

# **Director of the Work o Venerable Master**



Brethren: Under normal circumstances I'd be writing to you about our progress as we prepare for the Fall Reunion Class. Our degree teams would be practicing and we'd be gearing up for a fun weekend of learning and growing as men and as masons. However, the pandemic we're all experiencing has thrown a little monkey wrench into all of that. The good news is alternate plans are being discussed to enable all of the Valleys in California to push forward

and have an event using online platforms! Details will be announced at a later date, but I truly hope, as with anything that we might see some of you on that event as well to welcome our new Scottish Rite brethren.

We had another great Zoom call on July 16th where we were able to update everyone on the state of our Valley, and the news is good... our Fraternity is adapting and we are strong! Our education group has also been holding meetings online to further the Master Craftsman program, and if you haven't joined in on that yet, I highly recommend it, the courses are really fun and it's a great way to further your understanding of our rituals and history.

The theme this month is Fraternity. And I struggled to wrap my head around how to properly express what that means given everything that's going on in the world. So I grabbed my handy copy of Ill. Rex Hutchens' "A Bridge To Light" and started thumbing through a few things and landed on the 15th Degree - Knight of The East. In this degree, one of the things we're reminded of



The apron of the 15th Degree:
Knight of the East

is the law of ebb and flow in nature. It's exemplified by the destruction and eventual rebuilding of the temple. It struck a chord with me and lit a fire of resolve for me. While we might be facing challenges these days, we will, as a fraternity, rebuild. We will come back stronger than before.

Again, I urge all of you to reach out to each other. Be there with an ear to hear and a virtual shoulder for our friends and loved ones. We are all bound by a common tie to Freemasonry. And I want all of you to know, I will always be here for you. So if you need someone to talk to, please e-mail me.

(jcervantes@ocscottishrite.org)

May the Great Architect keep you and bless you. Stay safe, stay healthy.

James Cervantes, 32° Venerable Master Director of The Work

# **Senior Warden**



Brethren, I hope this message finds that you and your family are doing will. Throughout my journey in Masonry, I have been asked, "What is MSA and what do they do?"

The **Masonic Service Association** of the United States was created in 1919 by the Grand Lodges of the United States for the purpose of performing a number of services under one central organization. Some of those services have changed over the years,

but MSA remains an organization dedicated to serving Freemasonry, our country, and the world.

The initial reason for MSA's formation was so U.S. Freemasonry could provide aid to our military servicemen near the end of World War I. The War Department (now Defense Department) refused to work with 49 (at that time) different Grand Lodges, but the government department agreed to work with just one agency. So Grand Masters gathered in Cedar Rapids in 1918 to discuss and formulate the concept of MSA, and again in 1919 to formally give birth to the new organization. MSA's goal from the start was to provide services to the Grand Lodges that they could not perform as easily individually.

MSA was given the charge to provide services to our military, create informational and educational materials, and to issue disaster relief appeals and distribute funds collected for that purpose.

In the years after its creation MSA established service centers in numerous cities in the United States and a few overseas. During the World War II years, with the formation of Veterans Administration Hospitals, MSA's role changed to provide services at the VA Medical Centers. Now called the MSA Hospital Visitation Program, this duty continues today, with MSA volunteers at some 150 VA sites, providing more than 100,000 hours of volunteer service annually.

Informational and educational items began to be published by MSA almost from the start, including newsletters. The Short Talk Bulletin was first printed in January, 1923, and has been published monthly since. Over the years, many books, brochures, digests, and other materials have been created and distributed throughout the Masonic community, with its online offerings, including this web page and a Facebook presence, have been added to its offering.

The first Disaster Relief Appeal was issued in 1923 for the Grand Lodge of Japan, and since then, more than S10 million in relief donations have been received and distributed by MSA. A full list of the appeals is available on this site.

Now, MSA's three major functions are:

#### **Education and Information**

Since 1923, MSA has published the Short Talk Bulletin every month. It is considered the most widely distributed Masonic publication in the world.

Additionally, the MSA and its Masonic Information Center have many publications to tell the world about Freemasonry, including a variety of

pamphlets, digests, and brochures, which have been distributed to more than 3 million people in the past 20 years.

#### **Disaster Relief**

In 1923 MSA issued its first disaster relief appeal. Since then MSA has become a recognized and credible Masonic group in North America, trusted by all Grand Lodges to forward aid around the world when disaster strikes. This has been one of MSA's key services. Total disaster aid collected and distributed by MSA since 1923 has surpassed \$10 million - a milestone of which we are very proud.

## **Hospital Visitation**

From the start the cornerstone service provided by MSA is our work with those who have served in the military. Today MSA has approximately 180 Hospital Representatives and State Coordinators, plus hundreds more volunteers at virtually every VA Medical Center and at many state veterans hospitals in the United States. These individuals have given thousands of hours of service to our Veterans, giving back to those who have served our country through great sacrifice.

Thanks to MW Frank Little and Mount Pinson Lodge No. 495 of Pinson,
Alabama for the photo of the participants at the first meeting of the Masonic
Service Association. The meeting was held on November 11-13, 1919 in Cedar
Rapids, Iowa.

The photo was found by a man who was cleaning out a house after his grandfather died. He knew his grandfather was a Mason and gave it to Brother Wayne Wise. Brother Frank Little knew MSA would want a copy.

Now, it is framed and hanging at the MSA office. Do you know who is in the photo?



1919 Photo of MSA's Origin

For more information on MSA's programs, click on the links listed below:

- Disaster Relief
- Education/Information Publications
- <u>Masonic Information Center</u>
- Hospital Visitation Program

# Mike Selix, 32° KCCH Senior Warden Orange County Lodge of Perfection

# **Wise Master • Masonic Education • Editor**



### **Brotherhood**

Greetings, all. This month's theme is *Fraternity*, and so it has — appropriately — gotten me thinking about brotherhood.

One of the great things about Freemasonry is the fact that it recognizes all in its roster as brothers, bound by a common set of ideals, a common commitment, and a common desire for

knowledge. You meet a brother from a different walk of life, and still you meet as brothers. To borrow from Ill. Chris Hodapp, 33°, "One of the basic ideas of Freemasonry was that all men, whether upper or lower class, met upon the level in the lodge."

Enter a lodge, and you might find yourself sitting next to carpenter, a businessman, a laborer, or one of our nation's leaders.

In this vein, it was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of one our nation's leaders in Georgia Congressman John R. Lewis. It was with much interest, however, that I discovered that Congressman Lewis — in addition to being one of our nation's leaders and a stalwart of the Civil Rights movement — was a brother mason.

Just as the bonds of fraternity link us to George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, we also share a bond with brother Lewis.

It is in his memory that I include an excerpt from Ill. Hodapp's website about Congressman Lewis:

Illus. Brother John Robert Lewis 33° passed to the Celestial Lodge on July 10, following a battle with pancreatic cancer. He was 80 years old. The Hon. John Lewis served as the U.S. Representative for the 5th District of Atlanta more than three decades, from 1987 until his death, and he was one of the last living 'leading lights' of the 1960s civil rights movement.

John Lewis was the last surviving speaker from the famous civil rights 'March on Washington' in 1963

(the occasion of Dr. Martin Luther King's celebrated "I Have a Dream " speech) — at the age of 23, Lewis was the youngest person to give a speech that day.



Illustrious John Lewis, 33° Sovereign Grand Inspector General

John Lewis was made a Prince Hall Mason 'at sight' in 1999 at H. R. Butler Lodge 23 in Atlanta, Georgia, by then-Grand Master Benjamin Barksdale of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge F&AM of Georgia.

In addition to his lodge, Brother Lewis was a Scottish Rite Mason in Atlanta Consistory No. 24-A, Orient of Georgia (PHA). He was coroneted a 33°SGIG in 2011 at the United Supreme Council Session in Atlanta. And he was a Shriner in the Prince Hall-associated Khedive Temple No. 16, and later in Mecca Temple No. 10, in the Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine.

On Sunday, a horse-drawn carriage carried his flag-draped casket on a final trip across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama. Congressman Lewis' body will lay in state in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda Monday and Tuesday so that lawmakers and many others can pay their final respects in Washington, D.C. He will then be taken to the Georgia State Capitol in Atlanta.

MW Corey Shackleford, Sr., Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge F&AM of Georgia (PHA), has announced that the last rites for the late Congressman and Mason will take place Wednesday, July 29 at 8:00 p.m., at the Georgia State Capitol in the Rotunda area. Masonic services will be performed by the officers and members of H.R. Butler Lodge No. 23 (PHA) under current COVID guidelines and restrictions.

In May of 2008, then-Grand Master Akram Elias of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia honored John Lewis for his lifelong commitment to civil rights. This ceremony took place as part of the 9th World Conference of Masonic Grand Lodges at the Renaissance Washington D.C. Hotel.

It is no small irony that Lewis' own grand lodge, the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Georgia, was not then, and is not today, recognized as regular by the 51 U.S. 'mainstream' state grand lodges, including the Grand Lodge of Georgia. Masonic protocol dictated then as now that he could not have accepted GM Elias' presentation in open lodge as a Brother Mason.

Nothing has changed in a dozen years. And there's no way to defend that situation any longer.

His column is broken, and his brethren mourn.

Requiescat in pace.

May peace find you indeed, Brother.

#### **Masonic Education**

As you know, our **Master Craftsman Study Group** will not be meeting in person this month. That does not excuse us from scholarly study, however! On the contrary, with extra time on your hands at home, I strongly encourage you to continue your journey in Masonic education. Venerable brother **James Cervantes** and I are here to answer any questions and guide you. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to either of us by e-mail:

Andrew Todd, 32°: <u>atodd@ocscottishrite.org</u>

James Cervantes, 32°: <u>icervantes@ocscottishrite.org</u>



If you'd like to participate or are looking for information about the program, please prepare by visiting the website for information about the books and other information to get you started:

www.ocscottishrite.org/master-craftsman-program

## **The Master Craftsman Program**

For those unaware, the Master Craftsman is a by-mail correspondence course. Each participant is required to do some scholarly reading in advance and complete a written quiz which is mailed to the Supreme Council for grading. As each quiz is completed, a new



one is sent and the program progresses. The course consists of 7 quizzes, after completion of which the successful participant will receive a certificate and a lapel pin.

The Scottish Rite Master Craftsman: Symbolic Lodge course will familiarize students with aspects of the development of Blue Lodge Masonry and explore some of its developing symbolism. This will reveal that the "High Degrees" began to develop soon after formation of the Premier Grand Lodge (1717). Albert Pike's book, Esoterika: The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry, along with Arturo de Hoyos' Scottish Rite Ritual Monitor & Guide (3d edition) will be used to demonstrate a rational and philosophical interpretation for much of what is found in Craft Masonry.

## Study with us on Zoom

We will be meeting in the "virtual classroom" on Zoom this month. Join us on Thursday, August 7th at 5:00pm as we continue our progress through the Master Craftsman program. Stay tuned for an email invite, coming soon.



The month of August sees us continuing Quiz #4 of the Symbolic Lodge program. If you want to join us, please purchase the books and read the following in preparation for the quiz:

Albert Pike's Esoterika, pp. 385–484

If you're just getting started we can also help you with Quizes #1 - 3. You can also reach out to me directly for information and access to our Facebook group.

Thanks to all our brothers for your interest and participation. I'll see you in the classroom!

## From the Editor

I'd like to express my thanks again to the heads of body for contributing their excellent and thoughtful articles this month and for doing so in a timely fashion.

## **Calling All Writers!**

You don't have to be a head of body or a member of the line to contribute to this newsletter! If you have something to say from a masonic perspective — perhaps

insights into your masonic ruminations, scholarly endeavors you'd like to share, or general news for the brethren — this newsletter is your conduit for those ideas. I encourage any and all brothers who'd like to contribute something to this newsletter to send their ideas to:

editor@ocscottishrite.org

I'll work with you on getting your article together for the next issue.

Fraternally,

Andrew Todd, 32°

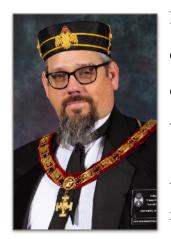
Wise Master, Chapter of Rose Croix Editor, Director of Masonic Education

# **In-Person Stated Meetings Canceled; Valley Updates via Zoom**

It is with an abundance of caution and concern for the health and welfare of our brethren and their families that we are canceling upcoming Stated Meetings until further notice.

Please join us Monday, September 14th at 6:00pm to catch up with your brothers on Zoom. Stay tuned for an email invite with the link and password!

# **Commander of Kadosh**



Digging deep to find the motivation to keep one foot in front of the other as each month of 2020 just brings another challenge to our collective mental state. All we can do is our best to care for those we love while pushing through this arduous year.

As I write this I have just learned of yet another brother reporting for duty at the Pearly Gates. That makes four close friends and brothers this year who the Great Architect has called home; three

of whom served their country with honor.

If not for the fraternity of our Masonic and veteran brothers we would all find this trying time much more difficult to bear.

I very much look forward to the day when we can join together once more for a Festive Board of brotherly love and happiness; one to put all of this behind us and find a path forward to encompass our fraternal future.

May this find you in good good health and peace,

**Bob White, 32°** Commander of Kadosh

# **General Secretary**



Brethren: Although we are still prevented from having physical meetings due to state guidelines, we had another excellent online zoom meeting for the Valley in July. Our next meeting will be in September and attendance is highly recommended. You will receive all of the details in an email in September. Our Valley is alive and well. Our Valley administrative office is open on Mondays and Thursdays. If you have any questions regarding

your membership or any other Valley matter, do not hesitate to give us a call at the number below.

Our Supreme office has instituted a program to bring back Brothers who drifted away from our fraternity. If you know of a Brother who may have been suspended for non-payment of dues and has an interest in rejoining our Valley, please send an email or call the office with his name. We will reach out to him. This program allows a Brother who may have owed several years of back dues to reactivate his membership at a very favorable cost. We have brought 3 excellent Brothers back so far and have plans to bring back many more. The only requirement is for the Brother to be current in his Blue Lodge. This opportunity is a win-win for both the inactive member and the Valley. Stay well.

Jamie Hopkins, 32° General Secretary

# **Language Center News**



# **Greetings from the RiteCare Language Center of Orange County**

Welcome to the RiteCare Language Center of Orange County! We sincerely hope that everyone is staying safe and healthy. We have entered our Summer hiatus as we follow the Chapman University academic calendar. During this time, we look back at the year to help us plan for resuming therapy in September. Here is some

data that you might find interesting.

#### **Numbers for the Year**

## **Demographics**

Ages: Gender:

1 - 2 years = 12 Boys: 69%

2 - 3 years = 17 Girls: 31%

3-4 years =17

4 - 5 years = 11

5 - 6 years = 10

6 - 12 years = 7

## **Looking Ahead**

Of the 19 families seen for telehealth during the summer session, 8 prefer to stay with telehealth, 2 children were discharged, 9 children would prefer to be seen in the clinic.

As we look forward to resuming therapy in the fall our biggest goal is to find a safe way to have more children enrolled at our Language Center. Based on what we have learned with our first venture into Teletherapy, and based on the



changing therapy standards, we should see a significant increase in our enrollment numbers. If the state of California can lower the infection rate of the COVID virus we could also return to some limited onsite therapy. Onsite therapy will require us to address all safety concerns about how to keep people

healthy and overhaul our cleaning standards at the center. We are using this time during our hiatus to be better prepared for the challenges the COVID virus presents.

We can still make a difference in the lives of the children that need our services. Your support of our Language Center is vital, and we appreciate all of your generosity. Please continue to donate by visiting <a href="www.oclanguagecenter.org/">www.oclanguagecenter.org/</a> donate

Thank you for your support

#### David Frias, 32° KCCH

Chairman

RiteCare Childhood Language Center of Orange County

## **Please Donate!**

Please consider donating to our Language Center during the new year. We are very thankful for all your support. To donate, visit:

https://oclanguagecenter.org/donate

# **New to ZOOM?**

All of this virtual meeting business may be the wave of the future, but it can also be a little intimidating to the uninitiated. If you've never "Zoomed" before, or are looking for ways to take better advantage of the platform (maybe you want to add your own fancy virtual background, or learn about "Zoom etiquette") the company offers a wide variety of online tutorials that are highly recommended. You can access them all on the Zoom website:



A Community Program of the Scottish Rite Foundation for Children with Speech and Language Challenges

## **Speech Language Pathologists**

Leslie Sierra-Guzman, MA CCC-SLP Laura Garcia-Maxey, MA CCC-SLP Chris Switzer, MA CCC-SLP Francine Wenhardt, CCC-SLP

## www.oclanguagecenter.org

Please support your RiteCare Childhood Language Center by making an individual, group, or company donation. Support our Center by becoming a member:

President's Circle: A donation of \$500 or more each year supports one child at the center for a year

**365 Club:** A donation of \$365 each year **Center Club:** A donation of \$100 each year

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For information please contact: Chairman David Frias, 32° (714) 600-8538, dfrias@oclanguagecenter.org

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III. David Kussman, 33° Assistant to the Personal Rep dkussman@ocscottishrite.org



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Andrew Todd, 32° Wise Master atodd@ocscottishrite.org



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Tiler

## **The Orange County Scottish Rite Valley**

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Stated Meetings on the first Monday of the month, 6:30 pm; dinner follows at 7:15 pm (reservations requested) at the Anaheim DeMolay Center, 303 W. Lincoln Ave. Anaheim, CA 92805

The Valley of Orange County, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America publishes the Scottish Rite News monthly. No Subscription Price.

Edited by Bro. Andrew Todd, 32° (949) 288-3739, editor@ocscottishrite.org. All articles must be submitted prior to the 15th of the month.

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