



Denver's RiteWorks

November 2025 vol. 18 #9



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New Parking Garage Management Company – The owner of the parking garage hired a new company to manage the garage, which will impact how we have been allowed to use the garage for our meetings, reunions, Friday lunches, and special events. It is unclear, at this time, what the changes will be. Denver Consistory does not own the garage, and we do not manage the garage. The ground lease between Scottish Rite Properties and the garage owner allows the Consistory to use the garage on a restricted basis. **We are in the process of working with the garage owner to come to an understanding on our use of the garage. Please bear with us while we work through the details.**

BUILDING SECURITY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY! We ask that you be mindful of who you let into the lobby through the glass doors and also be aware of who follows you into the building. We have many "street people" waiting for an opportunity to slip into the building. **Do not let anyone in who you do not know to be a member of Denver Consistory.**



DENVER CONSISTORY PETITION FOR MEMBERSHIP—NEW QR CODE

Pocket petition cards with the new QR code are on the Tyler's desk. Pick up some of the new cards and discard the cards you have been saving in your wallet. The QR code on the old cards is no longer valid.

PLANNING CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 2025

Mon, NOV 3	5:00 p.m. Special Officers Meeting to read petitions 7:00 p.m. KSA Meeting in Lodge Room
Wed, NOV 5	5:15 p.m. Children's Hospital RiteCare Presentation
Thu-Sat, NOV 6-8	7:00 a.m. Fall Reunion (64 th) Parking Garage Available
Sat, NOV 8	5:30 p.m. Banquet, 25 & 50 year Presentations
Fri, NOV 14, 21	11:30 a.m. Consistory Lunch (\$13)
Mon, NOV 17	Stated Meeting - Parking Garage Available 5:30 p.m. Red Room Business Meeting 6:00 p.m. Dinner 7:00 p.m. Entertainment: Veterans Recognition Program 7:30 p.m. Split Meeting
Thu-Fri, NOV 27-28	Consistory CLOSED—Thanksgiving Holiday
Sat, NOV 29	9:00 - 11:00 a.m. Consistory Decorating Party—all members, officers and wives are invited.

DECEMBER 2025

Mon, DEC 1	7:00 p.m. KSA Meeting in Lodge Room
Fri, DEC 5, 12, 19	11:30 a.m. Consistory Lunch (\$13, Fried Chicken on DEC 5)
Sat, DEC 13	12:00 noon Wreaths Across America (Fort Logan National Cemetery)
Mon, DEC 15	Stated Meeting - Parking Garage Available <u>Member Appreciation Night; Ugly Sweater Night</u> 5:30 p.m. Red Room Business Meeting 6:00 p.m. Dinner 7:00 p.m. Entertainment 7:30 p.m. Split Meeting: Annual Election of Officers for 2026
Wed-Fri, DEC 24,25,26	Consistory CLOSED for Christmas Holiday

JANUARY 2026

Thu, JAN 1	Consistory Closed for New Year Holiday
Fri, JAN 2	NO LUNCH— Holiday Weekend
Sat, JAN 3	9:00-11:00 a.m. Un-decorating Party—All members, officers & wives invited
Fri, JAN 9, 16, 30	11:30 a.m. Consistory Lunch (\$13—Fried Chicken on JAN 9)
Sat, JAN 17	8:00 a.m.—noon Officers' Meeting and Installation Practice 6:00 p.m. KSA Whisky College (in classroom) Parking Garage Available 7:00 p.m. KSA Burns' Supper Parking Garage Available
Mon, JAN 19	Stated Meeting - Parking Garage Available
Fri, JAN 23	NO LUNCH—Consistory Closed for Grand Lodge

**64th Reunion
Fall 2025
Nov. 6, 7, 8, 2025**

Thursday Nov. 6, 2025

7:30 AM Registration
8:00 AM Welcome/Class Instruction
8:24 AM Exemplify 4°
9:04 AM Communicate 5°
9:11 AM Communicate 6°
9:18 AM Communicate 7°
9:25 AM Communicate 8°
9:36 AM Exemplify 9° & 10°
10:42 AM Exemplify 11°
11:43 AM Exemplify 12°
12:20 PM Lunch
1:13 PM Shrine presentation
1:38 PM Exemplify 13°
2:29 PM Exemplify 14°
3:50 PM Exemplify 15°
4:56 PM Communicate 16°
5:03 PM Communicate 17°
5:10 PM Adjourn

Friday Nov. 7, 2025

8:00 AM Class Convenes
8:22 AM Exemplify 18° First & Second Apartment
9:16 AM Exemplify 18° Third Apartment
10:05 AM KSA Presentation
10:28 AM Communicate 19°
10:39 AM Exemplify 20° First Apartment
11:23 AM Exemplify 20° Second Apartment
11:53 AM Grand Master Address
12:13 PM Lunch
1:12 PM Exemplify 21°
1:47 PM Communicate 22°
2:13 PM Exemplify 23°
3:00 PM Exemplify 24°
3:46 PM Communicate 25°
3:53 PM Communicate 26°
4:00 PM Communicate 27°
4:07 PM Communicate 28°
4:16 PM Exemplify 29°
5:03 PM Adjourn

Saturday Nov. 8, 2025

8:00 AM Class Convenes
8:10 AM Class Photos
9:10 AM Exemplify 30° 1st Apartment
9:30 AM Exemplify 30° 2nd Apartment
9:50 AM Exemplify 30° 3rd Apartment
10:22 AM Secretary's Presentation
10:44 AM Exemplify 30° 4th Apartment
11:15 AM Committee Tours
12:05 PM Lunch
12:55 PM S.G.I.G. Address
1:22 PM Communicate 31°
1:44 PM Exemplify 32° First Section
2:43 PM Exemplify 32° Second Section
3:38 PM Closing Ceremony
3:58 PM Adjourn
5:30 PM Ring Ceremony
6:00 PM Banquet
25- & 50-Year Membership Awards
8:00 PM Adjourn

EDITOR'S WRESTLEBOARD



BY: **BILL HICKEY, 33°**

EMAIL: WA3H@HOTMAIL.COM



Kind of a strange title for my monthly piece. It is the title of a recent movie which started with a book titled "Bowling Alone—America's Declining Social Capital" written in 1995. The author, Robert Putnam, was a professor of Sociology at Harvard. This movie started with the premise elaborated upon in Putnam's initial essay on this topic. His original essay has now been updated and revised (and subtitled) "The Collapse and Revival of American Community."

Now, before I get too far into this topic, it's only fair to put my background into perspective. In college, I was a Chemistry major in the University of Tulsa's College of Engineering. Back in the mid 1960's, it was "fashionable" in the engineering world to define a Sociologist as someone who never ceased to be amazed by the obvious. That said, let's frame some of this discussion a bit better.

Putnam's original hypothesis started out with: "Bowling Alone—more people than ever before in the United States are bowling. Fewer people than ever before in the United States are bowling IN LEAGUES. As a one-time bowler, I can attest to that observation. When I first started bowling with my wife, (I married in 1967) LEAGUES were just about the only reliable way for you to get a decent time on a bowling alley. Over the next two decades, it became evident that "leagues" were just not as popular as they used to be. In point of fact, my wife and I made the same observation about playing cards with others as well. When I started dating the girl who would later become my wife, I was told - in no uncertain terms - that if I wanted to date her, I had to learn how to play contract bridge. OK, I did that. (By the way, she later extended that to ... if you want to marry me, you have to play bridge.) In college, you could always find a bridge game, a Euchre game, a Pinochle game in the student union during breaks between classes. When I was commissioned into the Navy, I found bridge played in the wardroom (officer's mess). That soon gave way. Or, if there was an officer-based bridge group, it was CUTTHROAT! Neither my wife nor I played bridge like that. We played for the enjoyment of it...so we politely declined offers to join in the bloodletting groups. We found a home with some former enlisted and warrant officers playing double-deck pinochle for probably the last 10 years of my career. When I retired from the navy and moved to Boulder (yeah, I know, the "People's Republic of Boulder" - 10 square miles of insanity surrounded by reality) I couldn't find anyone at work interested in card games and by that time, my children and a

Handicapped wife took precedence over trying to find partners. The kids were too young and small to bowl, the wife wasn't able, and it just seemed futile to try to find a compatible group to socialize with outside of work.

OK, let's look at Putnam's commentary: he postulated that TELEVISION was the root of all evil in this civic disengagement phenomenon. Later, he would amend that position to say TV was a "confounder" or "complicator" but NOT "the" primary cause of this disengagement of social civility.

Remember "amazed by the obvious"? Well, if you step back and look at things objectively, you have young people entering the work force, starting a family, paying off college debt, buying a house, buying a car, and the list goes on. They have a LOT of things on their plate, and worrying about socializing isn't really at the top of their priority list at least for a while. And, for whatever it is worth, "later" is something we ALL keep postponing in our daily lives.

Then, as time permits, they surely DO want to bowl (play cards, etc.) WHEN they want to bowl, WITH WHOM they want to bowl, AS MANY LINES as they want to bowl, and the idea of being in a league where you are told when, where, and how many lines to bowl along with bureaucratic requirements to join the ABC or WIBC, track your averages, compete for prizes, pay dues, etc. just doesn't appeal to them. They work all day long in an hierarchical organization with bosses telling them what to do, when to do it, sometimes even HOW to do it. Is it any wonder they aren't overly enthusiastic about joining a "social" group that only continues that kind of structure?

Now, before I get to the real gist of things, let's look at a couple of structural things that play into all this. In the military you have a solid and defined CHAIN OF COMMAND—you have your oath and obligation to follow orders (legal, that is) of those appointed over you. When you become a civilian, things change a bit, but you still have a BOSS—EVERYONE has a boss...sometimes a number of bosses. Sometimes they can be rather arbitrary as well.

In FREEMASONRY, we too have a structure of "leadership" - and the fact of life is that someone has to be in charge, we don't all have to like that, but it is what it is. Some leaders are better than others. When you have leaders, who shall we say are "less than effective" in a position of authority for extended terms, for the most part people will begin to exit (vote with their feet). In the military, you serve under a contract; in the civilian world, you give two weeks notice and find another job or start your own business (and obviously become "the" boss).

Let's get back to the "JOIN OR DIE" theme of this discussion. This movie takes Putnam's original work and goes a bit further. Follow-on studies have shown that isolating yourself is NOT good for your health and LONGEVITY. In fact, there is pretty solid evidence that those people who JOIN an organization (pretty much any organization) where they socialize with others tend to live longer and more healthy lives. The movie focuses on IOOF (International Order of Odd Fellows) but also acknowledges a similarity of activities with Masonry.

Over that last few years, I have frequently sounded the alarm about Freemasonry's 50 year steady and predictable DECLINE in membership. YOUR lodge may be an exception, but exceptions are NOT the rule—and the numbers don't lie. Overall, EVERY civic, fraternal, professional, and social organization is struggling to retain members and get new members engaged.

In that regard, Masonry is not the only organization with a “membership problem.” No one seems to have “the” solution to the problem, although some organizations may be showing a slightly better approach to working on it.

As Masons, WE KNOW how pleasant it can be to “dwell in brotherhood” and be active. But, there is also the other side of the coin. A common phenomenon we see plays out something like this: (1) new guy joins the lodge, progresses from EA through FC and finally to MM. (2) as a newly made MM, he is immediately approached by any number of well-meaning and enthusiastic brothers with a petition to join (fill in the blank here). (3) being new to Masonry, he is like a sponge—wanting to absorb as much as possible about all the various aspects of Masonry so he joins just about everything he can find. If he has kids, he tries to involve them in our Masonic youth groups (but, let's face it, little league baseball, football, soccer, volleyball, golf, and a host of other sports all take time and money and compete for kids' attention—and the accompanying parental support).

There are only 24 hours in a day, 365 days in a year, and only so many years in our children's lives before they leave the nest and go out on their own. The LAST thing we, as Masons would want to do is create an environment that increases the number of Masonic orphans or widows out there. FAMILY comes first. But, how do we balance this primary focus with the critical need by all these worthy and interesting groups who need new members? In fact, they too have existing members on their roles that no longer are active—why?

A recent article in the Kiplinger magazine addressed what they called “The Kevin Bacon Rule of Retirement” - and had some pretty stark data to back up their observations.

Over the past 30 years (and remember, the MSA has shown OUR Masonic membership numbers for over 50 years) “friendship groups” (cards, bowling, etc.) have SHRUNK. The drop is especially pronounced with men (that would be US, guys).

In 1990 (one year after I retired from the navy), ~55% of men reported having AT LEAST SIX close friends. Today (2025) only 27% can say the same thing! Further, 15% of men claim they have ZERO close friends. This means, quite literally, no one to play 18 holes of golf with, grab a drink, catch a movie, play cards, or just play trivial pursuit.

“Join Or Die” shows us, incontrovertibly, that “connection” with others is not just a “multiplier” but is essential for our survival. Ongoing research shows that socialization boosts the odds of living longer, retaining cognitive health, and a stronger immune system.

Take my situation: two young daughters growing up in the home with a severely handicapped wife—unable to be a “mother” to the girls in the traditional sense of the word. Eventually she enters a nursing home at 50 because of the need for 24 hour skilled nursing care. As I personally navigated this path in life, I had MASONRY to rely upon for emotional support. While I had a few friends in my work life (that followed me from the navy), their numbers were swamped by my Masonic Brothers.

As well, when I first arrived, before I became active as a Mason, I was also the IEEE (Electrical Engineering professional society) chair in Engineering in Medicine and Biology. That group was comprised of doctors and engineers—and while it had VERY INTERESTING programs, it died from a lack of attendance (support) by members after only 2 years.

WHAT DOES THIS SAY ABOUT ANY ORGANIZATION?

Well, in MY opinion at least, it says that current members either grow dissatisfied with the status quo of the group OR they find something else in their personal/professional/family lives that is more relevant and interesting than staying with the group. This is likely what is happening in Masonry my Brothers—we do not have to like it, but we need to deal with it.

If our CURRENT members do not find our meetings engaging, entertaining, or enlightening, they WILL vote with their feet and find something else to fill their spare time. Bet on it. And, we already know from MSA data that we can't keep up with our losses due to death, let alone those associated with disaffection as a member of a group.

And, if you can't keep your current members engaged, what makes you think we'll be able to get and keep NEW members engaged? Again, the NUMBERS tell us pretty much everything we need to know.

I am aware of all the historical number trends. I'm also aware of the tendency of some to dismiss historical data and trends with the mantra "we need quality, not quantity." Sad to say, while this can be true to some extent, in the final analysis, numbers will drive pretty much everything else. Smaller membership numbers end up forcing dues to rise, which in itself also causes more to drop out because it becomes economically unsustainable.

Go back to the early days of Masonry. Lodges met in taverns, usually upstairs in a private room. As the craft spread and grew, the natural tendency was to want to have a dedicated place for meetings and activities, so they increased dues and had fundraisers to build a separate building. Some buildings were even designed and built with the intention of renting out a bottom floor for a business to provide an income stream to offset expenses—but NOT ALL did it that way. Over time, more and more lodges were created. In the UK, once a lodge membership exceeds a certain reasonable number, they are expected to split off and create a smaller lodge—this has been the way of the craft for nearly 300 years now. If you are too small, you can't afford your own building, so you rent out from another lodge (or business). And, so it goes. If you own your own building, chances are maintenance and upkeep will start becoming a serious issue before long, and the TENDENCY of many lodges is simply to ignore minor inconveniences or needs because they don't have the cash flow to repair them in real time. Over time, these minor annoyances become major problems for everyone—and could even cause some of the exodus of existing members...which also impacts on the ability to attract new members.

NOT EVERY LODGE needs their own building. But, at some point, like renting an apartment or leasing a car, eventually it becomes more economical to set out on your own and have your own facility...and hopefully rent out part of it to help with your costs.

Back to "JOIN OR DIE" - what do WE need to do to persuade potential new members to join US instead of another group? We need to understand what it is that they are looking for and endeavor to provide that for them. Failing to do that simple thing means ... no one will join and your organization will die. The thesis of the movie is that YOU as an individual need to join a group to thrive and survive. Same is true of the organization.

CHANGE is always daunting, but it is essential. Failure to change is death.

Bill



From the Secretary's Desk

[Matt Raia, 33°](#)



CONSISTORY OFFICE HOURS

Monday—Thursday 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Friday 7:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The sole purpose of a child's middle name is so they can tell when they are REALLY in trouble.

PARKING PERMIT REQUIRED - A Denver Consistory parking permit **MUST** be displayed on the lower left of your vehicle windshield. (Where the emission certificate is usually located.) Do NOT place the permit in a location other than the lower left of the windshield. If you park in the garage without a properly displayed parking permit, you will receive a ticket. Denver Consistory cannot dismiss the ticket, and we will not pay it. We do not own the garage; we do not control the parking, and we do not issue the tickets. Parking permits are available in the Consistory Office.

Scottish Rite Masonic Center Endowment Fund Contributions

The SRMC wishes to acknowledge those who donated to the Endowment fund this past month and began or added to a Cathedral Club membership.

Illustrious Brother Keith Anderson, 33°; Illustrious Brother Donald Emarine, 33°; Brother Bill Achbach, 32° KCCH; Brother Jerry Edwards, 32° KCCH; Brother Mike Tims, 32° KCCH; Brother John Ballard, 32°; Brother Gary Jewell, 32°; Brother Thomas Johnston, 32°; Brother Thomas Jones, 32°; Brother Michael Katich, 32°; Brother Carlos Klinger, 32°; Brother Mike McMinimee, 32°; Brother Dale Pierce, 32°; Brother Clifton Schmitt, 32°; Brother Jay Siegel, 32°; Brother Ronald Soule, 32°; Brother Ronald Tanski, Sr., 32°; Brother Steven Tygart, 32°; and Brother Paul West, 32°.

Transportation Available – Brethren, if you need a ride to a stated meeting, the reunion, or one of our events, call the office and let us know. We will send a ride-share service (Lyft or Uber) to pick you up and bring you back home, **at no expense to you.** The Consistory will pay the bill. You do not have to miss out on participating in Denver Consistory events because you need a ride.

Monthly membership fee payment plan is available - Are you tired of paying fees at the end of the year to all the Masonic bodies for which you are a member? You may pay your annual Denver Consistory membership fee in eleven easy monthly payments rather than one lump sum, eliminating one more year end bill to pay. By authorizing an automatic credit card payment each month, at the end of eleven months your membership fee for the ensuing year will be paid. Contact the office to set up a payment plan.

2025 Membership fee was payable December 31, 2024. If you have not yet paid your 2025 membership fee, **you are delinquent** and we are coming into the time when 2026 fees are due as well. \$140 is a real bargain for membership in Denver Consistory. Just \$0.38 per day. WOW! That's less than the cost of one cup of coffee. Isn't your membership in the Scottish Rite worth more to you than a cup of coffee? Please do your part to help sustain the operation of Denver Consistory by paying your membership fee.

If you are experiencing financial difficulty and are unable to pay your membership fee, PLEASE CONTACT ME. We have programs available to assist you so that you are not suspended for nonpayment. **You must contact me. We can't help you if you don't ask.**

Automatic Membership Fee Renewal Program

Supreme Council created and installed an auto renewal program to pay membership fees. This is a completely voluntary program that gives members the option to have their membership fees automatically deducted using a credit or debit card through the online Membership Portal.

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS are an ideal way to avoid paying future membership fee increases. A Life Membership guarantees that you will never be suspended for non-payment of membership fees should your future financial situation change. It also ensures that should you no longer be able to take care of your finances, you will not be suspended for non-payment because your Scottish Rite Membership is of no significance to the individual handling your finances. By purchasing a Life Membership, you leave a continuing legacy to Denver Consistory after your death.

Current Life Membership Fee Structure

75 years old and older - a single payment of \$1,250

62-74 years old - a single payment of \$1,750

Younger than 62 years old - a single payment of \$2,500

Extended payment terms may be arranged. Contact the office for details.

Fall Reunion - The Fall Reunion (November 6, 7, 8) is dedicated to **Illustrious Brother Steve Hubbard, 33°**. We need you to do your part to facilitate the Fall Reunion. **We need candidates!** Get those petitions turned in to the office, don't wait until November. We need volunteers to work on the AV, Lighting, Sound, Properties, Stage, Costumes, and Makeup committees. If you can help, even for just a day or part of a day, please contact **Illustrious Brother Keith Anderson, 33°**, Director General, keith.anderson166@gmail.com. We are asking for only a little bit of your time to help the existing committee members, and to ease some of their work load as well.

If you are interested in being a cast member in one of the Degrees (speaking or non-speaking part) contact **Brother Jeremy DeBard, 32° KCCH**, debard@me.com or **Brother Miguel Lazalde, 32° KCCH**, mikealazalde@gmail.com. If you would like to be a degree director, contact our Director General, **Illustrious Brother Keith Anderson, 33°** keith.anderson166@gmail.com.

October 20th Stated Meeting - WOW! What a night! Sovereign Grand Commander James Cole, 33°, joined us on ZOOM for a "Town Hall" meeting. He provided an update on the activities of the Supreme Council, his activities, and the status of the Southern Jurisdiction.



NEW QR CODE

Pocket petition cards with the new QR code are on the Tyler's desk. Pick up some of the new cards and **discard the old cards you have been saving in your wallet.** The QR code on the old cards is no longer valid.

First Line Signer Incentive Program: **THREE** petitions in a calendar year will pay your membership fee for a year. If you are a life member, it entitles you to receive stated meeting dinners for a year.

Knights of Saint Andrew Fall Cleanup—Thank you to the Knights of Saint Andrew for coming out October 18th to shine up our building in preparation for the Fall Reunion.

November 17th Stated Meeting—The November meeting we have a Veteran's Recognition program, with special presentations by **Sherry Coulter, wife of Brother Thayne Coulter, 32° KCCH** on the "Quilts of Valor."

Brother James Warner, 32° KCCH, Venerable Master of the Knights of Saint Andrew, will present an overview of the historical lecture of the 29°.

A MESSAGE FROM THE ESMRC BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

The Board of Trustees has made the decision to move forward with repairing the damage caused by the March 12 incident. The Board has selected a contractor to make the repairs. The Board will also move forward to work with another Senior Living group to restore operations.

We cannot provide a timeline for this, since negotiations are ongoing, and we cannot provide the identity of the groups involved.

We will continue to keep you informed as we move forward.

From generous past contributions and growth in the investment of those funds, the Scottish Rite Masonic Center Endowment Fund is now comfortably
over a million dollars!

A NEW CHALLENGE HAS BEEN MADE.

In an effort to continue that growth, the
members of the
Endowment Committee
have committed that they will
personally match additional
contributions received during the period
of September 15, 2025 through Decem-
ber 21, 2025,

THANK YOU! Yes, a great big "Thank you!" to all our generous sponsors of our two major fund-raising events each year. The annual Clays for a Cause sporting days event in May and our Scottish Rite Golf Classic in August generate a tremendous amount of support for the Scottish Rite Masonic Center (our Consistory Temple) and RiteCare Colorado. Each of these events are fun for our members and guests but require lots of volunteer support as well as the financial contributions and underwriting of our many sponsors. We couldn't do it without you!

We want to take a brief moment to remind each of you to share your appreciation for the support of our sponsors and underwriters. And make plans now for our Annual Scottish Rite Golf Classic on Monday, August 10, 2026. The date for the Clays for a Cause has not yet been finalized, but we will keep you informed.

Again, thank you to each of our participants and to our sponsors. Please congratulate yourselves on a great job!





Thanks to Our
Gold Sponsor – Jon Sellars





Thanks to Our
Gold Sponsor – Jon Sellars





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33°



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John P. Swift, CFA, CPA





Bill Achbach, 32° KCCH

Master of Kadosh
Director of Education
NINE GREAT TRUTHS
Some Final Thoughts



A few housekeeping items to begin...

I hope that everyone will make an extra effort to join your Brothers at the Fall Reunion on November 6, 7, and 8. We tend to think of these semi-annual events as the time when we bring new members into the Rite, and it's easy to get lost in the demands of our own attendance. But, Brethren, these events are called "reunions" for a reason! They are our opportunity to renew our relationships with each other and an excellent opportunity to get back into the habit of making our Scottish Rite involvement a bigger part of our lives.

That said, petitions are important too! Our 64th Reunion Class stands to be a small one, but it's not too late to help a Blue Lodge Brother petition and join. You'll find the digital petition QR code elsewhere in this issue of *Rite Works*, and the presiding officers will meet on November 3 to approve any late petitions.

Please plan on attending and bringing your family and guests to our annual December Holiday Program on December 15th. You'll find a promotional flyer for the program in this *Rite Works* issue. The Consistory Officers have booked an excellent program for you this year!

Finally, there are still a few autographed copies of Ill. Chris Hodapp's *Freemasons for Dummies* available in the Consistory Office. Maybe consider a holiday gift for a new Lodge Brother?

Nine Great Truths: Some Final Thoughts...

When I began this series of five articles, way back in May (for publication in June), I had a single overall expectation in producing the series... one that I've shared with a few of you over the intervening months. I expected that writing commentary to expand on someone else's ideas—in this case Past SGC Pike—would make the writing task easier... less complex, than having to come up with my own original material each month. In a sense, selfishly, I admit, I expected to get a few months of easy composition, by piggybacking on someone else's ideas! That has proven to be an extremely naive assumption (and about as far from the reality of what I've been up to since) as I could imagine!

Part of that, I'm now well aware, is because it's probably never easy to try to analyze what Albert Pike was thinking and attempting to communicate to us, from the perspective of his very different times and circumstances to our own. But what I'm finally coming to understand as well, quite apart from the differences between his 19th century style, viewpoints, and priorities and ours, is that our PSGC's purpose was always to force us to look at who we are, what we do, and what we believe from the point of view of "eternal things." He thought and wrote to challenge us to look past whatever the differences might be between his times and our own... differences that he could not possibly have even imagined in his own time... and which

ultimately do not matter in the least, in considering the eternal truths that are the foundations of the Craft!

One of the arguments that I've always used in countering the claim that "Freemasonry is a religion" is to point out that the Craft has no theological system: no dogmatic beliefs as to the nature of Deity; no rigid or exclusive theory of Creation; no restrictive attitudes about revelation or salvation; no inflexible concepts as to the relationship between God and Man. Lectures and orations, both in the Symbolic Lodge and in our Rite ... lessons in all of our work ... do indeed touch on many of these themes, but always with the conclusion that "this or that symbol," "this or that touchstone of faith," "this or that great idea ... personage ... principle," while carrying a wealth of meaning to one of a particular faith, may also transmit quite another (and just as profound) meaning in some other context.

The Fraternity does not teach such theological specifics, but what it does teach—and which are encompassed in the first three of Pike's Great Truths—has often been termed "that religion upon which all men can agree." These fundamentally make Freemasonry an institution, as one great ritualist put it, "so far interwoven with religion as to lay us under rational obligation to Deity." The Fraternity then proceeds to do what most human institutions fail to do: inviting our initiates to bring the depth of their own beliefs and the experience of their own religious practice with them through the West Gate ... without judgment or prejudice ... on the way to being identified as "Brother."

If the first three of Pike's Great Truths of Masonry lay a foundation for belief and attitude toward human spirituality, the next three provide a solid footing for the Craft's standing as a system of moral philosophy. In these, SGC Pike asserts the reality of objective moral truth, the nature of good and evil, and man's obligation to discover and to follow a path of virtue both for himself and in his treatment of his fellows. To me, the real power of Masonry's moral system is that man's fundamental "free will" becomes both a perspective from which to understand our moral frailty and shortcomings **and** to see our opportunity to rise above our baser instincts to live full, rewarding, and useful lives! I cannot focus enough, once again, upon the link between Masonic and Stoic philosophy in this regard, and I recommend such study as a way to progress along that path.

Finally, in the last three of the Great Truths, our Past SGC focuses upon our treatment of others and our accountability for their welfare and our own. I can't help but think of the Orator's reminder, in the 30th Degree, that "... all of the knightly virtues are but the tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth manifested in action in the world." The focus here is on our obligation to put what Freemasonry teaches us into action, to see even the most unfortunate situations as opportunities to "practice what we preach," and to embrace the idea that all that we experience can become a part of the balance that we seek in our lives. This last notion, of course, especially speaks to the ultimate lesson of our Rite. It is not easy to understand that even the worst that the world may throw at us, and those we care about, may be turned to advantage and be made a tool for growth and advancement. That, nevertheless, is what we are called upon to do.

Bill 303-775-5727 wbapm32@gmail.com

Continued on next page

A quick addition/correction to the June Trivia Question:

My thanks to Ill. Tommy Thompson for his correction to my answer about other organizations meeting at the Denver Scottish Rite Masonic Center: I missed two! In addition to those mentioned, St. Bernard Commandery No. 41 and the Red Cross of Constantine also meet quarterly in our Consistory building.

Last Month's Trivia Question: As we head into the Fall Reunion next month, how do I get started on filling out a Passport, and what do I do with it when it's completed?

Answer: Blank Passport booklets are \$5.00 and are available from the Consistory office **or** at the Director-General's table (high up in the Southwest corner of the Cathedral Room) during the Reunion. After you view each Exemplified Degree (at this Fall Reunion the five Mandatory Degrees—4th, 14th, 18th, 30th & 32nd — **plus** the 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 15th, 20th, 21st, 23rd, 24th, and 29th), go to the Director-General's table and have your passport stamped and initialed. When all degrees have been viewed and verified in your passport, turn in the completed Passport to the Consistory office. One completed Passport = one Passport bar.

This Month's Trivia Question (answer in next month's Rite Works):

How many Service Jewel Points are awarded for each of these Consistory Activities:

Attending a Stated Meeting?

Providing transportation to an ill or disabled member or widow?

Serving as a Degree Cast Member?

Assisting in a Rose Croix Service (Team Member)?

Attending a Degree Rehearsal (Cast Member)?



Pike's Nine Great Truths of Masonry

1. No man has seen God at any time; that is, God is only spiritual.
2. The soul of man is immortal.
3. The Moral Sense of man derives from God and therefore has a divine source and is a divine imperative.
4. Moral truths are as real as physical truths. They are not created by God but are a part of His nature; therefore, morality is not an arbitrary law of God but a part of that goodness which constitutes His essence.
5. The distinction between good and evil is essential. Having the ability to make the distinction is a unique quality of man whose ability to do good is only made meaningful by his ability to do that which is not good.
6. There are no degrees in the practice of moral obligations; it is neither variable nor contingent. No excuse can justify one's failure to exercise the moral imperatives of a just life.
7. The immutable law of God requires, that besides respecting the absolute rights of others, and being just, we should do good, be charitable, and obey the dictates of the generous and noble sentiments of the soul. We are but the almoners of God's riches and thus charity can know neither rule nor limit. It is the most sacred of all Masonic obligations.
8. The laws which control and regulate the universe are those of motion and harmony. Evil is merely apparent, and all is, in reality, good and perfect. The existence of misfortune and adversity provides the opportunity for the expression of those virtues which ennoble the soul and elevate the spirit of man; thus is the evil of this world but part of the great plan of God for the betterment of man.
9. The last Great Truth of Masonry is the paradox of the equipoise of the infinite justice and infinite mercy of God; the former alone would call for man's utter destruction, the latter alone would permit the most offensive hedonism. Together they provide man with both retribution and forgiveness.



Member in the Spotlight By Jeremy DeBard, 32° KCCH

1st Lieutenant Commander
Colorado Council of Kadosh

Clinton "Rusty" Keithline, 32° KCCH



This month, we're thrilled to shine the Member Spotlight on Brother Rusty Keithline, a dedicated Mason whose journey in our fraternity is as inspiring as it is impactful. Born in Denver, Colorado, Rusty grew up in Northglenn, where he attended Northglenn High School and later pursued a career in automotive upholstery. Now residing in Littleton, Colorado, Rusty's roots in the Denver area run deep, and his commitment to Masonry reflects the same steadfast dedication.

Rusty's Masonic journey began at Inspiration Lodge #143 and South Denver Lodge #93, following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Clinton K. Keithline, his great-grandfather, and two grand uncles. His son, Klinton L. Keithline, has also joined the fraternity, continuing the family's proud Masonic legacy. Rusty's involvement spans multiple Masonic bodies, including the Scottish Rite, York Rite, Amaranth, and White Shrine. His leadership shines through in his past roles as Grand Royal Patron of Amaranth, Master of Kadosh in the Scottish Rite, and presiding officer of all other bodies he's served. Currently he holds the esteemed position of Most Illustrious Grand Master of Cryptic Masons, a role he attributes to the growth and opportunities provided by his Scottish Rite experience.

When asked about his favorite Masonic activities, Rusty highlights the fellowship and educational discussions that make the fraternity so meaningful. "I'm not a great ritualist," he admits, "but I enjoy the stories told in the degrees and the sense of unity they bring." He particularly cherishes the Spring and Fall Scottish Rite reunions, where he's been involved in the 16th, 18th, 23rd, and 24th degrees. This year, he's directing the 24th degree at the upcoming reunion, an event he looks forward to for the camaraderie and the collaborative effort of over 100 brothers working together. "The Scottish Rite feels good when I leave," Rusty shares. "The education, the brothers, and the fact that our wives can join in make it special."

Outside of Masonry, Rusty's passions include cars and crafting with leather and wood, hobbies that reflect his hands-on, creative nature. But perhaps the most surprising fact about Rusty is his self-described introversion. "The things I do in Masonry get me out of my comfort zone," he says. "I strive to be the leader and person I want to be, and Masonry pushes me to grow." This willingness to step beyond his comfort zone has been a defining life lesson from his years in the Scottish Rite. "Everyone will help and support you," he reflects, emphasizing the encouragement and brotherhood that have shaped his journey.

As Rusty looks back on his Masonic experience, he credits the fraternity with helping him become the leader he is today. "Without being an officer in the Scottish Rite, I wouldn't be where I am now," he says. His story is a testament to the transformative power of Masonry - pushing us to grow, connect, and lead with purpose.

Thank you Brother Rusty, for sharing your inspiring journey with the Denver Valley. We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming reunion, directing the 24th degree, and continuing to lead with dedication and heart.



Denver Consistory Knights of St. Andrew

**James A. Warner, 32°KCCH
Venerable Master**



Burns Night Supper & Whisky College

Saturday, January 17, 2026

Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 1370 Grant Street, Denver, Colorado 80203

Scottish Music  Silent Auction  Burns Poetry

Presented by the Denver Knights of Saint Andrew



Whisky College | 5:00 p.m. | \$55 – Adult (21 and over)

Join us for a captivating Scotch whisky tasting and educational journey led by a true expert. This year's special class features selections from Glenmorangie Distillery, showcasing how a single malt evolves through time and craftsmanship. Discover how age, cask type, and maturation techniques transform aroma, taste, and finish—revealing the subtle complexities that make each expression uniquely exceptional. *Price includes a commemorative tasting glass!*

Dinner & Entertainment | 6:00 p.m. | \$74 – Adult (13 and over)

Pear Salad, Haggis, Filet Mignon, Asparagus, Twice Baked Potato, Chocolate Mousse

Join us for a lively dinner in honor of Robert Burns: Celebrate Scotland's beloved bard with an evening of traditional fare, poetry, and song. Enjoy the stirring sounds of the El Jebel Pipe Band and the Celtic folk tunes of Gobs o' Phun. Raise a glass to heritage, humor, and Highland pride in true Burns Night fashion!

Advance tickets only!
denverburnssupper.com
or scan the QR code

*Reserved table with purchase
of 8 dinner tickets*



Proceeds support RiteCare Colorado's programs for childhood language disorders
and the Scottish Rite Masonic Center building preservation

Whisky College
Year 12
Saturday, January 17, 2026
5:00 p.m. **PROMPTLY**



For the past 11 years, Professor Stan Holtzswart has taken the class on some pretty special journeys discovering some unique and rare whiskies (and whiskeys as well). This year, he will have a special class using Glenmorangie Distillery's products of various ages and maturation casks to show how a single malt from one distillery will change it's taste, finish, and other unique characteristics as it ages and is matured in different casks and combinations of casks.

This is an unique opportunity, not to be missed. Remember, seating is limited (fire code) so you don't want to postpone your reservation once it is announced by the KSA in association with their Burns' Supper announcement later this year...so keep your eyes open and be ready for what could be your most unique "post-graduate" Whisky College experience yet.



33rd and Last Degree

Musings

Scott E. Olson, 33^o



When I first received the call from Illustrious Brother Ron, I was stunned. Like many of us, I had hoped and worked toward this moment, but I never imagined it would come so soon.

Since that day, I've had time to reflect on the path that brought me here. At the very heart of it all is my family. None of this would have been possible without their love, patience, and understanding. Tonight, I'm blessed to be joined by my wife Jennifer, and our daughter Klara, while our oldest, Brennan is away at college. They have been with me every step of the way, and this honor is as much theirs as it is mine.

I also think of the men and mentors who have shaped me as a Mason. From my home lodge of South Denver - Illustrious Brothers Wayne Arner and Al Ulibarri, who I'm sure played no small part in my presence here. As well as WB Dan Rivers, and the late WB's Gerry Ford, Burney Brandel, and Joe Mitchell—whose steady guidance laid my foundation. To the many incredible Brothers of the Consistory: Illustrious Brother John Moreno, whose guidance on the photo committee—and eventual “retirement” - brought me into leadership; Illustrious Brother Danny Will, who has always been there beside me; Illustrious Brother Scott Bates, who welcomed me into the Rose Croix line; Illustrious Brother Joe Magoffin, with whom I had the privilege of working so closely in that line; Illustrious and Most Worshipful Brother Karl Hinkle, whose words have inspired me from the very first time I heard you speak; Illustrious Brothers Ron, Matt; Honorable, Illustrious, and Most Worshipful Steve - and so many others of you who have been a part of this journey - I carry great love and admiration for you all.

What I've come to realize is how fortunate I've been to have these men take an interest in a quiet, introverted young man and help me grow into the Mason I am today. And now, it is our responsibility to do the same for those who follow. To welcome every new Brother, engage them, encourage them, and provide a place where they can thrive. No matter their background, faith, race, or identity - this must be a home where all feel included and valued. That spirit of belonging will ensure not just our survival, but our continued relevance.

By accepting this cap, I also accept that responsibility: to honor those who lifted me up, and to extend the same hand to others - so they, too, may flourish on their journey.



Special Birthdays

90 Years "YOUNG"

George Zary Janich

80 Years "YOUNG"

Donald Jimmy Shearer, Jr.
Danny Leon Tomlinson

70 Years "YOUNG"

Randy Noel Clark
Monty Lee Robinson

60 Years "OLD"

Fousseni Livingstone Banao
Arthur Lee Chavez
Scott Chase Haldi
Ronald Helm, Jr.

Our November "YOUNGSTER"

Michael A. Guerrero, Jr. (27)



November 10, 1775
(250 years old)

Interesting Facts About NOVEMBER

Novem is the Latin word for 9. But wait, isn't November the 11th month? Before January and February were added to the calendar, November was indeed the 9th month. Instead of changing the name of the month from November to UNIDECIMBER (Latin for 11), they kept the old name.

The official flower for November is the chrysanthemum—meaning "golden flower" which represents honesty, joy, and optimism. The official birthstone of November is the Topaz. This orange-yellow gemstone is said to represent friendship. The Greeks also believed that Topaz had the power to turn you invisible.

November is the ONLY month that Shakespeare NEVER mentioned in all of his plays and sonnets.

SPECIAL DAYS IN NOVEMBER

NOV 1: All Saints' Day (Christian Holiday)

NOV 2: All Souls' Day (Pray for the dead)

NOV 3: Sandwich Day

NOV 5: National Doughnut Day

NOV 6: Taco Day

NOV 7: National Bittersweet Chocolate with Almonds Day

NOV 11: Veterans Day (USA)

NOV 14: Pickle Day

NOV 15: Clean Out Your Refrigerator Day

NOV 18: National Apple Cider Day

NOV 20: National Absurdity Day

NOV 21: National Stuffing Day

NOV 24: Celebrate Your Unique Talent Day

NOV 25: National Parfait Day

NOV 27: National Electric Guitar Day

NOV 28: French Toast Day

Red Planet Day (celebrate Mars)

NOV 29: Lemon Cream Pie Day

NOV 30: National Mason Jar Day



The Consistory Line Entertainment Group Presents...

Denver Consistory's Annual Holiday Celebration

Entertainment Provided by...

The Yuletide Carolers



[The Yuletide Carolers | Professional Singers](#)

Guests are welcome for dinner at 6PM and for the
open meeting and entertainment at 7PM.

Dinner Reservations **[HERE](#)**

EL JEBEL SHRINE ROCKY MOUNTAIN



FEZtival of Trees

A HOLIDAY EVENT THAT WILL FEATURE A
FOREST OF BEAUTIFULLY DECORATED
THEMED CHRISTMAS TREES AND GIFTS

**Tree Raffle: Win the WHOLE tree
and gifts that accompany it!!**

**Admission \$2 Kids 12 and under free
Raffle tickets - \$1 each**

Raffle will be held Friday November 28th at 5 pm

Trees must be picked up Saturday November 29th between 10 am - 2 pm



THE STREETS AT SOUTHGLENN



6797 S Vine St, Centennial, CO

NOV 20th - 28th

10:00 am to 8:00 pm daily

CLOSED THANKSGIVING DAY

Closed @ 5pm on Fridays

seasonal refreshments and snacks available

Call (303) 455-3470 ext 2 for questions

<https://eljebelshrine.org/feztival-of-trees-2025>



HOLIDAY FUNDRAISER

HELP SUPPORT OUR CAUSE AND JOIN IN THE SPIRIT OF THE HOLIDAYS!

Fundraiser for: Liberty Court #1

CLASSIC WREATH



25" : \$35.00

WINTERGREEN WREATH



25" : \$40.00

VICTORIAN SPRAY



\$35.00

CRANBERRY SPLASH SPRAY



\$35.00

CENTERPIECE



\$40.00

EZ WREATH HANGER



\$2.50

HOLIDAY FUNDRAISER

HELP SUPPORT OUR CAUSE AND JOIN IN THE SPIRIT OF THE HOLIDAYS!

Fundraiser for: Liberty Court #1

LED LIGHT SET



\$5.50

**Thank you for supporting
Liberty Court #1**

Please see a member of Liberty Court #1 to order! If you'd like other products, scan the QR code, or go to Giftitforward.com and use code **LibertCO004**. Items ordered online are more expensive, but are shipped directly to your door!

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Extra value in every online purchase at GiftitForward.com

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- Includes an EZ Wreath Hanger
- Includes an LED Light Set
- Decorative gift box packaging
- FedEx delivery in 48 states
- Tree planted in honor of gift recipient

Ordering is simple!

- Scan the QR Code or visit GiftitForward.com
- Make your selections
- Enter this fundraising code for our group to benefit from your purchase:



LIBERTCO004

judi's house JAG Institute
For Grieving Children and Families



Please drop items off in the bin located in the building.
Supplies they need will be listed on a flyer above the bin.

They need things like art supplies, toys, non-perishable snacks, and
everyday household supplies.

Any questions? Contact Pablo Colomban
pablocolomban@yahoo.com • 720-284-4304

Scan the QR code for a
complete list.



SCAN ME

MEDIA PRESENCE



Denver Consistory Web Page

<https://denverconsistory.org>

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS: [Pablo Colombar, 32° KCCH](#)



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Denver Scottish Rite Consistory

<http://www.facebook.com>

You need to “LIKE” us to see what is going on.

QUESTIONS: [Randy Penn, 32° KCCH](#)



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SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY
SUPREME COUNCIL, 33°  SOUTHERN JURISDICTION, USA

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This publication is produced monthly by and for the benefit of members, staff, and interested parties associated with the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America, and more particularly the Denver Consistory in the Valley of Denver, Orient of Colorado. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the Denver Consistory or its officers.

Deadline for article submission is two (2) days after the monthly stated meeting (third Monday). Articles should be approximately 250-1000 words long. Where appropriate, relevant high-resolution images with proper credits may be included with your submission. Articles may be submitted in hard copy to the office or by electronic format via email to the editor. All articles are subject to editing and are published without restrictions unless clearly marked as copyrighted. No compensation is given for any articles, photographs, or other materials submitted or published.

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Questions pertaining to this publication should be forwarded to the Editor or the Consistory Office.

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Contact:

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or

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