
The Lyceum



A Publication of
The Committee on Masonic Education



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Editor, Chad Lacek, 33°, Bernard Davis, Chairman

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Brethren and friends,

As we turn the page into April, the spirit of renewal is palpable. Spring is upon us, bringing with it a renewed sense of energy and purpose for all our lodges. Our calendars are quickly filling with events, meetings, and opportunities for fellowship, marking the season as one of growth and enlightenment.

In this invigorating time of year, we are thrilled to present a rich selection of articles that promise to inspire, educate, and challenge our perspectives. Each piece has been thoughtfully crafted or curated for this edition, reflecting the diverse tapestry of ideas and traditions within our fraternal community.

Our Chairman shares sage insights to guide us through this season of activity and reflection. His words serve as a beacon for all who seek wisdom and growth in their Masonic journey.

“Spring Time” by V.W. Bro. M.J. Brodix, PGS UGLE, paints a poetic picture linking Midwest culture with Freemasonry’s ritual practices. This article eloquently captures the essence of spring as a metaphor for spiritual and intellectual flourishing.

Chad M. Lacey’s “What Will Emerge” invites us to ponder renewal from a philosophical perspective. It encourages us to contemplate the new possibilities that this spring of our lives heralds for our individual journeys and collective endeavors as we approach the coming years.

We also bring you the latest news about this year’s Masonic Restoration Foundation Symposium, promising exciting discussions and innovative ideas for the future of our craft.

In “Service to Others,” Greg Knott reflects on the profound experience of spending time with a World War II veteran. His narrative is a poignant reminder of the timeless values of sacrifice and brotherhood.

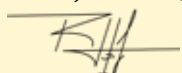
“Behold How Good & How Pleasant It Is” by Ernie Miranda explores the joy and harmony found in Masonic visitations, underscoring the importance of unity and fellowship in our lodges.

WB Bill Hosler’s “Freemasonry and the Chinese Bamboo Tree” offers a philosophical exploration of patience and diligent nurturing as essential elements for cultivating excellence within our lodges.

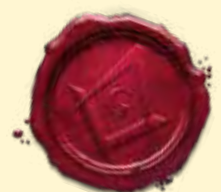
Finally, we delve into our archives with “The Character and Duty of Freemasonry,” an oration delivered in 1890 by Rev. A.T. Wolff, Grand Orator of the Grand Lodge of Illinois. This timeless piece reflects on the enduring values and responsibilities that define our fraternity.

We hope these articles inspire you with fresh insights and deepen your commitment to the craft. May this spring be a season of enlightenment and growth for all.

Fraternally yours,
R.H. Johnson,



Editor-In-Chief
The Lyceum



From the Chairman's Desk

by WB: Bernard Davis Jr., Chairman- Masonic Education Committee

EMBRACING MASONIC RENEWAL AND EDUCATION



This theme resonates deeply within Freemasonry, where the pursuit of education and enlightenment is a cornerstone of our craft. Education, much like spring, is about growth and transformation.

It is a continuous journey of discovery, fostering a deeper understanding of ourselves, our fraternity, and the world around us. As Freemasons, we are tasked with seeking knowledge that illuminates our path, helping us become better men and more impactful leaders within our communities.

Spring serves as a metaphor for the blossoming potential that education unlocks. Just as the earth replenishes itself, we too must renew our dedication to learning—whether it be studying Masonic principles, exploring the symbolism of our rituals, or engaging in discussions that challenge and inspire. By embracing education, we cultivate a stronger, more vibrant foundation for ourselves and our brothers.

Let us use this season of rebirth as an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to Masonic education. By deepening our knowledge and sharing our insights, we nurture the bonds that tie us together while planting seeds of wisdom for future generations. In doing so, we embody the ideals of Freemasonry and ensure that the light of learning continues to shine brightly within our fraternity.

Fraternally,

WB Bernard Davis Jr

Chairman - Committee on Masonic Education
Grand Lodge of A.F. & A. M. of the State of
Illinois



SPRING TIME

by V. W. Bro. M. J. Brodix, Past Grand Steward



*“Wide flush the fields; the softening air is balm;
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;
And every sense and every heart is joy.”*

The long, dark winter is over, and once again, we enter that period of the year known as springtime. It is the season in which new growth begins, when “Life flows afresh; and young-eyed health exalts the whole creation round.” It is also the season when man must cease to be a dreamer with the poets and become practical, and get busy tilling and seeding the land, for we know that without seedtime there can be no harvest.

It matters not what our private vocation may be; our thoughts turn to those of our brethren whose life's occupation is farming. Although we may live in a city, town, or hamlet, we are all vitally concerned in the welfare of the farmer and scan the skies for signs of the weather, for we know so much depends upon the frequent showers and sunshine by which the G.A.O.T.U. blesses and rewards the labors of those on the land. And yet, our brother on the farm will tell us that unless the soil is clean, well fertilized, and properly tilled, he cannot expect the seed to germinate, grow, multiply, and ripen.

As the sun, at this season, draws out from the soil renewed or awakened life and new wealth of vegetation, so also should the Entered Apprentice degree create in the candidate a thirst or desire for spiritual light in the realm of moral philosophy. As we listen to and watch a candidate receiving his First Degree,

we sometimes wonder what the harvest will be in future years. What kind of preparation has taken place in his mind for him to desire to be admitted into the great brotherhood of Freemasonry? He is not invited into the Craft, but must apply for admittance of his own free will and accord, and if his application is approved, he comes before us humbly soliciting to be admitted to our ancient mysteries.

In a word, the ground must be well prepared to receive the seed of Masonry. Before the applicant is permitted to take one step on his Masonic journey, he must answer certain questions, and from the replies given to these questions, we catch a glimpse of the mental character of the man. The seed that is planted in the mind and soul of the Initiate is good seed, and, as with the farmer, so with the Craft, we cannot expect a bountiful harvest unless the candidate is thoroughly prepared within himself to receive our Masonic teachings.

At times it would seem that our brethren, residing in the country live and work closer to the realities or plans of the Great Architect. Surely they have a better opportunity of observing all around them in the natural world. PILLARS of His works; His WISDOM in the order of the seasons-spring, summer, autumn, and winter, light and darkness; His STRENGTH or Power in the mighty elements of sunshine and cloud, wind and rain, heat and frost; -His BEAUTY in the adornment of the countryside, with its ever changing colors, its fruits, its flowers, and the music of the birds. Truly, *“His Beauty shines*

forth throughout the whole of creation.” These brethren know we cannot violate His Eternal Laws without suffering and loss to ourselves. So, it is in the Entered Apprentice degree, the lessons imparted to the candidate are the fundamentals of life, and unless he receives these with an open mind, we cannot expect the teachings of the subsequent degrees to grow and prosper.

Many years ago, at the time of the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, there appeared a remarkable cartoon. This showed a long flight of massive stone steps, at the top of which was an enormous door, heavily studded and barred. Written across the door were the blazing letters LIFE. Upon the second or third step stood the figure of a feeble old man representing Science. The idea conveyed by the cartoonist was that although man had climbed a step or two in his search for the secrets of the laws of the Divine Creator, he had a long, long struggle ahead of him, and even after reaching the top of the steps he would still be confronted by that great door leading to the Mystery of Life—the door which could and would be opened only by the Great Architect Himself, and in His own good time.

As an allegory, this may well be likened to our entrance into Freemasonry. We believe it is only by the practice of the three great virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity, that we can ascend those symbolic steps to a fuller knowledge of the will of the Supreme Being. Just as the farmer sows his seed in faith, believing all will be well, so should the initiate pass the portal of a Masonic lodge, believing the step he is taking will lead him to a richer, fuller life. As he proceeds through the ceremony he may feel bewildered and confused, for he learns for the first time part of the philosophy of Freemasonry, and begins to realize the importance of the step he has taken.

He soon discovers that while he may have believed the Craft was just a gathering of jovial, friendly fellows, yet within the lodge the principles inculcated are of the very highest. He hears what is expected of him as a member of this great Fraternity. He learns that the cornerstone of Freemasonry is CHARITY (Love), and how we are constantly admonished to practice this virtue in its most ample sense, not only in the giving of our substance, but in the moderation and manor of our criticism of the views or sentiments of others. For is it not written in the V.S.L., “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.”

As he tries to absorb all he hears and sees of the impressive ceremony, he perhaps wonders whether he will be able to ascend the next round on the ladder of Freemasonry, for upward, ever upward, should a Mason strive to climb, and the higher one would climb the more one must divest himself of selfish desires and material ambitions. Looking about him he may see men of divers religious beliefs, and many shades of political opinions, and yet each calling the other “brother,” forgetting all their differences both within the lodge and at harmony, in the knowledge that they are fellow servants and workmen of the G.A.O.T.U., and, therefore, all equal under Him, and all equally necessary in the building of His Holy Temple. And so, the long evening being over and the last handshake given, our newly initiated brother departs for home.

As he journeys homeward along the quiet countryside, where nature seems so calm and restful, with only an occasional startled cry or scurry of some wild creature to disturb the silence, he meditates over all he has heard and seen, and wonders what it is all about—what change has come over him--has he acted wisely in joining the Craft? Looking up and seeing the starry firmament of the celestial canopy, he seems to hear faintly the strain of some distant choir singing those familiar words:

*“Clear before us through the darkness
Gleams and burns the guiding Light;
Brother clasps the hand of brother,
Stepping fearless through the night.”*





Victory Masonic Lodge & Cibolo Masonic Lodge present

San Antonio Esoteric Summit

Saturday, June 7th, 2025

8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. CDT

Speakers

**Jeff Bennett . Ben Williams . Frank Zepp . Dirk Hughes
Robert H. Johnson . Rodney McGillvary . T.J. Brumfield**

Tickets: <https://tinyurl.com/4wvkjpaf>

**Alzafar Shrine - Director's Staff Building
901 N Loop 1604 W,
San Antonio, TX, 78232**

What Will Emerge?

by RWB.: Chad M. Lacey, 33°

We see it reenacted every year. The play, if it had a name, may well be titled, "How the Universe works, in Four Acts." It doesn't matter when you take your seat. If you watch long enough, you'll see them all. Birth, Life, Death, Rebirth. Consolidation, Function, Dissolution, Recombination. Be it animal, plant, or mineral, all matter obeys. The curtain opened March 20th to the latest performance of the Act labeled "Spring."

We might erroneously believe that we are exempt from this format, since the duration of our four Acts is longer than three months. They are, however, not much longer. 20 years, perhaps? Maybe 25?

What we do have is opportunity. Each year we get to decide how we will greet the new cycle of life around us. The blossoms outside right now are different than the ones you knew. They may look similar, but they are in fact a reflection of what happened to them and around them last year. Like it or not, so are you.

Wisdom, at least some fragment of it, is ironically found by a process of unlearning. As children we are taught which things are good, and the ones that are bad. We are shown examples of when to be angry, and why to be happy. We were taught how the world works, but our teachers didn't know it themselves. There is only one world, one universe. It's the one you see through your eyes. No one else sees it the way you do. Yours is perfectly accurate and correct, and so is everyone else's, to them. You interpret the signals your body collects, and you create the world in your eyes.

It was an evolutionary necessity that we interpret signals in a similar way to permit cooperation. A successful hunt would be difficult if you were pursuing an elk, while I was chasing a pink elephant. We can see similar things, if we both agree to do so.

Who decides when something good happens to you? Many people will share an opinion, but who has the only vote that counts? Do you use that lone vote? Or do you locate the event on the chart you were given as a child, and see which category it falls under so

you can permit yourself to feel happy or angry accordingly?

You get to decide every single time. Now I know that asking you to consider the upside of a flat tire is a stretch. Gandhi or Mother Teresa might manage it, but it borders on the ridiculous for everyone else. Nevertheless, our interpretation of every event is whatever we choose it to be.

What if you exercised your vote 10% of the time? You'd get to skip one out of every 10 frustrations. This Mental Toughness, like any other muscle, gets stronger with use. In the midst of a disruption, could you ask yourself questions like, "What can I learn from this?" or "How can I turn this into an advantage?"

Will you greet this spring unchanged, one year closer to the winter of your life? Or will you emerge a slightly different version, empowered with a few new ideas and a spark of determination? Will you unlearn patterns of thought that no longer serve you, and replace them with your right to interpret your world as only you can? No one knows, and no one decides but you.





MASONIC RESTORATION FOUNDATION

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM • AUGUST 15-17, 2025 • HAMILTON, ONTARIO

Welcome to the Fourteenth Annual MRF Symposium!

The Masonic Restoration Foundation Symposium is the largest gathering of Masons in North America who are expressly committed to observing the highest standards of excellence in the Craft. This year, for only the second time, we are returning to Canada, to one of the most majestic Masonic locations in Canada: the Hamilton Scottish Rite Temple, in Hamilton, Ontario.

The Symposium will take place from August 15-17, 2025, and will be hosted by Templum Lucis Lodge No. 747.

As usual, the event will begin with a Harmony [Festive Board] held in the Lower Level Dining Room on Friday evening, conducted by the MRF Board, and featuring comments from our Keynote Speaker, WB Ric Berman, Past Master of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076 in London, England. Along with our usual lineup of interesting speakers, brothers will have the opportunity to witness a Fellow Craft Degree conferred by Heredom Lodge No. 749 on Saturday afternoon. Registration for the Symposium is \$125.00 USD/\$175.00 CAD, and \$75.00 USD/\$100 CAD for the Saturday session only.

We are hoping that this year's Symposium will be an opportunity for an exchange of different perspectives and methods of Masonic practice in North America, and one that will especially bring in brothers from across Canada. All the information you need to participate is found here on this web site. We look forward to seeing you at the Symposium!

Andrew Hammer
President, MRF

What is the MRF Symposium?

The MRF Symposium is a meeting place for Masons who are seeking the highest form of Masonic experience they can attain within their lodges, while strictly conforming to the laws, resolutions, and edicts of their respective grand lodges. It is a gathering for those who pursue quality in the Craft to share ideas and discuss their work. The Symposium begins on Friday evening at 7:30 PM, with a Harmony in the Lower Level Dining Room, and concludes before noon on Sunday. As always, we have assembled an excellent program of speakers and presenters to share their light with you.

Who May Attend the Symposium?

Any Mason in good standing may register for the Symposium, provided he is a member of a Grand Lodge which is a member of, or is recognized by any one of the Grand Lodges which are members of, the Conference of Grand Masters of North America, or the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodge of Ireland, or the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Full Registration for the Symposium is \$175 CAD/\$125 USD.

Topics and Panels

- Origins, Allegory, and Enlightenment: From the Horn Tavern to Solomon's Temple
- Why Do We Bother?
- Dealing With Diversity in the Lodge
- Tragedies and Triumphs in a New Observant Lodge
- Living Life as an Observant Mason
- Victory Through Harmony: Transforming an Existing Lodge
- The Observant Lodge In Canada
- Happiness: The Chief Aim of Masonry
- Kipling, Burns, and Observant Masonry

Featured Speakers and Panelists:

Ric Berman . Ed Burridge . David Cameron
Donald Carducci . Jean-Frédéric Dicaire Philip
Durell Dan Graham . Andrew Hammer
Chad M. Lacey

Service to Others

by Greg Knott, 33°



Since retirement, I have been pursuing a hobby and perhaps more in aviation photography. I have attended numerous airshows, visited air museums, stopped in small towns looking at the military aircraft they have on display in front of the American Legion Post and more.

My travels have taken me across the US, including a recent trip to Arizona. I made my way to Tucson and visited the Pima Air and Space Museum. This museum is adjacent to Davis-Mothan AFB, home of the 309th Aircraft Maintenance and Regeneration Group (309 AMARG)B and the museum has been the recipient of many of the retired aircraft that come to their final home in aircraft boneyard at Davis-Mothan.

The museum now has a collection of over 400 aircraft, with most of them in great condition. These aircraft range from pre WWII aircraft to modern recently retired aircraft. Most of the planes were flown to the museum for their final flight. The Arizona desert is a great place to keep planes, when they are outside for display.

On the grounds of Pima Air and Space is a smaller museum, the 390th Memorial Museum. This museum pays tribute to the crews who flew in B-17 bombers during WW II. A fully restored B-17 is prominently featured in the building and the exhibits tell the stories of those who flew aboard the B-17 and the ground crews who supported them.

The particular day I was visiting, the museum had an author, Col. Richard B. Bushong there to talk about his book "My Wars." Col. Bushong had a 32 career as an aviator in the United States Air Force, first serving as a B-17 pilot during WWII and finishing his career flying an F-4 in Vietnam.

Col. Bushong told the stories of the B-17 crews. He recounted the heavy losses they sustained as they flew from bases in England, flying over the English Channel with missions in Germany and elsewhere, to bomb amongst other targets, factories that were vital to the German war efforts. Most of the time, the B-17 did not have fighter escorts, as the escort planes did not have sufficient range to stay with the B-17. This changed later in the war as the P-51 Mustang came into service and it had sufficient range to escort the B-17. The famed Tuskegee Airmen were amongst the crews who flew the P-51 and served as escorts.

The Germans knew the B-17s were on the way, as their radar could pick them up as they left England. The Americans primarily bombed during the day, as US Army Air Force leadership thought that was the most effective method. The crew flew at altitudes of up to 29,000 feet and faced heavy flak from the Germans below. The B-17s had to fly in tight formations to help their rate of survival and to be most effective.

B-17 losses were often heavy. Each B-17 had a 10 man crew and when a plane was shot down, the crew's only hope was to bail out of the plane and hope to evade

capture by German forces on the ground.

Crews were under extreme duress. The B-17 is an unpressurized plane, which meant that above 10,000 feet, crews had to wear an oxygen mask. This was in addition to heavy jackets and clothing to keep them from freezing to death. The air temperature could drop to -50 degrees below zero. All the while the plane had to be flown, the radio manned, the bomb site scoped in for accuracy, 50mm guns to be manned and reloaded.

If a crew member was able to fly and complete 25 missions, they would have completed their service and rotated back home. Crews only had a 25% chance of completing their 25th mission. Hundreds of crew members were lost after being shot down and hundreds more were taken as prisoners of war after being captured by the Germans.

The bravery of these crews is easy to forget today, as we are now 80 years after the close of WWII. Yet the events of the current day are still influenced by those brave service personnel from decades ago. Col. Bushong at 102 years of age is one of the very last of the surviving B-17 crew members. He has made it his life's mission to tell the stories of these brave men, in hopes of keeping their story alive and help ensure the sacrifices they made are not forgotten.

I want to thank Col. Bushong for his service and all those who flew, manned and crewed the B-17s to help ensure our freedom.



“BEHOLD, HOW GOOD AND HOW PLEASANT IT IS...”

by SK Ernest (Ernie) Miranda, AZ

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”

“It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore.”

Brethren, I consider myself to be a “Traveling Man” in Masonry. In speculative Masonry, we as Master Masons may freely move from Lodge to Lodge (visiting) and, upon proper avouchment or by testing, be found worthy of attending a Lodge of Master Masons. My job takes me to many locations domestically and internationally, and I do take advantage of this opportunity and visit lodges when able.

The one thing that is a constant within all the lodges I have visited, regardless of location, is the concern the brethren have regarding low attendance at the stated meetings.

I started this message with the passage above, that we are all very familiar with. This message that I impart on you is a part of a larger masonic education piece I have put together, but I wanted to share some of it with you at this time. My rationale for this is because the passage above is a good reminder of why it is so essential for us to take time to attend Lodge whenever possible.

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” – We each face daily challenges in our lives, and our body and mind require an opportunity to refresh and renew. What a blessing to have the opportunity that enables us to meet with others in an environment free of politics, personal status, issues of the outside world, etc.! Coming together to meet as equals for the common good.

“It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;” – The “ointment or oil”

was used for setting one apart from, and for blessing them in preparation of an upcoming task. Unity and fellowship are like anointing oil in someone’s life.

The physical and mental renewal and recharge that is experienced by attending Lodge and being with your brethren are all-encompassing for your body and mind, head to toe!

“As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion” – Just as the dew provides moisture and reinvigorates life as it descends to the lower elevations, so does brotherly love, descending from the higher to the lower, the passing of knowledge and strength, refreshing and enlivening in the course of the gathering, and the sweet diffusiveness of brotherly unity.

“...for there the Lord commanded the blessing,” – The Great Architect with these words gives strength to support to perform that which is commanded. It is good, for the Great Architect calls it a blessing. Finally, *“even life forevermore.”* – Regeneration, which will never cease.

Brethren, ask yourself, *“Why is it that you are not regularly attending stated meetings?”* If you think that the Lodge doesn’t miss you or that the Lodge is doing fine in your absence, remember the quote by Aristotle, *“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”* When we connected, when we all come together in unity, imagine what we could do, rather than as smaller parts trying to accomplish the same.

If you need assistance in getting to Lodge, please let a Lodge member know, and we will find a way to get you here. If you require anything, let a Lodge member know. Brethren, look around in Lodge and look for those missing and reach out to them. Ask them if they need any assistance and arrange for a visit.

May the Great Architects blessings be with you and yours.



Freemasonry and the Chinese Bamboo Tree

by Bill Hosler, PM †

Not long ago I saw a video of a motivational talk given by a man named Les Brown. In this talk, Mr. Brown began to explain how a person's life and their success is like growing a Chinese bamboo tree.

The Chinese bamboo tree isn't easy to grow. In order for the tree to grow, the ground in which the seed is planted must be watered and fertilized every day without fail for five years, but the tree doesn't sprout until the fifth year. After that five years, the grower's patience and hard work are rewarded when the tree grows over ninety feet tall in that fifth year.

Brown explains in the video how many people will allow the tree to die because they get discouraged doing all that work, spending all the time fertilizing the soil and watering the seed without seeing any progress from all their labors. After all that time, they have spent so much doing the necessary work in order for the tree to sprout, without seeing any progress. They begin to lose faith in the process or their own abilities, or even worse, they begin to listen to naysayers, and the tree dies when they give up the hard work needed to make the tree come alive.

In today's Microwave society, where we want to start out at the top of the heap and success is assured, many of us will become frustrated when the goal we want to reach or the objective we have in mind doesn't happen right away or fails to fall into place on the first attempt. Many times we get frustrated or dejected and we begin to listen to that little voice in the back of our head, or worse yet, those who don't want you to succeed because of their own agendas and prejudices. We give up and move on, and the Chinese bamboo tree seed we planted will wither and die because we quit watering and fertilizing the ground in which it was planted.

Brethren, in my opinion, Masonic renewal is much like that Chinese bamboo tree. In the decade and a half since I was raised to the sublime degree, I've begun to get interested in the Masonic renewal movement. I have worked with many dedicated Masons who put their lives and treasure into the Craft with the hope of making Freemasonry grow strong again, and to help it take its legitimate place in society. But I also watch them grow weary in their labors and slowly give in to the naysayers who place obstructions in their path. They either don't

see the progress being made or the tree of their labors isn't sprouting quickly enough, or even worse, their skin gets too thin when dealing with those who wish the Fraternity to stay as it has for the last half-century. Sadly, they just throw their hands up in the air and leave our speculative quarries and give up on Masonry.

It's really sad for so many reasons. First of all, in just a few years I have been a Mason there has been tremendous progress, such as the mutual recognition of Prince Hall Grand Lodges (including in many formerly Confederate states), many jurisdictions have begun allowing business meetings on the first degree, more Masonic education is being introduced into lodge settings. In just the last decade and a half, our progress has been beyond what any of us thought could happen just a decade ago. Every year the Masonic renewal movement continues to make progress, it may not be as fast as many of us wish it would happen, but progress is being made nonetheless. But if we want it to continue to progress we need to continue to work the soil in which we planted that seed so many years ago.

Brethren, the Craft needs you. Each one of you is to continue to advance and work toward making Freemasonry strong again. For each Mason who leaves our Fraternity, there is one less man to work in his local lodge, mentor younger Brethren, and vote in Grand lodge communications. Like it says in the York Rite's Virtual Past Master's degree: "From a grip to a span; from a span to a grip; a two-fold cord is strong, but a three-fold cord is not easily broken." We are all stronger as a group than we are as individuals.

Each one of us has our own strengths and talents given to us by our Creator, whether you are a writer, orator, ritualist, builder, cook...each one of us has a place in this Masonic renaissance. No matter who you are, we need you. Each of you is important and hard to replace. Brothers, if you know a man who is thinking about leaving the Fraternity, try to convince them to stay and continue their labors. Explain to them how they make a difference to you, the lodge, and to the Craft as a whole. If they have already left, try to convince them to come back and rejoin us in our efforts.

If we want this fraternity to grow strong again, we need each of you, your efforts, and support.



Volume II is out now!

Since 1953, the Research Lodge of Colorado has been producing quality Masonic Education papers. Over the last three years, the Lodge has worked tirelessly to compile the transactions into an amazing volume that is beautifully curated and printed.

\$20

RLCOLO.Org/Items

Since 1949, the MCME has provided a forum for sharing best practices in Masonic Education



News



Mission



Invitation to Join Us



**The 2025 Midwest
Conference on Masonic
Education will be held in
Indiana**

May 2 – 4, 2025

Since 1949 we have endeavored to:

Provide a communications and support network for our member jurisdictions.

Conduct an annual forum for Masons who have a vital interest in Masonic Education.

Offer the opportunity to share Masonic experiences, knowledge, and insights.

Publish occasional newsletters, communications, and the proceedings of its annual meetings.

Consider joining us in this work:

All Master Masons from recognized Masonic jurisdictions and Masonic-Affiliated organizations in the United States, Canada, or worldwide are encouraged to contact us and become part of our Conference on Masonic Education.

We also encourage recognized Masonic Jurisdictions to inquire on how to become a member jurisdiction of MCME.

[Join Now...](#)



About Us

Midwest Conference on Masonic Education

Since 1949, the MCME has provided a forum for sharing best practices in Masonic Education with each of its member jurisdictions.

Who We Are

The Midwest Conference on Masonic Education was formed in 1949 at a gathering of interested Masons from Illinois (including Alphonse Cerza) and Iowa.

The outcome was to continue getting together by establishing its first Annual Meeting which was held in December 1950 in Cedar Rapids IA. The organization is comprised of a loose and ever-changing collection of Masonic educators from Grand Lodge jurisdictions located in 12 north central States and the Province of Manitoba. Other participants frequently include chairs of Masonic Education as well as Grand Lodge officers.

What We Are About

The aim of the Conference is to promote Masonic Education, in part by providing a forum for educators to gather, freely discuss Masonic issues, socialize, and learn from sharing experiences while build-

ing beneficial relationships.

In addition, the Conference initiates special projects such as collecting data on educational practices across all North American jurisdictions, as well as encouraging Masonic research and writing by individual educators.

How We Function

The Conference meets once a year, usually in late April or early May, in one of the member jurisdictions. Responsibility for conducting the Annual Meeting rotates each year, eventually being hosted by all member jurisdictions before repeating.

A typical program schedule includes presentations by well-known Masonic speakers, experiential as well as scholarly participant presentations, roundtable discussions, and jurisdiction reports. Sufficient time is also arranged to provide informal chats among attendees. For more than a half century, our participants have expressed the view that our Conference is well worth the time, effort and cost in order to gain the many benefits from attending and participating.

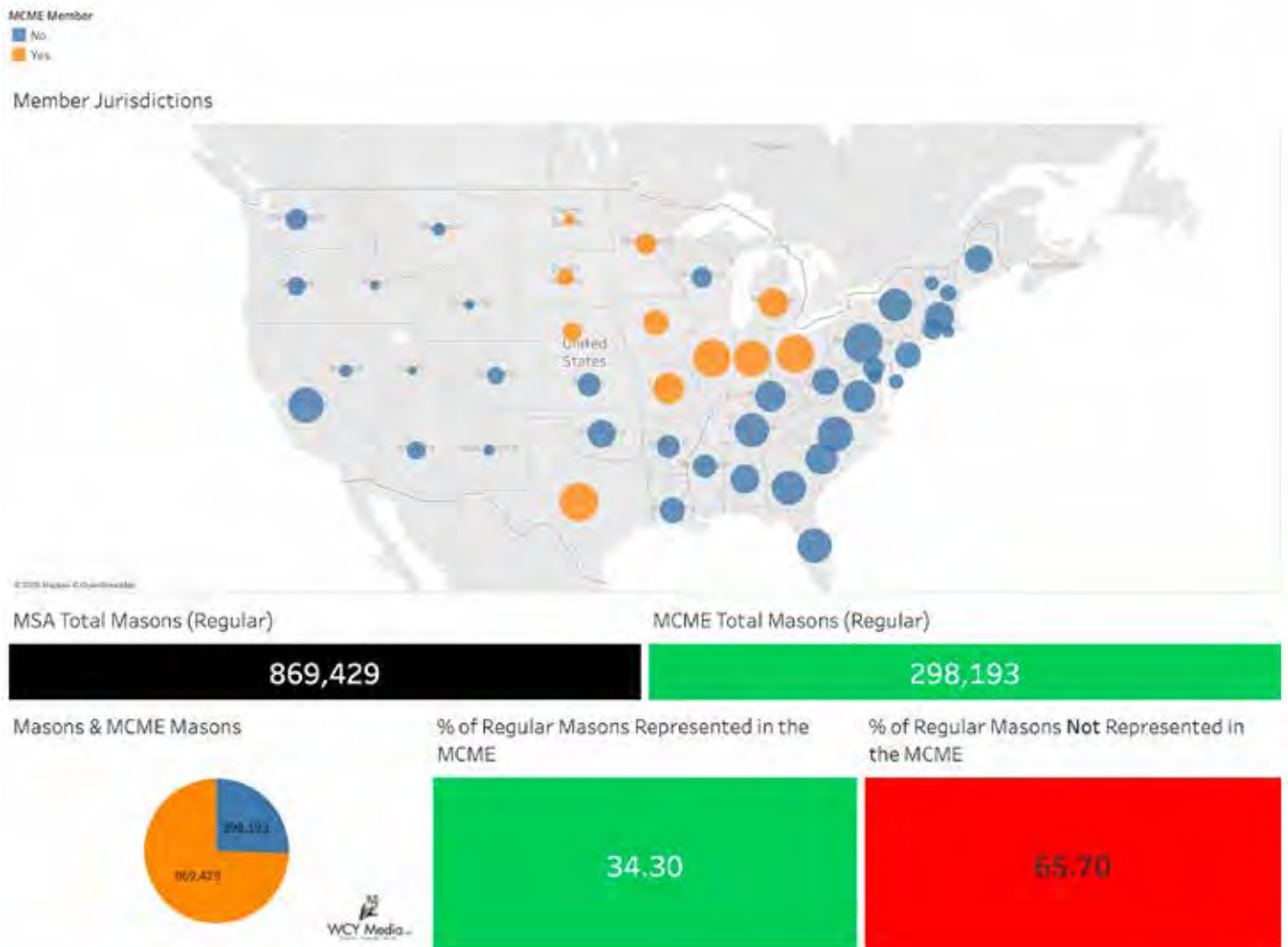
For more information visit:

MCME1949.Org

Remember - Individuals and other orgs can join, that means YOU!

Are YOU Represented?!

- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- Ohio
- North Dakota
- South Dakota
- Texas



The 2025 Midwest Conference on Masonic Education

Hosted by the Grand Lodge of Indiana F. & A. M.

May 2 – 4, 2025

THE CHARACTER & DUTY OF MASONRY

*An address delivered before the Grand Lodge of Illinois,
October 5th. 1890,
By Rev. A. T. Wolff, Grand Orator*

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Grand Officers and Brethren:

I am deeply sensible of the honor conferred upon me in being permitted to address this great assemblage, the representatives of the more than 40,000 Masons in the State of Illinois. But what can I say?

Our Most Worshipful Grand Master in notifying me of this appointment expressed a wish that I should say something practical and helpful to the members of our Fraternity.

This I shall try to do, especially in view of the great number of young men in this Grand Lodge. They are an earnest of the glory, the strength and progress of our Order through coming years. For myself, let me say that I was raised an anti-Mason of the straightest sect. I was told that Freemasons were thieves, cutthroats; that they had murdered more than one inoffensive citizen; would swear to what was not true in courts of justice to shield a brother Mason from just punishment; that they were a menace to society and good government, and could not be trusted.

As I grew older, observation taught me that these things could not be true. Wherever I went I saw many of the best men in every community wearing the badge of the Order. Many of these were men who not only would scorn to do a vile or mean act, but they were eminent Christian men. What is true of the present is also true of the past. A few years ago, a ministerial friend in Pennsylvania had in his possession a Masonic apron which he held of priceless value because of its history. He was a descendant of the Wesley family, and the apron, which had descended to him through several generations,

had belonged to the illustrious John Wesley, the great founder of Methodism.

This apron was worn by Wesley when present at meetings of the lodge. In 1734 Benjamin Franklin was the Grand Master of Pennsylvania. In 1754 a subscription list was circulated in Philadelphia to erect a Masonic hall. The list of subscribers is a long one, and among the names are Benjamin Franklin, John Bell, James Hamilton and others eminent in the city and Province, and some of them afterwards in the councils of the nation. When General Washington was inaugurated President, April 30, 1789, the oath of office was administered by Chancellor Livingstone, the Grand Master of New York, and the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania sent him an address of fraternal greeting! Time wore on and Washington's administration was drawing to its close. At an extra Grand Communication, an address was presented, to which Washington sent a most affectionate reply, closing with these words: "Permit me to reciprocate your prayers for my temporal happiness, and to supplicate that we may all hereafter meet in that eternal temple, whose builder is the Great Architect of the Universe." In 1824, when the Illustrious Lafayette, the friend of Washington and liberty, visited this country, in the Grand Lodges of Pennsylvania and of New York he made most earnest, fraternal appeals on behalf of the persecuted Masons of France and Spain.

But why enlarge the list? The best men of the past and present have honored the Institutions of Masonry. Let us keep it so by saying that none but the virtuous and the good shall be admitted within our sacred portals. Unworthy and wicked men have sometimes gained admission. "They were with us, but not of us." So has it ever been in the Church of Jesus Christ.

When there was only a church of twelve, one was a Judas, and there have been many Judases since. Masonry has her Judases, but they are false to the principles they profess.

Some object to the secrecy of our Order, but I remark that secrecy is not in itself wrong. It only becomes wrong when used for wicked purposes. Those who would compare Masonry to Molly McGuireism, the Clan-na-Gael, and other lawless organizations, talk of that which they know not. Every corporation or business house has its secrets. Every family is a secret society, and the husband or wife who reveals family secrets to the world, is justly held up to public infamy. The little flower blooming on the hillside, with its dew-kissed petals, bowing in worship to the rising sun, has its mysteries of life and growth which naturalist has never penetrated. Man himself is a being of mystery. He is "...fearfully and wonderfully made."

The soul and its attributes, the union of mind and matter, the relations of will and consciousness, are secrets which have never been revealed. Masonry has its secrets as well, which shall not be made manifest till the great day of the declaring of all things.

There exists an organization, with headquarters in this city, which has for its avowed object the overthrow of Masonry and all other secret organizations. It is composed of a few members, mostly in the vicinity of this city with a poorly sustained paper and publishing house. No slander is too great, no falsehood too base or malicious for these cranks to utter against our Order and its members. And yet they arrogate to themselves the great, high-sounding title of the "National Christian Association." Their feeble efforts and their big name reminds me of a little story of old Jack Spicer, of Kentucky.

Jack was in Paris, and attended a ball at the Hotel de Ville. He was dressed in a resplendent uniform, and sported epaulettes on his shoulders large enough to start four major generals in business. Jack was the observed of all observers, and got mixed up with a party that his friends could not account for. Wherever the Marshals of France went, there went Jack, and when the Marshals sat down, Jack did the same, always taking the post of honor. The next day Jack called on the American Minister, who started up conversation in the following way:

"Well, Jack, you were at the ball last night."

"I was, sir, and had a high old time."

"For which I suppose you were indebted to the high old company you got into. By the way, how came you associ-

ated with the Marshals?"

"How? By virtue of my office. They were Marshals of France, while I am nothing else than a Marshal of the United States?"

"By right of your office! What do you mean?"

Jack pulled out a whitey-brown parchment, with a seal big enough for a four-pound weight.

"What is this?"

"My commission of 'Marshal', which I received when I was Provost, Marshal, time of the war!"

"Well, Jack," said the American Minister, "all I've got to say is, you're doing a mighty big business on a mighty small capital!"

And so say we of the Cynosureans, alias National Christian Association—in their attempt to overthrow Masonry—they are doing a mighty big business on a mighty small capital!

For whatever cause attacked—by the ignorant, the scoffer, the wicked, the faithless, or the false—the brotherhood is pledged to maintain itself now and hereafter as aforesaid. We laugh to scorn the futile efforts of men, ignorant or misled, deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who seek notoriety or gain by fruitless assaults upon our noble Order. Against all hostile forces, it stands protected in a security consecrated by the centuries.

Masonry is the oldest of existing secret fraternities, as well as the mother of all others. Our Most Worshipful Grand Master said to me almost a year ago, "Don't give us a flowery talk about the Antiquity of Masonry, that is done to death; talk about something else." Which I propose to do. The fact is, I have no sympathy with the claims of a great antiquity. Some say that the apostles were Masons, some trace the institution back to Solomon, some to Noah, and some to the garden of Eden. It is true that Adam made himself an "apron," but I can scarcely believe that he was a Mason, for he had been guilty of grossly unMasonic conduct just before! I have no doubt that the world in all ages has had its secret orders, but speculative Masonry is of comparatively modern date. It is an outgrowth of the Guilds of operative Masons of Germany, France and Great Britain in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and more latterly those of Sir Christopher Wren, who erected St. Paul's Cathedral, and rebuilt much of London after the great fire. These guilds beginning to admit gen-

tllemen and noblemen, gradually lost their operative character. The first instance of the admission of gentlemen to these guilds was in 1646, when Elias Ashmole, afterward Herald of Windsor under Charles II., and Col. Mainwaring were accepted.

Thus these guilds began to develop into speculative Masonry. Speculative Masonry may really be said to have commenced its present career in London, June 24, 1717. For on that day, the “high noon of the year, the day of light and roses,” was instituted the first Grand Lodge of England, which was composed of four subordinate lodges. The leading spirits in the organization were Desaguliers, a French Huguenot, and Rev. James Anderson, a Scotch Presbyterian minister. Anderson compiled the first Book of Constitutions. In 1721, the Duke of Montague was Grand Warden, the first of a long line of noblemen and princes who have graced our noble Fraternity.

The true glory of Masonry is not in its antiquity, but in the purity of its principles. Feathers, regalia, gold lace, big processions may dazzle the eyes of children and the unthinking, but we shall best commend ourselves and our order to the thoughtful and wise by being more fraternal, and walking by the “great light” which God has given to us, to be a “lamp to our feet and a light to our pathway.”



Masonic Educational Conferences

Midwest Conference on Masonic Education – May 2nd-4th 2025, Indiana
www.MCME1949.org

San Antonio Esoteric Summit - Saturday, June 7th, 2025
San Antonio, TX, Alzafar Shrine - Director's Staff Building
Tickets are for sale! - <https://tinyurl.com/4wvkjpaf>

Northern Illinois All-State Spring AMD In-Gathering - June 21st, Medinah Shrine
Open to all members of the Allied Masonic Degrees

South Pasadena Masonic Con (SPML) – July 25th, 2025 – California
www.MasonicCon.com

Central Illinois All-State Fall AMD In-Gathering - October 18th, 2025 - Bloomington-Normal Masonic Lodge
Open to all members of the Allied Masonic Degrees

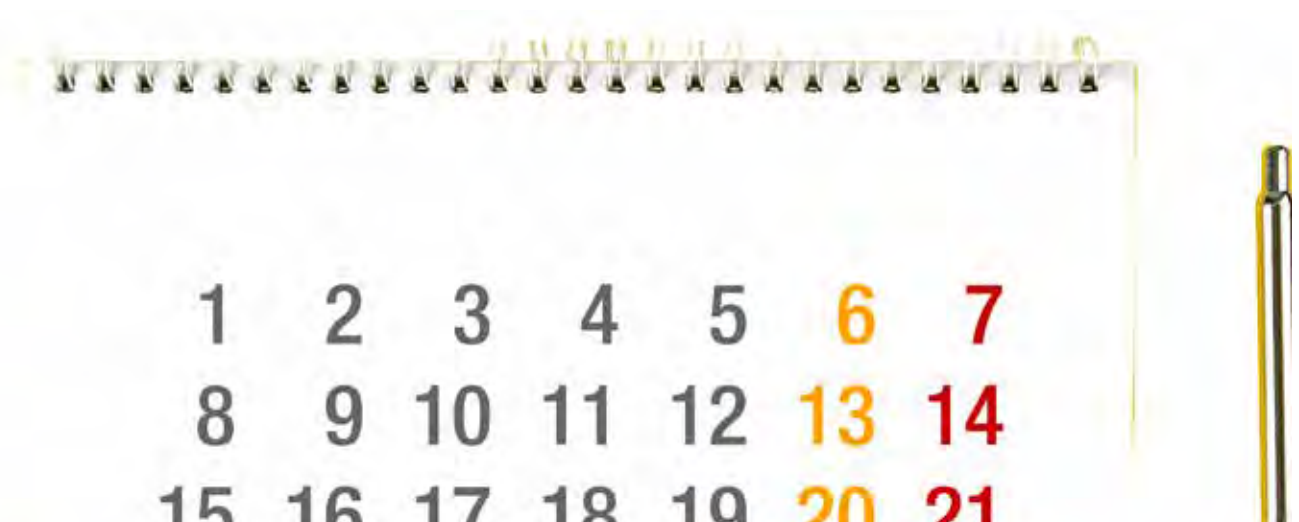
Masonic Con South – October 18 & 19th, 2025 – North Carolina
www.MasonicConSouth.com

Yes! Masonic Con Chicago will be back in September of 2026.

For more visit, MasonicConferences.com

If your lodge or organization is having an Educational Event (not related to instruction or charities), please let us know. Email the details to: Admin@wcypodcast.com

Please give us at least a month notice so that we can ensure it is added.





בזמננו נאמנו מנו טר

