

WLN20 Trestle Board

September 2023



From the East

Mauro Lara - Worshipful Master

Hello Brethren, Family, and Friends.

Here we are in the last month of the third quarter of the year. Is it just me or does it seem to you that the year is moving along rather quickly? The good news is that not only is the year going by fast, but we as a Lodge have done a number of events and will continue to do so through the balance of the year. More to follow.

As you know from my previous communications, my emphasis was to start the year off fast and steadily. The first and second quarters were filled with a variety of activities, Masonic, social, and philanthropic. These were previously mentioned. This is as a result of the benefit of having the enthusiasm and energy that goes with officers in new positions and with the eagerness that comes at the beginning of every new year. The Officers were certainly busy for the benefit of our brothers, family, and friends. The third quarter was one where things by design were slowed down to accommodate vacation time, the typical reduction in energy that comes with the hot summer months, and a general need to catch one's breath. Now we end the third quarter and move into the fourth quarter with a renewed sense of commitment and energy to do several activities. More on this later as well.

At the start of the year when we had our first all-Officers meeting, I asked the Wardens and Deacons to each take on a major project, plan it, manage it, and execute it. These fine Officers stepped up and have delivered all year.

EVENTS LAST MONTH (AUGUST)

This last month, we had two such events. The first was the **Annual Family BBQ Picnic**. This was planned, managed, and executed by our Brother Senior Warden **Matt Mason**. It was held on August 12th at the **Ben Ali Shrine** grounds. This year, the picnic was held in conjunction with our sister Lodge **General Douglas McArthur No. 853**. We thank Worshipful **Elway Balmorez** and the Brothers and families of **GDML853**.

On August 19th, our Lodge was joined by members of **Commandery No. 2 of Knights Templar (Sacramento York Rite)** to serve the community at the **River City Food Bank**. This was a project that was planned, managed, and executed by our Brother Junior Deacon **Brandon Jenkins**. It proved to be very rewarding to those of us who served. We were joined by family members, and we all had a most positive experience. It was announced at the end of our time that we served 457 families in the four hours we were there.



EVENTS THIS MONTH (SEPTEMBER)

We have two events this month that are much anticipated. The first is the **Annual Past Master's Night** on September 21st. Not only is it a special event to recognize and honor our Past Masters, but we have the added special occasion of a Third-Degree Ceremony for Brother **Moises Gonzalez**. The extraordinary part of this is that all the elements of the Third Degree Ritual will be delivered by Past Masters, which is something

that hasn't been done in our Lodge since 2019. Dinner is at 06:00 PM followed immediately by the Degree Ceremony. This event is for Master Masons only. We look forward to this occurrence with great anticipation. This event is spearheaded by our Junior Past Master, Worshipful **Russell Tomas**.

The second activity is the **Annual Constitutional Observance Night** on September 28th at 6:00 PM. This event is open to all Masons and non-Masons. Worshipful **Phil Hardiman, PM**, is planning, managing, and executing this event. He brings a wealth of knowledge and information that will be most welcome to us all. Join us in the fun, refreshment, and fellowship.

EVENTS NEXT MONTH (OCTOBER)

October is set aside for the **174th Annual Communication of Grand Lodge of California**, which will take place October 27th-29th. As you know, this is the one time where Masons come together from all over our state to connect with one another and to discuss and vote on a variety of new initiatives that impact Masons throughout the state and beyond. It is also the time when Grand Lodge Officers are elected and installed for the ensuing Masonic Year. Indeed, a very worthy event.

As mentioned earlier, in this month of September, we celebrate **Constitutional Observance Night**.

To that, I'd like to offer some thought about how Freemasonry influenced our Constitution.



THE U.S. CONSTITUTION AND ITS CONNECTIONS WITH FREEMASONRY

The **United States Constitution**, a cornerstone of American democracy and governance, is a remarkable document that has shaped the nation's political landscape since its adoption in 1787. Often celebrated for its visionary principles and emphasis on individual rights, the Constitution also harbors intriguing connections with the fraternal organization of Freemasonry. Although the precise extent of these connections remains a topic of historical debate, several elements suggest that Freemasonry had an influence on the formation of the Constitution and the values it upholds.

Historical Context: Freemasonry in the 18th Century

During the 18th century, Freemasonry played a significant role in the intellectual and social life of Western societies. It was a secretive fraternal order that emerged from medieval stonemason guilds and evolved into an organization focused on moral and ethical teachings, enlightenment philosophy, and principles of self-improvement. Freemasonry's influence stretched across Europe and made its way to the American colonies, where it attracted the attention of many prominent figures, including several Founding Fathers.

Shared Ideals and Values

The connection between the U.S. Constitution and Freemasonry can be traced to the shared ideals and values that both entities championed. Both Freemasonry and the Constitution emphasized principles such as equality, liberty, and individual rights. The notion of all men being created equal, as articulated in the Constitution's Declaration of Independence, resonates with Freemasonry's emphasis on the equality of all members regardless of their social or economic background.

Furthermore, Freemasonry's focus on the pursuit of knowledge, virtue, and moral development aligns with the Enlightenment philosophy that influenced the framers of the Constitution. Enlightenment thinkers valued reason, science, and the betterment of society, which can be seen in the Constitution's establishment of a system of checks and balances and its emphasis on the separation of powers.

Influence on the Framers

While historical evidence does not definitively prove direct causal connections between Freemasonry and the Constitution's drafting, several Founding Fathers were known Freemasons, and their involvement in both endeavors suggests potential influence. Figures like **George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and James Madison** were active Freemasons who also played pivotal roles in the Constitutional Convention.

The Masonic tradition of open discourse and debate, as well as its rituals and organizational structure, could have provided a model for the Constitutional Convention's proceedings. The principles of compromise, cooperation, and consensus-building that Freemasonry valued may have influenced the collaborative spirit with which the delegates drafted the Constitution.

Summary

The U.S. Constitution and Freemasonry share common principles and values that reflect the intellectual currents of the 18th century. While it is challenging to definitively quantify the extent of Freemasonry's influence on the Constitution's formation, the connections between the two are undeniable. The commitment to individual rights, equality, and moral development that both entities uphold resonates throughout American society to this day. As the Constitution continues to guide the nation's governance, its connections with Freemasonry serve as a testament to the enduring impact of shared ideals on the course of history.

IN CLOSING

Food for thought:

A little something about Amendments in the Constitution:

Is it a coincidence that the 18th Amendment of the US Constitution outlawed alcohol while the 21st made it legal again?

Smile!



From the West

Matthew Mason - Senior Warden

Brethren,

There are a few things that can help our Lodge experience more enjoyable. Some of them play on two of our senses, **taste** and **hearing**.

The first is so important to Masonry.

Breaking bread with brethren and families is important to get to know each other and share our recent, and sometimes not-so-recent, experiences. It gives us a chance to see what others are doing and will often expand our minds into areas we would not have been exposed to otherwise.

We are fortunate to have a tasty meal at each of our lodge meetings.

At most meetings, that meal has been provided by our Cordon Bleu team; Brothers **Bob Taylor, Wally Clark, Smokey Stover**, and Worshipful **Eric Hickson (PM)** have made tasty meals for us so we can break bread. Next meeting stop in and say hello and let them know how much we appreciate them.

They spend a lot of time shopping and preparing those meals for us, and I for one am truly grateful for the night I don't have to cook!

Auditory enrichment is important too. Music has had a long history in Freemasonry. During the ceremonies and rituals we partake in, music can only enhance our experience.

Luckily, we have Brother **James Dimmitt** at the ivory keys, providing us with some beautiful tunes as we roll through our meeting. He gives us a wonderful interlude as well during our Degrees.

Listening to the music, I tend to let the stresses of the day pass away and enjoy being in the moment. I hope you swing by and hear our Brother Organist's melodies and let him know your appreciation for him as well.

So next time you're in Lodge, enjoy some of what our brethren are offering you.

You will be glad you did.





From the South

Joseph Wallach - Junior Warden

Brethren,

It is already September and the season of summer weather will soon be retired for another year. The name September comes from the Latin word *septem*. *Septem* meant seven because, under the Roman calendar, September was the seventh month of the year.

September is also known as the start of the harvest season, a time to reap what we have sown and nurtured over the past months. This applies not only to a garden we may tend in the backyard but the garden of our social and moral fabric.

September 4th is Labor Day, a day for us as a country to honor the workers whose sum of labors provides for the necessities of a civilized society and a comfortable existence.

We have fifteen fellow workers of the Craft birthdays to celebrate this month, all listed on our [calendar](#) below.

I hope to see you at our next Stated Meeting.





Masonic Education

Brandon Jenkins - Junior Deacon

Brethren,

I recently came across an article by Worshipful Brother **Gabriel Anghelescu**, Grand Spokesman of the **United Europe Regular Grand Lodge**, a Past Master of **L'Athénée des Etrangers Lodge**, and a member of the **Ancient and Primitive Rite of Memphis** (Romania).

The article brought a period of self-reflection to my mind, which led me to question my motivations for belonging to our great institution. It also allowed me to reassess my goals regarding Freemasonry and recommitted me to be the best brother, father, and mason that I can be.

I hope it will inspire you to do the same:

"Freemasonry is a Fraternity shrouded in mystery. We can tell this not only from its symbols and ceremonies but also from the definitions that specific Masonic organizations and certain Freemasons assign to it.

We, therefore, learn from two sources, representing the two predominant pillars of the Fraternity, the English and the French, that Freemasonry is either “one of the oldest social and charitable organizations in the world” or an “initiatory institution par excellence secular, philosophical and progressive”.

A third definition (perpetrated from the USA) we come across is that Freemasonry is an organization dedicated to “making good men better”.

If we were self-sufficient, we could limit ourselves to these definitions. But since we are Freemasons and are supposed to be constantly in search of Truth, we could dissect and analyze them in order to formulate a fourth definition, different from the previous ones.

Although we meet in Lodges, making contact with men belonging to different cultures, social backgrounds and we cultivate the principle of

mutual help, it could be a mistake to say that Freemasonry is a social and charitable organization.

If we reduce it to this point, we would be nothing more than mere contributors wearing silly aprons and participating in meaningless ceremonies.

To achieve such a goal, we would only need a cash register, a cashier and some pubs where we can meet to waste our time, socializing without any particular purpose.

Although the degrees of Freemasonry contain certain philosophical aspects, to reduce it to a purely philosophical organization would mean that it has no seed of knowable truth, and that all interpretations of its symbols are left to the invention of our own minds. We would thus be put in the position of searching within it for something that we could never find.



Although, with the help of the moral lessons that the degrees of Freemasonry offer, we could say that we may become better, we must

take into account the fact that we can be good people without being Freemasons.

It would be an attempt to turn the Fraternity into a cult if we said that only Freemasons are good people and that you cannot be a good person without Freemasonry.

Relative to the global population, the number of Freemasons is very small, and we cannot be sure that only a few million people are good or interested in becoming better, given that we are not even sure that all Freemasons are interested in this aspect.

So, what is Freemasonry after all?

Freemasonry is such a mysterious organization that to most of its members it is itself a mystery, and so conspiratorial, one might say in order to shatter the illusions of certain profanes, that there are brethren within its ranks who seem to conspire in the greatest of all the possible conspiracies: that against human nature itself, endowed with reason and an intelligence that animals do not possess.

At the same time, it is an organization with a noble purpose, for those brethren who have eyes to see and ears to hear as well as for those profanes who, being able to observe this, knock at the doors of the Temple and ask to be received in order to join it for her higher mission.

If we take a look at the definitions offered by scholars of the Fraternity, such as **W.L. Wilmshurst**, **Albert Mackey**, **Albert Pike**, and many others who are among the few who have succeeded in giving it meanings more suitable than those of some contemporaries, we find that:

“Freemasonry is a science, [...] a system of doctrines which is taught, in a manner peculiar to itself, by allegories and symbols.” (**Albert Mackey**, *The Symbolism of Freemasonry*), but “[masonry] is not made for cold souls and narrow minds, that do not comprehend its lofty mission and sublime apostolate” (**Albert Pike**, *Morals & Dogma of the [AASR](#)*).

“Those who enter it, as the majority do, entirely ignorant of what they will find there, usually because they have friends there or know Masonry to be an institution devoted to high ideals and benevolence and with which it

may be socially desirable to be connected, may or may not be attracted and profit by what is disclosed to them, and may or may not see anything beyond the bare form of the symbol or hear anything beyond the mere letter of the word.

Their admission is quite a lottery; their Initiation too often remains but a formality, not an actual awakening into an order and quality of life previously unexperienced; their membership, unless such an awakening eventually ensues from the careful study and faithful practice of the Order's teaching, has little, if any, greater influence upon them than would ensue from their joining a purely social club." (The Meaning of Masonry, **W.L. Wilmshurst**).

These statements may seem full of arrogance to some brethren and also in opposition to the principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity that Freemasonry fiercely upholds.

But can one be free without being educated? Can one be equal with the rest of his fellows if he is not free? Can one consider himself their brother if he is not their equal?

And last but not least: can one call himself a Freemason if he is not educated, free, brother to his fellows, if he does not learn, and if he does not embark on a mission of guiding others to do the same?

Here's how important the education of a man who desires to become a Freemason is, and how many disadvantages are rendered to Freemasonry by those profanes who join for petty purposes, but whom we find among us and recognize as such as brethren.

We can learn about such brethren from **Albert Mackey's** article entitled "Reading Masons and Masons who do not Read":

"The Master Mason who knows very little, if anything, of the Apprentice's degree longs to be a Knight Templar [...] The height of his ambition is to wear the Templar cross upon his breast. If he has entered the Scottish Rite, the Lodge of Perfection will not content him, although it supplies material for months of study.

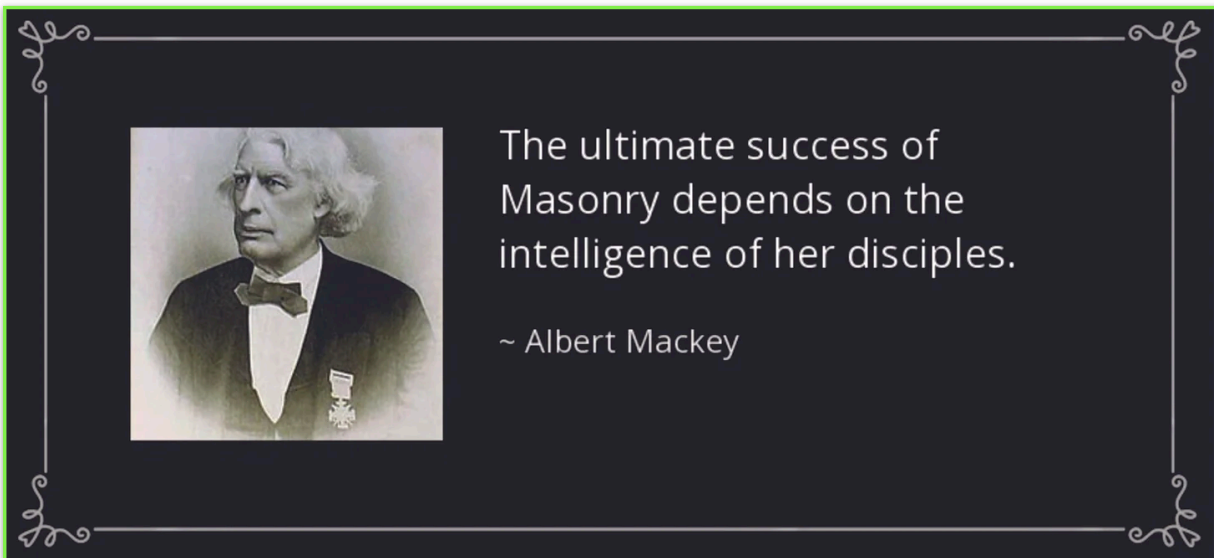
He would faster rise higher in the scale of rank, and if by persevering efforts he can attain the summit of the Rite and be invested with the Thirty-third degree, little cares he for any knowledge of the organization of the Rite or the sublime lessons that it teaches.

He has reached the height of his ambition and is permitted to wear the double-headed eagle.

Such Masons are distinguished not by the amount of knowledge that they possess, but by the number of the jewels that they wear.

They will give fifty dollars for a decoration, but not fifty cents for a book.”

“[Freemasonry] will deteriorate into social clubs or mere benefit societies. With so many rivals in that field, her struggle for a prosperous life will be a hard one.”



In the age of the Internet, we can easily observe the global Masonic phenomenon and how his words are beginning to come true.

We see more and more members for whom it is more important to debate whether their Masonic ring should be worn with the points in or out, more and more who are flattered by the titles and distinctions they wear and feel infallible.

We see in certain areas of the world how it has declined even more than **Albert Mackey** and others “predicted”, entire Lodges or entire Grand Lodges becoming business or political lobby clubs under the cover of a so-called Freemasonry that only they know about.

We see how Freemasonry has fewer and fewer enemies without and more and more within, and the main cause of this is the lack of understanding of what Freemasonry really is supposed to be.

We are more than six million members, belonging to different Grand Lodges, Lodges, Rites, but who essentially have the same mission: the progress of ourselves and of Humanity towards Freedom.

And yet we see both ourselves and humanity in a continuous regression, in a continuous state of slavery.

Maybe Freemasonry has opened its doors too wide. Perhaps some have not understood that the survival of Freemasonry in order to achieve its sublime purpose lies not in the number of members it has, but in their quality.

Maybe we need fewer members and more Freemasons. Fewer men in Freemasonry and more Freemasonry in men.

We should stop for a second and we should all reflect:

"Are we really Freemasons, or just dues members?"



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Gabriel Anghelescu is a Romanian Freemason interested in the spiritual and esoteric aspects of the Fraternity.

His passion for esotericism and Freemasonry began at an early age. His first contact with initiatory societies was the International Order of DeMolay, a para-Masonic organization for boys aged 12 to 21. He was initiated in Jacques de Molay Chapter, in Bucharest, where he later served a mandate as the Master Councillor of his Chapter.

He received the Masonic initiation in a French Rite Lodge bearing the distinctive name of Apolodor din Damasc (Apollodorus of Damascus), working under the Grand Orient of Romania and years later he joined L'Athénée des Etrangers Lodge, which works under the auspices of the United Europe Regular Grand Lodge (Marea Lojă Regulară Europa Unită), in the Orient of Bucharest.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER (Public Schools Month)

- 05 **Monthly Executive Committee Meeting (Zoom)** Tuesday 06:30 PM
- 07 **Fellowship Dinner** (Banquet Room) Thursday 06:00 PM
- 07 **Monthly Stated Meeting (LR1)** Thursday 07:30 PM
- 14 **Third Degree Practice (LR1)** Thursday 06:30 PM
- 20 **OSI (Officers School of Instruction) (LR3)** Wednesday 07:00 PM
Topic: Advanced Stations - 2nd Degree
- 21 **Annual Past Masters' Night (LR1 + Banquet Room)** Thursday 06:00 PM
- 28 **Annual Constitutional Observance Night (Banquet Room)** Thursday 06:00 PM

OCTOBER

- 03 **Monthly Executive Committee Meeting (Zoom)** Tuesday 06:30 PM
- 05 **Fellowship Dinner (Banquet Room)** Thursday 06:00 PM
- 05 **Monthly Stated Meeting (LR1)** Thursday 07:30 PM
- 12 **DARK or Degree Practice (LR1)** Thursday
- 18 **OSI (Officers School of Instruction) (LR3)** Wednesday 07:00 PM
Topic: Advanced Stations - 3rd Degree
- 19 **DARK** Thursday
- 26 **DARK** Thursday
- 27-29 **174th Annual Communication - GL of California** Friday-Sunday

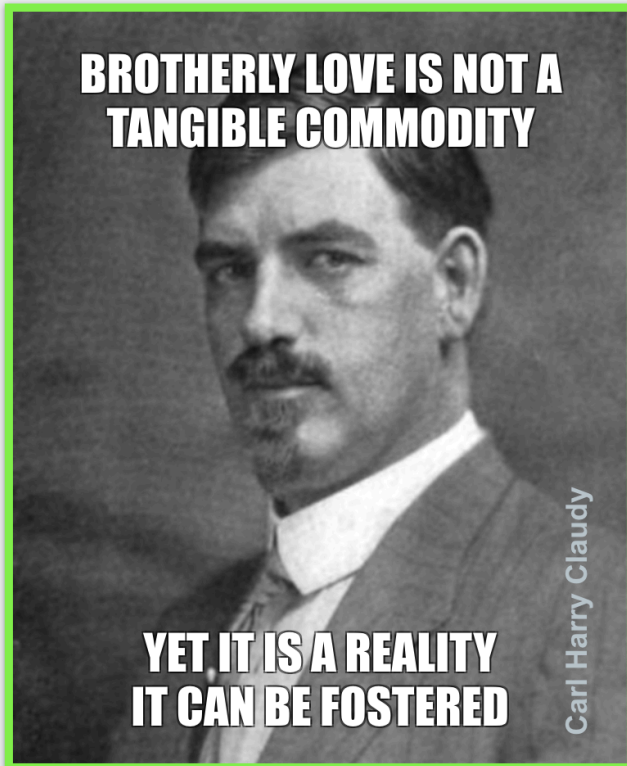
SEPTEMBER 2023

BIRTHDAYS

- 02 **Devin Gray** (Master Mason)
- 05 **Norman Helsel** (Master Mason)
- 11 **Moises Gonzalez** (FellowCraft)
- 12 **Rodrigo Bitar** (Master Mason)
- 13 **Brian Jones** (Master Mason)
- 14 **Lucas Zeiher** (Master Mason)
- 15 **Alan Grundel (Past Master)**
- 17 **Norman Hernandez** (Entered Apprentice)
- 19 **David Keehner** (Master Mason)
- 21 **Ian Solis-Jacques** (Master Mason)
- 25 **Alejandro Reynoso** (Master Mason)
- 26 **Ernest Owen** (Master Mason)

MASTER MASON ANNIVERSARIES

- 01 **Douglas Dern** (47 Years)
- 12 **Jon Isaacson (Past Master) (21 Years)**
- 12 **Jesse Solis-Jacques (Past Master) (10 Years)**
- 12 **William Hill** (32 Years)
- 15 **Mauro Lara** (7 Years)
- 16 **V. Winter Jr. (Past Master) (30 Years)**
- 16 **Lance Vayder** (19 Years)
- 20 **Creston Whiting-Casey III** (11 Years)
- 20 **Alexis Baloji** (5 Years)
- 22 **Jacob Cummings** (7 Years)
- 22 **Ramey Packer** (01 Year)
- 23 **Reaburn Lenau III** (30 Years)
- 24 **Donald Bader** (53 Years)
- 27 **Garth Tanner** (61 Years)
- 28 **Larry Afzal** (45 Years)
- 28 **Thomas Ansell** (34 Years)
- 29 **J. Scott Goode (Past Master) (12 Years)**
- 29 **Brandon Jenkins** (01 Year)
- 30 **David Thomas** (10 Years)



HOW TO PAY YOUR DUES

1. ONLINE at Freemason.org

Registration Required:

- Lodge Number: **20**
- Your Member ID: (**Ask Secretary**)
- Your Last Name: (Case Sensitive)

2. ONLINE at Square.com

3. CHECK payable to:

Washington Lodge No. 20
(Mailed to 1123 J Street 95814)

4. CASH
(In-Person at 1123 J Street 95814)

Washington Lodge No. 20

Mission Statement

To practice and promote a way of life that binds like-minded men in a worldwide brotherhood that transcends all religious, ethnic, cultural, social and educational differences.

Through Masonic principles and tradition, and by the outward expression of these through its fellowship and compassion, Washington Lodge No.20 Free & Accepted Masons provides ways in which to serve God, family, country, neighbors, and self in an environment that contributes to the enrichment and betterment of its members, mankind, and its communities.