He had an iPhone, and not just for show. He texted, used Snapchat, banked online, and worked Facebook like a pro. It also helped that he exercised six days a week and had a personal trainer. On a cold and snowy December day in 2009, he, Rodney Boyce and I had a meeting at the convention center. As we were leaving Sam invited us to lunch at



the Engineer's Club which was probably a good half mile walk from where we were standing. Keep in mind that at the time, Rodney and I were in our 40s and Sam was a couple of days away from 83. "We might as well walk," he said, "Unless it's too far for the two of you."

I will share one last funny story about Sam. In the Masonic Temple in Philadelphia, the portraits of all the living Past Grand Masters have traditionally adorned the walls of the Franklin Room, but owing to the longevity of some of them, they ran out of space on the inside. Consequently, the portraits of the most recent Past Grand Masters had to be placed on easels outside of the room. Beginning in 2012, when Tom Sturgeon finished his term and became the junior Past Grand Master, he took every opportunity to needle Sam about this. "You know, you guys are just hanging on too long and I'm stuck outside. The polite thing would be to make space in the room. It's the right thing to do," Tom would tell him. Understand that the only way to get your portrait out of the room is to pass to the celestial lodge above. Every time Tom brought it up, Sam would laugh it off and say, "Get comfortable out there because I'm not planning to go anywhere."

A time immemorial presence that just *was*.

Then in 2015, Sam went for his annual cardiologist visit and learned that he needed bypass surgery. "Okay, I'll schedule it," he told them. "No, you're not leaving here. We're doing it today." Prior to surgery, he was nervous but confident that it would all be fine. I visited him a few hours after the surgery. When I walked into the room, Sam was framed by several beeping monitors and a tangle of IVs, tubes, and cords. To my surprise he was awake and alert.

"Brother Sam," I said, "How are you feeling?"

In spite of the pain and the lingering effects of the anesthesia, Sam paused. A smile began to form. He got that familiar twinkle in his eye. "You tell that SOB Sturgeon to leave my portrait right where it is!" I immediately burst out laughing, but it quickly turned to tears of joy knowing that my surly friend was going to be just fine.

Since that time, rarely has a week passed that Sam and



I haven't had lunch, dinner, Masonic business, or at least a few telephone conversations. I would always ask him how he was doing. For a long time, his answer was, "Better than I deserve," a line he took from a speech I gave at Lodge years earlier that he particularly liked. As his health changed, the answers did too. "Better than I deserve" gave way to "pretty good," which changed to "I'm okay." Over the last months, it was generally a disappointed, "I'm about the same." But no matter the answer he gave, the next words from his mouth were, "More importantly, how are you?" It wasn't just a casually tossed out reply either. He genuinely cared. Whether he was feeling fantastic or lousy, he wanted to know how I (or whoever he was talking to) was. That was Sam.

I said earlier that I couldn't remember precisely when I met Sam and perhaps that is because from the moment we became friends, he seemed like he had always been part of my life—a time immemorial presence that just *was*.

The poet Rumi said, "Love your friends neither with your heart nor your mind. The heart will stop. The mind will forget. Love with the soul, for it does not stop or forget."

Sam Williamson was one of the best friends I have ever had and one of the best men any of us could hope to know. He was generous with his time, his knowledge, and his heart and he never, ever, asked for or expected anything in return. To me, he was equal parts mentor, councilor, champion, and friend and his loss leaves a chasm in the hearts of all of us that can never be filled. The best tribute I or any of us can pay to him is to love with our souls and be the kind of friend to someone that he was to us. That would bring a twinkle to his eye. □

The Office

A message from the Secretary of the Valley of Pittsburgh

VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

Member Center

By David W. Morgans, 33°

AS Freemasons, we are taught lessons about various tools used by operative Masons. We can all probably agree that an unused tool cannot get any work done. The Supreme Council, the overarching body of the Scottish Rite, has given each member a very valuable and useable tool called the Member Center on the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction website located at <https://scottishritenmj.org/login>. This tool allows each member to get more out of his Scottish Rite experience. If you have not registered yet, please do so and unlock a wealth of resources for your Scottish Rite journey.



David W. Morgans, 33°
secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org

Upon opening the Member Center, you will see your personal dashboard that gives you a snapshot of your contact information, the Valley contact information, your dues balance, your passport record, and the membership statistics for the Valley. You may also get contact information for any Valley in the Northern Jurisdiction. From this Dashboard, with one click you can go to your profile page and update your information as needed. You can update your mailing address, telephone number(s), email address, family information, and any military service information that may pertain to you. Current information in your profile allows for better correspondence from the Scottish Rite to you.

With one click from the Dashboard you may also update your degree record or check on your degree record to make sure it is accurate. There are 29 Degrees in the Scottish Rite and anyone who witnesses all 29 degree receives special recognition and a new Gold Passport to record his continued journey through the Scottish Rite.

With one click from the Dashboard you may view your payment records and make your annual membership

dues payment using a credit or debit card. Our annual membership renewal notices go out in July every year and are payable as soon as you receive them. Through the Member Center you can avoid the hassle of writing a check and paying for postage to mail your dues payments.

Whether you are a newly initiated 32° Scottish Rite Mason or have been a member for decades, there are many paths forward.

The Member Center online payments are fast, convenient, and safe. Your dues payment notices this year will also include your new membership card. Please remember to detach the card and carry it with as we are now scanning the dues cards at our events.

From the Dashboard of the Member Center, you may also access the new Pathfinder Program. Your journey and search for Masonic light began in the Blue Lodge.

After you were raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason, the world of Freemasonry opened wide, providing many additional paths to pursue and explore. The Scottish Rite, NMJ extends the opportunity to journey to further light in Masonry through its twenty-nine degrees from the 4° through the 32°.

To help Scottish Rite, NMJ Brethren continue their quest for self-improvement, the Supreme

Council offers you the Pathfinder Program. Through participating in various activities and exploring the resources of the Scottish Rite, Pathfinder serves as a guide for 32° Scottish Rite Masons to uncover the road that best serves their needs and interests. A multitude of activities called Mile-Markers lead you to discover the experiences, knowledge, and lifelong friendships that help you become the best version of the man you know you can be. Whether you are a newly initiated 32° Scottish Rite Mason or have been a member for decades, there are many paths forward. Let Pathfinder help you find yours.

From the Dashboard you may also tailor your Mailing Preferences and opt out, if you so desire, from the various mailings sent by the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. This allows you to receive the enumerated mailings that mean the most to you and stop those that may not appeal to you.

You may also see a current scorecard for the Valley of Excellence Program. The Valley of Pittsburgh qualified for the Valley of Excellence award for our current Scottish Rite year because of the efforts of a whole host of Brothers who worked diligently to help our Valley score well in each of the four categories used to evaluate Valley performance. You are encouraged to check out the Valley of Excellence program and then join with other Brothers in helping the Valley of Pittsburgh be the best it can be.

The Member Center is a great tool that is at your disposal at any time of the day or night. Please register and see how you can use this tool to make your Scottish Rite journey more meaningful. □



Need Assistance?

No one likes to find themselves in financial hardship. No one likes to ask for help. However, many Brothers would rather be suspended than ask for the help that we all promised to render to a Brother when we joined the Fraternity. If you need to have your dues remitted this year, please, please, please contact the Office by phone (412-939-3579), by letter (Valley of Pittsburgh, 3579 Masonic Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15237), or by email (secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org). Your request will be kept confidential, and you will continue to be a vital part of our Valley.



Senior Member Status

If you are 80-years old or older or are a 50-year plus member, I would like to remind you that the Scottish Rite does not automatically remit your dues. The Scottish Rite has a program for senior members. The Senior Member Program was implemented to ensure that NO member over the age of 80 (or over 75 with 50 years of membership in the Scottish Rite, NMJ) having financial hardship would be suspended for non-payment. If you qualify for Senior Membership, you will no longer have to pay dues.

If you think you qualify for Senior Member status, please contact the Office by phone (412-939-3579), by letter (Valley of Pittsburgh, 3579 Masonic Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15237), or by email (secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org).

If you are a caregiver for someone who may qualify, please contact us and let us know of the need. We are ready, willing, and able to help but can only do so if we are aware of the need.





Dr. Glenn D. Miller, 33°

Avascular Necrosis **Part 1**

By Dr. Glenn D. Miller, II, 33°

The topic for this issue of *RiteNow* is avascular necrosis, specifically avascular necrosis of the femoral head (hip). For reference, the hip is a “ball and socket” type of joint. The “ball” is part of the proximal end of the femur and is called the femoral head. The portion of bone that connects the proximal femur to the femoral head is called the femoral neck. The “socket” is formed by a portion of the pelvis which is called the acetabulum. The definition of avascular is “without blood vessels” and the definition of necrosis is “death of a piece of living tissue.” Therefore, avascular necrosis of the femoral head (hip) is the death of bone tissue in the femoral head secondary to an interruption of the blood supply. Avascular necrosis of bone tissue is also referred to as osteonecrosis or aseptic necrosis. Avascular necrosis can also affect the knee, humeral head (shoulder), jaw, the talus bone in the foot, and the lunate and scaphoid bones in the wrist/hand. However, involvement of the femoral head is easily the most common site and will be the central theme of this discussion. The reason that the femoral head is the most common site for avascular necrosis is two-fold. Firstly, the arterial blood supply to the femoral head is precarious because the vessels are firmly attached to the neck of the femur which makes it susceptible to damage with any fracture or dislocation. Secondly, these arteries terminate in small arterioles which are susceptible to occlusion from either blood or cholesterol emboli.

It is estimated that there are 10,000 to 30,000 new cases of avascular necrosis of the femoral head diagnosed every year in the United States. This condition typically affects adults in the 30-65 age group (mean age at presentation is 38 years) with males being affected more commonly than females at a 3:1-5:1 ratio. Additionally, avascular necrosis can affect both of the patients’

hips in more than 60% of the cases. Approximately 5-15 % of the yearly total of 450,000 or more total hip arthroplasties (hip replacements) are attributed to avascular necrosis.

Historically, the first case of avascular necrosis of the femoral head is unknown but it has been noted in examinations of Egyptian mummies. However, Dr. Alexander Munro, a Scottish surgeon and anatomist, was the first to describe the condition in 1738. Dr. James Russell subsequently published a paper on the necrosis of bone in 1794. Jean Cruveilhier, a French anatomist, recorded during 1829-1842 that the delayed gross deformation of the femoral head after trauma was secondary to vascular damage. More comprehensive reports of avascular necrosis were published independently by Dr. Dane Kragelund in 1886 and by Dr. Franz Konig in 1888. Dr. Dallas Phemister published the most comprehensive description of the disease in 1930 including the etiology, pathogenesis, and treatment. Dr. Ernst Freund then published the first detailed description of idiopathic (no known cause) avascular necrosis in bilateral femoral heads in 1938.

It is estimated that there are 10,000 to 30,000 new cases of avascular necrosis of the femoral head diagnosed every year in the United States.

The causes of avascular necrosis of the femoral head can be categorized as either traumatic, atraumatic, or iatrogenic (no known cause). Traumatic causes include femoral neck fractures, hip dislocations and partial dislocations, and slipped capital femoral epiphysis. These conditions result in physical damage to the

arteries and arterioles that supply the femoral neck and head. Hip dislocations and partial dislocations are the most common cause for people involved in athletics.

A slipped capital femoral epiphysis is a fracture that involves the growth plate of the femur and is most common in adolescents. Approximately 15-50% of femoral neck fractures and 10-25% of hip dislocations can eventually result in avascular necrosis. The most famous case of traumatic avascular necrosis is probably that of Oakland Raiders running back Bo Jackson. During a nationally televised playoff game against the Cincinnati Bengals on January 13, 1991, he was tackled which resulted in a fracture and dislocation of his left hip. It is believed that he “popped” his hip back into place on the sideline which resulted in damage to the femoral neck arteries. He subsequently developed avascular necrosis and underwent total hip replacement surgery on April 4, 1992.

Atraumatic causes constitute the vast majority of avascular necrosis cases. Most of these causes result in intravascular coagulation (clots), emboli (air, fat, or blood clots), or direct vascular damage involving the arteries and arterioles that supply the femoral neck and head which interrupts the blood supply to the hip. Atraumatic causes include excessive corticosteroid (prednisone) use which includes using typically prescribed dosages for extended periods of time for chronic conditions as well as using high dosages for lesser periods of time. Another common etiology is alcohol abuse. Consumption of 400 milliliters or less of alcohol per week results in triple the risk compared to those who do not use alcohol. Consumption of greater than 400 milliliters of alcohol per week results in a risk of 11 times greater as compared to those who do not use alcohol.

Other common causes of avascular necrosis include coagulopathies (bleeding disorders such as hemophilia or platelet abnormalities), hemoglobinopathies (sickle cell disease), gout, vascular damage secondary to diabetes mellitus and cancers/chemotherapy/radiation therapy, HIV, Crohn’s disease, pancreatitis, autoimmune diseases such as systemic lupus erythematosus (Lupus), hyperlipidemias (increased cholesterol abnormalities), Gaucher’s disease (rare genetic disease that results in the buildup of lipids in organs such as the liver and spleen), organ transplantation with subsequent anti-rejection medication usage (especially

kidney transplants), Caisson disease (decompression sickness), pregnancy, vasculitis, metabolic bone diseases (osteoporosis, osteomalacia, Rickets, fibrous dysplasia, Paget’s disease), and tobacco usage. Of these, chronic steroid use and excessive alcohol use comprise approximately 80-90% of the non-traumatic causes. The cause is unknown in up to 20-25% of cases.

As you can see from this list of etiologies, most of the causes or risk factors for avascular necrosis are not able to be controlled by individuals. The risk factors that are modifiable by individuals are alcohol consumption, tobacco usage, corticosteroid usage, amount of deep-sea diving, and lifestyle/diet modifications to prevent or control gout, diabetes, and hypercholesterolemia.

Approximately 15-50% of femoral neck fractures and 10-25% of hip dislocations can eventually result in avascular necrosis.

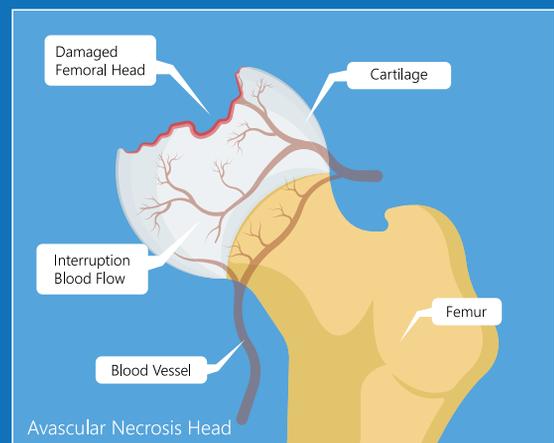
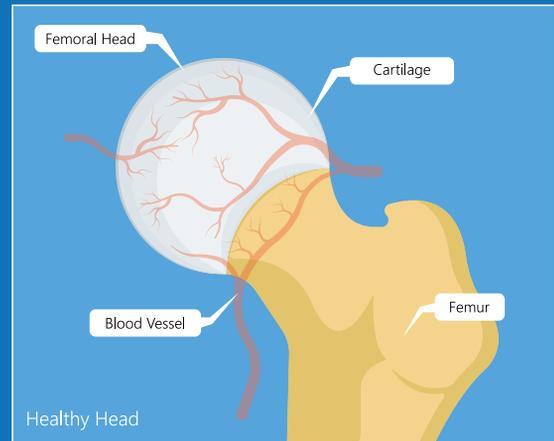
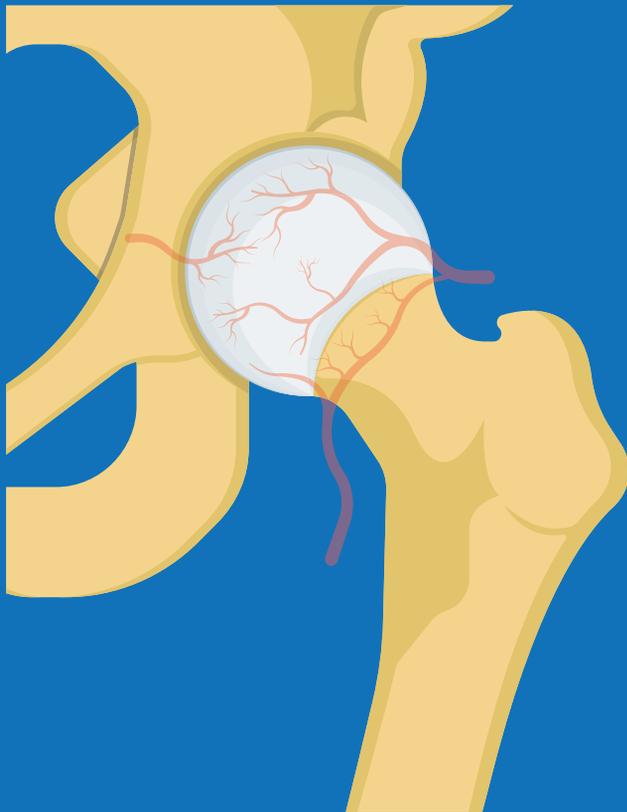
Avoidance of certain types of physical activities could, at least theoretically, lower a person’s risk for trauma to the femoral neck/head and the acetabulum of the pelvis. Additionally, there are some studies that are promising for initiating hypercholesterolemia statin therapy in patients who must take long-term corticosteroid medications.

An unfortunate aspect of avascular necrosis of the femoral head is that most patients are asymptomatic at the onset of the disease. It can take weeks, months, or even more than a year to develop symptoms. This delay in diagnosis usually results in patients developing significant joint damage which makes them ineligible for less invasive treatments. Symptoms usually start out as an intermittent dull ache or throbbing hip pain that increases with weight bearing and decreases with rest. The hip pain often radiates to the ipsilateral (same side) groin and/or thigh. As the bone/joint damage progresses, the pain typically increases and becomes more constant. This usually results in a stiff joint with decreased range of motion, increased difficulty with activities such as standing/walking/climbing stairs, and the development of a pronounced limp. If the disease progresses to the point where there is partial collapse of the femoral head, ambulation can become virtually impossible without the assistance of aids such as crutches or a walker.

Routine laboratory studies are not typically utilized in an evaluation for avascular necrosis unless some underlying disorder is suspected as the etiology such as sickle cell disease, systemic lupus erythematosus (Lupus), Paget's disease, rheumatoid arthritis, HIV, etc. Plain radiographs (X-rays) are often the first imaging test to be performed although they are often normal in the early stages of the disease process. They are utilized in an effort to assess for possible evidence of femoral head collapse and/or hip joint space narrowing. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is the gold standard test for the assessment of possible avascular necrosis of the femoral head. MRI can detect early avascular necrosis that is not detectable on standard X-rays and has not progressed to the point of causing the patient to develop symptoms. MRI is extremely sensitive and can detect the beginning of avascular necrosis as early as 5 days after the initiating ischemic event. Radionuclide

bone scans are significantly less sensitive and specific in detecting avascular necrosis as compared to MRI. However, bone scans may be utilized in patients that have contraindications to MRI scans. Computed tomography imaging (CT scans) are less sensitive than MRI for the detection of avascular necrosis. However, CT scans may be utilized to detect early subchondral collapse of the femoral head because CT scans are the gold standard for the assessment of bone architecture. Additionally, CT scans result in a significant radiation exposure to the patient. Rarely, angiographic studies and bone biopsies may be utilized to confirm the diagnosis of avascular necrosis.

In the next issue of *RiteNow* we will continue our discussion of avascular necrosis of the femoral head by reviewing the current state of treatment options for this disease. I will also relate my personal experience with this disease to conclude the discussion. □



Avascular Necrosis (Osteonecrosis)

The death of bone tissue caused by reduced blood flow to bones in the joints



SPRING CLASS

Pittsburgh Welcomes Newest Members

The Spring Class honoring Right Worshipful Grand Master, Jeffrey M. Wonderling, 33°, was held on Saturday, X, 00, 2022. We welcomed 00 new 32nd Degree Masons—some of whom received their 4th degree in the earlier virtual classes. The members of this class are shown with dignitaries in the group photograph at left.

Front Row (l to r)—Dominick Treemarchi; Chad Stanton; Scott Somerfiled; Tristan Oudit Jason Oudit; Bill Olinger; Vic Baronie, TPM, Valley of Uniontown; Vincent Monardo, 33°, MSA, Deputy's Representative; David Moore, 33°, TPM, Rodney Boyce 33°, CIC; Jeffrey Wonderling, 33°, RWGM; PJ Roup 33°, Active for PA, RWJGW; Mitchell Goldstein, SP; J. Blair McGill, 33°, Deputy's Representative; Andrew Andronas; Dennis Cole; David Marconi; Jerome Ellis; Ronnell Hunt; Nathan Lottes

Second Row (l to r)—Karl Horman; Darek Eberhart; Don Kemerer; John Trueblood; Shane Cribbs; Shaun Killmeyer; William Dorsch; James Donley; Brandon Crawford; C. Travis Nicholson; Jack Vanchieri Jr.; Frank Kodrich; Michael Dixon; Erik Weber; Franklin Snyder, Jr.

Not shown—Matthew Kohler



TheWord

Observations from Brother and Reverend David A. Eichelberger, 32°

THE SCOTTISH RITE VALUE OF JUSTICE

Long before any of us became Masons, much less Scottish Rite Masons, Justice became an important concept in our minds. We may not remember some of the earliest instances of that awareness, but any parent will tell you that children soon spout “It is no fair” over all manner of situations, whether they are complaining about differing bedtimes, portions of a favorite treat, or who gets to sit on Grandma’s lap first.

Our seemingly innate sense of fairness points us in the direction of justice. Lawyers in law school spend hours fine-tuning the definition of what is and what isn’t justice. So too have sages from all ages of human history.

I remember being in church school and learning the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” You can well understand the surprise of my developing mind when I read that many other cultures than the Judeo-Christian one had similar sayings.

Truly we humans yearn for rules and for them to be interpreted and enforced fairly. Every play yard kickball or baseball game began by setting the rules, such as what were considered the official bases (someone’s backpack, a flat rock, and a paint mark on the blacktop). Others detailed what was a ground rule double (if you hit the basketball backstop) and what was not allowed. Unfortunately, rules get broken, and umpires are needed to issue just decrees which are not always accepted.

Our Scottish Rite degrees encourage us to establish a strong code of justice within ourselves. We must be very much self-aware of what we are doing and how it

will affect others. If we make a mistake, we are quickly to make amends as best as we are able.

We are also urged to mentor one another in developing and maintaining this justice. As Masons, we swore not to harm one another, keep one another’s interests at heart, and do whatever we could to help those in need.

Lawyers in law school spend hours fine-tuning the definition of what is and what isn’t justice.

We are admonished to speak up if we see injustices happening, even when it wraps itself in the flag of country or the black robe of the law. As Rev. Dr. Dietrich Bonhoeffer learned in 1940s Germany, the value of being a law-abiding country can be distorted if it harms a minority or leads to an injustice to the true sense of justice. We must carefully consider the true impact of any law, who it will benefit, and who will be hurt before we agree that it is just. If I make a big noise about the beautiful park I am going to build in our town but neglect to say I am going to tear down 200 houses in your neighborhood and not give fair payment, that is not a good outcome for you, no matter how splendid the park.

Judges who are swayed by political motives, district attorneys who want to make a name for themselves by prosecuting low-level criminals but never go after the people who are most benefitting from the crime, legislators who are more interested in seeing themselves on television for 30 seconds than caring for the concerns of their constituents are each possible causes of injustice.

So too are the injustices that you and I commit by what we do or what we fail to do every day. Have we spoken to our community leaders about the need for mental health care for the homeless? Are we concerned enough about our homeless veterans to write to our congressmen to urge action? Are we being careful to balance the time we spend on the job with our family, in prayer, in recreation so that we can be better prepared to assist the cause of justice?

As Masons, we swore not to harm one another, keep one another's interests at heart, and do whatever we could to help those in need.

Justice, balance, fairness, living on the level, and treating one another by the square are important virtues for us as Scottish Rite Masons. Think on these things. Look carefully around you and see what you can do to restore balance to the scales of justice.

□



On Justice

by
D. Todd Ballenger, 33rd

“To err is human; to forgive, divine.”

—Alexander Pope



D. Todd Ballenger, 33*

**“Many that live deserve death.
And some that die deserve life.
Can you give it to them?
Then do not be too eager to deal out death in judgement.
For even the very wise cannot see all ends.”**

—J.R.R. Tolkien

The most interesting thing about justice as a concept is that everyone seems to have an opinion of how and when to apply it without actually being able to define precisely what it is. In ancient civilizations, justice was thought of by Plato and Aristotle as a balance between thought and action whereby “virtue, harmony, unity, and happiness can be established in the society.” (*The Concept of Justice in Greek Philosophy (Plato and Aristotle)*, Afifeh Hamedi, *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 2014). Think of it: societal harmony—the idea that everyone fills their roles so that society will run smoothly until someone steps out of the social order and is considered *unjust*—that is, not behaving according to what is morally right and fair.

You may begin to see the problem.

Who decides what is *morally right* and what is *fair*? Are morals the same for you and me? What exactly is fairness, anyway?

Like I said, how do we talk about justice if we don't really know what it is?

As it turns out, many modern philosophical discussions of justice end up talking about what is *fair* as being almost synonymous with what is *just*. From here, it's easy to fall down the rabbit hole of socio-political ideology as it

seems everyone has their own idea of justice and fairness. For example, several different schools of thought on the subject include (thank you, *Crash Course: Philosophy*, PBS Digital Studios, 2016):

Utilitarian Justice - Justice tries to increase the overall quality of life for citizens;

Political Libertarian - Justice that allows citizens their maximum freedom;

Distributive Justice - Justice as Equality (everyone should get the same kind and amount of stuff); Need-Based Justice (everyone should not get the same because our needs aren't the same); Merit-Based Justice (stuff distributed based on what each person deserves);

Retributive (Corrective) Justice - Justice where the wrongdoer suffers in proportion to how he has made others suffer;

Restorative Justice - Justice focused on making amends rather than making the wrongdoer suffer.

Head spinning, yet? Yeah, me, too. And we still don't have a good idea of what justice really is.

Let's look at it this way. It is a given that justice is a reflection of the ideas of morality and fairness as applied in society. The problem is that human beings do not agree on a uniform moral code and most certainly do not share consistent ideas of what is or is not fair. “But what is?” asks the inquiring mind. “Ah, what about Divine Justice?”

comes the mystical answer. Divine justice might indeed provide a more stable idea of the overarching concept of justice—that is, if mankind shared a universal view of the Divine.

So, let's try to simplify things to come up with something more manageable. I believe it is a universal idea that *justice* reflects a society's sense of moral rightness and fairness. However, within that broad brushstroke is the acknowledgment that there exist two standards of justice: one based on mankind's views and another based on a divine view. Given that mankind's viewpoint is rather subjective in light of changing attitudes towards, well, everything, it makes more sense to shift our focus to orient on the idea of divine justice as a guide.

Fortunately, this was the general idea the founding fathers of Freemasonry had as well. Take, for example, Brother Rex Hutchens' interpretation of the lecture in the 31st Degree, *Inspector Inquisitor* (SJ):

"The laws of man are but the pale shadows of the great and unerring Laws of Nature which are beyond all human comprehension. Justice is not only the fundamental law of the natural universe but also of the moral universe. One great difficulty for man is to possess the perspective which allows him to understand when his laws, being contrary to divine justice, are themselves unjust and the enforcement of them but a form of legal tyranny." (A Bridge to Light, Rex R. Hutchens, 2010, p. 299).

Or, from Brother Albert Pike himself:

"It is entirely true to say that justice is the constitution or fundamental law of the moral Universe, the law of right, a rule of conduct for man, in all his moral relations... The difficulty is that we ever erect our notions of what is right and just into the law of justice, and insist that God shall adapt that as His law; instead of striving to learn by observation and reflection what His law is... We are too wise in our own conceit, and ever strive to enact our own little

notions of the Universal Laws of God." (*Morals and Dogma*, pp.829-830).

Here we see that one fundamental issue with a unified Divine Justice is that mankind keeps mucking up the works by interjecting secular interpretations and dogmatic restrictions into the message, thereby changing the Truth of the Divine to fit the lifestyles of the imperfect. What are we to do? Is there no way to open ourselves to the Truth that we, as human beings, cannot corrupt to fit our own opinions? Perhaps not, but I do believe there is a place to start.

While we may feel overwhelmed at the differences in attitudes toward what each of us views as fair or just, the answer may lie not in recognizing our innumerable differences but in finding what we have in common.

"To ride abroad, redressing human wrong;

**To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it;
But teach high thoughts
and amiable words,**

And love and Truth and all that makes aman."

—Alfred, Lord Tennyson (extract from the 31st Degree, *Knight Aspirant*, NMJ)

What do we have in common?

The recurring idea that *justice* and *fairness* are interchangeable terms would lead me to think that both are focused on how the individual feels he or she is being treated. When you hear someone say, "That's not fair," I'd be willing to bet that someone feels they have been mistreated. What's the best solution for the situation?

Well, I'd like to suggest fixing it with a razor—every time.

Of course, I'm speaking of Occam's Razor. Yep, the 14th Century logician William of Ockham who postulated that

'all things being equal, the simplest solution tends to be the best one.' And what, pray tell, might that simple solution be? Well, I suggest that if you want to be treated fairly (taken seriously, considered equally, etc.), you first have to extend that courtesy to everyone around you and those with whom you interact. Everyone; no selective audiences, preferred customers, or family discounting allowed. Everyone. This is, in fact, the most basic form of Divine Justice documented in the world today. It remains the simplest solution to a recurring problem that we choose to ignore on a regular basis simply because it is inconvenient and often runs counter to our preferred outcome.

So what is this treasured piece of divine wisdom that represents ultimate justice and fairness, and where do we find such a golden nugget of Truth? How about here:

“Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.”

Udana-Varga 5:18 (Buddhism)

“Do naught unto others which would cause you pain if done to you.”

Mahabharata 5:1517 (Hinduism)

“Do not do to others what you would not like yourself.”

Analects 12:2 (Confucianism)

Or perhaps here:

“Regard your neighbor’s gain as your own, and your neighbor’s loss as your own loss.”

T'ai Shang Kan Ying P'ien 213-218 (Taoism)

“One should treat all creatures in the world as one would like to be treated.”

Mahavira, Suttrakritanga (Jainism)

“Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself.”

Shayast-na-Shayast 13.29 (Zoroastrianism)

Maybe one of these will be familiar:

“Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.”

The Prophet Muhammad, Hadith (Islam)

“What is hateful to you, do not to your neighbor.”

Hillel, Talmud, Shabbat 31a (Judaism)

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Matthew 7:12 (Christianity)

If we are to find universal justice and true fairness in this world, then we need to come to grips with the fact that, as human beings, we are fallible and not likely to agree on a common moral code. Yes, society functions under sets of laws designed to replicate such morés and necessary restrictions put in place to protect the public welfare. However, if you want to be treated fairly no matter where you go, then you need to start by looking within. You need to find the Divine lesson of fairness within yourself, and there is no greater lesson than the one that appears in almost every major religion and belief system on the planet: We call it The Golden Rule.

Wherever you may travel or whomever you may come into contact with, this one simple idea that holds true in practically every segment of our world is the very basis of fairness and, by extension, justice. Treat others how you wish to be treated. In a world of lawlessness and disrespect, of cries for justice and fairness, we seem to have conveniently overlooked the one critical idea common to the divine writings and wisdom of the prophets and sages who fill the pages of our Volumes of Sacred Law with spiritual guidance. Yes, a singular answer to the question “What is justice?” is unlikely to be the same from one person to another. However, if you put Divine Justice above Man’s Justice, you may find that the pillars of a firm foundation are there for you to use no matter where you come from, where you go, or what you do. We are all charged with a Divine lesson in how to be just and fair - this is your spiritual foundation. What you build on it is up to you. □

UniontownUpdate

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

VALLEY OF UNIONTOWN

► Friend to Friend

By Vic Baronie, 32°

Justice, doing the right thing, fairness, mercy, restraint, taking up a righteous cause, order out of chaos—is a value that our country’s founding fathers believed in very deeply. As we look around our country today, this Core Value seems to be missing. However, justice is a value that you can find in abundance within Freemasonry.

One great example of justice in action is displayed in the Friend to Friend Masonic Memorial in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The

Brothers involved put aside all differences and united together through their common brotherhood and love for each other. As Freemasons, we unite in the cause of making good men great and doing the right thing to help our communities.

Justice is not always easy to obtain, and we should never take the task of doing so lightly. As Freemasons, we can be examples in our communities and put justice into action by showing love, respect, and fairness to all those that we meet. □



Our Youth

News and information about the Masonic Youth in our Valley

Ultimate Frisbee Weekend

The weekend of April 22 to April 24 was significant for Pennsylvania DeMolay. It marked the first statewide fun activity held at Patton Campus in nearly two years. The members gathered on campus from across Pennsylvania for an energetic and fun-filled weekend of Ultimate Frisbee.

Teams were decided Saturday morning, with four teams set to play frisbee. Led by the State Officer Corps, members enjoyed a fun-filled day of competition, brotherhood, learning, and excitement. Along with the frisbee games, workshops were presented to DeMolays on topics such as planning fundraisers, how to promote DeMolay, and promotional information about the 100th anniversary. The anniversary will take place in 2023. For more information on this, visit <https://pademolay.org/100-for-100/>.

After the frisbee games and workshops, a nerf battle zone was created for Demolays to challenge each other in the Function Room, making it even more fun for all in attendance. The members and advisors enjoyed themselves, and it was great to see that energy back in DeMolay at a Patton Campus Weekend. □



pademolay.org

Rainbow Supports “My Stuff Bags”

“Rainbow Gets Girls Ready for Life” is the motto for the Supreme Assembly of the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls. All the values and teachings are geared as life lessons.

Rainbow Girls learn that they can accomplish more by working together and that what they do does make a difference. Rainbow strives to give girls between the ages of 11 and 21 the tools, training, and encouragement to shine brighter, quicker.

One lesson we encourage is to work together for worthy, righteous causes, volunteering and working to better the lives of others. The state charity of PA Rainbow is the “My Stuff Bags Foundation,” a very righteous cause. This charity supports children in trauma when they are separated from all they know: parents, possessions, home, and all that they were accustomed to. In cases where children are taken from dangerous situations and placed in foster care, crisis shelters, or homeless shelters they will often have nothing more than the clothes on their backs. Nothing. No favorite stuffed animal, blanket, or book in their possession. This is where “My Stuff Bags” helps. Each child is given a big blue duffel bag filled with age and gender appropriate comforts such as blankets, stuffed animals, games, books, toiletries, crayons, etc. This Foundation has rescued hundreds of thousands of children from severe abuse, neglect, abandonment, or homelessness. The bags are not only filled with appropriate items, but with hope and love, and they become theirs to keep.

Each year, the officer appointed as Grand Charity is challenged to spearhead a campaign to raise funds for this organization. In the last ten years PA Rainbow has sent over \$12,000 to assist in this worthy cause. This year, in addition to collecting soda/pop tabs, girls are filling piggy banks with coins (or paper money) and cash or check donations. The goal to reach is \$3,000 before July 2022. Reaching this goal will result in a “Snowball Blizzard” at Grand Assembly (think powered sugar tied in pantyhose).

This is one more way PA Rainbow Girls provide Service to Others! □

parainbowgirls.org





Austin R. Shifrin, 33°

Justice, Justice You Shall Pursue

by Austin Shifrin, 33°

Brother Michael Mochan of Harry S. Truman lodge No. 765 recently published a book called *The Heart and Soul of Freemasonry: Philosophy and Jurisprudence*. He wrote this book as part of his studies with the Academy of Masonic Knowledge (affiliated with the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania). I am pleased to recommend it strongly to anyone who wants to come to a deeper understanding of the logic and reasoning that underpins the why and the how of our fraternity as an organization.

Regarding the *why*, the book uses the framework of classic philosophy to outline in great detail what a man should learn in Freemasonry—well beyond the glib catchphrase of “making good men better.” Regarding the *how*, Mochan explores the roots and the forms of legal systems in human history, and how they then manifest in our institution.

In the course of laying out his analysis, Brother Mochan touches on two influences that drove humankind to develop legal systems. From the perspective of science,

he points out that as ground-based hominids evolved from tree-dwelling apes:

“...the need for cooperation among hunting males spelled the demise of the alpha ape societal model, because those physically weaker male members who would have previously been banished to the periphery of the group were now valuable team members. In short, close-knit cooperation became central for mutual survival.”

His account focuses on the Old Testament, in which we are led to understand that God dictated the Ten Commandments to Moses, to instruct the people.

The other influence he points to that catalyzed the development of legal systems is that of religion. His account focuses on the Old Testament, in which we are led to understand that God dictated the Ten Commandments to Moses, to instruct the people. The aforementioned scientific perspective implies that laws were developed to serve the practical purpose of regulating social cooperation. The religious perspective may be interpreted several ways; the faithful tend to take a stance that the laws are a gift, as conforming to them improves our lives and merits reward. I will come back to address this notion later.

The preceding arguments nicely tee-up the chapter “Masonic Jurisprudence” where the author establishes that, per the criteria developed by the legal scholar H.L.A. Hart, the characteristics of Masonic law constitute a bona fide legal system, in that: members generally abide by the system; that they do so because they feel the obligation, rather than (only) to avoid consequences; and that there exists “a formal system of rules for adjudication and change.”

However much we might perceive the hierarchical structure of our Fraternity, and the power and authority that we vest in its chief executive, it does give a greater feeling of legitimacy and validity to the enterprise to be reminded there is a system of balanced and regulated exercise of powers. And, on reflection, there is further justification for placing a value on things like logic and rhetoric, when we posit that having a valid legal system, and being able to manage and navigate it, legitimizes the fraternity in this way.

Thinking of all this calls to mind a lesson from many years ago, in a social studies class—I remember when they taught us of the Code of Hammurabi. Hammurabi was a king who ruled Babylon from 1792 to 1750 BCE. He had his code of laws inscribed in a great stone pillar for public display. We were taught that this served several purposes: The populace were more agreeable to being governed by a set of laws that were broadly known, and all could anticipate what was expected of them; none could feign ignorance. The code is referenced as having a very tit-for-tat quality, and would be characterized

in jurisprudence as being “positive law” (in contrast to “natural law”). In other words, a defining feature of Hammurabi’s code was—if you engage in this behavior, this will be the outcome.

Departing from the academic perspective, this is somewhat like the lay definition, or our more intuitive understanding of the concept of justice: I want to know that whether I choose to follow the rules, or disobey them, I can anticipate what kind of results I might expect.

Surely, in man-made arrangements such as a justice system, this kind of causality is carefully and intentionally baked into their design. But even in this context, our expectations may be subverted or disappointed. We know, for instance, that in the American justice system, the burden of proof falls upon a plaintiff or prosecutor. They must demonstrate to a jury, to some standard of evidence or proof, that their version of events must be what took place; in a criminal case in the U.S., this standard is “beyond a reasonable doubt.” In the absence of meeting that standard, the accused is to be presumed innocent. This state of affairs may prove very unsatisfactory to aggrieved parties. For example, in a case where someone is alleged to have broken a law, and there is some evidence supporting this allegation, common sense may suggest to us that they have likely committed the act of which they are accused. But because of the severity of potential penalties, our system tempers justice with mercy by presuming innocence unless any other reasonable conclusion but guilt is disproven.





also, that innocent people sometimes suffer tragedies undeservedly.

We think of concepts that appeal to us intuitively, such as one shared by several Indian religions, known as Karma—that your actions shape the nature and quality of your future. Simply put, such a direct tie between cause and effect appeals to our desire for this “fairness.” For some practitioners who believe in reincarnation as well, the system has the added feature of explaining in a satisfactory manner why “good” outcomes sometimes happen for “bad” people, and vice-versa—because it must be a result of actions taken and Karma accrued in a previous life. It will also motivate ethical behavior in this life, in spite of challenging conditions or feeling a lack of immediate reward, in the hopes of being born into a better next life.

I was once told by a Chabad Rabbi that we must not engage in prayer and good deeds expecting to get immediate and predictable results, because “God is not a vending machine.” A quick internet search confirms that a similar sentiment is shared in many contemporary Christian sermons as well. It is narcissism and folly to imagine that God owes us things in return for things. Are we not beholden to him for many gifts already? In a more appropriate tone of humility, we must accept that there are aspects of our fate and that of others that are quite beyond our control. As for that which I can control, I will strive to follow the instruction we are given in D’varim (Deuteronomy) 16:20—“Justice, justice you shall pursue, that you may live.” □

The merit of the seeming bias of this high standard is that if we relax the standard for the burden of proof, there exists the risk that citizens might be deprived of their liberties on flimsy pretexts. The drawback is that plaintiffs will sometimes feel cheated out of justice when common sense indicates that the accused has indeed broken the law, but it cannot be proven sufficiently in court.

At this point, we are straying somewhat semantically from the concept of “justice” into the concept of “fairness”—has the ethical actor reaped rewards or punishments that seem fitting to us, given their choices? It is difficult for us emotionally to grapple with the prospect that sometimes unethical people get away with their misdeeds successfully and without repercussions;



Brother of the Forest

24th Degree

by John Dinkel, 32°, HGA

► The degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction (NMJ), consist of twenty-nine interlocking morality plays that teach six Core Values that are representative of the ideals believed by the NMJ to have relevance in the lives of Scottish Rite Masons. These Core Values are: Reverence to God, Justice, Integrity, Service to Humanity, Tolerance, and Devotion to Country, and have been assigned by the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction but have not been in our sister jurisdiction (SJ).

The 24th degree, known as the *Brother of the Forest*, is a newer iteration of a Scottish Rite ritual from 1909 which uses two dramatic discussions, one within an open Lodge and one in a forest setting, to compare and contrast the relative merits of different religious faiths. This is done to impress upon the candidates the need for understanding and tolerance of another's religion and system of morality, particularly those that are perceived to be very different from our own.

The initial scene is set in the late 1700s, probably somewhere in New York or Pennsylvania, just following the events of the American Revolution. Despite

depredations by the native American Indian tribes along the western and northern borders, some on both sides still hope to restrain the newly founded government of the United States from further encroachment into traditional Native American territories and, by that means, to make it possible for all to live in peace. Some on both sides, however, still harbor strong animosities against their traditional enemies.

The initial scene is set in the late 1700s, probably somewhere in New York or Pennsylvania, just following the events of the American Revolution.

The location is a Masonic Lodge room that is considering a petition for membership and degrees, one that has been tendered by a Native American man who is known to some of the members present. This scene segues into a flashback that shows the universality of religious belief in the Great Architect of the Universe, regardless of which sacred name He is known.

The heated debate that ensues in both the Lodge room and in the forest flashback scene demonstrates how easy it is to be closed-minded to another human being's beliefs, in some cases even to the point of violence. With a little consideration, we can easily comprehend the reasons behind so many of mankind's wars against those who are perceived to be *different*, as exemplified

by the deadly bigotry that allowed and encouraged atrocities like the “Holocaust” in World War II, and by the deliberate genocide practiced by the United States against the Native American Indian tribes on the North American continent under the mantle of “Manifest Destiny.”¹

These scenes also quite clearly show the reasoning behind the long-held universal ban on any discussion regarding both religion and politics while a Lodge is in open session, for these are subjects (perhaps more than any others) that have the potential to prevent those present from “meeting on the level and parting on the square,” which all Freemasons are obligated to obey.

Tolerance for another Mason’s beliefs in a Supreme Being—a primary requirement for admission into our beloved fraternity—is what permits a Lodge meeting to take place with members of the Jewish faith, Christians, followers of Islam, and others sitting together in peace and harmony. Without this tolerance, and considering the history of the world when such disparate belief systems have not been permitted to coexist, a Lodge meeting as described in this degree could simply not occur. But in the world of Freemasonry, this toleration and acceptance happens all the time in diverse places, to the benefit of all who espouse Masonic values, as well as the rest of humanity. This tolerance is held up by the Scottish Rite as an example to all people of what can be done in the spirit of love and peace, instead of one of rancor and disunity. Scottish Rite Freemasonry also uses this 24th degree as a cautionary tale, reminding us that it is far more difficult to misuse people once you accept them as equals.

We, as Freemasons, are bound and obligated to practice the Core Values of Reverence to GOD, and Tolerance, both within and without the confines of the

Lodge experience. This is more than just something suggested by our pledged allegiance to the Scottish Rite—it is also an integral part of our entire Masonic experience in both the Scottish and York Rites. When our Blue Lodge committee of examination asked us whether we believed in a Supreme Being, they were determining whether or not we were viable candidates for admission into Freemasonry. When properly done in the candidate’s home, his family was also be present as a means of determining their feelings about our fraternity and other people, as well as their willingness to tolerate his entrance into what is meant to be a solemn and life-changing experience.

**We, as Freemasons,
are bound and obligated
to practice the Core Values
of Reverence to GOD,
and Tolerance, both within
and without the confines
of the Lodge experience.**

Passing this examination successfully was more than just a formality; being found a favorable candidate opened the door to Freemasonry with its privileges, along with its attendant responsibilities, including reverence to GOD, and tolerance of individuals and ideas with which we might not totally agree. The mantle of Freemasonry allows us this tolerance without our trying to change those persons or ideas to match our own. It permits us to ponder whether there might be more to things than are suggested at first glance, and then asks us to seek out a middle ground in our relationships with the world around us.

The Scottish Rite NMJ has wisely shown in a very visible way that these Core Values are important to our lives as men and Masons. Regardless of how the world turns these days, we have these values as laudable examples of how we are to live our lives, to the betterment of our families, our towns, our country, and of course, ourselves. Let us remember the lessons taught in the 24th degree, *Brother of the Forest*, and may those important lessons point us always toward a better way of life for all mankind. □

¹ A doctrine or belief from the 19th Century that held that the expansion of the American government and way of life throughout the entire North American continent was inevitable, and was justified by means of a “divine mandate” from GOD. This philosophy drove American Expansionism and the forced removal of Native American Indian tribes from their ancestral lands, intensified the issues of chattel slavery, and helped bring about the American Civil War of 1861-1865.

SCOTTISH RITE, NORTHERN MASONIC JURISDICTION PRESENTS



THE SCOTTISH RITE, NMJ 25th DEGREE

MASTER OF ACHIEVEMENT

Northern Masonic Jurisdiction
**SCOTTISH
RITE**

ValleyNews

A collection of recent happenings in the Valley of Pittsburgh

CDC Celebration of Achievement

On May 16, the Children's Dyslexia Center—Pittsburgh held its annual Celebration of Achievement. In addition to rejoicing in the progress of all the students, the Center graduated two of its students.

To donate to the Children's Dyslexia Center, visit childrensdyslexiacenters.org/donate. Be sure to select Pittsburgh as your center.



The Valley of Pittsburgh and Steel City DeMolay Honor Mothers

Members of the Valley of Pittsburgh and the Steel City Chapter of the DeMolay partnered together to spread warmth and joy on Mother's Day by handing out flowers to mothers and grandmothers at the Masonic Village at Sewickley.



Cadet Receives Americanism Award

On May 5, Brother Jordan Frei, 32°, presented the Scottish Rite Americanism Award to Cadet Madelyn R. Ostapchenko of Pine-Richland High School. To receive the Scottish Rite Americanism Award, the recipient must contribute the most among cadets in demonstrating Americanism in the school and community; be in the top 25% of his or her class; and must demonstrate potential for outstanding leadership by exhibiting dependability, character, self-discipline, good citizenship, and patriotism.



Black Hats Awarded

At the Spring Reunion, the following members completed the requirements to receive their black hats: [Names](#)

To enroll in the program, contact the Valley office at 412-939-3579.



The Latest

Important happenings coming soon to the Valley of Pittsburgh

AUG

5

Reservations are requested.

Please contact the Valley Office:
secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org
412-939-3579

CigaRite

Bring your own cigars and adult beverages and join your fellow cigar lovers for an evening of good conversations, snacks, and smokes on the patio at the Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center. This laid-back evening is the perfect way to relax and refresh yourself. Non-Scottish Rite Masons and nonsmokers are welcome too.

TIME: 6:00PM to 11:00PM

LOCATION: GPMC

COST: Small donation for Pizza, BYOB & Cigars

RSVP: August 1

AUG

21

No reservations are required.

Please contact the Valley Office for more information: secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org
412-939-3579

Washington Wild Things Baseball Game

Join us at our annual trip to the ballpark in Washington, Pa. This once-a-year family event should be a "don't miss" on your calendar. A genuine picnic style meal will be served prior to the first pitch.

TIME: 3:00PM Picnic / 5:00PM Ballgame

LOCATION: Consol Energy Park, Washington, PA

COST: \$10 per person

RSVP: **SOLD OUT**

SEP

9

Reservations are requested.

Please contact the Valley Office:
secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org
412-939-3579

CigaRite

Bring your own cigars and adult beverages and join your fellow cigar lovers for an evening of good conversations, snacks, and smokes on the patio at the Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center. This laid-back evening is the perfect way to relax and refresh yourself. Non-Scottish Rite Masons and nonsmokers are welcome too.

TIME: 6:00PM to 11:00PM

LOCATION: GPMC

COST: Small donation for Pizza, BYOB & Cigars

RSVP: September 2

SEP

24

Reservations are required.

Please contact the Valley Office:
secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org
412-939-3579

Degree Presentation

Join us after the breakfast for two LIVE degree presentations. Candidates will be initiated at 10:00 a.m. All Scottish Rite members and candidates will be treated to a complimentary all-you-can-eat breakfast from 9:00-10:30am.

TIME: 9:00-10:00AM Breakfast / 10:00AM Degrees

LOCATION: GPMC

COST: None

RSVP: September 21

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

AUG

27

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

SEP
1

Reservations are required for Dinner only!

Please contact the Valley Office:
secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org
412-939-3579

September Stated Meeting

Join us at our September Stated meeting where we will recognize those members who have served in the ranks of the Scottish Rite for 50, 60, 65, & 70 years. The dress code will be slacks and collared shirts for the members.

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

LOCATION: GPMC

COST: \$15 for Dinner. No charge to attend meeting.

RSVP: August 30

Editor's Note: This meeting date may change to September 8. Please check with the Valley Office in advance.

OCT
1

Reservations are required.

Please contact the Valley Office:
secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org
412-939-3579

Children's Dyslexia Center Walkathon

Come out to support the Children's Dyslexia Center. Food, drinks, prizes, silent auction, and fun galore. Please register as an individual or a team by September 15, 2022.

TIME: 8:30AM Registration / 10:00AM Walk Begins

LOCATION: GPMC

COST: Fundraiser, donations accepted

RSVP: September 15, Individual/Team Registration

SEP
24

OCT
29

NOV
26

Looking Ahead

OCT
7

CigaRite

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7
7-11PM
GPMC

OCT
9

Annual Valley Golf Outing

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9
8AM Registration, 9AM Shotgun Start
Butler's Golf Course

NOV
3

November Stated Meeting

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3
6PM Dinner, 7PM Meeting
GPMC

The Center

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

VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

Walkathon

By Patricia Broskey

For more information:

412-931-3181

Patricia Broskey, Director
pittsburgh@cdcinc.org



19th Annual Dyslexia Walkathon

Saturday, October 1, 2022

Registration 8:30 a.m.

Walk starts at 10:00 a.m.

5K (or 3.1 miles)

Basket Raffle, 50/50 Raffle,
Refreshments, DJ, and Clowns!
All donations are tax deductible.
Registration fee is \$25; Pre-
registration by September 30th is
\$15; for children under 12 the
fee is \$10; for children under
5 the fee is free.

Bring your family, friends, and
neighbors for a fun filled day!
For information on the walk contact
Austin Shifrin at (412) 496-8767
To donate a basket for the raffle
contact Cab Whitaker at (412) 605-
4485

This year's walk is held in memory
of former walkathon chair, Ill. Eric
Krauss Cohen, 33°. □

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT



The 988 Lifeline

988 is now active across the United States. This new,
shorter phone number will make it easier for people to
remember and access mental health crisis services.
(Please note, the previous 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
number will continue to function indefinitely.)

Fraternal 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

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 www.partylinecatering.net

CHIMNEY REPOINTING & REBUILDING

Coffey Contracting Co. Inc. 412-341-1127
Tom Coffey www.coffeycontracting.com

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 Harry C. Neel 412-655-4500

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

Warco-Falvo Funeral Home 724-225-1500
Washington, PA S. Timothy Warco

Young Funeral Home Ltd 724-283-3333
Butler, PA William F. Young III

GRAPHIC DESIGN / CREATIVE SERVICES

Square Peg Design 724-925-0224
Rodney E. Boyce www.squarepegdesign.com

HOME REMODELERS

Unglo Construction LLC 412-977-8924
Bethel Park Paul M. Unglo II

INSURANCE

Rodgers Insurance Group 412-922-1651
James M. Wehur roddersgrp.com

State Farm Insurance 724-864-9000
Irwin, PA Brian Winfield

PLUMBING

John R. Meyers Plumbing, Inc. 412-787-2370
Sturgeon, PA jrmeyers161@verizon.net

REAL ESTATE

K.W. Keller Williams Realty 412-884-3800
Mac McClrath www.mcllrathrealtygroup.com

ROOFING

Coffey Contracting Co. Inc. 412-341-1127
Tom Coffey www.coffeycontracting.com

SHOE REPAIRS

Mazza Shoe Repairing 412-341-7493
Vincent M. Mazza 618 Brookline Blvd.

TRUCKING / TARPULIN SYSTEMS

Merlot Vango 1-800-443-8277
Automatic Tarps for Dump Trucks & Flatbeds
Truck Tarpaulin Systems, Digital Vinyl Sign
Printing, all sizes, Flatbeds: 8' to 24' Aluminum
Vince Merlot 50 year member
10 Plum St., Verona, PA 15147

VIDEOGRAPHY

Dreamscape Productions 412-965-1860
P.J. Roup pjroup@gmail.com

For advertising rates and information, please contact the Valley Office at 412-939-3579 or by email at secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org

VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH OFFICERS

August 1, 2021 - July 31, 2022

Gourgass Lodge of Perfection 14°

David L. Moore, 33° Thrice Potent Master
Eric S. Teasdale, 33° Deputy Master
Peter A. Leary, 33°, MSA Senior Warden
Christopher A. McNeal, 32° Junior Warden
David C. Allison, 32° Orator
Erich W. Gumto, 33° Master of Ceremonies
David E. Thumm Jr., 32° Guard

Pennsylvania Council, Princes of Jerusalem

Mitchell D. Goldstein, 32° Sovereign Prince
Richard F. Kucera, 32° High Priest
Robert H. Nelson, 32° Senior Warden
B. Scott Allen, 32° Junior Warden
Aaron J. Antimary, 32° Master of Ceremonies
Robert B. McGinnis, 32° Master of Entrances

Pittsburgh Chapter of Rose Croix 18°

Kristin M. Douglas, 32° Most Wise Master
Jordan L. Frei, 32° Senior Warden
Charles F. Zurcher, 32° Junior Warden
Benjamin J. Douglas, 32° Master of Ceremonies
Richard J. Saxberg, 32° Guard

Pennsylvania Consistory 32°

Rodney E. Boyce, 33° Commander-in-Chief
William G. Johnston, 33° 1st Lieutenant Commander
Joshua S. Freeman, 32° 2nd Lieutenant Commander
Thomas B. Baker, 32° Chancellor
Greer C. R. Lukens, 32° Master of Ceremonies
Thomas J. Anke, 32° Engineer & Seneschal
Robert W. Lovic, 32° Standard Bearer
Robert D. Nichol, 32° Guard
George W. Polnar, 33° Treasurer
David W. Morgans, 33° Secretary
Vito A. Urso, 33° Hospitaler
Dennis R. Johnston, 33° Tiler
Robert F. Dunkle, 33° MFS Representative
Robert B. Ruff, 33° MFS Representative
Ronald A. Plesh, 32°, MSA MFS Representative

Executive Committee

Rodney E. Boyce, 33°, Chairman
William G. Johnston, 33° Joshua S. Freeman, 32°
David L. Moore, 33° Eric S. Teasdale, 33°
Mitchell D. Goldstein, 32° Richard F. Kucera, 32°
Kristin M. Douglas, 32° Jordan L. Frei, 32°
George W. Polnar, 33° David W. Morgans, 33°
Brian A. Maxwell, 32°, Trustee Paul J. Roup, 33°, Active

Trustees

Brian A. Maxwell, 32°, Chairman
Austin R. Shifrin, 33°, Vice Chairman
Patrick G. Blackwell, 33° Thomas M. Gasmire, 33°
Glenn D. Miller, II, 33° James C. Mayes, 32°
Rodney E. Boyce, 33° David L. Moore, 33°
Mitchell D. Goldstein, 32° Kristin M. Douglas, 32°

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.: Peter J. Samiec, 33°, Sovereign Grand Commander, Ill.: Robert J. Bateman, 33°, Deputy for Pennsylvania. Other Active members for Pennsylvania are: Ill.: Stephen Gardner, 33°, Ill.: Thomas R. Labagh, 33°, Ill.: Keith E. Parkinson, 33°, and Ill.: Paul J. Roup, 33°.

Valley of Pittsburgh
Gourgas Lodge of Perfection
Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center
3579 Masonic Way
Pittsburgh, PA 15237-2700



Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite
Charity Golf Tournament

SPONSORED BY THE GOURGAS LODGE OF PERFECTION

*Please
Join Us!*

Sunday, October 9

Registration at 8AM

Shotgun Start at 9AM

Butler's Golf Course

800 Rock Run Road, Elizabeth

\$100 / per Golfer

Includes:

- **18 Holes of Golf**
- **Greens Fees**
- **Golf Cart**
- **Gift**
- **Bag Drop**
- **Lunch at the Turn**
- **Dinner**

Open to Men, Women, and Non-Members. Foursomes are recommended, however individual golfers are also welcome. Deadline for registration is October 1, 2022. 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.