

May 2006

2006 Grand Line Officers

M.W. Grand Master - Ronald G. Bélanger R.W. D.G..M. - John R. Biggs, Jr.

R.W. Sr. Grand Warden - Stephen J. Ponzillo, III

R.W. Jr. Grand Warden - Carl W. Todd

R.W. Grand Secretary - Herbert Y. Holcomb, III

R.W. Grand Treasurer - Wm. Raymond Bosley

R.W. Grand Marshal - Harold A. Garren

W. Grand Chaplain - Donald C. Stottlemyer

W. Asst. Grand Chaplain - Elwood L. Ulmer

W. Asst. Grand Chaplain - Richard C. Oursler

W. Sr. Grand Deacon - Jay W. Hodges

W. Jr. Grand Deacon - Kerry P. Collins

W. Sr. Grand Steward - Jeffrey L. Schuster

W. Jr. Grand Steward - Paul C. Cornelius, Jr.

W. Grand Standard Bearer - C. Denning Wiggins

W. Grand Sword Bearer - G. Steven Shlagel

W. Grand Pursuivant - William E. Gyr

W. Grand Dir. of Ceremonies - Arthur R. Dickerson

W. Grand Tyler - Melvin E. Harrison

W. Asst. Grand Tyler - Richard H. Uren

W. Grand Lecturer - David L. Schneider

W. Grand Organist - Ronald L. Unger

W. Asst Grand Organist - Kenneth C. Mars

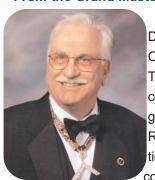
R.W Grand Secretary Emeritus - Jack R. Frazier

W. Grand Lecturer Emeritus - Edward B. Kraft

The Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons of Maryland

MOVING ALONG

From the Grand Master:



My Brethren: As I write this message the Deputy Grand Master and I are fresh from the Conference of Grand Masters of North America. The time spent sharing thoughts and ideas with contemporaries about the various Masonic topics germane to our fraternity are always well spent. Regardless of the size of the individual jurisdictions, the problems are usually the same. They concern membership, education, and jurispru-

dence. What is most surprising are the various methods different jurisdictions employ to combat what is usually at the root of each of these challenges, apathy! I want to remind each of you, at the last Annual Communication of your Grand Lodge twenty one Lodges did not attend. That my Brethren, means 42 votes that should have been cast concerning business that came before your Grand Lodge were absent from the floor. This May we have more business to discuss and needless to say the Annual Communication in November will elect officers who will govern this Grand Lodge. I would suggest each Lodge attend and take part in what is, after all, the future of your Grand Lodge.

On a more positive note, the watch program has been a total success. This is due to the wonderful response by the Craft. To date we have raised well over \$31,000 dollars for the John Coats Memorial Fund and we're still receiving donations. I thank each and every one of you who have participated in this effort for your generous response.

Our regional meetings have been well received and the conversation concerning the Grand Lodge Trial Commission has been lively and very informative. I have listened to each of your concerns and ideas and feel there is enough interest to proceed with the concept. I will therefore place before the Craft in May an amendment to the Constitution establishing this commission and we shall vote on the same in November.

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Deadlines for submitting articles & information for publication in the Freestate Freemason: the 20th of January. March, May, July, September, November. These dates are firm as the issue must be formatted and given to the AASR the last day of these months.

Grand Lodge of Maryland 304 International Circle Cockeysville, MD 21030 410-527-0600 tel 410-527-1276 fax FSFM@covad.net

http://freemasonry.org/maryland/gl

Article Submission

These points should be followed for articles submitted for inclusion in the FSFM:

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 return on the pictures they must have submitting individual's name on 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

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: 8:00 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.

2 Free State Freemason



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The Land Lease project is, as of this writing, still in limbo. There will be a full accounting of this project at the Semi-Annual in May to be held on the 13th at 10:00 a.m. in the Grand Master's Report. Our development partners, The Shelter Group, and the Grand Lodge have been patient and persistent in trying to accommodate the County Commissioner, Mr. Smith and one of his minions, Mr. Ianucci. Much to our disappointment, all of our efforts have been to no avail. Unless there is some considerable change and movement on the part of the county, I fear our project may be at an unfortunate end. Not only does the Grand Lodge lose a source of revenue for many years to come, the county of Baltimore loses a considerable tax income from the project as well. We have done our best for our Grand Lodge.

Finally, let me encourage each of our Lodges to get out into the community and make your presence known. There is, for whatever reason, a renewed interest in our Fraternity and we have a window of opportunity presented to us that we must not ignore. Schedule an "Open House" or a "Get to Know Masonry" meeting and open your doors to the beauty of our Craft. I look forward to visiting with as many of you as possible this spring and let's all be about promoting this wonderful organization we call "Freemasonry." Onward my Brethren, let us be ever Onward!

Fraternally,
Ronald G. Belanger
Grand Master

From the Deputy

Brethren,



I recently spent a couple of days in the hospital for the extraction of a nasty gall

bladder. While there I contacted a virus as well, and I quickly found out that coughing and sneezing weren't at all compatible with 4 incisions in the tummy. That is now behind me and I am back at the office. I do appreciate the many phone calls and cards sent me by many of you – it really is a bright spot in the day when you aren't particularly feeling all that great.

One of the things I spoke of during the Regional meetings I did attend was the need for us to be more attentive to mentoring the new candidate. I am not speaking of the short period we mentor someone while he is taking part in a One Day Class, or the mentoring he gets while learning catechism rather, I am speaking of the need to practice mentoring on a regular basis for 6 months to a year following the candidate's Master Mason catechism completion. Often I have seen a new member come to Lodge, left to sit by himself and not made to feel a part of the group. How long do you think he will continue to attend?

Each Lodge should assign knowledgeable and out-going Brothers, willing to spend time with

the new candidate, teach him the things needed to function in Lodge, such as how to move around in Lodge, how to be recognized, etc. This is basic information, but so often is not appropriately passed on.

We have taken steps to move the fraternity into the age of technology - web sites have the potential to expose the fraternity to the world. I presently answer about a dozen emails a week requesting information on the fraternity, and how to pursue membership. Does your Lodge have a web page? They are not expensive if it is placed on the Grand Lodge's web server – if our annual cost is \$300 a year, and we have ten Lodges with web sites, the cost is \$30 a year to each individual Lodge. Twenty Lodges on line brings the cost to \$15 a year. These are approximate figures, but points out the fact that this is a very inexpensive way to advertise your Lodge and its activities. If your Lodge doesn't have a web site but has the desire to start one, contact Tom Velvin, one of our webmasters. Tom will be happy to assist you in this endeavor.

The new Grand Lodge Listserv is available to every Mason, and every Masonic organization in Maryland. It is simple to activate your account.

New School of Instruction

The Grand Lodge has started a new School of Instruction. The school is for any Master Mason

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interested in attending. We would particularly invite and encourage Officers. Ritualist Instructors to attend. The school is scheduled for the third Monday of each month, February through November (no session in June, July or August). The starting time is 7 P.M. sharp. Depending on the crowd and room availability we will meet in the Grand Lodge Room. We will have several Deputy Grand Lecturers in attendance to answer any question you may have about our ritual and other ritual programs. We had our first meeting on February 20 and had nine lodges represented with over 30 in attendance. Each lodge is encouraged to take advantage of this new approach with this new school.

If you have any question please call Dave Schneider, Grand Lecturer at 410-247-4039

Grand Conclave

This year's Grand Conclave will convene at 9 a.m. on Saturday, May 27, at Freemasons' Hall in Cockeysville. Our hospitality room will be in the Hampton Inn, York Road (about ¼ mile south of Shawan Road).

The first official event will be a leisurely Friday dinner at the near-by Friendly Farms Restaurant at 6:45 p.m. The Grand Commandery banquet will be a catered dinner at Java Bay, a private dining room in the executive office complex off McCormick Road. On Sunday, May 28, we will meet in the Masonic

Home's dining room for breakfast and follow it up with our farewell religious service in the beautiful chapel there at Bonnie Blink.

Registration forms have been mailed to each Recorder and are available through him or Grand Recorder S. K. William Colburn.

Temple Committee

Time for an update on the ongoing happenings of the committee. First of all, all meeting rooms now have MASTERS CARPETS! A much needed addition. We took some pictures of the presentation of them to Washington Lodge No. 3.



The next big project is in the "Pool Room!" The back pool table has been sold. As soon as it is removed we plan to create another room by putting up a wall with a door, just beyond the front pool table. In this new room, we will place a conference table with chairs, so that lodges can hold meetings (i.e. committee meetings, Past Masters meetings etc.) instead of having to sit in the Common Room. There will be enough room at the end of the new "conference room" for an instruction area for teaching catechism.

Also, we intend to clean up the MAIL BOX AREA. We hope to place a ledge or table below the mail boxes whereupon correspondence can be placed to make it easier when distributing material to the boxes.

There are plans for the future to replace or reupholster some of the Master's and Warden's chairs in the meeting rooms.

Also, the Common Room is on our list to be beautified. To make it look warmer and more comfortable.

Last but not least, the ice machine is in place, but not ready. There is a delay in creating drainage for it, but just as soon as it is operable you will be notified. So for the time being, continue to order ice as you have been.

(Left: Bro. Pat Green, Chairman of the Temple Committee, displays one of the new Master's carpets added to the meeting rooms.)

Honorary Past Master

In November 2005, Temple Lodge No. 128 held an Open Affair for family and friends for the purpose of Making Brother Daniel Crouse an Honorary Past Master. Brother Crouse has been in line twice but had to drop out because of the health of his daughter and then himself

There were 72 family and friends present, and with this many people knowing no one divulged this affair to Brother Crouse. It was a great surprise to him and made a moment in his life he will never forget. Brother Francis Callahan presented (Continued on page 5)



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him with a Past Masters Certificate, Brother Richard Andrew Presented a Past Master apron and W.M. Robert Sparks presented a plaque and gavel.

Among some of the dignitaries present were P.G.M Bennie Owens, P.G.M John A Young and G. C. Jim Coker, after their introductions Brother Crouse said a few words on what Masonry means to him and the friendship and brotherly love that was shown on this night, and thanked every body for attending this special night for him.

There was singing by the Ames-Harmony Praise Team and all present were asked to join in the song that they knew after the songs, refreshments and plenty of fellowship were enjoyed by all.

Temple Lodge No. 128 First Table Lodge

On October 8 Temple Lodge No. 128 held their first Table Lodge and it was a sell out. W.M. Robert Sparks with the help of Brother Richard Andrew put the occasion together. This was the first time for a table lodge for many of the brethren. The ladies of the Eastern Star put on a very delicious meal.

The guest speaker of the evening was Governor William Donald Schafer our Comptroller for the State of Maryland. Everyone present enjoyed the presentation. Brother Schafer enjoyed the evening of fellowship with Brother Freemasons. After his speech he was presented with

a gift from the Temple Lodge No. 128 presented by Brother Christian Jensen also Brother Brian Gall of Centreville Lodge No. 180 presented a sketch of Brother Schafer and both were accepted with great pleasure.



After the guest speaker the Grand Master of Masons of Maryland gave a short talk. Among some of the dignitaries there were Brother Gerald Piepiora President of the Grand Inspectors and Brother Robert Trice, Past Grand Master of the State of Delaware.

Grand Commander's Message

Sir Knights:

Spring is in the air, and thanks to daylight savings, not only do we have the promise of lengthening days but most of us find we are imbued with new energy and renewed hope - hope for an Orioles winning season, hope that we can spend more quality time with our wives and kids in some beautiful vacation spot, hope that we can finish that outdoor home improvement project while the soft, bright days of spring and summer are with us. Let's make room on our list of hopes and

plans for the work of the Commandery. How we expend our energy and what use we make of those extra daylight hours is up to each of us. My hope is that we will all use some of these irreplaceable, priceless hours to preserve for posterity the beautiful Christian Orders conferred in the Commandery. Remember, practice makes perfect.

Would you use the minutes, hours and days of your life more wisely if you had to pay for them? We cannot put a price tag on the minutes and hours we possess. They are given to us freely by God as a gift of His grace. This makes them far more valuable than any monetary figure could suggest. Therefore, let's all take advantage of the opportunities time provides to serve.

This year, April is the occasion for the Christian world's most important religious observance. Beginning with Palm Sunday (the day Jesus was received by cries of "hosanna" as He entered Jerusalem), descending to the abject terror, violence and desolation of Good Friday and ending with our New Beginning in the celof ebration Easter. Resurrection makes us all whole. As Christian Knights, Easter is the time to re-examine our vows of Knighthood in the shadow of the Cross and resolve to serve our God, our communities and our fellows as did the Knights of old who are our exemplars.

> Fraternally yours in Christ, Jim Coker, G. C. of Maryland

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Boumi Shriners

Noble Glenn J. Daniel, Illustrious Potentate of Boumi Temple 2006 would like to invite Brother Masons to join with him in Shrinedom. The Shrine organization is an additional arm of the Masonic fraternity where brothers join for a single cause. The Shrine's official philanthropy is Shriners Hospitals for Children, a network of 22 hospitals that provide expert, no-cost orthopedic and burn care to children under 18.

For over 80 years, Shriner Hospitals for Children have provided some of the best medical care in the world, totally free of charge, to approximately 770,000 children with orthopedic problems, severe burns, and spinal cord injuries. If you know a child Shriners Hospitals might be able to help, call us tollfree at 1-800-237-5055.

Here at Boumi Temple Shrine, 5050 King Avenue White Marsh, we support the hospitals by the works from 17 Marching Units and 34 Clubs all joining in the spirit of fun and good fellowship. Since 1884. Boumi has been under the guidance of 89 Past Potentates and very proudly, PP Raoul L. Frevel, Sr. (1992) now an Imperial Past Potentate. There is a proud feeling of years of fraternal brotherhood here at Boumi. In our Clubs and Units we have a lot of color and diversity within them, wearing an apron serving the vast cornucopia of food after a business meeting to driving a Big-Rig (smaller version) in a parade. We have fun with people and have fun with each other; we are a fraternity with a cause.

Activities coming up: Spring Musical April 30, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.; and the Patio Party Dance May 27, 8 p.m. to Midnight (Platter).

For information about any activities or membership in Boumi Shrine, contact Noble P. Edward (Ed) Triplett, Recorder (410) 391-6400.

Evergreen No. 153 Renovates Temple

Evergreen Lodge No. 153 will hold its first meeting in its refurbished Temple on March 6, 2006, at which time a third generation Mason will be raised. A public dedication service will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday April 29, 2006. Main Street will be closed for the dedication service.

The service will be preceded and followed by an open house for all who wish to visit. Evergreen Lodge No. 153 meets on the first and third Monday of each month, October through June. encourage Masons throughout the State of Maryland to set aside one of those Monday nights to come and have fellowship with us.

GRAND LODGE SUMMER SCHOOL

This year our Grand Lodge Summer School will again be eight evenings. The schools will be held in the Grand Lodge Room, Cockeysville, Md. The schools will begin at 7:00 P.M. The dress code will be casual. Please no jeans, shorts or tank tops.

The three catechisms' will be given on the first evening. This will allow each lodge to bring their

INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE AND their RITUALIST to review all three catechisms' in one evening. Thereby saving them two nights of attending summer school.

There will be a special events evening on August 15th.

This year we will be SERVING REFRESHMENTS after school. Come and join in the fellowship and learning or refreshing yourselves with our ritual.

On the last evening certificates of attendance will be distributed. The schedule for this year is:

JULY 11 - 7 P.M. Grand Master's Lodge will open our School. The three Catechisms'

JULY 18 - 7pm - E.A. Degree

JULY 25 - 7pm - E.A. Degree

AUGUST 1- 7pm - F.C. Degree

AUGUST 8 - 7pm - F.C. Degree

AUGUST 15 - 7pm - Special Events evening

AUGUST 22 - 7pm - M.M. Degree

AUGUST 29 - 7pm - FINAL

EVENING -M.M. Degree and

Certificates

State Schools will be held at the following locations

July 6 - Hagerstown 217- 7:00pm -

M.M. Degree

July 13- Wicomico 91 - 7:00pm -

M.M. Degree

July 20 - Columbia 58 - 7:00pm -

F.C. Degree

July 27 - Cambridge 66 - 7:30pm -

M.M. Degree

August 3 - James W. Bowers 173 -

7:00pm - E.A. Degree

August 17 - Centerville 180 -

7:30pm - M.M. Degree

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August 24 -Potomac 100 7:00pm - M.M. Degree
Centennial 174 - 7:30pm July 20,
July 27, August 3, August 10 - The
three degrees and a special events
evening on the last night.

If you have any suggestions please send them to any DGL or me. Questions from those in attendance are welcomed and encouraged.

Regional Competition

The M.W.G.M. Bro. Ronald G. Belanger, has made known his desire to return to some form of Ritual Competition. Beginning this year we will try a different approach. The competition will consist of all qualified members of subordinate lodges within a Region. The competition will be between the Regions and not each individual lodge.

Our objective is to create quality competition among the Regions throughout the state. We feel that during the rehearsals and actual competition the quality of our ritual will be preserved and hopefully enhanced. Finally, we hope that this type of competition will light a spark under some very qualified Masons and inspire them to join in their lodge as future officers. M. W.G.M. Ronald G. Belanger has approved the following guidelines to govern the competition:

The Deputy Grand Lecturers will solicit and select officers for the competition from all lodges within his Region. A form containing the participants will be completed and sent to the Grand Lecturer.

The only persons not eligible for the competition are all DGLs and past Dgls. All other Master Masons in good standing of a subordinate lodge are qualified to participate.

This year the competition will include opening the Master Mason Lodge, receiving the Brother, the complete second section including the lecture, charge, edict, admonishment of the brother and closing of the Master Mason degree.

Floor work and officers movements will be included in the scoring. Each Region must provide their apron. All other implements will be provided.

A grading system will be distributed prior to the date of competition. This will allow the Deputy Grand Lecturers to use this as a tool to gauge how well their ritual team is doing during their preparation for the competition.

First, Second and Third place winners will receive awards. All other participants will receive a certificate of appreciation for their precipitation.

The Regions are:

Northeast/Upper Eastern Shore, Lower Eastern Shore- Jim Davidson & Lawrence Adkins; Western Region, MidWestern Region - Frank Eberly & Fred Reel; Baltimore County North, West/Carroll County - John Doyle & Steve Winer; Baltimore County South/Central MD., Montgomery County, Southern MD. - Paul Fishell, Ted Harding, John Crull, Jr. & Carl Todd

If you have any questions concerning the competition, please talk to your Deputy Grand Lecturer or call Dave Schneider, W.G.L.

Octoberfest

The Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Maryland is delighted to hold a typical German Octoberfest during the evening of the Harvest Home Day on October 21, 2006 starting at 6:30 pm until 10:30pm at the Grand Lodge ballroom.

This Event will be organized by Germania Lodge No. 160 and will feature German music, food, beer, etc. including German folklore, dances and other entertainment

You are invited with spouses and friends to join us at this special happy event.

Olive Branch Lodge No. 47 in Sturgis, South Dakota

wishes to welcome all Masons to a Special meeting of the Lodge during the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally and Races, Sturgis South Dakota (first full week of August)

Date: Wednesday, August 9, 2006

Time: 7:30pm

Location: Olive Branch Lodge

No. 47 Sturgis, South Dakota Please be prepared to show a current, paid-up dues card and respond to a short examination. Dress is casual (motorcycle attire is acceptable.) Visiting Masons wishing to wear his Lodge apron: please feel free to do so.

For more information contact:

Thomas Secrest
Board of Custodians
Grand Lodge of South Dakota
Phone: 605-717-1115

Email: crest@rushmore.com

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Ronald G. Bélanger Most Morshipful Grand Master

Grand Lodge Ancient Free and Accepted Masons



My Brethren All:

The time to solicit your support of the Endowment fund for our Masonic Homes and that of the Masonic Charities of Maryland is upon us once again. Both are tax deductible entities with the Masonic Homes a 501c8 and Masonic Charities of Maryland being a 501c3.

Brethren, the work of "MCM" is without question one of our best kept secrets yet, we should all be singing its praises from the roof tops. With some \$48,000 in scholarships being given every year to Maryland students and the underwriting and support of the Maryland Students Assistance Program, we are investing well over \$100,000 dollars a year in Maryland youth. This investment in our future leaders stretches across the entire state and every Maryland Mason should derive a great deal of pride and pleasure from this most worthwhile endeavor. The Masonic jurisdiction of Maryland entered into this partnership with our educators some twenty years ago. We were the second jurisdiction in the United States to take on this project and I dare say we have saved hundreds if not thousands of young people from the grips of drug and alcohol abuse by funding the training needed by councilors and teachers to identify and intervene whenever possible. We are making a difference when it comes to Maryland's youth.

Bonnie Blink continues to be the Flagship of Masonic care in Maryland. The Board of Trustees continues to work diligently to provide the assets needed by our most capable staff to continue administering the best possible care for our residents. As stewards of the Homes Endowment we have continued to see that fund grow but I must inform you, as the cost of utilities rise, so does our need for your continued support and donations to the Maryland Masonic Homes Endowment Fund. In order to obtain and retain the best possible care givers for our homes, we must remain competitive in the job market and that means the cost of top quality care is also rising. I hope you will join me in a continuing support of the Homes Endowment Fund and the care of our Masonic Family members.

In an effort to cut administration costs we are now placing the Grand Master's Appeal letter in the Freestate Freemason along with a self addressed envelope. I pray you will make a check out to either the Maryland Masonic Homes Endowment Fund or Masonic Charities of Maryland and mail it in today. Your donation will make a difference in the life of one of Maryland's Youth, or one of our Masonic Family members. Thank you again and God Bless.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Ronald G. Bélanger

Grand Master

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