



# FREE STATE Freemason

A PUBLICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF  
ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF MARYLAND



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SUMMER 2023



**MARYLAND MASONS**  
HELP PRESERVE LOCAL FISHING TRADITION  
(SEE PAGE 12)

FREE STATE FREEMASON ARTICLES  
AND ADVERTISEMENTS

The *Free State Freemason* is published bi-monthly from September through June (there is no issue in July or August). Deadlines for submissions are the 1<sup>st</sup> day of February, April, August, and October for publication in the following issue. These dates **ARE FIRM** and can not be changed due to printing schedules.

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# FREE STATE Freemason

A PUBLICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF  
ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF MARYLAND

VOLUME 48, ISSUE 1

MAKING GOOD MEN BETTER

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Maryland Masons Help Preserve  
Local Fishing Tradition



*FREEMASONRY is the oldest fraternal organization in the world. It is dedicated to promoting improvement in the character of its members. A Mason is taught to be a good citizen, to be of good character, to care for those less fortunate, and to give back to his community.*

*THE MASONIC FRATERNITY contributes over \$1 Billion each year to its philanthropic pursuits. Over \$750 Million of that in the United States alone. The Crippled Children's and Burns Hospitals sponsored by Shrine Masons are world famous for their ability to help those most in need.*





# GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

Greetings Brethren,

I hope this Summer Edition of the Free State Freemason finds you well and enjoying all that a Maryland summer has to offer.

As I visit and receive reports from our Blue Lodges throughout the State, I find added interest in Masonry. Members, and particularly the officers, are realizing the wonderful opportunities which are theirs. Many Dispensations have been granted to Lodges to call on earlier than their stated hour for the purpose of conferring the degrees, and in many instances to hold special communications for that purpose. The RW Deputy Grand Master and I are making a conscious effort to attend these conferrals, to show our continued support and because we enjoy our ritual, and the many lessons contains.

As Grand Master, I have encouraged the RW Deputy Grand Master to travel to as many lodges as his schedule allows. Look for him – it will be his to lead this craft - a little over a year for now and how can he lead unless he knows who he is leading? Each lodge has its own ‘personality’, strengths, challenges, etc. and no one can possibly plan without knowing who you are planning for.

One of the responsibilities that I currently have (one not in the ‘Grand Master’ category) is as editor of a Maryland Masonic quarterly magazine. In checking the second proof there is an article by the Secretary of Mt. Ararat Lodge #44 and in this article is the question: “Are you leaving behind a noble legacy? Not just in material possessions, but in the example you set in your character and behavior”. In these last few

months, I have had the honor of presenting many 50, 60, and even several 70-year Service Awards, some in tiled Lodges, some during ‘Strawberry Night’ with the family present and several at the Brother’s home. Every one of these brothers has had an amazing life, they have truly left behind a noble legacy, and you can see it by the appreciation shown by their families, friends and all those that have known them who are present at these presentations.

In the same magazine, there is an excerpt from Grand Master Huether’s address to the Grand Lodge at the Annual in 1948. In part it reads:

*“We meet in times of unrest and with the international scene anything but encouraging. Suspicion and mistrust still exist throughout the world.....that organizations often pass high sounding resolutions and then individual members, by their deeds, actions and words, deny the very sentiments they have declared.....To say that we believe in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man, what we will do unto others as we would have them do unto us, and then give countenance to prejudice and discrimination, is certainly beneath the character and dignity of a Mason. It is just good religion and good Masonry to so act that we shall avoid the pitfalls of hypocrisy which says one thing and may mean another.....”*

Dear reader, this was written seventy-five years ago and (in my opinion) is just as pertinent today as when it was written.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your MW Grand Master & may the blessings of Heaven rest upon you and your families.

Sincerely & fraternally,

Frederick A. Spicer  
Most Worshipful Grand Master  
of Masons in Maryland

## 2023 Grand Lodge Summer School Schedule

Attire for attendees: Business Casual – Polo Shirts & Slacks  
NO SHORTS!

Tuesday, July 11  
7:00 PM  
Cockeysville  
Entered Apprentice Degree  
Concordia Lodge Officers  
Open full form EA degree  
Exemplify degree  
Review both single and multiple candidates.

Tuesday, July 18  
7:00 PM  
Cockeysville  
Fellowcraft Degree  
Mt. Ararat Lodge Officers  
Open full form FC degree  
Exemplify degree

Tuesday, July 25  
7:00 PM  
Cockeysville  
Master Mason Degree  
Lodge TBD  
Open full form MM degree  
Exemplify degree

Tuesday, August 1  
7:00 PM  
Cockeysville  
Special Topics  
Lodge TBD  
Open full form MM degree  
Various other subjects and  
Ceremonies will be discussed

Thursday, July 6, 7:00 PM  
Columbia Lodge # 58 Western MD  
Entered Apprentice Degree

Thursday, July 13, 7:00 PM  
Wicomico Lodge #91 Eastern Shore  
Entered Apprentice Degree

Thursday, July 20, 7:00 PM  
Hagerstown Lodge # 217 Western MD  
Fellowcraft Degree  
&  
Centennial Lodge # 174  
Upper Marlboro, 7:30 PM  
Entered Apprentice Degree

Thursday, July 27, 7:00 PM  
Centreville Lodge #180 Eastern Shore  
Fellowcraft Degree  
&  
Camp Springs Lodge # 227  
Temple Hills, 7:30 PM  
Fellowcraft Degree

Thursday, August 3, 7:00 PM  
Cumberland Masonic Temple  
Western MD  
Master Mason Degree  
&  
Centennial Lodge # 174  
Upper Marlboro, 7:30 PM  
Master Mason Degree

Thursday, August 10, 7:00 PM  
Manokin Lodge # 106, Eastern Shore  
Master Mason Degree  
&  
Camp Springs Lodge # 227  
Temple Hills, 7:30 PM  
Special Topics



## DEPUTY GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

I just returned from DeMolay's International Supreme Council Session and have been reflecting on how I've gotten to where I am today in the Masonic Fraternity. My path could easily have led elsewhere.

I grew up in Federalsburg on the Eastern Shore. My father wasn't in a lodge, but both grandfathers were in one of the fraternities with a lodge in town. My paternal grandfather, H. Atwood "Bitters" Watson, was in the Masonic Lodge: Nanticoke No. 172, A.F. & A.M. My maternal grandfather, Elbert F. Williamson, was in the Odd Fellows Lodge: Federal No. 35, I.O.O.F.

My grandfather Watson was a machinist who managed the machine shop at Maryland Plastics, Inc., formerly the Excelsior Pearl Works. He kept his Masonic dues current, and attended a few meetings each year, but as far as I know, he never served as an officer in the Lodge. My grandmother, Alice Watson (née Jester), never joined the Eastern Star or other fraternal groups.

My grandfather Williamson was an auto mechanic who owned Williamson Auto Sales, which operated as a Studebaker and used car dealership, a repair shop, and an Esso/Humble gas station. He was very active in the Odd Fellows and served as Noble Grand of the Lodge. I believe that he also served as Patriarch of the Encampment and Captain of the Canton of Patriarchs Militant. My grandmother, Rachel Williamson (née Quillen), served as the Noble

Grand of the Rebekah Lodge. In addition to serving as the presiding officers and regularly attending the meetings, my grandparents were at the Odd Fellows Hall every week, running the Friday evening Bingo which was the group's main fund-raising effort. My grandfather took turns as the caller, selling cards, and helping oversee the players. My grandmother was in the kitchen and/or running the counter that sold refreshments.

In 1979, when I turned 21 (the minimum age at the time), and while still a student at Washington College in Chestertown, I joined both fraternities under the sponsorship of my grandfathers.



From their levels of activity, it would have seemed to make sense that I would have followed in their footsteps and become actively involved in the Odd Fellows and only marginally involved with the Masons. However, such was not the case.

After being Raised in Nanticoke Masonic Lodge in October, I covered for the Senior Steward's station for the November and December meetings. In January 1980,

I was installed as Junior Deacon, and regularly drove from Chestertown for all the Masonic Lodge meetings. After getting the Third Degree in Federal Lodge of the Odd Fellows, I attended a few Lodge meetings, but never took an officer position.

Why did I become active in the Masons and not the Odd Fellows? That's easy – it's all due to the Order of DeMolay.

While I was attending Colonel Richardson High School, Nanticoke Lodge sponsored a DeMolay Club under Salisbury Chapter. I joined the Club as it was getting Letters Temporary and was installed as Senior Councilor as part of the Institution Ceremonies when we received our Charter as Nanticoke Chapter

in 1975. I served as Master Councilor from April to September 1976, and was Scribe-Treasurer from 1977 until I reached Majority in 1979. During this time, I became familiar not only with the Masonic Lodge building and the Masons serving as DeMolay Advisors, but also with many of the Masons that the Chapter worked with in service projects and social activities. I enjoyed the DeMolay ritual and understood that its principles were reflective of those in the Lodge. I also was given an understanding of the structure of the Masonic Lodge and the commitments required to serve as an officer.

Because of my DeMolay experience, when I joined the Masonic Lodge, I already had a desire to learn its ritual and serve as the Worshipful Master—I understand that this is a different set of expectations and goals from most of our Candidates!

After I got out of school, I moved to Rockville in Montgomery County and began working as an Advisor with Cornerstone DeMolay. In 1982, while serving as Junior Warden of Nanticoke Lodge, I realized that I wouldn't be as effective as Worshipful Master as I had hoped, since I was living just over 100 miles

from the Lodge building on North Main Street in Federalsburg. So, I affiliated with Cornerstone #224, and they were kind enough to put me into the Line as Senior Deacon in 1983; and I served as WM in 1986.

If there had not been a DeMolay Chapter in Federalsburg, or if the Odd Fellows had a local Junior Lodge, I might well have put my fraternal energies in to their fraternity; where now I just pay my dues each year, but don't really participate.

On a similar note, if you're not already aware, four 18-year-old Active DeMolays of Nelson J. Briggs Chapter in Bel Air have just been Raised as Master Masons: three in Mt. Ararat #44 (Gavin Lawson, Ethan Shoemaker, and State Master Councilor Griffin Thurfield) and one in Concordia #93 (Peter Ludwig). Maryland DeMolay's Executive Officer, Carl Michel, has started an email distribution list of Senior DeMolays, Past Advisors, and other Masons who are interested in getting a notification of when Active DeMolays and Senior DeMolays are scheduled to receive their Masonic Degrees. If you are interested in getting on this list, please contact him at EO@Md-DeMolay.org.



*Pictured are the Maryland DeMolays recently raised as Master Masons. From left to right are Peter Ludwig (of Corinthian Lodge No. 93), Gavin Lawson, Ethan Shemaker, Griffin Thurfield (all of Mt. Ararat Lodge No. 44), and DeMolay Executive Officer in Maryland Carl Michel.*



# FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND SECRETARY

Fraternal greetings, my Brothers. It is once again my pleasure to address you in a medium other than an official Grand Lodge correspondence. There are a few items of business that I'd like to cover in a less formal manner.

In recent years, we have made efforts to encourage the brethren to register on the Membership Manager. I'm again making that request, for several reasons. It is the responsibility of the Grand Secretary and staff to preserve the records of our organization for posterity. It is important that we endeavor to keep these records as complete and accurate as possible. We not only need your proper address and contact details (email and phone numbers), but it is also helpful that we get other information from you such as your spouse's name and a profile photo. To register, go to [www.glmd.org](http://www.glmd.org). You will need your dues card with your member number, Lodge number and last name to register. It will walk you through the process, which will include choosing your own password.

Once you have registered, you will have access to an abundance of information and reference materials. Some of the resources include The Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Maryland, Guide for Investigation Committees, Blue Books – current and previous, Book of Strategies, Burial Book, various forms on different topics, Maryland Masonic Academy materials, resumes, etc. You will also be assisting us in keeping our records

current. You can make changes to your contact information right on the system as they occur. The system will automatically notify your lodge secretary of the changes via email.

In addition to record keeping, the Grand Lodge office takes care of the administrative functions that assist the Lodges in their day-to-day clerical tasks, whether it be on the membership system, properly filing assessments, handling dispensations, taking reservations for events and many other tasks too numerous to mention. The staff is always ready to assist in any way that we can to help the constituent lodges. Please do not hesitate to seek our assistance if needed.

Maintaining the business of the Grand Lodge and administrating the various programs is a monumental task but it is necessary to maintain order among the lodges to allow them to engage in the reason for which they were formed – fellowship, fraternity, spreading brotherly love and making new Masons. This is the purpose of Masonry. The business is necessary, but the purpose is essential.

## THE BUSINESS OF MASONRY IS NOT THE PURPOSE OF MASONRY

The business of Masonry involves many other aspects such as ritual memorization, attending mandatory meetings, etc. but the reason for this article is to take a step beyond the business and address the real reason we all do this.

When each of us petitioned our lodge, we were looking for something—something different from what was typical of our lives up to that point. Something that would enhance our daily lives and lead to a new and rewarding experience. This gets me to my point. Many times we get caught up in the “business” of Masonry, whether it is some of the examples I have mentioned above or other tasks that we have been elected to, assigned to, or volunteered for and it ends up distracting us from why we are really involved in the first place –

enhance our daily lives and lead to a new and rewarding experience. This gets me to my point. Many times we get caught up in the “business” of Masonry, whether it is some of the examples I have mentioned above or other tasks that we have been elected to, assigned to, or volunteered for and it ends up distracting us from why we are really involved in the first place –

brotherhood, self-improvement, helping others, and spreading the bond of friendship which unites us all. These are the foundations of our Masonic fellowship. It is a laudable attribute to devote yourself to performing a task well (the business) and knowing you have performed well, but is also a most rewarding experience to spend time with your brothers in simple interactions of fellowship. These are the truly rewarding times of Masonry. It has been my observa-

tion over these past 30 years that Masonry offers a unique experience, much more than most other fraternal organizations. It just makes good sense to take advantage of this opportunity and enjoy as many of the rewarding and gratifying activities that our fraternity provides. That, my Brothers, in my opinion, is the purpose of Masonry.

Sincerely, Your Brother,  
Ken Taylor, Grand Secretary

*The Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Maryland convened for its 236<sup>th</sup> Semi-Annual Communication on Saturday, May 20, 2023. The following Grand Lodge Officers and Board Members were elected to serve in 2024:*

- MW BRO. FREDERICK A. SPICER  
*Amicable – St. John's Lode No. 25*  
Most Worshipful Grand Master-Elect
- RW BRO. RANDALL L. WATSON  
*Montgomery – Cornerstone Lodge No. 195*  
Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master-Elect
- BRO. HAROLD A. GARREN, PM  
*Camp Springs Lodge No. 227*  
Right Worshipful Senior Grand Warden-Elect
- BRO. BARRY S. BOSLEY, PM  
*Columbia Lodge No. 58*  
Right Worshipful Junior Grand Warden-Elect
- RW BRO. KENNETH R. TAYLOR  
*Howard Lodge No. 101*  
Right Worshipful Grand Secretary-Elect
- RW BRO. T. SCOTT CUSHING  
*Mt. Ararat Lodge No. 44*  
Right Worshipful Grand Treasurer-Elect

- 
- BOARD OF MANAGERS**  
(Three-Year Term)
- RW BRO. BRADLEY D. ANDRUKITIS  
*Centennial Lodge No. 174*
  - RW BRO. DAVID R. SANDY  
*Mt. Moriah Lodge No. 116*
  - RW BRO. S. MICHAEL RASHAD  
*Washington Lodge No. 3*

- 
- BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
(Three-Year Term)
- BRO. CHARLES E. FRAIM, JR.  
*Oriental Lodge No. 158*
  - BRO. KEITH D. WILLIAMS, PM  
*Glen Burnie Lodge No. 213*

- 
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS –  
MASONIC CHARITIES OF MARYLAND**  
(Three-Year Term)
- RW BRO. THOMAS W. FOSTER  
*Ionic Lodge No. 145*
  - BRO. ROBERT D. KNIGHT, JR., PM  
*Washington Lodge No. 3*
  - BRO. LAWRENCE S. BRISTER, SR.  
*Door to Virtue Lodge No. 46*

- 
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS –  
LIBRARY AND MUSEUM**  
(Three-Year Term)
- RW BRO. ROGER D. DUNN  
*Mt. Moriah Lodge No. 116*
  - BRO. CHRISTIAN J. MIELE, PM  
*Highland Lodge No. 184*
  - BRO. MATTHEW H. MITCHELL  
*Mt. Ararat Lodge No. 44*
  - BRO. ROBERT A. SAUNDERS  
*Mt. Ararat Lodge No. 44 (Two-Year Term)*



Following the motion of the Committee on Fraternal Relations, A favorable vote was cast to recognize the following Grand Jurisdictions:

- The Grand Lodge of Georgia (Europe)*
- The Grand Lodge of Kazakhstan*
- The Grand Lodge Cuscatlan of El Salvador*

# A RUDIMENTARY LOOK AT ALCHEMY & FREEMASONRY

By: Luis J. Gonzalez Jr, PM Odenton Lodge No. 209

There are some similarities between alchemical teachings and Freemasonry, and some believe that Freemasonry may have been influenced by alchemy. In fact, the teachings have been a part of Freemasonry since its inception. The first Masonic lodges were founded in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, and at that time, alchemy was a popular science and philosophy. Many of the early Freemasons were alchemists, and they incorporated its symbolism and imagery into their rituals.

Alchemy is the study of the transmutation of metals, but it is also a more esoteric practice that seeks to transform the individual through spiritual development. The alchemical process is often used as a metaphor for the spiritual journey of Freemasonry. Just as the alchemist seeks to transform base metals into gold, the Freemason seeks to transform himself into a better man. The alchemical process is also seen as a way of uniting the opposites, such as the material and the spiritual, the masculine and the feminine, and the good and the evil.

While alchemy is no longer a popular science, its teachings continue to be relevant to Freemasonry. Although alchemical teachings are not explicitly mentioned in the Masonic ritual, they are present in the symbolism of the craft. Freemasons are encouraged to interpret the symbolism in their own way, and some Freemasons believe that the alchemical symbolism is a way of teaching the secrets of Freemasonry. Here are some of the ways in which alchemical teachings are reflected in Freemasonry:

## THE USE OF SYMBOLISM

Both alchemy and Freemasonry use symbolism to represent spiritual concepts. Some of the most common alchemical symbols found in Freemasonry include the square and compasses, the ladder, and the sun and moon.

## THE SQUARE AND COMPASSES

- The square and compasses are two of the most important symbols in Freemasonry. They are often seen as symbols of morality and virtue, but they also have a deeper meaning that is related to alchemy.
- In alchemy, the square represents the material world, while the compass represents the spiritual world. The square and compasses together represent the idea that the material and spiritual worlds are interconnected, and that it is possible to achieve enlightenment by uniting the two.
- The square and compasses are also seen as symbols of the alchemist's quest for perfection. The square represents the alchemist's desire to create a perfect world, while the compass represents the alchemist's desire to find the Philosopher's Stone, a mythical substance that could transform base metals into gold.
- In Freemasonry, the square and compasses are used to remind members of their obligations to their fellow man, to their families, and to their Creator. They are also used to remind members of the importance of seeking knowledge and wisdom, and of striving to make the world a better place.
- The square and compasses represent the ideals of morality, virtue, and enlightenment, and they inspire members to strive to be better men.

## THE LADDER (JACOB'S LADDER)

- The Masonic ladder is a symbol that has been used by Freemasons for centuries. It represents the journey of life, and the steps that we take to progress from ignorance to enlightenment. ▶ The ladder is often depicted with seven rungs, which repre-

sent the seven degrees of Royal Arch Freemasonry. Each degree represents a different level of knowledge and understanding, and each step on the ladder represents a step closer to enlightenment.

- It is also a symbol of the alchemical process. In alchemy, the ladder represents the process of transmutation, or the transformation of one thing into another. The seven rungs of the ladder represent the seven stages of the alchemical process (calcination, dissolution, separation, conjunction, fermentation, distillation, and coagulation), from the initial state of matter to the final state of perfection. It also represents the seven metals (gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, lead, and mercury).
- The ladder is a powerful symbol that has been used by Freemasons and alchemists for centuries.

## THE SUN & THE MOON

- The Sun represents enlightenment, truth, and the divine. It is also a symbol of the alchemical process, which was a pursuit of knowledge and perfection that was popular in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.
- In alchemy, the sun is often associated with gold, which was seen as the perfect metal. The sun was also seen as a symbol of the soul, and the alchemist's quest to turn base metals into gold was seen as a metaphor for the soul's journey to perfection.

- The moon represents the feminine principle, the subconscious mind, and the cycles of nature. It is also a symbol of the alchemical process.
- In alchemy, the moon is often associated with silver, which was also seen as a perfect metal. While the Sun was seen as a symbol of the Soul, the moon was seen as a symbol of the body, and the alchemist's quest to turn base metals into silver was seen as a metaphor for the body's journey to perfection.

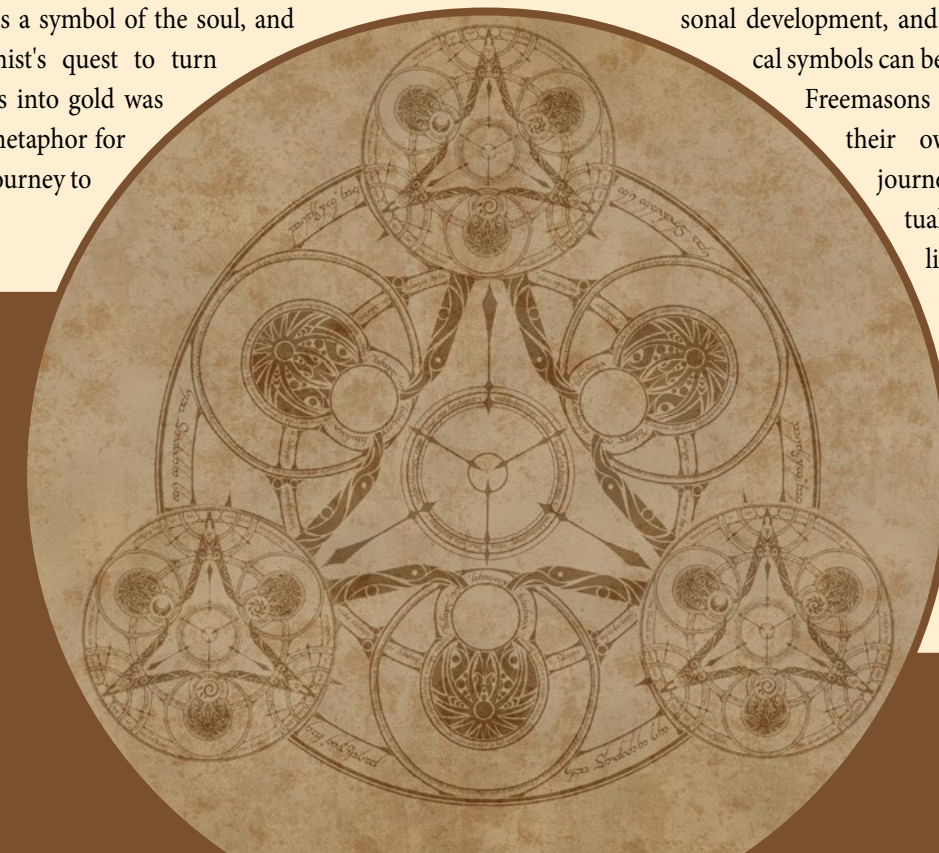
## THE GOAL OF PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

- Both alchemy and Freemasonry seek to transform the individual. In alchemy, this is achieved through the process of transmutation, which is a metaphor for spiritual development. In Freemasonry, this is achieved through the process of initiation, which is a series of rituals that teach the individual about the importance of morality, virtue, and brotherhood.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SECRECY

- Both alchemy and Freemasonry are shrouded in secrecy. This is because the teachings of both traditions are considered to be sacred and not to be shared with the uninitiated. In conclusion, the alchemical process can be seen as a model for personal development, and the alchemical symbols can be used to help

Freemasons understand their own spiritual journey. The spiritual journey is a lifelong process of transformation, from the base metal of ignorance to the gold of enlightenment.



# 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BATTIE MIXON FISHING RODEO

by Jeffrey R. Leaf, Worshipful Master, Potomac Lodge No. 100 AF&AM



For seventy-five years the Battie Mixon Fishing Rodeo has been a part of the fabric of Allegany County, Maryland. But it is much more than that; in a way it defines us as a community. For seventy-five years, fathers, sons, mothers, daughters, grandparents, one and all, have gathered on a bright June day and gone fishing... together. This year was no different. The weather was beautiful and the turn-out was amazing!

Potomac Lodge No. 100, Queen City Lodge No. 131 and East Gate Lodge no. 216 orchestrated an epic event on June 10, 2023 with the help of the Federal Park Service, the C&O Canal National Park Service, and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. In addition to the most generous support from the Maryland Masonic Charities of the Grand Lodge of Maryland, we also acquired major sponsorship donations from AES Warrior Run Cogeneration Facility,

Potomac Lodge No. 100 AF&AM and Faith Hope and Images. Many other local businesses joined Queen City Lodge and East Gate Lodge with donations and gifts as well. Volunteers from all the lodge families and the Demolay helped throughout the planning and completion of a great day for Western Maryland youths.

The Federal Park Service and the C&O Canal National Park Service provided the venue and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources stocked the fish for the rodeo. The rodeo featured catfish, panfish (sunfish, bluegill and hybrids), bass and fall fish. Over one-thousand people attended. Despite the beautiful weather, which actually slowed down the fishing, over 430 youths registered to fish and 380 fish were measured and registered for prizes. Approximately the same number of fish were actually caught and released without measuring.

The Maryland Mason's represented well, and gifted every child with a brand new fishing pole and limited edition 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Battie Mixon Fishing Rodeo summer ball cap. Approximately \$1000 of random drawing prizes were distributed to the children including Fishing Gear, Camping Gear, outdoor toys and the grand prize of a Kayak. A rifle (Bosley's Guns & Ammo), a shotgun (Mountain Maryland Firearms) and a two-day person duck hunt (Wildcat Outfitters) were all raffled off to help with the event. In addition, over two dozen trophies (Faith, Hope and Images) were awarded for various categories including largest fish caught, smallest fish caught, most fish caught, trophies for tagged fish and several other special trophies.

Frederick Spicer, the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Maryland, not only helped measure fish, but also awarded the trophy for most catfish caught. We were also delighted



to have Judith Kinnie, Mrs. Maryland America 2023, who assisted with trophies and prize drawings, in addition to posing for photos with many of the youths and adults. Finally, Potomac Lodge No. 100 AF&AM was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation from Senator Ben Cardin for its work with the Battie Mixon Fishing Rodeo along with all the other community activities it supports.

The 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Battie Mixon Fishing Rodeo was a success from all viewpoints. Please visit the Battie Mixon Fishing Rodeo FaceBook page for pictures and videos of the event, as well as news and announcements. The Cumberland Masonic Lodges want to express our profound gratitude to all our many sponsors and volunteers. We are looking forward to supporting this popular and important event for years to come.

# MASONIC VIRTUES

BY BRO. TIMOTHY SHEILS, PM  
SILVER SPRING LODGE NO. 215



## GRAND LODGE ESSAY CONTEST – 2<sup>ND</sup> & 3<sup>RD</sup> PLACES

*In this issue we continue our series of winning essays from the 2022 Essay Contest sponsored by the Grand Lodge of Maryland Committee on Masonic Education. On the following pages we present the second and third-place winning entries.*

### MASONIC VIRTUES- 2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE WINNER

To discuss Masonic Virtues, it is important to have an idea of what a virtue is, means, and entails, to have a solid foundation to build upon. A virtue is a trait or quality that is deemed to be morally good and thus valued as a foundation of principle and good moral being. This indicates that a virtue may be relative. What is prized in one culture may not be in another. Internal to that culture, however, it is the foundation on which to build a moral, virtuous person, and to expand to become a broader principle for society as a whole.

The cardinal virtues have their origins in ancient Greek times, and one of the Greek terms used to describe virtues is arete, which means excellence of any kind. It has a still further meaning however, and can also mean "moral virtue". Linking excellence with a foundation of being a moral being, results in the idea that excellence was ultimately tied to the fulfillment of purpose or function. Being virtuous meant that one was living up to their full potential. If one is viewed as an object of creation, by excelling and living up to one's potential, they are becoming virtuous, and exuding the characteristics of their Divine Creator. A more literal origin of the word virtue comes from the ancient Latin word virtus which refers to all of the excellent qualities of men, including physical strength, valorous conduct, and moral rectitude. Again, it is living up to one's potential, the absolute function of a person, which is to emulate their Creator.

The term cardinal comes from Latin (cardo), meaning "hinge", in this case meaning a basis, or foundation. Cardinal virtues are the building blocks required for a virtuous life, and they are all necessary. Lacking in one virtue means the whole of a person is lacking in a way - they are not living up to their full potential. Cardinal virtues therefore serve as building blocks for a virtuous life. The theological

virtues serve as a bridge that connects human life and morality, with the Supreme Architect of the Universe.

### TEMPERANCE

Temperance is typically described in terms of what an individual voluntarily refrains from doing, it is self-restraint, or self-discipline. It goes beyond that to include the avoidance of excess on either side. For example, too much food is gluttony, but too little is starvation. Temperance allows a person to maintain a balance within their lives.

By avoiding excess, Masons are able to avoid situations where they may un-advisably or inadvertently reveal some of the mysteries of Freemasonry. This is a more modern interpretation of temperance, that of abstaining from alcohol or other vices, which makes sense given that in the early stages of Masonry, lodges were meeting in pubs and taverns, so avoidance of excess was probably necessary. But just like tempering metal, it is important to not be too hot or cold, it requires a delicate balance to become strong.

Temperance is traditionally portrayed as a female figure holding a wheel, bridle and reins, vegetables and fish, a cup or water and wine in two jugs. These different objects show either the idea of balance (vegetables and fish, jugs, etc), or being in control (wheel, bridle and reins).

### FORTITUDE

Fortitude frequently is used to describe a person having courage, but the real meaning goes a bit deeper. Fortitude has its basis in courage, but it also includes the aspects of perseverance and patience. Courage itself is the choice and willingness to confront agony, pain, danger, uncertainty, or intimidation. Physical courage is bravery in the face of physical pain, hardship, threat of death, or even death itself. Moral courage is the ability to act rightly in the face of popular opposition, shame, scandal, discouragement, or personal loss. Perseverance is the ability to persevere through all emotions, such as suffering, pleasure and fear. Taken separately, all of these virtues are admirable, but by encompassing all of them, fortitude indeed is a strong foundation for a virtuous life.

Fortitude teaches Masons to be in control of their emotions, especially fear and not being afraid if someone is threatening you to gain access. This seems a bit drastic, but being able to keep Masonic secrets in the face of danger is important, and part of the Masonic obligation. Fortitude also means that all virtues endure this discomfort, and are thus strengthened. Temperance isn't very strong if one lacks the fortitude to follow through with their convictions.

Fortitude is traditionally shown with armor and clubs. In some instances, fortitude is depicted with a lion, a traditional symbol of strength. In addition, fortitude has also been portrayed with a palm, a tower, a yoke or a broken column. These items all signify something that is either persevering, such as a broken column or yoke, or endurance.

### PRUDENCE

Prudence is the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason, and is associated with wisdom, insight and knowledge. The word itself derives from the Latin prudentia meaning "foresight, sagacity". Whereas temperance and fortitude were concerned with restraining one's actions and persevering, prudence is more forward thinking, it allows a person to consider their past experiences, and use knowledge gained from other sources to analyze their actions and plan an outcome. Prudence also allows a person to choose between different types of actions, such as virtuous or vicious actions. Prudence is essential for the other virtues because it allows someone to view the impact of their actions, be it temperance or intemperance, fortitude or cowardice, and assess what the impact may be. Prudence uses the facilities of logic to determine actions, not passion or selfishness.

Prudence teaches Masons to think carefully about their words and actions. As opposed to rashness, just saying or doing whatever one feels, prudence teaches a Mason to carefully and dispassionately think about the possible courses of action, and apply the various lessons they have learned in choosing a path.

Prudence is frequently portrayed with a book or a scroll, both elements of education, alluding to past experiences and lessons. Prudence is also displayed with a mirror, and on occasion attacked by a serpent, alluding to self-reflection and underlying dangers of unwise actions.

### JUSTICE

Justice is the moderation, or the mean between selfishness and selflessness. It is a middle path one has to tread, similar to temperance or prudence, but it is more outward in its manifestations. It is focused on attitudes towards others, and how one integrates with society as a whole. If a person feels that they are better than their peers, they will not treat them equally, and will behave unjustly. Justice regulates relationships with others.

Justice teaches Masons to treat everyone equally. Masons talk about meeting on the level, and justice is a major



element of that. If someone acts unjustly towards another person, they are definitely not acting on the level.

Justice is traditionally portrayed as having a sword, balance and scales and a crown. The sword is reminiscent of the adage “*a double-edged sword*”, meaning that justice, like a sword, is an important tool that can have positive or negative consequences depending on how it is used. The balance and scales allude to equality, and striking the perfect balance between one’s own needs and the needs of others. The crown is indicative that justice is frequently seen as the most important of the cardinal virtues.

#### ORIGINS

The cardinal virtues originated in the great philosophical work *The Republic*, written around 375 BCE by Plato. *The Republic* is a Socratic dialogue, meaning that the main character Socrates, Plato’s mentor, engages in a series of conversations with pupils about various subjects. This format gives a surprising amount of structure to the work - by using a question-and-answer format, Plato is able to posit an idea, and examine it from all angles.

*The Republic* is primarily focused on the idea of justice. Socrates is interested in the ideal structure for a society, and discusses what a just society should entail. He then discusses the just person, and the virtues they should exhibit, and finally, the education necessary to produce just people. Book IV is most interesting because Socrates discusses the virtues necessary for a just city. It is interesting to note that this conception has the idea of a virtue belonging to a certain segment of society, rather than all members exhibiting all of the cardinal virtues. These virtues however, are the necessary building blocks for such a city.

Wisdom (or prudence) is necessary among the guardian rulers of the city. Courage (or fortitude) is necessary among the warriors of the city. Temperance is necessary among all the classes in order to agree on this structure and who should be in which class. Justice is also necessary among the entire city to ensure that everyone is working to the best of their abilities, and to ensure that no one is trying to give orders about something they have no experience with. It is interesting that temperance and justice are needed in all levels of Socrates’ ideal city, but prudence and fortitude aren’t.

In discussing the individual however, Socrates maintains that a person needs all of the cardinal virtues. A person is wise or prudent if they are ruled by the part of the soul (or brain) that knows and understands what is beneficial for each part or person, and for the whole of the society.

An individual exhibiting fortitude is one who stays even headed in the midst of pleasures and pains so that decisions are made by the rational part of a person. A person is temperate if they agree that the rational part should lead, they don’t let excess decide. Justice, to Socrates, was the apex virtue, and a person is just if each part of the soul attended to its function and not the function of another. Without justice, one cannot be especially prudent, or have fortitude or temperance. This is because the soul needs to have the experiences of prudence, fortitude and temperance to really be able to moderate between selfishness and selflessness, especially when it comes to one’s part as the whole of society.

#### MEANING TO MASONS

The Cardinal virtues hold a lot of meaning to Masons. So much so, that a large portion of the first degree lecture is dedicated to the discussion of the cardinal virtues. These virtues are among the first lessons learned by Masons, and a large part of their importance is due to the purpose of each degree. The process of initiation has several steps, which are broken up among the three degrees. The first step of initiation is purification, it is removing the errant pieces and edges from a rough stone. By removing these extraneous pieces/ideas, Masons are then able to receive education about what should be in their place - the cardinal virtues. In addition, it allows new Masons to see their place as building blocks in an entire society. After this education, a Mason is prepared for the second and third degrees, signifying illumination and transformation, respectively. As Masonry is founded upon the ideas of improving a brother, the cardinal virtues are indeed the education that their transformation will hinge on.

Ancient Greek thoughts and ideals made a resurgence in the Renaissance and Age of Enlightenment and were adopted by Masons for the benefit of self-improvement.

However, improving the mind is not enough. The subsequent addition of the theological virtues, and emphasis of the Supreme Architect of the Universe, serve to remind Masons to focus on the virtues that come from the heart as well, and have a focus on something external to a person. In this way, Masons are reminded that their actions are as equally important as their thoughts and ideas. Masonic education is important, but lodges also focus on spiritual endeavors and charitable works. These activities are to improve our souls, in preparation for our reunion with our Great Creator.

# DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE AND TYRANNY



By Steven R. Shubert, PM - Hagerstown Lodge No.217

My main objective in this essay is to reinforce the importance of the moral applications of the lessons in Masonry. It is my hope that I may provide another insight that goes beyond the ritual lectures as just ‘lectures’ and will restate the importance of internalizing the lessons of Masonry.

*“The Sanctum Sanctorum, or Holy of Holies of King Solomon’s Temple, where the Ark of the Covenant sat, was the residing place of Deity. The destruction of the Temple and the loss of man’s inherent oneness with Deity is the start of a search for Divine Truth.”* (From *The Entered Apprentice*, copied and pasted from the GL site)

King Solomon’s Temple was built by King Solomon as a house of Deity. Since the temple was considered the resting place of Deity, its destruction can be seen as a loss of oneness with Deity. As Masons, we are on a journey to recover that oneness.

This is evident in our ritual and within our charges. As Masons, we are charged with recognizing the powers of His handiwork in creation and are further taught to consider and focus on our spiritual and moral growth. It is expected that Freemasons work to perfect their own edifice.

We live in a time when various traditional structures of morality built previously upon a solid ethic are crumbling. Consider the move from a ‘Main Street America’, where

communities established supporting structures in the form of civic groups, social groups, community churches; in these structures a community may strengthen itself from within. From this, there was a move to various “commuter cultures” which, for some, resulted in a superficial community based solely as a place of habitation. Lastly, the “online community” which, though creating more connections, paradoxically, resulted in more disconnect from traditional supporting structures of communities.

In the past decades, amid these societal changes, many organizations had to either adapt or collapse under the new weight of this change in ‘community’. Freemasonry has within it the characteristics that are needed to stand against the failing of traditional structures of morality.

The results of societal changes are not new. Society is not a stagnant being, but one that is moving toward a destination. It is founded in its past civilizations and is continuously the culmination of all of those civilizations and exists presently in the midst of whatever tumultuous force may challenge it.

The challenges of a changing society are not new ones. In the late 1800s Friedrich Nietzsche predicted one result of failing and crumbling moral structures. In his often-misunderstood quote, he expressed that God is dead<sup>1</sup>. He was not referring to the actual death of God, obviously, but to

the death of moral structures that predicated themselves on the historical belief in God, and how that belief contributed to how God had been defined by society.

Similar to Nietzsche's nihilistic prediction, the psychologist Erich Fromm discussed these issues in his works *Escape from Freedom* (1941) and *The Sane Society* (1955). Fromm argued that mankind is faced with the awareness that life may seem to have little meaning at best, and at worst, when that point is reached, humanity has always become more susceptible to tyranny and despotism. Indeed, in the times when traditional structures collapse, society looks to tyrannical options as a surrogate to these previously held structures. He wrote in *Escape from Freedom* that if we fail to see the suffering of the average person, then we fail to see what will be his or her willingness to accept any ideology that may give his or her life meaning<sup>2</sup>.

History has shown us that tyranny and despotism are anathema to both an enlightened society and individual progress. Throughout history, the most vehement opposition to Masonry often came from tyrannical systems. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Soviet Union, Mussolini, Franco, and Hitler all took steps to weaken Freemasonry or to outright dissolve it by declaring it to be illegal. In one regard, Freemasonry is not permitted to exist within a tyranny. In another, tyranny more easily exists where Freemasonry does not. Albert Pike provided an illustrative description of the tyranny that may lurk just below the surface of society. He stated that within the "degradation, squalor, wretchedness and destitution, vices and crimes" the tyrant finds the means in which to build his fortification<sup>3</sup> and "a people willingly submits to despotism."<sup>4</sup>

The American moral and social philosopher, Eric Hoffer, felt that mass movements begin when individuals become frustrated, hopeless, and lose faith in existing institutions and wish to be freed from their ineffectual selves<sup>5</sup>. The noted writer C.S. Lewis discussed similar routes to tyranny in *Timeless at Heart*.

Likewise, John Dewey also elaborated on the loss of traditional structures which result in individuals who become "confused and bewildered" and whose "traditional objects of loyalty have become hollow or are openly repudiated, and they drift without anchorage."<sup>6</sup>

Even more so, the psychologist Carl Jung wrote in 1957 that the "chaotic formlessness" of a mass always produces a "leader, who almost infallibly becomes the victim of his own inflated ego-consciousness, as numerous examples in history show."<sup>7</sup> Jung further states that just as the crowd will be

moved by a dictatorial will, the individual in this "dissociated state" needs a directing and ordering principle.<sup>8</sup> I believe that ordering principle can be found within Masonry and I, for one, would rather embrace an individual principle, belief, or philosophy than be subjected to a dictatorial one. I firmly agree with Nietzsche when he wrote that where tyranny exists, the philosopher will be hated- philosophy provides an "asylum" that cannot be penetrated by the tyrant.<sup>9</sup>

There are those who live not by the standards that they have internalized as proper and vital, but instead, live by the standards and the appearance that others expect of them. These standards may not be grounded in properly established moral dictates, but in the common opinion of the masses—resulting in mediocrity. Whereas the individual spirituality/philosophy will carry one above and beyond the average.<sup>10</sup>

Fromm further laments the superficiality of a society predicated on weakened structures and the public opinion of the masses. He also wrote in *The Sane Society* that "Today we come across a person who acts and feels like an automaton; who never experiences anything which is really his; who experiences himself entirely as the person he thinks he supposed to be..."<sup>11</sup>

Numerous thinkers explored the ideas of a nihilistic consequence of shifting moralities and belief structures presented. Predating Nietzsche, St. Augustine wrote, "For human nature is never so perverted in its degradation as to lose all feelings for what is honorable."<sup>12</sup>

I have traced a common thread of ideas connecting the works of philosophers, theologians, sociologists, and psychologists. So, what are the Masonic implications of these ideas?

By a lack of understanding and by a weak adherence to a moral structure, one may lose the vision of a purposeful life. As seen in the opening quote, the destruction of the temple resulted in our distancing from God. However, Masons are charged with recognizing the powers of His handiwork in creation and are further taught to consider the perfect ashlar and focus on "our spiritual, moral, and Masonic Trestle-Board". It is expected that Freemasons work to perfect themselves. Masonic instruction and action are among the most powerful counters to attacks of nihilism and to lack of purpose.

To preface my thoughts related to the rituals of Freemasonry, I am reminded of the sincerity and formality that are to accompany the rituals. A ritual is to be a sacred and

transformative experience; otherwise, it is just words and movement.

The rituals and the lectures we have all been a part of may serve as prominent foundations of our moral and ethical structure. We have observed these rituals physically and should seek to 'observe' them in our dealings with others. Since "*The capacity to observe is the first step to action.*"<sup>13</sup> we, as Masons, should internalize these lessons and apply them in every sphere of our lives. Manly P. Hall and Albert Pike both admonished the Mason to be live "*the doctrines which he preaches*"<sup>14</sup> and not to be "*content merely to hear, or even to understand, the lectures.*"<sup>15</sup>

Consider that many may attend to the rituals and lectures and see meaning within them. We are taught, charged, and we vow to keep and perform the same. Yet, if we think of these tenets as merely abstractions rather than a charge to action, we miss the point of them and fail to live up to those ideals.<sup>16</sup>

In our journey through the degrees of Freemasonry, we are presented with multiple opportunities to internalize its teachings. To receive knowledge, to contemplate it, to understand it through allegories and lessons, and, ultimately, to pass it on. We speak of circumscribing our desires and keeping our passions within due bounds. We speak of operative tools that we take as emblems of how we are to live a life of self-improvement in the quest of perfecting ourselves. However, "*One acts imperfectly if he acts with less perfection than he is capable of.*"<sup>17</sup>

We know that the Temple is a representative of a temporal building, but also so much more. We know that we are also that temple, and, being that temple, we are obliged to continue toward its perfection, to live up to those ideal and to keep an "Incessant vigilance over thought, action, and desire ... to make progress in the unfolding of [our] own being"<sup>18</sup>

What can be loftier than to take the instruction to heart and apply it to our lives? Simply - to pass those ideals, lessons, contemplations, and actions to others. It becomes our duty to stand against those seeds of tyranny<sup>19</sup> through the elevation of the moral and intellectual level of the individuals in society - not to dictate, but to model and allow those individuals to see our light for themselves. The Mason "*should meet them too, foot to foot, even in the darkness, and protest against the national wrongs and follies; against usurpation and the first inroads of that hydra, Tyranny.*"<sup>20</sup>

As I come back around to the initial mention of the Temple and its destruction, how then to summarize and apply

the above? As indicated, when the traditional moral structures fall, society seeks something to fill the void. Masons are to reflect upon their own personal betterment. This is through the lessons inherent in the properly conducted rituals and through the richness and universality of the lessons of Masonry. Though we are to learn and grow, there is an expectation that we also extend that light to others. Our own personal development can light the way for others when we live accordingly within the moral structures of Masonry. As living examples of the lessons that we inculcate, we extend one version of charity, we become not just an 'instructive tongue' but also a model. By doing so, we reinforce that moral edifice that is our individual temple; we seek to become the perfect ashlar that can then be used to rebuild the temple for others. If the destruction of King Solomon's temple resulted in a loss of our one-ness with Deity, then we can help re-establish that one-ness, that At-one-ment, by being examples of proper conduct for others.

Masonry should not be a mere watch-tower, built upon mystery, from which to gaze at ease upon the world, with no other result than to be a convenience to the curious... Contemplation should lead to action and the absolute be practical; the ideal to be made food and drink to the human mind. Wisdom is a sacred communion.

And that the many could do the greatest evil, for then they would also be able to do the greatest good- and what a fine thing this would be.

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6. Dewey, John. *Individualism, Old and New*. Capricorn Books, 1962.
7. Jung, Carl. *The Undiscovered Self*. 1957, p. 23.
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10. Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *Beyond Good and Evil*. (1886)
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13. *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra*; 2.1.19
14. Hall, Manly Palmer. *The Lost Keys Of Freemasonry*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply Co., 2013, p. 73.
15. Pike, Albert. *Morals And Dogma Of The Ancient And Accepted Scottish Rite Of Freemasonry*. 1871, p. 22.
16. Hall, Manly Palmer. *The Lost Keys Of Freemasonry*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply Co., 2013, p. 68.
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19. Pike, Albert. *Morals And Dogma Of The Ancient And Accepted Scottish Rite Of Freemasonry*. 1871, p. 4.
20. Pike, Albert. *Morals And Dogma Of The Ancient And Accepted Scottish Rite Of Freemasonry*. 1871, pp. 4-5.



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## DELIVERING MORE LIGHT IN MASONRY

Using PowerPoint® Technology to Enhance Your Message

by Mike Codori, PM | Deputy Grand Lecturer

Sharing our Masonic knowledge with others is a manifestation of our commitment to provide our brethren with information—historical and allegorical—that will enhance their information and sharpen their perspective of Masonry. When doing so, many speakers choose to emphasize the points of their topic with presentation technology, especially PowerPoint®. It is crucial to recognize that your message is the most important feature of your speech, not the visual technology that PowerPoint® provides. It is intended to be used to highlight key terms and phrases that contribute to the total message you have chosen to disseminate to your audience.

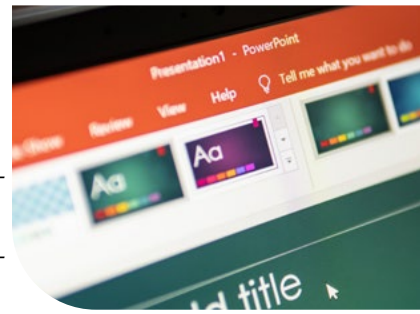
Many speakers use PowerPoint® to make their message both heard and seen, unaware of the features of this technology that may dramatically enhance their presentation. This is especially important when presenting to an adult audience, whose learning styles are clearly different from school-age listeners. I offer the following suggestions in your use of PowerPoint® to make your presentation both attention-getting and memorable.

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2. Use bullet points to emphasize the key words/phrases in your speech. Make them short and “attached” to your message.
3. Open each panel with a heading, beneath which will be the selected terms or phrases that support your heading.
4. Create subtopic terms with few/important words and “launch” them one at a time...NOT all together. Each subtopic should stand by itself and will depend upon your explanation of that chosen line.
5. Avoid long, detailed subtopics on your panels. The audience will be forced to read the entire lengthy paragraph as you speak, thus reducing the impact of your narrative.
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7. Use diverse animation features to introduce the slide components. These include swipe right/left, fade onto the screen, “roll” out onto the screen, etc. It reduces the monotony of the same animation and enhances visualization for the audience.
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