



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

# The TrestleBoard

*Making Good Men Better*

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July 2016



Lodge Excellence Award

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## 2016 Grand Lodge

As it does every year, the month of June brings a trip to Grand Lodge in Madison, Wisconsin. The principal officers and Senior Deacon went to sessions this year, along with the Degree Director, Secretary, and Grand Chaplain; it was a great time.

It was done differently than in the past. The new Grand Master took office after installation, and completed sessions under his leadership. This year also included breakout sessions. Damascus was well represented and received

Gold status for Lodge Excellence Award (LEA) points for the past year.

During installation, when the Grand Master took his oath, all Masters of Lodges were on the floor standing with him, right hand on heart and left on the Grand Master or the Master in front of him, while he knelt taking that obligation. We look forward to the year with new and continuing initiatives and growth in Lodges around the state.

*(Additional picture on next page)*

 **UPCOMING  
EVENTS**

**July**

12th – Stated Meeting  
Special meal, scholarship  
recipient guests. Suit  
and tie dress.

17th – Lodge Picnic with  
Lake Lodge

More details on pg. 6

26th – Fellowcraft Degree

**August**

21st – Past Masters Dinner



**Grand Masters:** Incoming Grand Master Don Hensiak (left) and outgoing Grand Master Frank Struble (right).



**DAMASCUS  
LAKE LODGE PICNIC**  
**July 17th @ 1:00 pm**  
**Wilson Park, Pavilion 1**

Bring a dish to pass!

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

# The Master's Message

by Worshipful Master Nathan Butts

Greetings Brethren,

July brings with it family gatherings to celebrate our freedoms that our military veterans fought so long and hard to gain for us. We should all reflect on that for a moment, and think about all the freedoms we have today because our founding fathers fought to have our rights and freedoms established for us to enjoy today.

So, as we enjoy the upcoming holiday and are reflecting on the freedoms we enjoy, consider how you can apply that to your personal lives and our Lodge. How can you add to and improve your Lodge to help others feel and enjoy those freedoms earned so long ago? How can you help your fellow man enjoy these freedoms and promote the ties of our obligations to help them see how you have improved and continue to do so? How can you encourage them to do the same in how you treat them and act around them?

We need to be stewards of the fraternity. We are the front line people see day in and day out, and if we do not promote the fraternity by the way we act, what are we saying about this great fraternity? How can we find others who feel the same way, want to be part of this great fellowship, and enjoy all we strive to do?

I encourage you to join us for our family outing this month by attending the combined Lodge picnic we are having with our extended family Lake Lodge. We have great day of events and food planned, and friends and family are welcomed. Join us and help make it a great day for all — enjoy the friendship and fellowship. Hope to see you all there. If you cannot attend, we have more community events coming later this year, as well as a fellowcraft degree on the 26th of July.



Nathan Butts  
Worshipful Master  
worshipful.master@d1290.org

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# How Does Freemasonry Make You Better?

by Bro. Matt Hanchek, Senior Deacon

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One of the primary purposes of our craft is “making good men better.” When asked what we do, this is often the first response that comes to mind. The more complicated question to answer is, “how does Freemasonry make good men better?”

The answer will probably be different for every brother. For some, it may be teaching us to temper our responses to situations or our obsessions and excesses. In Masonic terms, learning to circumscribe our discordant passions with the compasses so that we may live within due bounds. For others, it may be a support system for our morale code, helping to guide our conduct by teaching us to square our actions with virtue, meeting people on the level, and keeping our actions upright. It may also be the motivation to be charitable

in the relief of others, a sense of family, or simply a feeling of belonging to something that’s greater than the sum of its parts.

For me, Freemasonry has provided opportunities to grow by getting involved in activities that might otherwise have been outside of my comfort zone, and leveraging my brothers’ strengths. I’ve become a better planner by being involved in different projects and events. I may not ever get to Brother Bert’s level of precision, but the progress is there, and the example set has been a great one. Freemasonry has prompted me to refocus on continual learning, as I’ve prepared to take on new responsibilities within the Lodge. I’ve learned to be a better leader by participating in important decisions, and watching others do the same. I’ve learned humility, both from brothers gently

knocking me down a peg when my ego gets too big, and by being reminded to take a moment for prayer to choose my path forward. This particular ashlar is still quite rough, but it’s noticeably smoother than when I entered the Lodge just a few years ago.

I firmly believe that Freemasonry will make any good man a better version of himself through participation in the Lodge to whatever extent they are able without compromising their other responsibilities. Whether it’s taking on a leadership role, helping to coordinate an event, or simply sharing a meal or joining on the sidelines a night or two per month, you’ll be better for it in some way, and you’ll be helping your brothers grow as well.

I hope to see you all at Lodge.

# Echoes from the West

by Bro. Michael Fairbanks, Senior Warden

## Loose Lips

Everyone has heard the old saying “Loose lips sink ships.” It is actually an American English idiom meaning “beware of unguarded talk,” originating during World War II and was created by the War Advertising Council.

The “saying” was used on posters to advise servicemen and other citizens to avoid careless talk concerning secure information that might be of use to the enemy. The British equivalent used “Careless talk costs lives,” and variations on the phrase “Keep mum.” While in neutral Sweden, the State Information Board promoted the wordplay “en svensk tiger” (the Swedish word “tiger” means both “tiger” and “keeping silent”), and Germany used “Schäm Dich, Schwätzer!” (English: “Shame on you, blabbermouth!”).

In our world of Freemasonry, “loose lips” and “learn to subdue my passions” are very parallel and useful terms. The failure of subduing passions during discussion or debate is normal,

and we struggle with controlling or subduing those passions. As such, things are often said which can lead to harsh feelings toward one another.

From the youngest Entered Apprentice, to the longest standing Master Mason, and for the good of our gentle craft, it is imperative — it is a must — that we subdue our passions and guard against “loose lips.” We must remember that we are dealing with our Brothers — our Masonic families; these are the very same people who would do whatever is necessary to aid and assist us during times of trouble or need.

Even an unguarded joke or quip can be cause for consternation and hurt feelings. Again, we are Masons, Brothers: we are family. Familiarity can lull us into a false sense of security, and I suggest, Brethren, it is because of our familiarity and closeness that we need to be on our toes and cognizant of how we talk to and address each other.

Perhaps the questions to ask is: “If I say or do this — is there a chance I might have to apologize down

the road for this action? Is this something I will regret saying (or doing) and will I be embarrassed about it?” Those of us with Irish mothers have lost count of the number of times we were the recipients of a swift hand across the cheek with the inevitable follow-up question, “Would you care to say that again in a different way, son?” The response was always an apology and a re-phrasing of what we said.

Brethren, there is no one, no organization in existence that is absolutely perfect. Keep in mind, however, that part of our teachings as Masons is to strive for perfection, although we know that we will never be perfect.

It is in striving for the goal of perfection that we will learn to subdue our passions; we will learn to guard closely what we say. Be quick to apologize when necessary, and be even quicker to accept that apology and forgive.

“What came ye here to do?”

Brethren — see you in Lodge.

Be there AND be square.

# 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 (Vacant)

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  
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## 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*