



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

THE TRESTLEBOARD

Volume VIII, Issue 9

October 2011



REV'N UP FOR PIZZA

September 27th found us back at Lucky Bob's Raceway for the fourth annual DL 290 Slot Car Race. As in past years, the event was very well attended and has proven to be a member favorite. Everyone had a great time racing and eating pizza. Great fun and great food, in the truest Damascus tradition!

Brethren, we are racing through the rest of this year! The year has been a blur! The good news is: another great year is drawing to a close! The better news is: this is just one more lap and there is plenty more racing to go. We're already revving up our engines for next year. More degrees, more candidates, more fellowship and a whole lot more fun! Damascus Lodge is racing along and it's a white knuckle ride! Come out and be a part of the crew!!

PMS TO BE STUFFED

If you haven't made your reservation yet, Why Not?? This year's Past Masters' dinner will be held at 6:00 pm on October 16, 2011 at Dobie's Steak House. See the flyer in this TrestleBoard and make your reservations with Bro. Nate Butts. You can choose your favorite entrée and enjoy the fellowship as we honor those men who have led our Lodge to where we are today. Reservations are due October 9th.

LODGE ELECTIONS AND AWARDS NIGHT

At our November 8th meeting we will be holding elections for the 2011 Lodge Officers. Come to cast your vote for our future leaders and show your support. Who knows, you may even be elected!

Also on November 8th, Damascus will be presenting awards to our Brethren who have reached Masonic Milestones or have given exemplary service to our Lodge. Please come and help thank these Brethren for their Masonic Service. They have labored hard in our quarries.

IRISH FEST 2011

The world celebrates Saint Patrick's Day every year. It is one of the times when the whole world becomes Irish and celebrates but one of the thousands of stories and legends that Ireland is known for. But in August Ireland comes to Milwaukee and we celebrate Ireland, Irish History, Irish Culture, and the Celtic people as a whole, for an entire weekend.

Good food, good music, and good times ruled the day as we moved through the walkways and browsed through the merchandise tents. The Irish merchants were friendly and outgoing; always displaying the legendary Irish charm while spreading blarney all about them. Continued page 4

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

-  *Past Master's Dinner*
-  *Master's Message*
-  *Upcoming Events*
-  *Chaplain's Pew*
-  *Traveling Men*

OCTOBER 2011						
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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 10/11 - Stated Meeting - 6pm Dinner, 7pm Lodge
- 10/16 - Past Masters Dinner - 5pm
- 10/25 - Special Communication - 6pm Dinner, 7pm Entered Apprentice Degrees
- 11/08 - Stated Meeting - 6pm Dinner, 7pm Lodge
- 12/

CONCERNING GOD AND RELIGION

In 1723 Dr. James Anderson wrote what would become known as Anderson's Constitutions. These constitutions set forth ancient charges, established rituals and practices, outlined a history of the craft and provided regulations. Its influence on our craft is undeniable. Subsequent changes were made by Anderson in 1738 and then revised by Brother John Entick in 1754. However, despite these revisions and amendments to the constitutions, the first Charge on God and Religion was left substantially unchanged. The first section of the 1723 Anderson's Constitutions reads as follows:

I. Concerning GOD and RELIGION.

A Mason is obliged by his Tenure, to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist nor an irreligious Libertine. But though in ancient times Masons were charged in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is, to be good Men and true, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguished; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remained at a perpetual Distance.

There is one line of passage in this text that strikes me as being crucial to grasp and understand as a Mason. Anderson constitutes that as Freemasons we are obliged to leave our own particular opinions regarding religion to ourselves. Such a proclamation sets forth the notion of toleration of religious traditions not of our own and with that one message Freemasonry essentially makes it possible for people of different religious traditions to meet in amity, without compromising their own affiliation to a particular tradition, and ensures harmony within our institution.

What a beautiful and powerful message! This brothers, is what makes me proud to be a Mason.

Brother Jason

THE MASTER'S MESSAGE

“Do unto your neighbor as you wish he should do unto you.”



Jack's Buyrite was the main grocery store in Benton Heights, Michigan, and one of the very first in Southwest Michigan to sell groceries on a larger scale. It had a great toy section with plenty of rubber band slingshots and BB's, much to the delight of my best friend Phil and me!

Times were difficult for everyone in our neighborhood, but more so for my Mum and Dad. Dad had fallen ill and couldn't work, nor could my mother find work, being she was an immigrant from Northern Ireland and no one could understand what she was saying. As times became increasingly more difficult, my parents could only afford to buy Campbell's Pork-N-Beans so that my sister and I wouldn't go hungry.

Then came the day that Jack Durlinger knocked on our door. He told my mother he had not seen her in the store for a couple of days and was worried. He didn't want to intrude, but he just stopped by to make sure she and dad were not sick, and by the way, Campbell's had accidentally shipped an extra case of Pork-N-Beans and, well, she might as well take it so he wouldn't have the trouble of sending it back.

Of course my mother started to protest she couldn't have the Pork-N-Beans because we had no money to pay for them. Mr. Durlinger simply said "It's extra.", waved his hand in the air and asked Mum if everything was going to be ok now. Mr. Durlinger would show up once a week because Campbell's "made another mistake". We never forgot the kindness and the generosity of Jack Durlinger. Dad eventually got over his illness and Mum found work. Every Saturday, my dad and I would go grocery shopping with Mum and when paying for our groceries, always over paid their bill by one case of Campbell's Pork-N-Beans.

Several weeks ago, I flew into San Jose, California where I met with my best friend and we re-lived our childhood. The topic soon turned from rocket ships and forts to rubber band slingshots and Jack's Buyrite. I told Phil about the six months of "mistakes" that Campbell's soups made. The look on Phil's face told it all as he sat stunned and then he pointed out that the shipping manager for Campbell's had to be pretty incompetent because Campbell's always seemed to send an extra case of Chicken Noodle soup just when Phil's family ran out of money. I pointed out that Mr. Durlinger could have been a Mason because he sure acted like one. Phil asked the one question I never thought to ask – "How do you know he wasn't?"

Masons and the Masonic Fraternities have always looked out and cared for each other, being there when one of us falls onto bad times or becomes ill. What makes us unique is that as Masons we also look out for our neighbors and strangers as well as our Brethren and their families. And yet, in helping our neighbors, our neighbors may not know their help came from a Mason.

Does this mean we are a secret society? Does it mean that we don't want anyone to know that we are Masons? Not at all. What this means is that we tend to not want to be put into the limelight simply because we reached out to a person in need. It means that we are following our Rule and Guide by being charitable, lending aid and doing so with humbleness. It means that we are doing what we as Masons were charged to do as Entered Apprentices; "To your neighbor by acting upon the square and doing unto him, what you wish he should do unto you."

Damascus Lodge has always been charitable, working in the community, donating funds to different organizations, and supporting our youth groups. May we always keep in mind "those who are less fortunate than ourselves".

Oh yea, after some research I did discover that Mr. Durlinger, owner of Jack's Buyrite in Benton Heights, Michigan was in fact, and indeed a Master Mason who always seemed to be the victim of "mistakes" made by Campbell's Soups. Imagine that, Ole Jack, a Master Mason!

My Brothers – Be there AND be square.
Bro. Michael Fairbanks - Worshipful Master

IRISH FEST 2011 CONTINUED

Traditional Irish music and dancing went on all around and of course with the dancing there had to be traditional Irish Dance music while the wee lasses and lads pounded the dance floors, jigging and twirling, bringing back memories of my poor attempt at a jig as each child left for University.

The day ended at the Red Hot Chili Pipers concert where the Worshipful Master stood up and embarrassed himself by dancing and jigging for the first time ever, in public. The guy has no rhythm. We had planned to see Gaelic Storm, however by the time Red Hot Chili Pipers were finished, Gaelic Storm had started and there wasn't even standing room.

To everyone who made it to the outing, thank you for coming and thank you for humoring your Worshipful Master. The Irish Culture can be a bit different than our own, and it was my honor and privilege to introduce you to the intriguing and mysterious world we know as Ireland.

Worshipful Master Michael Fairbanks

TRAVELING MEN

As many of you may know, Lafayette Lodge delivered the Traveling Gavel to Damascus at our meeting on August 23rd. To show our gratitude to West Allis Lodge for their hospitality in allowing us to meet there while Lake Lodge was being remodeled, we decided to deliver the Gavel to them. So that is exactly what WM Mike and four of us Brethren did. Seeing how all of that traveling can create an appetite, we stopped for a bite to eat at Senor Sol's for some Mexican cuisine before the meeting; after all, a Damascus Man would never journey far on an empty stomach. The food was delicious and was only topped by the great fellowship among Brothers.

When we reached West Allis Lodge everything was going fine until somehow it slipped out that WM Mike's alias was Brother 'Suga Lump'. When we went to the East to deliver the Gavel, WM Todd Krohn would only accept it on the condition that WM Mike explained to West Allis Lodge the story of 'Suga Lump'. Poor Bro. Suga had to go through the whole story of how he received that nickname, and we all know how much he hates to speak before a crowd. Fortunately we were able to get out of there by Low Twelve. If anyone doesn't know the story and would like to know more about it, just ask WM Mike. I'm sure he won't mind telling you all about it.

All in all it was a great trip, we had a great time, there was great food, and great fellowship. As one of the principles of Masonry is to spread the bonds of brotherly love, traveling to our Sister Lodges is an excellent way to do this. There are other opportunities for traveling and it doesn't have to involve the Traveling Gavel. We can show our support or assist in other Lodges' degree work, Table Lodges, charity events, or just go to hang out with our Brothers at their stated meetings. On our future travels to "foreign countries" everyone is invited and encouraged to join us in spreading this brotherly love and partake in the fellowship that is Freemasonry.

THE CHAPLAIN'S PEW



“The Chaplain’s Position”

The Wisconsin Masonic Code isn't as definitive on the Chaplain's position as it is the other officer positions. Unlike the other officers, which are required positions, the Chaplain is optional, according to the wishes of the Master.

The Code says little about the position of Chaplain or prayer. Yet, our ritual draws heavily on religion and the need for prayer. As you are aware, each of the Three Degrees includes prayer and places heavy emphasis on the specific prayers and their wording. These prayers are a vital part of each degree. The lectures of the degrees repeatedly mention prayer and its importance.

One allegory could be the Masonic Lodge is our community. Within the lodge we labor and greet our brothers and friends. Would this “community” be complete without deity and a representative of that deity? Though we aren't a religion, Masonry places great emphasis on religion. Every man must believe in deity to become a Mason, otherwise our obligations would be meaningless. Does the presence of a Chaplain remind us of this?

We all know the Freemasonry is not a religion, and many people that I have talked with have been confused on this matter. Maybe the media, (electronic, print or television) have added to this misconception. I always try to explain that we do not “endorse” any one God, but encourage each member's belief in their own deity. At many lodges, a Bible, Torah, and/or Koran can be placed on the altar together as a reflection of the religious diversity of its members.

Though the Chaplain is not a position required by the Code, custom allows few Masonic happenings to occur without first invoking prayer ... a rightful privilege of the Chaplain. It is doubtful that you have ever heard of a Masonic Lodge without a Chaplain.

Before lodge and our meal, I always try to recite a prayer that I have been thinking of for a while. I try to include history, a blessing for our nourishment, thankfulness for our fraternity, brotherhood, our families, and guidance in our lives. I try to keep the prayer general, but there are times (especially in the last year or so) I gather from my own experiences, as we all have, and I believe we can all relate to.

Although the Chaplain does have the option of choosing alternate opening and closing prayers, I have generally used what is written in our ritual book. There is, however, a Wisconsin Grand lodge book of prayers that also can be used for these and many other prayers. After attending a West Allis Lodge meeting recently, I am considering using some alternate prayers. I hope this works, as at our last meeting I had a total brain freeze. I hope my choices meet your approval. I would like to make the prayers for opening a closing something different, to reflect upon, and keep with you until our next meeting.

Bro. Bert
Chaplain

Damascus Lodge No. 290

Past Masters' Dinner

*Please join us as we honor those who have served
our Lodge as Worshipful Master.*

Sunday, October 16, 2011

Social Hour 5:00-6:00 P.M.

Dinner 6:00 P.M.



Dobie's Steak House
4136 Kinnickinnic Avenue
St. Francis



Past Masters are the guests of the lodge.
The cost for all others is \$23.00.

Entrée Selections:
New York Strip Steak
Pork Chops (broiled or breaded)
Chicken Breast (broiled or breaded)
Baked Cod

Please make your reservations by October 9th!

Call Brother Nate Butts at 414-727-9772

Or nb290@wi.rr.com

Join Damascus Lodge as we celebrate a
Christmas Tradition at



'A Christmas Carol'



Sunday, December 11, 2011

4:30 P.M.

Dinner to follow.

Please save this date!!

Further details soon!





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

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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

Patrick J. Militzer, P.M. (2011) 414-469-9804
Mick Olson, P.M. (2012) 414-397-3076
Dale A. Graeven, P.M. (2013) 414-764-8187

SICK AND VISITATION CHAIRPERSON

Mathew Wright 414-254-5677

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.

2011 LODGE OFFICERS

Worshipful Master Michael Fairbanks (Sandra) 2169 W. St. Johns Way, Oak Creek, WI 53154	worshipful.master@dl290.org H 414-304-0260 C 414-397-0330
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Chaplain Brian Bertram Junior Deacon Tom Stachowiak Junior Steward Pete Czechorski Tiler Dale R. Graeven, P.M.	Senior Deacon Nathan Butts Senior Steward Steve Manthey Counselor Mick Olson, P.M. Degree Director Michael B. Meyer, P.M.