



The Patriot Lodge

No. 1957 A.F. & A.M.

Chartered November 11, 2011

Ira Dreyfuss

Master

ira.dreyfuss@gmail.com

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Jonathan Graham, PM

Secretary

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703.895.0417

Stated Meetings Third Friday 7:00, Dinner 6:00 ThePatriotLodge.org

Brethren & Friends,

Welcome back! One of the advantages of being an academic lodge is that we're dark during the summer semester, which gives us a two-month break to chill in. That said, even though everyone has been drinking pina colodas by the pool (maybe somebody has, anyway), it's time to wash the beach towels, dust the sand off the working tools, and get back into lodge business. Our next Stated will be August 15 at the Roberts House, with dinner at 6 p.m. and lodge meeting thereafter.

During the dinner hour, Fred Edwards, PM, Esq., will tell us his experience relating his practice of freemasonry to his practice of law – how, for instance, he can use the working tools we all share to navigate the reefs and shoals of the profession. These can be serious ethical questions, so we can apply our knowledge as Fred helps us to get it.

Now let's get caught up on the past couple of months.

The July 4 fireworks stand fundraiser, as we remember, turned out to be a star-spangled bust. Phantom Fireworks let us down. It failed to come up with an actual

stand. But we were ready to commit to it – many of us agreed to set aside time in our schedules to staff the stand. This shows dedication on our part, and I thank everyone who signed up. It demonstrates your readiness to do the work that makes a lodge strong.

One thing that did work: the post-spring Spring Social, held at the Dreyfuss House around the summer solstice. We had about a dozen people, and all of us had a great time. I'm thinking now about a fall/winter social, and I'll look forward to your ideas for it.

During the summer, I worked (with Wor. Fred) on a draft memorandum of understanding with the university that will formalize our right to be in the Roberts House. In the next few weeks, I expect to have a signed document to that effect. Having a documented right of occupancy that the university recognizes offers better security for our presence than just being in the Roberts House by force of habit.

I want to applaud Bro. Andy Marotta, our current senior warden, on the progress he has been making over the summer toward the



Worshipful Master

Ira Dreyfuss

Senior Warden

Andy Marotta

Junior Warden

Guy Barnes

Treasurer

George A. Botic

Secretary

Jonathan Graham, PM

Senior Deacon

Anthony Keatts

Junior Deacon

Jared Purcell

Meeting Address:

*Roberts House
George Mason University
Fairfax Campus*

Mailing Address:

*P.O. Box 813
Fairfax, VA 22038*

Chaplain

George R. Botic

Senior Steward

Kevin Pena-Mallon

Junior Steward

Jacob Swartz

Tiler

El-Medhi Marhoum, PM

Trustees

Jon Shelton, PDDGM

Don McAndrews, PDDGM

Chris Chrzanowski, PM

LIW

Jon Shelton, PDDGM

LEOChristopher Chrzanowski,
PM**Blood Coordinator**

Jared Purcell

Mahova Ambassador

Ira Dreyfuss

Membership

Anthony Keatts

Trestleboard EditorChristopher Chrzanowski,
PM***Master's Message continued...***

Warden's Certificate that he'll need before he can be elected master for 2026. I am looking forward to his year!

Although I don't have the usual lawn signs yet, expect to see them on campus around move-in, assuming the lodge gets the appropriate sign-offs from the university. It turns out that people remember the "Not Just a Man... a Mason" signs. It's a presence we have on campus. To keep from having to replace the signs every year, we'll take them down before the building and maintenance crews can trash them, and we'll store them at the Roberts House.

The fall presentation schedule has a lot of lodge business requirements. The Founders presentation is in October. I plan Move-Up for November and elections in December. Andy will have the pleasure of choosing the installation date. I think we also can have some other topics – shorter, maybe, but worth showing up to hear and talk about. This is your chance to suggest some topics, so let me know.

See you around....

Ira

Masonic Musings



A month or so ago, my son Mike (a Mason, BTW) did a little test to see what artificial intelligence was capable of. His prompt to ChatGPT was to produce a story that looked like one I could have written.

I had been a reporter for over 30 years and I have an identifiable (maybe idiosyncratic) writing style, so ChatGPT had a lot to draw on for its large language model. But the result astounded me. In only about a minute, its AI product mirrored the best I could have done. It was coherent and accurate, and it used my typical sentence and phrase structures. It even matched my sense of humor.

Mike's experiment changed my understanding of my role in American work society. More than being retired, I am redundant. AI writes like me more efficiently than I do.

And it's not just me. The other day, my wife, Jane, a retired education administrator, did her own experiment. She prompted ChatGPT to devise a strategy to improve results for a (hypothetical) school where fourth grade reading test scores had fallen. She also was astounded. Not only was the result coherent and accurate, it reflected the latest research – even the latest terminology.

Jane then prompted ChatGPT to create a method to create a love of reading in fifth-grade boys who did not like to read. The result: a reading club featuring specific books the boys very likely would like, framed in a mini-marketing campaign using wording that presented reading as their kind of fun.



Grand Master

MW Gary Dwight
Huffman

Deputy Grand Master

RW Matthew Todd
Szamoski

**District Deputy Grand
Master**

RW R. Paul Lawrence

**District Instructor of
Work**

Thomas W. Costis, PM

**District Education
Officer**

Joseph H. Martinez PM

**District Blood
Coordinator**

David C. McAndrews,
PM

**District Mahova
Ambassador**

William J. Baumbach, II,
PM

**District Membership
Coordinator**

Kerry L. Worsham, PM

Masonic Musings

continued



Jane thinks AI is a potentially very valuable tool. She may be right, but I have other concerns. I think it will fundamentally change the American social contract. AI could do to the thinking class – us, for instance, in our academic lodge – what robotics did to the working class. AI could leave vast numbers of us socially adrift, without the career that provides identity and meaning – more than just income – in our lives.

And that's where freemasonry comes in. Our Order always has been fundamentally about meaning in life – the kind we find in ethics and brotherhood as Enlightenment thinkers conceived of them. Machine learning can examine our online record and extrapolate. AI can provide each of us with information, even guidance. But it can't provide any of us with personal meaning, because this is something we create, and it is individual and internal.

As freemasons, we use our “science of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols” to find meaning. We use our universal Masonic tools to solve problems AI can never address, such as controlling emotions (which algorithms cannot have) and living up to our responsibilities for ethical living with our fellow creatures. To make ourselves better men is to create habits that AI cannot instill in us. And to follow this journey with our brethren is to create friendships that AI could – even theoretically – only simulate.

So, while I'm still concerned about the effects AI will have on our social structure, our work life and our incomes, there are two areas I know it can never touch – our human nature and our Craft.

See you around,

Ira

PS: Given the way things are today, I have to add a disclaimer that ChatGPT did not write this. I don't even want to see what it could have written. I might find it discouraging.

Ira



Past Masters

2010 (UD)—Jon V. Shelton,
PDDGM

2011—Jon V. Shelton,
PDDGM

2012—Christopher R.
Chrzanowski, PM

2013—Jonathan T. Ruark,
PM

2014—Peter S. Jensen,
PDDGM

2015—Jon V. Shelton,
PDDGM

2016—Donald L.
McAndrews, PDDGM

2017—Michael T. Huff, PM

2018—Jonathan M. Graham,
PM

2019—John P. Benitez, PM

2020/21—Stuart C. Pool,
PM

2022—Jon V. Shelton,
PDDGM

2023—El Medhi Marhoum

Honorary Members

Christopher R. Chrzanowski,
PM

Edmund Cohen, PGM

Peter S. Jensen, PDDGM

Jon V. Shelton, PDDGM

Robert B. Williams,
PDDGM

Life Members

Lauris M. Eek, III, PDDGM

A. J. Fasano, PM

El Mehdi Marhoum, PM

50 Year Veterans

Donald L. McAndrews,
PDDGM

August

8/2—Saturday 10:00-13:00

Chris' Ritual Tutoring
At Henry Lodge

8/9—Saturday 10:00-13:00

Chris' Ritual Tutoring
At Henry Lodge

8/14—Thursday 18:30

Lodge Practice
At Henry Lodge

8/15—Friday 19:00

Patriot Stated
Roberts House
Dinner 18:00

8/16—Saturday 10:00-13:00

Chris' Ritual Tutoring
At Henry Lodge

8/23—Saturday 10:00-13:00

Chris' Ritual Tutoring
At Henry Lodge

8/27—Wednesday 19:00-20:30

District School
Catechisms
At Hay Market Lodge

8/28—Thursday 18:30

Lodge Practice
At Henry Lodge



September

9/11—Thursday 18:30

Lodge Practice
At Henry Lodge

9/19—Friday 19:00

Patriot Stated
Roberts House
Dinner 18:00

9/20—Saturday 10:00-13:00

Chris' Ritual Tutoring
At Henry Lodge

9/24—Wednesday 19:00-20:30

District School
EA Degree
At Mt. Carmel Lodge

9/25—Thursday 18:30

Lodge Practice
At Henry Lodge

9/27—Saturday 10:00-13:00

Chris' Ritual Tutoring
At Henry Lodge