



**DAMASCUS**  
**290**  
 F. & A.M.

# The TrestleBoard

*Making Good Men Better*

Volume XIII, Issue V  
 May 2016



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## Master Mason's Degree

On April 26th, members of Damascus Lodge raised a new Master Mason, Mike Corso received his degree and it was extremely well done. He really enjoyed the degree and gave praise to the members who conferred the degree upon him. He looks forward to learning and growing and participating in the lodge fully.

Many thanks to Mike Fairbanks who conferred the degree and all the members of the degree team for another fantastic degree.





## UPCOMING EVENTS

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### May

**21st – District Meeting**  
4 pm - 6 pm

**24th – MM Degree**  
for Jason Sliwa

**31st – Knife and Fork Degree**  
Sign up by May 20th  
See pg. 4 for details

### June

**25th – Chinooks Baseball**  
**Game Family Outing**  
Sign up by June 10th  
More details on pg. 5

### July

**17th – Lodge Picnic with**  
**Lake Lodge**  
More details on pg. 6



## Nothing to Cry About

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In our usual Damascus tradition, we purchased 500 lbs. of onions from the Shrine and donated them to the Hunger Task Force. By buying the onions from the Shrine, we support the charities they are supporting, as well as those in need. Matt Hanchek and Nathan Butts handled the pickup and delivery, and are shown getting ready to unload them at the Hunger Task Force.

# The Master's Message: Feast or Famine

by Worshipful Master Nathan Butts

Greetings, Brethren! I hope this message finds you well. This month I want to focus on you, our members. We have not seen many of you in some time for a multitude of reasons, perhaps the distance to travel, work, family, personal mobility, or just time. There are other reasons that may be keeping you away, such as boredom, fear, unhappiness, or many others.

I want you to know your voice can be heard, and we can improve, but that involves you. We are shortening meetings, having more educational pieces, and setting aside more time for fellowship. Something I have heard: "It's always the same guys doing things and running things." That's the famine we see, and that can only change with you being involved and making your voice heard. You are not just a number; you are who help us improve and grow; not in weight as some think but in fellowship, membership, and family.

Officers are making time to be available for counseling to help brothers in need as we always have. But sometimes you just have to see it or hear it to know it's there. If you cannot make meetings, you can still be active. Come to our events, or offer to help with the event, even if you cannot attend. Have an artistic mind? We could use flyers for upcoming events. Want to help our youth? Attend

a youth event, or go with an officer to check presentations for scholarships at local high schools. Available during the day? We are making food donations to the Hunger Task Force. You are welcome to come with us.

We have many things going on to help the community and improve the world around us, one person at a time, with the work we do outside **and** inside Lodge. Many of our Lodge members are also doing ride shares for guys who have vehicle issues or don't wish to drive. We will come and get you for a meeting and bring you home, because we would rather see you in Lodge with a smile than not see you at all. Ask and it will happen.

The Lodge is busy, but we have not forgotten about you, and we hope you have not forgotten about us. We are here for you to help in any way we can. To improve us all, it only takes a little bit of time to share and grow with your brothers. Do not think, "If I show up, they will put me to work." That is not the case. Someone may ask if you want to help or do something, but you can just use the lost Masonic word, "No," and still be around to enjoy the fellowship. Think about what you would like to see or learn about – Masonic history, rituals, other education, events, etc. – anything you can think of that might bring



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Worshipful Master  
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you back to the Lodge. Send your ideas to me, any way you want: snail mail, email, or give me a call. My lines are always open.

I will close with this. We say, "Damascus 290. It's not just a number – it's a goal." That doesn't mean we all want to weigh 290 pounds (though some will joke and say it is) but for the current core of officers, it's the number of guys we want to see at every meeting, being involved, and attending events. What a sight that would be. Wouldn't you like to be there when it happens? I know I would. That's a feast we can all enjoy.



**Damascus Lodge No. 290  
(Being Uniquely Qualified)  
Announces the Conferral of**

# *The Knife and Fork Degree*

**An enjoyable evening of food, fun and fellowship**

*May 31, 2016*

**Doors open at 6 pm; Event starts at 7 pm**

Lake Masonic Center  
1235 E Howard Ave., Milwaukee

## *Lê Menu*

Ze Bacon Wrapped Filet via  
all de trimmings, desserts,  
and beverages (including  
a fine 'Bovine Wine')

## *Guest Speaker*

Robert Johnson  
from "Whence Came You" and  
Masonic Roundtable Podcasts  
[www.wcypodcast.com](http://www.wcypodcast.com)

**\$33.00 - First Timers (including a Pin and Card)**

**\$28.00 - Alumni**

Open to all MM, FC and EA if properly vouched for

**Reserve your seat by May 20th!!**

For more information and to get your seat at the table,  
go to: <http://knf2016.brownpapertickets.com>

**Proceeds go to the Milwaukee Rescue Mission**

Contact Bro. Brian Bertram with questions • [bsbert290@att.net](mailto:bsbert290@att.net) • (414) 486-0806

# Play ball!

*Join us for an evening of baseball!*



**June 25th @  
5:00 pm**



**Kapco Park  
Concordia University  
12800 N. Lake Shore Dr.  
Mequon, WI**

**\$5.00 per person  
Kids 17 & Under FREE!**

RSVP to Bro. Dale at  
[treasurer@dl290.org](mailto:treasurer@dl290.org)  
by June 10th, 8:00 am



# **DAMASCUS-LAKE LODGE PICNIC**

**July 17th @ 1:00 pm  
Wilson Park**

Bring a dish to pass!

Sign up with Matt Hanchek  
[senior.deacon@dl290.org](mailto:senior.deacon@dl290.org)

# Echoes from the West

by Bro. Michael Fairbanks, Senior Warden

“Well, my Brother, you are poor indeed.”

I remember well that fall night during my Entered Apprentice Degree when I stood in front of Brother Dale, his hand extended. The disappointed look on his face said it all, and it was saying: “You are so poor that I wonder why we even let you through the doors.” It was not an unfamiliar position for me, but I did find myself somewhat puzzled at the request until he explained the reason behind it.

We have all been, at some point in our lives, in the unenviable position where feeding and sheltering our family was a major concern for one reason or another. Perhaps the loss of a job, the loss of a loved one who supported us, or the inability to work due to illness or injury led us to finding ourselves in that position. The most powerful question in one’s life at that particular moment in time is: “How am I going to feed my family next week?”

While we live in economically challenging times, charity is still one aspect of Masonry that we, as Masons, are committed

to supporting. In each and every degree, we commit to “help a friend, more especially a Brother Mason in like destitute circumstances.” Have we become so accustomed to saying these words that we just repeat them to get through our degree, or are we really committed to “aid and assist” anyone in a bad situation?

What about the person standing on the street corner at a stoplight with a sign begging for help? Do we stop and contribute a couple of dollars? Do we simply ignore his plea for help because he is not receiving aid through a larger organization, but instead chose to stand on that street corner? Do we ignore his pleas because we have already judged him in our minds to be unworthy of our aid, perhaps assuming he is going to buy illegal drugs? Do we ignore him because there is no one around to notice and acknowledge our good deed should we stop and give a couple of dollars?

The questions to really ask oneself is: “Is that person a Veteran who has fought for my freedom? Is that person a friend or acquaintance that I don’t recognize, or is it possible that he might even be a

Brother Mason?” I now ask you, what does it hurt to hand a couple of dollars to that person holding a sign, begging for your help?

Almost nine years ago, my cousin and I were walking on the street in front of Queens University in Belfast when he suddenly stopped, rattled a few coins around in his pocket, and pulled out enough to pay double for a publication from an unkempt and somewhat dirty man. My cousin explained later that, while he didn’t know the man personally, he knew his story and knew the man to be honorable. And as such, he always stopped a bought a paper. I recall thinking that my cousin was a pretty nice guy to do that. It was later during my trip in July 2007 that I began my Masonic journey when I asked my cousin about Masonry.

As I stood before the Worshipful Master on the night of my Entered Apprentice Degree without anything to give, I thought back to that unkempt and somewhat dirty man. That day, there was no nice guy. There was only a Master Mason keeping a promise, without any hesitation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind whatsoever.

# 2016 Lodge Officers

## Worshipful Master

Nathan Butts  
worshipful.master@dl290.org

## Senior Warden

Michael L. Fairbanks, P.M.  
senior.warden@dl290.org

## Junior Warden

Brian Bertram  
junior.warden@dl290.org

## Treasurer

Dale A. Graeven, P.M.  
treasurer@dl290.org

## Secretary

Patrick J. Militzer, P.M.  
secretary@dl290.org

Chaplain Michael Meyer, P.M.

Senior Deacon Matt Hanchek

Junior Deacon Jason Williams

Senior Steward Don O'Kray

Junior Steward Chris Balke

Counselor Sean Schult, P.M.

Tiler Larry Chadderdon, P.M.

Degree Director Mick Olson, P.M.

## Lodge Trustees

Matthew Wright, P.M. (2016)  
414-254-5677

Dale A. Graeven, P.M. (2017)  
414-852-4838

Matt Hanchek (2018)  
414-418-8229

## Sick and Visitation Chairperson

Michael Fairbanks, P.M.  
414-397-0330  
senior.warden@dl290.org

## Master's Board

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



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*The Real Secret of Freemasonry –  
Making Good Men Better*