



DAMASCUS
290
 F. & A.M.

The TrestleBoard

Making Good Men Better

Volume XIV, Issue VIII
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Youth Group Wins!

Damascus Lodge issued the challenge – Doric and Bethel #6 stepped up to meet it. On July 16th, 34 contestants met at the Moorland Road mini golf course for a serious round of mini golf, both for fun and the Grand Title of “Mini Duffer Champions.”

The Damascus guys and gals outscored the opponents by 54 strokes – yep, 54 strokes. Oh, there was dancing in the aisles, whooping and hollering all around, and then we were told that outscoring opponents in golf was a bad thing. In actuality, the Damascus guys and gals were

mercilessly slaughtered by 54 strokes.

The mini golf challenge really wasn't about who beat who; it was about having a day out with the kids and family. It was about drumming up camaraderie and having the opportunity to get to know our youth while they got to know us.

Pizza was the ultimate prize after the match. I'm not sure, but I think Doric and Bethel 6 out-ate the Damascus guys and gals

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📅 UPCOMING EVENTS

August

13th – Summer Picnic

Wilson Park, Picnic Area #1

1:00 p.m.

See signup details on page 5

Youth Group Wins! (cont'd)

too. For score it was a bad day for Damascus. But for friendship, a wee bit of travel, and fun with our youth – the day could not have been more perfect for Damascus.

Next time you see our own Brother Jake and his lovely gal, Mom Amy, be sure to say thank you, for they dug in and set it all up. Great job, Brother Jake and Mom Amy!

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The Master's Message

by Worshipful Master Michael Fairbanks, P.M.

“Well, my Brother, you are poor indeed”

I remember well that fall night during my Entered Apprentice Degree when I stood in front of Worshipful Brother Dale with 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 until he explained the reason behind it.

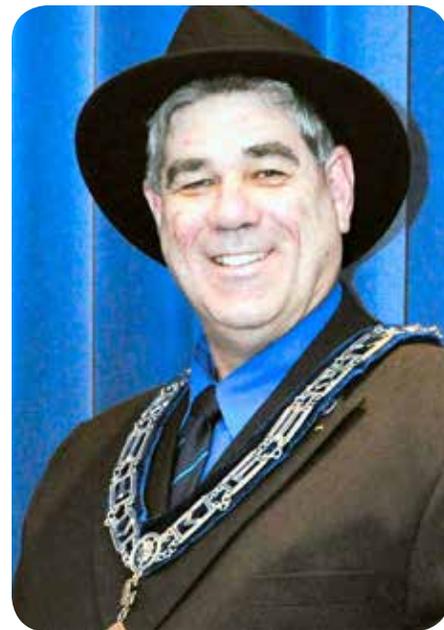
We have all been, at some point in our lives, in the unenviable position where feeding and sheltering our family was a major concern for one reason or another. Perhaps the loss of a job, the loss of a loved one who supported us, or the inability to work due to illness or injury - all could be reasons for 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.” Are these words that we have become so accustomed to saying 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 their plea for help because they are not receiving their aid through a larger organization, but instead choose to stand on that street corner? Do we ignore their pleas because we have already judged them in our minds to be unworthy of our aid, knowing they are going to buy illegal drugs? Do we ignore them because there is no one around to notice and acknowledge our good deed should we stop and give them 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?



Michael Fairbanks, P.M.
Worshipful Master
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I was introduced to our gentle craft of Freemasonry in 2007, and it was in 2007 that my cousin and I were walking on the street in front of Queens University in Belfast. 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 went on to explain later, that while he didn't know the man personally, he knew his story and knew the man to be honorable. As such, he always stopped a bought a paper. I recall thinking that my

(Continued on next page)

The Master's Message (cont'd)

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 Mason keeping his obligation “without any hesitation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mine; whatever.”

If you haven't been to Lodge in a while, come back and see what we are doing. You will like what you see. For those who have been

coming, keep coming, and keep up the great work!

Damascus Lodge meets every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month.

Be there AND be square.

Family Debate

By Bro. Matt Hanchek, Junior Warden

At every family gathering, I brace myself for inevitable criticism from my very devote Catholic aunts, who are thoroughly convinced that I joined a cult. I don't typically feel compelled to defend the institution of freemasonry from the ignorant, but every now and then I get asked just the right question.

At this year's fourth of July gathering, I politely listened to a 15-minute speech about the members of their parish recently volunteering at a local food pantry, and the great example it set. I was asked what “my little group does for their community” ... Challenge accepted.

I set down my beer, paused for a moment, and responded, “In my short time with Damascus

Lodge, we've donated to research for cancer and Alzheimer's, donated 2500 pounds of food to Milwaukee's Hunger Task Force, and helped an elementary school that had a catastrophic fire build a new playground. We've granted \$15,000 in scholarships to local high school students. I had the honor of presenting one of the scholarships this year. We've also supported youth groups, and a retirement home. I'm sure I've forgotten a few. Since I've been involved with the Tripoli Motor Corp, we've also raised thousands of dollars to help support two children's hospitals.

Of course, if by 'my little group' you meant masons in general, and not just my Lodge, a common estimate is that Masons, Masonic

organizations, and appendant bodies globally contribute \$3,000,000 per day to charity. In the U.S., the number is closer to \$2,000,000 per day, but that's just an estimate.”

The reaction was typical disbelief: “If Masons do so much, how come we've never heard of this?” A slight grin slipped across my face. I responded, “We do these things for their own sake, rather than drawing attention to how good we are.” At that point, they decided it would be better if they just helped my mom make dinner. I returned to my beer.

Perhaps I need to work on my humility, but I'm very proud of what we are, what we do, and what we stand for. Every now and then, it's fun to brag a little bit.

Youth Group Wins! (cont'd)



DAMASCUS 290 SUMMER PICNIC

August 13th @ 1 pm
Wilson Park, Picnic Area #1

Bring a dish to pass!

Sign up with Matt Hanchek
junior.warden@dl290.org

2017 Lodge Officers

Worshipful Master

Michael L. Fairbanks, P.M.
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Senior Warden

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Junior Warden

Matt Hanchek
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Treasurer

Dale A. Graeven, P.M.
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Secretary

Patrick J. Militzer, P.M.
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Chaplain John Chadderdon, P.M.

Senior Deacon Nathan Butts, P.M.

Junior Deacon Jacob Harycki

Senior Steward (vacant)

Junior Steward (vacant)

Counselor Sean Schult, P.M.

Assistant Counselor Nathan
Butts, P.M.

Tiler Larry Chadderdon, P.M.

Degree Director Mick Olson, P.M.

Lodge Trustees

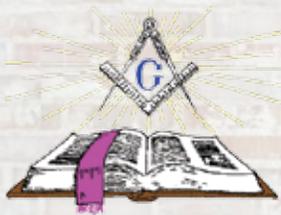
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*The Real Secret of Freemasonry –
Making Good Men Better*