



DAMASCUS
290
F. & A.M.

The TrestleBoard

Making Good Men Better

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Spreading Holiday Cheer

On a snowy December evening, the families of Damascus Lodge No. 290 met for a holiday party. Twenty-five adults and nine children braved the foul winter weather and met at St. Francis Brewery on December 11th for a nice meal and gifts for all the wives and children.

The children had to write letters to Santa and put them in a magic mailbox, and were then given gifts with a personal letter back from Santa, along with coloring books. Everyone had fun, and it was a great event. Hope to see more out next year.

(More pictures on next page)

 **UPCOMING
EVENTS**

January

10th – Stated Meeting

15th – Officers Meeting

24th – Social Meeting

February

7th – Postings or
Degree/Practice

12th – Sweethearts Brunch
(See pg. 5 for details)

14th – Stated Meeting

28th – Officers
Training Night



The Master's Message

by Worshipful Master Michael Fairbanks, P.M.

Have you ever wondered about the statement "Whereby I might travel into foreign countries?" Where, when, and how did it become such a vital part of our opening and closing ritual?

In the opening of our Lodges, the Senior Warden proclaims that he left the East so that he "may travel into foreign countries." Where does that statement come from: "travel into foreign countries"? Why is it that we only hear that statement in opening and closing of Lodge? Therein lies one of the "mysteries" of Freemasonry – one of a minimally few cherished "secrets" which, as Masons, we promise to keep to ourselves.

After receiving our degrees, many of us ask questions about specific portions of the degrees as we notice something in ritual or Lodge doesn't quite fit or make perfect sense. Are the portions of our degrees that do not make sense, or that seem out of order, perhaps the all-elusive, conspiratorial secrets of the Freemasons? Alas, we do not have secrets!!! And there is an answer.

Freemasonry is actually made up of several appendent Masonic bodies that include Royal Arch Masons. Royal Arch Masonry is a continuation of Ancient Craft Masonry and explains further

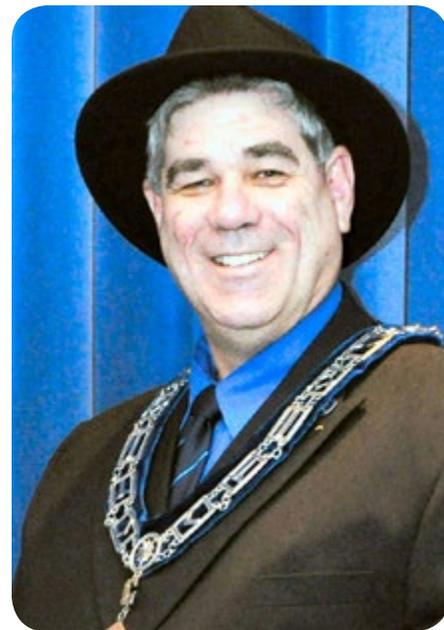
the mysteries which we only just began to discover when we started our Masonic journey.

What? You want me to further explain those mysteries? Here? Now?

Like the obligation and promise we make as Masons, to keep the modes of recognition to ourselves, there are obligations and promises to be made in Royal Arch Masonry that fall in line with those we make in Lodge. And those Royal Arch Mysteries will not be explained here.

Royal Arch Masonry is a part of the York Rite Branch of Freemasonry; and, upon becoming a Mason with your Entered Apprentice Degree, you have already started your journey as a York Rite Mason. Why not continue your education and Masonic journey? By continuing as a Royal Arch Mason, I can promise that you will make further discoveries, gaps and holes will be filled in, and your education, as well as understanding, of Freemasonry will be greatly enhanced.

Wait, you still do not know where the statement "Whereby I might travel into foreign countries" comes from? My answer is "Royal Arch Masonry." Look closely for and seek out a Royal Arch Mason.



Michael Fairbanks, P.M.
Worshipful Master
worshipful.master@d1290.org

They will be hard to spot due to their "secret" wearing of Royal Arch lapel pins, bumper stickers, cufflinks, and their confident look of "I know something you don't." Then, as you did when becoming a Mason, ask one to be one.

If you haven't been to Lodge lately, come back and see what we are doing. Come for a meal before the meeting, and catch up on the happenings and doings. For those who have been able to come to Lodge – keep coming. Be there AND be square.

Get to Know: Brian Bertram

Senior Warden

Good day all! For those that don't know me, let me introduce myself. My name is Brian Bertram, a.k.a. "Bert." I have been entrusted to be your Senior Warden for 2017, and am excited for the new year and activities, opportunities, and challenges that accompany this position.

I was Entered into Damascus in February 2010, Passed on July 2010 and Raised in August 2010. Since then I have been in the offices of Chaplain, Senior Stewart, Junior and Senior Deacon and Junior Warden. I received Mason of the Year for our Lodge, and the Traveling Apron Award for District 12. I belong to West Allis Chapter 84 Royal Arch Masons, Kilburn Council No. 9 Royal and Select Masters, and am also a member of Ivanhoe Commandery K.T. No. 24, of which I will receive my Order of the Temple this March. I am also the Promoter of Fraternal Affairs for Bethel 6 of Job's Daughters.

I have been married for going on 26 years to my lovely wife Sheryl, who I may add is very involved in Job's Daughters, and is the Bethel Guardian for Bethel 6 right here at Lake Lodge. She is also the Grand Marshal for the Job's Daughters Grand Guardian Council. I have

one daughter, Meagan, who is in her third year of college and is pursuing a degree in nursing.

I myself am a retired fire department Lieutenant for the state. I spent eight years in the Wisconsin Air National Guard starting at age 17, and was a firefighter/officer for a combined total of 23 years. I have a degree in computer aided drafting and design, with an emphasis on architecture. I completed my degree in 2008 after a long hiatus from college. I enjoy deer hunting, fishing, car shows, plastic model making, participating in my high school alumni band as a percussionist when available, and I collect miniature fire-related trucks and vehicles, of which my collection exceeds 550 in quantity.

I also enjoy research into my family's genealogy, which dates back to approximately 1540 in the United States as a member of the Pequot Indian tribe. Currently I am a member of the Brotherton Indians of Wisconsin.

I am excited to execute my duties to the Lodge, which include succeeding to the duties of the Worshipful Master in his absence, assisting the Worshipful Master in any and all of his Lodge

undertakings, participating on our committees – including the finance and audit committees – and attending Grand Lodge Communications and voting on your behalf. Rest assured that I will take my duties very seriously and act in the best interest of our Lodge, present and future. If you have any sickness or distress you would like to confer to me, I will make sure it will be disseminated as appropriate.

As I prepare for my possible entrance to the East, I look forward to working with Lodge members and Past Masters for their input and expertise. I look forward to seeing you in Lodge, and getting to know the members that I may not have the pleasure of knowing.

Get to Know: Matt Hanchek

Junior Warden

I'm Matt Hanchek, Junior Warden. I live in Oak Creek with my wife (Brita) and two daughters (Audrey & Evelyn). I was initiated an Entered Apprentice in 2012, Raised in 2013, and have been on a rewarding, exciting, and fast-paced Masonic Journey ever since. The opportunities for personal growth while strengthening and supporting families and the community is more than I could have hoped for. In addition to being a Mason, I also recently became a member of the Tripoli Shrine Motor Corp, and can be

seen narrowly avoiding crashes in a miniature VW beetle in parades throughout the summer.

As Junior Warden for 2017, my primary goal is to see that the Lodge is well fed. Damascus 290's well-earned reputation for good food and hospitality is a critical part of who we are, and I am making it my mission to ensure the other type of "Masonic Growth." The bar has been set high, and our standards must be maintained. Remember, it's not just a Lodge number, it's a goal!

Culinary responsibilities notwithstanding, I also serve as the liaison to the Masonic youth organizations, and look forward to meeting the emerging youth and adult leaders within Jobs Daughter's and DeMolay. Damascus Lodge has always stood ready to support these great organizations, and I am happy to do anything I can to help ensure our Masonic heritage is passed to the next generation.



*Sweethearts
Brunch*

**SUNDAY,
FEBRUARY 12TH - 11 AM**

SAZ'S ON STATE

**5539 W State St
Milwaukee, WI 53208**

**COST IS \$20.
(Ladies free)**

**RSVP to Bro. Matt Hanchek
junior.warden@dl290.org**

**Sign up by February 1st.
Limit of 54 people.**

2017 Lodge Officers

Worshipful Master

Michael L. Fairbanks, P.M.
worshipful.master@dl290.org

Senior Warden

Brian Bertram
senior.warden@dl290.org

Junior Warden

Matt Hanchek
junior.warden@dl290.org

Treasurer

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

Secretary

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

Chaplain (vacant)

Senior Deacon Nathan Butts, P.M.

Junior Deacon Jacob Harycki

Senior Steward (vacant)

Junior Steward (vacant)

Counselor Sean Schult, P.M.

Tiler Larry Chadderdon, P.M.

Degree Director Mick Olson, P.M.

Lodge Trustees

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

Matt Hanchek (2018)
414-418-8229

Nathan Butts (2019)
414-405-6383

Sick and Visitation Chairperson

Brian Bertram
414-486-0806
senior.warden@dl290.org



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