

Summer 2023

# rite now

THE MAGAZINE OF THE VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

origin  
stories

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# In Memoriam

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

Ill. ° Richard Morrow Groat, 33°

Ill. ° Carl C. Rueter, 33°

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Lewis C. Amicone  
Robert W. Ascott  
George N. Aspiotes  
Paul John Bartek  
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Gaylord R. Gardner  
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George Klixbull Jr.  
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John F. McConnell Sr.  
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# inside

## riteNOW

Vol. XXXII, No. 4  
Summer 2023

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**RiteNow** magazine is the official publication of the Valley of Pittsburgh, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, District of Pennsylvania, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, USA. Opinions expressed are those of the individual author(s). Information is obtained from correspondence, press releases, Masonic publications and miscellaneous sources, which in many cases, cannot be verified. **RiteNow** magazine is published four times a year. © 2023, Valley of Pittsburgh, 3579 Masonic Way, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15237. Phone: 412-939-3579. Email: secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org



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### about this issue

Origin stories are not just for superheroes. And whether it was your dad, your friend, your curiosity, or a deeper longing for something more, your Masonic journey has an origin story too. In this issue of *RiteNow*, our contributors share their thoughts on origin stories. Some are real, some

are fictitious, but all of them will entertain you and hopefully serve as reminders of what brought you to the Craft as well.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *RiteNow*.



# The Active

A message from the Supreme Council Active for Pennsylvania

SUPREME COUNCIL

## Ya Gotta Start Somewhere

By Paul J. Roup, 33°

When I hear the phrase, *origin story*, my mind immediately goes to superheroes. Superman's parents put him in a spaceship to Earth moments before his home planet, Krypton, was destroyed. A radioactive spider bit Peter Parker, turning him into Spiderman. Steve Rogers volunteered to take the Super Soldier serum, turning him into Captain America. Every superhero has an origin story. So does every Freemason.

Each of us has a unique story about what brought us to the Craft. For many, it was a family member. Dad, Uncle Bob, or Grandpa was a Freemason. You admired him, and at some point, he may have handed you a petition or subtly nudged you in the right direction. It could have been a coworker or neighbor you knew to be a good man. For others, it might have begun with a quiet longing. You knew there was something more to life—a way to be a better version of yourself. It could have happened a million different ways, but the point is: it happened.

Ya gotta start somewhere. As you thumb through the pages of this

issue, you might find some stories familiar. Those that are less similar to your own will probably still resonate with you, though. And if you're reading this, you have almost certainly started. Frankly, as our audience is close to 95 percent Scottish Rite Masons, not only do you have a solid origin story in place, but you have also continued your journey

into *The Adventures of [Your Name Here]*, *Freemason, Issue No. 2*.

**“The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.”**

—Walt Disney

In your origin story issue, we saw you transformed from complacent citizen to upright man, focused on making yourself and the world better.

In Issue 2, you realize there are other men

doing the same—men who have joined forces in a league known as the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite. The degrees you witness as you journey through the Rite inspire you to bigger and better things, grander actions, and bolder steps in helping your fellow man. You realize we have a duty to each other, and you want to see every man succeed.

In this issue, you also meet your trusted sidekick. Superheroes need those. Just ask Robin. Who is your sidekick, you wonder? Well, that's up to you. The caveat is that he hasn't joined the Scottish Rite yet. He may not have even joined the blue lodge. That's the unwritten part of Issue



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Every superhero has an origin story.  
So does every Freemason.



No. 2. That's the part you must take care of next.

I promise you that there is someone in your life who would enjoy Masonry like you do; he just doesn't know it yet. If you're comfortable talking about the benefits of membership, have a conversation with him. If you're not comfortable, introduce him to someone from your Lodge or Valley who is comfortable talking about Masonry. Every superhero has a different power. Let someone do that lifting for you. If your prospective sidekick is already a Mason, just hand him this magazine

(after you've finished reading it, of course) or one of our back issues. I firmly believe that any Mason who sees what we do—both charitably and socially—would want to be a part of the Valley.

Walt Disney said, "The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing." Nothing could apply more than inviting a friend to the blue lodge or the Valley. We are stronger together. United, we can change the world. Let's start now. □



# The Chief

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

CONSISTORY

## It Started with DeMolay

By William G. Johnston, 33°

The story of my joining the Scottish Rite in the Valley of Pittsburgh has a somewhat interesting backstory. It starts with my joining Blue Lodge, which traces back to a conversation I had with D. William Roberts. “Bill,” as he was more casually known by his friends, was a close friend of my father and District Deputy Grand Master at the time. He was attending the Retiring Master’s Dinner for Crafton Lodge, where I got to talking to him. He asked how things were going, and I told him about my life and how I couldn’t wait until I turned 21 to be able to join the Lodge. The decision had not been made yet to lower the membership eligibility to 18. Brother Roberts assured me that if he had anything to do with it, I would not have to wait that long.

When I asked what he meant, his response was a bit cryptic, and I was told not to worry about it. I had no idea at the time what a Masonic dispensation was or how it worked, but I later came to find out that he intended to do just that. It would later turn out that he would not have to, as a vote in Grand Lodge would lower the minimum membership age in Pennsylvania to 18. In 2002,

on November 11th, I would turn of age to petition the Lodge, but the calendar happened to be against me that year. Crafton Lodge met on the second Friday of the month, and my birthday just happened to fall on the day after. At the time, you were not allowed to read a candidate’s petition until he turned of age.

I have had so many wonderful experiences with the Brethren in our Fraternity.

You’re probably wondering at this point, *But what does this have to do with the Scottish Rite? Right?* Well, we all know how the scheduling and planning process works in Freemasonry. I had mentioned in a previous article that my uncle would just happen to be

conferring the 14th degree in the Spring Class of 2003. Due to the timing of the petitioning process, it turns out that a dispensation would be needed after all to accommodate my joining. I would end up getting both my first and second degrees on the same night and become a candidate for the James F. Barry Class of 2003. And the rest is history.

I consider joining the Scottish Rite as a rounding out of my Masonic experience. As a Senior DeMolay, I would say I was exposed to two different types of ritual. For those who do not know what I mean,



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Do you know a young man between the ages of 12 and 21?  
Are you interested in becoming an adult advisor?  
Learn more about DeMolay at [www.pademolay.org](http://www.pademolay.org)

I would highly encourage you to attend a conferral of the degrees of the Order of DeMolay. The Initiatory degree was very ceremonial in nature, and I recognized many similarities to the blue lodge degrees. But the DeMolay degree was an allegory and was very similar to my experiences joining the Valley. A cast of characters would get together to perform a historically-based account of a lesson about one of our Core Values. Taking roles in the DeMolay degree was my favorite part of DeMolay, so I knew I would be right at home on the Scottish Rite stage.

I have been involved in many degrees at the Valley, with roles ranging from walk-ons to leading characters. I have had so many wonderful experiences with the Brethren in our Fraternity, but one story stands out, and I relate it often to our newer Valley members.

It hasn't been active in some time, but when the Hiram's Riders Motorcycle Club was very young, we had an idea to cast a degree entirely with members of the club. We chose the 22nd degree because it was a shorter degree and didn't have a lot of characters. Also, none of the parts were terribly large. This was helpful as we had Brothers who would be taking the stage for the

first time. Rehearsals went fine, but come the day of the conferral, one of the members completely locked up when it was his turn to speak. It instantly brought back memories for me of a DeMolay conferral when the same thing happened, and I went completely blank.

I was a bit worried when it was over that we would never see that Brother take the stage again and that the experience

might have ruined him. But he stuck with it, continued to take roles and to be involved. A few years later, at a rehearsal for the 32nd degree, I remember the same Brother cracking a joke about the main character's footwear, or hair, or something, and the whole cast getting a good chuckle out of it. I smiled when I thought of how awesome it was to see him now comfortable on stage and enjoying the experience when it easily could have turned out completely different.

We all have an origin story about how we got here and how our experiences have shaped us into who we are today. But how does your story extend beyond its origin, beyond

the Class or Reunion when you joined? If you want more, I encourage you to come back and experience all that your Scottish Rite membership has to offer. Let's continue our journey together! □

I couldn't wait until I turned 21 to be able to join the Lodge.



THE ROAD BEGINS HERE

# The Potent

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

LODGE OF PERFECTION

## Change IS Good

By Eric S. Teasdale, 33°



As all who have become members of the Craft can attest, Freemasonry has been around for centuries with a rich history steeped in tradition. I had vaguely heard about Masonry when I was in High School and College but did not think much of it at the time as I was very involved in practicing and playing golf. It wasn't until I settled into adult life that I started to develop an interest in the Fraternity.

At that time, "To Be One, Ask One" was the basic recruitment tenet of Freemasonry in the state of Pennsylvania. In hindsight, that had to be a very steep hurdle to overcome for recruitment for the Fraternity. How did you know who a Mason was so you could ask them to join? I have heard stories from Masons who had friends that were members and that they never knew it. When asked, the common response was, "We are not supposed to talk about it."

As I stated in a previous article, the facility where I work has a substantial Masonic presence. I have been very fortunate to be involved in the lives of the members—getting to know them by playing golf, having lunch, and coaching them, as well as

introducing their children to golf. As any successful businessperson can tell you, playing golf is the best way to really get to know someone. It was through these golfing moments that I began to gain an appreciation of Masonry. I was especially intrigued about how the Masons I golfed with were all very close and affectionately referred to each other as *Brother*.

I guess that the "To Be One, Ask One" principle was really effective in blocking the light instead of bringing in the light.

This was my routine for years until, one day, a member started talking to me about Freemasonry as we were golfing. He told me that he thought that it was something that I might be interested in. He took me out to dinner, and we had a very informative discussion about Masonry. At the end of the evening, I was

presented with a petition to fill out. As I said before, I was very fortunate to have two members who thought enough of me to be my first- and second-line signers. My journey had now just started.

The next step was having my Committee of Inquiry. At that time, I was surprised and thankful that when I spoke to the chairman, he informed me that my wife and children could be present and ask questions if they chose. To me, it was very important to make sure that my wife could be



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## I am very glad that we are now permitted to actively recruit members and to have open discussions with potential candidates.

involved. It is my understanding that was not always the case in Masonry. You know the old adage, “Happy wife, happy life?” That could not be more true if you wanted to actively participate in the Fraternity. My committee members were excellent in that they helped relieve any anxiety I might have had at that time. I know this is basic, but to this day, anytime I see any of the three Brothers from the committee, they go out of their way to say hello and ask me how my journey has been.

That is very valuable to me. It is as if they feel responsible for me.

I was now ready to begin my journey. I took an untraditional and, at that time, slightly controversial route to becoming a Mason, though. I benefitted from a relatively infrequent recruitment strategy: the One Day Class. On October 30, 2010, I was entered, passed, and raised, and became a Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret and a Shriner all in one day. It was a very long but rewarding day for me. The content I witnessed that day was immense, and I am still trying to figure out what the ritual was about. But I wanted to know more.

After I was raised, I told my parents that I had joined. Much to my

surprise, I found out that my mother was a member of Amaranth and the Order of the Eastern Star, as was my grandmother. My grandfathers on both sides were Masons as well. They never once told me about the Masonic lineage in my family. Not once. I guess that the “To Be One,

Ask One” principle was really effective in blocking the light instead of bringing in the light.

After witnessing the ritual during my one-day journey, I knew that I wanted to get involved in some fashion. I really enjoyed the Blue Lodge degrees as well as the 14th and 18th degrees of the Scottish Rite. I then asked one of my signers if he would accompany me to my home Lodge to see some degrees two weeks later, and

he was more than happy to do so. Witnessing those degrees again just affirmed my decision. I did not know what the word confer was at that time, but I knew that I wanted to confer some of the degrees that I witnessed. So the next time my Lodge had a rehearsal, I begged to become an officer. I was fortunate in that a current floor officer was moving out of the District. The next month, I was on the floor, and I am happy to say that I have been an officer in my Blue

Lodge or the Scottish Rite ever since. It has been a very rewarding journey for me—one that might not have happened without the changes we have witnessed in the Fraternity since before I was raised.

Having been a member for several years, I am very glad that we are now permitted to actively recruit members and to have open discussions with potential candidates. I know that I would have never asked someone for a petition. Also, if not for the One Day Class of 2010, I probably would not have been able to join. At that point in my life, I did not have the time—mainly multiple days—with my job and young children to dedicate to becoming a member of the Fraternity.

I am thankful for both of those initiatives that enabled me to become a Mason. I have had nothing but good, positive experiences in Masonry. Change IS good. □

I was especially intrigued about how the Masons I golfed with were all very close and affectionately referred to each other as *Brother*.



**NOT JUST A MAN. A MASON.™**

# The Sovereign

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

PRINCES OF JERUSALEM

## Making a Difference

By Richard F. Kucera, 32°

So how does one come to Freemasonry? There are many paths, and this is my story.

So, what makes Brotherly love such a difficult concept to grasp? Brotherly love can come easily in many situations. Where Masonic Brotherly love comes into play is when good men of honest intention disagree but remain supportive, respectful, caring, and friendly despite the disagreements. Conflicts among Brothers stop at the door, for brotherly love is the cement of Freemasonry and the keystone that holds us all together. We always need to remember this and rise above any conflict.

When I was young, my father and grandfather would get dressed up once a month and disappear for an evening. When they came home, they would practice certain things out in the garage that I wasn't allowed to hear. My grandfather happened to live across the street from where I grew up, and there are Masonic symbols all around his house.

There were rough bricks and smooth bricks. He would go once a year to Atlantic City to march with the Tall Cedars Band, and they had a pretty sharp-looking band uniform. He would usually come back with a trophy. My grandmother would go off to Eastern Star. I never quite

knew what was going on with that, but she always had a nice dress on when she left.

When I was in junior high school, a friend and I joined DeMolay at the Plum Lodge. I remember the night I was initiated, sitting with my father at the Syria Mosque. The entire event was very impressive and has been in my thoughts ever since.

When I was in junior high school, a friend and I joined DeMolay at the Plum Lodge.

Later, when I had to learn my obligation, I practiced what seemed like forever. I was very nervous when I first presented to the DeMolay Dad but muddled my way through.

I was involved until I went off to college. Then life changed,

and childish things were put aside. I met my wife, Mary Ruth, and then I spent most of my time concentrating on work and, later, school. Having put in 13 years in the military, my wife always reminds me she was in the military along with me. When I finished my obligations, I came back to Western Pennsylvania and went into private practice. I really had not thought much about Freemasonry. I felt like it was something from the past that my father and grandfather had done and essentially forgotten about.

Then one day, I had a patient come to my office. He had a serious problem,



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and while we were working through it, he asked me if I had ever been interested in Freemasonry. I told him I was a DeMolay and explained about my family connections. After the visit, on the way out the door, he gave me the handshake for DeMolay. It really caught me off guard!

The next thing I knew, there was an application to join the Greensburg Lodge in my mailbox.

At this point in my life, our children had all left home, and I was still busy with a very active practice and all that entails. After speaking with my father, I thought if I was ever going to join Freemasonry, it was going to be at that time. I filled out the application and wrote the check but wasn't sure what was going to happen next.

Then I got a call from the Worshipful Master of Greensburg Lodge telling me he wanted to come to the house for an interview. At the time, my oldest daughter was in the process of arranging her wedding. I told him if I let anybody in the house in the state it was in, my wife would probably divorce me. So, I went to the Worshipful Master's business office and was interviewed. One question that he asked me really struck me and has stuck with me ever since: *Why do you want to become a Freemason?*

My answer at the time was that I always felt Freemasonry did a lot of very worthwhile charity work. However, I have thought about this for many years now—what exactly Freemasonry and the Scottish Rite have to offer. Throughout my career, I have been an intimate part of the lives of many families of all social strata and literally from around the world. The one observation that is

The next thing I knew, there was an application to join the Greensburg Lodge in my mailbox.

always constant is that despite the culture, despite the place of geographic origin, despite all the trouble in the world, we are all so very similar. People really do all want basically the same things: a place where they can have a family, be safe, provide a good life for their loved ones, and hopefully leave things a little better

than they were by their presence while they were here.

So how does Freemasonry need the Scottish Rite to build on this? What is it that we do that is essential and really matters and defines Freemasonry and the Scottish Rite? I believe that it is building bridges of commonality so that people of different opinions can cross over all the divisive

problems in the world to become friends and Brothers. It is a place where good people can talk and build friendships despite all their differences; a place of quiet peace among people willing to help each other; one that grows from the similarities and understands their differences, but above all, expresses tolerance, Brotherly love, and caring. □



THE  
ROAD  
BEGINS  
HERE

# TheWise

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

ROSE CROIX

## Owning Your Craft

By Jordan L. Frei, 32°

For me to become a Mason, it only took two conversations. They were, however, roughly ten years apart.

Whether coincidence or fate, Perry Egelsky is from New Kensington—a neighborhood I had been to once or twice as a student at Waynesburg College (now University).

I met “Skee” when he and I joined the same high school football coaching staff in Broward County (FL) in 1998, which is where I grew up but where few people ever heard of New Kensington.

It didn’t take us long to become friends. Despite him being more than a decade older than me, we saw the world through similar eyes, had a shared work ethic, and often found ourselves practicing discipline and temperance as any number of situations required us to do.

I remember Skee being unafraid to go against the grain, but he did so in a calculated manner and only if it was beneficial to everyone involved. All too often, folks want to change things just for the sake of change or to be the person who brought about change. This isn’t Skee.

But what I found most interesting about Skee was that despite being an accomplished football coach and educator, he is, for lack of a better word—worldly.

During countless meals, whether historical events, cooking, or politics became the topic of conversation, Skee has a working knowledge of a vast amount of topics. If the

conversation turned to a topic with which he wasn’t familiar, he asked those who were and listened intently. He genuinely seeks to expand his knowledge of all things.

In my younger mind, I found that particularly unique for a football coach. Stereotypically, the mastery of that profession left little time for worldly

interests. This, also, is not Skee.

One day, I approached him about an emblem on his vehicle. We were both at a stoplight with our windows down. I shouted to him, “I have been meaning to ask you—what is that gold thing on your car?”

He smiled and said, “Now I can talk to you about it!”

The next day, in less than an hour’s planning period, Skee broke down what Freemasonry was and what it

“It’s a craft, not just something you do. Own your craft,” Skee would commonly profess.



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## All too often, folks want to change things just for the sake of change or to be the person who brought about change.

wasn't. I remember him saying that since South Florida is made up of many New York transplants, and because New York Masons live by the "to be one, ask one" rule, he had to wait for me to ask.

But he recommended that I wait to petition a lodge. At the time, I was coaching both football and wrestling in addition to teaching English and reading. He described a system where it takes a full year to reach the third degree and that, some weeks, there are multiple meetings.

A few years later, my wife and I decided to relocate to her hometown in western Pennsylvania. One of Skee's parting bits of advice to me was to find out more about Freemasonry after getting settled. Eventually, he predicted, I would come across someone who is a Freemason.

*Eventually* occurred at a golf outing when I spent the day with Brother Joshua S. Freeman, our current First Lieutenant Commander and District Deputy Grand Master of the 30th Masonic District. I remember it occurring to me that day that there were a number of similarities between him and Skee.

Brother Josh loves a good conversation. There are few topics that he knows nothing about but is quick to give his attention to enlightening pursuits. Also, like Skee, he genuinely cares about the state of others.

As my first-line signer, Brother Josh served as a Masonic mentor to me for the years to follow—even still.

Whether it is Masonic folklore or an interpretation of the *Ahiman Rezon*, Brother Josh not only has a firm grasp on the correct answer but can explain why something is the way it is.

As a ritualist, Brother Josh owns his work. His degree work is delivered in a style that is personal to him.

This is similar to Skee's value system. I recall a few occasions where he suggested reading a football coach's autobiography or some thesis on better implementing classroom management practices.

"It's a craft, not just something you do. Own your craft," Skee would commonly profess.

But the most common of common grounds for both Brother Josh and Brother Skee was how they use our Masonic code and values to navigate the never-ending moral dilemmas that life presents. They quickly identify a solution and pursue it, regardless of the hardship.

In short (I could safely guess that they would both agree), our

Masonic Craft is not just something we do. Not everyone in our world is on the level, and that is okay so long as *we* are.

As a Past Master of Ligonier Lodge No. 331 and soon-to-be Past Most Wise Master of the Pittsburgh Chapter of Rose Croix, I communicate with Brother Josh frequently. But as men often do, I fell out of touch with Brother Skee. My visits to South Florida are too infrequent and too packed with family obligations.

Nevertheless, I owe Brother Skee a contact and will be mailing him a copy of this edition of *RiteNow*.

I don't know if Brother Skee is a Scottish Rite Mason or a member of any of the other appendant bodies. But what I do know is that whatever he is doing, he is doing it by the square and on the level.

And owning his craft. □



# The Office

A message from the Secretary of the Valley of Pittsburgh

VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

## Membership Has Its Privileges

By David W. Morgans, 33°

### Greetings

Brethren, your annual membership renewal fees will soon be due. That's right, Brethren, another Scottish Rite year has passed, and a new one will soon begin. Next year's dues notices will be heading your way during the latter part of July or early August 2023. Paying dues is a necessary component to remaining a member of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry in the great Valley of Pittsburgh, but your \$120.00 per year dues also mean much more.

Paying dues allows you to support the ongoing work of the Valley, which includes, but is not limited to, providing excellent stated meetings for not only our members but also their ladies and, at times, families; holding fantastic Classes and Reunions; having great social events for all; receiving notices of upcoming events; publishing the *RiteNow* magazine; providing college scholarships; and so much more.

While it's easy for you to update your information through the Member Center on the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction's website, you may also update your membership

information when you remit your annual dues. If you have had any changes to your address, phone number(s), or email, please let us know when you send in your dues. It is critical that the office have your current contact information so we can continue to correspond with you in a timely and efficient manner.

Please let the office know if you need a little help with your dues this year because our Hospitaller stands ready to assist.

Returning the dues card or calling the office also provides the families of those who have lost a loved one who belonged to our Valley an opportunity to let us know of his passing so that we may update our records and stop (or continue) to send out our newsletters and magazines to the

surviving spouse. We will also be able to include our Brother's name at our next stated meeting and in the next issue of *RiteNow* so that we may honor his memory and inform the membership of his passing.

If you are having financial struggles, then your dues notice brings you the opportunity of experiencing what Brotherly love and affection are all about. Please let the office know if you need a little help with your dues this year because our Hospitaller stands ready to assist. It will cause



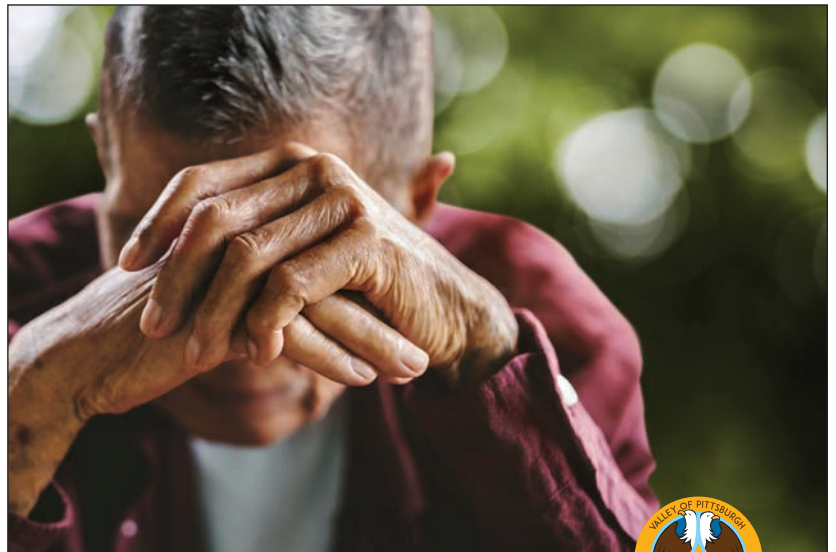
David W. Morgans, 33°  
secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org

## Paying dues allows you to support the ongoing work of the Valley.

you less stress and cost the Valley less money if you let us know you need financial help prior to us sending out a second and maybe even a third dues notice.

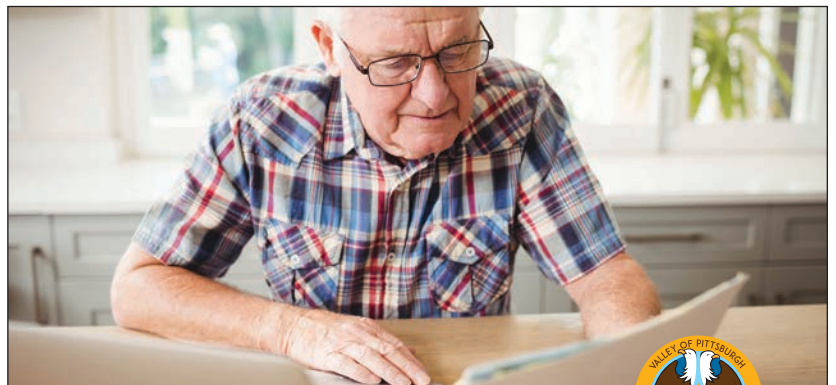
And lastly, returning your dues notice gives you the opportunity to contribute to the outstanding work that our Children's Dyslexia Center does in helping children overcome the challenges of dyslexia. Please be as generous as possible by donating when you return your dues.

As always, if there is anything that we can do for you at the office, please let us know. □



## Need Assistance?

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



## Senior Member Status

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

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

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

# Our Youth

News and information about the Masonic Youth in our Valley

## My Masonic/Rainbow Journey

by Helen Snedden, Supreme Inspector in Pennsylvania

**How** does anyone's Masonic journey begin? For most, the first step starts with a conversation about the organization.

At our Patton Weekends, we have fun, fellowship, Rainbow ritual, and sessions full of life skills information. At a recent weekend, one of the discussion sessions was focused on membership, especially recruitment. Many ideas were shared about how to talk about our beautiful Order of Rainbow to girls and/or their parent(s). The discussion started with each Grand Officer in the group answering the question, "How did your 'join story' begin?" One by one, every Grand Officer said that they learned about Rainbow from a family member.

This got me thinking, *What is my join story?* My Rainbow journey started 61 years ago. My family moved from Williamsport to Bellefonte when I was 11 years old. I was fortunate to have moved across the street from a family with a girl my same age and in the same classroom. We became best friends. When Carol turned 12, her mother told her about joining Rainbow. Carol only wanted to do it if I also joined with her. I knew nothing of Rainbow, but doing something different with my best friend was a no-brainer. With my parents' permission, I got to pursue this new adventure.

To my surprise, my parents knew about the Masonic Family but had never mentioned it to me.

I learned my mother had joined Eastern Star as soon as she turned 18. Her father and uncles were very active Masons. I didn't know that my dad and my grandfather were Masons as well. We went to a lot of dinners at the Lodge and Consistory. My grandfather was always working the dinners. I later learned he was on the banquet committee for his Lodge. My father joined his father's Lodge as soon as he returned from his tour of duty on a naval destroyer in the South Pacific. After I asked about Rainbow, I learned how proud my parents were of their Masonic heritage and membership. They weren't active in our new community, and it just wasn't talked about.

The night of my Initiation into Bellefonte Assembly #79, my mother attended, but my father couldn't. Back then, Masons were not permitted to attend. It was an experience that opened a whole new world to me. I quickly became an active member of the Assembly. I loved the fact that Carol had invited me and that we then did it together. My two younger sisters and my parents then learned all about Rainbow too. We became a very active Rainbow family.

The moral of this story is to encourage everyone to tell their Masonic "join story." What's yours? □



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



# The Road Begins Here

by Michael Larkin, Executive Officer, Pennsylvania DeMolay

**Making** friends is sometimes difficult for young people. They go to school and meet other people, but they may have difficulty forming relationships. They have “friends” on social media, but they may be friends in quantity and not quality.

Working with young people for many years, I realize why belonging to a group like DeMolay provides the opportunity for young men to make real friendships. Members work together doing service events, discussing and planning activities, getting help with running a meeting, or just hanging out eating pizza and wings. Adult Advisors mentor these young men; they listen to their problems and help them work through their issues. DeMolay provides an experience that creates bonds of friendship and an extended family that our members will never forget.

The majority of members will tell you that the reason they keep coming back to DeMolay is for the brotherhood. It is the one thing they all need. And let’s agree that as Masons, brotherhood is why we are active in our lodges.

An example of this DeMolay brotherhood is happening with the members of the Elizabethtown Chapter. With 42 members in their Chapter, those who are active—from 12 to 15 members depending on the activity—represent 12 diverse school districts, including those in Lancaster and Lebanon Counties and southeastern York and Dauphin Counties. But the school district or residency doesn’t alter the brotherhood, cooperative collaboration, and energy that is immediately evident when these young men are together.

Most recently, the elected leaders, working with a

committee of newer members, each in for less than a year, planned a Dodgeball for Dyslexia Tournament that was supported by five Pennsylvania DeMolay Chapters, two Virginia DeMolay Chapters, one Masonic Lodge, and one group of Senior DeMolays. The Tournament raised \$1,850.00 for the Dyslexia Centers, the Pennsylvania DeMolay charity of 23 years. It was brotherhood truly in action, all for a charitable cause. Of the money raised, the members also made donations totaling \$300 from their profit-sharing “Personal Accounts.” Generosity is also a hallmark of this group of remarkable youth, ages 12 to 19.

Through planning their chapter activities, working together, and making collective decisions, DeMolay provides the environment to cultivate this type of brotherhood. They celebrate their successes and learn from their mistakes.

Let’s help a young man become a member of DeMolay, providing him the opportunity to meet other young men and form a brotherhood that may last a lifetime. Let’s help them become better sons, better citizens, and better men.

The Road Begins Here.

The Road Begins with You. □

**THE  
ROAD  
BEGINS  
HERE**



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

\$100

for



1923 - 2023



# A Once in a Lifetime Opportunity

## Leave a Legacy

Since February 12, 1923, when Templar Chapter was instituted in Pittsburgh, the Order of DeMolay in Pennsylvania has been offering its members an exciting opportunity to grow and develop into young men of service. Young men who are recognized as leaders, and who can be relied on in every field of life and endeavor.

The teachings of the Order of DeMolay have been invaluable to the generations who have been recognized as leaders in their homes, churches, work places, and communities for 100 years. In order to ensure and to celebrate the past and future of this organization—one that offers an experience that no other youth group provides—we are asking for your financial support.

This "Once in a Lifetime Opportunity" is an invitation to give back for those who have benefitted from the teachings of DeMolay, as well as, an opportunity for those who recognize the importance of this organization in today's world to show their support.

Your gift will embrace these principles while providing the financial support for a brighter future as the Centennial of Pennsylvania DeMolay is celebrated across the Commonwealth and we begin our second century of service and success.

Thank You for your consideration of this invitation.

## Levels of Giving

We all know how special this "Once in a Lifetime Opportunity" will be for our members, Advisors, and friends.

In recognition of this we want to offer everyone a chance to contribute to the Centennial Celebration.

We have created gift levels that are attainable by all. We encourage you to give at a level that is most comfortable to you.

This chart is designed to help you decide the level at which you would like to give.

### CONTRIBUTION LEVELS

Bronze Level	\$100 for 100 contributions of up to \$99	Silver Level contributions of \$100 to \$249	Gold Level contributions of \$250 to \$499	Platinum Level contributions of \$500 to \$999	Sapphire Level contributions of \$1,000 to \$4,999	Sapphire Level contributions of \$5,000 or more
Recognition in the commemorative book "100 Years of DeMolay in Pennsylvania" and a Commemorative Centennial Pin	★	★	★	★	★	★
Permanent Recognition in Memorial Hall at the Masonic Conference Center—Patton Campus		★	★	★	★	★
A copy of the commemorative book "100 Years of DeMolay in Pennsylvania"		★	★	★	★	★
A unique Centennial Gift (tie, socks, or similar)			★	★	★	★
A copy of the commemorative book "100 Years of DeMolay in Pennsylvania" signed by the State Master Councilor, Executive Officer, and Right Worshipful Grand Master				★	★	★
The commemorative Right Worshipful Grand Master's Centennial Medallion					★	★
Invitations to all special Centennial Celebration Events						★

Pennsylvania DeMolay has been determined by the Internal Revenue Service to be exempt from federal income taxes as a charitable organization under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your contribution may be tax deductible.



pademolay.org

Contribute today!

Use this code to visit [pademolay.org/100-for-100/](http://pademolay.org/100-for-100/):  
Or call 717-367-1536.



# Uniontown Update

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

VALLEY OF UNIONTOWN

## Looking Forward, Looking Back

By Jonathan E. Green, 32°

My year as Thrice Potent Master of the Valley of Uniontown is coming to an end. It was enjoyable, both with the reunion and doing the 9th degree at the Valley of Pittsburgh.

I really hope we continue doing the live degrees. With all the enjoyment we get out of performing them, I think we have a better time than the candidates witnessing them. I hope the Valley of Pittsburgh continues to confer the 32nd degree at our fall reunion. The Brethren who were there really enjoyed it.

Participate.  
It's well worth it.

I hope the new and old Brethren reading this might step in and participate in the live degrees. The fellowship of it is a great feeling. The practices and the fellowship afterward are the best part. You have two great Valleys—one to the north of the city and one to the south.

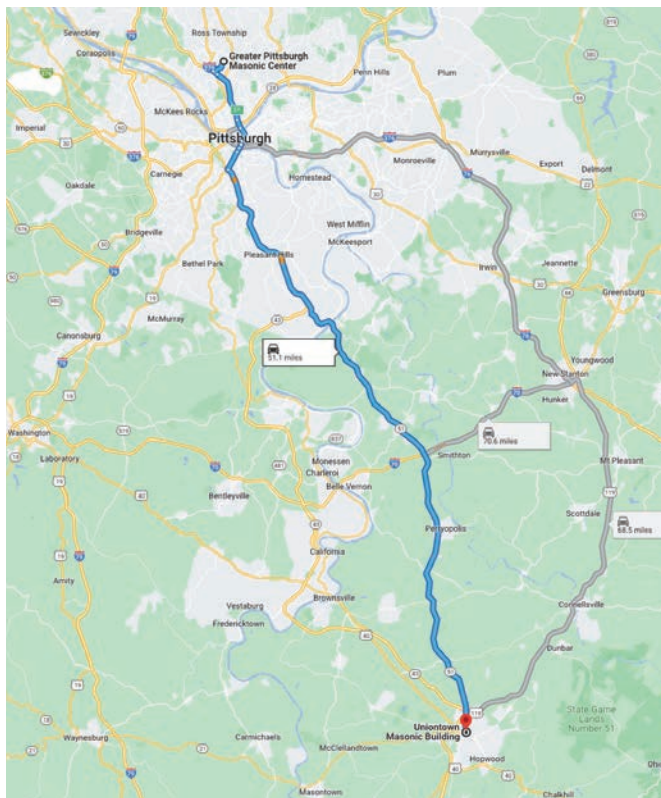
Get active. Try to get in one of the lines. Participate. It's well worth it. We need guys to keep this great Fraternity going, so get active. And to the older Brethren: remember not to push younger guys away.

I would like to thank the officers in Uniontown and Pittsburgh for their help and support this past year. I've never claimed to be

an author, so the whole writing Masonic articles for a magazine was new to me, and I would like to thank anyone who actually read them. If you wanted to hear stories about building power lines, I could write a book.

I would still like to try next spring for a sporting clays or trap shoot between the two Valleys to promote some fellowship. Lack of time and days off this year and last year has taken away from some of the things I could have accomplished, but I enjoyed the opportunity. Again I would like to thank everyone for the help and support and hope they do the same for our incoming Master.

I would like to close by wishing everyone a safe and happy summer. Remember: storm season is coming, so when you complain about your lights being off, show some compassion and think about the Brother writing this article. □



More Light





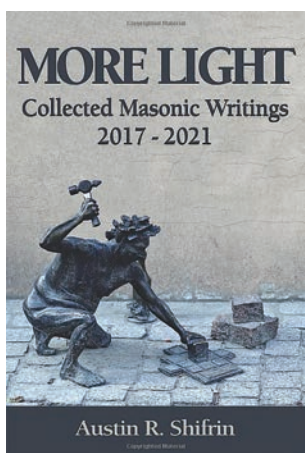
Austin R. Shifrin, 33°

# Great Expectations

by Austin Shifrin, 33°

**Looking at the theme of this issue, “Origin Stories,” I felt some discomfort at the prospect of telling the story of my introduction to Freemasonry again: Having written about it for my presentation to the Squirrel Hill Historical Society in 2018, which subsequently appeared in my book, *More Light*, and having retold it on several podcasts in the past two years, I would feel a bit like I was abusing my audience to revisit it.**

By now, my poor girlfriend can probably recite the story the same way I tell it, beat-for-beat. But I was grabbed immediately by one of Illustrious Brother



Roup’s suggestions regarding specific nuances of the subject: *what you expected vs. what you received.* Understanding and managing prospective members’ expectations is one of the most important and interesting challenges contemporary Freemasonry faces, so I’d like to discuss and explore this together.

I will confess in the spirit of responsible journalism that the following observations are somewhat anecdotal—while based on nearly two decades of observation, it wasn’t rigorously scientific, nor have I deluded myself that it will necessarily cover all the bases. I will be satisfied if it provokes helpful and productive conversation, though.

Some gentlemen seem to pursue Freemasonry expecting that it is a bulwark for their own traditional religious values. Their recommender might be someone who is active and involved in their house of worship,

**A very important component of this process, then, is having a good understanding of the “culture” of our own Craft Lodges.**

whose perspective might very well be that this is indeed the core of Craft Masonry. They would likely find in their initiatory experience that expectation is met and reinforced. There are some authors and scholars who have put a more explicitly Christian spin on the content of Craft Freemasonry, I would imagine, to the reassurance of the adherents of that faith. But to reiterate: generally speaking, I think this expectation is probably met for the bulk of men who join unless perhaps the broad and inclusive spirit of the lodge doesn’t jive with that specific person’s more fundamentalist preferences (as I outlined in my article “Beyond Tolerance” in our Winter 2022 issue).

Some gentlemen seem to pursue Freemasonry expecting that it is the refuge of esoteric or occult knowledge. I am going to publicly state that I don't honestly believe the genuine inventors of Freemasonry, the operative masons, intentionally included any esoteric or occult knowledge in Craft lodge teachings, nor do I believe that the knowledge of older mystery schools such as those of Greece or Egypt has somehow become hidden or encoded within Freemasonry (with no disrespect intended to those who disagree with me). I will say, however, that this expectation has become something of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Clearly, for a very long time, there has been an overlapping Euler diagram of people with an interest in both Freemasonry and the esoteric (My inclination is to cite the creation of the Theosophical Society in 1875, but I'm sure it could pre-date that). A prospect who comes to our doors expecting this may be very disappointed if he encounters only lodges or members who comport more with the preceding paragraph; on the other hand, their expectation might be met with a little further collaboration among Brethren to connect that prospect with a lodge whose members have a more esoteric bent. I also acknowledge that this take is colored by my good fortune to be a member in Pennsylvania, a state with significant Masonic activity and, therefore, a greater number and diversity of lodges to "shop" among.

Some gentlemen seem to pursue Freemasonry expecting that it will provide them with professional networking opportunities. This perspective obviously ought to be discouraged by any of the earliest Brethren that they encounter since we take a stance that material self-enrichment is an unacceptable motivation for candidates for our order. With that said, I think we may agree that if a man harbors this desire secretly in his heart, we may be unable to detect it or prevent him from joining. And having

said that, he could be surprised or disappointed to learn that, owing to some diversity of background among our membership, he will not exclusively or frequently be rubbing elbows with men from his own field or industry. Furthermore, if a man seeking to join is looking not just to make contacts within his same field but rather to look upon his lodge or other Masonic bodies as mere sources of sales leads, he would undoubtedly find that unless practiced very patiently and judiciously, such activity would likely be identified pretty quickly (and pretty

**Understanding and managing prospective members' expectations is one of the most important and interesting challenges contemporary Freemasonry faces.**

sternly frowned upon). In this scenario, the old adage "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is undoubtedly applicable.

Some gentlemen seem to pursue Freemasonry expecting that it will give them a chance to discuss and debate lofty or important subjects. They have somehow arrived at this impression of our membership consisting of wise and scholarly people. And I certainly hope there's a kernel of truth to this. After all, people with interests in philosophy and history may naturally gravitate to the Masonic lodge if, for instance, they are familiar with the similarities between the Stoics and the Masonic view on mortality; or with Freemasonry's influence on the American Revolution and other events in world history besides. So, with some collaboration and some synergy, the brethren who meet this description may find themselves congregated to enjoy each other's company—if not on a monthly basis, then at the very least at events organized for the purpose. This prospect's expectations can be met.

Some gentlemen seem to pursue Freemasonry expecting that it will give them an opportunity for fun and fellowship. While I find it hard to imagine thinking that this was Freemasonry's chief purpose, I suspect this could be (and maybe you can relate) due to the challenge of remembering what my perception of things was like before I was a Freemason at all. And I think we can probably agree that the more public face of our appendant bodies, such as the Shriners, can contribute to the public perception that Freemasons have fun and enjoy each other's company to the extent that the public can make the connection between the Shrine and Craft lodge. But even some Craft lodges present good examples of fun and fellowship, organizing socials and outings for their members. I believe we can say this is another case in which a prospect's expectations can be met, provided that he can be connected with a lodge that meets with this description, although he could be disappointed if the lodge he petitions is not like this and it comes as some big surprise.

I think the preceding sentence truly contains the nucleus of what I'm driving at in this essay. To wit: Freemasonry has so much to offer that it has the potential to meet the expectations of a wide variety of prospects—even those whose preferences might appear diametrically opposed to each other. A very important component of this process, then, is having a good understanding of the “culture” of our own Craft lodges, and getting to know our candidates well and their expectations clearly. We probably need to find ways to balance priorities, such as finding a lodge with a convenient meeting time and location for that prospect, against finding the lodge that is truly a good fit for their expectations—even if that lodge is not your own. It may be difficult but necessary to shed a small element of the mystique, claiming that “you can't truly know what Freemasonry is like until you join” in favor of getting this fit right. I would rather make a member who feels like he is truly at home in our Fraternity—who will be loyal and active for the rest of his days—than the alternative. □



VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

# Spring Class Honors Matthew A. Boice, 32°

On Friday and Saturday, April 21 and 22, the Valley of Pittsburgh welcomed 17 new members and 7 initiates during their Spring Class.

The class was named in honor of Matt Boice, Past Most Wise Master, who joined the celestial lodge last year. Those attending witnessed live performances of the 4th, 9th, 14th, 16th, 30th, and 32nd degrees over the course of the weekend.

At the official reception, Vince Monardo, 33°, Deputy's Representative welcomed Blair McGill, 33°, Deputy's Representative for Uniontown and Jason Craig, 33°, Most Excellent Grand High Priest for Pennsylvania.

Following the degrees, the Valley welcomed the candidates with an afterglow event at the Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center. □







# TheWord

A Message from the Grand Chaplain

VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH

## A False Start

By David A. Eichelberger, 32°

“Origin stories” is an interesting topic for many of us since we all came to Freemasonry on differing paths. Some of us joined because our father was a Mason. Some because of the mysteries depicted on the internet or the books and films by Mr. Brown. Others come because they like the sort of men who are Freemasons—how they treat people, how they step forward to help when others hold back, etc.

My origin story is a bit complicated. As a child growing up among my large extended family, I heard rumors that earlier ancestors had been Freemasons. This intrigued me at the time because I did not fully understand what exactly that meant. I stored it away with the many other stories I was told about our family history. Years went by, and additional mentions were made of this or that member of the family joining the Eastern Star or the Shrine. I still did not fully grasp the significance of the story, just that it was said they were able to join because they were related to a Freemason, in the case of the member of the Eastern Star.

I lived in a small town in Mercer County but spent the summers with my grandparents in Bedford County in a very small town called

Morrison’s Cove. The only fraternal groups I was especially aware of were the American Legion, the V.F.W., and the Lions. As a veteran of WWII, my father was a member of the first two, and my grandfather was active in the Lions. I just never saw much presence of the Masons in any of these areas.

However, the seed had been planted in my head that Freemasonry was

in my heritage, and I should learn about it. When I moved to Elmhurst, Illinois, I was pastoring in a town with an active Lodge near the train station for trips into Chicago. I also had a member of my church who was both a member and an officer of the lodge. I

Not wanting to cause family problems, I withdrew my petition.

asked him about Freemasonry and procured a petition. Unfortunately, at this point in my process, I came to a sticking point. My wife at that time was dead set against Freemasonry due to a slight she felt she had received as a child at the hands of the Rainbow Girls in the town she grew up in back here in Pennsylvania. Not wanting to cause family problems, I withdrew my petition.

Years later, and for reasons totally unrelated, we divorced. In the midst of my readjusting my life, I came to the awareness that my way was clear to become a Mason! By this time, I was no longer in the same town. I was pastoring a

## As a child growing up among my large extended family, I heard rumors that earlier ancestors had been Freemasons.

midsized church in Aurora, Illinois, and had very few free evenings. I went online to the Grand Lodge of Illinois website, found a list of the lodges that met in my area, and discovered that one met on the night I had free. The next time they met, I arrived early, sat on the bench out front of the lodge, and waited. When my soon-to-be Brethren arrived at the lodge, they were delighted to find an applicant waiting to be interviewed so that he could petition the lodge. In a few months, I was entered, passed, and raised to the Sublime degree of a Master Mason on St. Patrick's Day, 2008.

The next time they met, I arrived early, sat on the bench out front of the lodge, and waited.

The Brethren of Raven Lodge No. 303, Oswego, Illinois, have been my Brothers ever since. Subsequent to that time, I have expanded my experience in Freemasonry via the York Rite, Scottish Rite, the Shrine, the Grotto, the Tall Cedars, the Allied Masonic Degrees, and other invitational bodies. In each, I have met men who have challenged me to be a better man, to strive for greater achievements, and to seek even more enlightenment through Freemasonry. I am so thankful I chose to become a Freemason.

I admit that my story is, in all likelihood, quite unlike many others, but I think it has some similarities to other men in Freemasonry. Some of us hesitated to join. Some join out of heritage. Some join out of curiosity. Some find it rather daunting in its intellectual challenges.



No matter the way you get here—via one-day class, the traditional three steps over three months, or an extended process—press on. As many will tell you, you get out of Freemasonry the degree of effort you put into it. Spend time with your Brethren, work with them, help out with your Lodge, Chapter, Commandery, Council, Valley, etc. Masonry has learned over the ages what the human mind can accomplish when it is put to work. Trust us, and you will be amazed. I was, and you can be too! □

Raven Lodge 303 A.F. & A.M.  
71 Main Street, Oswego, IL 60543

Member Portal

### Not just a man. A Mason.

Home | Contact | Calendar | News | Sign In / Create Account

**Calendar**

**Stated Communication**  
Jun 5, 2023 - 7:30pm - 71 Main Street, Oswego, IL 60543  
Raven #303, in Oswego, Illinois, holds bi-monthly Stated Communications on the first and third Monday of the month. The meeting, held at 71 Main Street in Oswego, IL 60543, starts at 7:30pm. Contact the lodge to determine the purpose of the meetin...

**Stated Communication**  
Jun 18, 2023 - 7:30pm - 71 Main Street, Oswego, IL 60543  
Raven #303, in Oswego, Illinois, holds bi-monthly Stated Communications on the first and third Monday of the month. The meeting, held at 71 Main Street in Oswego, IL 60543, starts at 7:30pm. Contact the lodge to determine the purpose of the meetin...

**Stated Communication**  
Jul 3, 2023 - 7:30pm - 71 Main Street, Oswego, IL 60543  
Raven #303, in Oswego, Illinois, holds bi-monthly Stated Communications on the first and third Monday of the month. The meeting, held at 71 Main Street in Oswego, IL 60543, starts at 7:30pm. Contact the lodge to determine the purpose of the meetin...

**Stated Meetings**  
1st & 3rd Mondays 7:30PM

**Part of:**  
District 007-N

**Along With:**  
Jerusalem's Temple #90  
Kendal #471  
Leland #508  
Mason #353  
Shabbona #374  
Sunbeam #428

**Charters on 10/05/1859 by the Grand Lodge of Illinois, Raven Lodge #303 A.F. & A.M. in Oswego, Illinois is part of District 007-N.**

- Grand Lodge of Illinois
- WHO
- Temp of Service
- Privacy Policy

# Origin Story

by D. Todd Ballenger, 33<sup>rd</sup>



D. Todd Ballenger, 33°

Sykes entered the cluttered office while reading the desk sergeant's note. He pulled the door closed with his free hand and began to speak as he took a seat in the chair behind the desk. His partner, Detective Will Jonas, leaned against the wall in the back corner of the room casually chewing on a toothpick.

**"You're Richard Abernathy?"** Sykes intoned.

**"Yes, sir,"** came the reply. **"I'm Rick Abernathy."**

The man in the chair opposite Sykes did not seem especially nervous, though he turned his head to take in the layout of the smallish room and his position between the two other men. Nervous? Not really. But he'd certainly never had a police interview before. That was easy to see.

**"Uh-huh,"** said Sykes.

Jonas shifted the toothpick to the other side of his mouth. **"Why don't you tell us why you're here, Mr. Abernathy."**

**"Yeah, ok. Sure."** Abernathy shifted to the front of his chair and began. **"I was coming out of my building after work yesterday. I got held over—well, everybody did—'cause we're so busy right now, and I guess I wasn't in the greatest of moods when I hit the front door. I immediately hailed a cab, and as luck would have it, one swung right over to the curb."**

Jonas stopped chewing on the toothpick. Sykes looked up from the mess of paperwork on his desk.

**"As far as unusual occurrences go, you now have my attention."**

Abernathy forced out a laugh. **"Ha, I know, right? Anyway, right as I was reaching for the cab door, this**

**other guy came out of nowhere and grabbed the handle. The guy was trying to steal my cab, and I guess in the mood I was in, I wasn't having it."**

**"I take it the two of you had words at this point,"** Sykes interjected.

**"Oh, you better believe we did,"** responded Abernathy. **"I admit, I'm not proud of what I said or how I acted, but there you go. Maybe it was work, maybe it was something else, but the next thing I know, I'm saying a lot of things I wouldn't normally say and squaring off with this other guy in the middle of the public sidewalk. I mean, some of my co-workers were still coming out of our building, and there were people beginning to gather on the street just to gawk."**

Jonas unfolded himself from the corner and casually moved behind the visitor's chair. **"I'm sure this was a bit out of your norm, Rick—can I call you Rick? But why bring the story to the police?"**

**"I'm getting to that,"** came the reply.

**"Yeah, he's getting to that, Will."** Jonas rolled his eyes as Sykes prodded, **"Do continue, sir."**

**"Well, that was when the Stranger showed up,"** offered Rick.

**"I thought you were already about to mix it up with a stranger,"** Sykes commented.

**“True. But this was a different Stranger,”** Abernathy continued, **“and I don’t just mean ‘stranger’ in the way that I didn’t know him. There was something definitely different about him.”**

**“Different? How so?”** inquired Jonas. **“Was he dressed unusually? Was it in the way he walked or looked? What are we talking about here?”**

Rick looked back over his shoulder, trying to direct the answer to the hovering Detective Jonas. **“I don’t know how to describe it. He just seemed . . . happy.”**

Jonas stopped moving, the toothpick in his mouth now dead center, frozen mid-switch from one side to the other. Sykes slowly removed his glasses and laid them on the desk, then lowered his head and pinched the bridge of his nose between two fingers. Maybe if he squinted hard enough, the headache growing in the front of his skull would retreat. He drew in a breath and said, **“Happy, you say?”**

**“Happy, yeah,”** said Rick. **“Look, I know it doesn’t make sense, but the guy was odd, and everybody around us knew it—especially when the light came.”**

Will Jonas straightened up. **“There was a light, too?”**

**“Absolutely,”** Rick went on, **“and it wasn’t like from a street lamp or traffic, but more like the sun—only brighter. It was so bright I had to close my eyes. It didn’t hurt or anything, but it was warm, and I felt, well, calm. Then it was gone. We were all just standing there looking at each other—me, the guy stealing my cab, and a small crowd of people. No animosity; no guilt. Just peacefulness and a sense of calm. It wasn’t just me, I swear. Everyone felt it.”**



Sykes just stared. **“What happened next?”**

**“Yeah, about that,”** Abernathy continued. **“We shared the cab—me and the other guy.”**

**“What?!”** said Jonas in disbelief.

This time Rick turned to look at him. **“Yeah. Sounds crazy, two guys ready to slug it out in the street sharing the ride home. Turns out we only live a couple of miles apart. Our kids are in the same grade and everything.”**

Jonas shifted the toothpick and came almost nose to nose with Abernathy. **“Got pretty friendly for a couple of strangers on a shared cab ride, didn’t you? Sounds like you’re leaving something out.”**

Abernathy broke away from the detective’s gaze and faced Sykes. **“No, really—it was the strangest thing, but it was the same for both of us. After that guy walked by and the thing with the light, I just didn’t feel like fighting anymore. I felt better about myself and**



everyone around me, too. Something changed, all right, but I'm not sure what it was. I guess it was me."

Sykes picked up his glasses and began to wipe them with a once-clean cloth that was on his desk. "What about the other guy—your new friend?"

"It seemed to hit us both the same way," said Rick. "There just didn't seem to be any point to arguing over who got to ride in the cab when we were going the same direction at the same time."

Jonas chimed in, "So why bring this to us?"

Rick replied, "I saw the piece on the news about other people and the bright light thing, and I looked at my wife and said, 'That's exactly what happened to me.' And now it's happening to people all over. I guess I thought I would do the right thing and let you guys know."

Sykes, glasses now in place, stood up behind his desk and motioned toward the door. "And we're

certainly glad you did, Mr. Abernathy. Thanks for stopping in and giving a statement. If you run into anything else unusual, you know how to reach us."

Abernathy stood and began to make his way to the office door. Reaching for the knob, he paused. "What's going to happen to him?" he asked without turning around.

"To who?" asked Jonas.

"The guy." said Abernathy, "You know, the guy with the light."

Sykes stepped from behind the desk and, opening the door himself, said, "Sir, we do not know for sure that the figure and the light are even connected to each other, much less to any other incident reported at this time. But we're going to keep an eye out for him. No need to worry."

"Oh, I wasn't worried," said Abernathy.

"Come again?" asked Sykes.

"I wasn't worried," Abernathy said calmly. "In fact, I'd like to thank him."

Sykes could feel the headache returning. "I don't understand."

Rick Abernathy turned in the office doorway to face the detectives. "I'm telling you something happened with that light thing. I felt different. I acted different. I know it was him, and I just want the opportunity to say thank you if I can."

Sykes and Jonas looked at each other. Jonas finally

spoke. **“Well if we find out anything about the man with the light, we’ll pass on your thanks.”**

Making his way through the door, Abernathy said, **“I’d appreciate it, detectives. I really would—and of course, thank you both.”** He headed down the hall, turned at the end of the corridor, and was gone.

Sykes closed the door and made for his chair behind the desk. Jonas moved to the seat opposite him. **“What do you make of that?”** he asked.

Sykes reclined back in the seat and closed his eyes. **“Something’s going on. That’s the third incident this week. First at the Little League field with the parents accosting the umpire; then that situation with the guy blowing up on his boss at work; now this. All potentially volatile situations suddenly diffused, and all with witnesses who say they saw an unusual man and a bright light.”**

**“You’re right,”** said Jonas. **“Aliens.”**

**“Stop it,”** growled Sykes, suddenly re-engaged. **“You know I’m serious. Those people noticed it, and you do, too. You know as well as I do that people will absolutely go off on someone nowadays with no more reason than ‘I don’t like the way you eat ice cream.’ The fact that maybe there’s a guy walking around with a way to take the crazy out of situations is important. It could help—and we could use that kind of help.”**

Will Jonas leaned forward in his seat and folded his hands. **“I see what you mean. The only thing is, the Little League case and the guy in the office happened at almost the same time on the same day but on opposite sides of town.”**

**“Yeah, I know,”** said Sykes. **“Something still doesn’t add up. Unless . . .”**

**“Unless what,”** said Jonas, sitting up straight in the chair.

Sykes looked at him. **“Unless there’s more than one of these guys.”**

**“More than one?”**

**“You heard me.”** Sykes looked across the desk and stared his partner directly in the eyes. **“We need to find this guy.”**

Jonas returned a quizzical look. **“And do what? Arrest him? For what? Making people better?”**

Sykes stood up and faced away, staring out of his window down the alleyway. The comfort of an urban landscape always made him feel less edgy. It wasn’t working. **“No. I just need to ask him a question.”**

**“What’s that?”** asked his partner.

Without looking, Sykes simply answered, **“How do I get to be like him?”** □





# Builders Council

Benefactors of the Children's Dyslexia Center-Pittsburgh

The ability to read is the foundation of each child's future. It provides the base upon which all learning depends. Membership in the Builders Council means that you have made a commitment to assure that our Children's Dyslexia Center will be able to help children with dyslexia today and for years to come.

Joining the Builders Council is achieved through a commitment of \$10,000 by one of the following methods:

- **Pledging monthly/annual gifts for a period lasting no longer than 10 years**

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Jeffrey & Sharon Wonderling





**Finding**  
**your**  
**Tribe**

by PJ Roup, 33'



PJ Roup, 33°

► **Dylan** involuntarily grimaced as he looked at the time on his phone. 6:56. That meant he had four minutes, three and change actually, to park and get into the diner. He and Henry had a long-standing agreement that if you're late, you treat. He scanned the car's passenger seat while waiting for a break in the traffic to allow him to make a left into the parking lot. Phone? Check. Portfolio? Check. Wallet? Maybe he wouldn't need it if Henry hit the same traffic he had. He knew that wouldn't happen since Henry was pathologically early to everything.

Dylan's thoughts drifted back to the night he received his first degree.

*A few weeks before that night, he had received a letter from the lodge secretary telling him to arrive at 7:30. Walking in at 7:25, he was greeted by a gruff stranger who berated him for being late. "It said to present myself at 7:30, sir," Dylan protested, waving the secretary's letter in front of him.*

*"Call me Henry. Don't call me sir. I work for a living," was the reply. "We start at 7:30. You should have been here half an hour ago," Henry continued.*

*"Then this letter probably could have said that," Dylan said, rolling his eyes.*

Dylan smiled to himself. It was amusing to recall his first interaction with Henry, who was now arguably one of his closest friends. He grabbed his things from the front seat, nudged the door closed with his hip, and hurried across the parking lot. He checked his phone as he crossed the threshold of the diner: 6:59. He spied Henry in a corner

booth sipping his coffee. When he saw Dylan, he put the mug down and checked his watch with exaggerated flair.

Dylan made it by the skin of his teeth. He wouldn't have to pay, but he knew Henry would have something smart to say.

"Betty," Henry shouted in the direction of the kitchen. "Cancel my steak and eggs. The kid made it on time, and I can't afford a meal like that on my fixed income."

"Ha," came Betty's reply. "I wish my income was as fixed as yours. At least you're a good tipper," she said, winking at him.

"Better not let Ava catch you making eyes at her man, Betty," Dylan said, sliding into the booth. "I'll have my usual," he added.

"You don't say," replied Betty, feigning shock. "I put both of your orders in before Henry sat down. You two are more predictable than sunrise." She balanced the tray carefully as she removed the first plate. "Poached with a side of turkey sausage for Henry, and a Western omelet, sausage, home fries, and a blueberry pancake on the side for the youngster."



“I’m gonna surprise you someday, Betty. Really shake things up,” said Henry.

“Sure ya are, hon. Sure ya are,” she said, walking away.

“I really thought I had you today. Free meals taste so much better,” Henry said, turning his attention back to Dylan. “So what’s this interview about again?”

“Good morning, by the way,” Dylan said, opening his portfolio. He placed his phone on the table and hit the red record button on the voice recorder app. “The lodge anniversary is coming up next year, and I volunteered to ask some of our experienced—and by experienced, I mean old—members just what it was that made them want to join.”

“You could have just stuck with *experienced*,” Henry replied, taking a bite from his breakfast.

“What fun would that have been?”

Henry shrugged.

“Should we eat first?” Dylan asked.

“No. I can multitask, as you kids like to say. I’ll eat while you talk. You can eat while I talk. I’m a busy man, after all,” Henry joked, unable to hide his smile.

“Okay,” said Dylan. “So, I know you joined after you came back from the war, right? What attracted you to the Masons?”



Henry sat silently for several seconds. Dylan was about to rephrase the question but thought better of it. He could see that Henry was rewinding the last 70-plus years in his head. “You know what? I don’t think anyone has ever asked me that question—at least not in recent memory – and after three-quarters of a century as a Mason, the truth is it seems like I’ve always been one. It’s been a part of me for that long.”

“The  
European Theater. I didn’t get there until late ’44. Didn’t have to suffer through D-Day or the Battle of the Bulge like some of my friends.”

Three-quarters of a century was more than twice as long as Dylan had been alive. He loved being a Freemason, but it was tough to wrap his head around that length of service. He imagined what the Lodge of the 40s would have looked like—men in high-waisted pants and fedoras driving their giant cars to town a couple of nights a month, probably followed by a stop for highballs or martinis or whatever they drank back then. He allowed himself that brief distraction before refocusing his attention on Henry.

“You joined in ’49, right?”

“I did. Not very long after I got back from the war.”

“So, you served when and where?”

“The European Theater. I didn’t get there until late ’44. Didn’t have to suffer through D-Day or the Battle of the Bulge like some of my friends. I saw some action, but nothing like those kids did on June 6 or in the Ardennes, I tell ya. I stayed in Europe until late ’47 and was honorably discharged in 1948. Came home to Ava just as fast as I could,” Henry said.

He didn’t talk much about his time in the war. When he did, he downplayed it. Just doing my part, he would

tell people. But as he recounted his record to Dylan, he could see the faces of the men he served with, most of them gone now. The memories washed over him. Albright from Danbury, Connecticut, took a bullet right through the steel pot as they crouched behind the rubble of a building in a long-forgotten French town. Yocum, or “Yokel” as the platoon fondly nicknamed him for his accent, was from Abilene, Texas. He helped Henry out of more than one pinch. They remained close until Yokel died in the late 1990s. He made and lost a lot of friends there, and he could remember them all. He forced their faces from his mind and continued.

“In the military, whether you see action or not, you develop a bond with the men you serve with,” Henry continued. “We were all scared. We were kids fighting for our lives and for our country half a world away from home. Some were better at hiding it, but I think we were all scared at one point or another.”

“I can’t even imagine,” Dylan said, shaking his head.

“It’s hard to describe the bond that something like that creates. The men on your right and left were responsible for you and you for them. You literally trusted each other with your lives. Anyhow,” Henry continued, “those of us who made it home were left with a sort of emptiness without that. A lot of guys called it a band of brothers, and when we got home, we went from that to being just regular guys in regular towns.”

“I think the modern term for a band of brothers is tribe now. I mean, in case you want to sound hip,” Dylan teased.

“You know me, I’m all about the hip,” Henry said. He took a sip of coffee and continued. “So after I’m home a few months, my boss suggested that I should think about joining the Masons. I didn’t know much about them other than a lot of respectable guys in town—and a lot of the guys home from the war—were members. The rest is history.”

“You can’t *the rest is history* me,” Dylan laughed. “We’re not done yet. You obviously found something that spoke to you. What was that something?”

“Dylan, do you remember telling me when you joined

that you felt lost because it seemed like you had been swallowed up by your own family?”

Dylan nodded in agreement, finishing the last bite of his pancake.

“Well, I think we’re the same, only different. I know that sounds weird, but let me explain. You felt like you were lost in the shuffle in your family, like you were on the outside. You wanted to find your—what was the word you just used?

“Tribe.”

“Right. You wanted to find your tribe. I had mine in the army and wanted to find it again. I did that by joining the Lodge, and so did you. Take a second and think about the millions, heck, tens of millions of men who have shared this brotherhood with you and me across time,” Henry said.

“I never really thought of it in that way, but that’s pretty humbling...and pretty special,” Dylan replied.

“That it is, my boy. That it is,” said Henry, sliding the check across the table to Dylan. “Make sure you leave Betty a big tip.”

Dylan just smiled.

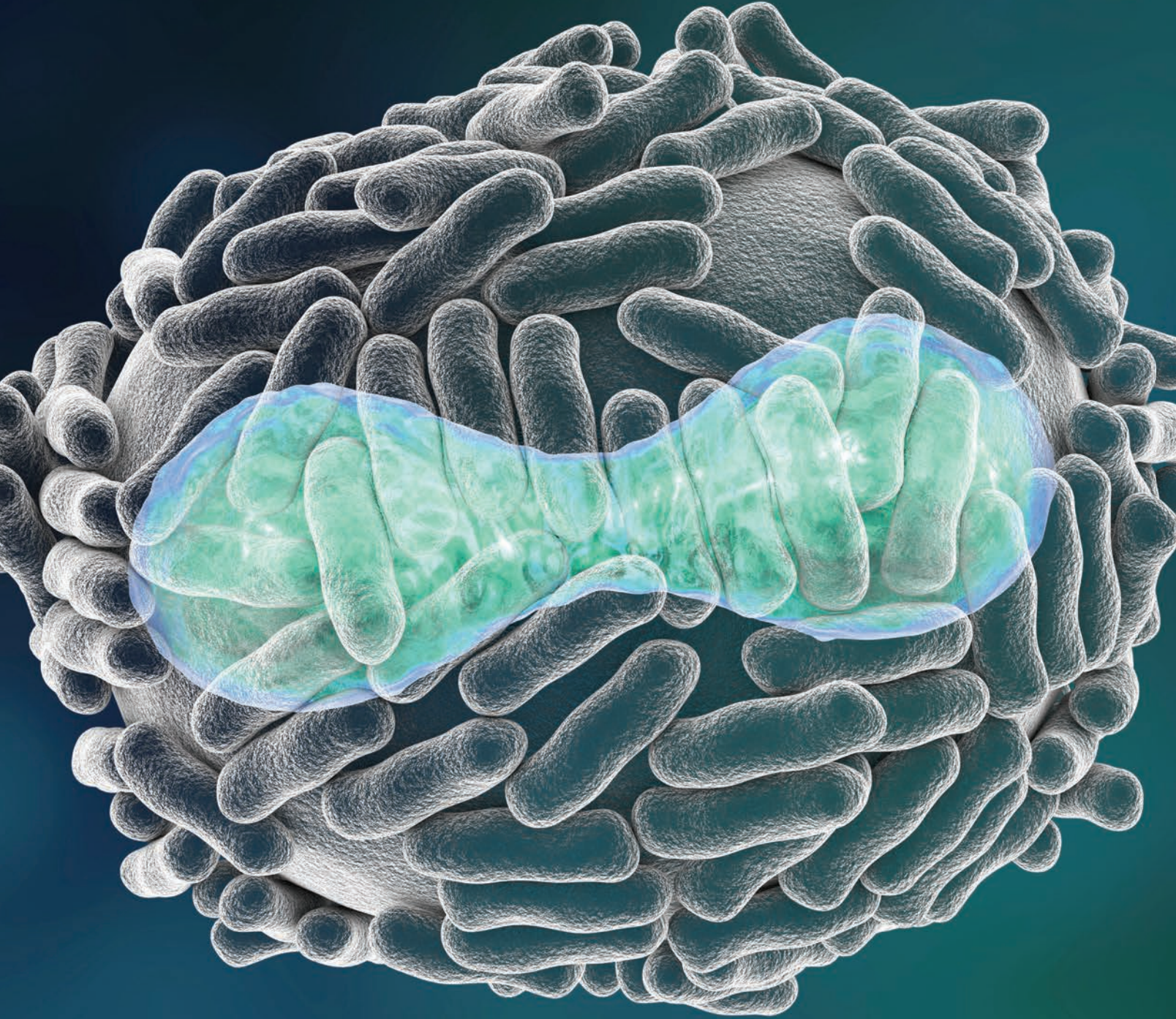
□



# Smallpox

Part 1

By Dr. Glenn D. Miller, II, 33°





Dr. Glenn D. Miller, 33°

The topic for this issue of *RiteNow* will be smallpox, which for centuries was one of the world's most feared plagues, with death tolls comparable to that of the Bubonic Plague (Black Death). An accurate estimate of the total deaths attributable to smallpox is difficult to ascertain because the exact origin of the disease is unknown. However, the best estimates currently place the death toll at approximately 300 million people during the 20th century and 500 million people during the previous 100 years of its existence prior to the World Health Organization's (WHO) declaration of eradication in May 1980.

**Historical** figures who have died from smallpox include Pocahontas; Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses V; King Louis XV of France; King Louis I of Spain; Queen Mary II of England; Czar Peter II of Russia; Henry Gray (British anatomist and publisher of the textbook *Gray's Anatomy*); Queen Ulrika Eleonora of Sweden; Jean-Baptiste Alexandre Le Blond (chief architect of Saint Petersburg, Russia); Christopher Gist (British colonial explorer who was one of the first European explorers of what would become western Pennsylvania, northwestern West Virginia, Ohio, and eastern Indiana); King Joseph I of Hungary and Germany; King Ferdinand IV of Bohemia, Hungary, and Croatia; and Francis Folger Franklin (eldest son of Benjamin Franklin). Historical figures that contracted smallpox but survived include Chief Sitting Bull; Queen Elizabeth I of England; Queen Mary I of Scotland (Mary, Queen of Scots); Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart; Johannes Kepler (discoverer of the laws of planetary motion); James Clerk Maxwell (British physicist who formulated equations for the laws of electricity and magnetism); Joseph Stalin; Czar Peter III of Russia; and U.S. Presidents George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Andrew Jackson. Of note is the fact that Czar Peter III of Russia was left so disfigured that his wife, Catherine the Great, underwent variolation, which was an early form of immunization and strove to have the masses of the Russian Empire undergo variolation or inoculation as well. Her efforts were

largely successful, with approximately 2 million Russians inoculated by 1800.

Even though the origins of smallpox are unknown, smallpox-like rashes have been found on Egyptian mummies from the 3rd century BC, and variola virus DNA has been recovered from the skeletal remains of humans that inhabited modern-day Russia and Denmark in the 600-1050 AD time period.

**Smallpox is caused by the variola virus, which is a member of the orthopoxvirus family.**

Additionally, its spread throughout the world has been well documented. As outlined on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website, smallpox was first documented in China during the 4th century. By the 6th century, smallpox had spread to Japan via trade with China and Korea. Smallpox was first documented in Asia Minor in the 7th century and had spread to Spain, Portugal, and northern Africa via Arab expansion. The Crusades spread smallpox to Europe in the 11th century. It spread to western Africa during the 15th century via Portuguese expansion. The 16th century saw smallpox spread to the Caribbean, Central America, and South America via European settlers and the African slave trade. European settlers subsequently introduced

smallpox to North America during the 17th century. Australia was the last inhabited continent to be affected by smallpox when British explorers introduced it during the 18th century.

Smallpox is caused by the variola virus, which is a member of the orthopoxvirus family. The name variola comes from the Latin words *varus*, which means pimple, and *varius*, which means changing color, both of which describe smallpox's rash. This family also includes the vaccinia, cowpox, and the monkeypox viruses. These latter three viruses can infect both humans and other animals, whereas smallpox (variola) can only infect and be spread by humans (no known animal or insect vectors), which was a major factor in the ability of the disease to be eradicated by mass vaccination efforts. Additionally, because these orthopoxviruses are unique among human DNA viruses in their ability to replicate in a cell's cytoplasm rather than in its nucleus, the vaccinia virus was the source for the modern-day smallpox vaccine that was utilized to eradicate smallpox. Patients are contagious from the time that the first sores appear in the mouth and/or throat up until when the last smallpox scab falls off. The virus is spread to other people via direct contact with the patient's scabs and the fluid contained in these cutaneous sores; direct contact with objects contaminated by the patient's scabs and sores such as clothing or bedding; and via saliva droplets from a patient during coughing, sneezing, or talking. Spread of the virus via saliva droplets usually required the individuals to be within a distance of 6 feet of each other.

There are two main separate forms of the virus—variola major and variola minor. Variola major is the more common and severe form of the disease. According to CDC estimates, variola major accounted for approximately 90% of smallpox cases, with a 30% mortality rate. Variola minor accounted for a significantly lower percentage of smallpox cases, with a mortality rate of approximately 1% or less. Additionally, there are two extremely rare subtypes of smallpox. These two subtypes are named malignant/flat and hemorrhagic smallpox. These two subtypes have a 90-100% mortality

rate. For the purposes of our discussion, we will be referring to the most common form of smallpox, variola major.

When a person is exposed to the variola major virus and becomes infected, there is a 7-19 day incubation period where that person is asymptomatic. During that incubation period, the virus multiplies in the person's lymph nodes, spleen, and bone marrow prior to migrating to the arterioles and capillaries near the skin's surface via the white blood cells. Patients are not contagious during this incubation period. After this incubation period, infected people develop the acute onset of flu-like symptoms, including a high

**Even though the origins of smallpox are unknown, smallpox-like rashes have been found on Egyptian mummies from the 3rd century BC.**

fever (101-105° F), chills, severe headache, severe back pain, abdominal pain, and vomiting. These symptoms usually last for approximately 2-4 days, after which the patient will feel better. Patients may or may not be contagious during this stage. However, patients will then start to develop lesions in the mucous membranes of the mouth and nose, as well as a red flat-spotted (macules) rash that starts on the face, hands, and forearms prior to spreading to the torso. The rash tends to be most prominent on the face and lower limbs. This stage typically lasts about four days. Patients are most contagious during this stage. Within a few days, the rash morphs into raised papules, then into clear blisters (vesicles), and then finally into infected pustules that are filled with fluid and pus. At this point, the patients' fevers will usually return. The pustules will eventually burst and then form scabs. This stage lasts approximately ten days. These scabs will eventually fall off and leave pockmarked scars on the skin. This final stage typically lasts about six days. Therefore, a typical smallpox infection will last approximately four weeks from the time that the initial rash appears. As previously stated, patients are contagious until the last scab has



**Historical figures who have died from smallpox include:**

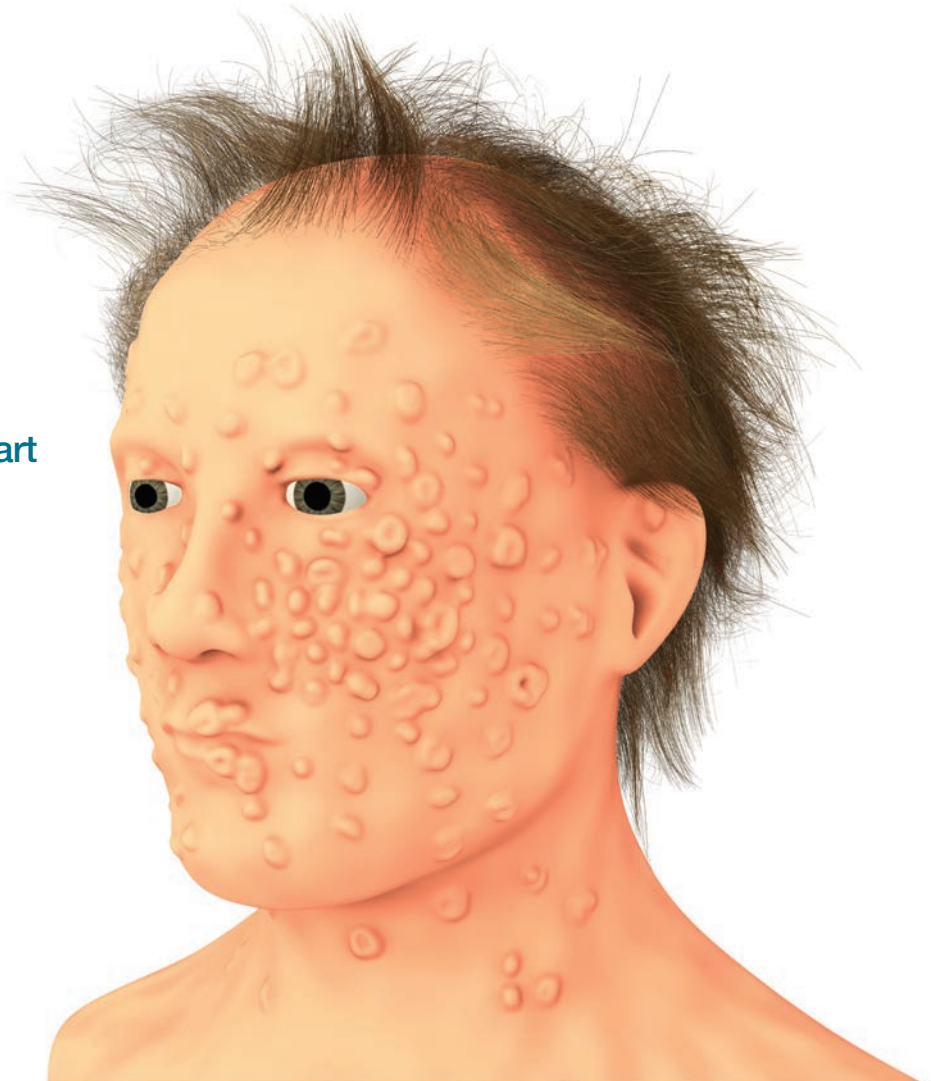
Pocahontas  
Pharaoh Ramses V  
King Louis XV  
King Louis I  
Queen Mary II  
Czar Peter II  
Henry Gray  
Queen Ulrika Eleonora  
Jean-Baptiste Alexandre Le Blond  
Christopher Gist  
King Joseph I  
King Ferdinand IV  
Francis Folger Franklin

**Historical figures who contracted smallpox but survived include:**

Chief Sitting Bull  
Queen Elizabeth I  
Queen Mary I  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Johannes Kepler  
James Clerk Maxwell  
Joseph Stalin  
Czar Peter III of Russia  
George Washington  
Abraham Lincoln  
Andrew Jackson.

fallen off. Fatalities usually occur within 1-2 weeks of developing the initial symptoms and are brought on by the toxic effects of the viral load in the patients' bodies in combination with the severe inflammatory responses produced by the patients' immune systems.

In the next issue of *RiteNow*, we will conclude our discussion on smallpox, including complications from the disease, current potential treatments, early immunization attempts (variola), modern vaccination with subsequent eradication, and the potential use of the smallpox virus as a weapon of bioterrorism. □



# ValleyNews

A collection of recent happenings in the Valley of Pittsburgh

## Cheers to the Most Wise

On April 27, the officers and Past Most Wise Masters of Pittsburgh Chapter Rose Croix gathered at JG's Tarentum Station Grille to celebrate the successful terms of Kris Douglas, and Jordan Frei, Past and Present Most Wise Masters. It was a time of fun and fellowship enjoyed by all. *(right)*



## Dinner of Perfection

The Gourgas Lodge of Perfection held their annual line dinner at the North Shore Tavern on May 2. The dinner is an opportunity for the current officers and past presiding officers to fellowship in an informal session and to extend thanks to Eric Teasdale, Thrice Potent Master, for his service to the line. *(below)*





**VoP Hosts Regional Ambassador Training**

On Saturday, May 6, the Valley of Pittsburgh hosted members from New Castle, Oil City, Uniontown and Pittsburgh for Ambassador training. Bob Siebold, Assistant Director of Membership Development at Supreme Council, led the training.

The Ambassadors serve an important role as the conduit between the blue lodges and Valleys. Contact your Valley secretary if you are interested in serving in this very important role. *(above)*

**Uniontown Flag Day**

Brethren from Uniontown Lodge of Perfection (plus two young helpers) assisted North Union VFW Post 8543 in placing flags on veterans' graves in four Uniontown area cemeteries. This has become an annual event for the Valley, and anyone interested in helping next year can contact the Valley office for dates and locations. *(below)*

*(l to r) Bro. Fred Kridle; Bro. Larry Burks; Ill. Charles Curry; Bro. Richard Prough; Bro. Larry Schupp; Bro. Neil Reddington; Bro. Bob Fleming, MSA; Bro. Steve Deli; Ill. Frank DeCarlo; Bro. Vince Milsom; Kelan Milsom; Calvin Winfrey; and Ill. Blair McGill. Not in the photo but participating was Bro. Jeff Taggart.*



## Mother's Day Bouquets

The ladies at the Masonic Villages at Sewickley campus were all smiles after a visit from the Valley of Pittsburgh and Steel City DeMolay. The joint effort delivered flowers to the residents for Mother's Day.



# Fraternal Services Directory

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

## ACCOUNTING & TAXATION

**Richard A. Reynolds, CPA** 412-795-4194  
 www.RichReynoldsCPA.com  
 richreynolds@MSN.com

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 Eddie & Sandy Grimes goodadv@comcast.net  
 www.good-advertising.com

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**American Classics/Street Rods** 814-268-1234  
 Dennis A. Liegey  
 Americanclassics@windstream.net  
 1026 3rd Avenue, Brockway, PA 15824-1012

**Flynn's Tire & Auto Service** 724-346-3701  
 18 Locations  
 Jeff Wonderling www.FlynnsTire.com

## BEARINGS & POWER TRANSMISSION

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

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**Party Line Catering, Deli & Bakery** 412-882-7110  
 Custer Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15227  
 Brian Meador www.partylinecatering.net

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**Coffey Contracting Co. Inc.** 412-341-1127  
 thomas.coffey3@verizon.net Pittsburgh, PA  
 Tom Coffey www.coffeycontracting.com

## FINANCIAL SERVICES / WEALTH MANAGEMENT

**Fayette Legacy Partners of Janney Montgomery Scott, LLC.**  
 Michael Tetteris, MBA, AWMA 724-425-1021  
 mtetteris@janney.com

## FUNERAL SERVICES

**George Irvin Green Funeral Home**  
 www.georgegreenfuneralhome.com  
 Munhall, PA Donald Green 412-461-6394

**Jefferson Memorial Cemetery & Funeral Home**  
 Pleasant Hills Harry C. Neel 412-655-4500  
 www.jeffersonmemorial.biz

## FUNERAL SERVICES

**Warco-Falvo Funeral Home** 724-225-1500  
 Washington, PA S.Timothy Warco  
 www.warcofalvofuneralhome.com

**Young Funeral Home Ltd** 724-283-3333  
 William F. Young III  
 127 W. Jefferson St., Butler, PA 16003  
 www.youngfuneralhomes.com

## GRAPHIC DESIGN / CREATIVE SERVICES

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

## HOME REMODELERS

**Unglo Construction LLC** 412-977-8924  
 License # PA069933  
 Paul M. Unglo II Bethel Park, PA  
 Building, Renovation & Remodeling

## INSURANCE

**Rodgers Insurance Group** 412-922-1651  
 James M. Wehar  
 Pittsburgh, PA jwehar@roddersgrp.com

## PLUMBING

**John R. Meyers Plumbing, Inc.** 412-787-2370  
 John Meyers jmeyers161@verizon.net  
 Sturgeon, PA Since 1972

## REAL ESTATE

**Keller Williams Realty** 412-882-9002  
 Mac McClrath, Assoc. Broker Mac13@kw.com  
 4710 Clairton Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15236

## ROOFING

**Coffey Contracting Co. Inc.** 412-341-1127  
 Tom Coffey www.coffeycontracting.com  
 thomas.coffey3@verizon.net

## VIDEOGRAPHY

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

## VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH OFFICERS

August 1, 2022 - July 31, 2023

### Gourgass Lodge of Perfection 14°

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

### Pennsylvania Council, Princes of Jerusalem

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

### Pittsburgh Chapter of Rose Croix 18°

Jordan L. Frei, 32° . . . . . Most Wise Master  
 Charles F. Zurcher, 32° . . . . . Senior Warden  
 Benjamin J. Douglas, 32° . . . . . Junior Warden  
 Robert D. Nichol, 32° . . . . . Orator

### Pennsylvania Consistory 32°

William G. Johnston, 33° . . . . . Commander-in-Chief  
 Joshua S. Freeman, 32° . . . . . 1st Lieutenant Commander  
 David L. Moore, 33° . . . . . 2nd Lieutenant Commander  
 Edward W. Deitz Jr., 32° . . . . . Orator  
 Michael R. Bahney, 32° . . . . . Chancellor  
 Timothy L. McKiernan, 32° . . . . . Master of Ceremonies  
 Steven R. Seman, 32° . . . . . Engineer & Seneschal  
 Thomas E. Ruch, 32° . . . . . Standard Bearer  
 Sean M. Tomasic, 32° . . . . . Guard  
 George W. Polnar, 33° . . . . . Treasurer  
 David W. Morgans, 33° . . . . . Secretary  
 Vito A. Urso, 33° . . . . . Hospitaler  
 Dennis R. Johnston, 33° . . . . . Tiler  
 Robert F. Dunkle, 33° . . . . . MFS Representative  
 Robert B. Ruff, 33° . . . . . MFS Representative  
 Ronald A. Plesh, 32°, MSA . . . . . MFS Representative

### Executive Committee

William G. Johnston, 33°, Chairman  
 Joshua S. Freeman, 32° . . . . . David L. Moore, 33°  
 Eric S. Teasdale, 33° . . . . . Richard F. Kucera, 32°  
 Jordan L. Frei, 32° . . . . . Peter A. Leary, 33°, MSA  
 Robert H. Nelson, 32° . . . . . Charles F. Zurcher, 32°  
 Christopher A. McNeal, 32° . . . . . B. Scott Allen, 32°  
 Benjamin J. Douglas, 32° . . . . . Paul J. Roup, 33°, Active

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 William G. Johnston, 33° . . . . . Eric S. Teasdale, 33°  
 Richard F. Kucera, 32° . . . . . Jordan L. Frei, 32°

### Allegiance

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

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

# The Latest

Important happenings coming soon to the Valley of Pittsburgh

**AUG**

**19**

**Reservations are required!**

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

## Wild Things Game

Join us for a picnic beginning at 4:00 p.m. at the Passalacqua Pavilion and the game at 7:00 p.m. for only \$10 per person. Great deal, great fun! Get your reservations into the office soon. Only 100 tickets available at this time and they are selling fast.

TIME: 4:00PM Picnic / 7:00PM Game

LOCATION: Consol Stadium, Washington, PA

COST: \$10 per person

RSVP: July 31

**SEP**

**7**

**Reservations are required for Dinner only!**

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

## Stated Meeting

Join us as we honor our 50, 55, 60, 65 & 70-year members. Honorees and a guest will be treated to a free dinner in recognition of their continued membership in the Scottish Rite Valley of Pittsburgh.

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

LOCATION: GPMC

COST: \$15.00 for Dinner, no charge to attend meeting

RSVP: September 5

**SEP**

**16**

**Reservations are required!**

For more information, please contact the Valley Office: secretary@valleyofpittsburgh.org  
412-939-3579

## Pitt vs. West Virginia Football Game

Join us along with members and families of the Valley of Clarksburg in West Virginia to celebrate our second annual backyard brawl between these two local universities. We will tailgate and watch the game together each cheering on their favorite team in a spirit of brotherly love and affection.

LOCATION: WVU Football Stadium, Morgantown, WV

COST: TBD

RSVP: More details to follow

**OCT**

**7**

**Reservations are required.**

Please contact the Childrens Dyslexia Center-Pittsburgh directly at 412-931-3181.

## Walkathon

Get up and moving and help raise funds for the Children's Dyslexia Center—Pittsburgh. This annual event is always loads of fun. There will be basket raffles, food, and entertainment. Come out alone or bring a team.

TIME: 10:30AM

LOCATION: GPMC

COST: Donation(s)

RSVP: September 15

## Fellowship Breakfast

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

TIME: 9AM to 10:30AM

LOCATION: GPMC

COST: \$9/person (all you can eat)

RSVP: None required

**JUN**

**24**

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



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

## Joint Conferral of York Rite and Scottish Rite degrees

York Rite Mason? No? This is your chance to join! Know any Masons that are not York or Scottish Rite Masons? This is their chance to join both in one day! Here's a great opportunity to build relationships across the Rites and to work together to grow our organizations.

TIME: 8:00AM-7:30PM  
LOCATION: GPMC  
COST: Initiation costs for candidates  
RSVP: September 5



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

## Golf Outing

Join us for a great day of fun, food, and fellowship as we raise funds for the Children's Dyslexia Center—Pittsburgh. Tee sponsors and event sponsors are needed and appreciated. See website for details.

TIME: 9:00AM Shotgun Start  
LOCATION: Butler's Golf Course, Elizabeth, PA  
COST: \$100 per person  
RSVP: October 2



# Looking Ahead



**Council of Deliberation**  
SATURDAY, JULY 8  
10AM  
Harrisburg, PA



**CigarRite**  
FIRST FRIDAY OF JULY,  
AUGUST, AND SEPTEMBER  
6PM  
GPMC



**Stated Meeting**  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2  
6PM Dinner, 7PM Meeting  
GPMC



**Valley of Uniontown Reunion**  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3 and  
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4  
Uniontown Masonic Temple

Scan this QR code for the most up-to-date information on all Valley events:



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



**WATERSLIDES &  
SKYRIDES &  
COMEDY SHOWS &  
ALL IN THE MIDDLE  
OF THE OCEAN.**

**VALLEY OF PITTSBURGH  
8 NIGHT CRUISE  
ON CARNIVAL MAGIC**

**FEBRUARY 24 -  
MARCH 3, 2024**



**ST. MAARTEN  
ST. THOMAS  
SAN JUAN  
GRAND TURK**

Cruise departs from Miami, Florida



Below pricing includes cruise fare, taxes, port charges, government fees, private cocktail party, and group photo. All prices are per person and based upon two persons per cabin. Triples or other categories of cabins are available upon request. Air transfers are not yet available, but notification will be provided when available. Air options will include travel one-day prior with hotel.

Reservations are based on availability at time of booking. Cabins are limited at the rates listed below.

All persons traveling must have a valid passport. Passport must have at least a six month validity from the date of return travel.

**PRICING FROM**

**\$1243** BALCONY CABINS  
PER PERSON

**\$819** OUTSIDE CABINS  
PER PERSON

DEPOSIT OF \$250 PER PERSON IS REQUIRED.  
BALANCE DUE ON NOVEMBER 20, 2023.

ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE THROUGH ALL SEASONS TRAVEL AT:

**724-483-7989 OR 800-435-1077**