



WM Richard Elia

## Reuniting A Mason

John Lewis Abraham III was born into military family in Jacksonville Arkansas (near Little Rock) on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1971, his father died in a motorcycle accident in 1976 when he was only five years old, leaving his Mother, Marry Lee, to raise him as a single parent, with the assistance of his Grandfather. Both his Father, until his death, and three of his six uncles were actively involved in the Army and Marines. With military influence surrounding him, he developed a keen sense of duty to family and Country, and it was no wonder that he began to consider a military career for himself during his high-school years.

Abraham was too young to be negatively influenced by the controversy of the Vietnam war and, when he began to consider his options and make plans for his future, the world was in a state of

relative peace, meaning that serving some time in the military would keep him in a relatively safe place.

He had always maintained good grades, and, being from a single-parent home, knew that if he was going to go to college he would either have to get a scholarship, work part-time and attend school part-time, delay his entrance into school after graduating from high-school or take advantage of one of the many programs available to college aged students who agree to give between 2 and 5 years of their lives to military service in return for money that can be used towards their college education.

Since the draft had long been abolished, military service was no longer an obligation, but the rewards of the college tuition program were beginning to look

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## Special Monday Night Installation

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On Monday evening, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Brethren of Hesperia Lodge #411 joined with Brethren of Paul Revere Lodge #998 and Ancient Egyptian Order of Sciots, Illinois Pyramid No. 1, to initiate 3 new Entered Apprentice candidates for Paul Revere Lodge and 1 new Entered Apprentice candidate for Hesperia Lodge.

This very special meeting took place on a night that would normally have been a lodge instruction school night at the Richard D Johnson School of Instruction, in the Gale Street Temple on Chicago's Northwest side. The candidates initiated for Paul Revere Lodge #998 were: Peter Gatziolis, Charles Smiley and Tomasz Janowski. The candidate initiated for Hesperia Lodge #411 was Robert Scarano.



**DEGREE TEAM and CANDIDATES: Bottom row: Steve Wiseman, Jimmie Lopez, Charlie Smiley, Daniel Salgado, Tom Janowski, Peter Gatziolis Bob Scarano, Louis Ennis; top row, Aubrey McCauley, Andy Feltovich, Paul Scheeler, Ray DeGrootte, Rick Taman, Jim Durbin, Richard Elia, Wayne Hardesty, Rich Sobotta, Manny Roth, Ralph Kipnis. Not in picture were Howard Helgesen, Tiler Cary Willis, and Assistant. Deacons — Photo Courtesy of Rick Tamen**

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The evening began with a delicious spaghetti and sausage dinner, accompanied by a tossed salad, having been lovingly prepared by Betty Modaressi, wife of Moshen Modaressi. Betty is an excellent cook and there was sufficient food to feed the troops currently serving in Iraq. If you missed this dinner and ever have a chance to sample Betty's cooking, make certain you're there the next time!

Upon completion of dinner, at approximately 7:30 PM, Worshipful Master, Sciot Jim Durbin, MWPGM, opened Paul Revere Lodge #998 with the Pledge of Allegiance on the First Degree of Masonry.

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*Four of the Five Sciots who helped to make the evening successful: Paul Scheeler, Rick Taman, Jim Durbin, Manny Roth. Sciot not in picture was Howard Helgesen*

The slate for the evening's events was as follows:

WM	Sciot Jim Durbin, MWPGM
SW	Bro Daniel Salgado -- Paul Revere No. 998
JW	Bro Jimmie Lopez – Paul Revere No. 998
TR	Sciot Manny Roth
SE	WB Ray DeGroot – Paul Revere No. 998
CH	Bro Aubrey McCauley -- Paul Revere No. 998
SD	Bro Steve Wiseman -- Paul Revere No. 998
JD	Sciot Paul Scheeler – Editor of the Illinois Freemason
SS	Bro Rich Sobotta – Decalogue No. 160
JS	Bro Andy Feltovich -- Flat Rock No. 348
MA	Bro Josh Modaressi -- Paul Revere No. 998
TI	WB James Bufferine – Paul Revere No. 998
AD	RWB Russ Johnson – King Oscar No. 855
AD	Bro John Sarabia – Hesperia No. 411
AD	Bro Thomas Terranova – Paul Revere No. 998
OR	WB Cary Willis – Paul Revere No. 998

Lectures to the newly initiated candidates were given by the following individuals::

Explanatory:	Sciot Rick Taman
Forms & Supports:	Sciot Howard Helgesen
Tenets:	Bro Wayne Hardesty – King Oscar No. 855
Charge:	Bro Steve Wiseman – Paul Revere No. 998

Officers of Hesperia Lodge #411 were present on the sidelines to witness and participate in the evening's activities were:

WM	Richard Elia
SW	Joseph Laiacona
CH	Gil Orejudos, PM
JS	Marino Pallotta
SD	John Sarabia
CLI	Sciot Rick Tamen

The following Brethren from Hesperia were also present on the sidelines:

Robert Harvey  
Bruce Barnes  
James Voss

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Lou Ennis, Entered Apprentice  
Ralph Kipness, Entered Apprentice

Upon completion of the lectures and a warm welcome to the newly initiated Entered Apprentices by Worshipful Master Jim Durban, Sciot Paul Scheeler both congratulated and gave a brief explanation of the secrecy and tenants of Freemasonry, as well as an interesting explanation of the four types of reprimands that could be given to a Brother.

Lodge was closed at approximately 10:30 PM whereby all retired to the dining hall to wish Jim Oehler, PM and Treasurer of Paul Revere Lodge a happy 60<sup>th</sup> birthday with a cake provided by Hesperia Lodge. Brother Oehler was both surprised and gracious when he stated, "I don't personally know too many of the



**Back Row: Ralph Kipniss and Louis Ennis, initiated as Entered Apprentices on Thursday, March 10th, 2005. Front Row: Worshipful Master Richard Elia and newly initiated Entered Apprentice Robert Scarano**  
Photo Courtesy of Rick Tamen

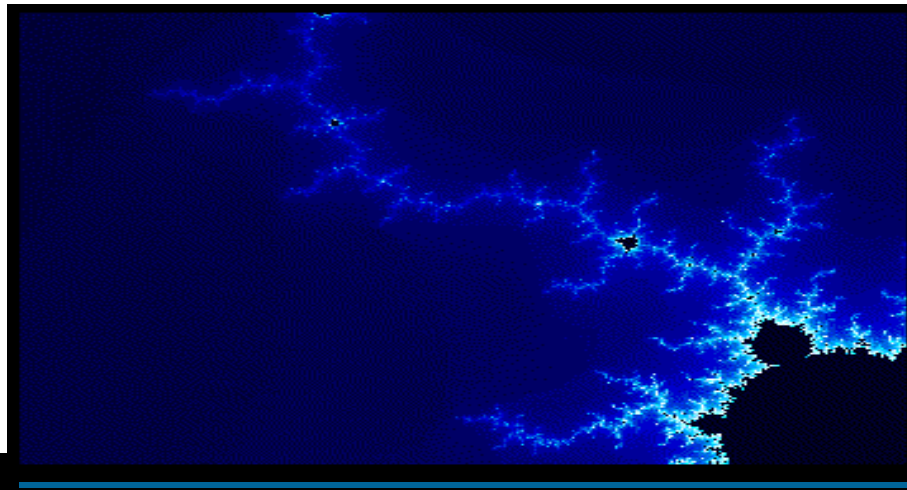
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Brothers of Hesperia Lodge, but thank you for thinking me in such a kind manner and thank you for the wonderful cake”.

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All who were present experienced an exceptional evening during the gathering of Brethren who, collectively, have more than 180 years of Masonic experience. The two Entered Apprentice Brothers from Hesperia, who sat on the sidelines with other members of Hesperia, Paul Revere and King Oscar Lodges, gained additional insight into what they had experienced only 4 days previous, and Hesperia had the privilege of assisting another lodge.

On Saturday, March 19th, Entered Apprentices Ralph Kipniss, Louis Ennis, and Robert Scarano joined 32 other Entered Apprentices for a Blue Lightning Initiative hosted by St Cecelia Lodge #865 at the Scottish Rite Cathedral.. The mentors from Hesperia who assisted the our Entered Apprentices with their degree work were: WM Richard Elia, and Brothers Bruce Barnes, Rodney Abstone, and Howell Brown. Many thanks to St Cecelia Lodge and the Scottish Rite for allowing these Hesperians to participate in this wonderful event.



## **Temple Building Rededication in June**

*Our very own Gale Street Temple has undergone substantial renovations over the last year. Repairs include refurbished Temple, youth and public spaces. A re-dedication Saturday, June 25th, 2005. Breakfast: 8:00 AM and 1:00 PM with the re-dedication ceremony beginning at 2:00 PM.*

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## Attack On A Masonic Lodge

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### Five Of Ten People Sent To Court For Their Arrest

from the Anadolu Agency of the Turkish Press — 16 March, 2004

ISTANBUL TURKEY — Five of the ten people who had been detained under investigation into bomb attack on the Free and Accepted Masons Grand Lodge Association's building in [the] Yakacik neighborhood of [the] Kartal district in Istanbul and later transferred to the State Security Court (DGM), were sent to court with a request for their arrest.

Two DGM prosecutors interrogated those ten people and sent five of them to the Istanbul DGM on duty court for their arrest on charges of "being member of illegal organization" and "aiding and abetting illegal organization".

Meanwhile, five of them were released after their interrogation.

*ONE SUSPECT CLAIMED TO HAVE*

*"The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that is created — created first in the mind and will, created next in activity. The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them, changes both the maker and the destination" John Schaar*

*TESTIFIED THEY PLAN TO STAGE SUICIDE BOMB ATTACK ON A PRESS ORGAN*

One of the three persons who were detained and are supposed to have been involved in murder of dentist Yasef Yahya, was claimed to have said in his testimony that "they were planning to stage a suicide bomb attack on a press organ".

Sources said on Tuesday [15 March, 2005] that police continued to interrogate three people who were detained after bomb attack on the Free and Accepted Masons Grand Lodge Association's building in Yakacik neighborhood of Kartal district in Istanbul on March 9 and are suspected of murder of dentist Yasef Yahya.

A high-level police official told the A.A correspondent that one of the suspects testified that they were planning to stage a suicide bomb attack on a press organ.

Noting that the investigation was under way, the official did not name the press organ.

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# The Empty Chair

By Bro Joseph Laiacona

Every time we participate in the conferring of a degree we have the opportunity to learn more about Masonry. In fact it could well be shown that the degree work is more instructional to those watching, listening, or reciting than it is for the candidate. Just as the candidate is in our lodge to “receive Light in Masonry,” so too should that be our purpose.

Over and over again we hear the word “Light” in our ritual but little about darkness. Yet it is there metaphorically as we hear in the “Forms and Supports” lecture of the first degree:

*“A lodge has three lights, situated East, West, and South. There is none in the North because of the situation of King Solomon’s Temple, which was placed so far north of the ecliptic that neither sun nor moon, at meridian height, could dart any rays into the northern part thereof. The North, therefore, we Masonically term a place of darkness.”*

Albert Pike, in his *Morals and Dogma* affirms the same: “To all Mason, the North has immemorially been the place of darkness; and of the great lights of the Lodge, none is in the North.”

Why one asks, should a fraternity so dedicated to gaining light, one which repeats again and again the words “More light in Masonry,” have such a place in its lodges? What does this empty chair have to teach

us?

If we look first to the Bible, the first of the great lights of a lodge, we read:

*“When God began to create heaven and earth, and the earth then was welter and waste and darkness over the deep and God’s breath hovering over the waters, God said, ‘Let there be light.’ And there was light.”*

So we see that darkness has existed from the beginning. It was there when the earth was “welter and waste.” My American Heritage Dictionary comes to my rescue here, showing that welter means “Confusion, turmoil, a confused mass, a jumble” and that waste is “Garbage, trash.” So the word brought forth light, separated from the darkness:

And God saw the light, that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And it was evening and it was morning, first day.

Thus we see the first duality, a necessary

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step in creation. In *Morals and Dogma*, Pike will return to this theme many times, even reminding us that some ancients saw the light as Father, the darkness as Mother. This is also an allusion to the fertility of the night, when, it is said, corn grows more quickly than during the day. Certainly more children are conceived at night than during the day.

*"When God began to create heaven and earth, and the earth then was welter and waste and darkness over the deep and God's breath hovering over the waters, God said, 'Let there be light.' And there was light."*

*the black shades that surround him, feels his existence a blank and nothingness, except so far as memory recalls to him the glories and splendors of light"*

As reasonable as it is for man to see darkness as evil, it is likewise natural that he see light as divine:

Light was the first Divinity worshipped by men. To it they owed the brilliant spectacle of Nature. It seems an emanation from the Creator of all things, making known to our

Still we have come to associate darkness with evil. A natural association as the darkness hides the beauty of the day and of the creation that we can no longer see in the night.

*"Man, enveloped by the thick darkness of profoundest night, when everything around him has disappeared, and he seems alone with himself and*

senses the Universe which darkness hides from our eyes, and, as it were, giving it existence. Darkness, as it were, reduces all nature again to nothingness, and almost entirely annihilates man.

Naturally, therefore, two substances of opposite natures were imagined....

...Says Plutarch, "...The harmony of the Universe is a combination of contraries, like the strings of a lyre, or that of a bow, which alternately is stretched and relaxed." "The good," says Euripides, "is never separated from the Evil. The two must mingle, that all may go well."

So there is a northern place in our lodges for darkness by which we are reminded of the fullness of creation. It is a reminder of whence we came, the darkness we were in before we knew light. It tells us that all of creation reflects the yin and the yang. Without light there would be no shadow. Without darkness we would have no knowledge that there is light.

Again quoting Pike:

*"There must be for every Force a Resistance to support it, to every light a shadow, for every Royalty a Realm to govern, for every affirmative, a negative.*

*For the Kabalists, Light represents the Active Principle, and Darkness or Shadow is analogous to the Passive Principle..."*

Justice and Mercy are contraries. If each be infinite, their coexistence seems impossible, and being equal, one cannot

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even annihilate the other and reign alone. The mysteries of the Divine Nature are beyond our finite comprehension; but so indeed are the mysteries of our own finite nature; and it is certain that in all nature harmony and movement are the result of the equilibrium of opposing or contrary forces.

Yes the chair in the north is empty but it speaks volumes to us about creation, duality, forces of good and evil, and harmony, “the strength and support of all institutions, especially ours.” Pretty good for an empty chair, huh?

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## Protecting Yourself Against Identity Theft

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Each week we seem to hear yet another story about another company who’s customers have potentially had their identity compromised because someone has either stolen or otherwise gained unauthorized access to a database containing customer credit card, social security numbers or other personal information. In this article, we will attempt to show you how you can take steps to protect

that information and, if your identity is compromised because of the theft of information, what steps you can take to resolve the problem.

### **Stealing Your Identity:**

Have you ever eaten at a restaurant, paid with a credit card, and forgotten to get your copy of the credit card receipt? Did you know that many of these receipts have your credit card number printed right there for anyone to see and use? If you’ve already signed the receipt, your signature is also there for someone to copy. This is the simplest form of identity theft.

With the information from a simple credit card receipt, a less-than-honest person can begin making purchases, either by phone or on the Internet, using your credit card number. The worst part about someone using a credit card number they’ve stolen this way is that you won’t even know about it until you get your statement — a good reason why you should always study the charges on your credit card statements! Even if your credit card receipt doesn’t contain your address, all the thief has to do is look up your mailing address, easily found in a phone book or on the Internet.

Credit card fraud can also happen when pre-approved credit card offers fall into the wrong hands. All a person has to do is get these out of your mailbox or trash can, fill out the information requested, including a

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***Haven’t paid your 2005  
Dues Card yet? It’s not too  
late to sent your payment!***

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## Toys for Iraq

Past Master David Grooms and his wife Vicki were overjoyed when their daughter, Tracy, announced her engagement to Brad Lyga. Then she broke the bad news. The wedding would have to wait for awhile because Brad was Master Sergeant Brad and right now he was off training for deployment to Iraq.

As it unfolded, the Army gave Brad a one week leave to visit his family and on an unseasonably warm Sunday last Fall he and Tracy were married. The following Wednesday they kissed each other goodbye and Brad boarded a plane for Baghdad.

Facing a minimum year and a half deployment, the letters and packages began. At first Tracy sent cookies, then toiletries and finally small gifts. Brad quickly wrote back. He explained that he loved her and that he loved getting her letters, but that he really didn't need the things she had been sending for him. It turns out that despite what we read in the papers our military is fairly well stocked and Brad felt he simply had everything he really needed. "What you can do," he wrote, "is send me something for all the children I'm encountering here in Iraq."

Brad explained that the Iraqi people are in poverty. The war has all but destroyed what they might have called a normal life and it has been particularly difficult for the children. What Brad requested was small toys, school sup-

plies or sporting equipment which he could give away to the hundreds and hundreds of children he encountered on his daily rounds.

"They have nothing," he wrote, "and basically they're just kids. They didn't ask for this war, they didn't do anything to wage this war, they're just caught up in hell and anything you can send to help make life better would be money much better spent than sending things for me."

With that in mind, Vicki Grooms began her mission. She and David contacted their friends, their church, the American Legion and just about every other fraternal organization or civic group they'd ever encountered, including the Masons.

At their request Hesperia Lodge No. 411 donated \$200 toward the purchase of toys and trinkets. Ordering through a company called "Oriental Trading" which supplies to schools, we were able to purchase a huge box of toys and maximize our dollars. Our Secretary, Bro. Ehemann, was able to convince Oriental Trading to cover the cost of shipping, and we saved the tax by ordering off the internet. As a result, Hesperia's \$200 produced a huge box (almost 85 pounds) of toys and school supplies for the children in Iraq.

Because of mail blackouts and redeployments, we've not yet heard from SSG Brad Lyga, so we can't give you the conclusion to this story. We can tell you that the Hesperians who participated in this "toys for tots" like charity

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change of address request and wait for the card, originally intended for you, to be mailed to them. Once they receive your new credit card, they start spending. Again, just like the thief who steals a credit card number from a sales slip, you won't know a thing about the fact that someone has opened a new credit card account in your name until the credit card company tracks you down and demands payment for the purchases made by the perpetrator, in your name.

### **Talking Trash:**

What you throw away that might be of use to someone wanting to commit identity theft!

Do you throw your pay stubs away once you've recorded the amount in your checkbook? Take a look at what information is on that seemingly unimportant piece of paper:

- Your full name
- Your address
- Your social security number
- Your complete bank account number (if you have direct deposit)
- Your employer and its address
- Your rate of pay

Your pay stub probably contains all of the information you have to provide in order to get a credit card, a loan or lease a car. Very little additional information is required.

Digging through trash cans and

dumpsters is a process that has colloquially become known as "dumpster diving".

Information can also be memorized or copied by sales clerks and waiters; removed from your mailbox in the form of tax notices, financial account statements and other bills, before you have a chance to get them or even know they are there; removed from your employer's files, either secretly or with the help of an inside accomplice; removed from your hospital records, usually with the help of an inside accomplice; removed from your financial lender's files; removed from your landlord's files, if you rent; and purchased, or found free, in online or offline databases

Because banks and mortgage companies have become so competitive for your business, you can now apply for a mortgage or home equity loan, and do everything except sign the final documents, over the phone. You can also fax your financial information directly to a loan officer or mortgage broker. It would not be all that difficult for someone wanting to steal your identity to "create" those documents using someone else's social security number, bank account numbers and other personal information!

### **How to Protect Yourself:**

Protecting yourself from identity theft takes proactive effort. You can't simply assume it's not going to happen to you and go on about your life -- it can happen to anyone. Oprah Winfrey, Tiger Woods, Robert De Niro and Martha Stewart have all had their identities sto-

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len.

While you can't ever totally protect yourself from these thieves, you can to make it more difficult for them to access your information. Here are some of the things you can do:

**DON'T give out your Social Security number** unless it is absolutely necessary. Many companies collect more information than they really need. Make sure they absolutely have to have and make sure they'll protect your privacy.

**DESTROY any unwanted credit card offers.** Shred, burn, or rip them into tiny pieces. These pre-approved offers come almost daily. If you don't want the three major credit bureaus to sell your name to these companies, you can "opt out" by either writing to the three major credit bureaus or by calling (888) 5OPTOUT (567-8688). This will remove your name, for two years, from mailing and telemarketing lists that come from TransUnion, Equifax, Experian, and INNOVIS.

**DON'T put any other information besides your name and address** on your checks. Keep a close watch on your checkbook both when you're writing checks. Someone can memorize your name, address and phone number during the short time it takes you to write a check.

**SHRED (cross-cut) any sensitive**

**documents** before you throw them into the trash. This may seem like an extreme measure, but dumpster diving happens all the time and turns up more personal information than most people realize.

**DON'T carry your Social Security card,** passport or birth certificate in your wallet or purse.

**Only carry as many credit cards as are absolutely necessary.** (If you photocopy everything you carry in your wallet it will make canceling things easier in the event that your wallet is stolen.)

**REVIEW your credit reports every year** to make sure there haven't been any new credit cards or other accounts issued that you don't know about and to make sure there haven't been inquiries by people you haven't initiated business with. You can now do this at no cost by going to the secure website at [www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com)

**NEVER give out personal information on the phone to someone you don't know unless you initiated the call.** Get their name, phone number and address, but don't call them back at that number, call them back at the number you have on file or at the number that is printed on the monthly statements you receive

**REVIEW your credit card statement** each month to make sure there aren't any charges that aren't yours!

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*Staff Sergeant Brad Lyga (right), in Iraq, with some of his young friends and their new toys.*

*(Toys for Iraq — Continued from page 11)*

felt great. "It's a whole lot better to think we're dropping toys on the kids of Baghdad instead of bombs," one member expressed.

Members who wish to make their own individual donations of toys or school supplies can send them directly to Brad whose address follows. All toys and school supplies should be free of any writing. Due to cultural differences even things we might think of as innocuous could be seen as religiously or culturally insensitive. Therefore, no books with writing (even coloring books should be just pictures), nothing with religious or political overtones. Pencils, small pads of paper, erasers, small scissors and similar school supplies are great. Small toys, balls, games and coloring books are also appreciated. No donation is too small. Indeed, the smaller packages tend to arrive faster and therefore get to the kids faster.. Brad's address is: SSG Bradley Alan Lyga, 2nd Platoon C Co.\ 128 INBN, FOB O'Ryan, APO AE 0939

*Editor's Note: Just prior to going to press, we received the following information*

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*(Toys for Iraq — Continued from page 14)*

*from Staff Sgt Brad Lyga:* “I’m way out in the country where the kids are pretty poor. I’ve divided the little toys into zip lock bags so that each kid gets several toys, and I keep a box of pre-bagged toys in my vehicle at all times to hand out whenever I come across any kids. These people are much more conservative, and very religious, when compared to the city kids. Overall they are very friendly and tend to keep to themselves. When I was in the city, the kids swarmed me for the toys, but in the country they tend to be pretty shy about coming up to soldiers. Interestingly enough, when I give the toys to the kids I find it tends to warm things with their parents and now I’m being approached by the adults as well. This is good, as it is building much better relations with the people my unit is there to serve, and they are now bringing us their problems and telling us what they need done. Thanks, Hesperians!”

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## ... and Dedicated to the Saints John ...

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By Bro John Sarabia

As Masons, we are all familiar with these words. We hear them the first time as we repeat the oath that we take as part of our Entered Apprentice degree, and they are repeated frequently as we continue to on our journey to quench our thirst for knowledge and our search for Light. They are again referenced in the Entered Apprentice Lecture as being “perfect parallels in Masonry as well as in Christianity”. . . . we dedicate every Lodge to these two men.

In early Masonry, the feast day of St. John the Baptist was always celebrated by the Craft. In fact, the first public Grand Lodge - the Grand Lodge of England - was born on St. John the Baptist’s day, June 24<sup>th</sup>, in 1717, in London. Thereafter, the Grand Lodge of England sponsored great annual celebrations of this day for many years. Eventually, the feast of St. John the Evangelist, celebrated on December 27<sup>th</sup>, became im-

portant festival day, too.

Both festival days were of central importance to early American Lodges as well, almost always celebrated by well-governed Lodges during the early years of our Country. Elections and installations were usually planned around the dates, and records indicate that Brothers George Washington and Benjamin Franklin always made it a point to attend their Lodges respective observances of St. Johns Days.

Even though we have allowed this tradition, like so many others, to slip away, we retain the vestiges of it. More and more frequently, we are allowing traditions to become habits, losing sight of the reason for the original tradition.

So who were these Saints, John the Baptist and John the Evangelist?

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*(Protecting Yourself From Identity Theft —  
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**Make certain you get a monthly statement.** If your statement is late, contact the credit card company *IMMEDIATELY*. Someone may have turned in a change-of-address form so they could make a few more weeks of purchases on a lost or stolen credit card without you noticing.

**DON'T mail bills or documents that contain personal data (like tax forms or checks) from your personal mail box.** Take them directly to the post office or an official postal service mailbox. It's too easy for someone to take mail out of your mailbox on the street. From there, they can dip your checks in special chemicals to remove the ink and then rewrite them to themselves!

**If you're ever denied credit, FIND OUT WHY,** especially if you haven't reviewed your credit report lately. This may be the first indication you get that someone has stolen your identity and has opened other accounts, or is making charges in your name.

**REACT QUICKLY if a creditor or merchant calls you about charges you didn't make.** This may be the first notice you get that someone has stolen your identity. Get as much information from them as you can and investigate immediately.

- **GUARD deposit slips and checks.** Not only do they have your name, address and account number

printed on them, but they can also be used to withdraw money from your account. All someone has to do is write a bad check, deposit it into your account and use the "less cash received" line to withdraw your money.

- **COMPLETE THE SALE at Gas Stations.** At some gas stations, if you don't say YES or NO the receipt prompt, the next person who uses the pump may be billing your card!

### **Protecting Yourself on the Net:**

The ease of shopping and comparing products and prices online has made it an attractive option for many shoppers. How can you make sure your transactions are safe and your credit card information going only where you intend it to? There are several ways to help ensure safe transactions on the Internet, and more are becoming possible all the time. Each carries its own set of risks. Some of these include:

- Stored-value cards (cards that you can buy with specified, loaded dollar amounts)
- Smart Cards — cards that can act as credit cards, debit cards and/or stored-value cards.
- Digital Cash
- E-Wallets
- PayPal

In spite of the introduction of new services like the ones listed above, the most prevalent, and most secure, method for paying for purchases online is still the credit card. The following

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tips will help to insure your Internet transactions are secure.

**Use the latest Internet browser.**

The program that you use to surf the Internet is called a browser. This software has built-in encryption capabilities that scramble the information you send to a server. Using the most recent browser ensures that the data is protected using the latest encryption technology. This technology also uses a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL), which is an Internet security protocol used by browsers and Web servers to transmit sensitive information. The server receiving the data uses special "keys" to decode it. You can make sure you are on an SSL by checking the URL -- the http at the beginning of the address should have changed to **https**. Also, you should notice a small **lock icon** in the status bar at the bottom of your browser window.

**Look for digital certificates** like those shown above on any website on which you want to make an online purchase. They authenticate the entity you are dealing with. Clicking on



the logo should open a separate window that will show you whether the certificate is valid or and assure you that the site is legitimate, rather than a clone of the legitimate company set up to collect your personal and financial information.

**Look for the "S"** in secure web site addresses. All secure website addresses will ALWAYS start with "**HTTPS://**", whereas non-secure website addresses will start with "**HTTP://**"

**Read the privacy policy.** The information you enter on the Web site should be kept confidential. Make sure you read the company's privacy policy to ensure that your personal information won't be sold to others. Services like Trust-E review a company's privacy policy (for a fee) and then allow the company to post the Trust-E logo if its privacy policy follows certain industry standards for consumer protection.

**Only use one credit card** for all of your online purchases. That will make keeping track of your online purchases easier.

**Never give out passwords or user ID information online unless you know who you are dealing with** and why they need it. Don't give it out to your Internet service provider if you get an e-mail requesting it. This is a relatively recent scam used to access your account and get your credit card number, along with whatever other personal information is there.

**Keep records of all of your Internet transactions.** Watch your credit card

*(Continued on page 18)*

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*(Protecting Yourself From Identity Theft —  
Continued from page 17)*

statement for the charges and make sure they're accurate.

**After you've made purchases online, check your e-mail.** Merchants often send confirmation e-mails or other communications about your order.

### **If Your Identity is Compromised:**

What can you do if you find out, through a phone call from a creditor, a review of your credit report, or even a visit from the police, that your identity has been stolen.

**Don't panic.** The first thing to do is report the crime to the police and get a copy of your police report or case number. Most credit card companies, banks, and others may ask you for it in order to make sure a crime has actually occurred.

**Immediately contact your credit card issuers,** close your existing accounts and get replacement cards with new account numbers. Make sure you request that the old account reflect that it was "closed at consumer's request" for credit report purposes. It is also smart to follow up your telephone conversation with letters to the credit card companies that summarize your request in writing.

**Close any accounts the thief has opened** in your name. If you open new accounts yourself, make sure

you request that passwords be put on those accounts. As with any password, make sure you use something that is not obvious to others. Don't use your mother's maiden name, the last four digits of your social security number, or anything else that would be obvious.

**Call the fraud units of the three credit reporting bureaus** and report the theft of your credit cards and/or numbers. Ask that your accounts be flagged with a "fraud alert." This usually means that someone can't set up a new account in your name without the creditor calling you at a phone number you specify. Verify with the credit bureau representative you speak with that this will happen, and provide them with the number at which you want to be reached. The down side of this is that you won't be able to get "instant credit" at department stores. This flag, also known as a "victim's statement," is the best way to prevent unauthorized accounts.

### **The Credit Bureaus**

Hopefully, you'll be one of the lucky ones and never have a problem. If you are unfortunate enough to find yourself in the situation of having to call the credit bureaus to report identity theft, make certain you keep a log of all conversations with authorities and financial entities, and keep copies of any documentation you provide to them. Here is how to contact the credit reporting agencies:

**Equifax** Credit Information Services -  
Consumer Fraud Div.  
P.O. Box 105496  
Atlanta, Georgia 30348-5496

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*(Protecting Yourself From Identity Theft —  
Continued from page 18)*

Tel: (800) 997-2493  
www.equifax.com

### **Experian**

P.O. Box 2104  
Allen, Texas 75013-2104  
Tel: (888) EXPERIAN (397-3742)  
www.experian.com

### **TransUnion**

Fraud Victim Assistance Dept.  
P.O. Box 390  
Springfield, PA 19064-0390  
Tel: (800) 680-7289  
www.transunion.com

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## Happy Birthday Alma Montejano

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As many of you are aware, Hesperia continues to sponsor a child at the Masonic Children's home in LaGrange Illinois. We'll, it's time for our sponsored child, Alma Montejano, to turn 15, and Hesperian's will be making a journey to the Children's Home in LaGrange on Sunday, May 15th, at 5:00 PM to help both Alma and her house-mates celebrate her birthday.

The Lodge will be giving Alma's caseworker a \$100.00 donation so her caseworker can pick out an appropriate gift, but, as anyone who remembers being 15 knows, it's always a lot more fun to receive more than one gift

on your birthday! Therefore, anyone who wants to bring a card or small gift can do so.

The Lodge will also pay for a pizza party for the entire facility for Alma's birthday, party which is: SUNDAY - M A Y 1 5 a t 5 p m

The Masonic Children's Home in LaGrange is located at 441 9th Ave, LaGrange, Illinois 60525-6423

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## Website Wins Awards

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If you haven't been to the Hesperia website lately, you may not be aware of the fact that we've received several awards for both the content and layout.

On the Hesperia website, you'll find an up-to-date calendar of events; copies of the minutes of all the meetings dating back to October, 2003; a searchable, up-to-date listing of all of our member's names, addresses, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers and links to other useful information. Access to the Member's Only area requires a password. The Hesperia website is located at [www.Hesperia411.org](http://www.Hesperia411.org).

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## New Member Directory

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Thanks to Brother Marino Pallotta, you should now have a new member's directory in your hands. If you find an error or didn't receive yours, please let us know by contacting Brother Secretary Ron Ehemann at [RJE@RonEhemann.com](mailto:RJE@RonEhemann.com) or Marino Pallotta at [Marino@Hesperia411.org](mailto:Marino@Hesperia411.org).

(...and Dedicated to the Saints John...  
— Continued from page 15)

The four Gospels, the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as found in the Bible's New Testament, all describe John the Baptist in almost exactly the same language. John the Baptist, a cousin to Jesus, is referred to as "A voice crying in the wilderness," whose purpose was to, "Prepare the way of the Lord and make his paths straight." He must have been an extremely important man as all four Gospels to refer to him with exactly the same terminology, something extremely rare in the Bible. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus himself says of John, "Among them that are born of women, there has not risen any greater than John the Baptist."

John the Baptist - called the Baptist because, as he preached, he baptized believers in the River Jordan - lived a simple, yet powerful and devout life. He preached single-minded righteous living and change of character. His message was that one must live in a holy manner and that deviation from that manner was not acceptable. For his refusal to change either himself or his message, and for his devotion to Jesus, John the Baptist was imprisoned and, eventually, beheaded by King Herod.

The heroism, fidelity and integrity of John the Baptist are echoed in the legends of Jacques DeMolay and Hiram Abif, both of which give us more insight into his choice as a Patron Saint of the Masonic Order.

John the Evangelist is equally important to us as Masons. It is fitting that, while we have a relatively concrete biography



of St. John the Baptist, whose theology and teachings were straightforward and rigid, the story of the St John the Evangelist is more difficult to correlate and requires more study, much like his teachings. John the Evangelist is quite likely the amalgamation of several New Testament Johns, including John the Disciple of Christ; John the Epistle writer and John the Divine of Patmos, author of the Book of Revelation.

There are many reasons why Freemasons would choose the St John the Evangelist as a Patron. To begin with, the writings of this John, or group of Johns, read almost like Masonic ritual. The Gospel of John begins: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In

(Continued on page 21)

(. . . and Dedicated to the Saints John. . .  
Continued from page 20)

*him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and darkness comprehended it not."*

Nowhere else in the Bible, with the exception of the Book of Genesis, is the concept of light so inextricably entwined with the idea of the divine spirit. As continue our Masonic education and progress through higher degrees, the concepts of the Word, the Light and the Divine, as inseparable parts of the whole of Creation, become of primary importance. John the Evangelist leads us forward in that direction.

In his Epistles, John the Evangelist continues to work from the theme that the Word and the Light are inevitably linked, and goes on to introduce the concepts of Truth and Love in as links of the same chain. The idea and practice of Brotherly Love and Fellowship is explored more thoroughly by St John the Evangelist than by any other New Testament writer. The disturbing imagery of the Book of Revelations is the source of many esoteric schools of thought and many writers have made convincing arguments that this imagery is in many ways influential to Masonry.

Also of Masonic importance is that John the Evangelist is described as among the most loyal of the Disciples of Christ and the one closest to Jesus. Even in death, Jesus entrusts the care of his Mother to John, who we may assume was in many ways his best friend on earth.



There we have two Saints John, described Masonically as parallel figures of equal importance. Both Saints John are of unimpeachable character, and impart a strong influence on the mind – one dogmatic and rigid – the other intellectual and esoteric.

In both Saints John we find both the integrity and the inflexible fidelity, so common to Masonic teachings. The manner of teaching those virtues, however, varies widely between the two.

***Come celebrate St John the Baptist Day at Hesperia  
Thursday, June 24th  
— Dinner : 6:30 PM —  
— Meeting: 7:30 PM —***

*(Reuniting a Mason — Continued from page 1)*

better and better to this country boy who was living at home with his mother.

*“If things were different I would have easily stayed in Germany, due to the strong Masonic practice there and all of the knowledge I gained.”*

Abraham poured over the pros and cons of full military service, joining the National Guard, working while attending school and forgoing continuing education alltogether. After contemplating his options for several weeks, he decided to take advantage of the collective experience of his uncles, and discussed his options with them. One of them, Steven Neal, suggested that he become involved with a National Guard program available to high school aged students in Arkansas called Delayed Entry.

John’s uncle helped him contact the right people to get more information and he was soon involved, as a student, with the Arkansas National Guard. The program allowed him to go to actual drills at military camps during the summer, and go on weekend camping and training trips with real National Guardsmen during the school year. Best of all, he got paid for it! He was young and he was hooked and he had money in his pocket!

The following year, 18 year old Abraham graduated from Ole Main High School in North Little Rock and had to make a decision about what he was going to do about continuing his education. Would he go to college full-time and work part-time? Would he work full-time and go to college on evenings and weekends? Would he join the National Guard as a regular guardsman? His mother, who didn’t want him to be a bum, told him to “make up your mind or get out!

That was the catalyst he needed, and John decided to join the Army as a full-time soldier. Basic training was at Ft Leonard Wood Missouri, after which he was assigned to Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland. This was where an unusual turn of events would give him a break not usually afforded to active army troops. The base commander, Capt Johnson, made everyone in his unit a deal – if they could maintain at least a C average, they could go to college half a day and be in the Army half a day. John chose to accept that challenge, and, during his four years he was stationed at Aberdeen, attended the University of Maryland, graduating with a degree in Computer Science – all at the Army’s expense and on the Army’s time!

After Aberdeen, he was re-assigned for additional training in Germany, for a few months, and did so well that he was permanently assigned to a base in Bamberg Germany. Less than a year into his assignment at Bamberg, a friend told him about a meeting that was taking place in the local village. The meeting was to discuss the formation of a new Masonic Lodge in Bamberg. John, his friend, and two others from his unit

*(Continued on page 23)*



*Brother John Abraham  
Raised in a Military Lodge  
Reunited with Freemasonry via  
the Hesperia website*

*(Reuniting a Mason — Continued from page 22)*  
requested petitions and joining the newly formed Lodge that night.

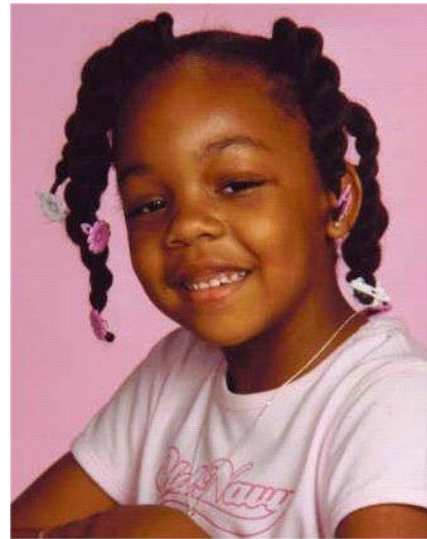
Over the next two and a half years, John was initiated, passed, and finally, with only 2 weeks remaining in his tour-of-duty in Germany, raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason.

Upon his return to the United States, John was stationed at Ft Lewis in Washington State. He was already beginning to miss his involvement with Freema-

sonry and his Brethren from his Lodge in Germany. After approximately 2 months, he met a fellow soldier who was a member of a Lodge near Ft Lewis and began to attend meetings once again. Realizing that Freemasonry was now as much a part of his life as the Army, John now requested a Demit from his Lodge in Germany and made plans to join his new lodge in Washington.

Because of changes to the base housing, he was moved from one part of the base to another and never received the paperwork to complete his Demit when it was sent to him by his new

*(Continued on page 24)*



*Bro Abraham's Daughter,  
Brehanna Lasearcey  
Abraham*

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*(Reuniting a Mason — Continued from page 23)*

Lodge. It turns out the Army does not forward mail when you move within base housing and he lost touch with his efforts to transfer his membership.

Stationed at Ft Lewis for a little over a year, when his tour-of-duty was over, he decided not to re-up in the Army because he was now, himself, a single parent, and his next posting was to be in Korea. While he had the option of making a hardship application to remain in country, he knew that hardship applications were almost never approved for troops of his rank and decided to end his military career, knowing full well that a move to Korea would be too difficult an adjustment for his daughter, Brehanna Lasearcey.

John decided to put his Computer Science degree to good use, and applied to go to work at Microsoft. Before he could be accepted by Microsoft, his Grandfather passed away. After his Dad had died, John's Grandfather had become the father-figure in his family, assisting his mother in his upbringing. Because of his Grandfather's involvement with his upbringing after his Father's death, John was very close to him. So he headed home to Jacksonville to take care of his family and deal with the death of his Grandfather.

What was supposed to be a short visit with family and friends ended up becoming a permanent stay, bringing him full-circle to the place from which he had begun six years ago. Reconciling himself with the fact that he was not going to be working with Microsoft, John took a temporary position as a personnel supervisor with Westaff, a staffing agency that handled the staffing for Sharper Image and, when Westaff was downsized, ended up going to work at Tyson foods.

During the 10 years between 1995 and 2005 he frequently thought about attempting to reestablish his affiliation with Freemasonry, but never knew quite how to go about finding the right way to do so. One day in January, frustrated with the fact that he hadn't re-established himself with another Lodge, he decided to put some of his Computer Science degree to work and looked up the Grand Lodge of Illinois. After browsing the Grand Lodge's website for a while, he started to click on the links of Illinois Lodges that are listed on their site.

John's military training had taught him to be thorough. He looked at several different Illinois Lodge websites and decided he liked the look and feel of Hesperia's pages the best, so he explored further. After spending about an hour browsing the Hesperia site, John decided to take a chance and clicked on the e-mail link Brother Secretary Ron Ehemann. The e-mail message he sent Brother Ehemann explained his situation and inquired about the next step in re-establishing himself with a Lodge in his home state. Here is the text of his message:

*(Continued on page 25)*



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*(Reuniting a Mason . . . — Continued from page 24)*

*“Subject: can you please help me*

*From: John Lewis Abraham III, Jacksonville, AR 72078*

*I have been a mason since 20 July 1994, but I have never received a Masonic birth certificate. I was raised as a mason in Bamberg Germany (Prince E. Marshall military lodge #11) then I was reassigned in the states. My dues were paid and up to date, however now they are not. I need documentation and all else that should have been provided for me almost 11 years ago — Whatever will bring me up to date. Please help a distressed brother.*

*I you need any more info, please feel free to ask.”*

Brother Ehemann responded with a request for additional information and, after doing some detective work of his own with the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Illinois, determined that Brother Abraham was made a Mason in Prince E. Marshall No. 149 in Bamberg, Germany.

The Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Illinois is now in the process of contacting Prince E Marshall Lodge #149 in Bamberg Germany to bring Brother Abraham back into good standing within the Craft. Once the correspondence is concluded and the paperwork finished, Brother Abraham’s new Lodge affiliation will be in Jacksonville, with Jacinto Lodge No. 216.

One of the basic tenants of Freemasonry is that we provide assistance to a needy Brother and his family. Whether we assist that Brother by extending our hand in person, or by providing a resource in the form of a website that can be searched on the Internet, the net effect is still the same – by way of our very existence, we are here to help each other.

Just prior to the publication of this article, Brother Abraham wrote: *“I would like to take this time to thank you and your lodge for all of the help that you have offered, unconditionally, to me and I am honored to speak to you on any level at any time.”*

Welcome back to the Fraternity, Brother Abraham, we look forward to meeting you in person one day soon!

*EDITOR’S NOTE: Bro Abraham is awaiting a call from a Lodge Officers to complete the transfer of his membership and will keep us posted.*

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## Lodge Building Rededication

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Mark your calendar and save the date of Saturday, June 25th, for the rededication of the Gale Street Temple Building! This will be a very special 6th Northeastern District Breakfast to be held between the hours of 8:00 AM and 1:00 PM, with a re-dedication of the Gale Street Temple to take place starting at 2:00 PM.

The building, which has been extensively refurbished by the Temple Association, under the watchful eye of King Oscar Lodge, will be open throughout the day. A new heating and air-conditioning plant — zoned for both economy and efficiency, new flagpole, brick patio in front, new carpeting throughout the Temple building and a complete remodeling of the kitchen and dining area are among the treats awaiting those who attend. Members of the Grand Lodge of Illinois will be present for the re-dedication ceremonies. This event is open to both Master Masons and their friends and families.

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## Articles From The Past

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### Facts about Masonry

Joseph Brant, a Mohawk Indian, was initiated a Mason in London in 1776. During the War of Independence, he was in command of some Indian troops on the British side, by who Captain McKinsty of the United States Army had been captured. The Indians tied their prisoner to a tree and were preparing to torture him when he made the mystic appeal of a Mason in the hour of danger. Brant interposed and rescued his American Brother from his impending fate, took him to Quebec, and placed him in the hands of some English Masons who returned him, uninjured, to the American Outposts.

Hawkins Concise Cyclopaedia  
of Freemasonry

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### Facts about Masonry

Those most ready to criticize Masonry

are usually the most ignorant about it. An interesting story illustrating this fact is a bit antique, although apropos.

In December, 1561, Queen Elizabeth of England sent a body of armed men to disperse the annual meeting of the Grand Lodge on St John's Day. Brandishing swords, they invaded the lodge r o o m .

Sir Thomas Sackville, Grand Master, was courteous in greeting them. He told them that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to communicate the secrets of the Order to Her Majesty's men and admit them to the Lodge. He finally persuaded them to be initiated. After they had been brought to light, they became devoted Masons. They reported back to the Queen so favorably that henceforth she gave the Fraternity full protection and sanction.

- Bohemia Lodge Compass

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## In Memoriam

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*The following Brethren answered the call of the Supreme Grand Master between April, 2004 and March, 2005:*

**Phillip J. Weber** ————— 4/23/04

**Rodrick D. Vincelette** ——— 6/14/04

**Allen Marshall Coke** ——— 6/14/03

**John E. Mueller** ————— 8/28/04

**Robert J. Callahan** ————— 9/4/04

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## Letter From the Editor

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Hello Brethren and Friends! I hope everyone is enjoying the welcome break from the cold winter weather!

This is your newsletter! Your submissions of letters, comments, pictures of both current and past events and articles about your memories of Masonic events in general, and Hesperia events in particular, are encouraged. Remember, in addition to the newsletter, we've got lots of room on the website. I know that many of you have a lot of history that you won't want to be forever locked away in your basement, filing cabinet or mind. Share your comments and experience with the younger brothers in our Lodge! Tell me what's on your mind!

Letters, articles and submissions can be of any length. We'll trim them down to fit, if necessary. Don't forget to include pictures as well. If you can't scan a picture, contact us and we'll arrange to have you send them, scan them for you and return them safely back to you.

Send your articles to the newsletter editor, Brother Bruce Barnes, via e-mail, to [Bbarnes@ChicagoNetTech.com](mailto:Bbarnes@ChicagoNetTech.com), or to Lodge Secretary, Brother Ron Ehemann, PM, e-mail: [RJE@RonEhemann.com](mailto:RJE@RonEhemann.com). Submissions can also be mailed to Hesperia Lodge #411, Attn: Newsletter Editor, % Ron Ehemann, Secretary, 4535 N Beacon St, Chicago IL 60640.

If you're located in the Chicago area and haven't been to a meeting lately, stop by. The Temple has been completely redecorated and looks great!

**T H E H E S P E R I A N**

Hesperia Lodge #411 A F & A M  
% Ron J Ehemann, Secretary  
4535 N Beacon St  
Chicago Illinois 60640

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**  
**Address Correction Requested**

**Hesperia** Lodge  
NO. 411

### **2005 Trestleboard**

- May 12<sup>th</sup> Regularly Scheduled Meeting
- May 26<sup>th</sup> Regularly Scheduled Meeting
- June 9<sup>th</sup> Friend's Night
- June 23<sup>rd</sup> St John's Night
- June 25<sup>th</sup> Breakfast/Rededication of Temple
- July 14<sup>th</sup> Regularly Scheduled Meeting
- August 11<sup>th</sup> Regularly Scheduled Meeting