

163 Years of Scottish Rite Masonry in Pittsburgh

# The Rite News

The Magazine of the Valley of Pittsburgh

VOL. XXIV NO. 3



March 2015



*The Valley of  
Pittsburgh  
Wishes You a  
Happy Easter  
and a  
Blessed Passover*





# Valley of Pittsburgh

Teaching children with dyslexia

The men and organizations pictured to the right are those who have made a \$10,000 or more commitment to support the Valley of Pittsburgh Children's Dyslexia Center Endowment Fund.

As Freemasons, we have always been benevolent and charitable. For Scottish Rite Masons, our Charity is to teach children with dyslexia how to read. It is important in giving them social confidence.

The teaching method is the Orton-Gillingham program. It is a one tutor – one student ratio. This method is very expensive but extremely effective. It costs approximately \$5,000 a year for each child. Our goal is to raise \$2,500,000 to endow the Children's Dyslexia Center for the future.

To make it easier to make this commitment, you can spread out your \$10,000 donation over a ten year period. Call Bro. Ray Dietz, 33°, at 412-369-9500 for information. The future of our children is our most important mission. I encourage each of you to have your picture on this page and be a BUILDER of this Masonic benevolence.

Your donation is tax-deductible.

**Thomas K. Sturgeon, 33°**

*Active Member of Supreme Council*



Robert & Janice Amend



Emery & Carol Anden



David & Carol Bagaley



Robert & Jacqueline Beatty



Jeff & Susan Biddle



Raymond & Lynn Dietz



Fred & Kathy Donatelli



Robert Eckbreth



James Ecker & Donna Murtha



James & Ellen Flanigan



Leland A. Hale, Jr.



Jeff & Lauren Heiger



Raymond & Dorothy James



James & Lisa Jenkins



Robert & P.J. Jones



Frank R. Mangery



Jack Marsh



John & Judy McCombs



Roy & Sara Jane McCullough



Jay & Joanne McElravy



Ronald & Karen Plesh



D. William Roberts



Bruce A. Robinson



Richard & Bette Rodibaugh



Don & Ginny Sauer



Kurt & Nancy Tesche



Gregory Triko



George & Norma Vance



S. Timothy Warco



Bob & Charlene Wells

Homestead Amity  
McCandles  
Lodge No. 582  
F. & A.M.

Lodge  
No. 45  
F. & A.M.

Washington  
Lodge No. 164  
F. & A.M.

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F. & A.M.



## Builders Council Enrollment Form

I pledge the sum of:  \$10,000  \$15,000  
 \$20,000  \$25,000

With payments in equal installments over a period of:

3 years  5 years  10 years.

This pledge will be payable:  Annually  
 Semi-annually  Quarterly  \*Monthly

\*Monthly payments may be made only by credit card.

First payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Deduct my pledge from my credit card when due:

MasterCard  Visa  American Express  
 Discover  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_

Name you would prefer in recognition:

This gift is anonymous.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Ph. ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Builders Council, 3579 Masonic Way,  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237-2700.

# Builders Council

to read – one child at a time!



Mark & Patty Bliler



George H. Cox



Rick & Renee Cross



James & Eda Dean



Mario & Linda DeBlasio



Bill & Heather Dickey



Howard & Sharon Flynn



Donald & Debora Green



Wallace & Leah Grossett



Eric & Raylene Gumto



Harvey & Carol Gumto



John & Ruth Habel



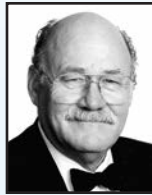
Paul & Penny Kappel



Paul & Jackie Kauffman



David & Sandy Kearns



David & Judy Kielman



John Kovac



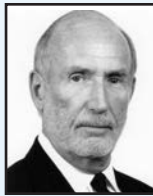
William & Babara Magnotti, Jr.



Glenn & Mary Miller



Dr. Glenn & Roberta Miller



Jack & Carol Miller



Donald & Barbara Murphy



John & Valerie Nicklas



Raymond & Joy Nicklas



Joseph A Schrock, Jr.



James W. Seel



William Shaw



William Slater II



Samuel & Judy Spanos



Thomas & Joan Sturgeon



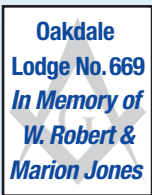
James & Annetta West



James & Jill West



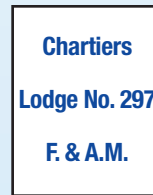
Jeff & Sharon Wonderling



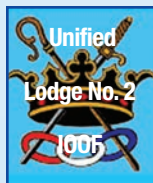
Oakdale  
Lodge No. 669  
In Memory of  
W. Robert &  
Marion Jones



30th  
Masonic  
District



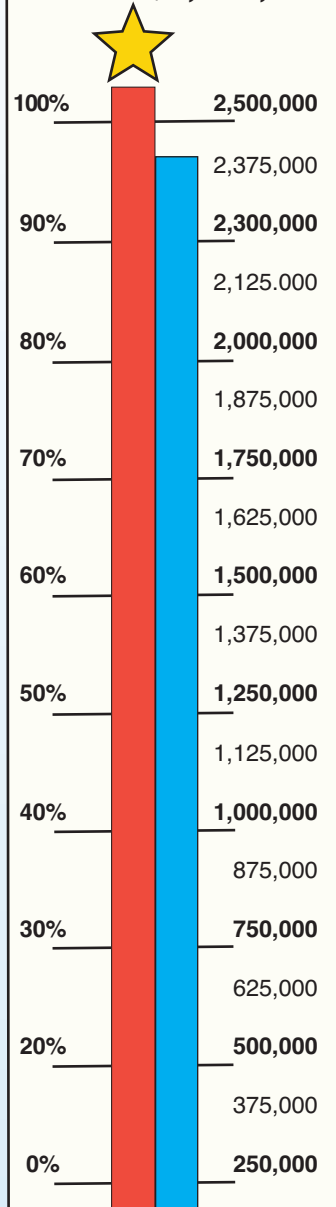
Chartiers  
Lodge No. 297  
F. & A.M.



Help the Endowment Fund for Dyslexia **GROW!**

Make a Pledge or a Donation!

**GOAL: \$2,500,000**



**GOAL \$2,500,000**

**\*RECEIVED**

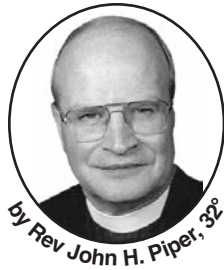
*\*from donations, bequests, pledges & fund raisers.*

**"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."**

– Bro. Winston Churchill



## Happy Easter



by Rev John H. Pipet, 32<sup>nd</sup>

Under the white blanket of winter snow, a world of color and beauty is waiting to spring forth again.

With Spring will come two major religious observances -- Passover and Easter. This year they both will arrive the first weekend of April.

At the heart of the Hebrew Bible is the Exodus event, with its theme of freedom from tyranny and slavery.

Standing at the center of the the Christian New Testament is the Cross with its message of freedom from sin and death.

On Palm Sunday, March 29, the Valley of Pittsburgh will present its annual production of "The Story of the Crucifixion" with its portrayal of Jesus' last week on earth.

This production is a major labor of love for the whole masonic and non-masonic community and merits our whole hearty support.

As the world will soon be renewed and revived by the coming of Spring, I pray that we will renew our commitments to our religious organizations and to our masonic fraternity, with a renewed commitment to the Scottish Rite, its meetings and its activities -- there will come a new, and enriched, vital life to us and our Valley.

*Have a Happy Easter*

## Happy Passover

As springtime rolls around, Passover becomes one of the most anticipated celebrations for the Jewish religion.

Passover begins at sunset Friday, April 3, and ends at nightfall Saturday, April 11. It commemorates the emancipation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt.

After many decades of slavery to the Egyptian pharaohs, during which time the Israelites were subjected to backbreaking labor and unbearable horrors, God saw the people's distress and sent Moses to Pharaoh with a message: "Send forth My people, so that they may serve Me." But despite numerous warnings, Pharaoh refused to heed God's command. God then sent upon Egypt ten devastating plagues, afflicting them and destroying everything from their livestock to their crops.

At the stroke of midnight of 15 Nisan in the year 2448 from creation (1313 BCE), God visited the last of the ten plagues on the Egyptians, killing all their firstborn. While doing so, God spared the Children of Israel, "passing over" their homes—hence the name of the holiday. Pharaoh's resistance was broken, and he virtually chased his former slaves out of the land.

The Israelites left in such a hurry that the bread they baked as provisions for the journey did not have time to rise.

Six hundred thousand adult males, plus many more women and children, left Egypt on that day, and began the trek to Mount Sinai and their birth as God's chosen people.

*Have a Blessed Passover*



# Happy Easter

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## The Rite News

VOL. XXIV NO. 3 March 2015

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## Message from the Commander-in-Chief

Donald W. Boehm, 33°

### It's good to be King

As one of four presiding officers in the Valley of Pittsburgh, it becomes our duty to produce an article for each edition of the *Rite News*, usually a Masonic flavored inspirational message. Bill Roberts, our Illustrious "Editor in Chief," always implores us to "WRITE SOMETHING DIFFERENT", as the articles tend to be redundant at times. So in the spirit of the Mel Brooks line from the movie *The History of the World Part I*, "It's good to be King", I am going to write about something that has nothing to do with Masonry.



"Oh anywhere" he said, to which I said "How about right here?" pointing the flashlight at an empty row of seats in the center section.

"Oh this is perfect, thank you, thank you" he said, so that was easy enough.

Then the manager tells me "He likes popcorn, make him some". We normally didn't open the popcorn stand in the afternoon with just a few matinee viewers, so I fire up the popcorn stand, melt the butter, and the aroma draws the other ten customers like a magnet.

"Sorry" I said, "The popcorn stand isn't open", which garnered me an assortment of sneers and grumbles as they walked away.

Now, I have to walk two big buckets of buttered popcorn down the aisle to Liberace and his body guard, past the ten customers who I told we weren't open, which again got me some rather disgusted looks.

"Oh thank you, thank you" said Liberace as I handed him the popcorn.

Now the manager says to me, "Take him 2 soft drinks", which violated a large sign in the lobby saying NO DRINKS IN THEATER. This was the biggest rule we enforced as ushers, as the cloth seats would stain and absorb spilt soda, so again, I walk down the aisle with two drinks in hand for Liberace.

"Oh thank you, thank you" he replied and on the way up the aisle, the ten customers... you guessed it.

The movie is over and up he comes to return to the hotel complex, spending a few minutes signing autographs for some of the ten customers now realizing he is Liberace. He thanks the theater manager and ticket girl then walks toward the exit when he stops abruptly, turns to me and says "And especially thank you!"

I replied with a very satisfying "Your welcome", and have savored that moment for many years. The life choices he made were his business, but I will remember him as a man who didn't look down his nose at the little people around him, and a genuine nice guy. ♦

I bet most of you have encountered a celebrity at one time or another in your lives, with a story to match. Mine occurred as an 18 year old usher at the Chatham Theatre in 1970, where I had a special interlude with... Liberace... NOT WHAT YOU THINK!

Liberace was doing a concert at the old Civic Arena, and would stay at the Chatham Hotel complex. He would always come and watch a movie in the afternoon at the theater located on the corner of 5th and Washington Place. There might be 10 people at the matinee, and he could attend without the hoopla of his presence causing an uproar. So at noon, in struts Liberace in a tan jump suit with gold sequins and a cape, along with a rough looking body guard, and his persona was exactly what you saw on TV. He greeted the manager, the ticket girl and then with a cheerful and smiling demeanor, walked over to me, extended his hand and said "It's really nice to meet you". I was shocked he even acknowledged me, being just a theater usher, but that's how genuine he was.

As Lee, the theater manager, ticket girl and I stood chatting at the box office, the cartoons started playing in the theater, as movies in those days had a "Short Subject" film or cartoon prior to the feature.

"Oh I love cartoons" he said, and the manager instructed me to usher him to his seat. I ushered him and his body guard into a 678 seat theater with 10 people and said, "Where would you like to sit?"

# PALM SUNDAY - March 29



## The Story of the Crucifixion

Dinner & Show - Reservations NOW - See Details on page 8.

# T.T.G.O.T.G.A.O.T.U.

Thursday, April 2, 2015

7:30 p.m.

## STATED MEETING OF THE FOUR COORDINATE BODIES

A Stated Meeting of the Four Coordinate Bodies of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry in the Valley of Pittsburgh, PA will be held at the Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center on Thursday, April 2, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.

Business will be transacted in the Lodge of Perfection 14°; Council of Princes of Jerusalem 16°, Chapter of Rose Croix 18° and Consistory 32°. Officers of the Lodge of Perfection 14° will preside.

**Donald W. Boehm, 33°**  
*Commander-in-Chief*

**Robert F. Dunkle, 32°**  
*Most Wise Master*

**Austin R. Shifrin, 32°**  
*Sovereign Prince*

**Paul J. Roup, 33°**  
*Thrice Potent Master*

### ATTEST:

**Donald M. Murphy, 33°**  
*Secretary*

### 4th Stated Meeting

of the 2014 - 2015  
Scottish Rite Year

★ Ladies & Children Invited

★ Entertainment  
following dinner

★ Enjoy a Fellowship Dinner  
before the meeting!

**\$10.00**

Served from 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Please make Reservations  
412-939-3579



## In Memoriam

May it be his portion to hear from Him  
who sitteth as the Judge Supreme



*"Well Done, Good and Faithful Brother"*

Since our last issue, the following brethren have been called home.



**Robert E. Beatty, 33°**



**Ronald G. Little, Jr., 33°**

George O. Adams, Sr.  
George H. Amsler  
Nicholas Angeloff  
William W. Barbour  
Ralph B. Bartlett  
Richard L. Bayard  
David P. Bell  
Larry H. Blair  
Harris R. Boyce  
Archie J. Branton, Jr.  
Frank R. Breznik  
Eugene O. Campbell  
James R. Campbell  
Clarence E. Connors  
Gerald T. Crayton  
Charles W. Crosby, III  
David J. Cumberlandge  
Griffith H. Daw, Jr.  
Tony J. Delost  
George F. Dewalt  
Allen E. Dickey  
Charles S. Dudgeon  
Charles W. Duffett, Jr.  
Harry A. Dunstan  
Dariell C. Erskine

Jack R. Ertel  
Hugh W. Fleming  
John E. Flower  
William W. Frost, Jr.  
Frederick L. Garvin, Sr.  
Harry R. Hooper  
Jimmie L. Huitt  
Caleem L. Jabbour  
Walter Jablonski  
William R. Jackson  
William T. Johnson  
George W. Jones  
Edward J. Kappeler  
Morris Kronzek  
Ronald L. Kuchenbrod  
John H. Kunkle Jr.  
Donald H. Lehman  
Harry R. Lentz  
William B. Lewis  
Louis J. List  
John A. Loeffel  
Charles E. Maxon  
Leo J. McCafferty, Jr.  
Donald W. McMurray

Gerald W. Meyers  
Carl H. Miller  
Robert D. Miller  
Stephen E. Mollner  
Harold D. Mounts  
Melvin Musulin  
Charles L. Muth  
James K. Nicely  
Stewart E. Owens  
Thomas M. Palmer  
Carl E. Raber, Jr.  
William R. Raver  
William T. Rust  
Kenneth J. Sanner  
William H. Scheibe Jr.  
Raymond K. Schramm  
Joseph G. Sharp  
Gilbert G. Shenkle  
Stanley A. Smith  
James H. Staff, Jr.  
William F. Stewart  
Ralph C. White, Jr.  
John L. Wilson  
Kenneth W. Wilson  
Ralph G. Witchey





## What Does 'Active' Mean?

by Thomas K. Sturgeon, 33<sup>a</sup>, Active for Pennsylvania

Throughout our fraternity of Freemasonry there are many unusual titles used for the various officers.

My Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite title is that of Active.

What does the title Active really mean?



Let me start with an explanation of the structure of the Scottish Rite and more specifically the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction.

The official title of the organization is the Supreme Council of the 33rd and last Degree of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States of America.

The Supreme Council meets annually at a designated city within the Jurisdiction and bi-annually meets and confers the 33rd degree.

The Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the AASR consists of the fifteen states that are East of the Mississippi River and North of the Mason-Dixon Line. The membership of the Northern Jurisdiction is approximately equal to the Southern Jurisdiction which is comprised of the other thirty five states.

The Northern Jurisdiction headquarters are located in Lexington, MA while the Southern Jurisdiction offices are located in Washington, D.C.

The highest office in the Supreme Council is the Sovereign Grand Commander which would be comparable to the Chairman and CEO in the business world. Beneath the SGC is the Deputy for each state. The Deputy is an Active who is elected to lead each state and could be compared to a Vice President in the business world. The next level in that Masonic hierarchy is that of Active which might be synonymous with a member of the Board of Directors. There are approximately forty-five Active Members of the Supreme Council.

Pennsylvania has five permanent Active Members with smaller states having less Actives.

There are three levels of membership in the Supreme Council. All Scottish Rite brothers are members of the Supreme Council but have no voting or administrative privileges. The next level of membership is Honorary Member. An Honorary Member is a brother who has been elected to receive the 33rd degree who

also has no voting or administrative privilege.

The last level of membership is an Active Member who has voting and administrative responsibilities in the Supreme Council. An Active member also has direct responsibilities and authority for more than one Scottish Rite Valley.

An Active Member must be relieved of duty at the age of seventy-five which at that point he becomes an Active Emeritus. This is a synopsis of the structure and what an Active is within the Supreme Council.

I have been privileged to serve as an Active Member since 1999 and continue to enjoy working for the Valley of Pittsburgh and the Supreme Council.

I have witnessed the Valley of Pittsburgh become more efficient and effective during my term of office. The officers of the Valley are young, enthusiastic, and motivated. They are providing excellent leadership in many ways. I believe the Valley is providing more interesting meetings for the members and continue daily to make good business type decisions.

It is my great privilege to serve as your Active and I sincerely thank you for that opportunity. ♦



Would you like to have one of these pins to proudly wear on your lapel or present as a gift? If so, please send a check (*payable to Hiram's Riders*) in the amount of \$5.00 each to cover the cost of the pin, and mailing charges.

These beautiful pins make great presents for Lodges to present to new candidates.

Please send to:

**Proud to be a Mason**  
Valley of Pittsburgh  
3579 Masonic Way  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

**Questions?** 412-683-0359 or  
dwr47@verizon.net. ♦

## On Camera!



Active Thomas K. Sturgeon, 33<sup>o</sup> with Fall Class Candidate, Bro. David N. Wecht. Bro. Wecht is a judge on the Pennsylvania Superior Court.



Dr. Glenn D. Miller II, 33<sup>o</sup> and Roberta with son, Glenn III, and mother, Mary, at the Christmas Party.



The Johnston Family - Nancy, Maggi, Emily, Bob, Bill & Will also enjoyed the Christmas Luncheon.



Bro. Paul Unglo began the New Year with a plunge in the Monongahela River on New Years Day with the Pittsburgh Polar Bear Club. He enjoys the yearly "jump" which he does in memory of his Grandfather, Mike. The Water Temp was 38°.

Continued on page 11.

# Upon the Checkered Pavement

D. Todd Ballenger, 32<sup>o</sup>, Feature Writer

## The Play's the Thing

"I'll have grounds more than this - the play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King."

~ William Shakespeare (*Hamlet*, Act II, Scene 2)

I love the theater. My wife and I have had season tickets to the Broadway Across America series here in Pittsburgh for years. I worked in the playhouse in college as a crew member and even made it onstage as an actor as a senior. It's a wonderful way to lose yourself; pretending to be someone else; imagining that you're the hero, the clever one with all the perfect lines in all the difficult situations. But as with Prince Hamlet, sometimes the play is meant to accomplish a bit more than meets the eye.

For you curious types, a brief recap: Something's rotten in Denmark and Prince Hamlet hires a troupe of actors to put on a play for his uncle, King Claudius. Hamlet believes his uncle murdered his father, the former king, for both his throne, and - in true Shakespearean fashion - his wife, the Queen. Hamlet pens a few choice lines of his own for the actors and waits to see if his uncle betrays himself with a reaction to the play.

So Hamlet turns playwright just to elicit a response from his audience and prove a point.

A novel idea for the Bard, but is it really that unfamiliar to any of us? The ritual in the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite is different from Craft Lodge work primarily in its presentation. The degrees of the Craft Lodge are more formal (at least here in Pennsylvania) whereas the Scottish Rite (Northern Masonic Jurisdiction) teaches its lessons in degree work staged as short dramas. But such things naturally did not originate in Freemasonry.

The morality play was popular in the 15th and 16th centuries and is a genre of Medieval and early Tudor theatrical entertainment. Even earlier on the historical timeline we had stories from the Greeks that were designed to teach us specific lessons (thank you, Aesop). But instead of giving us a means of pretending we're something or someone we're not, these genres give us insight on what we should be.

These special plays have endured the ages of fashion: from togas, to ruffled shirts and pantaloons, and even to police uniforms and tactical armor (if you were curious

enough to brave the recent experimental production of the story of an aspiring knight courtesy of some brave souls in the Valley of Pittsburgh). Even now, each of us is acting on life's great stage. The special thing is, you're writing your own role as you move from scene to scene. What will you do? How will you act? What will you say? Will you be a prop or an extra in the back-ground, as in *The Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam (1120):

"We are no more than a moving row  
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go  
Round with the Sun-illuminated Lantern held  
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;"

Or will you take the center stage and turn your face to the spotlight - believing that you have something important to show, to share, to teach your audience?

Shakespeare and Freemasonry both want us to remember that:

"All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players.  
They have their exits and their entrances,  
And one man in his time plays many parts . . ."

~ William Shakespeare  
(*As You Like It*, Act II, Scene 7)

The point is this: there are often many different things that we are meant to take away from a play. Perhaps its merely entertainment. Other times, there may be a lesson to be taught and learned. Sometimes the play is familiar. Sometimes it is something you've seen before, only in a different guise. A classic tale may take on new and significant meaning when retold from a slightly different point of view. Free your mind to be receptive to what's really happening. Is it the play that's changed, or is it somehow speaking to you in a different way? Every day life is like walking on stage. Recognize the scenes as they change around you. Look for the moral in the story you act out each day. And above all, try and make a difference by how you play your own role. ♦



D. Todd Ballenger, 32<sup>o</sup>, is a Past Thrice Potent Master of the Lodge of Perfection and District Deputy Grand Master of the 55th Masonic District.

A regular contributor to The Rite News, he is pleased to be part of the troupe of outstanding men and Masons on and behind the stage in the Valley of Pittsburgh.

You can read more from Bro. Ballenger at his blog, *The Luminosity of Souls*.  
([luminosityofsouls.blogspot.com](http://luminosityofsouls.blogspot.com))

## The Valley of Pittsburgh

Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center  
presents a free on stage production of the drama



## The Story of the Crucifixion

Palm Sunday, March 29 – Curtain Time 3:00 p.m.

Dinner following performance (optional) \$10.00

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ show tickets (no charge). Enclosed is my check for \$10 payable to **Lodge of Perfection** for \_\_\_\_\_ dinner tickets.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

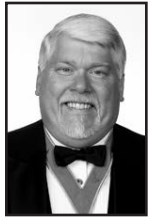
Mail to: GPMC, 3579 Masonic Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15237-2700



## Children's Dyslexia Center Report

*"Unless we think of others and do something for them, we miss one of the greatest sources of happiness."*

– Ray Lyman Wilbur



Each and every year since 1998, the Children's Dyslexia Center here at the Valley of Pittsburgh has provided nearly 40 children with a fresh start at success in life and in their school. Students often share with pride their amazing transformation from a child dealing with hopelessness and low self-esteem to a young adult looking forward to a future bright with rewards and opportunity.

Who is responsible for these remarkable transformations and results? YOU ARE! Through your ongoing support and financial contributions to the Learning Center, students can continue to have a place to learn the strategies needed to overcome dyslexia. Highly specialized teachers will continue to have the resources to develop individual lessons specific to each student in the school. Parents will continue to have someone who not only cares but also understands the problems that their child is facing. It is this individual and child specific approach that leads to the remarkable student success experienced at our Children's Dyslexia Center.

Thank you so much for your continued support! The generosity of the Brethren here at the Valley of Pittsburgh is inspiring. Even though membership in the Valley is slowly declining, contributions to our Learning Center remain strong. Thank you.

Please continue your efforts. Make a contribution to the Learning Center. Join the Builder's Council. Consider a bequest in your will. The Valley of Pittsburgh's Learning Center for Children makes a difference in children's lives every single day. Thank you for making that difference possible.

Best Wishes and God's Blessings to all of my Scottish Rite Brethren for the many hopes and successes that lay before each of you in 2015!

Sincerely and Fraternaly,

*Rich*

Richard A. Rodibaugh, 33°  
Chairman, Board of Governors



## Gourgas Lodge of Perfection

### Message from the Thrice Potent Master

Paul J. Roup, 33°



## UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

By the time you read this article, the Valley's production of *WWCD*? – *The Modern 31st* will have made its debut on the stage at the Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center. The lights will have dimmed, the sets struck, the stage swept and the words and music nothing but echoes in a dark and empty hall.

As I write this – ten days from the performance – I have no way of knowing what type of reception it will get, but I have my suspicions. Some will love it; others will hate it. Some will say the music was too loud or too modern. A few will call it innovative, and a few will decry it as heresy. In the end, none of that matters.

When Dave Morgans, Todd Ballenger and I began talking about this concept more than two years ago, we expected it to be challenging – it was. We expected to meet some resistance – we did. We expected to put in a lot of hours – without question. We expected that we would find one or two other members who would be perhaps a little apprehensive, but at least open to trying something like this, and others who would have to be begged to get on board – we could not have been more wrong.

From the first concept meeting through the most recent rehearsal, it has been evident that, to a man, cast and crew are genuinely excited about this project. There was an electricity in the air at that first meeting that has yet to dissipate.

We discussed characters, back stories, themes, and delivery. We collaborated on the construction, lighting, painting, and design. We talked audio, video, and effects. We shared ideas openly, and while it wasn't possible to implement every idea, all were given consideration. As a result,

A nation of well-informed men who have been taught to know and prize the rights which God has given them cannot be enslaved.

It is in the religion of ignorance that tyranny begins.

– Benjamin Franklin

the bonds of Brotherhood deepened for all involved. That was something I never saw coming.

Don't get me wrong. I hope that every one of you enjoyed it. But in the end, whether it was an unrivaled success or an unmitigated disaster, the men that worked tirelessly on this project got to share something truly magical, and that made it all worthwhile. ♦



*Vintage Classic Car Club*

## CAR CRUISE

**SUNDAY JUNE 7<sup>TH</sup>**

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PROCEEDS BENEFIT  
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CHILDREN'S  
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**No admission fee!**



# The Modern Vitruvian

by P. J. Roup, 33°



## Calls of Duty: Part Two

*Continued from the December issue.*



"I'm not sure what you mean. What could we possibly need to talk about," Dylan asked in the most innocent voice he could muster. He was unsure how much his mom had heard and wasn't

prepared to make any unnecessary admissions just yet. "Can't a guy just get up early and enjoy the sunrise?" He never thought when he went to bed a few short hours ago that Thanksgiving day would start like this.

His mother cocked her head to the side and stared at him with one eye. She reminded him of the parrot he had as a child. It was as if she was trying to decide whether to take a peanut from him or bite his finger.

"How old are you," she asked.

"Twenty-three."

"So how long have I known you?"

"Twenty-three years, I suppose." She still had her head cocked, and in spite of the possible danger to his fingers, he reached for his coffee. "Why are you asking?" He made his best attempt at what the family called the *boo-boo face*. Whether he was conscious of it from that early on or not, from about the time he was able to walk, Dylan could melt his mother's heart simply by going doe-eyed and pouty. It drove his siblings crazy, but it was his gift, and by the age of twenty-three, he had honed it to an art.

This time, it wasn't working.

"Dylan, do you remember when you were five and you came to me holding the two halves of the Royal Doulton figurine that the cat had knocked down?" He felt his cheeks warm when she mimed air quotes at the end of the sentence. "Well, I knew it wasn't the cat then, and it isn't the sunrise now. Moms just know. What's wrong with Henry?"

"It's not Henry, it's Eva, and he's not sure yet. They're taking her to the hospital now. Her heart stopped."

"And he asked you to come?"

It shocked him that she heard that much of his conversation. To himself, he cursed the paper-thin walls of the cabin and his mother's bat-like hearing simultaneously.

"He did, and I thought that if I left right after Thanksgiving dinner. . ." He trailed off, stirring his coffee to avoid eye contact.

"Dyl, this is the first Thanksgiving that the whole family has been together."

"I know mom, but. . ."

"Let me finish, honey." She picked up from where she left off. "This is the first Thanksgiving that the whole family has been together, but I know how close the two of you are. I can't even pretend to understand the depth of the bond that you share as Masons, but I see glimmers of it in so much that you do since you joined; how you comport yourself; your desire to be more; the way you genuinely care for everyone around you. Your soul has expanded, son, and I could not *be* more proud of you."

Dylan's eyes pooled with tears. He pulled her in close and hugged her tight. "I don't know what to do mom," he sobbed. "I don't want to disappoint the family."

"Henry is your family, too. He needs you there."

"I'll wait until everyone is up, so I can say goodbye. Dad's gonna be mad."

"You just go, and let me handle your father. He understands more than you give him credit for," she said, taking a large travel mug from the knotty pine cabinet above the coffee maker. "He may be a little disappointed, but he'll understand. Now go." She screwed the lid on tightly and handed it to him. "Go," she added for emphasis.

The tires crunched on the gravel as he drove from the cabin. Through tears, he watched it shrink in the rearview mirror, silhouetted by the rising sun. He said a silent prayer of thanksgiving for his family, for both of his families.

It was late morning as he walked into the Emergency Entrance of the hospital, and it was busier than he expected for Thanksgiving morning. The Macy's Parade played on the flat screen television that hung in the corner of the waiting area. A boy no older than four, his hand wrapped in a now ruined bath towel, turned from the floating balloons that had been keeping his attention to watch Dylan approach the triage desk. Following

her son's eyes, the boy's mother glanced up as well as she ran her fingers through his blonde hair.

"I'm here to see Eva Ranier," he said to the nurse in the pink scrubs.

"Family," she asked as she typed the name into the computer.

"Yes. Family." He didn't love lying, but he knew it would both save precious time as well as avoid an argument (one that he knew he would eventually win). Besides, Henry was family, there was no doubt about that.

"Curtain four," she said, gesturing violently behind her with her head. He assumed that her willingness to put her neck in such danger meant that curtain four was all the way in the corner. "The doctor is in there now. Go on back."

As he approached, he heard fragments of conversations – stitches, flu, surgery – through the other curtains as he passed. *They're about as thick as the walls of the cabin*, he thought to himself.

He approached Eva's curtain and listened. "We'll take her up to surgery in a few minutes. She's not out of the woods yet, but we'll do everything we can, Mr. Ranier. You calling 911 saved her life." Through the gap, he watched Henry stroke Eva's frail hand. The pale skin was almost translucent, and it bunched easily as his thumb rode up toward her wrist. A cluster of wires rose out of the top of her blue hospital gown and disappeared behind the bed. He wasn't sure of the protocol for entering a curtained-off area, so he simply said, "Knock, knock," softly as he pulled the curtain back.

Henry sprang to his feet with the speed of a man thirty years younger and engulfed him in a hug. "Dylan," he exclaimed, a little too loud. Softer, he continued. "I can't believe you came, son. I told you to stay with your folks. We ruined Thanksgiving." The hug was so firm, it was difficult for him to breathe, but Dylan embraced him back.

"You didn't ruin anything. I'm right where I'm supposed to be."

Henry released him but kept his hands on Dylan's shoulders. "You're here," he said, smiling through tears. "You're actually here." Henry pulled him in again and slapped him hard on the back, sobbing.

"How is she," Dylan asked, mostly to the doctor.

"She had a severe MI – a heart attack. The next few hours will tell us a lot, but we have a great surgical team standing by. I'm heading up to scrub in for her open heart surgery now." Two orderlies opened the curtain and unlocked the wheels on her bed.

“Why don’t we all ride the elevator together. That’ll give you a few more minutes with her before we take her into the OR.”

The doctor brought Dylan up to speed on the situation as they were lifted toward the surgical floor. The ding that counted off floors seemed to sound in syncopation with the heart rate monitor at the foot of Eva’s bed. As the doors slid open, Henry kissed Eva on the forehead and whispered something in her ear. The doctor waited until he was finished, then waved them out first, pointing to the waiting area to the right. He and the bed carrying the love of Henry’s life turned left toward a set of broad doors on which were stenciled the words, *AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY*. Before he could get too far, Henry caught hold of his long, white lab coat. “Doc, she’s my sun and my moon. Bring her back to me. Please.” On the word please, he broke down.

“We will, Mr. Ranier. I’ll come see you the minute we’re finished,” His eyes flashed with confidence as he turned and disappeared through the wide doors.

Over the next hours, Dylan distracted Henry as best he could. He caught him up on the family. He told him about work, and he listened as Henry told him about the first time he met Eva.

Dylan tried several times to coax him to the cafeteria, but he refused to leave the waiting room in case the doctor came. Every invitation to eat was met with an apology for making Dylan leave his family.

“Quiet, old man,” Dylan smiled. “You have nothing to be sorry for. I have an idea. Maybe you can help me with the Third Degree lecture?” He already had a pretty good handle on it, but knew from experience that they could easily pass an hour or more once they got started. Halfway through the lecture, Dylan was interrupted by the ring of Henry’s cell phone. He took the opportunity to check his own phone. Not even two o’clock yet.

“This is Henry ... She’s in surgery now ... Please don’t go to that trouble, I’ve already messed up enough people’s holiday ... I don’t even know when I’ll be able to get home ... If you insist ... You’re too kind – runs in the family obviously ... You know where the house is. There’s a key under the potted mums on the front porch. Are you sure you want to do that? It seems like a lot of trouble ... God bless you.” Henry flipped his phone closed and wiped a tear from his eye.

“Who was that?”

“Oh, no one. No one you know, I mean. Just a lady from church who wanted to let the

dog out.”

“You seemed to fight her pretty hard over something so simple.”

“Really? You appeared to listen terribly intently to a conversation that you weren’t a part of,” he retorted, winking a little at Dylan. “Now where were we?” It was the first time Henry had smiled all day.

It was after six when the doctor came in. He walked up to them with all the poise he had when they last saw him, and they knew before he said a word that she was going to be fine.

“You have a very strong wife, Mr. Ranier. She’s going to be okay.”

“Can we see her?”

“They’re closing now, then she’ll go into the recovery room, so not for a few more hours. Go get something to eat, and be back around nine. I’ll take you to see her myself.”

“That’ll never happen,” Dylan said. “I couldn’t get him to leave these chairs since she went in.”

“Nonsense, kid. We should eat.”

“But don’t you want . . .”

“I need to shower and get some of Eva’s things for when she wakes up. I can’t give you the full meal, but I have sliced turkey in the deli drawer of the icebox, and we have a lot to be thankful for. Get your coat.”

Dylan thought it was odd when Henry had him stop at the end of the driveway. For as long as they had been friends, he never saw Henry use the front door. Henry tossed Dylan the key as he fumbled for his knapsack in the back seat.

“Head on in, my bag spilled.”

Dylan walked up the steps of the front porch and moved the key toward the lock. The door opened on its own as he did. He expected to see the stranger from church who had called earlier, but standing on the other side of the threshold was someone far more familiar. “Dad?”

“Happy Thanksgiving, Son.”

*To be continued . . .*

*P.J. Roup, 33°, is Thrice Potent Master of The Gourgas Lodge of Perfection, Valley of Pittsburgh, AASR. He also serves as District Deputy Grand Master of the 54th Masonic District.*

*In addition to The Modern Vitruvian, (www.themodernvitruvian.blogspot.com) he owns The Point Within the Circle (www.district54.blogspot.com).*

*Brother Roup can be reached at (pittmason@yahoo.com).*

## On Camera!

*Continued from page 7.*



**Valley Secretary, Donald M. Murphy, 33° with his wife Barbara, was in attendance at the Valley Christmas Party at the Shannopin Country Club.**



**Fred J. Buskirk, 32°, M.S.A., with his wife Elly, his daughter Diane, granddaughter Aalyiah, and her friend Alexie, at the Children’s Christmas Party.**



**Bill Kiehl, Past Most Wise Master, with grand children – Dakota and Emma, identical twins, Larry and Eddie enjoyed the Kid’s Christmas Party at the GPMC.**

*Continued on page 13.*





## Princes of Jerusalem

### Message from the Sovereign Prince

Austin Reed Shifrin, 32°



## Flux, Granfalloon and the Night Kitchen

**G**reetings, brothers... today I pick back up the overarching theme I have been outlining for you, Freemasonry Invested with Renewed Enthusiasm (FIRE).

In my September address, I focused on the need to revive the legendary harmony and unity within our fraternity – to carefully consider how we treat a brother, in his presence or his absence.

In the December issue, I mused on the role of ritual in our Scottish Rite experience and how ritual may evolve as we move into the future. Today, building on both of those, I want to discuss with you how we shape Freemasonry and how Freemasonry shapes us.

There are probably not many in our Valley who know that from 1996 to 2001, I sang in a band. Nor would many of you know that from 2000 to 2003 I was the security and volunteer coordinator for a travelling, multi-disciplinary art event series called Flux. When I reflect back on those experiences, I find that there are some things about them that remind me of my involvement in Masonry (and of course, some things that are very different). One similarity is the feeling that a person is leading a double life – one life in a role in ordinary society, say as a student, or an employee in some position – and another life in a society where your value, your contribution, is measured in some completely different manner. One significant difference, is that in my work with the band and with the art event series, I was helping make something “from scratch”, but when I began in Freemasonry I had much more of an experience of arriving into long-established institutions; in the former, I felt like more of a performer, a producer, and a leader; in the latter, I felt like more of an audience, a consumer, and a follower. Although some initiatives like recruitment, retention and fundraising do tend to motivate us to brainstorm, it more commonly feels like there is a tendency in Freemasonry against innovation in general. I know I would not be the first columnist here to

observe this.

In a recent conversation I was reminded of the novel “Cat’s Cradle” by Kurt Vonnegut. To place this reference in a context, I’d like to point out the following two things: One, that Vonnegut served in the US Army and was captured and held as a POW during World War II. This strongly colored his outlook and his writing, and made him fairly cynical and skeptical regarding human institutions and endeavors – he is considered a counter-culture icon. Two, that I want to bring his perspective into this discourse not because I myself am skeptical regarding the institution of Freemasonry, but because I have been taught that there is a value in questioning our own assumptions, even our closely-held values – to try to see things as others, even our adversaries, might see them.

It is in this spirit that I am thinking of Vonnegut’s novel... it is set in a fictional island nation called San Lorenzo, whose natives practice a religion called Bokononism, based entirely on a set of harmless untruths. The primary tenet of Bokononism is to live by the untruths that guide one to be brave, kind, healthy and happy. The practitioners have a concept known as a karass, defined as “a group of people linked in a cosmically significant manner, even when superficial linkages are not evident”, and a group known as a granfalloon, which is a false karass, i.e., a group of people who affect a shared identity or purpose, but whose mutual association is actually meaningless. Vonnegut includes in that latter category such organizations as corporations and nation-states (here his cynicism is showing).

Discussing this with a friend and brother, it made me wonder; what helps us draw the distinction between a karass and a granfalloon? Who gets to judge? If I posit that Freemasonry is an organization founded on the concept of the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God then is Freemasonry a karass, or a granfalloon? This would hinge on whether or not the concept of the brotherhood of man

under the fatherhood of God is “cosmically significant”. That’s a quality that would be hard to objectively verify or disprove... certainly, if we watch the news enough, current events can undermine our perception of brotherhood within the broader context of human relations in the world at large.

My assertion implies it’s “cosmically significant” to me, but it only takes on an external reality for others if I behave as though that premise is true – if I treat others like I think I should treat my brothers. This line of thinking leads me to conclude that, while the fraternity as an institution pre-exists our participation, it derives its authenticity from the quality of our participation – and therefore, our commitment to exemplify its principles.

And this was the line of thinking that brought me to the Night Kitchen. “In the Night Kitchen” is a children’s book by Maurice Sendak. In the story, a young boy named Mickey takes a surreal journey through a dreamscape, reminiscent of Winsor McCay’s Sunday comic strip series “Little Nemo”. At one point he falls into a giant old-fashioned glass bottle of milk, at which point Mickey states: “I’m in the milk and the milk’s in me.” It’s reminiscent of the old aphorism “you are what you eat”, but rendered in a novel in a peculiar way.

That odd quote has resonated in my memory since I was a child, and ended up colliding with these other concepts to bring me to a conclusion: We may not always perceive Freemasonry as being malleable, or affording us creative opportunities; but, if we immerse ourselves in it, and pledge to live out its lessons, then we are in the Masonry and the Masonry is in us. If we wish to assert to the public, that the fraternity is an organization founded on the premise of the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God, then it derives all its validity to the outside world on the basis of our commitment to behave as though that premise is so. Thus, it needs us very badly indeed – and rather than being passive, being audience, consumers, or followers, it is by our participation that we re-create Freemasonry, at every moment, for the world today and for future generations. ♦

AD MAJOREM ADONAI GLORIAM



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## From the Secretary's Desk

Donald M. Murphy, 33°, Secretary



The Scottish Rite 2014-2015 year is moving along quickly. So far we are having a good year. We are seeing more members at our activities and meetings. Our Commander-in-Chief has offered great door prizes to entice attendance.

Our activities calendar has been completed. Watch this magazine and the Valley Bulletin for announcements of those Valley activities.

With only a few months to go before the June meeting we still have many members who have not yet paid their dues. It would be quite a blow to the organization to lose a lot of members because of non payment of dues. We lose many members to death each year but to lose several hundred to suspension would certainly weaken the Valley.

Perhaps some members do not realize how the system works. Several years ago, the Supreme Council started to mail out dues statements. It is up to the member to return payment to the Valley in a timely fashion. Your permanent dues card becomes valid only when the Valley receives payment. If you have lost that gray plastic permanent dues card, please call the office and request a new one.

After three notices, sent approximately 90 days apart, you become delinquent or behind in your dues. After two full billing years you will get notices that you have been suspended for nonpayment of dues. Again, it is your responsibility to respond to these notices and make proper restitution for the statement.

Jeff Wonderling, our membership chairman, will be working hard to identify those who have not paid so proper contacts can be made with each individual to

determine why dues are delinquent.

If you have any questions regarding your dues, please feel free to contact the Valley office at 412-939-3579.

We cherish your friendship and membership in the Scottish Rite, so if you happen to be in financial need, please call us so that we may be of assistance with your concerns.

Someone unknown wrote the following statement in response to the question – *Why should I continue to pay dues?*

### STAY IN THE LODGE!

So many times we hear the remark: "I want to demit from the Valley of Pittsburgh." Or worse "I'm not paying dues anymore, so what if I am suspended, so what"!!! "I cannot attend meetings. My business or life is such that I cannot be active. Why should I remain a member?"

Here are some very good answers to that question. First of all, being a member of the Valley is not only attending meetings, it provides an opportunity for you to meet with your brethren. Being a mason is living a good life based on Masonic principles, and living up to the vows assumed by you during conferral of your degrees. It is believing in and practicing those beliefs that make you a mason.

You continue to be a mason even if you are in a place where there are no Masonic Lodges! When you continue to pay your dues, you support a cause that you believe in. You help to continue a fraternity of free men who believe in moral character, love for country and the practice of Masonic tenets in the life of man. It is important to remember that you help build a heritage for those who come after you. Your annual dues are a small contribution to pay! Are your dues paid? ♦

## On Camera!

Continued from page 11.



Bros. Larry Horath and "Cab" Whitaker dispensed the pizza at the Kid's Christmas Party and Bros. Rich Roell and Robert Polander (below) ate the pizza.



Bro. Tom and Susan Hrynda with grandchildren Charlotte and Audrey Hrynda also enjoyed the pizza and the party.

Continued on page 17.

## The Annual Grotto Lenten Fish Dinner

Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center

Friday: Feb. 20, 27, Mar. 6, 13, 20, 27, Apr. 3

Served from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. – Purchase Tickets at the Door!







## Celebration of Education Dinner

**Friday, May 22 - 6:00 p.m.**  
**Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center**  
**\$25.00**  
per person

The annual Celebration of Education Dinner features distribution of Abbott Scholarships to high school and college applicants from Scottish Rite families. Applications are available from the Valley office (412-939-3579) or on line at: [www.scottishritenmj.org](http://www.scottishritenmj.org) (click on philanthropy and scroll down to Abbott Scholarships and 'click here') Mail two copies to the Valley office at 3579 Masonic Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15237. The deadline for submission of applications is April 1.

The four Valley presiding officers will also select four Masons (not necessarily members of the Valley) who will be recognized as the ideal Family Man – living by the principles taught in the Scottish Rite.

Additionally, two grants will be presented to Rainbow members and two grants to DeMolay members to attend leadership conferences to be held in the summer. Applications for these grants will be available thru Youth Leaders and must be submitted by April 1.

The evening of food, student recognitions, and family life, celebrates masonic values, and reinforces individual commitment to the family. ♦

**Make check payable and mail to:**  
**Lodge of Perfection**  
**GPMC, 3579 Masonic Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15237**  
**(tickets held at door)**



## Robert W. Herbert 115th Potentate of Syria Shriners

Brother Robert (Bob) W. Herbert, 32°, was elected and installed as the 115th Potentate of the Syria Shrine at the Annual Meeting on January 5, 2015. He will serve as leader of the more than 6000 members of the second largest Shrine in the world.



Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair every year since 1981. He is currently the Co-Chair for the Junior Division Physical Science Category. He has also been a Judge for student competitions held by the Western PA Engineers Society, the

Born and raised in McKees Rocks, Brother Herbert graduated from Sto-Rox High School in 1967. He earned his Bachelors of Science degree from Youngstown State University in 1971, did post graduate work at CCAC, the University of Pittsburgh, and pursued an MBA from Robert Morris University.

Bob married Paige A. Proser in 1972, and they will be celebrating their 43rd anniversary this June. They, along with their dog, Teddy, have lived at the Masonic Village at Sewickley since 2011.

He began his science and engineering working career at the Gulf Research Center in Harmarville. He also worked for the Westinghouse Industry Services Division, the Corrosion Engineering Division of Pennwalt Corp., and the Research Center of Pittsburgh Des Moines Engineers.

In 1979 he joined the National Association of Corrosion Engineers (NACE) where he served in numerous positions, including President.

In 1980 he was recruited by the Chemical Plants Division of Dravo Engineers.

In 1998, Bob started Corrosion Specialists, his own independent corrosion consulting company.

He is a NACE International certified Corrosion Specialist and a NACE International certified Materials Selection and Design Specialist.

He is a world recognized authority and speaker on the subject of corrosion, its impact, and its cost.

In 2012, Bob was affirmed as a Director General of the World Corrosion Organization (WCO) by its Board of Administrators.

In December of 2013, Bob was appointed an inaugural member of the Certification Commission of the NACE International Institute.

He has been a judge at the annual

Carnegie Science Center, ASM International, and NACE International. He has been a judge for the prestigious Vaaler Award which recognizes innovation in process technology.

Bob is a life member of Delta Sigma Phi Fraternity, NACE International, Syria Shriners and Shriners International.

He is a member of Chartiers Valley Lodge No. 725, a member of the CINOSAM Club of Mt. Washington, a member of the Sewickley High Twelve Club, and a member of the William Slater II Master Mason's Club at the Masonic Village. He is a 32° Scottish Rite Mason of the Valley of Pittsburgh, a Sir Knight of Duquesne Commandery No. 72 Knights Templar, a member of East Hills Royal Arch Chapter No. 268, and a member of Liberty Council No. 50, a member of the Royal Order of Scotland, a member of Pittsburgh Court No. 2 Royal Order of Jesters, a member of OL Verein and a member of Three Rivers Hillbillies Clan # 53. He has been an active member of the Shrine Directors Staff, and a Past President of West Hills Caravan No. 25.

In January 2008, Bob was elected to Syria's Executive Committee. He served as Syria's Membership Committee Chairman for four consecutive years, and, in 2010, the Temple earned the Silver Award for Membership from Shriners International.

Brother Herbert is looking forward to putting his skills and talents to work as he leads Syria Shriners into the future. He intends to continue the tradition of the Shrine being the fun side of Freemasonry, and wants each and every Noble to join with him to make Syria Shriners the best Shrine Center in all of Shrinedom. He has said: "We don't have to be the biggest, just the best! The rest will follow." ♦



# Freemasonry in the Hands of Idiots



by David W. Morgans, 33<sup>rd</sup>, 1st. Lieutenant Commander

The title of this article is rather harsh. The idea for it came out of a frustration with the actions and words of many different people that all share the

name, "Brother."

Before proceeding farther with this article it is important to define the word "idiot."

According to Webster's it is 1: a person mentally equal or inferior to a child two years old or 2: a very foolish or stupid person. Naturally this article will focus on the second definition, as it would be impossible for anyone who may fall under the first definition to be able to petition and be accepted into a lodge.

We all know people who, at times, act foolishly or stupidly. It is very difficult to see that type of behavior coming from

our Brethren but it happens. In the past six months alone there have been some incredible displays of idiocy in the small corner of Masonry in which I live. It was my intent to list some of the observed behavior but that would probably be a disservice to our Fraternity. But the one common thread that stitched its way

*"Foolishness, stupidity, and selfishness has no place in this Fraternity"*

through each idiotic act was selfishness. There was never a reason given for why the words or acts would have benefitted the Fraternity in general or any Lodge or Valley in particular.

Foolishness, stupidity, and selfishness has no place in this Fraternity; however, people who

display any one of those three characteristics seldom know that it's them. They continue in their ways and they negatively influence those around them. New Masons (and old) question why they joined the Fraternity when they regularly are treated to idiots who continually display their total lack of knowledge of the rules and rituals that govern our Fraternity. Men who constantly try to get their way in even small things, who use bigoted, obscene, and racist comments to make their points, and who have no regard for (or even a recognition of) those they leave drowning in their wakes are a blot on this Fraternity.

Every village has its idiot so they say and I guess so does every Lodge and Valley. They may be contractors, carpenters, commissioners, councilmen, and country club members or any other designation from the other 25 letters of the alphabet. Idiots come in all shapes and sizes but what do they have to do with the genius of Freemasonry? The simple answer is, "Nothing!" The best an idiot can do is ruin his own reputation or possibly damage that of their Lodge or Valley. The genius of Masonry is not impacted by the actions of others because the genius of Masonry is much bigger and of much greater meaning than any one of us can fully understand or practice.

Many people think that "genius" simply means a person of exceptionally high IQ but "genius" has other definitions as well. "Genius" also can be an overarching spirit or character. The genius of Freemasonry is embodied in character traits such as love, truth, hope, charity, justice, mercy, and fidelity. Idiots have no claim to these.

*Continued on page 21.*

## GOLF For Dyslexia



Join us for a grand day of Charity Golf and fellowship at the annual Valley of Pittsburgh Golf Outing benefiting the Children's Dyslexia Center.

The date is Saturday, June 6 at the Butler's Golf Course in Elizabeth, PA.

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. with play beginning at 9:00 a.m. Player fee is \$90 which includes a golfer's gift, bag service, greens fees, cart, snack at the turn, lunch and awards.

For "non-golfers" wanting to attend the fellowship luncheon, the cost is \$25.

We are limited to 120 Golfers, but unlimited as to Program Sponsorships or Charitable Donations in any amount.

The Children's Dyslexia Center is the only one of its kind in the Pittsburgh area offering *FREE* tutoring.

To continue this magnificent program we must annually raise at least \$125,000 to cover material and educational expenses.

The Center opened in April 1999 and offers a dynamic reading program at no cost to the students family.

This program has had many inspiring success stories in bringing children, who could not read, up to their reading grade level and beyond.

Currently there are 36 students enrolled in the 28 week (during the school year) reading learning program and a long waiting list of children who can benefit from it.

The Center is also recognized by Penn State University as a student curriculum training program.

Please share this information with those who might want to golf in this event, or be a financial Sponsor, or make a Donation.

**Complete the application form on page 19 and mail today!**

Questions about sponsorships, program advertising, or general information?

Call Bro. David Morgans, *Chairman*, at 412-728-6533 or call or email:

**Donald Murphy, Secretary**

**412-939-3579**

aasr.pittsburgh@comcast.net

### Spring Class 2015

#### Conferral Schedule

##### Friday Evening, April 17

- 5:00 Registration and Dinner
- 6:00 Welcome by Thrice Potent Master; Declaration of Principles. Communication of 5th, 6th, 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th & 14th Degrees.
- 6:10 4th Degree Ceremonial
- 6:20 4th Degree DVD
- 7:00 8th Degree - DVD
- 8:00 12th Degree - DVD
- 8:30 10th Degree

##### Saturday Morning April 18

- 8:00 Coffee and Donuts
- 9:00 15th Degree
- 10:15 Class Picture
- 10:45 18th Degree
- 12:00 Lunch

##### Saturday Afternoon April 18

- 1:00 Communication of 19th thru 28th and 30th, 31st Degrees.
- 1:10 29th Degree  
*Speaker-Secretary*
- 2:15 24th Degree
- 2:45 32nd Degree
- 3:45 Official Reception  
*Speaker-Hospitaler*
- 4:15 Dinner

**Have a Safe Trip Home!**



## Chapter of Rose Croix

*Message from the*

### Most Wise Master

Robert F. Dunkle, 32°



## How do you communicate your masonic light?

As each of us reflects on our masonic careers which range from under a year to some of us having spent the majority of our lives being masons. Our fifty year members have been masons for 70% of their lives. We all can agree that we grow each day in learning our beliefs through communication from one another starting with our first degree.

It behooves us as masons to always impart our wisdom to our brethren in a constructive manner for our fraternity to flourish. We are charged to let all private animosities, if any should exist, give place to peace and fellowship. Uniting in the same grand design, let us be happy ourselves, and endeavor to contribute to the happiness of others.

The fact is the world today is far different than 10, 20, 30 and 40 years ago. Think about what we had 10 years ago. We had cell phones and computers that did not work well together. Technology was frustrating, printers didn't work with computers when connected. Internet connections required hours of time on line with help desk to get working. Cell phone service had many dead spots. The primary communications tools were home phones, postal service, limited use of email and learning how to text with cell phones. By the way Facebook was launched in February 2004 by a couple college roommates and undergraduates at Harvard University - Mark who? It went public in 2006. As of the third quarter of 2014, Facebook had 1.35 billion monthly users.

20 years ago we had desktop computers, dial up internet access. Very limited email communication, you had to wait for dialup to connect - "you've got mail" if an AOL customer. Primary communications were home phones, post office and cell phone if someone had one. 1997 was the first texting cell phone commercially available. Although as we know it today Wi-Fi arrived with limited use and was originally patented in 1942.

30 years ago we had the first personal computers. IBM, Apple and

Commodore. We primarily used them for word processing to replace typewriters. The first cell phone was tested and produced by Motorola in 1983 and cost \$3,990. We had beepers that showed a phone number to call. You had to find a pay phone to return the call.

40 years our primary communication tools were post office and home phones. The first answering machines were available in case someone called they would automatically answer when you were not home. They even had the ability to call in remotely, usually from a pay phone, to retrieve your messages. Some home phones were party lines which several households used the same phone number with different rings for each household. Maybe the origin of what we call ring tones today?

What was communication like 2000 years ago? The Rose Croix degrees teach us lessons from the Christian era of history. Was communication then different than today? I purpose no. Communication then compared to today is just how fast it travels. Then it required human travel to carry messages. Today we can instantly send and receive a message anywhere in the world. Although it may not be in person, it is one person to another or one person to a group as it was 2000 years ago.

At our last executive committee meeting we implemented our mentoring committee for new members. We are choosing to actively communicate with our new members through this committee. This is an excellent example of a group of masons identifying a problem and finding a solution. As we know - when masons go hand-in-hand success usually crowns their work.

Today we have many avenues of communications to choose from. As masons we have a message to communicate - Our way of life. If our fraternity is to flourish we must carefully use multiple communication tools to effectively communicate between our members and our society. How are you communicating your masonic light? ❖



## Hiram's Riders Elects Officers for 2015

At the November Meeting of Hiram's Riders Motorcycle Club, the following officers were elected for 2015.

President . . . . . Mark C. Giles  
1st Vice President . . . . . Joshua L. Miller  
2nd Vice President . . . . .  
Treasurer . . . . . William D. Johnston, 33°  
Secretary . . . . . D. William Roberts, 33°  
President, Club East . . . Richard J. Stemmler, 33°  
President, Club West . . . . . Rick V. Cross

Hiram's Riders 2015 *special events* that all Masons and their friends are invited to participate in include:

Ride for Dyslexia . . . . . Sunday, Jun. 28  
Brentwood 4th of July Parade . . Saturday, Jul. 4  
Picnic with the Grand Master . . . . . TBA  
Christmas Luncheon . . . . . Saturday, Dec. 19  
Interested in becoming a member? Send email to: [dwr47@verizon.net](mailto:dwr47@verizon.net) or 412-683-0359.

## Watch the Race on the Giant 9' x 12' TV Screen

Sunday,  
February 22  
12:30 p.m.

Greater Pittsburgh  
Masonic Center



**\$5**  
payable  
at door

Masons, Ladies and Guests

### WELCOME



Reservations are not necessary but please call 412-939-3579 to let us know how many are attending.

★ REFRESHMENTS

★ BEVERAGES

★ CARDS

★ 50/50 DRAWING

No Charge for Potential Member Prospects



# Freemasonry – A System of Morality

by John L. Palmer, 33°  
 Managing Editor, *Knights Templar Magazine*

In December, I was critical in this column of my generation and the one or two before me for their parsimonious attitude and the actions they have taken to deteriorate our fraternity over the years. I got a good deal of feedback on that column, and surprisingly, all of it was positive, even from the old guys like me. I expressed my confident expectation that these bright new Masons who are coming into our fraternity will rebuild Freemasonry into what it once was and even more. I am, however, concerned about one thing. I'm not sure that all of our young guys understand the most important thing.

This month, the message is to you young guys who are rebuilding our fraternity. Freemasonry is fellowship, charity, philosophy, and even a bit like a puzzle, built on symbolism, but most importantly and fundamentally, Freemasonry is a system of morality. It even tells us that right up front. So what is morality? Morality is not doing whatever feels good. Morality is not making sure we get our fair share or get our turn. Morality is not defined by our society or what everybody else is doing. It is not going by commonly accepted practice. Morality is not defined by society or government or the media. Morality is defined by the Great Architect of the Universe alone and is revealed to us through the Great Light of Freemasonry. That's what Freemasonry is and what Freemasonry

teaches. Make no mistake. Morality is either being celibate or being married to and faithful to one woman. Morality is paying your debts, including your student loans, and providing for your own family. Morality is accepting nothing which you haven't earned and being generous to others who are in need. Morality is being polite and respectful to others, even to your brethren within the Lodge when you don't agree with them.

Remember that the main thing is the main thing and that the main thing about Freemasonry is that we are a "beautiful system of morality," not theoretical morality but active morality. When you forget the main thing, it doesn't matter how smart you are or how much you know about the symbolism. It doesn't matter how much you give to charity or how fancy your buildings are. It doesn't matter how sophisticated you are or what office you hold. Without morality, Freemasonry is like sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal - much ado about nothing.

While you rebuild our Fraternity and lead us into the centuries to come, remember that in Freemasonry character counts. Without that sound foundation, the temple will collapse.

I'm sure you already knew this, but I thought it wouldn't hurt to remind you. ♦

*Originally published in the Knight Templar magazine and reproduced here with permission.*

## On Camera!

Continued from page 13.



Robert T. Addleman, 33°, Syria Potentate and Donald W. Boehm, 33°, presents George Hulse with the Syria Shrine Man of the Year plaque at the Valley Christmas Party. This is the 9th time George has received this special honor. Congratulations Brother George!



John R. Crewson, David Richards, Chairman of the Washington Lodge No. 164 & Blue Knights Chapter XVI sponsored annual Blue Ride for Charity, and Rick Cross, presents Richard Rodibaugh, 33° a check for \$1,500 for the Children's Dyslexia Center.



Brother Norm Flaherty, 33°, the Valley's favorite Irishman, celebrated his 77th Birthday on January 13. A few celebrants included Jane Binley, Pete Countouris, Bill Zipf and Phil Spano. Not pictured, Sam Spanos and Bill Roberts. ♦

**Make Plans NOW!**

**Shrine / Scottish Rite**

**Friday  
August  
7th**

**Family Picnic**

**KENNYWOOD**

★ Picnic Pavilions ★ Games for Kids

★ Prizes ★ Entertainment ★ Ride all Day

★ Buttermilk ★ Fireworks

**For Group & Pavilion Reservations,  
 call Bro. Bob Plata, 412.860.5299**

**Complete details in June issue of the Rite News**







# Your Health

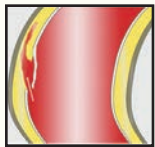
Dr. Glenn D. Miller, II, 33<sup>rd</sup>, *Chairman*  
Valley of Pittsburgh Medical Committee



## Aortic Dissection

**I**n this next installment of Your Health we will discuss aortic dissection which is another life threatening condition that affects the major artery in the body. As a review, the aorta originates at the heart and carries blood to the rest of the body. The aorta originates at the heart's aortic valve, ascends to an arch where branches supply blood to the head and arms, and then descends through the chest and abdomen where it splits into two arteries (right and left iliac arteries) that supply blood to the legs. The aortic wall is made up of three layers of muscle: intima, media, and adventitia. The intima is the innermost layer in contact with the blood, the media is the middle layer, and the adventitia is the outermost layer.

Aortic dissection occurs when there is a tear in the innermost layer of the aorta. This tear allows blood to flow between the layers of the wall forcing the layers apart.



The blood will travel between these layers and create a false channel or "false lumen" ("true lumen" is the normal conduit of blood flow in the aorta). This "false lumen" may be short or involve the entire length of the aorta, and can occur in any segment of the aorta. 65% of aortic dissections originate in the ascending aorta, 10% in the aortic arch, and 20% in the descending thoracic aorta.

Aortic dissection is relatively rare, affecting 2-3.5 people per 100,000 each year. It is more common in males (65%) than females (35%). Mean age at time of diagnosis is approximately 63 years with a peak incidence in the 60-80 age group. From a historical standpoint, the first fully documented case of an aortic dissection was the autopsy report of King George II of Great Britain who was found dead on 10/25/1760. More recently, comedic actor John Ritter, who was on the 1970's sitcom "Threes Company", died of an acute aortic dissection in 2003 at age 54. Comedian and actress Lucille Ball also died of an

acute aortic dissection in 1989 at age 77. The most common cause of death associated with an acute aortic dissection is pericardial tamponade (inability of heart to effectively pump blood and maintain an adequate blood pressure secondary to buildup of fluid around the heart in the pericardial sac). Other common causes of death include associated myocardial infarctions (heart attacks), congestive heart failure, and aortic rupture.

Risk factors for aortic dissection include high blood pressure, bicuspid aortic valve (aortic valve comprised of 2 leaflets instead of the normal 3 leaflets), connective tissue diseases such as Marfan's syndrome and Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, chromosomal abnormalities such as Turner's syndrome, blunt chest trauma or aortic trauma from a cardiac catheterization, previous cardiac surgery (especially aortic valve replacement surgery for a leaky aortic valve), pregnancy (especially in third trimester or in postpartum period), cocaine use, high intensity weight lifting (systolic BP can transiently exceed 300 mmHg), and late stage syphilis.

The most common symptom (96% of patients) of an acute aortic dissection is the sudden onset of severe chest or back pain. This pain is usually described as sharp, stabbing, and "tearing" in character. Anterior chest pain is associated with dissections involving the ascending aorta. Interscapular pain (back pain between the shoulder blades) is associated with descending aorta dissections. Pleuritic chest pain may be a sign of acute pericarditis (inflammation of the fibrous sac surrounding the heart) caused by bleeding into the pericardial sac. Other symptoms include sudden onset of nausea, sweating, shortness of breath, generalized weakness, syncope (passing out), and a sense of impending doom. People who experience these symptoms should seek medical assistance.




Additional signs and symptoms may be related to the location of the aortic dissec-

tion and whether it affects arteries (occludes their blood flow) that branch off of the aorta. Myocardial infarctions (heart attacks) can occur with dissections that involve the origin of the aorta. CVA's (strokes) can occur with dissections that involve the aortic arch. Paraplegia or paralysis can occur with dissections that involve the anterior spinal artery. Renal failure and mesenteric ischemia (ischemic gut) can occur with abdominal aortic dissections. Congestive heart failure with resultant fluid buildup in the lungs can occur with dissections that involve the origin of the aorta with resultant damage and failure of the aortic valve ie. Aortic Insufficiency (think of a poor functioning water pump).

The diagnosis of aortic dissection is usually made with a combination of taking the patient's history of symptoms and risk factors; careful physical examination looking for a pulse delay between the arms and legs, discrepancy in blood pressure between the left and right arms, evidence of congestive heart failure or fluid in the lung(s), or evidence of a new murmur of aortic insufficiency (leaky aortic valve); and diagnostic imaging tests such as CT scan, MRI, or TEE (transesophageal echocardiography). The MRI is currently to "gold standard" test but has the disadvantage of being time consuming. The TEE is usually the preferred imaging modality due to its accuracy and wide spread availability.

Aortic dissections are classified using either the DeBakey system or the Stanford system.

Classification of aortic dissection

			
Percentage	60%	10-15%	25-30%
Type	DeBakey I	DeBakey II	DeBakey III
	Stanford A (Proximal)		Stanford B (Distal)

The Stanford classification system, now the most commonly used, is divided into two groups, A and B, depending on whether the ascending aorta is involved. Stanford A involves the ascending aorta and/or aortic arch, and possibly the

descending aorta. Stanford B involves the descending aorta or the aortic arch (distal to the left subclavian artery), without involvement of the ascending aorta.

Treatment for aortic dissections depend upon the location of the dissection (Stanford A or Stanford B), as well as whether the dissection is "acute" or "chronic". Chronic dissections are defined as those which are diagnosed in individuals who present two weeks or longer after the onset of symptoms/dissection. These patients have been "self selected" as survivors of the acute event and can usually be treated with medical therapy as long as they remain clinically stable. The risk of death is highest in the first few hours after the dissection begins and decreases thereafter.

Risk of death in untreated aortic dissection	
25%	in first 24 hours
50%	in first 48 hours
85%	in first week
90%	in first month

Acute dissections are defined as those which are diagnosed in individuals who present within two weeks of the onset of symptoms/dissection. Acute dissections often present as hypertensive emergencies and the initial efforts are aimed at strict blood pressure control. The mainstays of medical therapy include beta blockers, calcium channel blockers, and vasodilators such as nitroglycerine and its derivatives. Controlling blood pressure helps to decrease the shearing forces on the aorta from the blood being ejected from the heart which, in turn, helps to decrease the chances of the dissection expanding. Definitive therapy for Stanford A dissections is surgical replacement of the affected aortic segment with an artificial graft, and either repair or replacement of the aortic valve if it has been damaged. Stanford B dissections are usually treated with continued medical therapy aimed at controlling blood pressure as previously outlined. Surgery for Stanford B dissections is reserved for dissections that are complicated by a ruptured aorta, leaking aorta, or involvement of a branch artery that compromises blood flow to other organs.

The overall ten year survival rate for both Stanford A and Stanford B aortic

dissections taken together is greater than 60%.

Both Stanford A and B dissections have close to a 30% post surgical mortality rate. Stanford B dissections treated medically have an initial mortality rate of approximately 10%. Aortic dissections complicated by aortic rupture have a mortality rate of approximately 80% with 40-50% of patients dying prior to reaching a hospital.

Preventative measures consist of modifying controllable risk factors that can adversely affect the health of the blood vessels. These measures would include control of high blood pressure, tight control of blood sugar levels in diabetics, control of high blood cholesterol levels, tobacco avoidance/cessation, maintenance of an ideal body weight, implementation of a low salt diet with fruits/whole grains/vegetables, implementation of a regular exercise regimen, and seat belt usage to reduce risk of chest trauma in motor vehicle accidents.

Patients should also make their physician(s) aware of any family history of aortic dissection, or if they have any previously diagnosed conditions such as bicuspid aortic valve/aortic aneurysms/connective tissue diseases/genetic disorders that increase risk of aortic dissection. ♦

*"This medical column will cover common ailments, both acute and chronic, that are likely to affect either one of us directly or someone in our families.*

*The purpose of the column will be to provide an overview of that particular condition and to stimulate you to discuss the matter further with your personal physician should you have any concerns.*

*If only one of our brothers, or their family members, is stimulated enough to seek medical evaluation which results in the prevention of a life threatening condition, then I will consider this column to be a resounding success."*

— Dr. Glenn D. Miller II, 33°

*Ed. Note: You can write to Bro. Miller at Valley of Pittsburgh, 3579 Masonic Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15237.*

*Or by email at: aasr.pittsburgh@comcast.net*

## Benefits the Pittsburgh Children's Dyslexia Center

# Valley of Pittsburgh CHARITY GOLF Saturday, June 6

## Butler's Golf Course

800 Rock Run Road Elizabeth, PA 15037

Open to men, women and non-members.



Registration: 8:00 a.m.

Play Begins: 9:00 a.m.

Snack: 1:30 p.m.

Fee: \$90.00 per golfer. Includes a golfer's gift, bag service, greens fee, cart, snack at turn, lunch, and door prizes.

Lunch Only: \$25.00.

### - 2015 Registration Form -

Enclosed is my check, payable to **Charity Golf** in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for:

Golf, \$90 per golfer

Lunch Only, \$25 per person

Please print Golfers Names

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Ph. ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Ph. ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Ph. ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Ph. ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail by **June 1**, with check, to **Charity Golf**, 3579 Masonic Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15237. Questions? Dave Morgans, 412-728-6533.

# Pittsburgh Dyslexia Center for Children

Operated by Scottish Rite Masons  
Providing FREE Tutoring - 412-939-3579



## She has dyslexia!

**3**  
Numbers  
per ticket  
**\$10.00**

A \$10.00  
Contribution could win you  
\$20,000 and help her overcome dyslexia

Proceeds benefit the  
**FREE**  
tutoring of children  
with dyslexia!

Winning Numbers Based on  
PA Lottery at 1:30 & 7:00 p.m.  
Labor Day, Sept 7, 2015.

(1st Number)

Questions? 412-683-0359  
dwr47@verizon.net

Small Games of Chance License #16987.

Mail the coupon below and you could win \$10,000 on the four digit number at 1:30 p.m. on Labor Day and you could win another \$10,000 on the four digit number at 7:00 p.m.

Here's my \$\_\_\_\_\_ contribution for dyslexia. Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ tickets.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose a self-addressed stamped, envelope for return of ticket/s. Mail to: GPMC, 3579 Masonic Way, Pgh., PA 15237.

## She had dyslexia!

After tutoring at the  
Pittsburgh Dyslexia Center.



Fundraising project managed by Hiram's Riders Motorcycle Club of the Valley of Pittsburgh for the **FREE** tutoring of kids diagnosed with dyslexia.



1916 - 2015

Walter L. Sykes, 33°



**Congratulations!**

Brother Walter Louis Sykes celebrated his 99th Birthday on January 13.

He was made a Mason on September 14, 1937 - passed on October 17, 1937 and raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on November 15, 1937 in Chartiers Lodge No. 297, in Canonsburg, PA, where he served as Worshipful Master in 1946.

He joined the Valley of Pittsburgh in 1948, and served as Thrice Potent Master of the Gourgas Lodge of Perfection in 1976. He was coronated a thirty-third degree Mason in 1982 in St. Louis, MO.

He became a member of the Royal Arch Chapter in 1940 and served as Most Excellent High Priest in 1981. He joined the Council and Commandery in 1943.

Bro. Sykes is a Past District Deputy Grand Master of District 29 (1963 to 1972). He also served several years on the Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Homes.

He was awarded a 75 Year Masonic Service Emblem by R. W. Grand Master Jay W. Smith, at the Masonic Village at Sewickley in 2012.

Bro. Sykes, and his wife Lois, reside at the St. Barnabas Communities. To send him a greeting, his address is: 5850 Meridian, Rd., 409C, Gibsonia, PA 15044 or by email: wsykes@zoominternet.net ♦



# Wonderling Wonders!

by Jeffrey M. Wonderling, 33°



It is the saddest of days, the funeral of our best friend Cliff. The four of us have been inseparable, connected at the hip, one might say, for over fifty years. He is the first

one to pass. It is already unbearable to think of life without him. Cliff had been in Banking his entire professional life, had never known anything else, and he was an overachiever. He started as a Teller and retired as Vice President, always living his life with honor and integrity. The thought of him not getting his Entered Apprentice Mason's Degree was heart-breaking.

Charlie and I have been friends since the seventh grade. We were in many of the same classes together and had many of the same interests. We both joined the school golf team and although we were below average, managed to stay on the team. The game of Golf became a conduit for a lifetime of memories both good and bad.

Charlie's father worked as a Conductor on the B & O Railroad and was a member of the local Masonic Lodge. I became intrigued at the thought of Mr. Silvis working long hours then coming home, donning his Sunday "Go to Meeting" Suit, and heading off to Lodge, yet he never mentioned it. I knew, even though quiet in his demeanor, was well respected at the railroad, in his church, and in the community. As a young man I wanted to be like him. One day and at Charlie's graduation party I summoned the intestinal fortitude to ask Mr. Silvis about the Lodge. He said, "Jeff, the Fraternity is a place where I find peace and harmony. At each meeting I learn something new. One of



the highlights of my life is spending time with like-minded men of outstanding character. I cannot describe the pride I feel". Mr. Silvis told me to ask him the same question when I turned twenty one.

I spent the next three years away at Millersville University wishing I were twenty one. I read many books on Freemasonry, some favorable, some not so much. Charlie agreed to think about it. I wasn't sure of the next step but there was two things for certain, I wanted to take that step and I wanted Charlie to take it with me. When the time came, we met with Mr. Silvis. He was very serious outlining the expectations of a Freemason. That summer the Lodge held Special Meetings to accommodate our college schedules. Bobby joined the Lodge with us and became the third member of the group. The three of us soon married and started families. Charlie became a Lawyer, Bobby was an Accountant. I worked in the Personnel Department at Jones and Laughlin Steel.

My wife Sharon and I saved a few dollars and decided to pursue the American dream of owning our own home. We went to the bank and that's when I met Cliff. He was the Teller. When we arrived at the bank to inquire about a mortgage, the Loan Officer was on his lunch break. So Cliff ushered us to a waiting area, stayed with us, making small talk. It was obvious this young man genuinely cared not only about his Bank but about people. He was a magnet, someone you would want to get to know. Soon we were talking about families and similar

*Continued on page 23.*

## Freemasonry in the Hands of Idiots

*Continued from page 15.*

These traits existed before time began, as they are attributes of God, and will exist for time immemorial. There is an infinitesimal chance that idiots could destroy our Fraternity as we know it but they still could never destroy the genius of Freemasonry.

The genius of Freemasonry is not contained in any one book. In fact, you will have a hard time finding an exact definition because of its enormous scope. The genius resides in the changed lives of men who search for its meaning. I could have easily included definitions of love, truth, hope, charity, justice, mercy, and fidelity but where is the challenge for others? The genius of Masonry is found through our travels in the Fraternity and through our interactions with other Masons dedicated to traversing the road that leads to knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and, yes, even genius.

This is my 25th year as a Mason. To some that may seem like an eternity and to others like a blink of an eye. However, it is not the years that count, it's the miles. I have met many newer Masons that have logged more miles in their journey to discover and practice the genius of Masonry than some 50-year plus members. The quest for this genius is to be a joyful labor of love for Masons. All of us have heard about knocking the corners off of rough stone to become

better living stones or in other words better men. That's what happens when we search out the genius of Masonry.

The odometer that we use to determine if we are logging miles or just years is simple. Do we show more love, more truth, more hope, more charity, more justice, more mercy, and more fidelity in our day-to-day lives? If so, then the genius of Freemasonry is presiding over our conduct and the miles will rack up quickly, if not, its time for an examination of our current way of living to see why we are just spinning our wheels. On the grand spectrum between idiot and genius we should all want to proceed toward genius. It's never too late to begin the trip and we all have countless Brethren to travel the road with and to get reports of how we are progressing – hopefully, in a loving and gentle manner.

The genius of Freemasonry is not and will not be in the hands of idiots. It will ever remain in the hands of good-hearted Brethren who seek the best for the Fraternity and for their fellow Brethren. Let us each use the genius of Masonry as our plumb-line to govern our words and our behaviors. By doing so, we show those who do not know what Masonry is all about, and perhaps, by our example, they too may seek the genius of Masonry and change their lives for the better. ♦

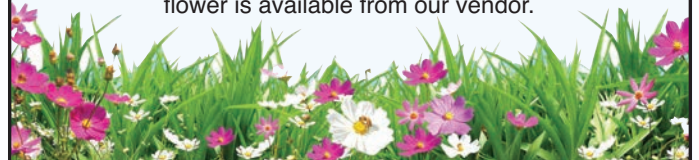
### Annual Flower Sale Benefits Children's Dyslexia Center



To order flowers, email or phone the Center for an order form.

[pghdyslexiacenter@comcast.net](mailto:pghdyslexiacenter@comcast.net) 412-931-3181

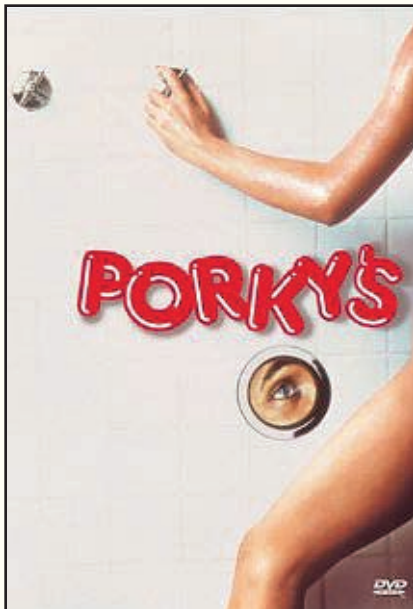
We will try to accommodate special flower requests, if that flower is available from our vendor.



# Spring Stag

**Dinner, Laughs & Movie**

Friday, April 10 – 6:00 p.m.  
Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center



A group of Florida high school students plan on losing their virginity. They go to Porky's, a nightclub in the Everglades, believing they can hire a prostitute to satisfy their sexual desires. Porky takes their money but humiliates the kids by dumping them in the swamp. When they demand their money back, the sheriff, who turns out to be Porky's brother, drives them away, but not before his minions extort the rest of their money.

**Free Admission**

**Featuring Pork & Sauerkraut  
by Jeff Wonderling, 33°**

**The Valley's New Cooking King**

**Always Good Fun & Fellowship**

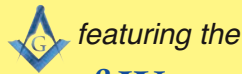
**Come, but let us know if you are attending.**

**412-939-3579**

**Check our Web Site  
Regularly for New Events**

**[www.valleyofpittsburgh.org](http://www.valleyofpittsburgh.org)**

## Collectors Commemorative Plates



featuring the  
**Grand Masters of Western Pennsylvania**

**4th plate of a series,  
in production.  
Order yours NOW!**

Not shown to scale  
Actual size: 10"



**QUESTIONS?**

412-683-0359 or  
dwr47@verizon.net

**T**he Past Grand Masters from Western Pennsylvania are being honored by a limited series, of numbered china commemorative collector plates.

The series will cover the period from 1970 to the present.

Plates are being issued two per year. Bros. Thomas K. Sturgeon, Samuel C. Williamson & James E. Ernette have been completed. A few are still available.

The reverse side of the collectors plate has a descriptive paragraph about the Grand Master along with the production number.

Cost of the tribute plates are \$35.00 each.

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**Availability Limited**



## Toni's Hair Tips

by Toni Boehm



As winter is upon us, it is a popular option among women to brighten their hair with highlights. You can add a few or many to compliment your existing color, so paying an experienced professional is highly recommended. "Do it Your Selves" can sometimes have disastrous results, thus requiring a trip to the professional to get it fixed.

Highlights enhances your hair style, adds texture and makes a woman feel good. Feeling and looking good are great ways to beat the winter cold! As always, don't forget to use a high quality shampoo and conditioner. ♦

## Rite Ladies Come in All Ages

by Donald W. Boehm, 33°, *Commander-in-Chief*

The Valley of Pittsburgh truly has the "Rite Ladies" and they come in all ages.

**Patricia Wilding**, a fourth grader at Wyland Elementary in Hampton Township, is the daughter of Brian Wilding, an officer of the Gourgas Lodge of Perfection.



Patricia Wilding

She enjoys art, music and cooking, especially creating exotic desserts, and her painted masterpieces are displayed all over the Wilding household. When not satisfying her artistic side, she takes care of three cats named Dante, Costello and Sadie, a dog named Chaucer, and two birds named Sweetie and Jumper.

**Emma and Ellie Holderbaum** are twin daughters of Robbie Holderbaum, a Past Sovereign Prince of the Princes of Jerusalem, are 5th graders at Mosside Elementary in Monroeville. They both have served as Pledge Sisters or Presiding Officers in Rainbow Girls, and both will join the International Order of Rainbow in the Spring when they turn eleven. They both train in Ko Am Mu Do Karate with their father, and have achieved the level of Orange Belt. When not beating on each other with karate moves, they enjoy playing with friends, jumping on a trampoline or swimming in the backyard pool.



Emma Holderbaum Ellie Holderbaum

There is one common thread with these three special "Rite Ladies". They have attended numerous Lincoln Degree performances to watch their dads perform. I would bet they know the dialog as well, if not better, than their fathers which is quite a statement, considering Brian and Robbie are ritual 'All Stars'.

I have watched these beautiful young girls grow and flourish as the daughters of outstanding parents. I like to think the Masonic Fraternity and Scottish Rite have been positive influences on their lives, as we prove once again...

"The Valley of Pittsburgh Has the Rite Ladies". ♦

## Wonderling Wonders . . .

*Continued from page 21.*

interests like we had been friends for years. That's when it happened, we learned of our mutual love of Golf. Through our conversation it was surmised that our skill levels were similar. The following Saturday, I outlined to Bobby and Charlie my encounter with Cliff. I asked for permission to invite him to play Golf. Charlie said it would be nice to actually have a foursome.

Several weeks later the Bank called Sharon with the approval of our loan. Before we knew it, we were signing the Mortgage papers at the Bank. I was disappointed to learn that Cliff had requested the morning off but as luck would have it, our paths crossed out in the parking lot. After a short conversation, we agreed to play Golf the following Saturday. Bobby shot the best score that day with a Ninety Eight, but no matter, we all agreed that we had never had so much fun on a Golf Course. The four of us have been playing Golf ever since.

We have supported each other through thick and thin. The only inconsistency was that Cliff never became a Mason. He possessed every quality you could ask for in a brother but never asked the question. We took every opportunity to lead Cliff to that question, but still, he never asked. We were true to our obligation and to the premise that it was not acceptable to ask a man to join the Fraternity. After many years we finally gave up on Cliff, assuming that he simply was not interested in our group.

One January evening, relaxing by the fire, I was reading the inaugural issue of the Freemason magazine introducing Brother Thomas K. Sturgeon as the Grand Master of Pennsylvania. He wrote that it was now permissible to invite men to join Freemasonry. I was elated. Bobby, Charlie and I wasted little time in formulating a plan to invite Cliff to join the Lodge. Charlie said he thought it appropriate to broach the subject with Cliff over a dinner at the Country Club.

After the dinner, Bobby began to talk openly about his Masonic experiences and what they had meant to him. I was next with

Charlie speaking last. As we spoke, Cliff seemed a bit out of sorts. He hung on our every word and was disappointed to learn that the onus had been on him to ask for a petition. Through all the years that we were not permitted to ask him to join us, now the rules had changed, and we were now inviting our best friend to become a Mason. There was a silence that seemed to eclipse eternity and you cannot fathom our surprise when the tears began to well in Cliff's eyes. After regaining his composure Cliff shared that for years he knew that Bobby, Charlie, and I seemed to have a special bond because of Masonry. Cliff confessed his longtime desire to share in that bond. The longing for his best friends to include him was decades old. He waited but the conversation never took place. He concluded that because we never asked maybe we did not want him to be involved in that part of our lives. Or worse, maybe he wasn't worthy. I still have no idea who felt worse, Bobby, Charlie and I, or Cliff.

That was about three months ago and now Cliff was gone. He died unexpectedly and his wife Dorothy said that becoming a Mason was all he talked about. Cliff said that although it regrettably had been prolonged he was actually going to be counted among other men he held in the highest regard. He said to his beloved Dorothy, "It is not important what was, but it is important what is to be."

The truth is that we all have friends that would be a good fit for the Fraternity (I am not without fault). What is the problem? Why don't we ask? What are we thinking?

Well my brethren, here's the rub. When we don't ask we are making the decision for our friends. A decision that might be different if left up to that friend to decide for himself.

I Wonder Who The "CLIFF" Is In Your Life. ♦

"FOOT TO FOOT"





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**Calendar of Masonic Events**



**February 2015**

- 22 - Daytona 500 Party - GPMC
- 24 - High 12 Luncheon - Masonic Village at Sewickley
- 28 - Fellowship Breakfast - GPMC

**March 2015**

- 07 - Potentates Stag - Embassy Suites, 12:00 noon
- 14 - Rose Croix Demolay Class - GPMC, 1:30 p.m.
- 24 - High 12 Luncheon - Masonic Village at Sewickley
- 28 - Fellowship Breakfast - GPMC
- 29 - Story of the Crucifixion - GPMC

**April 2015**

- 02 - VALLEY STATED MEETING - GPMC**
- 02, 03, 04 - Shrine Circus - Consol Energy Center
- 10 - Spring Stag - GPMC, 6:00 p.m.
- 17, 18 - Spring Class - GPMC
- 25 - Fellowship Breakfast - GPMC
- 28 - High 12 Luncheon - Masonic Village at Sewickley

**May 2015**

- 16 - Night at the Races - GPMC
- 22 - Scholarship Night - GPMC
- 26 - High 12 Luncheon - Masonic Village at Sewickley
- 30 - Fellowship Breakfast - GPMC

**June 2015**

- 04 - VALLEY STATED MEETING - GPMC**
- 06 - Valley Charity Golf Tournament- Butler's Golf Course, 9:00 a.m.
- 07 - Car Club Cruise - GPMC
- 11 - Bike Night - North Hills Lodge No. 716
- 12 - Pirates vs Philadelphia Baseball - PNC Park
- 13 - Shrine Gun Bash - Shrine Pavillion - 11:00 a.m.
- 19, 20 - Grand Lodge Quarterly Communication - GPMC, 10:00 a.m.
- 23 - High 12 Luncheon - Masonic Village at Sewickley
- 27 - Fellowship Breakfast - GPMC
- 28 - Hiram's Riders Ride for Dyslexia - TBA

**July 2015**

- 04 - Brentwood 4th of July Parade
- 11 - PA Council of Deliberation - Seven Springs, Champion, PA
- 17 - Wild Things Baseball - Consol Park, Washington, PA
- 18 - Meeting in the Hills - Dawson, PA - 5:30 p.m.
- 25 - Fellowship Breakfast - GPMC
- 26 - Blue Ride Charity Ride - Washington, PA
- 28 - High 12 Luncheon - Masonic Village at Sewickley

**August 2015**

- 07 - Masonic Day - Kennywood Park
- 25 - High 12 Luncheon - Masonic Village at Sewickley
- 29 - Fellowship Breakfast - GPMC
- 30, 31, Sept 1 - Biennial meeting of Supreme Council - Indianapolis, IN

**September 2015**

- 03 - VALLEY STATED MEETING - GPMC**
- 13 - Car Club Cruise - GPMC
- 22 - High 12 Luncheon - Masonic Village at Sewickley
- 26 - Fellowship Breakfast - GPMC

**October 2015**

- 01 - Oktoberfest - GPMC
- 03 - Walk for Dyslexia - GPMC
- 27 - High 12 Luncheon - Masonic Village at Sewickley
- 31 - Fellowship Breakfast - GPMC

**November 2015**

- 05 - VALLEY STATED MEETING - GPMC**
- 20, 21 - Fall Reunion Class - GPMC
- 24 - High 12 Luncheon - Masonic Village at Sewickley
- 28 - Fellowship Breakfast - GPMC

Schedule updated monthly: [www.valleyofpittsburgh.org](http://www.valleyofpittsburgh.org)

# Valley of Pittsburgh

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