

Gray Line



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

DECEMBER 2022

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CHARTERED JUNE 24, 1870

OFFICERS FOR 2022-2023

GARY A. WIENER

WORSHIPFUL MASTER

STEVEN E. COBB

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VIGIL M. ROXAS

JUNIOR WARDEN

DANIEL R. SWEET

TREASURER

DARRIN I. PITTS, PM

SECRETARY

DOUG W. HISSONG, PM

CHAPLAIN

ZACH D. WILLNER

SENIOR DEACON

LEO I. BARNUEVO

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M. POLYCHRONOPOULOS

SENIOR STEWARD

YOUSSEF JAMAL DIALLO

JUNIOR STEWARD

RICHARD H. COBB, SR.

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Greetings from the East



Brethren,

This issue of the Gray Line is a month late simply because Gray Lodge has had so much going on for the past three months! This message will be a long one, so for those of you who just want an "executive summary", I have included section headings in boldface font that will hit the high points:

Annual Dues Increase to \$250—Due December 31

As you know by now, Gray No. 329 has been forced to increase our annual dues to keep up with inflation. Dues for the calendar year 2023 are \$250.00, and must be received by our Secretary no later than December 31, 2022 to remain a member in good standing come January 1. For any Brethren who are in arrears, the dues due for 2022 and previous years remains \$175.00. Many of you were emailed two dues notices – one with a \$0.00 balance owed and one for \$250.00 – due to a glitch in the Grand Lodge of Texas' Grandview software. If you are an Endowed, Life or 50-Year member, of course you have no dues owed (though we continue to appreciate any financial assistance you can offer).

Financial State of Gray Lodge

Because a few Brethren have asked whether our pleas for financial support mean Gray Lodge is in financial trouble, I have written a letter to explain our situation at length, which you will find beginning on Page 6.

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- Bro. Jerry N. Spencer

Greetings From the East

(Continued from page 1)

Two new Master Masons

This past September, we raised two Brothers to the Sublime Degree. Bro. Cedric Nikiema became a Master Mason on September 8, followed by Bro. Rie Pittman on September 22. Both have already proven themselves tremendous assets to Gray Lodge, and we look forward to our former candidates' continued involvement as new Members.

A.S. Richardson Lecture

Gray hosted our very successful 14th Annual A.S. Richardson Lecture & Festive Board on October 22, featuring Bro. Ben Williams, editor of Rocky Mountain Mason magazine and former Grand Orator of the Grand Lodge of Colorado. M.:W.: Grand Master Brad Billings joined us for the event, which attracted Brethren from all over the state. (Photos are on Page 5.) Many thanks to Past Master Erickson Ybarra for organizing the event!

Jerry Spencer Memorial

On October 29, our former Tiler Jerry Spencer laid down his working tools. While we were unable to provide a Masonic burial service for our departed Brother, the Lodge did host a Masonic "celebration of life" for his friends and family on November 9. Bro. Spencer's written dedication can be found on page 12. Please keep his wife Janice and the Spencer family in your prayers.

Blood Drive and Family Day

It's hard to know whom to thank for the incredible success of our Blood Drive (and Family Day) on Saturday, November 12: our JW Vigil Roxas for putting the entire event together, or the 31 people who volunteered to donate a pint of their blood to save the lives of patients at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center! The drive collected 27 pints of whole blood, which can go toward saving as many as 81 lives. Thanks to all our donors (and to Bro. Roxas as well)!

Thanksgiving Turkey Fundraiser

Meanwhile, SD Zach Willner was busily reviving Gray Lodge's traditional Thanksgiving Turkey fundraiser. Many Brethren gathered on Wednesday, November 23 to create Cajun-fried poultry goodness for our donors, and to engage in tremendous fellowship. Thanks to Bro. Willner for doing what he does best – organizing and frying – and leading another successful fundraiser!

Upcoming Events

- Our final **Stated Meeting** of 2022 will be on **Wednesday, December 7**. We will finish up our Lodge business for the year and go over the Resolutions to be voted on at the Grand Lodge Annual Communication in January.

(Continued on page 4)

It's Dues Time Again!

Gray Lodge annual dues notices were issued in late October, either via email (if we have your address) or regular mail. To remain a member in good standing, dues must be received by January 1, 2023. Your dues provide the funds that allow Gray Lodge to pay our bills, so please remit payment to the Lodge promptly.

You can now pay your annual Lodge dues (\$250 for 2023) online through the Gray Lodge No. 329 website (<http://www.gray329.org>, select "Pay Your Dues" from the menu), or use one of the QR codes below. (PayPal charges a small convenience fee; Zelle has no additional charge. If the Zelle QR code does not work, simply remit to treasurer@gray329.org.)

Even if your membership is Endowed, Life or 50-Year, please read Worshipful Master Wiener's message regarding financial support. Gray Lodge has faced a budget deficit for years, and only with your help can we ensure the long-term financial stability of our beloved lodge. You can also join the Master's "151" Club (\$175 through June 24, 2023), or increase your Endowment, by selecting "Shop" from the website menu.

Our Secretary and Treasurer will be notified of your payment, and your dues card will be mailed to you as soon as we receive it from Grand Lodge. Thank you for your prompt attention!



Scan in your photo app to pay

GRAY LODGE NO. 329

at onlinetreasurer@gray329.org



Scan in your banking app to pay

GRAY LODGE NO. 329

at treasurer@gray329.org



Greetings From the East

(Continued from page 2)

- We will raise another worthy Brother to the **degree of Master Mason on Thursday, December 8**. Please join us in conferring this degree, and in celebrating one of the most significant events in the life of every Mason!
- We will either have an **Educational Round-Table** or conduct a **Fellowcraft Degree on Thursday, December 15**. Following that gathering, Gray Lodge will “go dark” for the December holidays ...
- ... except for a **Gray Lodge “work day” on Saturday, December 17**. The inside of the building is ready to be painted, and (weather permitting) the outside is ready to be power-washed. Please join us and help spruce up our incredible Lodge building!

Conclusion

We hope you can join us for our final Stated Meeting of 2022 on Wednesday, December 7, and our MM Degree the following night. If you can't, make plans now to join us for the first Stated Meeting of 2023 on Wednesday, January 4. Just remember that there will always be a seat reserved for you in our Lodge room!

Fraternally and Sincerely,

Gary Wiener
Worshipful Master

Mark Your Calendars Now!

There are a LOT of great activities coming up soon at Gray Lodge No. 329! Here is just a taste of what we have planned:

- Gray Lodge will host its first “Sweethearts’ Dinner” on Thursday, February 9, 2023! Tickets will be on sale soon, and every Mason is encouraged to bring the ladies of his family for a special meal prepared by WM Wiener and the ladies of Bluebell Chapter No. 856. Bro. Cody Cockroft, chair of the Grand Lodge Masonic Education and Service Committee, will then present the significance of the Masonic “Blue Slipper”, which will end with a surprise for every woman in attendance. Tickets will go on sale beginning January 4, 2023, and given the quality of the meal planned, all tickets **MUST** be purchased in advance!
- On Thursday, March 16, 2023, our Brother and Master of Holland No. 1, R.:W.: Aaron Tyksinski, will appear at our Lodge Education Roundtable to present his acclaimed class on Masonic candidate investigations. Every Brother who plans to serve on an investigating committee—at any point—will benefit from this presentation. Mark your calendars now!



14th Annual A. S. Richardson Lecture & Festive Board

October 22, 2022



WM Wiener and PM Ybarra welcome Grand Master Billings



L to R: A past G.M., a present G.M., and a ... never mind



Presenter Bro. Ben Williams, Past Grand Orator of Colorado



Brethren from several Lodges attended our Festive Board



Regarding Gray Lodge Finances

By Gary Wiener, Worshipful Master

One of my priorities upon ascending to the office of Worshipful Master of Gray No. 329 was to make sure that our Lodge's financial health would remain assured for future generations. What I discovered upon taking office is that our Lodge be in a cash crunch in a few years, if we do not take drastic steps now to balance our outflows with our income.

Some Brethren have asked me privately if our Lodge is in financial trouble. While the answer (fortunately) is "No ... not right now", as a member you are entitled to know why I and other recent Masters of Gray Lodge have been asking so aggressively for your financial support. This letter will, I hope, provide some transparency into the "inner workings" of the corporate entity that is Gray Lodge No. 329, as well as provide some necessary explanations.

Deficit Spending

Gray No. 329 is very fortunate to have investments that can ensure its financial well-being. For over 117 years – beginning with the Holland-Gray Masonic Temple in 1905 and the Gray-Temple Masonic Temple in 1924 (both in downtown Houston), to the Hillcroft Avenue building in 1964, to our current Barker Oaks location since 2006 – Gray No. 329 has owned its own Masonic lodge building, and has been free of all mortgage debt since 1966. As our Lodge sold its properties and purchased new holdings further from the city center, our predecessors' wise decisions have enabled Gray Lodge to have sufficient finances to invest, not only in our current real property, but also in stocks and other securities to help secure its financial future.

"Mortgage-free", however, does not mean "debt-free". For the past several years, Gray Lodge has been operating at an annual deficit, requiring more money to fund our operations than we have taken in from annual membership dues, degree fees, Grand Lodge endowment returns, and fundraising activities. For many years – while the financial markets were strong – we used our annual net investment gains to offset our deficits; although we could not reinvest our gains to increase the size of our investments (as we would have liked to have done), neither did we have to "draw down" our investments by selling any of our holdings. Unfortunately, the market correction of the past year means our investment gains have not been enough to cover the shortfall, recently requiring us to sell a small portion of our holdings to meet our financial obligations.

Even though we may be a Masonic Lodge, we are also a *corporation* – one in which the "C Suite" officers change every year. One of my first tasks as Master was to prepare a budget for the Lodge's approval, and it was in crunching our numbers that I discovered our potential financial peril. If we don't begin work now to balance our Lodge's income with our operational outflows, to keep paying our bills Gray's investments must continue to be sold off, and will likely be liquidated (in other words, *gone*) within 20 or 25 years.

As Master of our Lodge, I don't believe we can afford to "kick the can down the road" for future officers to deal with; we have to manage our finances better beginning **RIGHT NOW**. Trust me, I take no pleasure in pushing for unpopular financial initiatives – raising annual dues, eliminating wasteful utility costs, cutting back on site maintenance expenditures – but my obligation as Master is to ensure our Lodge's operational and financial welfare, not only now but in the future.

I also take no pleasure in begging our Members – those who have already given of their time and their money to the Lodge through the years – for additional financial support. How-

ever, we are required to ask, because of a situation not of our making: the Grand Lodge of Texas' Endowed Member program. While it was implemented with only the very best of intentions, this program has not only contributed to Gray Lodge's budget deficit, but has endangered the financial sustainability of many Masonic lodges in Texas.

The Grand Lodge Endowment Program

When the Grand Lodge voted to implement its Endowment program in 1979, the average annual lodge dues in Texas were somewhere around \$35 per year, and the Grand Lodge "per capita" payment (the amount each lodge must remit to Grand Lodge each year for each non-exempt Member) was only about \$3. The expectation was that, by selling Endowed Memberships for (initially) about \$500 each, lodges could earn a fair annual return on the endowments purchased by its members – if not earning enough to cover what that member would have paid in annual dues, then at least earning enough to cover that member's per capita assessment – and that these endowments would survive the Brethren that purchased them, theoretically providing income for that lodge in perpetuity.

This financial model looked great on paper, but regrettably failed to take into account inflation and rising costs. The \$35 average annual dues in 1979, which would be worth about \$140 today, might be enough for most lodges to meet their financial obligations, if dues were received from each of its Members. Inflation, however, is only part of this "perfect (financial) storm", in which our Endowed Members (many of whom are still living and who never increased their endowments above \$500) no longer contribute directly to the financial support of their lodge, meaning that any resulting budget shortfalls must now be absorbed by the Members who continue to pay dues each year. Complicating this "storm" has been the increase in Grand Lodge per capita assessments, which have far outpaced the rate of inflation and now run each lodge about \$30 per living Member (except for 50-Year Masons). Every lodge remains responsible for remitting the annual per capita per member to Grand Lodge – even for Endowed Members – until a Brother either reaches the 50-Year plateau or passes away.

Until last January, however, a positive return on each lodge's share of endowments was not assured. If the financial markets were down in any given year, it was quite possible that for that year, lodges would receive no return from endowments at all. As it was, the maximum return was capped at 5 percent of the endowment principal (back in 1979, bank "passbook savings" accounts typically guaranteed an annual return of 5 percent interest), meaning that the most a lodge could receive in a year from each \$100 endowment unit would be \$5. Figure five units per endowed member (or \$500), and the annual return would therefore have been capped at \$25.00.

You can easily do the math: \$25.00 in annual endowment returns, \$30.00 in current *per capita* due the Grand Lodge for each Endowed Member ... which means that, rather than contributing financial support to their lodge, those Members whose endowments have remained at \$500 have become a net financial *liability* to their lodge's financial health.

I don't relate this to make any Member feel unhappy about their endowment purchases back when they were relatively cheap – a contract is a contract, after all, and those Members (who remain Masons in good standing) will not only remain members of Gray No. 329 for the rest of their lives, but will continue to benefit from their very wise financial investment. I explain this to you simply to emphasize that Gray Lodge, like most Texas lodges, finds itself in a cash crunch not of its own making, but which we nevertheless must deal with.

(Continued on page 8)

Regarding Gray Lodge Finances

(Continued from page 7)

Asking for Financial Support

These are the reasons why Gray Lodge has been earnestly seeking your additional financial for the past several years. Rest assured: *our Lodge is not about to go broke*. To make ends meet, however, we must ask our Brethren – and especially our long-time Endowed Members – to voluntarily provide additional financial support to our Lodge, either via cash donation (to the Master's Club, Humphrey Benevolent Fund, or Ahrendt Scholarship Fund) or by increasing their endowments.

We have heard, "I purchased my endowment, I'm already a member, why should I pay more?" It's a fair question to ask ... but the answer should already be obvious to every Master Mason. Our Lodge and its Members are obligated to help, aid and assist Brethren and their families in financial trouble; and duties to provide scholarship opportunities to deserving high school seniors, and support charitable endeavors in our community. All of these obligations and duties require money – money that we cannot provide to others, no matter how worthy they are or how dire their circumstances, when our current revenues do not cover our monthly operational expenses.

This is why, once again, Gray No. 329 asks for whatever financial support your cable tow will permit. There are numerous options available to you for financial support, and all donations are greatly appreciated. However, the most significant ways our Endowed Members can help are these:

1. Increase your endowment. The Grand Lodge sells endowment units at \$100.00 each. Any additional units you purchase will help Gray No. 329 in perpetuity; the more units you can purchase, the greater the perpetual support you'll be providing to your Lodge.
2. Donate an amount equal to the annual dues you are saving. This will not only provide immediate financial relief to our Lodge, but will make you a member of the Master's Club for that Masonic Year, the funds of which are dedicated to a lodge project of the Master's choosing. (This year's "151 Club" proceeds are dedicated to completion of the second floor of our lodge building into usable office space.) Despite our Lodge's annual dues increase, this year's Master's Club donation will remain at \$175.00 until June 24, 2023.

If you are a Life or 50-Year Member, you can still purchase an endowment (minimum \$500), the annual returns from which will continue to benefit Gray Lodge. If you pay annual dues, we would encourage you to also join the Master's Club, and consider purchasing an Endowed Membership of your own (although the current minimum purchase is \$2,700.00 and, due to the recent dues increase, must go up soon).

Conclusion

Freemasonry is not cheap, particularly when a Masonic lodge owns its own building. In a perfect world, perhaps this should not be the case; but it is the situation which Gray Lodge No. 329 faces. I have given you a long explanation, but hopefully it has given you some clear insight into our Lodge's current financial situation, and why your continued support of Gray Lodge is critical. Please consider this your "summons" from Gray No. 329 to provide continuing strength and support of our Lodge and, if within length of your cable tow, kindly respond in any way you are able.

Have You Joined the “151 Club” (Master’s Club) Yet?

WM Wiener wishes to heartily thank the newest members of this year’s Master’s Club:

Jim Hoffman
Doug Hissong, PM
Darrin Pitts, PM
SW Steven Cobb

JW Vigil Roxas
Joshua Perez
Tom Wiener, APM



The “151 Club”, now 12 Members strong, is open to any Gray Lodge member who provides extra support to the Lodge by contributing an amount equal to annual dues, in addition to their Endowed, Life or 50-Year Membership or regular dues. This year’s proceeds will be used to finish and furnish the second floor of our Lodge Building.



Members receive a special lapel pin and will be recognized on a plaque for their support of the Lodge. (Our first plaque has filled up, but WM Wiener would like nothing more than to have to exchange it for a larger plaque!) Use the QR code to the left to become a 151 Club Member!

“... that Important Lesson of Charity”

The **Humphrey Benevolent Fund** was established from the bequest of the estate of Brother W. S. Humphrey to Gray Lodge in 1929, The property in the estate of Brother Humphrey was set aside by the membership of Gray Lodge as an endowment for charitable purposes, primarily to relieve the distresses of Gray Lodge Brethren and their wives, widows, mothers, sisters and daughters. In addition, the Fund may be used for appropriate Community Charity Projects.

Although many Brethren don’t know about the Humphrey Fund, rest assured that the mission of its Administrative Board (composed of the five principal Elected Officers and two Brethren appointed at the Worshipful Master’s discretion) is to provide emergency financial help when it is critically needed — no questions asked, no identities disclosed. .

The gifts from the Humphrey Fund are just that — gifts — and the Fund does not require nor expect to be reimbursed. However, that means that from time to time, the available cash in the Fund dips to an alarmingly low level. When that happens, it is up to those Brethren whose cable tow will permit to share their generosity, so that it can be put to best use when it is needed. Please donate if you can, either via cash or check to our Lodge Secretary, or via PayPal using this QR code . The money will be available for a very worthy cause (and, in case of emergency, it will be available for you, too!).



UPCOMING LOCAL MASONIC EVENTS

Please note that all plans are subject to change and should be confirmed before attending. The most up-to-date calendar info is always available at <http://www.GRAY329.org/calendar>.

We are working to repair the online calendar feed and will have new links for you soon.

DECEMBER 2022

7	Wed.	Gray Lodge Stated Meeting	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
8	Thurs.	Master Mason's Degree	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 6:30 pm
12	Mon.	Houston Council #1 Meeting	Holland #1	Meeting 7:00 pm
13	Tues.	Bluebell Chapter OES Meeting	Gray #329	7:30 pm
15	Thurs.	Lodge Education & Esoteric Work	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
15	Thurs.	Scottish Rite Stated Meeting	Scottish Rite Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
17	Sat.	Lodge Work Saturday	Gray #329	Begins 10:00 am
19	Mon.	Arabia Shrine Stated Meeting	Arabia Shrine Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
21	Wed.	District 30 MWSA Meeting	Reagan #1057	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm

JANUARY 2023

4	Wed.	Gray Lodge Stated Meeting	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
5	Thurs.	Lodge Masonic Education	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
9	Mon.	Washington Chapt #2 Meeting	Holland #1	Meeting 7:00 pm
10	Tues.	Bluebell Chapter OES Meeting	Gray #329	7:30 pm
12	Thurs.	Lodge Education & Esoteric Work	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
13	Fri.	Ruthven Cmdry #2 Stated Meeting	Holland #1	Meeting 7:00 pm
16	Mon.	Arabia Shrine Stated Meeting	Arabia Shrine Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
19-21	Thu-Sat	Grand Annual Communication	Grand Lodge, Waco	
25	Wed.	District 30 MWSA Meeting	Reagan #1057	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
26	Thurs.	Scottish Rite Stated Meeting	Scottish Rite Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
28	Sat.	Lodge Work Saturday	Gray #329	Begins 9:00 am

FEBRUARY 2023

1	Wed.	Gray Lodge Stated Meeting	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
2	Thurs.	Lodge Masonic Education	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
7	Tues.	Bluebell Chapter OES Meeting	Gray #329	7:30 pm
9	Thurs.	Sweethearts' Dinner & Blue Slipper	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
10	Fri.	Ruthven Cmdry #2 Stated Meeting	Holland #1	Meeting 7:00 pm
13	Mon.	Houston Council #1 Meeting	Holland #1	Meeting 7:00 pm
15	Wed.	Dist. 30 MM Degree	George Ranch , Richmond	Degree 6:00 pm
16	Thurs.	Lodge Education Roundtable	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
18	Sat.	Lodge Work Saturday	Gray #329	Begins 10:00 am
20	Mon.	Arabia Shrine Stated Meeting	Arabia Shrine Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
22	Wed.	District 30 MWSA Meeting	Reagan #1057	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
23	Thurs.	Scottish Rite Stated Meeting	Scottish Rite Temple	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm
23	Thurs.	Lodge Masonic Education	Gray #329	Dinner 6:00 pm / Meeting 7:00 pm

December and January Stated Meetings

Please plan now to join us for our Stated Meetings on Wednesday, December 8. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m., with an Entered Apprentice Mason's lodge to open at 7 p.m.

Also, please plan now to attend our January 4, 2023 Stated Meeting, at which we'll set forth and firm up our plans for the second half of this Masonic year. An E.A. lodge will open at 7 p.m.

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 Bro. Darrin Pitts at 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.

MASTER MASON ANNIVERSARIES

DECEMBER 2022

1 Lex Leckie (21 yrs)*	14 Ronald Pasadyn (34)
1 Randall Slinkard (21)*	17 Scott Bulkley (8)
2 Marshall Collins (1)	20 Travis Verdin (17)
3 Pascal Bresson (2)	27 Charles Moore (15)
4 Paul French (32)	29 Fernando Sanchez (11)
7 Michael Gray (2)	30 Dwight Phillips (65)
7 James Brady (50)	* Past Master of Gray Lodge
9 Sergio Hernandez (35)	

JANUARY 2023

3 Thomas Hill (10 yrs)	27 Yassen Kantchev (7)
5 Myron Welsh (70)	27 Youssef Diallo (2)
6 William Nicholson (21)	28 Chad Mitchell (7)
10 Brian Blowers (10)	28 Kenneth Smart (47)
12 Chester Presley (40)	29 Jerry Argovitz (54)
12 Robert Reeder (64)	29 Charles McKinley (41)
17 Tom Wiener (60)	31 Ignacio Fantaguzzi (10)
21 Thomas Bashforth (56)	31 Todd Ivey (27)

FEBRUARY 2023

4 Al Florido (10 yrs) *	16 Crawford Weir (30)
4 Lonnie Posey (7)	18 Frank Bissell (10)
5 J.W. Clampitte (64) *	18 Roy Cook (42)
5 David Vukovic (14)	24 Valdemar Perez (51)
8 Alan Johnston (17)	25 Buddy Taylor (47)
11 Leo Barnuevo (2)	27 Earnest Canterbury (47)
12 Todd Rovner (20)	* Past Master of Gray Lodge
15 Donald Beckner (45)	

"As we continue to improve ourselves in Masonry, we are indeed improving life. We know from history that without ideals to guide us, the garden of a man's life will not grow into a place of beauty."

~ Stanley F. Naxwell

Gray Lodge Blood Drive & Family Day

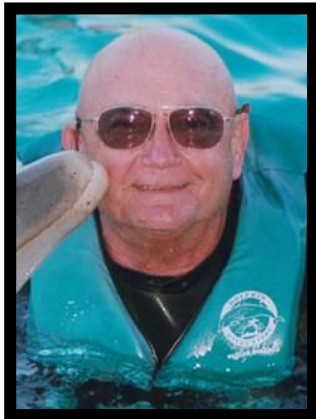
November 12, 2022



IN MEMORIAM

Bro. Jerry Neal Spencer

January 25, 1936 — October 29, 2022



Gray Lodge's former Tiler, Bro. Jerry Spencer, laid down his working tools on Saturday, Oct. 29, 2022. Jerry was born Jan. 25, 1936, in Jacksboro, Texas, and worked in several professions in service industries, including as a chauffeur for private clients and funeral homes. He served as a *shomer*, working as the watchman over the deceased in Jewish custom. Bro. Spencer owned a photo lab, sold insurance, and was an accomplished pilot.

Bro. Spencer was initiated into Freemasonry on Dec. 27, 1958, passed to the degree of Fellowcraft on Feb. 27, 1959, and raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason on May 8, 1959, all in Ft. Richardson Lodge No. 320. After 48 years of Masonic service, he affiliated with Gray Lodge No. 329 on July 14, 2007, and became Tiler of the Lodge for the 2009-2010 Masonic Year - a position he would continue to hold until 2016. Gray Lodge was pleased to present Bro. Spencer with his 50- and 60-Year Masonic Service Awards.

Jerry is survived by his loving wife of 25 years, Janice, and his extended family. Gray Lodge hosted a "celebration of life" service in Bro. Spencer's honor on Nov. 9, 2022, at which WM Gary Wiener presided over a Masonic memorial and led the guests in the traditional Jewish "Mourner's Kaddish". Bro. Spencer's family requests that memorial donations be made to the Houston Jewish Family Foundation, Linda L. Burger CEO Discretionary Endowment Fund, 5603 S. Braeswood Blvd, Houston, TX 77096 or jfshouston.org/houston-jewish-family-foundation/donate.