



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

THE TRESTLEBOARD

Volume IX, Issue 7

July/August 2012



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to our newest members of Damascus Lodge - Scott Fairbanks, Don Adams and Matthew Hanchek. Scott was initiated on June 26th by someone very special to him – his dear old Dad. Having the honor and pride of bringing your own flesh and blood into this beautiful and benevolent fraternity is a proud moment that only happens to an elite few; undoubtedly Past Master Michael Fairbanks will treasure this time forever – as will those of us who were privileged to share the moment with them. Don and Matthew were both initiated on July 24th and we could not be happier to have all of these fine gentlemen now official members of Damascus Lodge #290.

DID SOMEBODY SAY “PICNIC?!”

The Damascus Family Picnic at Wilson Park was an outstanding event! On July 29th, we celebrated the entire Damascus Family, because it’s the love and support of all our families that keeps Damascus Lodge going. With all of the family, food, fun – what could have been better? Hamburgers, brats and hotdogs were provided by the Lodge, but this was also a Pot-Luck event, so many traditional family dishes were brought and shared with the Damascus extended family. Many of the long time members of Damascus thought it was wonderful to see all children at the picnic and they particularly found it funny how little Audrey (daughter of new member Matthew Hanchek) beat Worshipful Master Matt repeatedly at the bean bag toss game. A tremendous “Thank You” to all those who helped with the planning and preparation, the cooking, the cleaning up afterwards...everything that needed to be done to make the picnic a great event.

THE GREATEST SHOW IN EARTH

It’s that time of year again...time for turkey legs, damsels in distress and knights jousting for their honor. The Renaissance Faire has come to Bristol, Wisconsin and Damascus Lodge loves to kick up our heels with all the fun loving, funny speaking folks of the Ren Faire. “Thou thinkest thee will have a splendid affair” – translation: you’re going to have fun! Join us on August 26th at 10am for a fun filled afternoon full of food, games and neat things to see.

SPEAKING OF FAMILY...



The Valley of Milwaukee - Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, held their annual Zoofari at the Milwaukee County Zoo on July 14th. The day was filled with many members of Milwaukee’s Masonic family; however, while strolling by the orangutan exhibit many members of Damascus Lodge couldn’t help but notice that



Worshipful Master Matt must have some family living right there at the zoo, which is not only interesting, but explains a lot about him. Special thanks goes out to Brother Tom Tinney for coordinating this wonderful event for the Lodge.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

-  *Damascus Lodge Picnic*
-  *Master’s Message*
-  *Upcoming Events*
-  *Counselor’s Corner*
-  *Ren Faire*
-  *Zoofari*

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Rumors

The definition of a rumor: “unverified report: a generally circulated story, report, or statement without facts to confirm its truth”.

A perfect example of a rumor: “Bro. Counselor can play the bagpipe”, or how about this one? “Bro. Chaplain hit a the curb at 110 MPH, in front of his house on his new motorcycle, which then flew 50 feet in the air and went right through the front window and all he got from it was a separated toe”.

Ok, so these examples are both stretches of the truth but can you imagine the disappointment when several of us went by Bro. Chaplain’s house expecting to see his new motorcycle hanging through the front of the house and there he was, sedated and in a cast on the couch AND NO MOTORCYCLE HANGING OUT THE FRONT WINDOW?

Often, I find myself at Bender Park where I can walk on the pier and practice with my bagpipe. As I was making my way to the pier recently, I noticed a family running up and down the shoreline, distraught and crying. Little did I know at the time that two members of that family had been riding a Jet Ski and fell off into the water about 300 yards off shore. Bystanders were in the process of calling the police department because the riders were in the water and could not be seen.

Literally within seconds, the first police officer arrived; another man with his own Jet Ski took off into Lake Michigan to search for the riders. Two fishermen who had just loaded their boat and was pulling away from the ramp, unloaded the boat into the water again. By this time three other police officers and the fire department had arrived and officers were climbing into private boats with the fishermen and heading toward the accident. Everyone knew these officers and civilians were essentially going to rescue one and recover one because a rumor of one of the riders was of a little boy not wearing a life jacket. As reports of that little boy started going through the crowd, the rumor went from a little boy not wearing a life jacket to neither rider was wearing a life jacket and the little girl had drowned.

Approximately 10 minutes after the officers and civilians arrived at the accident, they were heading back to the marina, having successfully fished two adults, with life jackets out of the water. Both adults were in good shape and never in danger during the short period of time they were treading water.

As Masons, we are taught to be true and honest; to practice temperance at all times. We are admonished to use the Holy Writings as our rule and guide through life and the Holy Writings has plenty of references to saying things that are not true. When we deal with one another, not only as Masons but when we interact with society in general; we are taught to use the Compasses to circumscribe and keep our behavior in due bounds which if you remember is that circle which touches the lines of the Holy Saints John and the Holy Writings.

Does a rumor fall outside of our “due bounds”? I submit to you Brethren that rumors fall outside of our due bounds, most certainly they fall outside of my due bounds. You will never hear me say that Bro. Councilor can play a bagpipe.

Thank you and Kudos the police officers and firefighters for responding as quickly as they did during that crises. After watching one officer climb into a boat; ride out to the accident scene and pull those people from the water with his bullet proof vest still on and in full gear, I will never again (well at least for 5 minutes) joke about Bro. Mick eating donuts !!!

See you at the next meeting.

Be there and be square.

Michael Fairbanks – Past Master, Counselor

THE MASTER'S MESSAGE



During the District 12 Winter meeting and again at the Grand Lodge Annual Communication, presentations on the topic of conflict management and ways to resolve discourse in the Lodge were presented. It seems that many Lodges – and not just in Milwaukee, but all around Wisconsin – are having a hard time with the simple act of simply getting along. During his presentation at the Annual Communication a key phrase that PGM Wilke shared with us was “the Blue Lodge is supposed to be a Temple of Happiness.” This phrase particularly struck a chord with me because many brothers from our Lodge have often expressed to me a similar sentiment, “The Lodge is the one place where I can escape the pressures and the realities of life – even if it’s just for an hour or two; where I can relax, enjoy myself and simply be HAPPY.” However, even though I hear these words often, I know I had heard them somewhere before and it finally hit me. During the Installation of Officers for Damascus Lodge – right before the proclamation was made by the Installing Marshal – the Installing Master made a very important declaration, “The officers who have been selected to govern your lodge are sufficiently familiar with the customs of society and the laws of Freemasonry to avoid exceeding the powers with which they are entrusted; and you are of too generous a disposition to envy their position. I, therefore, trust that you will have but one aim; to please each other and unite in the grand design of being HAPPY and communicating HAPPINESS.”

After the presentation at Grand Lodge, I could completely understand why the Grand Master felt this problem needed to be addressed and I was actually thankful for the information they presented us. I think everyone could identify with stressing the point of “happiness in the Lodge”; I mean, who wants to come to a place where they will be made to feel miserable, horrible or simply unwelcome? No one. And the more people we have feeling that way in this fraternity, the more people we will have leaving this fraternity. However, as I recollect on the presentations, I couldn’t help but think that this information desperately needed to be passed on to ALL of the brothers of this fraternity, not just the leadership or whoever happened to attend the presentations. This is why I felt compelled to write about it this now and I hope the same is being done all over Wisconsin.

Believe it or not, there is discourse happening in Damascus Lodge and as Worshipful Master, it’s a subject I have definitely been struggling with. I struggle because I loved seeing 20 or more brothers on the side lines at our stated meetings and at our degrees at the beginning of the year; and now we see fewer and fewer brothers attending every month. I struggle because I feel like there’s nothing I can do about this “divide” that is happening in our Lodge. I struggle because I have always felt there is nothing that I, or anyone, can say or do that will make one man get along with another man. Sure, we can provide counsel, we can bring perspective to situations and we can even empathize with someone; but the ultimate decision (even to “agree to disagree”) is on the individual person alone. I would be crazy if I thought that I could stand up in the Lodge room and “order” everyone to get along. As the old saying goes, “The only thing we have control of ... is ourselves.”

It was during the Grand Lodge presentation when I had one of those “ah hah” moments. I realized that I’ve been staring at the answers to my struggle with this divide all this time – and the answers have been staring back at me. Yes my brothers, “the answers” are each and every one of you. You alone make the decision if you are going to let someone affect you negatively (in or out of the Lodge). You alone make the choice of letting your ego get in the way of thinking rationally. You alone circumscribe your desires and keep yourself within due bounds with all mankind. It is impossible to run a Lodge alone brothers, it takes all of us together – regardless of where we sit. Collectively as a team we can tackle any obstacle that comes before us, but individually we must first decide that we are going to be members of the team. We are DAMASCUS LODGE – we’re not Matthew Wright Lodge, we’re not Past Master #40 Lodge, we’re Damascus Lodge! All of us need to make the individual choice of standing together – even if we don’t always agree with the person we are standing next to. If we’re not getting along, if we’re not being accepting and understanding of each other and most importantly, if we’re not happy... then the divide that is occurring will only get larger, the downward spiral will continue and we will be a prime example of who the presentations at Grand Lodge were referring to.

Benjamin Franklin said, “Tell me and I’ll forget. Teach me and I’ll remember; but involve me and I’ll learn.”

Matt Wright - Worshipful Master

DAMASCUS LODGE PICNIC



NEW EA'S



DAMASCUS LODGE PICNIC



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- August 14th – Stated Meeting, dinner starts at 6pm
- August 19h – Bristol Renaissance Fair, 10 am till ????
- August 28th – Master Mason degree, dinner starts at 6pm

MASONIC MILESTONES

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| BENJAMIN D. JUNGER – 3 years | PETER J. CZECHORSKI – 2 years |
| BYRON BORCK – 37 years | TOM TINNEY – 2 years |
| NATE BUTTS – 3 years | BRIAN BERTRAM – 2 years |
| TOM STACHOWIAK – 3 years | KEVIN HART – 2 years |

Congratulations Brothers!!!!



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

1235 EAST HOWARD
MILWAUKEE, WI 53207

Phone: 414-297-9193
Website: www.dl290.org
Email: worshipful.master@dl290.org

WE ARE ON THE WEB AT
[HTTP://WWW.DL290.ORG](http://www.dl290.org)

THE REAL SECRET OF FREEMASONRY
-
MAKING GOOD MEN BETTER

LODGE TRUSTEES

Mick Olson, P.M. (2012) 414-397-3076
Dale A. Graeven, P.M. (2013) 414-764-8187
Patrick J. Militzer, P.M. (2014) 414-469-9804

SICK AND VISITATION CHAIRPERSON

Sean Schult 414-469-0305

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

Worshipful Master
Matthew Wright

worshipful.master@dl290.org
H 414-778-0532
C 414-254-5677

Senior Warden
Sean Schult

senior.warden@dl290.org
H 414-324-2910
C 414-469-0305

Junior Warden
Tom Stachowiak

junior.warden@dl290.org
H 414-321-0092

Treasurer
Dale A. Graeven, P.M.

treasurer@dl290.org
H 414-764-8187
C 414-852-4838

Secretary
Michael B. Meyer, P.M.

secretary@dl290.org
C 262-853-5631
H 262-821-4495

Chaplain Brian Bertram
Junior Deacon Pete Czechorski
Junior Steward Paul Peacock
Tiler Dale R. Graeven, P.M.

Senior Deacon Steve Manthey
Senior Steward Jason Williams
Counselor Michael Fairbanks, P.M.