

Gray Line



NEWSLETTER OF GRAY MASONIC LODGE No. 329, A.F. & A.M.

JANUARY 2021

2370 BARKER OAKS DRIVE
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77077
(713) 730-9329

CHARTERED JUNE 24, 1870

OFFICERS FOR 2020-2021

BILLY J. MORENO

WORSHIPFUL MASTER

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GARY A. WIENER

JUNIOR WARDEN

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LUIZ A. SORIANO

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

JOE K. LESTER, JR.

MUSICIAN

DAVID VUKOVIC

TILER

MAILING ADDRESS:

P.O. BOX 941771

HOUSTON, TX 77094-8771

<http://www.GRAY329.org>

Greetings from the South



Brethren,

I write on behalf of WM Billy Moreno, who sends his fraternal greetings to all.

December and January have been hectic months for your Officers of Gray Lodge. In early December, we were forced to close our doors for the month due to a COVID-19 scare, and January's schedule has been eaten up with re-opening your Lodge and attending the annual Grand Lodge

Communication. We know we've missed several important deadlines, including the timely sending of dues notices and Dues Cards for 2021. Our Secretary is working to get these out to you as quickly as possible.

Pursuant to Grand Lodge law, however, unless you are an Endowed, Life, or 50-Year Member, you must still pay your annual dues on time, even if you haven't received a remittance envelope from the Lodge. That means if you haven't yet paid your dues, your good standing as a Mason is at risk, not only in Gray Lodge but in every other Lodge you may be affiliated with—even if dues to those Lodges have been paid.

Thanks to Webmaster Bro. Scott Bulkley, you can now pay your Lodge dues online, as described on Page 3 of this newsletter. (We'll still, of course, accept payment by check!)

Hearty congratulations go to two of our Right Worshipful Brethren:

- On January 8, Gray Lodge Brother R.: W.: Aaron Tyksinski, D.D.G.M. at Large, was honored by Sugar Land #1141 with the Golden Trowel, in recognition of his tireless service to Texas Freemasonry.

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Greetings From the South

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- On January 16, our Past Master and Secretary, R.:W.:Darrin Pitts, was installed as District Deputy Grand Master of Masonic District 30-B for the 2021 Grand Lodge year, and will make his first official visit to Gray Lodge at our Stated Meeting of February 3. If you can, please come welcome our distinguished Brother as he begins his term! (Dinner at 6:00 pm, MM lodge at 7:00 pm.)

Finally, we regret to share that Bellaire #1336 has cancelled their annual "Dinosaur Degree" at the Houston Museum of Natural Science at Sugar Land. This is particularly disappointing for us, as Gray Lodge had been invited to provide the worthy candidate to be raised! We will therefore be raising him, as well as several other Fellowcrafts, in the friendly confines of Gray Lodge's own lodge room. As dates are scheduled, you'll be notified; if you can, please make plans to join us for these happy occasions!

Remember that your fellow Brethren are here for you to provide comfort, support, relief and brotherhood. If you require any help at all, all you have to do is ask.

- Gary Wiener, Junior Warden

Golden Trowel Award to R.:W.:Aaron Tyksinski



On January 8, Gray Lodge member R.:W.:Aaron Tyksinski, District Deputy Grand Master at Large, was honored by his parent lodge, Sugar Land #1141, with the Golden Trowel Award from the Grand Lodge of Texas. The Grand Lodge of Texas' Golden Trowel is the highest honor a Lodge can bestow upon an individual Brother for his devotion to the teachings of Masonry, without thought of recognition or special honors. M.:W.:Grand Master Paul Underwood made the trip to Sugar Land to present the award himself. Congratulations, R.:W.:Brother Aaron!

Are Your Dues OVER-due? Pay Them Online!

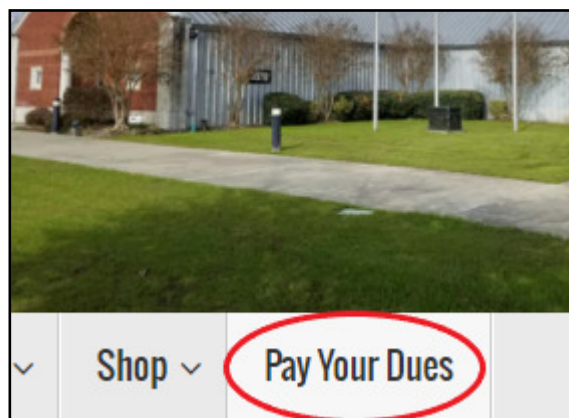
We are aware that 2021 dues notices and cards are very late in going out; however, per Grand Lodge law, you are still responsible for paying your dues by December 31 each year—which means your dues may now be overdue!

You can now pay your annual Lodge dues, join the Master's Club, or increase your Endowment online through the Gray

Lodge #329 website! Go to <http://www.gray329.org> and in the navigation banner, just under the picture of our Lodge building, click "Pay Your Dues".

This link will take you to a page where you can make your dues payment via PayPal, either using your credit card or PayPal Account. (PayPal will add a small convenience fee.)

Our Secretary and Treasurer will be notified of your payment, and your dues card will be mailed to you as soon as possible.



Congratulations to R.:W.:Darrin Pitts, D.D.G.M.

Gray Lodge congratulates our Past Master, Secretary, and Brother, R.:W.:Darrin Pitts, on his appointment by M.:W.:Grand Master Kenneth Curry to be District Deputy Grand Master for Masonic District 30-B in 2021. R.:W.:Pitts is the first Gray Lodge member in over 10 years to serve the Masons of District 30-B as District Deputy Grand Master. Congratulations, R.:W.:Brother Darrin!

"Masonic ideas are the precious jewels of Speculative Masons; they should be kept bright and sparkling for all the brethren to see and to admire. As such, they should be the special care of Masonic leaders particularly those who teach and interpret the philosophy of Freemasonry."

~ Conrad Hahn

Benefits of Masonic Membership

By Alphonse Cerza, 33°

Riverside Lodge No. 862 (Chicago, IL)

Short Talk Bulletin, Nov. 1978 (Masonic Svc. Assn. of North America)

Occasionally a member is asked by a non-Mason "What benefits do you receive from your Masonic membership?" Most members when asked this question for the first time have difficulty knowing what to say. This is especially true if the member has not given the matter any thought or he has had no experience explaining things to others. The situation can be further complicated for the member who erroneously believes that Freemasonry is a "secret" society and that the answer he may give might be disclosing a Masonic "secret." We also must recognize that Freemasonry has so many facets and attractions that each member has sought membership in the Craft for a reason personal to himself. Each has entered the lodge in search of something that is probably different than another member.

It is hoped that he has found in Freemasonry that which he was seeking. This facet or attraction is intimately connected with the specific benefit which the member logically would explain in his answer to the question if he is not prepared to answer the question as a result of his becoming a Mason. Every member should be aware of the possibility that such a question might be asked of him and he should be prepared to answer it fairly, truthfully, and completely.

A benefit may be considered as anything which is helpful, profitable, favorable, and advantageous to a person. A benefit may take many forms such as improving a person in some way, promoting his happiness, raising his status socially, increasing his personal contacts with others, or assisting him in any number of other ways. In a general way the benefits of Masonic membership are both tangible and intangible.

Here are a few of the tangible benefits that come to mind at once. Many Grand Lodges maintain a Home for the needy members in their Golden Years. Some maintain a Home for the children of deceased members. It is a comfortable feeling to know that if you have minor children, and with an untimely death that your children will be taken care of by the Craft; and if you are unable to take care of yourself in your declining years, it is a calming feeling to know that there will be help available for you and your wife. In some areas the Craft maintains a hospital for the public and takes care of the needy members of the Craft as well when they require medical attention.

Most lodges have a sick visitation committee. When a report is received of a sick member, steps are taken to have someone visit him. These visits are good for the person who is sick as well as for the one who is doing the visiting. If you are sick in bed or home bound, it is a great feeling to know that out there is someone who cares enough to take time to visit you. All members are taught to be charitable in word and deed. The word charity is used in the Craft in the broadest sense. When visiting a sick Brother you are urged to listen to his troubles, sympathize with him, and help him unburden himself. Often the faithful breast and the listening ear can do more good than all the medicine in the world to improve one's spirits.

If a Mason finds himself stranded in a strange place and is in need of help, there is always available help not too far away. In some areas there are Masonic Boards of Relief to help in such cases. In other places the needy Mason can contact the local lodge which will render whatever assistance is necessary.

Clearly the intangible benefits predominate over the tangible ones. In some instances the benefits defy classification because they are a blend of both general benefits. The first benefit received by a candidate for the degrees is the contacts he makes with those that recommends him and those who investigate his petition. The next benefit is the receiving of the three degrees and the friendships that develop with the poster and others connected with his securing the needed proficiency to advance from one degree to another. The ceremony of receiving the degrees and lectures is a new experience and hopefully the candidate has come to the meetings in the spirit of anticipating an important event with receptive heart and mind. The impressive presentation is bound to have an important effect on him. He is bound to observe that he is the attraction, that the degree is conferred on him alone, and that we are concentrating our attention on him. This should convince him that we are devoted to the importance of each person who joins us in our work.

There are a number of intangible benefits that do not readily meet the eye, but they do exist in ample measure. Freemasonry is a selective organization and not everyone is selected as a member. The mere fact that an application for membership has been filed indicates a desire to belong to something and to belong to something and to be associated with something worthwhile. He may not recognize this intangible element but he is seeking to belong to a worthwhile organization and to make his contribution to the work of the group. Let us recognize that there is nothing more destructive of one's happiness than the feeling of being alone, of not being part of something worthwhile. When he becomes a member he acquires a large number of new Brothers bound by a solemn obligation to do everything possible to make this a better world in which to live.

Joining the Craft gives the new member a new identity. He becomes a member of a worldwide fraternity dedicated to the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. There is also the matter of securing identity with other Masons and creating warm friendships. Each member knows that in common with all other members he has taken a solemn obligation to be a good man and true. As a result, when meeting another Mason there is immediately established a close sense of friendship resulting from the unexpressed knowledge that they both have a common philosophy of life which makes them better men and that they can help and trust one another.

The member who becomes active in the work of the Craft acquires some degree of leadership and eventually develops a feeling of importance because he is serving the organization in a worthwhile activity. Every person in order to be happy must feel that he is important to his family, his employer, his community, or some other group. The more experiences exist in one's life the happier that person is bound to be.

One of the most valuable benefits that is secured by being a Freemason is the unlimited opportunity to make deep and abiding friendships. Working with other good men on worthy projects has a way of developing into close friendly relations with a

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feeling of mutual respect for one another. You know that in case of need you can speak safely in confidence with a brother Mason. In case you are dejected you know that you have someone to speak with and unburden yourself as you pour your troubles into a sympathetic ear.

Active members receive the greatest benefit from their connection with Freemasonry. Opportunity is afforded to develop one's memory, working with others, learning to organize projects, develop speaking ability by making reports and presenting lectures, and learning how to work with others. There are many members who have no opportunity for an extensive formal education to thus secure considerable educational training.

The intangible benefit that is often overlooked is that the Craft teaches its members a philosophy of life. The importance of this benefit should not be overlooked because every person needs a philosophy of life to guide him in the journey through life. In past years a great deal of the turmoil with our youth was the confusion relative to an absence of a philosophy of life as they flounder around seeking something but not knowing what it was. Sometimes these young folks spoke of high ideals but really had nothing that would guide them into meaningful activities to make these ideals a reality. If we could only reach the minds of these young people they and the Craft could profit greatly.

Another intangible benefit is the opportunity which the Craft offers its members to become associated with worthy projects that help make this a better world in which to live. These consist primarily of the many charitable projects that are supported by the lodges, Grand Lodges, and the appendant bodies of the Craft.

Each member, if he gives this matter some thought, undoubtedly can recall instances in which his Masonic membership has proved to be a benefit to him. Above all else, it is well to be prepared to answer the question should the occasion arise, "What Benefits do you receive from your Masonic membership?"

Our 150th^{151st} Anniversary Celebration — May 22, 2021!

SAVE THE DATE! Gray Lodge's 150th Anniversary Celebration is on again!

Gray Lodge's Officers have been watching the public health situation carefully ever since we were forced to postpone our 150th Anniversary Banquet and Celebration this past summer. We now feel confident in rescheduling our 150th Anniversary celebration. (... during our 151st year. Hey, it's still gonna be a big deal.)

The festivities will be held in the auditorium of the Scottish Rite Temple, 2401 West Bellfort (just west of Kirby) on **Saturday evening, May 22, 2021**. Ticket information will be available soon.

Most Worshipful Kenneth C. Curry, Grand Master of Texas Masons in 2021, is expected to attend, along with many other Grand Lodge and local Masonic dignitaries. We hope you will be able to join us as well!

The Commemorative Magazine is On!

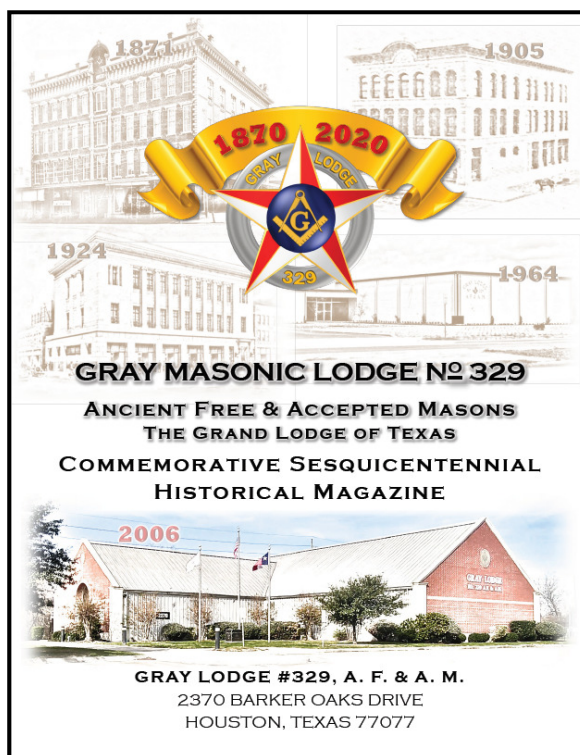
With the rescheduling of Gray Lodge's 150th Anniversary Dinner and Celebration, our plans to publish a commemorative magazine highlighting our Lodge's history are back underway!




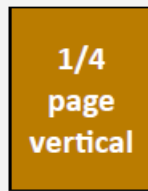

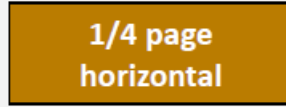

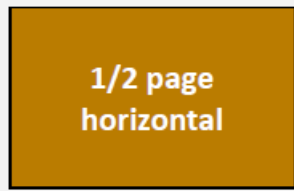




To finance the printing and distribution of this free publication, we are selling a limited amount of advertising space in this commemorative, full-color magazine.

Our Masonic family gets first opportunity to participate in the creation of this publication by purchasing space as shown below. You can advertise your business, or you and your affiliate Lodges can simply publish a message of congratulations.

We cannot create graphic ads (though we will lay out black and white text ads with you). Full-color ads of at least a half-page need camera-ready artwork, at least 300 dpi, CMYK preferred.

Please contact our Editor (and Junior Warden) Gary Wiener at jwarden@gray329.org for more information.



 	 	 	 
 	 	Rates for Premium Positioning (full or half page only): Inside front cover +20% SOLD Inside front facing page +15% Center spread +25% Inside back facing page +15% Full inside back cover +35% Gray Masonic Lodge #329 A.F. & A.M. is a tax-exempt corporation under Internal Revenue Code § 501(c)(10), and is exempt from collecting state sales tax for this fundraiser under Texas Tax Code §§ 151.310(a)(1) and (c).	

UPCOMING LOCAL MASONIC EVENTS (Gray Lodge activities are [hyperlinked](#))

Please note that due to the current pandemic, all plans are subject to change at the direction of the Grand Master and the discretion of the individual Masonic bodies.

The most up-to-date calendar info is always available at <http://www.GRAY329.org/calendar>.

JANUARY 2021

21	Thurs.	Fellowcraft Degree	Gray Lodge #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
27	Wed.	District 30 MWSA Meeting	Reagan Lodge #1057	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
28	Thurs.	Grand Lodge CoW Exam ONLY	Reagan Lodge #1057	6:00 pm
28	Thurs.	Scottish Rite Stated Meeting	Scottish Rite Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm

FEBRUARY 2021

3	Wed.	Gray Lodge Stated Meeting	Gray Lodge #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
4	Thurs.	Lodge Education & Esoteric Work	Gray Lodge #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
9	Tues.	Bluebell Chapter OES Meeting	Gray Lodge #329	7:30 pm
11	Thurs.	Lodge Education & Esoteric Work	Gray Lodge #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
15	Mon.	Arabia Shrine Stated Meeting	Arabia Shrine Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
18	Thurs.	Lodge Education & Esoteric Work	Gray Lodge #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
24	Wed.	District 30 MWSA Meeting	Reagan Lodge #1057	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
25	Thurs.	Scottish Rite Stated Meeting	Scottish Rite Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
25	Thurs.	Grand Lodge CoW Forum ONLY	Bellaire Lodge #1336	6:30 pm

MARCH 2021

3	Wed.	Gray Lodge Stated Meeting	Gray Lodge #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
4	Thurs.	Lodge Education & Esoteric Work	Gray Lodge #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
9	Tues.	Bluebell Chapter OES Meeting	Gray Lodge #329	7:30 pm
11	Thurs.	Lodge Education & Esoteric Work	Gray Lodge #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
15	Mon.	Arabia Shrine Stated Meeting	Arabia Shrine Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
18	Thurs.	Lodge Education & Esoteric Work	Gray Lodge #329	7:00 pm
24	Wed.	District 30 MWSA Meeting	Reagan Lodge #1057	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
25	Thurs.	Scottish Rite Stated Meeting	Scottish Rite Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
27	Thurs.	GL CoW Forum & Exam	Texas City #1118	Forum 9:30 am / Exam to follow

"Freemasonry teaches not merely temperance, fortitude, prudence, justice, brotherly love, relief, and truth, but liberty, equality, and fraternity, and it denounces ignorance, superstition, bigotry, lust tyranny and despotism."

~ Theodore Roosevelt

Keep Us Posted

If you have moved, or updated your email address or phone number, please update your record at grandlodgeoftexas.org (in the Member Portal), call us at 713-730-9329, or email Secretary Darrin Pitts secretary@gray329.org with your new information so we can stay in touch.

Also, please let the Secretary know if you have any personal announcements you would like us to pass along to the Brethren.

If you have suggestions for how we can continue to improve the *Gray Line* newsletter, please email them to Bro. Gary Wiener at jwarden@gray329.org.

MASTER MASON ANNIVERSARIES

JANUARY 2021

3	Thomas Hill	12	Robert Reeder	28	Chad Mitchell
5	Myron Welsh	12	Chester Presley III	29	Jerry Argovitz
6	William Nicholson	12	Anthony Copeland Jr.	29	Charles McKinley
10	Thomas Baker Jr.	16	Mark Herzog	31	Jack Ivey
10	Brian Blowers	21	Thomas Bashforth	31	Ignacio Fantaguzzi
11	James Littlejohn	28	Kenneth Smart	* Past Master of Gray Lodge	

FEBRUARY 2021

4	Al Florido*	12	Todd Rovner	24	Valdemar Perez Jr.
4	Lonnie Posey	15	Donald Beckner	25	Buddy Taylor
5	J.W. Clampitte*	16	Crawford Weir	27	Earnest Canterbury
5	David Vukovic	18	Roy Cook	* Past Master of Gray Lodge	
8	Alan Johnston	18	Frank Bissell		

MARCH 2021

7	Richard Cobb Sr.	18	Zach Willner	28	Noil Frisby
10	Hamlin Elrod Jr.	19	James Shafer	29	Lloyd Sherbert
10	William Britt	19	Roland Milligan	30	Lawrence Rathbun
10	Frederick Schwartz	20	Darrin Pitts*	30	David Black
10	Gregory Stephens	20	Daniel Boyd	31	Cary Maurstad
13	Ricardo Abuabara	21	Luiz Soriano	31	David Jurgens
13	Kevin Roberts*	24	Iain Dobbie	* Past Master of Gray Lodge	
14	Alex Trevino Jr.	27	Kenneth Wallis		
14	Willard Cox Jr.	28	Curtis Buchan		

"Freemasonry has promoted fellowship, it has nurtured brotherhood, it has practiced charity. It has education, it has been founded on truth and the cardinal virtues. But what is Masonry's greatest mission in life today? What should be the thrust of modern Masonry? Those are the answers we are presently seeking, and on our success in finding the answer depends the future of our Fraternity."

~ L. L. Williams

Coins and Caps Are Still On Tap

As part of Gray Lodge's 150th Anniversary celebration, we are finalizing designs for Sesquicentennial coins/ingots and for branded merchandise. All proceeds will go toward our Scholarship and Building Funds.

The designs have been finalized and all Members will receive an email soon with pictures and ordering information for commemorative embroidered-logo baseball caps.

If there is specific merchandise you'd like to see bearing our 150th Anniversary logo, please let SW Erickson Ybarra (swarden@gray329.org) or JW Gary Wiener (jwarden@gray329.org) know as soon as possible!

Gray Lodge Scholarship Raffle — It's Still On!

Gray Lodge announces our big Scholarship Fund raffle for a customized AR-15 style Ruger sporting rifle AND customized Glock 19 pistol. You haven't seen firearms like this before! In addition to these one-of-a-kind prizes, the winner will also receive:

- Customized matching carrying case
- Five boxes of 9mm ammo
- Free laser engraving of your choice on both weapons, plus the plate on the carrying case
- Two branded shot glasses
- A Full Armor T-shirt

Raffle tickets with the new drawing date have been ordered, and once we get them, you will be able to purchase them from any Gray Lodge Officer. The tickets will be \$10 each, \$50 for six, or \$100 for 12.

The drawing will be held at our 150th Anniversary Celebration and Dinner on **May 22, 2021**. You don't have to be present to win (but we'd sure like to see the joy on your face in person when you do!).

Please contact WM Billy Moreno (master@gray329.org) for more information.

