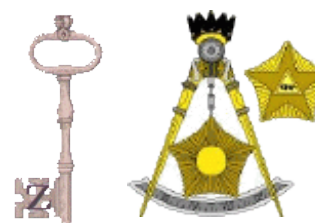


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Valley of Pensacola, Orient of Florida

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Mission of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry In the Orient of Florida

IS TO BE THE PREMIER FRATERNITY OF MEN OF INTEGRITY AND GOOD CHARACTER BY PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONAL GROWTH, LEADERSHIP SKILLS, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTION BASED ON THE VALUES OF FRIENDSHIP, CHARITY, PATRIOTISM, TOLERANCE, INTEGRITY AND BELIEF IN A SUPERIOR BEING. TO THAT END, WE COMMIT TO MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON HUMANKIND, PROMOTING OUR COMMUNITY AND PROVIDING A VALUE TO THE MASONIC FRATERNITY.



“Well Done, Good and Faithful Brother”

Bro. Robert Davidson 27-Aug-2019
Bro. Robert Wiscombe 29-Jun-2020

The Scottish Rite Creed

Human progress is our cause, liberty of thought our supreme wish, freedom of conscience our mission and guarantee of equal rights to all people everywhere our ultimate goal.

Attention wives, family and care-givers:

Should the person to whom this newsletter is addressed be ill or in some difficulty, please call 850-494-0801

Send all general Valley email to:
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SCOTTISH RITE OUTLOOK

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Notes from the General Secretary

Hon. James A. Salisbury, Jr.

Good day, this is a special edition of *The Outlook* that is being sent out to try and explain some of the changes that are coming down from the Supreme Council. Read these items, and if you have questions, please feel free to call and ask. We are here for just that purpose.

Sadly, there are a lot of Brothers who for whatever reason have gotten way behind on their dues. In fact, **43 Brothers** are over **THREE YEARS** behind which adds up to approximately **\$15,701**; and **86 Brothers** will be **TWO YEARS** behind as of December 31, 2020. These arrears add up to **over \$21,000**. This totals to over **\$36,000** in unpaid dues and puts a very big burden on the Valley as we must pay Per Capita on every Brother, whether they pay their dues or not. The Per Capita on the above-mentioned brothers amounts to over \$8,000 out of the Valley's coffers; an amount that is getting more and more difficult to satisfy as the years go by.

Brothers, please pay your dues on time. For example, dues for 2021 are due by December 31, 2020. The one thing we do not wish to do is suspend a Brother for nonpayment of dues. If there is some reason you are unable to pay, please call and we can arrange to assist your need; as we have several programs designed to do exactly that. But it requires you to contact us so we can allocate those resources to you. The Valley does not wish to lose a single Brother.

We are also asking our 50-year members to pay their portion of the Per Capita assessment. Unlike the Blue Lodge, the Supreme Council continues to charge Per Capita the same as any other Brother. Just food for thought, most Orients do not forgive 50-Year members of dues. Our Grand Lodge, the Grand Lodge of Florida, is one of a very few who do not collect dues from 50-Year members; most others do. Currently, we have **76** 50-Year members on our rolls, and while we do cherish each one of you, we are asking you to contribute at least enough to cover the Per Capita assessment; which, this year alone, amounts to **\$2,128**.

If you are looking for a reason to continue your association with the Scottish Rite, please read the letter published in this edition from a family helped by your donations to the Scottish Rite Foundation. Our charity does not seek the spotlight of big TV ads; we are more behind the scenes. ✖

Notes from the Treasurer

Hon. Bobby Kickliter

Brothers, you have no doubt read our General Secretary's letter in this special edition of *The Outlook*. We are finding it harder and harder to balance the books. In the simplest terms possible, we are simply spending more than we are taking in. For example, in 2019 we received \$89,000 in revenue and spent \$107,000. As it stands right now, we are having to depend on dividends and growth from our investments to the tune of almost \$50,000 per year to make ends meet (a number that is increasing as the years go by). The well from which we draw from is drying up. It will not be much longer before we will start having to liquidate the principle investments to cover our expenses.

.....continued 'Treasurer'

Notes from the PR

Ill. Kurt P. Larson, Personal Representative

My name is Kurt Larson, and I am George Washington.

I am the leader of men. I am fearless. I am the person others will aspire to be for generations. I am the indispensable man. I am also ... nothing special. I am average. I am flawed. I am fallible. I am emotional. I am awkward. And I am just like any other person. Right now, in a Starbucks or other such place that serves high priced foo foo coffee, a blogger is typing furiously. He is sipping briskly from a large can of energy drink and is already over powered by the effects of caffeine and shows signs of the jitters. However, he is in a hurry to complete work on their newly discovered controversy-of-the-day.

Headline: *Kurt Larson thinks he's George Washington! He has a Washington complex.*

He's actually named his article "I am George Washington." His ego is out of control! He must be threatening to start a revolution here in the Valley? I knew the Tea Party was dangerous!

The news of my self-elevation to national fatherhood will like spread from blog to blog, then to news sources and pundits, all of whom I will be more than happy to spread the news that Kurt Larson's messianic complex can no longer be contained. None of them, of course, will take the time to realize the irony of the situation; they are actually judging a book by its cover – or in this case, title.

So, what's the truth?

Simple, I do believe I am George Washington.

But I believe you are too.

I don't believe this because I have an extraordinarily high perception of myself. I believe it because I have a real understanding of who George Washington was and the values inculcated in the activities he spent his life engaged in.

Contrary to popular belief, George Washington was not born six foot two with a 555-foot, 5-inch monument to his name. He was never a painting hung in every lodge or a statue or a city. He was just a man, albeit one who happened to see his principles as immovable objects rather than minor inconveniences. He even shied away from monuments and memorials.

That's what is truly inspiring about George Washington: He was human, a superhero before we had them. He faced many of the same challenges in life that we all face. Yes, he was given the responsibility to deal with historic challenges on a scope that is difficult for us to imagine today, but the reason he was given enormous responsibilities is that people admired how he handled the small ones. He lived his life in a way that impressed and inspired others, so when the most trying times arrived, they all looked to him. Over and over again, he was willing to sacrifice his own happiness for the good of others.

Even his friends were cut of the same cloth. You know the names. Some may appear to be challengers, while others simply players in Mr. Washington's stage show. But, those close to him, knew the values of his life kept him grounded. It would have been easy to have just faded off into the sunset, or change values depending upon the winds of change. But not is the man I am writing about. He is you. He is me. He is steadfast in his beliefs. The political winds will continue to blow.

Which direction and how hard can't be determined today. If we do like George, we stick to the principles and values inculcated to each of us. The winds of politics will not have an effect on us.

George Washington wound up at the top of every insurmountable mountain he came to because he never acknowledged that there was an insurmountable mountain in front of him. Sure, he knew the enormity of what he was facing, but he saw each decision as just another step and he used his principles and faith to constantly maintain sure footing.

The Washington Monument is a story unto itself. And yet, is like that of the man it is designed to honor, albeit unintentionally, as it towers above Washington, D.C. From a distance, it is a perfect structure. It owns the skyline. It is bigger than life itself in a city filled with people who think they're bigger than life itself. But as you walk up to the structure and view it up close-you can't help but notice all of its imperfections. In 1854, six years into its construction, work on the project ground to a halt. There was simply no more money left for the monument. Yes, our government used to run out of money and stop work on projects until more money was available. Don't lament that here. It's not the place. When construction began again, the quarry that provided the stone for the first half could no longer be used because it had been exhausted building bunkers for the war between the states.

Today, when you stand close to the monument as I have had the opportunity to do, you will notice that it is two-toned. The marble, granite and stone used for the lower half is clearly lighter than those used at the top. In a way it is a monument that life and war got in the way of and reflects upon the challenges the actual man had as well. But those imperfections serve as a perfect tribute to George. He was that monument. From the distance of hundreds of years, he appears superhuman, able to soar to heights that you and I cannot. In reality, however, his life was a series of challenges, handled with honor, firmness, and faith, brick by brick.

Many times he succeeded in facing those challenges, but sometimes he did not. Slavery is one frequently cited example. Yes, it's true; George Washington owned slaves. You can make all kinds of arguments for and against the man just for that. Even though it was the norm of the time, he strongly advocated for the practice to be abolished, he treated his slaves well (he freed them upon his wife's death, etc.), but you cannot ignore it. It is a flaw, an imperfection, a part of life that, were he around today, I am sure he would change. But it's proof that this man really was just a man. Just like you and me.

We will not fall into the trap of exclusively gazing at the final monument from a distance. Instead, we get up close and examine some of the most important stones, how they were laid into place, and what quarry they came from. And, most important, we use these events to help sketch a blueprint of how to inspire the next George Washington, and millions more like him.

I don't want you to just read about Valley Forge or Yorktown. I want you to understand what a challenge that was to live through. Washington could have, as many others had done, just gone home. But he stayed. Just like you did when you received your degrees and didn't quite understand all of it. You stayed and I am glad both of you stayed. He helped cement our Country and you our Fraternity.

We all have a role to play. No one, not Washington, Lincoln, or anyone else could do it alone. I cannot do what is needed to find the next George Washington among our members by myself. And America will only change for the better when more of us believe this to be true instead of simply dismissing it as meaningless self-help psychobabble.

George Washington was just a guy. Before that, he was, like many of us, a young man who navigated personal relationships like an awkward teenager in an after-school special. There was a story that he asked a young woman named Betsey Fauntleroy to marry him. She said no. He asked again. She said no again. He wrote poems to her. Betsey's parents saw the man who would eventually be the father of the greatest country to ever grace the earth as too low-class for their daughter. Have you known a Brother that you've felt that way about?

We remember a normal-sized man with a giant monument in his honor. We remember a man who was too poor to impress the parents of the girl he loved because he didn't have much money and yet his face is on our currency. We remember a man known for his honesty with a fabricated story about a cherry tree. That must stop. We must instead remember that while Washington was a fearless leader who truly was indispensable, he was also average, emotional, and awkward.

For America to achieve the greatness that George Washington achieved, we first have to remember that it is achievable. We have to remember that any difficult journey always begins with a first small step. We all took that first step in our journey. We have to look up at the insurmountable mountain and pretend that it doesn't exist. You won't be George Washington next week or next year, and you may, in fact, not ever cross the finish line ... and that's okay. The simple act of reaching for a standard that so many others will dismiss as unattainable is enough to make a real difference. We need to put action to the thoughts, words, and deeds from our gatherings and practice them daily.

I can tell you unequivocally that being George Washington will be the hardest thing you ever attempt to do in your life. It will also be the most fulfilling and rewarding. Living a life of honor, integrity, and humility may not make you millions of dollars or result in your name being splashed across television screens from coast to coast, but it will earn you something far more enduring: the lasting respect of those you care about most. And if that doesn't happen? Well, I look forward to seeing you at our next gathering when you can help inspire me to be better than I was when I walked in because of you. ✕

CIRCLE OF CONCERN



Please remember our Brothers and Sisters during their sickness and distress. Privacy issues prevent us from printing addresses and telephone numbers here. Please contact the General Secretary's office for more information.

Treasurer—continued.....

Sadly, we may need to consider raising dues again; BUT – we are working hard to come up with ways to make this not be an issue.

Fundraisers:

We would submit that we need to reinstitute some of our older practices of having the bodies conduct their meal fundraisers: Red-beans and Rice, Chili, and others. As most of you know, our biggest fundraiser of the year is the BBQ Sandwich Sale – but 100% of those profits go to the Scottish Rite Foundation of Florida, not to the Valley. There are other programs such as “Lincolns for the Library”, “Dollar a Month Club”, and others that can be revitalized and reinstated to assist our Valley. There is no shortage of fundraisers we can conduct.

Perpetual Members (now 'Life Member'):

Something else I would take the time to clear up: Perpetual Membership. I am wholly supportive of this program, but it comes with a myth that needs to be dispelled:

- I'm “Dues Exempt” now. My Perpetual Membership pays for my dues every year.
 - ◊ This has turned out to be a really BAD selling point. Your investment is designed to only cover the “Per Capita” portion of your dues, which goes to Supreme Council and not to the Valley. So, while you are “technically” dues exempt, we still need your dues contributions.
 - ◊ Realistically, your investment does NOT help the Valley until after you pass to the Celestial Lodge above. If you are alive and a member on our rolls, the Valley is required to pay your portion of the Per Capita assessment and is in dire need of your dues.
 - ◊ Consider this: If 100% of our membership bought a Perpetual Membership, and every one of those brothers held fast to the fact they were “Dues Exempt”, then the Valley would simply die. The Perpetual fund does NOT help provide for your portion of dues while you are alive and a member on our rolls.

This Valley is trying very hard to set things up for the long term, so the current policy is to reinvest 100% of any growth back into the Perpetual Fund to make it grow even faster, which means we turn to other resources to satisfy Supreme's annual Per Capita billing.

We are in desperate need of your dues as this accounts for more than half of the Valley's income. I know most of our most active Perpetual members still pay towards dues every year, but there are those who do not. I want to encourage all who do not, to contribute your portion of dues and Per Capita as you are able to.

Increasing Membership:

As you all know, it's simple math: Increasing membership spreads out the burden of financially maintaining our Valley and keeping the doors open. We are losing more brothers to death and NPD's than we are replacing; a trend that has been going on for too long. This is a natural cycle of life, but we do need to do what we can to bring in new members. Besides which, it makes being a Mason more enjoyable when you have more friends to share it with!

I strongly urge you to consider and propose ways in which the Valley can begin to close the gap and help realize a balanced budget that can be attained. ✕



NOT JUST A MAN. A MASON.™

Scottish Rite Foundation—Thank you letter from Owen

