



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

# The TrestleBoard

*Making Good Men Better*

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## Master Mason's Degree

by Worshipful Master Michael Fairbanks, P.M.

Congratulations to Bro. Craig Leonhardt, who, on October 22nd, became our newest Master Mason. This is the third step of Bro. Craig's Masonic Journey. Let's all keep in mind that every Mason's Masonic Journey begins and ends in the same place. The paths which we trod from – start to end – are many, and what is important is that we continue to learn and build on what we've learned in these first three steps.

Congratulations also to the Lodge Officers in conferring an excellent degree upon our newly made

Brother. Your hard work and dedication not only paid off, but it showed. My personal thank you to Bro. Craig and the Lodge Officers for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend the extra night out.

The highest appreciation to the women in our lives: without their support, tolerance, and patience, we would not be able to come out and play Mason.

We look forward to seeing Bro. Craig in Lodge.

 **UPCOMING  
EVENTS**

**November**

14th – Stated Meeting

28th – Awards Night

Lake Masonic Center, 6 p.m.

**December**

10th – Christmas Gathering

Lake Masonic Center, 4 p.m.

Details on pg. 4

12th – Stated Meeting

**Master's Mason Degree (cont'd)**



# The Master's Message

by Worshipful Master Michael Fairbanks, P.M.

## Do unto your neighbor as you wish he should do unto you.

Jack's Byrite was the main grocery store in Benton Heights, MI, and one of the first in Southwest Michigan to sell groceries on a larger scale.

Times were difficult for everyone in our neighborhood, but moreso for my mum and dad. Dad had fallen ill and couldn't work, nor could my mother since she was an immigrant from Northern Ireland, and no one could understand what she was saying. As times became increasingly difficult, my parents could only afford to buy Campbell's Pork-N-Beans so that my sister and I would not go hungry.

Then came the day that Jack Durflinger knocked on our door. He didn't want to intrude, but stopped by to make sure my parents weren't sick. He added that Campbell's had accidently shipped an extra case of Pork-N-Beans and, well, my mom might as well take it so he wouldn't have the trouble of sending it back.

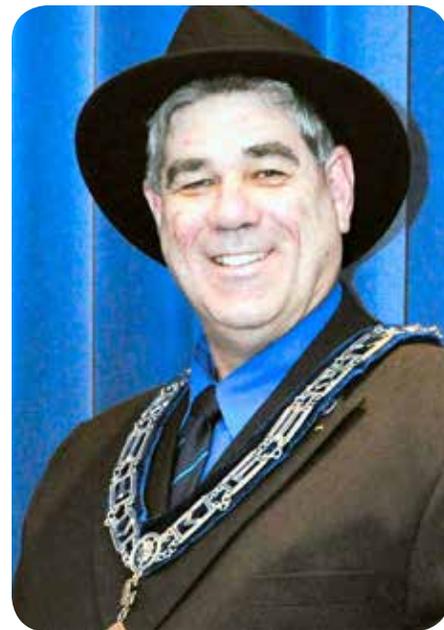
Of course my mother protested: she couldn't have the Pork-N-Beans because we had no money to pay for them. Mr. Durflinger simply said "It's extra," waved his hand in the air and asked mum if everything was going to be okay. Mr. Durflinger would show up once a week because Campbell's "made another mistake." We never forgot the kindness and the generosity of Jack Durflinger. Dad eventually got over his illness and

mum found work. Every Saturday, my dad and I would go grocery shopping with mum, and we always overpaid the bill by one case of Campbell's Pork-N-Beans.

Several years ago, I flew into San Jose, CA, where I met with my best friend, and we re-lived our childhood. The topic soon turned to Jack's Byrite. I told Phil about the six months of "mistakes" that Campbell's made. Phil sat there stunned. He said the shipping manager for Cambell's had to be pretty incompetent because he always seemed to send an extra case of Chicken Noodle soup just when Phil's family ran out of money. I pointed out that Mr. Durflinger could have been a Mason because he sure acted like one. Phil asked, *How do you know he wasn't?*

Masons and the Masonic Fraternities have always looked out and cared for each other, being there when one of us falls onto bad times or becomes ill. What makes us unique is that we also look out for our neighbors and strangers, as well as our Brethren and their families. And yet, in helping our neighbors, our neighbors may not know the help came from a Mason.

Does this mean we are a secret society? Does it mean that we don't want anyone to know we are Masons? Not at all. What this means is that we tend to not want to be put into the limelight simply because we reached out to a person in need. It means that we are following our Rule and Guide



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by being charitable, lending aid and doing so with humbleness. It means we are doing what we were charged to do as Entered Apprentices: "To your neighbor by acting upon the square and doing unto him, what you wish he should do unto you."

Damascus Lodge has always been charitable, working in the community, donating funds to different organizations, and supporting our youth groups. May we always keep in mind "those who are less fortunate than ourselves."

Oh yea, after some research, I did discover that Mr. Durflinger was indeed a Master Mason who always seemed to be the victim of "mistakes" made by Campbell's Soups.

# DAMASCUS LODGE 290 MEMBER CHRISTMAS GATHERING

DATE: DECEMBER 10, 2017

TIME: 4 P M

COST IS \$5/PERSON  
OR \$10/FAMILY

PLACE: LAKE LODGE



CHRISTMAS DINNER  
Gifts/Cookie Decorating for Children

Yankee Swap for Adults  
and kids 15 and up.  
Each person wishing to participate in the  
Yankee Swap, please bring 1 wrapped,  
non gender specific gift worth \$5 or less.

**RSVP to Brother Bert at**  
bsbert290@att.net or 414-486-0806  
by December 4th, 2017



# Ask Yourself – Why Am I A Mason?

by Bro. Brian Bertram, Senior Warden

Many times I ask myself these very questions: Is it the activities, the charities, the youth groups? Am I living up to my obligations, and all of the many aspects of each of the three degrees? Do I attend enough regular meetings, or celebrate the initiating, passing and raising of our newest brothers by being in attendance at the degrees? There are so many aspects of masonry that require thought.

Whether we strive to meet these aspects is something each one of us must decide on our own. But in my opinion, first and foremost, we are brothers. Recently, my brother and I experienced many of the true meanings of being a brother in Freemasonry.

In early September, my brother, myself and our wives found

ourselves in distress. After an accident in Marinette, Wis., we found that we had nowhere to go – no hotel rooms available, and no rental cars to be had. We were truly stranded with little options. After being left at a gas station and trying to find lodging for over an hour, it came to me ... call a brother.

I called Brother Mick and Curt, and my wife called Brother Brad from Lake Lodge for any type of assistance. Within 15 minutes, we were placed in contact with a brother from the Marinette area. Without hesitation, and not knowing us at all, he welcomed all four of us into his home, offered any type of assistance, and literally saved the day for us. This is when I

realized one of the real meanings of being a mason: brotherly love. I later found out that if we didn't have a place to go, my brothers from Milwaukee were going to drive three hours to come to our SOS. It is with a great sense of gratitude to my brothers for their assistance and willingness to drop everything and help us. A definite shout needs to go out to Bro. Moses Adams and his family, from Marinette, for their help.

So the next time you think of what it is to be a freemason, remember: it's not all about eating, activities, long business meetings, charities, youth groups or degree work.

It's also about being a brother willing to remember his obligations, and assisting a fellow brother in need.



# Quitters Never Truly Win

by Senior Deacon Nathan Butts, P.M.

They are too busy sitting on the sidelines worrying about being in the game, learning to grow and thrive, wallowing in self-doubt, and wondering what could have been. Whatever the reason is, we as Masons are taught to rarely quit.

Applying yourself, getting your feet wet, making things happen, falling down, getting back up and learning from the fall, climbing the mountain, achieving a goal – these are things quitters don't get to do unless the achievement is quitting, and then they really are not applying themselves.

There are always reasons to quit, and just as many reasons to try and do. Masonry teaches us to apply moral principles and make ourselves better men. Better men do not sit on the sidelines: they get involved, they *do*, they achieve. We are taught to try and improve ourselves, our neighbors, our neighborhoods, and our communities. This does not come about with quitters: it comes about by doers, thinkers, and the Masons who put forth the effort.

Life is hard. The road is rough and rugged, but that road or path has many joys and benefits you will never see if you take the easy

path, the hollow road. They may get you to the same place, but you will be ill-prepared on one path, for there was no danger, no triumphs, no tribulations. But now at the destination, all of those things come at once.

The rough and rugged road takes you by the hand and teaches you, helps you grow, and prepares you for the destination. So, when the final dangers arrive, they are much smaller in size to deal with because you have more personal weapons to use to overcome them. The dangers will not look like an insurmountable wall standing before you, but instead a pebble in the road easily walked over.

There are always things to be done, always things to learn, always things to teach; and as you starting doing, listening and learning, you will soon realize you have the information to be the teacher, the leader, and the example for the next man to follow. We show more about the fraternity by the things we do. Both in and out of Lodge, people see it, and if they don't already, they learn to respect us because we stand for something. We stand for something important, and we do that with friendship, morality, and brotherly love, the common

bond that binds us all to be better men and help others.

So think about what you are doing to stay in the game, and what you can do to show off these virtues we cling so tightly to for improving ourselves and those around us. Look for the common ground to show off these virtues to those not part of our fraternity so that they can learn, grow, and take that first step on their journey to become a better person. Maybe they even become Masons to help further spread that cement of brotherly love.

I, for one, will never truly quit. Not until life has taken my last breath, and I can help no more. For if it's possible, I will find a way to help, to learn, to grow, and to improve. Then I will be passing that along to as many who want to see and share the experience, and spread that cement of friendship and goodwill toward all.

# SPOOOoooooKKTacular

by Worshipful Master Michael Fairbanks, P.M.



Halloween was in full swing at Damascus Lodge, with kids of all ages (1 to 100) spooking out. Awards were given for Best Costume, Funniest Costume, and Best Boy and Best Girl Costumes, among others. The Damascus cooking team provided the food, an entrée worthy of Kings and Queens alike.

There were ghosts, skeletons, and goblins of all ages, and best of all: lots of candy and sugar for the wee goblins. The Generous Master of Damascus seemed to revel and encourage the children to consume ALL candies and sugars. We certainly hope the ride home was both peaceful and quiet for mums and dads. \*snicker\*

The gratitude and appreciation of Damascus Lodge #290 goes out to all who worked to make this year's Halloween party a success.

The Bertrams and Angel – thank you for all you did, from set up through tear down.

Thank you, Sean Schult: as usual your perfection in selecting the music and sound effects were absolutely superb.

To the cooking team, whose effort and fare is a testament to the reason they have won multiple awards, thank you for your commitment and dedication – from kitchen set up, cooking the

meal, and kitchen tear down. Our appreciation for Kevin Hart, Curt Campagna, and Jake Harycki is heartfelt. Thank you to our Chief Dishwasher, Mick Olson, who jumped in and helped with set up and teardown.

Finally, to all who attended – we hope you had fun and enjoyed the party!



## 2017 Lodge Officers

### Worshipful Master

Michael L. Fairbanks, P.M.  
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### Senior Warden

Brian Bertram  
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### Junior Warden

Matt Hanchek  
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### Treasurer

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

### Secretary

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

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

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

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