



EXCITING NEWS

We have approved the purchase of our new home!



VENERABLE MASTER'S MESSAGE

Whitney E. Hanscom, Sr., 32°, KCCH

As the crisp air of autumn descends upon us and the leaves transform into a vibrant tapestry, we are reminded of the beauty of change and reflection. Much like the fall season, the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry encourages us to embrace transformation, seek wisdom, and uphold values that lead to personal growth and enlightenment. Autumn symbolizes change—a time when nature gracefully releases the old to make way for the new.

In the Scottish Rite, we are encouraged to adapt and grow, constantly seeking knowledge to transform ourselves. Just as the trees shed their leaves, we too can release our outdated beliefs and habits, making room for new insights and perspectives. The fall season invites us to pause and reflect. The Scottish Rite emphasizes the importance of contemplation and the pursuit of wisdom. By looking inward, we deepen our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. This introspection allows us to appreciate the past while preparing for a brighter future.

Autumn is also often associated with gatherings and celebrations, reminding us of the importance of community. The Scottish Rite places a strong emphasis on fellowship among members. By coming together, we support each other in our journeys, sharing knowledge and experiences that enrich our lives. To embrace the values of fall and Freemasonry, consider setting aside time each day to reflect on your experiences and the lessons they bring. Dive into a new book or course that challenges your current understanding. Reach out to a friend or fellow Scottish Rite member for a meaningful conversation or collaboration. Identify one habit you can change this season to enhance your personal growth.

As we journey through this transformative season, let us embody the principles of the Scottish Rite: wisdom, strength, and beauty. By doing so, we can nurture our personal growth and contribute positively to our communities. I sincerely hope that you will enjoy the season both from a transformational standpoint, and all the festivities that come with it.

MATTHEW TODD SZRAMOSKI

GRAND MASTER OF MASONS IN VIRGINIA 2025 - 2026



Matthew Todd Szramoski was born on November 30, in Fort Gordon, Georgia, and returned to Virginia when he was four years old. He graduated from Denbigh High School in Newport News. He received an A.A.S. in Public Administration and a B.A. in History from Christopher Newport University. In addition, he completed the School Safety Professional certification from Pepperdine University. In his vocational career, he worked with the Daily Press, Inc., as the Williamsburg Bureau Supervisor; taught Social Studies in the Fairfax County School System; managed the Youth Programs Department for the National Rifle Association; was the Director of Development for the Supreme Council, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction; and currently serves as the Executive Director for the George Washington Masonic National Memorial.

Brother Szramoski was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on April 23, 1988, in Yorktown Lodge No. 205, where he is a Legacy Member in Perpetuity and served as its Worshipful Master in 1993. He affiliated with John Blair Lodge No. 187 and served as its Worshipful Master in 1996 and as Secretary from 2002 to 2012. In 2013, he affiliated with Mount Vernon Lodge No. 219, where he is a Legacy Member in Perpetuity, and served as its Worshipful Master in 2015 and has served as Secretary since 2017. Also, he is a member of Virginia Research Lodge No. 1777. He was the District Instructor of Work for Masonic District 1A from 2002 to 2007 and District Deputy Grand Master of Masonic District 1A in 2003. He served as Grand Chaplain in 2014, as Chairman of the Committee on Youth in 2006, and served as Chairman of the Committee on Finance from 2007 to 2019. He served on the Grand Master's Commission on Life Membership in Perpetuity and the Grand Lodge Building. He was elected Grand Junior Deacon in November 2019. He received the John Blair, Jr. Award in 2008. He is the Grand Representative to the Grand Lodge of Slovenia, near Virginia.

He is a member of the Valleys of Newport News and Alexandria, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, was invested Knight Commander Court of Honour in 2003, coroneted an Inspector General Honorary, 33°, in 2009, and is a Life Member in Perpetuity in the Valley of Alexandria. He is an Associate Regent of the York Rite Sovereign College of North America and was honored with the Order of the Purple Cross. He is a Past High Priest, and Life Member in Perpetuity, of Mount Vernon Royal Arch Chapter No. 14; Past District Deputy Grand

(cont. on pg. 3)

SCOTTISH RITE MEETING SCHEDULE

Monday, October 27, 2025

Past Masters/50 Year Presentation

5:30 PM.....Guard Meeting

6:00 PM.....Dinner

7:00 PM.....Business Meeting

Cost \$15.00 (\$20 w/out reservation)

Monday, November 24, 2025

Grand Master's Visit

5:30 PM.....Guard Meeting

6:00 PM.....Dinner

7:00 PM.....Business Meeting

Cost \$15.00 (\$20 w/out reservation)

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER

RICHMOND VALLEY COMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

Saturday 11 Degree Conferral

Monday 13 Office Closed

Columbus Day

Monday 27 Stated Meeting

NOVEMBER

Friday 7 – Grand Annual

Sunday 9 Communication

Tuesday 11 Office Closed

Veterans Day

Monday 24 Stated Meeting

Wednesday 26 – Office Closed

Thursday 27 Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

Wednesday 24 Office Closed

Thursday 25 Office Closed

Christmas Holiday

Wednesday 31 Office Closed

JANUARY(2026)

Thursday 1 Office Closed

New Year's Day

Monday 26 State Meeting

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK

Lambros Deligan, 32°, KCCH



Brethren, it has been my honor and privilege to serve the Valley of Richmond as General Secretary for the past three years. I am particularly humbled and honored to have been conferred in August at the Supreme Council Biennial Session the Thirty-Third Degree, Inspector General Honorary. I am told that with every honor come additional responsibilities. I will do my best to uphold my pledge.

Thus far this year we have had several Reunions. We had two Spring Reunions both honoring Ill. David Elam Amstutz, 33°, IGH. The first, promoted by Bro. Bill Heltzel, 32°, KCCH, took place in Guthrie, Oklahoma, over a three-day period on the weekend of April 4, 5, and 6. Three of our candidates received courtesy work and were presented live on stage all twenty-nine degrees. A second Spring Reunion was held on Saturday, April 12 at MAHOVA. Five additional candidates were made Masters of the Royal Secret via the presentation of the degrees cinematically. Courtesy work for another of our candidates was performed by the Newport News Scottish Rite on August 23. Our Fall Reunion in memory of Ill. Charles Simon Sarbaugh, 33°, IGH, will soon be upon us. Take the time now to contact your prospects and get them signed up for Saturday, October 11, 2025.

The Portsmouth Scottish Rite Valley, on September 25 to 27, hosted the 101st Annual Scottish Rite Conference at Virginia Beach. The Conference was well attended. Our Keynote speaker, Ill & RW Brother Matthew Todd Szramoski, Deputy Grand Master of Masons in Virginia was outstanding. Our very own, Ill and MW Brother Alan Adkins, 33°, SGIG was the perfect host.

In October we will recognize our new 50-year members, along with our Past Venerable Masters. November will bring the Visit and reception of our newly installed 180th Grand Master of Masons in Virginia.

Regarding our meals, our Culinary Committee, Chaired by Brother Scott Davis, 32° is doing an outstanding job. The goal is to serve meals prepared by local restaurants. In September we had Lee's Chicken. In October we will have a Chinese meal from Peking on Broad Street. In November we are planning to serve a steak dinner for our special event.

Remember, reservations are required for dinner and must be made by the Wednesday of the week before the Stated. The cost for dinner with a reservation is \$15.00 per person. Except for the month of January, meals will be served at 6:00 PM. The Stated meeting will be held at 7:00 PM.

Our delinquent list is slowly shrinking. We now have over 25 members who have not paid their 2024 dues. We will activate the committee of Brethren, who last year volunteered to contact delinquent Brothers. Sometimes all it takes is a kind word or a sympathetic ear to convince a Brother to continue his membership in the Richmond Valley.

We are anticipating with excitement our year-end holidays. We will be celebrating Halloween and looking forward to Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and the New Year, where our New Year's Resolutions will guide us in 2026.

Remember that the Valley is dark in December. At our first Stated Meeting on January 26, 2026, we will hold the election and installation of officers.

The office staff wants to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy and Merry Holiday Season as we gather with family and friends in celebration

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER - Tom Varner, 32°, KCCH

Who is God? One of the most interesting degrees we have is the 26th, Prince of Mercy, originally to confer their third and final stage of enlightenment. The degree reviews how various peoples of the world and Holy Spirit of the Christians.

Mankind has long revered the number three, and it is used many times in our Masonic ceremonies: the three pillars, three pieces of furniture, three lights, three jewels, etc. In the Royal Arch degree we learn to understand the mystery and majesty of our Supreme Being.

In Morals and Dogma while explaining the 26th degree, Albert Pike laid out great truths with which we have an immortal soul, that moral truth comes from the Creator and applies to all Men, and that it is that what we do have has come from Him, and therefore we should respect the rights of others,

Throughout our Masonic degrees, we learn again and again lessons that stem from our understanding because God is Merciful to us; truth is a divine attribute and the foundation of every virtue because we remember that God is Love, Mercy, Truth, Holy, and Righteous, that He is infinite and perfect, and

PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Terry F. Hilton, 33°

WOW! Is this an exciting time or what? Brethren all, in case you haven't heard the great news yet, the Richmond Valley of the Scottish Rite will have a new home soon!! Yes, the agreement between Tuckahoe Lodge and the Richmond Valley has now been ratified by both bodies. The ballot on Monday night, September 22, at the Stated meeting, confirmed that we are ready to go and are looking forward to the next step in the history of our Valley. The purchase from Tuckahoe still must move through the permitting system for Henrico County and be approved but we are working on that now and will keep you apprised of the results.

While I have already extended my appreciation to the fine Masons from Tuckahoe Lodge who worked hard to achieve this agreement, I also want to express my deepest gratitude to Ill. Bro. Moring Gravitt and Bro. Peyton Anderson for representing the Richmond Valley in these negotiations. We are all Masons, and with that, proved that Brotherly Love and fellowship are the key to success in working together. Thank you all for your efforts and support in this endeavor.

The Richmond Valley will continue to meet at ACCA Shrine Temple until the new building is complete and ready to be occupied. Ill. Potentate Tom Colletti has been a big help to us during our time at the Temple, even helping serve our meals on more than one occasion. Thank you to all those Shriners, many of whom are also SR Masons, who have shepherded us through this interim period while we were between permanent homes.

As mentioned in other communications and meetings, we will be developing different teams to assist with the design and construction of the new building. Bro. Duane Cunningham has established a software program that will assist us as we move forward. Thank you to Bro. Duane for sharing his expertise to keep us all informed throughout the process of what needs to be done, what is being done, and what is complete! The goal here is to keep everyone in lock step to achieve the priorities and timelines necessary to develop and build a new building for not only the Scottish Rite, but Masonry in central Virginia. It is important that we show our appreciation to the Relocation committee led by RW Whit Hanscom and Bro. Gary Hutchinson who worked tirelessly to determine the Tuckahoe Lodge Property was the best spot for us to move! That committee will now transition to the Purchase and Build committee for future assignments.

While the new building is certainly exciting and is a priority, we still have activities for fellowship and growth in our Valley. Our reunion will again be held at MAHOVA on Oct. 11. Please bring your petitions in soon. After that, we will have a "Night to Remember" on Oct. 18 to welcome all new SR Masons from the 2024-2025 reunions. This is a new and exciting event that will give current SR Masons the opportunity to meet new SR members and their families. The dinner price is very reasonable, and it will be a fun night for all. We will also get a chance to learn more about our #1 Charity, the Scottish Rite Childhood Language Center!

Please be sure and mark Nov. 24 on your calendar. This will be our showcase dinner with the new Grand Master, Ill. Matt Szramoski. Matt is the former Director of Development for the House of the Temple and is currently the Executive Director of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. It will be an exciting night for you and your wife. The SR Guard will receive the Grand Master under the Arch of Steel.

Thank you for all you do for the Richmond Valley of the Scottish Rite and for all of Masonry.

(cont. from pg. 1)

Commander of Chivalric District 3, Past Commander, and Life Member in Perpetuity, of Old Dominion Commandery No. 11; Past Governor, and Life Member in Perpetuity, of Washington and Lee York Rite College No. 93; Life Member in Perpetuity of Virginia Council No. 12, Knight Masons; St. Polycarp Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine; Charter member of Potomac Court No. 107, Order of Athelstan; Rose of Sharon Priory No. 2; Royal Order of Scotland; and Kena Shrine Center. He is a Past Patron of Faith Chapter No. 177, Order of Eastern Star. He is a member of Old Dominion Chapter No. 364, Light Horse Harry Lee Camp, Heroes of '76, National Sojourners.

Brother Szramoski is a Past State Master Councilor, Virginia State Association, DeMolay International; Past President of the Virginia DeMolay Foundation; Past Associate Guardian of Bethel No. 22, a member of the Grand Guardian Council of Virginia; and Advisor to Woodlawn DeMolay Chapter. He is an Eagle Scout, Life Member in the National Eagle Scout Association, and Past Chairman of Boy Scout Troop No. 1076. He is a recipient of the Knight York Cross of Honor; the Chevalier, Cross of Honor, and Active Legion of Honor from the International Order of DeMolay.

Brother Szramoski is a member of First Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia, where he has served as a Deacon and on the Stewardship Committee. In the community, he is a Past President of the Newington

Civic Association, Chief Election Officer in Fairfax County, and on the Mount Vernon District, Fairfax County Annual Plan Review (zoning) Committee.

He has a son, Alexander, who is a Senior DeMolay and a Master Mason, and a daughter, Haley, who is a Past Miss Congeniality of Virginia, Job's Daughters.

known as the Scottish Trinitarian degree. The degree is set in the catacombs deep under Rome, where the Christian faithful are secretly about through the ages have viewed God as composed of three distinct aspects, from the Supreme Triad of the ancient Egyptians to the Father, Son,

es and traditions as a symbol of perfection: Three degrees, the Master and two Wardens representing the three Most Excellent Grand Masters, e, we explain that God has three attributes: Omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. All of these represent our feeble attempts to explain

ch we should all agree, regardless of our religious faith. In it, he explains that our Supreme Being is spirit, that no one has seen Him, that Man is imperative for us to obey Him and to do good. Further, that our Supreme Being has given us the ability to decide between right and wrong, and be charitable, generous, and noble.

standing of God: Extend brotherly love to all because we are made in His image and God is Love; give mercy, relief, and forgiveness to others cause God is Truth; justice is not only consistent with divine law but is the very essence of God's Holiness and Righteousness. Let us always and go forth as true Masons carrying out our Creator's divine will and applying us to His service!

THE SCOTTISH RITE NEWS

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Master of Kadosh, Consistory

MEMBERSHIP

Charles Robinson, 33°, Chairman

As the year begins to wind down, we can reflect on the many great times we had. From Guthrie, Oklahoma, for the spring reunion, where we made new friends, to the Conference in Virginia Beach where we reconnected with old friends. We were able to hold two reunions of our own and visited Newport News for their reunion where one of our candidates received his Degrees. This being an odd number year, we attended the Bi-Annual session and the KCCH investiture. Congratulations to our KCCH and 33° Honor recipients.

If this was a lot of fun for us. We need to share it with our Blue Lodge Brothers who have not yet joined us. Anytime is a good time to get a petition in their hands so they can enjoy The Scottish Rite like we have. Our next reunion if October 11, 2025.

I hope the Holidays are Safe and Joyous for all of you.

Called from Labor

Frank Julian Boyer III
1942 - 2024

John Linwood Butler, Jr.
1934 - 2025

John Wilson Cole, Jr.
1942 - 2025

Lester Dennis Haisley, Jr.
1928 - 2025

Benjamin Durwood Holder
1940 - 2025

Carroll Myron Jones
1936 - 2025

Emory Wilson Lewis, Jr.
1939 - 2025

Joseph Franklin Pippen
1925 - 2025

Wayne Boswell Rothery
1942 - 2025

Frank Norman Stahl
1942 - 2025

Walter June Townsend, Sr.
1931 - 2023

Harvey Clark Williams
1930 - 2024

Charles Faris Wood, Jr.
1951 - 2025

Virtus Junxit-Mors non Separabit

"whom virtue has united, Death will not separate"

FELLOWSHIP REPORTS

Please take a moment and communicate with our shut-in Brethren either by card or a phone call. They will appreciate your thoughtfulness and you will feel better for it.

NEW SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER

James Sadler

Steve Sanford

Herb Turner

REQUESTED
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