

The Free State Freemason

Winter Issue

January/February

2007 Grand Line Officers

M. Worshipful Grand Master John R. Biggs, Jr.
R. W. Deputy Grand Master Thomas M. Velvin, Jr.
R. W. Sr. Grand Warden Gerald E. Piepiora
R. W. Jr. Grand Warden Henry C. McDonald, Jr.
R. W. Grand Secretary Herbert Y. Holcomb, III
R. W. Grand Treasurer William E. Gyr
W. Grand Marshal Julius H. Poston
W. Asst. Grand Marshal Jay W. Hodges
W. Grand Lecturer R. Gary Pierce
W. Grand Chaplain Donald C. Stottlemeyer
W. Asst. Grand Chaplain Elwood L. Ulmer
W. Asst. Grand Chaplain Richard C. Oursler
W. Asst. Grand Chaplain Randall A. Schoch
W. Asst. Grand Chaplain Walter F. Burgess
W. Asst. Grand Chaplain Jack R. George
W. Sr. Grand Deacon Kostas Vourvoulas
W. Jr. Grand Deacon Charles L. Oursler
W. Sr. Grand Steward Frank H. Eberly, Jr.
W. Jr. Grand Steward John L. Shriver
W. Grand Standard Bearer Robert O. Ivey
W. Grand Sword Bearer R. Craig Wehrle
W. Grand Pursuivant Gene L. Purkey
W. Grand Dir. of Ceremonies Michael A. Caldwell
W. Grand Tyler Thomas F. Hess
W. Asst. Grand Tyler Patrick V. Drum, Sr.
W. Asst. Grand Tyler Richard H. Uren
W. Grand Organist Ronald L. Unger
W. Asst. Grand Organist Kenneth C. Mars
W. Grand Photographer W. Grant Gibson

TEAMWORK IN OUR MASONIC FAMILY WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



From the Grand Master:

My Brethren:

A new year is upon us, and it is an especially exciting time for our fraternity; Lodges have completed their elections, and now they begin the process of installing these new officers. Hopefully the new Worshipful Masters will take the helm of leadership in their Lodge with great anticipation, and a plan to improve their Lodge throughout the coming year. Personally, I eagerly look forward to the fellowship I will enjoy while visiting those Lodges that have invited me and my Grand Line to attend their Installation ceremonies.

In early December I had the distinct pleasure of visiting Charity Lodge No. 134 for my first official visit as Grand Master. In addition to this, I was invited, with my Grand Line, to confer the M.M. Degree in Evergreen Lodge No. 153 in Berlin, raised two brothers in Patapsco Lodge No. 183, one the brother of Jules Poston, W. G. Mar.; raised another brother in Mountain Lodge No. 99 in Frostburg, and to round out and cap a great month, we raised 7 Brothers on a Saturday in Perseverance Lodge No. 208 for a total of 11 new brothers during the month of December. What a wonderful way to end 2006, and to begin my term as Grand Master.

I had the pleasure to preside over our Grand Line's first installation of the year in Union Lodge No. 48. The Lodge room was full and many additional chairs were brought in to accommodate the overflow. The same has held true for all of the many installations we have attended. Columbia Lodge was overflowing - additional chairs were brought into the Lodge room, and about a dozen were seated in the preparing room. What a joy that is to behold!

I attended the installation of the new Potentates in Boumi and Ali Ghan Shrine, and I can attest that our Shrines in Maryland are in great hands. Both Brothers are enthusiastic, have great years planned and only need the support of the Nobles to have a great year.

Closing out January, we raised five new Brothers in Annapolis Lodge and 3 new Brothers in Delmar Lodge. Now brethren, please find something for them to do, provide them the mentoring they deserve, and assist them in learning about our wonderful fraternity.

Pat and I wish for each of you our Creator's richest blessings for the upcoming year. We so appreciate the hospitality and friendship you have shown us as we traveled the past two years during my term as your Deputy Grand Master, and we look forward to being with you many times over the upcoming years.

In closing, please keep our service men and women in your prayers, as well as those police officers and fire fighters that provide us protection 24/7 within our communities - they, like our armed forces, put their lives on the line every day that you and I may enjoy the life we have. And as you know we have many of these special people within the ranks of our fraternity.

John R. Biggs, Jr., M.W. Grand Master

Veterans Day Observance

On November 14, 2006 Bonnie Blink Daylight Lodge No. 1 commemorated Veterans Day. Several Vets were present in regalia once worn by them in the service to our Country. Past Master Patrick A. Curtis provided the flags of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and Merchant Marines. Salutes were offered to each branch with Brothers standing and receiving just accolades for "a job well done" With Maude Bollinger at the piano, anthems for the Departments was sung with passionate pride and gusto. Master of Ceremonies, Brother George B. Little, Worshipful Master of Lebanon Lodge No. 175 who coordinated this event introduced each flag, gave a short history and led the singing of the anthems.

Emotional remarks were offered by Brother Col. Herman G. "Hank" Tillman who brought solemnity and the true meaning of sacrifice and service to the forefront of this observance. Also present was Past Master Earl J. Hoopes, Jr. who spoke of Baltimore's own 11th Engineer Marine Battalion stationed at Ft McHenry. Brother Chief Petty Officer, John English also mentioned that the Marines are now a separate Department as are the other Services.

Deputy Grand Master, John R. Biggs, Jr. took precious time away from his hectic schedule to be on hand for this memorable day. Finally, Worshipful Master Bandell delivered the "Toast to the Flag" courtesy of the National Sojourners. Chaplin Arthur C. Rutledge offered a closing prayer for those lost in battles, followed by the playing of Taps. From the first strains of The National Anthem to the thunderous rendering of God Bless America, this was a day, which will be long remembered for the raw emotion and pride that prevailed.

Louis F. Bandell, Jr. Worshipful Master

Deadlines for submitting articles & information for publication in the *Free State Freemason*: **the 20th of January, April, July, and October.**

These dates are firm as the issue must be formatted and given to the printer the last day of these months.

Send mail to:
Grand Lodge of Maryland
304 International Circle
Cockeysville, MD 21030

410-527-0600 tel
410-527-1276 fax

FSFM@covad.net

Grand Lodge Website
<http://www.mdmasons.org/gl>

Article Submission

These points should be followed for articles submitted for inclusion in the *Free State Freemason* publication:

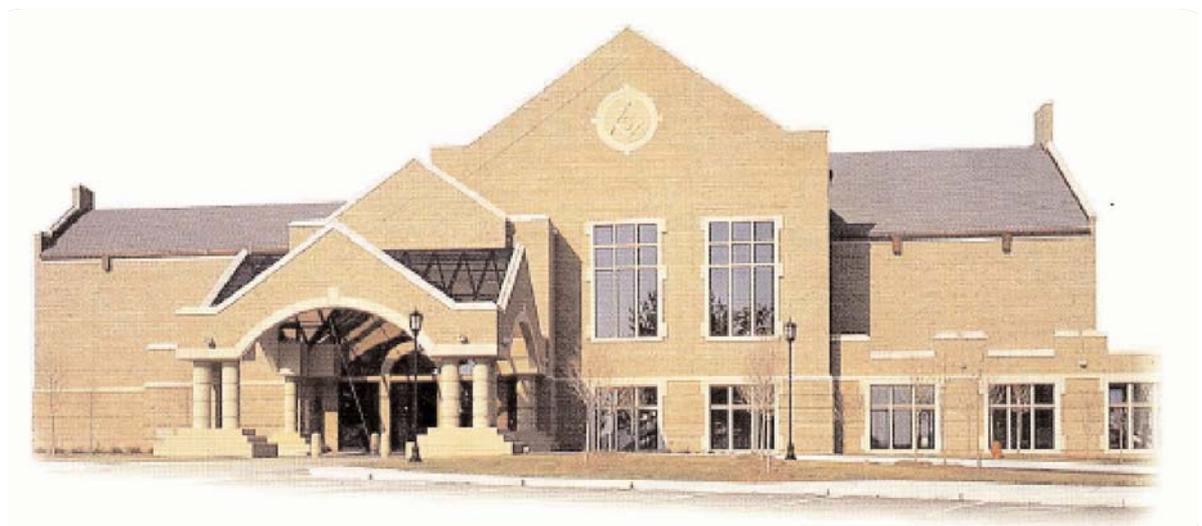
Original pictures or pictures from a digital camera on disk are fine - use the highest resolution.

Ink jet prints or newspaper pictures **will not reproduce satisfactorily.**

If you desire the return of pictures, they must have submitting individual's name on the back.

Pictures should have accompanying documentation detailing who is in the picture and what the picture represents if not accompanied by an article. Articles must be typewritten.

Articles can be submitted to the editor by e-mail, fax, regular mail or dropped off at the Grand Lodge office.



The Grand Lodge of Maryland Ballroom Rentals

Contact: Raymond J. Vogel, Ballroom Coordinator at 410-527-0289

E-Mail: glballroom@covad.net, Fax 410-527-0289

Office Hours: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.- Monday - Friday by appointment.

Catering: Approved list of caterers.

Ballroom Capacity: Receptions, 320, with a nice dance area. 410 for banquets without dance area. Separate room for Weddings and Special Events.

Rates: Call for information.

Parking: Free on site, 178 spaces.

Information: Foyer is marble with a fantastic staircase. Ballroom is 55 ft. x 111 ft., with hardwood floors. Twelve brass chandeliers, dance area depends on table setup. A must see in person to really see and feel the beauty of this facility. Call us and come see our Ballroom in this beautiful Hunt Valley setting.



License Plates

Masonic License plates are available to Maryland Masons, with vehicles registered in Maryland, as well as their wives, widows, and sons and daughters living at home.

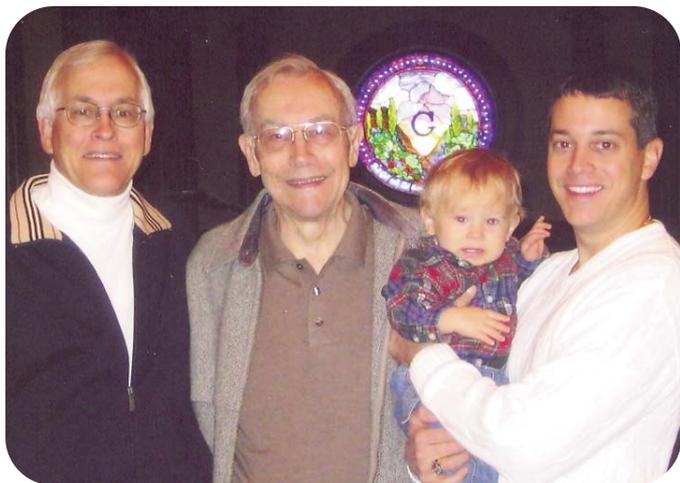
You do not have to wait for renewal of registration. Call Ray Vogel at 410-527-0600 to find out how it works and how easy it is to put them on your vehicle. Ray is available during regular business hours Monday through Friday. **Be proud of your fraternity and display these plates on your car this year.**

Chair Plaques & The Tree of Life

Chair Plaques are for chairs located in the Corinthian Room on the second floor of Grand Lodge. You may have your own name on a plaque, or have it in memory of, or to honor a person, club, or group.

The Tree of Life is located in the main lobby of the Grand Lodge Building. You can sponsor a leaf on the tree, or have it in memory of, or to honor a person, club, or group.

The Chair Plaques and the Tree of Life leaves cost only \$200.00 each. This provides you with up to four lines on either, with twenty-one characters per line. What a wonderful way to remember someone. Call Ray Vogel at the Grand Lodge at 410-527-0600 to make arrangements for yours.



Four Generations of the Bodie Men on a recent visit to the Grand Lodge of Maryland. From Left: Bruce B. Bodie; Bro. Charles A. Bodie, Jr., P.M. Oriental Lodge No. 158; Connor Bodie; and Bradley T. Bodie.



Bro. Charles A. Bodie, Jr., P.M. Oriental Lodge No. 158 and Grandson Bradley T. Bodie, WM Roe Fulkerson Lodge No. 299 in Hollywood, FL on his Installation Night January 6, 2007

National Sojourners Camp News LAFAYETTE CAMP (Baltimore # 7)

It was in broad daylight when two suspicious looking characters were apprehended whilst trying to penetrate the outer perimeter defenses of Lafayette Camp on the morning of November 11, 2006, at Mt. Moriah Lodge in Towson,



Maryland. The brazen nerve of these tattered-looking scoundrels was shattered whilst being processed, in the usual manner with trips to the "D", in order to ascertain their true identity and justify their worthiness to be made Heroes of '76, as they had requested.

Eventually, Sojourners Howard S. Maxwell and Henry C. McDonald, Jr., completed their initiation into the Camp, with all humility, and were pleased with the outcome of their daring adventure. In all seriousness, this was a perfect time for the Heroes of '76 Degree to take place, as it was during the 11th month; the 11th day; the 11th hour; and the 11th minute that the Degree was being conferred and it was also Veteran's Day, aka, Armistice Day and this was the exact time when the WWI Armistice had taken place in 1918! When the Prayer was read and Taps was being played, the swell of gratefulness was felt by all in attendance for those who had served our Nation since it's birth.

The newly made Heroes were overcome with pride in belonging to such a patriotic organization as The National Sojourners and The Heroes of '76 - and you would have been, too, had you been there. Think about it, inquire, and call your local Chapter, today. Pictured above are Heroes Maxwell (L) and McDonald (R); with Camp Commander Oliver Strong, (C).

The Camp Commander slowly approached two rough, gruff, looking characters, in tattered clothing, who were lurking at the perimeter of



our bivouac being held at Mt. Moriah Masonic Temple in Towson, MD, on a cold December morning reminiscent of Valley Forge. He apprehend both of them and told them that they would

soon be put into the guardhouse. Shortly thereafter, other members of the camp arrived and, while we listened to the intruders request to join our ranks, a third intruder suddenly appeared amongst us! He seemed to be of noble birth, since he was of a gentile nature and dressed in fine apparel.

All three were equally dealt with, however, since "station in life" is of no consequence among good men who "meet upon the Level"! Hence, Brothers Stephen J. Ponzillo, III; Walter J. Kulesza; and Karl F. Ballwanz, III, made their trips to the "D", in fine fashion, and were made Heroes of '76. Pictured are Brothers John A Young, Jr., MWPGM, Acting 2nd Lt. (TL), and Philip A. Tilson, NP, Acting 1st Lt. (TR); (C - L to R) Brothers Kulesza, Ponzillo, Craig R. Benson, COG/OOD; and Teddy R. Barkley, Jr. CHAP/ACS. Brother Ballwanz, III, is pictured directly above his father, Karl, Jr., in the striped tie. Seated (L- R) are Brothers Ken D. Lewis. ADJ; Oliver W. Strong, CMR; and Oswald E. Kinat, CS.

Moon Lodge Origin

In the early days, Maryland had a number of Moon Lodges - today there is but one that has maintained that tradition - Charity Lodge No. 134, located in Freeland, MD.

A check of Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia informs us that in the past, the population was more rural and there were no electric lights even in the cities. In the 18th century, the almanac was a common household authority and Freemasons, like others, measured their time and to some extent regulated their activities by it. Lodge By-laws often fixed the stated meetings on, just before or just after the Full Moon, thus, making 13 stated meetings per year.

There was a very practical reason for fixing meetings around the night of a Full Moon for, in rural communities, which predominated on the 18th century, there would be no natural illumination to guide the members to and from lodge over several miles of rough road.' While many Grand Lodges have since legislated Moon Lodges out of existence, others have clung to the old custom, preferring the inconvenience caused by confusion as to just when the moon is full, to sacrificing what has had the force of an "ancient usage and custom." It is interesting to realize the first mention of Moon Lodges was in the Cooke Manuscript of 1410, one of the oldest documents belonging to the Masonic Craft. It is understood moon lodges were first mentioned in a ritual in "The Whole Institute of Masonry," published in 1724. By 1767 there were five numbered lodges governed by the moon operating under the Grand Lodge of England. By the year 1776, this amount had increased to nine of 499 lodges in England which included the Provincial Lodges located in the English Colonies abroad.

The Minutes of Aitcheson's Haven Lodge in Scotland, beginning in 1598 show frequent meetings at odd dates, and although some of them may well have been chosen because they were on or near the nights of the full moon, there are no surviving regulations to suggest that those nights were deliberately chosen for that purpose. The same applies to the Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel) No. 1, whose minutes go back to 1599. Meetings of this lodge were also held fre-

quently and at regular intervals. The only regular or fixed-meeting was on St. John's Day in winter to elect the Warden, which, at that time was then the Scottish title for the Master of the Lodge. During the Colonial days around 1717, Moon Lodges were noted to be operating in Philadelphia, Boston, and also in Tennessee. By 1825, of the 75 instituted Connecticut lodges, many were Moon Lodges of which a number were located near fishing and whaling harbors. In 1951 Grand Lodge of Missouri had 18 Moon Lodges within their Jurisdiction; Grand Lodge of Indiana listed nine; and, in 1972 Grand Lodge of Maryland boasted one Moon Lodge. Between the years 1946 and 1958 moon lodges dropped from 119 to 52 in Kentucky. By the turn of the century, there were over 3,000 moon lodges operating, but by 1972 the number had dwindled to less than 500 spread amongst 30 jurisdictions within the United States. During this period of time, in those old horse and buggy days, brethren were known to have walked eight to ten miles or more to attend meetings. Some traveled by horseback, horse and buggy, and even by boat. Some were unable to make the long trip home during the night and were given shelter, allowing them to leave after breakfast to return home the next morning.

Occasions were experienced when the low tide allowed a brother to walk to attend his lodge, and, after the meeting, because of high tide, had to await the next low tide. Bristol Lodge No. 25 celebrated its 200th Anniversary in 1980. It all began back in February 1780 with a letter signed by nine brethren and sent to the Right Worshipful Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania asking that a Warrant be issued to hold a lodge in the Town of Bristol (or five miles around), and on the 15th of March the Warrant was issued. In those days, Bristol was a full day's trip north of Philadelphia on the road en-route to New York.

Quite often we hear a remark about 'the good old days'. When moon lodges began, there were no illuminated two or four lane black-top highways and very few gravel roads. Most consisted of two dirt ruts leading through bush and fields and seldom in a straight line. While the main roads may have been gravel, the side roads and town roads were dirt. There was no train or bus service, nor any cars for that matter. After dark, a candle or coal oil lamp was used for illumination: no electricity. If fortunate, everyone bathed in a galvanized wash tub on Saturday nights.

In the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Iowa around 1870, every Masonic home had a Masonic moon calendar drawn by a brother from that state. The calendar was a 13-month one showing only the date and month of the full moon throughout the year. Occasionally the brothers realized there were times when there was no full moon in February, such as occurred in 1893, and this caused quite a bit of a storm. As lodges usually met on a specific day such as the last Saturday of the month, visitors in this particular month arrived to find no Lodge meeting taking place, and so, the various Grand Lodges began eliminating the Moon Lodges.

The present Secretary of Bristol Lodge stat-

ed "The continuance of this practice of meeting on Saturday evenings on or before the full moon, reminds us of our heritage and tradition, and does provide some distinction when conversing with other members of the fraternity." One has to have a great deal of respect for our brothers who decided to get together and form a lodge under such conditions. No wonder they spent a few hours after the meeting enjoying a few beers and socializing with a sing-song. There were few occasions when they saw one another, except at Lodge meetings. As the Lodges begin to eliminate the moon lodges, it is interesting to realize the brothers would then begin to open their lodges in the early afternoon, allowing their membership to arrive at their homes before darkness set in. It is also realized Moon Lodges were also held in various unnamed Canadian Jurisdictions.

Scottish Rite Masons Announce Newest NASCAR Racing Team

Washington, D.C., January 3, 2007 - The Scottish Rite Racing Team was officially announced and introduced by NASCAR, BC Motorsports, and the Frank Cicci Racing team at the Scottish Rite House of the Temple on Saturday, January 6, 2007, at 11:00am. NASCAR representatives, the Racing Team, and members of the Masonic community were available to the media. The House of the Temple is located at 1733 Sixteenth St. N.W., Washington, DC.

The Scottish Rite race car will be driven by



veteran driver Brian Conz, who himself is a 32° Scottish Rite Mason. Brother Brian, who began his career in 1988 in the Street Stock Division, later moved to the ARCA/REMAX Series in 1996. Brian has 15 wins, 79 top fives, and 108 top ten finishes to his credit and will be in the running for the Raybestos Rookie of the Year honors.

He will be piloting the Scottish Rite #34 Chevrolet for Frank Cicci Racing based in Mooresville, N.C. The team will be celebrating its 20th season in the Busch Series in 2007 and is the oldest running team in series history.

With 743 starts and 19 victories, the team has fielded drivers such as current NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series Champion Todd Bodine, Randy LaJoie, and David Green, along with a long line of NASCAR's favorite driver's. Owner Frank Cicci states, "We are so excited and privileged to have such an honorable organization associated with us, we look forward to a long-lasting relationship with the Scottish Rite and Brian."

The Scottish Rite is part of the "Family of Freemasonry," the oldest and largest fraternal organization in America, dating back to 1730.

Many famous American men have been Masons, including fourteen presidents from George Washington to Gerald Ford. Bro. Ford was a Michigan Mason as is Bro. Conz, and both received the 32° in the Scottish Rite, with Bro. Ford being honored with the 33°. About one-third of the 1.5 million American Freemasons have gone on to become 32° Scottish Rite Masons, and about 1% of those receive the 33° in recognition of their service to humanity, their communities, or to Freemasonry. The Scottish Rite sponsor 225 speech and language clinics for children across the country, part of the \$2 million a day or \$750+ million a year American Masonry spends on philanthropy.

Scottish Rite Racing will compete in the 2007 NASCAR Busch Series commencing at the Daytona International Speedway in Florida on February 17th for the full 35 race schedule.

For additional information on the Scottish Rite Racing Team, contact Stan Dodd, 202-232-3579 or sdodd@scottishrite.org.

Prince Hall Visitation

(In a letter dated 11/15/05 by the GM Ronald G. Bélanger)

In light of the action taken by the majority of the permanent members present at the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Maryland concerning visitation by and with the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge and their subordinate Lodges and in response to the many phone calls and emails to this office concerning this action, I offer the following guidelines:

Visitation by any Lodge or Mason Beholden to the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge will be by "**Proper Invitation**" only. By "**Proper Invitation**" it is meant that: only the Worshipful Master may, in writing, extend such an invitation.

The right of any Mason in good standing entitled to object to sitting in Lodge with anyone he deems unsuitable must not be infringed upon, therefore any objection of this nature must be made prior to the invitation being extended. It is therefore imperative the Worshipful Master consult and advise his members of the intent to invite in advance of the actual invitation being extended. Once the Worshipful Master receives permission from the members present to extend such an invitation, and **not before**, may he in writing, with a copy to be sent to both Grand Lodge Offices, invite the intended Lodge, Mason or Masons to attend a stated or special communication of the Lodge over which he presides.

In order to maintain subordination, good conduct and good will between both Grand Lodges once the Worshipful Master is satisfied that the membership is willing to extend such an invitation and the invitation has been sent, the individual Mason will have waived any further right of objection in this particular instance. This in no way prevents a Mason in good standing the right to object but does place upon any individual the responsibility to do so before any invitation can be extended thereby avoiding any possible embarrassment to the members of his Mother Lodge and the Grand Lodge of Maryland.

This procedure remains unchanged.

John R. Biggs, Jr.
Grand Master

Temple Committee Update

Brethren - GREAT NEWS! By the time you read this, the John A. "Jack" Young, Jr. Conference Room will have been unveiled and dedicated. This was done on January 9th.

This room will be for the benefit of all Lodges. No longer will you have to use the



Common Room, where there are always people coming and going creating distractions from your event. No longer will you need to go outside of the Temple to find accommodations to conduct your Past Master's Meetings or inner Lodge committee meetings. It can also be used as a place for instructional work for the degrees.

There is a cork board and calendar in it for reserving the room so there won't be any problems of conflict with meetings.

Our next major project will be the beautification of the Mail Box area. The results of the committee's efforts are all around you. As you walk around the Temple, you can't help see the results of the dedication of your fellow Masonic Brothers who have unselfishly given of their time and skills to beautify OUR Temple.

This is my last column to you as the Chairman of the committee. My term is up and you will now have the benefit of having as the next Chairman one of the most dedicated Masons I have known - Past Master Bro. Robert Shinnick. I know there will be continued progress.

Again, I say thank you for having given me the privilege to serve you. Fraternaly yours,

Pat Green

Grand Chapter OES

The 2006 -2007 Grand Chapter of Maryland, Order of the Eastern Star's Military & Veterans Committee will close out the current year by hosting a USO-style dinner/dance & silent auction on Saturday night, March 31, 2007 at the Embassy Suites in Cockeysville, MD to benefit those very houses and recovering service members and their families.

This is the same weekend as the annual Grand Chapter Palm Sunday Service at Bonnie Blink on April 1, 2007 and we encourage everyone to come and share this weekend with Sister M. Ernestine Hale and Brother Lyndall Debar as they begin the rapid end to their outstanding year of service to the Grand Chapter. Tickets are \$50.00 per person (\$45.00 if ticket purchased prior to March 1). Doors open at 6:00pm.

MAYOR'S CHRISTMAS PARADE 2006



Grand Master Biggs passing out his pin to Boumi Temple parade members.



Two old Troopers reminisce - Frank Mazzone, retired Lt. Colonel, MSP & M.W.G.M. Jack Biggs, retired first Lieutenant.



Bro. Jerry Piepiora, R.W.S.G.W. listens to sage advice from R.W. Bro. Herb Holcomb, Grand Secretary.



Michael Caldwell, W. G. D. C.; Gary Ashby, W.M. of Union Lodge, and R. Gary Pierce, W. Grand Lecturer pose for the camera.



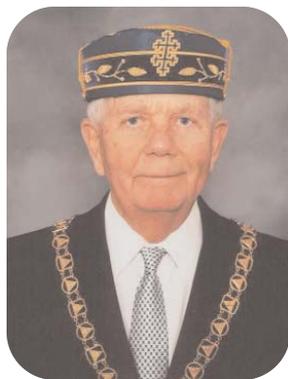
W. Asst. G. Marshal Jay Hodges sets the pace for those marching in the parade with the Grand Master and Grand Lodge.



This fine looking group of Brothers won a trophy (first ever) for the Grand Lodge.

This year's **Mayor's Day Parade** in Hampden saw a larger turn-out of Brothers from the Grand Line and from local Lodge's. A special thanks from our Grand Master to those that took the time to make this annual parade. The Mayor's Day Parade, originally the Hampden Parade, was instituted by Tom Kerr many years ago, and Tom has seen it grow from just a couple of fire departments participating, into one of the largest parades in the Baltimore area. It is always held on the first Sunday in December, and kicks off at 2 p.m. Staging begins at 1 p.m. Our Grand Master would be most appreciative if **YOU** would place this date on your calendar for the 2007 parade. He would love to see 60 to 70 Brothers in collars, jewels and aprons marching with him next December. Roughly 30 brothers came out in 2006 which was an improvement over the 7 that showed up in 2005, but we can do far better - make this a priority if you can.

From the Sovereign Grand Inspector General AA Scottish Rite



May I wish all the brethren and their families a happy and healthy 2007. The year 2006 was a good year for the Scottish Rite. The Baltimore Region brought in seventy-eight new members and the Valley of Cumberland brought in twenty-seven members for the year. In Baltimore, we had a reduction in the number of the brethren called to rest. The non-payment of dues could reflect a higher cost of living for those on a fixed income, but the Almoner, III. J. Fred Hobine, 33°, is helping out everyone that requests financial assistance with their dues.

The financial picture for your Valley is sound, including the Maryland Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation, which supports the Hilgenberg Childhood Speech and Language Center. The Scottish Rite contribution for the operation of the clinic has increased over 50% since 2003, but with your faithful support of our Foundation and our fundraisers, the assets of the Foundation are growing.

Plans have been made for the second Scottish Rite cruise in October 2007. Forty cabins have been set aside and thirty-eight of those have been booked already, a full year in advance. I call the Scottish Rite Cruise "Fundraising with Fun." On the Panama cruise we made \$15,000, and on the 14 Day New England Cruise, in October 2007, we hope to raise \$20,000. We are delighted that the Grand Master Jack Biggs and Lady Pat as well as the Deputy Grand Master Tom Velvin and Lady Carole will be sailing with us. Nobody gets a free cabin. The free cabins that the company awards per cabins sold will be resold for additional revenue. "There is no free lunch!"

The Bull and Oyster Roast was very successful, thanks to your support, and we netted \$12,000. I want to add a special thank you to all who bought raffle tickets for the cruise.

Shortly, you will receive tickets for another fundraiser. A generous donation was made by the III. Past Grand Master Bennie Owens, 33° and Lady Ruth. They deeded their timeshare at Massanutten, VA to the Scottish Rite. It is a beautiful place in the mountains, near Harrisonburg, VA. The location was personally visited by III. Marlin Mills, 33°, me, and our ladies. It is a great place for a family vacation and the date for this year's week is in the beginning of August. The drawing will be at the annual Scottish Rite Family Picnic at Sunnybrook Farms on Sunday, June 10, 2007. We will attempt to sell some tickets by mail. We thank you in advance for your support.

By now you have probably heard that the Supreme Council will be participating in the NASCAR Busch Series races. At no cost to the fraternity, car #34 will be racing under the Scottish Rite name. Two of these races will be

at Dover Downs in the fall. Think about the millions of people that attend the NASCAR races and watch it on television. They will see the Scottish Rite name on the hood and the spoiler and also the letter "G" in various places on the car. What a wonderful way to promote Masonry! Hopefully, this will entice men, both young and old, to call and inquire about our fraternity.

We are now gearing up for a one day class on March 31, with beautiful degree work to present to the new members. Names for honors are now being submitted for the Biennial Session this summer. It will be a combined meeting with the Northern Jurisdiction for the first time in our Scottish Rite history. Parts of this session are open to all Scottish Rite Masons. I especially hope that many of the 33° members will make an effort to attend this historic occasion.

As far as any changes in the building, there is some interest but nothing is finalized. The day will come when we need to downsize, due to the high cost of maintenance of our beautiful Temple. Hopefully we are able to prepare for that day.

May our Creator grant you His peace and support as you pursue your journey in Freemasonry. May God Bless all of our brethren and their families.

Fraternally Yours,
III. Dr. Hans R. Wilhelmsen, 33°
Sovereign Grand Inspector General

Royal Arch Masonry in Maryland



At symbolic lodge installations and meetings throughout the Masonic jurisdiction of Maryland, the Worshipful Master is presented a lapel pin accompanied by these words:

"In behalf of your 1700 brothers of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, I am pleased to present you, Worshipful Master, with this emblem of your office. I know that you will wear it with pleasure to yourself and honor to the fraternity."

The pin that the Royal Arch Masons of Maryland is presenting is a lapel emblem that is the Master's Square underneath of which is "07", representing his year of service. It is our intent to present one of these pins to every lodge Master in Maryland by May 1, 2007. Our intent is to recognize the importance of the position of Worshipful Master to every Masonic Lodge and that Royal Arch Masonry is an extension of the teachings of the "Blue Lodge."

We are pleased to report that, due to the action of M.W.G.M., Companion John R. Biggs, Jr., the collateral bodies continue to be able to present their "story" to lodges with the permission of the Worshipful Master. Thus, the Grand Chapter has made over 80 lodge visits explaining Royal Arch Masonry and the York Rite since June of 2005. Our late M.E. Grand High Priest Milton Arrington secured the dispensation from the M.W.G.M., Companion Ronald G. Bélanger to permit collateral bodies to appear in lodges in their regalia (sans hat).

This visitation program has been most successful in recruiting brothers to become Royal Arch Masons. We are rehearsing another program for presentation to lodges that we hope to launch in March. Thus, we can revisit each lodge with a new, more dramatic Royal Arch story. To arrange for a presentation to your lodge, contact Brother Louis F. Bandell, Jr. at louemeral@comcast.net or 410-252-6020.

Royal Arch Masonry in Maryland is enjoying a renewal of interest. "Work" is occurring in Western Maryland, "on the shore", in central Maryland and in Southern Maryland. If sufficient interest exists, we will confer two of the four chapter degrees in a local lodge and arrange for the other degrees to be conferred at the nearest Royal Arch Chapter. If interested contact Steve Ponzillo, M.E.G.H.P. at ponzillo@comcast.net Consider joining your brothers in the Royal Arch Chapter and complete the symbolic lodge story.

From The Grand Commander Royal Arch Masons



The Order of Knights Templar today exists as the top ranking Masonic organization in the York Rite of Freemasonry. The Order today requires membership in a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons and in some jurisdictions, membership in a Council of Royal and Select Masters. The Knights Templar is a Christian-oriented fraternal organization based on the ancient organization that was founded in the 11th century.

As a Knight Templar, one has many opportunities to help others that are less fortunate. One way is through The Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. which is our major charity. The foundation is often the last hope for individuals who may lose their sight and has often been called a "Great Humanitarian Charity".

The Knights Templar Educational Foundation was established in 1922 to help provide educational advantages to the youth of this country. The Grand Commandery of Maryland awards grants to Maryland college students.

Holy Land Pilgrimages provided by the respective Grand Commanderies and in conjunction with the Grand Encampment Committee on Holy Land Pilgrimages has sent over 1200 ministers to the Holy Land. The program sends ordained Christian Ministers, gratis, on Pilgrimages to the Holy Land, for their spiritual enrichment, enthusiasm, and refreshed dedication. Most ministers who have been chosen feel that this pilgrimage has enriched their ministry and their lives. Masonic membership is not required and the minister may be male or female. Every Christian Mason should be a Knights Templar.

Fraternally,
John Rafine
Right Eminent Grand Commander

From The Potentate Boumi Shriners



Brothers All, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Worshipful Grand Master Jack Biggs on becoming Grand Master of Maryland. We at Boumi temple look forward to working closely with the Grand Master and his line of Officers. At the Grand Masters Installation in November I had the opportunity to speak to the Brothers and Ladies that were in attendance. At that time I asked all the Shriners in the room to stand, about 90 % of the Brothers in the room stood. At the time I pledged the continued support of the Nobles to the Grand Master and I repeat that now as Potentate of the greatest Temple in North America, Boumi Temple. It is an honor to be chosen to be Potentate of Boumi temple.

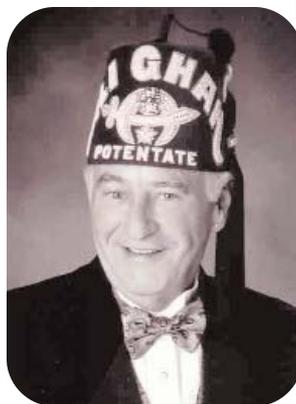
I would like to take this opportunity to reach out to all of our Masonic Brothers. Don't look at the Shrine as stealing members from the Lodges. Look at your Lodges and see how many Shriners are involved in the running of the Lodges. We all need members and I encourage those of you that are not Shriners to join our organization and continue your journey in the Masonic Brotherhood.

As Potentate I have asked the Grand Master for permission to invite Master Masons to attend a special night at Boumi Temple during 2007. We hope that we will be able to have a special presentation by our Membership Committee and have something interesting for everyone. In May we will be holding a Carnival in the Boumi parking lot. Please help us make this a success, come join your fellow Brothers on Masonic night when it is announced.

We as a Masonic Family need to reach out and support each other, because without the support of each other we will suffer.

Yours in The Faith
C. J. Rex Williams
Potentate - Boumi Shriners

From the Potentate Ali Ghan Shriners



Many of us have dreams and even visualize those dreams. But, we may either fail to believe in those dreams or, even fail to act to make those dreams a reality. In most cases, we need to realize that to accomplish many of our dreams or goals; we may need to make use of the various resources available to us.

To help understand what I am referring to, I wish to share a story with you about a young man, a dreamer named Aaron. An individual that had dreams

and a young man that visualized but, a young man that didn't plan, didn't believe and most certainly didn't act or, use the resources that were made available to him.

Aaron had a wife and 3 small children and like many young men, Aaron had dreams of a better life, an easier life, of wealth and of a better place to live. Aaron and his family lived in a small hut by a river and by trade, he was a fisherman. Each day, Aaron would rise at sun-up and return after a long day fishing around sun-down. Some days, he caught a lot of fish making it a profitable day. But most of his days were not very profitable.

One particular day proved to be totally non-profitable. Aaron spent all day on the fishing boat and failed to catch one single fish. Of course, in his line of work, no fish meant no money. As Aaron walked home along the river's edge with his head hung low and dragging his feet because of the very disappointing day. He noticed, buried in the rough sands of the river's edge, an object. His curiosity arose and he bent down, dug into the sand only to find an old leather pouch. Upon further investigation, he found what appeared to be a few small, round stones. Aaron figured, "just my luck, a bag of stones!"

Holding the pouch of stones in one hand, Aaron continued his long, disappointed walk home. As he walked, Aaron put his hand into the small leather pouch and pulled out a stone. He paused for a moment, held the stone up above his head and tossed it into the calm river. When the stone hit the river, it created a ripple effect causing Aaron to become somewhat hypnotized. As the rippling effect continued, Aaron dreamed of how great it would be, one day, when he could have all of the money he ever needed. How great it would be one day.

Regaining his senses, Aaron continued his slow, arduous journey home to his poor family. When he paused again, stuck his hand into the leather pouch and, pulled out yet another stone. Again, he held the stone above his head and again, tossed it into the river. As expected, the stone hitting the river created another rippling effect and again, Aaron stood there a bit hypnotized and began to dream again of how great it would be, one day, when I had all of the money I would ever need to buy my family a big, wonderful house.....oh, how great that would be.

Again, he snapped out of the dream world and saw that he was almost home. Again, he put his hand in the leather pouch and pulled out the one last remaining stone. Again, he held it high above his head and, for some reason Aaron took the time to look at the stone before tossing it into the river. All of a sudden, rays of sunlight hit the remaining stone causing it to sparkle and burst into glorious beams of colorful glow. Then, Aaron realized he was holding a precious gemstone - not simple, old, ordinary stones and, all along he was throwing those precious stones into the river.

Like so many people, Aaron was throwing his dreams away. Not taking the time to investigate what was at hand - those valuable resources I mentioned earlier. Yes, I want you to dream and dream big. But, when you dream, I encourage you - I implore you to not only dream but, to

visualize, plan, believe, and, act.

As Walt Disney once stated, "All of our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them."

To close, I can only tell you this: I am only one person, but I am one; I cannot do everything, but I can do something; and, what I can do, by the grace of god, I promise you I will do

R. Francis Shives
Potentate - Ali Ghan Shrine

From the Executive Director Maryland Masonic Homes

Greetings!

The winter months have been relatively quiet so far, however life on the hill has been full of activity. As we move into the New Year, reflection on the recent holiday season causes us to pause and rejoice. We were fortunate to have many entertainers, volunteers and individuals giving of their time and talent to enhance the lives of our residents. Thank you for assisting us to create the special warm feelings and peace of the season, and providing a high quality, continuum of care at Bonnie Blink.

That willingness to share can be carried throughout the year. There are many opportunities to volunteer. Please call today and begin the journey towards making a difference, building relationships, and receiving the blessings of volunteerism.

Our dedicated and professional staff continues to grow. Reverend Henry Thompson recently joined our leadership team, providing residents with spiritual support. I hear the weekly Bible study group has many lively discussions! Rev. Thompson works closely with individual Lodges to prepare Sunday Chapel services, and we encourage your continued participation and support.

MMH has begun a new initiative to become actively involved in our community and continue the Masonic mission of helping others. At Christmas, the Bonnie Blink staff 'adopted' a local needy family and donated clothing items and toys. Our mitten and hat tree was once again a huge success as residents, families and staff contributed. And we will join together this Spring to reach out to our armed forces, honoring current heroes and those veteran residents who committed to the fight for freedom years ago.

MMH's membership to Lifespan, the Maryland health care association and Masonic Homes' Executive Association enables our facility to utilize valuable industry resources, and participate in developing best practices within the non-profit sector.

MMH has begun a journey of commitment to embrace a cultural change and focus on person-centered care. This will include enhancing services offered on Serenity Hill,

our secure dementia and Alzheimer's unit. The concentration is to offer choices to our residents and allow for a less-structured, more home-like environment. Through staff, resident and family education, we can improve the residents' quality in the physical and psycho-social aspects of daily living.

Looking ahead the Board of Trustees is embarking on a strategic planning process to further define our values and map a plan to structure our future services. We approach this process with great excitement and enthusiasm. We are fortunate to have a caring group that put the residents and the facility first.

As we progress through 2007, we are prepared to initiate many positive changes to meet new challenges and maintain excellence.

Remember, the road to success starts with one single step

Paula O'Neill
Executive Director

From the Grand Lecturer

Much of the conduct we use in lodge is governed by tradition, ancient custom, and usage, with no force of law to enforce. Masonic manners, like those of civilized society, are rooted in the dictum that conduct which makes for the comfort and pleasure of others is good. I hope to discuss various parts of our protocol in this and in future issues. Since there has been some question as to the proper use of the Apron during installation ceremonies, I will begin with it.



Apron:

That all brethren entering a lodge be properly clothed is the Tyler's duty to ensure. Even when, as sometimes happens on "big nights", there are not enough aprons, a handkerchief may be tucked in the belt to take its place.

Aprons should be put on before entering the lodge room. The spectacle of a late brother hurriedly entering the lodge room at the last moment, tying on his apron as he approaches the Altar, is much on a par with a member of church entering it while putting on his collar and tie.

It is a courtesy, much appreciated by all Tyler's, for brethren leaving the lodge room to lay their aprons neatly, in a pile or in the apron box, instead of dropping them anywhere for the Tyler to pick up and put away.

Some Lodges have the custom of covering the officer's apron during installation ceremonies. Nowhere in our ritual or ancient custom is this required. Often we see the installing Brother remove the white apron, wad it up, and throw it on the side, or drop it on the kneeling pad; this is not the way to treat the "Badge of a Mason". The installation ritual states: "You will now be invested with the Jewel of your office". It matters not that you

are wearing the apron of the station/place, and it is no secret as to where the officer is to be installed, thus the white apron covering the apron of the station or place the officer is to be installed in serves no purpose at all, wastes time, and should require special handling of the removed white apron. It is, therefore, the Grand Master's position that no white apron be used to cover another apron during the Installation of Officers ceremonies. Take due notice thereof.

R. Gary Pierce
Grand Lecturer

Congressional Resolution: Recognition of Freemasons

Dear Most Worshipful Grand Master Biggs and Right Worshipful Brother Holcomb:

I write to you and other Grand Lodges today as a humble Mason from Salt Lake City to bring to your attention something that might be of interest to your Lodges. A congressional resolution is pending in the US House of Representatives which is intended to recognize the contributions of Freemasonry to our nation. The bill reads:

110th CONGRESS
1st Session
H. RES. 33

Recognizing the thousands of Freemasons in every State in the Nation and honoring them for their many contributions to the Nation throughout its history.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 5, 2007

Mr. GILLMOR submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the thousands of Freemasons in every State in the Nation and honoring them for their many contributions to the Nation throughout its history.

Whereas Freemasons, whose long lineage extends back to before the Nation's founding, have set an example of high moral standards and charity for all people;

Whereas the Founding Fathers of this great Nation and signers of the Constitution, most of whom were Freemasons, provided a well-rounded basis for developing themselves and others into valuable citizens of the United States;

Whereas members of the Masonic Fraternity, both individually and as an organization, continue to make invaluable charitable contributions of service to the United States;

Whereas the Masonic Fraternity continues to provide for the charitable relief and education of the citizens of the United States;

Whereas the Masonic Fraternity is deserving of formal recognition of their long history of care-giving for the citizenry and their example of high moral standards; and

Whereas Freemasons have always revered and celebrated St. John's Day, June

24th, as dedicated to their patron saints: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes the thousands of Freemasons in every State in the Nation and honors them for their many contributions to the Nation throughout its history.

Similar or identical bills have apparently been introduced for several years, but have not passed due to lack of interest.

Understanding the prohibition against political dialog in a Lodge, I also know this to be a non-partisan bill for the good of Masonry. Thus, I respectfully bring this bill to your attention and, if you see fit, recommend that you and other brethren contact your representatives and urge them to cosponsor the bill.

As a former employee of the House and of the Senate, the most common reason why my boss didn't cosponsor a bill is simply because nobody in his district asked him to. Most representatives are eager to please their constituency, and for a non-binding resolution like this, we have a good chance of getting cosponsorship and passage-if we act.

Specifically, two actions will help:

1. Ask Masons in Maryland to contact their representative and urge him or her politely but strongly to cosponsor the bill. Not just support it, but cosponsor it. You can find your representative's contact information at <http://www.house.gov/> in the upper left corner. Make contact either by e-mail or letter; it has more impact than a phone call.

2. Contact brethren in other congressional districts and states. Make them aware of the bill, and urge them to contact their representatives for the same purpose (cosponsorship). Perhaps run an article about it in The Trestleboard or other publication.

Representatives Cummings, Van Hollen, and Sarbanes from Maryland sit on the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform where this bill currently resides, and their cosponsorship will especially help push it along. When you write, tell your representatives why they should cosponsor the bill. How will it help your district? Point out the good work done by Masons (Shriner's Hospital, Scottish Rite Learning Center,

etc.) in your district. Show your representative that cosponsorship gives him or her good press. Remember, the bill is H.Res. 33, not H.R.33.

This is all respectfully submitted for your consideration. No intrusion is intended, and I promise not to follow up to nag. However, with our membership declining over the past 50 years, I believe that such congressional action and the press that comes with it can only help us rebuild Freemasonry into a stronger fraternity. This is our chance to act and make democracy work for us. I'm available for any discussions or questions, and you are welcome to forward this message as you see fit.

Fraternally Yours,
Robert M. Wolfarth, 32