

From the Grand Master



Brethren,

It is with mixed emotions that I write this, my last article for the Free State Freemason, as your Grand Master – mixed, in that there are still a few things I would like to have had the time to see done, and mixed, on the other hand, that the demanding schedule eventually tires one out, particularly at the age most Grand Masters leave office – I will celebrate my 75th birthday come next January - and it takes a lot of time away from one's family. I look forward to and will soon enjoy becoming a Past Grand Master. It has been a most enjoyable two years with you Brethren, and it is so amazing how quickly they seemed to have passed.

The Brethren involved in setting up the structure of our Grand Lodge, many years ago, did an excellent job with respect to the offices of Deputy and Grand Master – one year is not really adequate time, and three years would be a little too long for most of us – two seems to work out just right. It gives the Deputy adequate time, if he uses it wisely, to get a good handle on the tasks he will face when he assumes the Grand East, and it gives the Grand Master adequate time to accomplish the goals he has set.

I will leave the Grand East next month, knowing that our Grand Lodge will be in good hands for the next two years, under the guidance of R.W. Bro. Tom Velvin, DGM. I will also leave knowing, that with your help, we have accomplished, many good things for our Grand Lodge. A number of the edicts I have issued, during the last two years, caused many of you to personally thank me for them, and that was much appreciated. These were things I felt would benefit our Grand Lodge in the coming years, and it was most encouraging to know that you heartily agreed with them.

As I write this, we are just a few days away from Harvest Homes Day, and those that attended this annual event, got to see our new pavilion. The old one was getting in pretty poor shape, and needed quite a bit in repair, and wasn't of sufficient size to be able to be used for rentals. The new one presents a much better appearance, particularly as one comes up the "hill", and one that should last us for many years to come. The construction wasn't even finished, and we were already getting inquiries about renting it – particularly for weddings. We all know well what a beautiful campus we have, and the new pavilion is more in keeping with the rest of our structures.

One of the many good things R.W. Bro. George Hunt did, while serving in a number of capacities for this office, was to design a pavilion that he thought would be in keeping with the beauty of the rest of our buildings. What George designed was a little beyond our means, and is not what we built, however, I feel he would be most pleased to see what we actually installed. And, I couldn't think of a more fitting person to dedicate this new structure to, than to R.W. Brother George. Saturday morning, during Harvest Homes Day, at 8:30 a.m. the Grand Line and I will dedicate this new pavilion in George's honor, and have had a plaque to be installed to commemorate this. In addition, his family will be in attendance for the dedication.

One of the many things I was able to do, during my two years as Deputy, and two years as Grand Master, was to visit many of your Lodges, some that I had never been to before – this I enjoyed immensely, and my two Grand Lines and I thank you, and truly appreciated the many invitations, and the hospitality we enjoyed while there.

While this Grand Lodge has not seen many invitations for Cornerstone and/or Dedication Ceremonies for public building for quite a few years - mostly the dedications we performed were for Masonic properties - we have already dedicated the new library in Thurmont, the new fire headquarters and station 16 in Salisbury, and have accepted invitations for a rededication of the Courthouse in Oakland, and in Chestertown, and to dedicate a new, and quite large, statue of George Washington, to be installed in Washington County. I firmly believe the publicity we have been receiving over the past several years has been bringing us more into the public eye.

I also firmly believe that the Masonic Chip program I instituted this year, will continue to bring us into the public view in a very good way. The Brothers I appointed to this program have done a superb job, and I thank Brothers Marlin Mills, Doug Basset, and Mark Hartz for their efforts – they have worked tirelessly to see this program get off to a great start. I also thank those Lodges that have jumped into this program head on, and have been doing a superb job. In addition, my thanks to all of you who work in our Lodges and committees, for everything you do, for our great fraternity.

Jack Biggs
Grand Master

2008 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 Spyridon G. Treklas**
- R. W. Jr. Grand Warden Marvin E. Printz**
- 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. Asst. Grand Lecturer Paul H. Fishell**
- W. Grand Chaplain Elwood L. Ulmer**
- W. Asst. Grand Chaplain Walter F. Burgess**
- W. Asst. Grand Chaplain Jack R. George**
- W. Asst. Grand Chaplain Leslie G. Metcalf, Sr.**
- W. Asst. Grand Chaplain Richard C. Oursler**
- W. Asst. Grand Chaplain Randall A. Schoch**
- W. Sr. Grand Deacon Robert H. Hill, Jr.**
- W. Jr. Grand Deacon R. Bruce Tanner**
- W. Sr. Grand Steward Frederick A. Spicer**
- W. Jr. Grand Steward Dan B. Lane**
- W. Grand Standard Bearer Leslie G. Metcalf, Jr.**
- W. Grand Sword Bearer Shawn R. Winpigler, Sr.**
- W. Grand Pursuivant John B. Rogalski, Jr.**
- W. Grand Dir. of Ceremonies Ronald A. Hill, Sr.**
- Aide to Grand Master Thomas A. Keller**
- Aide to Grand Master Charles W. Winkler**
- W. Grand Tyler Gregory B. Hudnet**
- W. Asst. Grand Tyler Mark E. Hartz**
- 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**

Deadlines for submitting articles & information for publication in the *Free State Freemason*: **the 1st day of March (Spring), June (Summer), September (Fall), and December (Winter).**

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@glmd.org

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

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: gballroom@glmd.org, Fax 410-316-9410

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 experience 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. (*Motorcycle tags are not available*)

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.

Call Ray Vogel at the Grand Lodge at 410-527-0600 to make arrangements for yours.

FSFM HUNT

Help us complete our collection

The Grand Lodge is missing a few issues of the *Free State Freemason* and we need your help in recovering them! If you have any of these issues, please contact the Grand Lodge office:

[Volume 4, Number 1](#)

[Volume 11, Number 3 \(Fall 1988\)](#)

[Volume 16, Number 3 \(Fall 1993\)](#)

[Volume 17, Number 2 \(Spring 1994\)](#)

[Volume 17, Number 3 \(Summer 1994\)](#)

[Volume 17, Number 4 \(Fall 1994\)](#)

[Volume 18 \(Spring, Summer, Fall 1995\)](#)

[Volume 19, No. 3 \(Fall 1996\)](#)

[Winter 1999 & Fall 2001](#)

Completion of our collection will help us preserve our history, and will also allow our future Brethren to share in our wonderful heritage!

Contact Jason at 410-527-0600 or at fsfm@glmd.org if you can help.

A SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Brother John W. Hooks of Mt. Moriah Lodge No. 116, and Brother Carl W. Todd of Centennial Lodge No. 174 for their overwhelming response to the *Free State Freemason Hunt*!

Bro. Hooks donated his entire collection which dated from 1981 to 2003.

Bro. Todd donated his collection which included the very first issue of the *Free State Freemason* - Volume 1, Issue 1, March 1977!

Thank you both for your outstanding efforts in helping recover a part of the History of Maryland Masonry!



The first issue of the Free State Freemason was released as a 5x6 "Newsletter" and did not adopt its current name until the September issue in 1977

Free State Freemason E-Newsletter

The *Free State Freemason* is taking another step in moving Freemasonry forward. The publication can now be delivered right to your email!



The Newsletter will come as a PDF attachment every quarter.

For those brethren that are not online - **don't worry** - you will still get your copy mailed to you via USPS!

If you would like to begin receiving the *Free State Freemason* by email, send your name and email address to fsfm@glmd.org.

Be sure to specify that you want to begin receiving the e-newsletter so we can remove your name from the mailing list!

To Maryland Masonic Homes

There are no words to adequately convey the thankfulness in my heart to all the wonderful people at Maryland Masonic Homes, including every single person who works inside your beautiful walls, for the care you gave my mother, Ethyl Mae Norr.

My father and mother, each a long-time Mason and Sister, first brought me to Bonnie Blink over sixty years ago and I remember how lovely and peaceful it always seemed. Little did I realize that it would play such a big part in my mother's final years. Mother's five years as a resident at Maryland Masonic Homes was a true blessing for her. The kindness and caring she received encouraged her to trustfully open her heart to everyone around her. She became more confident in the peacefulness of being cared for. Many, many times, without being prompted, Mother would openly reflect on how content and happy she was living at Bonnie Blink and how wonderful all the people were. "Really Nice people," she would say. I never once heard a complaint from Mother.

During those five years of my Mother's residence, my husband and I visited mostly every four or five days. Each time I entered those two front doors I knew that waiting for me was assurance and comfort. I never heard an unkind or sharp word spoken by anyone at Bonnie Blink. What I did hear was a deep concern for the residents and compassion for the families. There were many times when I was sad or dismayed and had only to lift my eyes and I was instantly noticed and comforted. I tell all you girls that your hugs were mightily appreciated and helped me hold together in difficult times. I have never personally witnessed such deep strength and dedication as I did from all of Mother's caregivers. Special thanks to you all. And to all the friends that Mother gathered to her from the Staff that would stop by and chat. I like to think that Mother went from your 'angel arms' to the arms of angels in Heaven.

You all surely have God's blessings.

So sincerely, June Powell

Letter to Grand Master

Words cannot express the gratitude and appreciation I have for the Masonic Charities of Maryland. Thank you very much for choosing me to be the recipient of the C. David Haacke Memorial Scholarship. Your support means a lot to my family and me. The awards banquet was wonderful and I enjoyed the tour of the magnificent Grand Lodge. When my name was called to stage, I thought wow- they just said my name. I realize that the goal of a Mason is like mine- dedicating our lives to make our community a better place. Thanks to you, my expenses at University of Maryland will be merely to none. I have already begun my college experience at UMD's Six Week Summer Transitional Program and love every minute of it. In the fall, I will be very prepared for college life. Your contribution towards my education will help greatly with my future endeavors. I look forward to achieving my goals at University of Maryland College Park. Thank you again for all your support!

Sincerely, Ryan Willis Snow

MD CHIP - a PR Homerun!

Collington Lodge No. 230 jumped into the Maryland Child Identification Program ("CHIP") with both feet and their debut event was a resounding success!

On Saturday June 7th, Collington Lodge No. 230 publicly unveiled the Maryland Child Identification Program (MDCHIP) at Bowiefest. Collington's machine and one on loan from the Grand Lodge worked continuously from 11 am until 6:30 pm. During this time, we processed ninety-five children. Added to the five children we processed during our training session weeks before - We have now processed our first 100!

In addition, they handed out over 30 Rain Checks for families to bring their children to the Lodge on Saturday, June 21 to go through the CHIP process.

So, how is this deemed a success? Let's take a look ...

-ID records on over 100 children have been developed (Collington held a training session at the Lodge a few weeks before Bowiefest to get familiar with operating the CHIP system and 5 of their children were test cases. All successful, too.)

-Thirty or more families will visit the Lodge on June 21. A Masonic information table will be staffed and supplied (refreshments and brochures).

-The Masons and their families had the opportunity to interface directly with 100+ families at Bowiefest - demonstrating and discussing Masonic principles.

-This event was heavily advertised by the City of Bowie event organizers (no cost to the Lodge), who were excited to have the CHIP booth offered at festivities. The City gave MD CHIP a prime spot in several of the advertising media.

-Several organizations, including the City of Bowie Police Department, approached Worshipful Master Ray Denmark at Bowiefest to request the MD CHIP presence at their specific events.

Collington's investment in the MD CHIP program is certainly a public relations home run. The Lodge's dedication and the public's interest make CHIP a grand slam for the community, the Lodge and Maryland Masonry.

How do I know? I was there. Families were lined up at the CHIP booth before Bowiefest opened at 11 :00 past the 6:00 closing time. With the cooperation of the Grand Lodge loaning a 2nd CHIP machine and a height chart, and the efforts of 10 people all day long (in 90 degree heat), the families of 95 children can rest a little easier now... thanks to the Masons. That's spreading some serious Light!

Collington received numerous positive

comments and feed back with regard to the programs importance and in one case, shock that we were providing the service "Free of Charge." We were also approached by one non-profit group interested in hosting a MDCHIP event.

Finally, let's not forget our annual sales of cotton candy, popcorn and drinks to benefit the C. Elizabeth Reig School here in Bowie. Unfortunately sales were off this year. Certainly the weather had a lot to do with that. However, we did have sales just short of \$400.

All of this could not be possible without the involvement of membership and their families. Thank you to all who participated at this event. A special thanks also goes out to several brothers and their families from St. Albans Universal Lodge who spent hours working the computers and processing children.

Public Relations Committee continues to endorse the MD CHIP program as a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate Masonic principles, give something back to the community in a very visible way and involve many of your members and their families. If we can help your Lodge, please contact us.



Blue Lodge Wall Hanging

The wall hanging is 27" wide by 36" long. It is made of 100% US Cotton, and it has 380 picks per square inch to give it the beautiful colors and the detail. The wall hanging is made of upholstery material and has a sewn liner on the back. It is dry clean only. The cost of the wall hanging is \$49.95, which includes a donation of \$7.00 to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation and shipping costs and insurance.

If interested, please send a check or money order to:

Sandra D. Knotts
P.O. Box 158
Trexleron, PA 18087

Patapsco Lodge No. 183 Heritage Fair Weekend

Every year for the past 33 years the Heritage Fair has taken place in Dundalk, MD. It takes place over July 4th weekend and is a huge part of the culture of our community. Many masons from Patapsco Lodge are involved in planning, setting up, and running the yearly activity. For many years we have poured beer in the beer garden as a fundraiser for the lodge and for the Acacia Club which is a social club for many members from Patapsco Lodge. It was time for Patapsco Lodge to add another job to their list for the Heritage Fair in 2008.

This year we decided to jump right in to the Grand Lodge CHIP program and make Child Identification kits for members from our community. We borrowed three Child ID units from the Grand Lodge in order to process as many children as we could. Over 30,000 people attend the three day event so we had no way of knowing how many children would request us to make IDs for them. The Dundalk Eagle, which is our local paper made mention we would be at the fair producing the ID kits for free at the event. We also did our best to let parents of children in our community know we would be at the fair.

Over the weekend we produced over 345 ID kits for children and worked from 8 – 10 hours per day the entire weekend. We also made several senior ids for members of our community with Alzheimer's disease. It was a huge success for the fair and the publicity our Lodge and the Grand Lodge received from the event was tremendous. We received several petitions directly related to our producing the ID kits free of charge for the community.

Many of the parents commented how nice our kits were compared to what they had paid for through their school. It was a lot of hard work and very challenging since it was our first time working with the Child ID computers. However, I think all volunteers agreed it was a worthwhile event and look forward to setting up our stand at the fair again next year. The units are very easy to use and the program is a great way to reach out to your local community.



Above is a picture from our event with some of our volunteers. From right to left Nicholas Di Domenico, Christopher Boggs, Kenneth Langston, WM and his wife Jessica Langston, Douglas Nodonly, PM, Gloria Shannon, and Frank Shannon.



On Saturday, August 16, 2008, Illustrious Potentate of Boumi Shrine, Charles W. Needer, Jr. proudly placed a Masonic ring on the finger of his son Ryan Needer upon the occasion of Ryan being raised to the degree of Master Mason in Concordia Lodge No. 13. The ring belonged to Ryan's Great-Grandfather. Ryan was raised by the Most Worshipful Grand Master John R. Biggs, Jr. and the 2008 Grand Line Officers.



Introducing Retirement Living at Maryland Masonic Homes Stacey Sedesse Admissions Coordinator



Many people identify the Maryland Masonic Homes with quality care for aging seniors in a warm and dignified environment. While that in fact is true, there is another side as well. We are an active, vibrant community where residents enjoy many gratifying experiences. Retirement Living is a lifestyle which affords individuals the opportunity to utilize their time exploring new interests, meeting new friends, and trying new things. Instead of spending these years maintaining a house, cooking, cleaning and mowing the yard, you could be pursuing new hobbies and experiences which you would not otherwise have the time to do.

Residents of the Maryland Masonic Homes, can take it easy and relax knowing that their future is secure and care and services are available. Without the stress of planning for all of life's "what-ifs," residents spend their time with fellow brothers, sisters, friends and family.

Retirement Living also means retaining independence while pursuing new endeavors. Our variety of living styles assures that you are in control of your future. Therefore, we invite you to come and see all that the Maryland Masonic Homes has to offer. We may just surprise you.

Please call Stacey Sedesse at (410) 527-1111 to schedule a tour today!

York Rite of Maryland

Baltimore to New England and Canada
Friday, June 19 – Saturday, June 27, 2009

Ports of Call include:
Rockland, Maine
St. John, New Brunswick
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Bar Harbor, Maine
Boston, Massachusetts

Rates begin at \$ 1,144.00
(includes taxes, fuel surcharge, insurance)

Final Payment due by March 31, 2009

For More Information Contact:

Florence Littleton 410-529-3553
(Cruise Lady Travel Agent)

or

Richard Naegele 410-665-5947

richardnaegele229@hotmail.com

Hiram Lodge No. 103 Special Presentation

Hiram Lodge No. 103 A.F. & A.M. Westernport, Maryland honored member Robert Rizer at the Lodge's Annual Strawberry Night June 17, 2008.



Worshipful Master Robert Wiltison presented Brother Rizer with a masonic embellished jacket and a plaque in appreciation of work done on the history of our Lodge and for receiving his G.E.D. recently. Brother Rizer is 84 years young, what an accomplishment!

Grand Lodge Pavilion

Brethren,

Our old pavilion on the front of our Grand Lodge grounds has been removed – it was in dire need of a new roof and other maintenance. Our Boards of Managers and Trustees decided to replace it with a new pavilion that will provide more than four times the seating capacity of the old one.



It will be available for rental use as well as for Grand Lodge functions. It should come in quite handy for the 4th of July celebration, and will be equipped with a new grill.

Salisbury Dedication

On August 23rd, at 10 am. the Salisbury Fire Department held a formal dedication ceremony of their new Fire Station 16 and Fire Headquarters facilities located at 325 Cypress Street. A welcome address from Mayor Barrie Parsons Tilghman, and remarks from Chief David B. See were made, along with introductions. The keynote speaker for the ceremony was Mr. Gregory Cade, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Assistant Administrator for the U.S. Fire Administration. Following this, the two Grand Lines assembled, and processed to the location of the Cornerstone.



M.W. Brother John R. Biggs, Grand Master of the M.W. Grand Lodge of Maryland, A.F. & A.M. and M.W. Brother Shelton D. Redden, Grand Master of the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Maryland with their respective Grand Lines, were invited to participate in a joint cornerstone ceremony for the new firehouse in Salisbury, Maryland. Our Cornerstone Ceremony was split between the two Grand Lines, which worked out very well, and was appreciated by those in attendance. Fire Chief, Bro. David See, a member of Hope Lodge in Laurel, Delaware, initiated the invitation, and was very pleased with the morning. Also in attendance were several members of the Grand Lodge of Delaware, including their Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Bro. Jim Willey.

This was a most historic occasion, in that it was the first public appearance where the two Grand Lodges participated jointly in a Masonic Ceremony. The cornerstone picture is included, and includes both Grand Lodges.



Pictured from the right: W. Bro. Bruce Tanner, J.G.D., M.W. Bro. John R. Biggs, Grand Master, M.W. Bro. Shelton Redden, PHGL Grand Master, and W. Bro. Robert Hill, S.G.D.

An open house immediately followed the ceremony. The open house featured demonstrations and static displays by the Salisbury

Fire Department Special Operations Team, light refreshments provided by the Salisbury Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary, and continuous tours for the duration of the event. The Maryland State Police "Convincer" were on hand for various demos.

National Sojourners Camp News

On the evening of September 17, 2008, several members of The National Sojourners, Inc., Baltimore Chapter No. 7 and Lafayette Camp, Heroes of '76, performed the Flag Building Ceremony at Mt. Moriah Lodge No. 116 located in Towson, Maryland. It was a very special evening for Brother John English, Senior Warden of No. 116, who assumed the East dressed in his Continental Army uniform. Brother John also serves as the Chapter Secretary and Camp Adjutant.

If your Lodge or Organization would like to have this ceremony performed at one of your functions, please contact Brother English at 410-665-4980.



Pictured L/R are Brothers: John S. Kinnier; Louis F. Bandell, Jr.; Oliver W. Strong, PP, PC; Oswald E. Kinat PP, PC; John R. English, SEC/ADJ; Howard E. Roe. COG; and Teddy R. Barkley, PP, CMDR.

Early Connections to Freemasonry



Robert I. Bruce (1274-1329) King and liberator of Scotland. Opposed to Edward I of England as King of Scotland in 1296 and fought against him in 1298, but adhered to him during invasion of 1302-04. He murdered John Comyn in 1306 and was crowned as Robert I, King of Scotland, at Scone in 1306.

In the same year he was defeated by the English and took refuge on the coast of Ireland, excommunicated and outlawed. He returned the following year and in two years wrested most of Scotland from the English, routing Edward II's army at Bannockburn in 1314.

He repulsed the English time after time until Edward III recognized the independence of Scotland and Bruce's right to rule by the treaty of 1328 at Northampton. He died of leprosy.

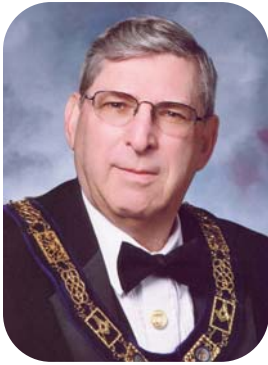
He is traditionally said to have introduced Freemasonry into Scotland and in 1314 established the Order of Heredom for the reception of those Knights Templar who had taken refuge in his dominions from the persecutions of the Pope and King of France.

As part of a combined order, he is said to have established the Royal Order of Scotland at the Battle of Bannockburn in recognition of the Freemasons who helped him defeat the English. His descendant, Lord Elgin, is present head of the Royal Order of Scotland and the possessor of the great sword of Robert I. Bruce.



The dedication at the Salisbury Fire Department was presided over by both the Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Maryland and the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Maryland. Above, from Left to Right are: R.W. Deputy Grand Master Thomas H. Wise, Jr., M.W. Grand Master Jack Biggs, M.W. Grand Master Shelton D. Redden, and R.W. Deputy Grand Master Thomas M. Velvin, Jr.

From the Deputy



Brethren,

The lengthening shadows in the late afternoon are signaling the end of Summer and the beginning of Fall, an event that has occurred every year since the dawn of time. It also signals a return to labor for our Lodges that have been dark over the past

two months, although in many cases the brethren have continued to be busy with degree work, CHIP events, and family gatherings for picnics.

The Grand Lodge Officers have been busy as well. These past two months have seen the Grand Line busy raising several new Master Masons, dedicating a new fire house in Salisbury and a new library in Thurmont, in addition to the normal summer schools and other activities that occur every summer.

As we move into the Fall, there is much to be done. There are several CHIP events scheduled around the jurisdiction which I hope everyone will be willing to pitch in and help with. This program has taken off in a way that we could not have envisioned a year ago when Grand Master Biggs decided that we should become involved. The future direction lies in the hands of you, the Brothers, who have gotten involved and made it a part of your Lodge's work. We recently held a training session for those of you who are involved in planning a CHIP event as well as those who do the actual work at events. We are planning to have another training session early in 2009 so please watch the Grand Lodge Calendar and plan to attend because there will be new topics and information to be shared.

For me, this is an exciting time to be a Mason in Maryland. I watch the membership numbers frequently, and am happy to see a steady flow of new petitions and new Master Masons. This tells me we are turning the corner and growing in numbers once again. We have not reached the point yet where these new members are ready to fill chairs in the Lodge, or be elected to serve as Worshipful Master, but, that day will come. First, we must make sure we allow these new men to become comfortable within their Lodge, to learn who their fellow members are, and to learn how to function as a member of their Lodge.

It is important that we, the men who have occupied both the Officers chairs and the side-lines, make these new men feel welcome, wanted and able to contribute to the Lodge. We must make sure we don't offer them a seat on the side-lines the evening they are raised, then, forget who and where they are, because it won't be long before they are no longer there.

We must remember that many of these new members may not have a desire, or the time, to take on the responsibility that goes with becoming an appointed, or elected officer within the Lodge. It may be that these Brothers would be happy and willing to contribute their time to the Lodge's involvement in the CHIP program, a Lodge sponsored scout troop, the Demolay, Jobs Daughters, or Rainbow, or other activities of the Lodge. It is up to us to find meaningful work for

our new members and to make them feel at home within their Lodge.

As my time as Deputy Grand Master comes to a close and my level of responsibility steps up to the next level, I must express my gratitude for the support that I have received from every one of you; especially to Grand Master Biggs for being a willing advisor and teacher over the past two years. I have learned much and will do my best to apply that knowledge as I take on the responsibility that will be given to me on November 15th. I know that with the friendship and support that I have received, the Grand Lodge of Maryland will thrive in the coming years.

Fraternally,

Tom Velvin

Deputy Grand Master

MARYLAND RAINBOW GIRLS PLACE IN NATIONAL EVENT

Rainbow Girls from across Maryland, recently attended the Supreme Assembly in Chicago, ILL. Maryland members participated in the Ritualistic Competition and placed second of seven teams competing.



Pictured left to right, are Geena Kile, Past Grand Worthy Advisor/coach, Cumberland No 6; Mary Adeline Bradford, Supreme Charity, Supreme Inspector of Maryland; Jackie Baker, Past Grand Worthy Advisor/coach, Cumberland; Marie Gruwell, Salisbury No 5; Shauna McKenzie, Cumberland; Sarah Hanlin, Oakland No 8; Alora Taylor, Oakland; Samantha Keane, Laurel No 13; Samantha Gordon, Hope No 12; Alyna Raynovich, Oakland; Julianna Sharpless, Oakland; Laura Kraul, Salisbury; and Kristi Johnson, Laurel.

This is the first time Maryland has competed in this competition. International Order of Rainbow for Girls IORG, is a youth organization for girls between the ages of 11 and 20. Pledge sisters between the age of 6 and 10. For more information, persons may visit GoRainbow.org, or call Sheree Witt at 301-729-3022, Linda Youse 302-349-5742 or Debbie Raynovich 301-387-4545.

In Rainbow Service,
Dora Hanlin, Oakland #8

Bermuda

Everyone attending the Grand Master's cruise to Bermuda in late June enjoyed an extremely nice trip. It was particularly nice to leave from Baltimore, taking away the aggravation of flying or long drives. It was also enjoyable that our ship stayed in the port of St. George's for the entire time we were on the island. Beautiful weather, and extremely friendly people greeted us during our entire stay in Bermuda. We arrived on Monday afternoon, and were free to wander this beautiful island the rest of the day, and many took

various tours during the day.

On Tuesday evening we were treated to a visit to Hannibal Lodge, of the Irish constitution, and greeted warmly by the officers, members, and the provincial Grand Master. Lodge was opened and we enjoyed watching an Irish Master Mason Degree, followed by a delicious dinner in the Lodge dining hall.



Wednesday we were to visit Lodge St. George, but due the size of the Lodge, and the number of brethren anticipated attending, the meeting was moved to Hannibal Lodge, a larger facility. Many of us did visit Lodge St. George, which is open every afternoon by the Grand Superintendent, Les Center. Les gives a history of Bermuda and Lodge St. George to tourist who choose to stop by. Thus, if you are ever fortunate to visit this charming island, make sure you stop in and see Les in the afternoon – he will be most happy to see you.

In Hannibal Lodge's building we were greeted by the officers of Lodge St. George, and Lodge St. George was opened. They operate under the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and their head officer on the island is the Grand Superintendent, which is the equivalent of a Provincial Grand Master. Once the Lodge was opened, the officers turned their stations over the Grand Master Jack Biggs, who assumed the East, and called the Grand Lodge officers who were to participate in the exemplifying of the Maryland Master Mason Degree to take their stations and places.

A Maryland Master Mason Degree was then exemplified using two Bermudan Brothers as candidates. Our Brothers from Hannibal Lodge and Lodge St. George were very impressed with our Degree, and the manner in which it was conferred, and a great time was had by all.



About ten Brothers from Bermuda will be visiting us in November for the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge of Maryland, and include most of the officers of Hannibal Lodge, the Provincial Grand Master, St. Clair Tucker, and the Grand Superintendent, Les Center.

Many of the Maryland brethren had taken a number of cruises in the past to various islands in the Caribbean, and all agreed that Bermuda has them all beaten. The island is without a doubt clean as could be, and the residents, as friendly as could be.

And, being a retired State Trooper, this Grand Master is always quick to greet members of his other favorite fraternity, being that of law enforcement.



Thanks to Bro. Hans Wilhelmsen, SGIG, he and the Grand Master were able to visit and tour the Ship's Bridge. For those who have never seen the workings of these huge cruise ships, the intricacies and equipment involved in navigating them is most interesting. Steering is done by joy sticks – no longer by those huge wheels. Next to the Grand Master is the Captain, and his first officer is on the left side of Bro. Hans.



The Maryland Masonic Homes welcomes you to join in the celebration of 75 Years of serving the Masonic Retirement Community.

Details on the Anniversary Banquet will be included in the next issue of the Free State Freemason.

Vette Square Club

As you probably already know, Grand Master Jack Biggs placed an article in the July issue of the Free State Freemason regarding the formation of a Corvette Club – suffice it to say, thirty five Brothers responded to this article, and have already had their first outing.



Brother Don Chaney volunteered to be the point-man for future events, and set up their first gathering on a pretty Sunday in August. This was in the form of a "Meet & Greet" on the Grand Lodge parking lot at 1:30 p.m., and after socializing for an hour, the Grand Master led nineteen Corvettes up I-83 to the Friendly Farms restaurant for dinner at 3 p.m. This club will also be well represented at Harvest Homes Day, and hopefully involved in upcoming parades and other events.



Our Grand Tyler, Bro. Greg Hudnet felt he was missing out on too much fun, and found a pristine 1987 Corvette coupe for \$5,000. Bill Dula had contacted the Grand Master, saying a friend of his had a nice Corvette for sale, Greg was made aware of it, quickly met with Bill, who escorted him to his friend's home, where Greg quickly finalized the deal, and drove it home – he is now the latest member of the group, bringing it to 36 members. The car was garaged since new, and a one owner vehicle – suffice it to say, Greg is very pleased with the deal.

Brother Gene Purkey is working on a design that will include a Corvette and a Square & Compass (naturally) that will be embroidered on a nice looking maroon golf shirt.

If you have a Corvette, and missed the first article, and would like to sign up for this new Masonic club, send the Grand Master an email to mwgm0708@glmd.org or to his home address – k3sp@comcast.net and he will contact you, and place you on their email list. If you don't have one, you don't know what you are missing.

As most all of these Brothers also belong to other Corvette clubs that do not have a Masonic affiliation, this is one more way to advertise our great fraternity.

Presentation



While attending Aberdeen Lodge No. 187 for the purpose of a fraternal visit, and the conferral of the Master Mason Degree on a new Brother, the Grand Master was presented with this beautiful lawn chair. The graphic is weaved into the fabric of the chair, and demonstrates some very nice craftsmanship. Suffice it to say, the Grand Master was most pleased and appreciative. The chair now proudly rests in his sunroom.

World War I Veteran Celebrated

Grand Master Jack Biggs was invited by the Sovereign Grand Commander, Brother Ron Seale, of the Southern Jurisdiction of the A.A.S.R., to attend a special meeting of the Supreme Council on September 24. The purpose of this special meeting was the investing of Brother Buckles with the Rank and Honor of Knight Commander Court of Honor.



Brother Buckles, pictured with our Grand Master Jack Biggs, is 107 years old, and to our knowledge, the only surviving veteran and Mason, of the First World War.

Brother Buckles, a West Virginia Mason, at 107 years young, and born in 1899, has certainly seen and lived the many changes to our country and to our world over the past century.

Honoring Bro. Ray Leppo

Brother Ray Leppo is joined by many friends and Brothers to celebrate his 80th birthday, and 56 years in the fraternity. Our S.G.I.G. dedicated the dining hall to Ray, and had a plaque to be installed there to commemorate the occasion.



From the left: Tom Velvin, D.G.M.; Jack Biggs, M.W.G.M.; Marlin Mills, Aide to S.G.I.G.; Herb Holcomb, R.W.G.S.; Ray Leppo, Personal Representative to S.G.I.G. and Hans Wilhelmsen, S.G.I.G.

**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Maryland Masonic Homes**

Paula O'Neill:



Greetings from the Hill! We are entering the fourth quarter of the year and the residents and staff at Bonnie Blink are looking toward a festive holiday season. With each passing month we pause to remember those who joined our family and reflect on the many special gifts that each has left.

Our Homes has been going through a transformation, inside and out, with equipment upgrades and replacements, 'face lift' improvements such as new carpeting and lighting and a much needed revitalization of the grounds with new flowers and tree plantings. The pace has not slowed and we anticipate a busy Fall and Winter.

My plea for monetary assistance was warmly received and a generous donation was made by Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Stephens and family to purchase two benches for the second floor Health Care unit. Special thanks also to M/M Darren Jones and M/M Carl Baker for their donations towards this purchase. We THANK YOU for your support!

In this edition, I again ask for your generous support. We are seeking to replace the two bikes we have in our physical therapy area that are over 10 years old with a NuStep Recumbent Cross Trainer. This type of bike focuses on ease of access and use for the resident with limited physical ability and range of movement. The cost is \$3,495. If anyone is interested in receiving additional information or making a contribution, please contact Paula O'Neill, 300 International Circle, Cockeysville, MD 21030, 410-527-1111, ext. 3240.

In June 2008, our Dietary Department was chosen by the Baltimore County Health Department to participate in a Food and Drug Administration 'survey.' This training exercise assists the Office of Food Protection and Consumer Health Services to bring uniformity among Federal, State and County food program personnel in conducting inspections and aid in improving communication between regulatory personnel and food service personnel. We received a 95% positive rating and accolades for the professionalism and dedication displayed by our Dietary staff. Congratulations to Food Service Director Patrice Goham, Assistant JoAnn Price-Troxel and their staff!

On May 1, 2009 we will be celebrating Maryland Masonic Homes 75th Anniversary. Please mark the date on your calendar!

On behalf of the residents and staff we wish to thank Most Worshipful Grand Master Biggs for his support the past 2 years and we extend many blessings to him and Mrs. Pat Biggs as the term ends. It has been a pleasure to work with you sir as you have aided us with enhancing and growing our community.

Remember we have many volunteer opportunities. Contact Dave Sevinsky, Recreation Director to find out how you can help.

Hugs!



Living Past Grand Masters on November 18, 1989

Left to Right, Front Row: Charles H. Cover (1957-1958), A. Wayne Reed (1959-1960), Ernest L. Poyner (1963-1964), Edward R. Saunders (1965-1966), William B. Stansbury, Jr. (1969-1970), John R. Fogle (1971-1972). Back Row: J. Thomas Middleton (1975-1976), Roy H. Stetler, Jr. (1977-1978), William M. Koenig (1979-1980), B. Hope Harrison (1989-1990), Bernard E. Rothman (1981-1982), Harvey T. Hopkins (1983-1984), Joseph C. Bryan (1987-1988). Not Pictured: C. David Haacke (1985-1986)



Grand Master Jack Biggs enjoyed spending the day at the Shriner's Children Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri while there for the Imperial Shrine Convention. Pictured Above: Most Worshipful Grand Master John R. Biggs, Jr. and Most Worshipful Grand Master Douglas Tucker, Grand Master from the State of Washington.



Grand Master Jack Biggs enjoyed throwing the 1st ceremonial pitch at the Bowie Baysox game in July of this year. He was very pleased the ball made it to home plate, unlike a previous Grand Master, who only managed to dribble the ball a few feet past the pitchers mound.

