



DAMASCUS LODGE No. 290 F. & A.M.

THE TRESTLEBOARD

Volume IX, Issue 3

March 2012



LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART

On February 12th, we had the pleasure to honor the lovely Ladies of the Lodge at The Packing House restaurant during our annual 'Sweethearts' Brunch'. As usual, the food was excellent, the fellowship was stupendous and the service from the staff at the Packing House was out of this world. The only variable is the Ladies get more beautiful every year! Everyone had a wonderful time and left the restaurant stuffed to the gills. Thank you to all who attended.

THE LUCK OF THE IRISH

A wee bit o' the luck of the Irish is always a good thing; and we're hoping we'll be lucky enough to see YOU at our stated meeting on March 13th. Chief Leprechaun 'Bro. Cookie' will be preparing a traditional corned beef roast from an old family recipe, along with all the 'trimmins', and we may be just lucky enough to have PM 'Suga' squeeze a tune out of his bag o' cats (his bagpipes). As he says, "If you have bagpipes, you don't need music!" Most of all we plan on havin' a whole lot o' fun! If you haven't been to a meeting in a while, March 13th, 2012 will no doubt be a good night to reacquaint yourself with the great things happening at Damascus Lodge.

WELL, HOWDY PARDNER

On April 29th the Damascus Hoedown will be kickin' off down yonder at the Lodge and we're plannin' on havin' a rootin'-tootin', rip-roarin', heck of a good time! We're gonna have a mess of tasty vittles, some boot scootin' music, and even some games for the youngins. Last year was a great time and we're hopeful the weather will continue to treat us well so the good times can be had inside and out. Wear your best cowboy and cowgirl duds! And bring your appetite!

MASONIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION

At the stated meeting on March 13th, we will have a special guest. Worshipful Brother Charles "Chuck" Wallen from the Masonic Service Association will be having dinner with us along with giving a presentation about the Masonic Service Association. If you have ever been interested in this wonderful organization, you will not want to miss this presentation. Come out and join us as we thank Bro. Chuck for all his good works!

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

-  *Hoe Down*
-  *Master's Message*
-  *Upcoming Events*
-  *Counselor's Corner*
-  *Entered Apprentice Degree*
-  *By the Plumb*

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- March 9th – Bethel 6th – IOJD, Honor Masonic Bodies Night – Festivities start at 7 pm.
- March 13th – Damascus March Stated Meeting – Irish Theme – Dinner starts at 6pm.
- March 15th – Doric Chapter of DeMolay – Conferring the DeMolay degree – 7:30pm
- March 27th – Damascus Social Night – Movie Night – Dinner starts at 6pm.
- April 1st - Scottish Rite - Feast of Paschal Lamb - 3pm at the Scottish Rite Milwaukee - Open to public

MASONIC MILESTONES

Bernard Strachota – 3/11/1966 – 46 years

Kyle Olson – 3/13/2007 – 5 years

Congratulations Brothers!!!!

MEET THE NEWEST ENTERED APPRENTICES



THE MASTER'S MESSAGE

History and Traditions



Some of you just received the initiatory Entered Apprentice degree just a few weeks ago; and for others, you received that degree a loooooong time ago; and for the rest of you...well, there just aren't enough 'O's. HA! Some things have changed through the years. For instance, when some of you went through your EA degree you were told "the ceremonies you received are such as have been adopted in every regular and well governed Lodge since time immemorial." This is different however from when W. Bro. Mick was initiated. See, way back then they just said, "as have been adopted in every regular and well governed lodge since last Tuesday." Just teasing Bro. Mick! My point is, regardless of "when" you were brought into this beautiful and benevolent fraternity, from the beginning we have been taught the importance of remembering our history and traditions. Don't get me wrong, there is absolutely nothing wrong with change – even a little change – but the key thing to remember is how that change is implemented.

Through my life I have worked at many different locations (thank you U.S. Army) and thinking back, with utmost certainty, I'm sure there was a change in leadership every place I have worked. Maybe that's why I still chuckle when I experience a change in leadership today. I chuckle because most of the "Head Honcho's" that arrived at each place I was working came in very aggressively, and thought they were going to change things overnight – with a snap of a finger. There's one guy I remember particularly well; I was stationed in Germany at the time and this guy came to our company and on his first day he said repeatedly, "When I come into a place I just take over and make changes. That's what I do." I vividly remember the expression on his face when he realized the "changes" he was planning on making were going to be much more difficult than he had originally planned. It was like someone rained all over his parade. Thinking about him still makes me laugh to this day.

There's a reason change is so hard to implement, and that's due to the dynamics of the organization. Aggressive change is fine for an organization that has hit rock bottom. For an organization like that, any light at the end of the tunnel is a welcome sight. But for organizations that are well established and already have a support structure in place, change needs to be implemented with subtlety and finesse, otherwise every idea will be met with opposition. This is especially true for an organization like ours, a volunteer organization that has a 100 plus year history and a great support structure of Past Masters, along with a young and innovative Officer Corps. Change has to be applied and met positively – and on all levels – or we risk creating opposition among us and worse yet, losing members. Of course you can't please everyone – this year has already been chalk full of those lessons – however, we have an advantage over most organizations. We meet on the level my Brothers; therefore we will more than likely develop a well thought out and educated compromise – a win-win situation to speak. If we can't come to that, well then, we can at least agree to disagree.

To bring this article full circle, in order for our Lodge to survive, we must bring in new members – that's a simple fact. Those new members are going to have all sorts of creative ideas to make the Lodge "better", even though some of us may think the Lodge is just fine the way it is. I think those new ideas are wonderful for the simple fact the Lodge is being thought about in a positive light – they have passion about our fraternity and they only want to see it become stronger. Nevertheless, it's that passion that can be misconstrued as aggressive. As seasoned members (I didn't call us old – just seasoned) we need to remember that we also had that same passion when we first joined Masonry and offer our attentive ear – and our instructive tongue if need be. But first we must at the very least listen. As new members, if your ideas are not met with the same excitement you have, don't get discouraged – remember patience and perseverance will conquer all things. That said, the traditions and history of our Lodge are always to be remembered and respect must be given, whether we are young or old, new or...seasoned.

Matt Wright
Worshipful Master



Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig oraibh!

Or as we say around these parts....

HAPPY
ST. PATRICK'S
DAY!

If you haven't been to Lodge in a while,
come Celebrate with us Irish Style
during our Stated Meeting on March
13th. Bro. Cookie be will making the
finest Irish Fare, don't miss out.

BY THE PLUMB

Another month is upon us, and another month chocked full of opportunities for travelling is here. WM. Matt has put forth the formidable, but possible challenge of going after the Travelling Apron Award. For those of you who do not know about this award, it is given to a Lodge that visits all of the Lodges in their respective districts. What makes this such a daunting challenge is the time frame in which we need to accomplish this. To win this award a Lodge must visit all the Lodges in their district in one Masonic year. Since the current Masonic Year is more than half over, we have only a few months to accomplish the task. We have visited some Lodges in the last six months of last year, the first half of this Masonic Year, so we won't have to visit all sixteen of the Lodges in District 12.

The travelling team must consist of a minimum of three brothers with at least one of them being an elected officer. Now they do not have to be the same brothers every time visiting every Lodge. It can be several different teams as long as the teams meet the basic guidelines. Perhaps to make things easier, we can form teams according to geographical areas. Brothers who live towards the north can visit Lodges along the north end of District 12, Brothers living to the south can cover the southern end of the district, brothers to the west...etc. You get the idea.

WM Matt has put together a tentative schedule where all lodges can be visited by the time Grand Lodge rolls around. I sent out a copy of the schedule via e-mail. If you are interested and have not received it, let me know and I will send you a copy. We kicked off the schedule with visits by WM Matt, SW Sean, and myself to South Shore Lodge on Feb 13th and Henry Palmer Lodge on the 17th. It was a great time and our hosts were very hospitable, as one would expect from fellow Brothers. March has the opportunity for visits to four Lodges: Nathan Hale, James M. Hayes, Silas Shepherd, and Lafayette.

Our youth groups have some important dates coming up this month also. The Doric Chapter of DeMolay is conferring the DeMolay Degree on Thursday March 15th at 7:30 p.m. at West Allis Masonic Temple, 7515 W. National Ave. West Allis, WI. Job's Daughters, Bethel #6 will be having an Honor Masonic Bodies Night at their meeting on Friday March 9th. Their meetings are held at Lake Lodge, 1235 E. Howard Ave. Milwaukee, WI, at 7:30 p.m.

Until next month Brothers, I'll see you on the road.

Bro. Tom Stachoviak
Junior Warden



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THE REAL SECRET OF FREEMASONRY
-
MAKING GOOD MEN BETTER

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MASTER'S BOARD

Keep those petitions coming in. The Master's Board Chairman and Master's Board Secretary would like to remind you to keep an eye out for new candidates for the Lodge.

Remember to carry a petition with you in your travels because you never know who you will meet.

If you do not have a petition or you need more, please contact any lodge officer and they will make sure you receive a couple.

2012 LODGE OFFICERS

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