

Brethren,

As we reflect upon the symbolic 24-inch gauge, let it remind us that time is one of the greatest gifts entrusted to us by the Grand Architect of the Universe. Unlike wealth or possessions, time cannot be recovered once spent. Each hour becomes part of the moral and spiritual structure we build within ourselves, teaching accountability as much as measurement. A well-lived life is defined not by years alone, but by purpose, service, growth, and the good we leave behind.

The divisions of the 24-inch gauge call us to balance: time for labor, family, rest, service to humanity, and the pursuit of Masonic light through education and self-improvement. In a distracted world, the Mason strives to govern his time with intention and discipline. True education within the Craft is a lifelong pursuit of wisdom, not merely ritual or history, but the steady shaping of character through study, reflection, and brotherhood.

Yet knowledge must become action. Freemasonry calls us to live by our principles, especially when it is difficult or when no one is watching. Character is forged in quiet moments—when honesty requires courage rather than comfort, when service requires sacrifice, and when integrity is chosen over convenience. The true measure of a Mason is not found in the apron he wears or the collar he bears, but in the discipline he cultivates, the virtues he practices, and the growth of his character. Honors may recognize service, but the real work of Masonry is the continual improvement of oneself. The Craft teaches that the hard right, though often the lonelier path, is the true labor by which we shape the ashlar of oneself.

The 24-inch gauge also teaches balance: labor with reflection, ambition with service, knowledge with compassion, and leadership with humility. When any part is neglected, balance is lost; when each is kept in harmony, the mason becomes whole.

Let us be mindful of how we spend our time, strengthening ourselves, our lodges, and those around us, so that when our work is measured, it reflects diligence, virtue, and purpose. And may we live each day with intention, humility, and quiet discipline, remembering that the truest work of a Mason is often that which is seen only by the Great Architect Himself.

“Do The Hard Thing”

Fraternally,



Michael A. Elston

Short Talk Bulletins

- **The Lambskin Apron**, By Bro. Howard R. Cruse, June 2025 Bulletin-This brilliant essay discusses the lambskin apron and further symbolism and meaning behind it.
- **The Three Lesser Lights**, by Wade Sheeler, PSGW Grand Lodge of Iowa - The Three Lesser Lights represent the Sun, Moon, and Worshipful Master, symbolizing the light that guides a Mason to the teachings of the Three Great Lights. They remind us that Masonic light must be used to guide our faith, conduct, and actions.
- **Omar N. Bradley** - This article highlights the life and leadership of General Omar N. Bradley, a quiet but highly capable World War II commander who led American forces from D-Day through Germany's surrender. Though often overshadowed by more famous generals, Bradley earned deep respect through humility, competence, and steady leadership, and he was also a Mason raised in West Point Lodge No. 877 in 1923.

Recommended Speakers

- **Masonic Jeopardy**
R.W. Roy G. Simpadian - An engaging and enjoyable way to learn and grow at the lodge.” A fun and interactive learning experience for the lodge community.
- **Protocol, The Masonic Manners we DIDN'T learn in School** R.W. Glenn T. Visscher - A fun, engaging, and informative look at the customs, courtesies, and unspoken rules that shape Masonic culture. From lodge etiquette and introductions to respectful conduct and officer decorum.
- **Brother and Naval Captain John Paul Jones** R.W. David Van Pelt - Remembered within Masonic tradition as a celebrated patriot whose maritime leadership during the American Revolutionary War reflected ideals of brotherhood, honor, and service.

Recommended Readings

- **The Builders**, by Joseph Fort Newton - A classic Masonic work exploring the philosophy, symbolism, and moral purpose of the Craft.
- **Jachin & Boaz; or an Authentic Key to the Door of Freemasonry (1762)**, by Samuel Pritchard - is an 18th-century exposé that claims to reveal the rituals, symbols, passwords, and ceremonies of Freemasonry as practiced in English lodges of the period.
- **Constitution and Laws**, by Grand Lodge of New Jersey - is important to Masons because it establishes the rules, principles, responsibilities, and standards.

Grand Lodge Educational Initiatives

Voyager Award Passport

Voyager is a lodge-travel passport program that adds adventure to your Masonic journey as a Traveling Man. Brothers visit and record Regular and Emergent Communications at other lodges, beginning with the Journeyman level through travel within New Jersey, then continuing to the Master level with out-of-state visits and at least one international lodge visit.

[Click here](#)

David Brearly Award

An award for newly raised Master Masons, to be completed within one year of being raised. It encourages new Brothers to become active in Lodge life through required and elective Masonic activities.

[Click here](#)

Society of King Solomon (SKS)

A Grand Lodge educational program for Master Masons. It focuses on Masonic ritual, symbolism, protocol, and the Grand Lodge By Laws. Members who complete the optional research and reflection portion will earn Fellowship status and further recognition.

[Click here](#)

Masonic Leadership Conference (MLC)

A Grand Lodge educational program designed to help Brethren develop practical leadership skills for Lodge Service and Life Lessons. It focuses on communication, planning, officer responsibilities, teamwork, and preparing Masons to serve their Lodges and the Craft more effectively.

[Click here](#)

Lodge Leadership Academy

A short training series that teaches lodge leaders how to run meetings well, manage key officer teamwork, build healthy lodge culture, follow protocol / bylaws, and improve membership and candidate work.

[Click here](#)

Recommended Reading List [Click here](#)

Recommended Speakers [Click here](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS



June

- 1 **2nd District DLI**, @ Phoenix Lodge No.168
- 5 Wyckoff Lodge No. 287 - Regular Communication
R.W. Alexandru D. Aldea
- 10 Genesis Lodge No. 88 - Regular Communication
R.W. Glenn Visscher, JGW
- 11 Phoenix Lodge No. 168 - Regular Communication
- 12 Fidelity Lodge No. 113 - Regular Communication
R.W. Jeffrey Chan
- 19 Wyckoff Lodge No. 287 - Regular Communication
- 23 **Blood Drive** @ Phoenix Lodge No. 168
- 24 Genesis Lodge No. 88 - Regular Communication
BBQ Dinner
- 25 Phoenix Lodge No. 168 - Regular Communication
R.W. Richie Schultz
Hawaiian Shirt Night
- 26 Fidelity Lodge No. 113 - Regular Communication
Family Barbecue
Hawaiian Shirt Night

July

- 9 Phoenix Lodge No. 168 - Regular Communication

August

- 13 Phoenix Lodge No. 168 - Regular Communication

** The above dates for July and August are **not a misprint**, Phoenix Lodge #168 will be having meetings in the summer.

Dates to Remember

- 06/26** - 15th & 19th District Reception
- 06/30** - 10th & 12th District Reception
- 09/19** - Grand Lodge 1 day Class
- 09/23** - 2nd & 3rd District Reception
- 09/30** - 4th & 6st District Reception
- 10/23 - 10/25** - Masonic Leadership Conference
- 11/03 - 11/05** - Grand Lodge Annual Communication

2nd District Traveling Gavel

The Traveling Gavel program is a great way to encourage participation, increase lodge visitation, and strengthen the bonds of fellowship throughout the district. It gives Brethren the opportunity to travel together, support neighboring lodges, and enjoy the camaraderie that makes our fraternity so meaningful. Now is the perfect time to gather a strong turnout, coordinate with your members, and make a memorable visit to claim the gavel from the lodge that presently has it. With enough support from your lodge, the Gavel could soon be proudly displayed in your lodge room.

2nd District Traveling Gavel Rules

1. In order to capture the Traveling Gavel within the Second Masonic District, at least four (4) members of the same Lodge must attend a Regular Communication of the Lodge currently possessing the Traveling Gavel. Of those visiting: at least one must be the Master or a Warden; at least one other must be a Past Master; and at least one other must be an appointed officer. A visiting member who is both a PM and a current officer can only satisfy one of those criteria. Current Grand Lodge officers do not count as visitors.
2. If two or more Lodges simultaneously qualify under these rules to capture the Gavel, the winner of the Traveling Gavel shall be the Lodge with the largest number of members in attendance. In case of a tie, the winner shall be the Lodge which traveled the greatest distance.
3. A brother who is a member both of the Lodge which currently has the Gavel and of the Lodge which is visiting to capture the Gavel, will only count as a visitor to the Lodge which currently has the Gavel if such brother is an officer of the Lodge making the visit, and not an officer of the visited lodge.
4. The Lodge taking the Traveling Gavel must immediately notify the District Deputy and all the Lodges in the District that they are in possession of the Traveling Gavel. The Lodge taking the Traveling Gavel must also inform the District of its meeting days and scheduled starting times.

The DDGM, at his discretion, may remove the gavel from a lodge and award it to another.

Phoenix Lodge #168 currently has the 2nd District Traveling Gavel and meets on the second and fourth Thursday 6:30 social and 7:30 meeting.

District Communications

Honorable Mentions

The following brothers have demonstrated exceptional dedication and excellence in masonry, and their outstanding achievements deserve recognition.

Bro. Nicholas Abolafia

Fellowcraft Lecture Bar

Bro. Michael Macri

Society of King Solomon, Silver Award

Bro. Neil Macasaet

Honorary Membership for Phoenix Lodge #168

2nd District Craftsmen Club

R.W. Roy Simpadian has taken the initiative to establish the 2nd District Craftsman Club, with the goal of exemplifying ritual work and assisting all lodges within the district in practicing and excelling in ritual proficiency. This Craftsman Club is supported and encouraged by R.W. Michael Volk, D.D.G.M., and R.W. John Matteson, D.R.I. These practices will not occur on the same day of any regular communications.

**Dates are to be determined, Information will be communicated at a later date.

2nd Masonic District Grand Lodge Appointments

R.W. John F. Matteson - DDGM

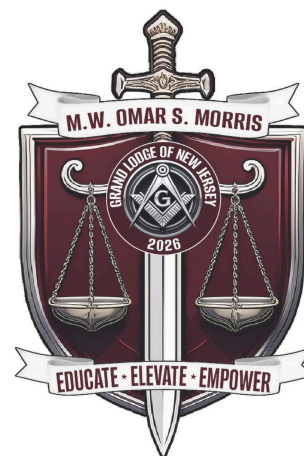
W.B. Richard Alam - DRI

W.B. Aaron Hassell - GC

Bro. Michael A. Elston - DEO

Light

The observance of **St. John the Baptist's Day** on **June 24** holds deep significance in Freemasonry. Along with **St. John the Evangelist** (December 27), St. John the Baptist is one of the two patron saints traditionally associated with the Craft. As Masons, we honor St. John the Baptist on June 24 as a patron of our ancient fraternity. His example of integrity, humility, and dedication to truth reminds us of our obligation to pursue moral excellence and to let the light of Masonic principles shine in our daily lives.



GRAND MASTER OF MASONS OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Most Worshipful Omar S. Morris
C. 718-809-7294 • omarmorris@gmail.com

DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER

Right Worshipful Michael W. Volk
C. 518- 378-2392 • mike.volk@fwwebb.com

DISTRICT RITUAL INSTRUCTOR

Right Worshipful John F. Matteson Jr.
C. 845-323-1338 • john@jmatteson.com

GRAND CHAPLAIN

Right Worshipful Paul Burkart
C. 201-970-7790 • paulburkart@msn.com

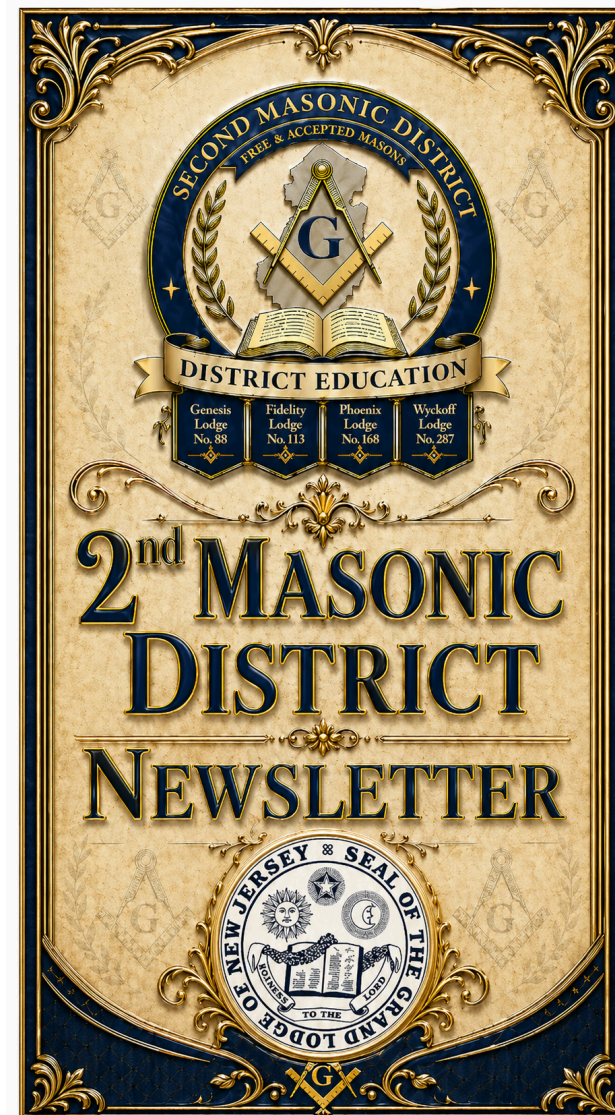
DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER

Brother Michael A. Elston
C. 973-600-9418 • elston.michael@yahoo.com

The Grand Lodge



Most Ancient and Honourable Society
of Free and Accepted Masons for the State of New Jersey



2 June 2026

Worshipful Masters & Secretaries

Please send district events,
education nights, speakers, and lodge programs to:
Elston.Michael@Yahoo.com