



DAMASCUS
290
 F. & A.M.

The TrestleBoard

Making Good Men Better

Volume XIII, Issue XII
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TOYS FOR TOTS

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December Challenge

by Worshipful Master Nathan Butts

I challenge all of our Lodge members to make a bigger pile of toys for our Toys for Tots donation drive this year.

Let's beat what we did last year and really bring the spirit of the holiday season to some kids who could really use it. Bring your cash or toys to the **December 13th** meeting so we can give back to the community and make some kids have a wonderful Christmas this year. Make the Lodge proud. See you in Lodge!



UPCOMING EVENTS

December

3rd – Bell Ringing

11th – Christmas Party
4 pm

13th – Stated Meeting
Bring your Toys for Tots!

17th – Installation of Officers
Lake Masonic Center, 2 pm

27th – *We will be dark*

January

10th – Stated Meeting

Officers for 2017

Worshipful Master

Michael L. Fairbanks

Senior Warden

Brian “Bert” Bertram

Junior Warden

Matt Hanchek

Secretary

Pat Militzer

Treasurer

Dale Graeven

Senior Deacon

Nathan Butts

Junior Deacon

Jacob Heretszki

Stewards to be appointed

Chaplain

Michael “Bruno” Meyer

Counselor

Sean Schult

Assistant Counselor

Nathan Butts

Degree Director

Mick Olson

Tiler

Larry Chadderdon



You are cordially invited...

*Open Installation of Officers for
DAMASCUS LODGE No. 290
for the 2017 Year*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17TH

Installation to begin at 2 pm

Light meal & refreshments to follow

Lake Masonic Center

1235 E. Howard Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53207

The Master's Message

by Worshipful Master Nathan Butts

December brings more of the holiday season, and also a changing of the guard as it were at Lodge, where leaders are chosen and installed for the next Masonic year. I want to thank everyone for a wonderful year, and for your trust and the opportunity to be Master of the Lodge. It has been a great year. It was truly a fantastic experience, and I am looking forward to the years ahead with the emerging leaders of our Lodge coming up through the ranks.

I cannot express in words the thanks I have for the opportunity you gave me this year to lead the Lodge. Hopefully I have done a good job for you; I worked with the other elected officers and appointed ones to improve the Lodge, improve ourselves, and keep us moving forward as a Lodge and family.

At our last stated meeting, I did a Masonic education on why Masons do the things we do, and why we do not do some things in the public eye. Our Masonic ties keep us from doing some things in the public because harmony and support are more important than doing things which all Masons may not agree with, creating disharmony among brethren. I want everyone to think about that.

We all have different opinions, different agendas, different paths in life, but we all come together for a common goal: to improve ourselves, improve those around us, and improve society. We all have different ideas in the whys, hows, and directions of those improvements, and they are all valid. But by working together we can build a path we can all agree on, follow, and thus fulfill, those obligations, maintain harmony, and grow as a Lodge and family. As long as we reflect on our Masonic ties, and our working tools, emblems, and history, we can easily all find a path that we can agree on to keep harmony, grow, and thrive.

We have brought many new faces into the Lodge this year. And as we grow, we will continue to have new ideas and paths to keep our history strong, and do good things for all those around us. If we keep the faith, believe in ourselves, our ideals, and our own Supreme Architect we follow, we can achieve all things.

I want to wish everyone a fantastic holiday season, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Peace, love and harmony to ALL!



Nathan Butts
Worshipful Master
worshipful.master@d1290.org

Thank You,

Worshipful Master Nathan

Echoes from the West

by Bro. Michael Fairbanks, Worshipful Master-Elect

“Two strikes and ...”

I first want to say thank you” to the Brethren and Officers of Damascus for entrusting me with the East for the second time. What an honor to be elected to the Master’s Chair and to serve the Lodge. May “Strike Two” be a fruitful year for Damascus #290.

Secondly, thank you to our outgoing Worshipful Master, Nathan Butts. W. Bro. Butts has seen the Lodge through good times, and through a couple of rocky spots as well. He has served with patience and wisdom, and made decisions based on good, sound judgement and common sense when others would have forced issues. He asked for help and opinions. He walked and talked softly while there we those of us who would have hacked away with a sword. He succeeded where most would have thrown the towel in. It is with a heartfelt and new, deeper appreciation that I say thank you, W. Bro. Nate.

Sitting as Master and serving the Brethren of Damascus is but one drop of water in the ocean of Freemasonry in the payback category for what Freemasonry has given me. I have said many times and to many people that I cannot possibly give back in 20

lifetimes what Freemasonry has given and taught me in the short time I’ve been a Mason. Put in an ounce and get 20 pounds back.

We have lots going on in Damascus, so check your calendars and note the following dates and events.

- December 17, 2:00 pm
Installation of officers at Lake Masonic Center.
- December 27
Movie night for anyone who wants to attend; however, attendance is not required as it is very close to Christmas.
- February 12, 2017
Sweethearts Brunch. Please watch your email and Trestleboard for further details as to where and time.

Also, keep your eye out for March and the “Spring Break” party.

We have picked up the third Tuesday of every month as a standby, social, special meeting night at Lake Masonic Center. We will make use of the extra night to confer degrees, have movie nights, perhaps an event, or hold sessions and make our plans.

One use for the extra night will be to continue Lodge Officers

Training (LOT) this year. Instead of only one LOT, I plan to have two, perhaps three, LOTs, depending upon officer progress.

Brethren, we have a full year planned for Damascus #290 and I am looking forward to much Masonic fellowship and fun. If you haven’t been to Lodge in a while, please come back and join the fun and fellowship of your Brothers. 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: you already know what is going on.

Damascus #290 meets every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month.

Be there AND be square.

My Gavel Had Something To Say!?

By Bro. Brian Bertram, Senior Warden-Elect

Okay ... now that I have your attention, and you probably think I have a screw loose, let me explain! As I sat in our last stated meeting during the Lodge Officers elections, at a lull in the action, I looked at my gavel and pondered its history. What other Brothers held it, who donated them, how is it truly used? So after some investigation with a Past Master, and some reading of the 110th Lodge Anniversary program, I found the following:

Our handmade Lodge gavels were donated by the Ladies of Damascus Auxiliary in 1953, along with a 24-inch gauge, and a set of rods. The Ladies of Damascus Auxiliary formed in 1953 with 28 ladies as members and dues of \$1.

I found out also that the Lodge has in its procession a gavel that has wood from the forest of Lebanon. I do not know the origins of this gavel, but have been informed that it is in pretty rough shape

and is not used. This may be an item worth restoring, tracing its history, and placing in our display cabinets when we receive it.

Now that I know where our gavels came from, I focused on their history. How many brothers have utilized the 63-year-old



gavels, how much important Lodge business had they seen, and how many members initiated, passed and raised with them? The numbers are no doubt impressive, although I do not have them.

With quite certainty I know that my gavel has been involved in so

many important decisions, degree work, and probably a call to order or two, either good or bad. I held the gavel and pondered the question if I, as senior Warden-Elect, can even hold up my end of the deal, as the other Brothers had done with the same gavel for so many years. So after a while, it came to me. The Lodge, as a whole, owns the gavels, the members assist in the decisions, and the gavel just finishes the work. The three elected officers only use it as a tool, as all members use it to smooth the rough ashlar.

So Brothers, as I enter service for you in the next year as Sr. Warden, don't be surprised as I stare at my gavel from time to time. I am doing so to listen to the outstanding Brothers from the past that held my gavel, to assist me in performing my duties, and to continue their legacy for the ongoing, successful performance of Damascus Lodge, present and future.

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
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*