



January – March 2026

TRESTLE BOARD

Ancient Craft Lodge No. 551

850 Horace Brown Drive Madison Heights MI 48071

Lucas Roberts Worshipful Master

FROM THE EAST

Brothers,

As the sun sets on the year, I find myself reflecting deeply on the path that has brought me to this moment. Freemasonry teaches us that advancement is grounded not in ambition, but in service; not in titles, but in labor; not in personal gain, but in a sincere desire to improve both ourselves and our Lodge. Standing on the threshold of this new responsibility, I feel both humbled and inspired.

Brethren, I know that no Worshipful Master accomplishes anything on his own. I will lean on your wisdom, welcome your counsel, and rely on your support. Together, we will continue to build upon the solid foundation that defines Ancient Craft Lodge No. 551. Together, we can build a year of purpose, unity, and light.

I am grateful for the confidence you have placed in me, and I pledge to serve with integrity, patience, and a sincere love for the Craft. May we labor together in harmony, and may the Great Architect guide our work.

Fraternally,
Lucas Roberts
Worshipful Master-Elect



FROM THE DESK OF THE SECRETARY



YOUR 2026 DUES ARE DUE!!

Brethren, dues letters are going out for 2026 annual dues, if you are struggling, please contact me to discuss your needs. Also, if any of you have changed your Address, Phone, or eMail, let me know so I can update our records. Contact me at eMail **Lbull46@yahoo.com** or call/txt at **(248) 797-4518**

From the Desk of the Grand Secretary

2024 Membership Report
Closing 31 December 2024

Total Membership – 18,801

Life Members – 5596

Total Lodges – 243

Respectfully Submitted
William R Finkel, PGM
Grand Secretary

FROM OUR CHAPLAIN



Brothers, I am excited and looking forward to being Chaplin for our lodge. I believe it will be a good year ahead with our new young Worshipful Master taking the helm and I am dedicated in helping any way I can.

Worshipful Brother John Harper
Lodge Chaplain

"There are no strangers in Freemasonry, only friends you've yet to meet." Dave Thomas, Wendy's founder, Sol. D. Bayless Lodge #359 Fort Wayne, IN

Table Lodge Dinner 13 June 2026

Friend to Friend - A Brotherhood Undivided

LODGE OFFICERS 2026

WORSHIPFUL MASTER

LUCAS ROBERTS
586-563-7944

SENIOR WARDEN

MARK GERHARD
248-379-0003

JUNIOR WARDEN

PHILIP ZOTT
619-559-9074

SECRETARY

LARRY BULLOCK PM
248-797-4518

TREASURER

JAMES MCPHERSON PM
248-878-0657

CHAPLIN

JOHN HARPER PM
734-915-2143

SENIOR DEACON

DAN NANCE
248-672-8451

JUNIOR DEACON

BILL BERKLICH
248-404-5816

SENIOR STEWARD

JIM MCPHERSON
248-854-2339

JUNIOR STEWARD

SHAUN MCCAW
313-505-2308

MARSHALL

ROY PRINCE P.M.
248-280-4515

TILER

MARK EVANS P.M.
734-635-6090

TEMPLE BOARD MEMBERS

Larry S Bullock PM 248-797-4518
Ray Doyscher PM 248-545-7443
John Harper PM 734-915-2143
Roy Prince PM 248-280-4515

LODGE SECRETARY

Larry Bullock PM 248-797-4518
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LODGE WEB PAGE

<http://www.nac551.com>
Roy Prince PM 248-280-4515
roy.prince@computer.org

TRESTLE BOARD EDITOR

Bill Berklich 248-404-4816
berklich@aol.com

LODGE CALENDAR

January – March 2026

Lodge Regular Communication Meetings on the First Wednesday 7PM

1 JAN	HAPPY NEW YEAR MAY IT BE SAFE AND PROSPEROUS
7 JAN	REGULAR COMMUNICATION - STEP-UP NIGHT!!
8 JAN	FINANCE COMMITTEE MTG 7PM AT WB
14 JAN	SOCIAL NIGHT OR DEGREE See Website NAC551.Com for updates
17 JAN	LODGE OFFICER OPEN INSTALLATION 5PM AT THE TEMPLE
21 JAN	SOCIAL NIGHT OR DEGREE See Website NAC551.Com for updates
28 JAN	LADIES NIGHT AND AWARDS BANQUET (<u>SEE PAGE 8</u>)
4 FEB	REGULAR COMMUNICATION
11 FEB	LODGE OF INSTRUCTION
18 FEB	SOCIAL NIGHT OR DEGREE See Website NAC551.Com for updates
21 FEB	BILLIARDS NIGHT 7PM HALL OF FAME BILLIARDS (<u>PAGE 8</u>)
25 FEB	EA DEGREE PRACTICE
28 FEB	BLUEGRASS NIGHT 7PM \$10 AT THE TEMPLE (<u>SEE PAGE 8</u>)
4 MAR	REGULAR COMMUNICATION
11 MAR	BOWLING NIGHT SOCIAL - LOCATION TBD See NAC551.Com
14 MAR	CORNERED BEEF DINNER 4-7PM \$15
25 MAR	EA RECITATION CONTEST (YES – THE WHOLE THING!)
29 MAR	PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST 9AM-1PM \$15
18 MAR	SOCIAL NIGHT OR DEGREE See Website NAC551.Com for updates
1 APRIL	REGULAR COMMUNICATION

UP COMING EVENTS AND SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ladies Night and Awards Banquet 28 January 5PM at
Clawson Steakhouse **Seating Limited RESERVATIONS**
REQUIRED NLT 18 Jan. Contact Larry Galloway **See Pg 8**



Join us for a few Games of Pool,
at Hall of Fame Billiards 5775 E Thirteen
Mile Rd, Warren, MI 48092 **21 February** at 7:00 pm.
Details on Pg 8



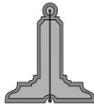
Bluegrass Night - Come On Down at 7PM on 28 February
to the Temple. Bring your family and friends, Food available,
\$10 at the door, proceed to charity **Details on Pg 8**



The Annual Corned Beef Dinner is coming on 14 March 4-7PM Bring your
family, bring your friends - \$15 Adults, 12 year olds \$10, 5 and under Free

Palm Sunday Breakfast Bring your family and friends on 29 March from 9AM-
1PM \$15 Adults, 12 year olds \$10, 5 and under Free

FROM THE WEST



Brethren of Ancient Craft Lodge, I am

both humbled and excited about serving as your Senior Warden this year. I feel we have a tremendously robust and fulfilling year of working together in our shared Masonic Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. Our Lodge has a special bond, and through that bond I believe we will continue to shine as a beacon of light to spread awareness, benevolent charity, mutual trust, and love amongst the brothers



Wishing all our Lodge Brothers the Best in the New Year. Do your part to bring Good Men and Good Values into the New Year!

of Ancient Craft. Happy New Year and may we always meet as Masons do, on the level, and part on the square!

Bro. Mark Gerhard
Senior Warden #551

FROM THE SOUTH



It's been an honor serving as a Senior Deacon. I found it to be challenging in just the right way, and I became especially interested in the rituals for each degree. It has deepened my spiritual journey as a Free Mason and has given me much to contemplate. I look forward to serving as Junior Warden, and am very grateful to the mentorship and guidance provided by Worshipful Brother Mike Karadimas.

Philip Zott Junior Warden

FROM OUR LODGE HISTORIAN

AN OLD MASONIC DOCUMENT



Freemason history in written form goes back to 1390 A.D. This is when it is believed that the oldest and most important version of "old charges" was composed. It was then known as The Regius

Manuscript. It gives us evidence of how ancient our fraternity really is. This document was composed at that time in poetic fashion on 64 pages of finely

grained lamb-skin sheets called Vellum and was bound in book form. King George II presented it to a British Museum in 1757. Eighty-two years later the Manuscript known as "Oral Duties" was catalogued as a Masonic document.

WB Raymond W. Doyscher Jr.

A MASONIC EXPERIENCE AS

RELATED BY RAY DOYSCHER

PM. Shortly after I received my first Masonic Degree my mother-in-law revealed the details of when her husband blew out a tire while driving home from Nebraska to Detroit in the late 1940s. My father-in-law was in a real predicament because he had only enough money for gas to complete the trip. He was almost broke. Then with a tear in her eye she told me how he got a new tire from a small-town Iowa gas-station owner because his 'Masonic grip' was recognized. To my mother-in-law this was a miracle...and perhaps it was. Once I became involved in Masonic meetings and activities Masonic history began to intrigue me. A small research project led me to the realization that Michigan textbook history and Michigan Masonic history was intertwined. In fact, such Masonic acts of kindness occurred along an old Indian pathway called "The Saginaw Indian Trail"... now known as Woodward Avenue.

BROTHERS MEET AT GETTYSBURG

Brothers Mark Gerhard and Bill Berklich toured Gettysburg National Battlefield with the Michigan Regimental Round Table (MRRT) in October. While our

Guide related many moments and movements of Generals Lee and Mead, the most significant to us was just before our final departure. It was the Friend to Friend Masonic Monument located in the Gettysburg National Cemetery Annex. The monument was emplaced by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.



Christina Rowand writes about the moment the monument captured. "The monument depicts Union Army Captain Henry H. Bingham assisting the severely wounded Confederate Brigadier General Lewis Armistead after Pickett's Charge. Both men were Freemasons, and it was said that as General Armistead fell, he gave a Masonic sign asking for assistance.



When Armistead learned that Bingham was an aid to his dear friend Union General Winfield Scott Hancock (also a Freemason), Armistead entrusted his personal effects to Bingham and asked that he pass along the items and a message to Hancock. Per later writings of Captain Bingham, the fateful message was "Say to Gen. Hancock for me that I have done him, and you all, a grievous injury, which I shall always regret."

The plaque on the monument bears the following words "Their unique bonds of

friendship enabled them to remain a brotherhood undivided, even as they fought in a divided nation, faithfully supporting the respective governments under which they lived."

This poignant moment in time represents one of many personal stories of the Civil War." And the theme for our 2026 Table Lodge on 13 June. See Jim McPherson for Tickets and more info on page 8.

NEW BROTHER HELPING EXPAND DEMOLAY TO CZECH REPUBLIC



Ahoj from the Czech Republic, brothers! David Prince here. For the past 9 months, Brother Adriano, a Senior DeMolay I met at Hiram Lodge #12, UGLE Emulation in Prague, and I have been working to bring DeMolay to the Czech Republic. I am proud to say that, against all odds, our hard work paid off. As of October 18th, we have found ourselves in the annals of DeMolay history as the advisors who brought DeMolay to the Czech Republic.



The consecration of the Prague Chapter was a beautiful event, and one of the most difficult and stressful things I've ever had to put together, with so many loose ends and variables up in the air up to the day itself. Among many things, I was in charge of were editing the ritual and putting together an international degree team made up of brothers from Bulgaria, Romania, France, Germany, Serbia, Greece, Brazil and Italy. Most these Brothers had never met each other until the day of the ceremony.

Even with regional differences and language barriers, the universality of the brotherhood really showed its true

power. Everyone knew what they were doing, and it didn't matter if they had never met or even spoke a common language. The language of brotherhood and the near universality of our ritual made it seem like we've all known each other for a long time.



Among our distinguished guests were the Grand Master of DeMolay International, the Grand Master of DeMolay Brazil, 5 Executive Officers from across Europe, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Czech Republic, a member of a European royal family, and too many others to list. And I was in charge of putting together an event for these people... no pressure, right? When I was a DeMolay, I never would have thought that I would ever meet someone so high up as the Grand Master of DeMolay International, and now I'm in charge of putting together an event where he's our guest.



But the sleepless nights, endless planning, constant phone calls and the never-ending waterfall of stress led to something truly historic.

It's an honor, and I am so proud of everything that we have accomplished. And, I am proud of the international degree team with motivated and brilliant boys who came from all over the world to help us. But as hard as this was, we have only laid the cornerstone. Now it's time to show our new brothers the value of fraternity and foster comradeship to show that DeMolay truly has a home in the Czech Republic.

Brother David Prince
Both here and abroad



LODGE PROJECTS

CALLING ALL SCOUTERS

Calling all Scouters, former Scouts and anyone that is interested in Scouting.



We are happy to announce that the Lodge has voted to sponsor a local Cub Scout pack, which will be selected from the Madison Heights school district. Worshipful Brother Roy Prince, Brother Bill Berklich and Brother Jim McPherson are leading the program with Brother Jim acting as liaison between the pack and lodge. Through this sponsorship, we hope to further serve the community, as well as gain additional exposure of our Lodge to the community. Stay tuned for further information as we intend kick-off to begin in the Fall of 2026!

Brother Jim McPherson

BIKES FOR BOOKS

Since 2016, our Lodge has joined, with four elementary schools in Madison Heights



to provide eight 20" bikes to each school. The bikes are new and are used as incentives for the March Reading Program. In each school, the Reading Teacher would identify one girl and one boy who excelled in that year's program and won the contest. Additionally, we provided each winner with a \$20 Walmart gift card to purchase a helmet. If you would care to make a personal donation please contact our Bikes for Books team led by Brother Dan Nance at:

masondannance@gmail.com.

CHILD IDS AT ROYAL OAK FIRE DEPARTMENT

On a warm and sunny day in October and thanks to WBs Larry Galloway and Roy Prince we supported the Royal Oak Fire Department Open House. Our Lodge provided almost 200 Child ID kits



to residents and engaged in discussions on child safety and recovery.

We also talked with Firefighters about our Endowed Scholarship at Oakland Community College for the Police and



Firefighters Academies. The result was a big thank you for helping to make the event a success and a \$100 Donation to us for the Endowed Scholarship.



LODGE EVENTS

WHISKEY AND CIGAR NIGHT

Ok, who doesn't enjoy a good whiskey and a stogie? Several



of our members met at Churchill's in Birmingham for just that. And some



good conversations on a wide range of topics. The Whiskey was wet and the

Cigars were smooth and we all enjoyed great evening with Brothers.

BLUEGRASS NIGHT

What a great night for Bluegrass! Thanks go to Worshipful Brother Don



House for organizing the band and the refreshments O.E.S. With over 40 people in attendance there Was a lot of



foot stomping and hand clapping. And the band played many an old song and a few new ones.



Everyone had a great time and we are looking forward to another Bluegrass Night Saturday 28 February 7PM at the Temple. Cost is \$10 per person and food is available. Bring your friends and family too.

BROTHERHOOD LODGE #468 FESTIVE BOARD



It is not often we have the chance to engage with our fellow Masons over a good meal so several of us took advantage of the opportunity with Brotherhood Lodge #468



In October we collected at the Brotherhood Lodge in Troy with 45 other Masons for food and good cheer.

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BROTHERS WE HAVE LOST

On December 10th Ancient Craft Lodge held our Lodge of Sorrow. Led by our Brother Mark Gerhard acting as Worshipful Master we celebrated lives well lived by our Brothers. Thirteen brothers were called to the Eternal East, and so, put down their Tools. In Remembrance of:

George Boedgieff, Hubert A Jacob, Simon John McNeilly II, James E Puckett, Gary Roberts, John Charles Shank, Ronald Douglas Sexton PM, George E Staten PM, William A Trout, Terry A Troutt PM, Howard Eugene Tyler, Peter A Visotsky, Eugene Winningham

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2025 LIFE MEMBERS

Donald House, George Carver, Joeseeph Gafa, James Keese, Ed Koponen, Douglas Kurth, Gene Rich, Michael Seefeldt, William Snapp, David Thompson

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2025 MASTER MASONS

Shaun McCaw, Bradley Klem, Daniel Nance, Hazeem Wahbi, Earl Anderson, Daniel Cressman, Franz Sajas, David Prince

NOTABLE BIRTHDAYS

JANUARY

"Buzz" Aldrin, Ben Franklin, and Paul Revere, Bradley Klemm, Anthony Andoniso, Bradley Messer, Gary Jones, Michael Semchena, Ronald Gregory, George Weaver, James Henderson, Roy Prince, Michael Seefeldt, Phillip Davis, Glenn Dickerson, Richard Holmes, James Campbell, James Holloway, Donald Gridley, Robert Haggart, Robert McRae, Hazem Wahbi, Eric Fettig, Charles Thorpe, Eugene Zimmerman, Todd Carman, Jonathan DeRoo, Louis Lenart, David Prince

FEBRUARY

Geroge Washington, and Clark Gable, Harold Marshall, Robert Conrad, Donald MacKenzie, Charles Woodall, Daniel Solum, Charles Sullins, Bill Briggs, Eugene Winningham, Daniel Nance, Donald Perrett, Mark Gerhard, William Carr, Kenneth Truett, Craig Maison, James Keesee, Denis Andean, James McPherson. Philip Zott, Ryan Koponen, Marvin King

MARCH

Leland Stanford, and David Wooster, Allan MacDonald, Michael Karadimas PM, Edwin Estevez, Christopher Blake, Fred Earnshaw, Oscar Carnes, Robert Trussell P M, John Beaver, Dennis Sherman, Daniel Cagle, Stefan Karpov, David Talbot, Antonio Almada, Donald Carman, PGM, Donald House, William Trout, Richard Lowery, Mark Stiles

***"Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment."*— Bro. Benjamin Franklin**
(1706-1790) St. John's Lodge of Philadelphia, USA

LET'S GO TO LODGE TONIGHT

My Brother, let's go to Lodge tonight;
You haven't been for years.
Let's don our Lambskin Apron white
And sit among our peers.
I feel a kind of longing, see,
to climb those creaky stairs;
I know it'll be a thrill for me
to lay aside my cares.
We'll meet the Tiler at the door
and though he'll hesitate,
we'll hear him say just as before,
"Come in or you'll be late."
I'd like to get out on the floor--
Come on, let's get in line;
I want to face the East once more
And give the same old sign.
I want to hear the gavel rap
the Craftsmen to attention
and see the Master don his cap;
a night without dissention.
So, come! Pass up that picture show,
or your wrestling bout or fight;
Switch off that TV set! Let's go!
Let's go to Lodge tonight.

(Author Unknown)

CLARA BARTON'S MASONIC CONNECTION

Clara Barton, known as the "Angel of the Battlefield" during the Civil War, was a nurse, teacher and humanitarian, and today is honored as the "Founder of the American Red Cross." Much of the inspiration for her life of service came from her father, Captain Stephen Barton, a Master Mason, who impressed her with the tenets of Freemasonry.

Captain Barton, a native of Oxford, Massachusetts, enlisted at the age of 19 to fight in the Indian Wars in the west under General Anthony Wayne. After his return to Oxford he married and later moved to the farm where Clara was born. He was chosen a Captain of the militia and served as moderator of town meetings, select men and a member of the legislature.



Two months after his marriage, he became a Master Mason in Olive Branch Lodge. Brother Barton combined a military spirit, gentle disposition and spirit of philanthropy—characteristics inherited by his daughter.

After his death Clara said, "As the daughter of an accepted Mason, he bade me seek and comfort the afflicted



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everywhere." Before his death he presented his daughter a gold Masonic emblem to wear in his memory for luck and protection. Clara Barton wore that emblem throughout the Civil War.

Later in life Clara became a member of the Order of Eastern Star and was initiated by Rob Morris, the founder of the Order. Just after her Eastern Star initiation, she said, "My father was a Mason; to him it was a religion and for the love of and honor I bear him, I am glad to be connected with anything like this."

Adapted from The Royal Arch Mason Magazine 2013.

ACROSS OUR LODGE IN PHOTOS



MASONS AROUND THE LODGE

**Dan Nance**

Raised: 2025
HS Grad: : Franklin HS,
Livonia, 1979
First Car: '71 Ford LTD
Fav Food: Road Kill

Fav Band: ZZ Top
Fav Book: War History
Favorite Vacation: In a rowboat by myself
fishing
Fav Movie: Westerns
Fav Music: Blues
Hobbies: Riding my Harley
Family: Married with Eight grand children
Masonic Influence: Hiram Abif

**Col. Mark Gerhard
USMC (Ret.)**

Raised: 2004
HS Grad: Rochester High
1983
First Car: '76 Grand Prix

Fav Food: Detroit style Coneyes
Fav Band: Three Dog Night
Fav Book: The Hobbit
Favorite Vacation: Afghanistan 2004
Fav Music: Classic rock (pre-1983)
Hobbies: Tobacco pipe collecting
Family: Divorced Noah (27) & Lucas (26)
Masonic Influence: : Earl VanCise
Mil Service: USMC 1989-2017

**Philip Zott**

Raised: 2023
HS Grad: Oakland
Christian, 2000
First Car: '72 Cutlass
Fav Music: Bluegrass

Fav Food: Shepherd's pie
Fav Band: Johnny Cash
Fav Book: Morals & Dogma by Albert Pike
Favorite Vacation: Rome, Italy
Hobbies: Writing poetry
Family: widower, two sons, single and
dating
Favorite Masonic role: Chaplin
Masonic Influence: Prof. Roy Potter



Table Lodge 2026 - Masons in the Civil War Friend to Friend - A Brotherhood Undivided Saturday, June 13, 2026, 5PM

Lodge will be Tiled in the EA Degree and Closed to Non-Masons. Doors will open at 5:00 PM for socializing - Lodge will be opened in the EA Degree at 6PM See WB Jim McPherson for Tickets



Ladies Night and Awards Banquet 28 January 5:00pm the Clawson Steakhouse

Contact Larry Galloway ASAP 248-672-4230 or email Bill Berklich Berklich@aol.com TXT 248-404-5816 NO
-LATER THAN 18 JAN

Where: Clawson Steakhouse 56 S Rochester Rd, Clawson, MI 48017



Bluegrass Night Saturday 28 February 7:00 pm \$10

Come on down for some foot stompin', hand clappin' music arranged by our very own Don House.

When: Saturday, 28 February 2026 at 7:00pm

Where: The Temple – 850 Horace Brown Drive, Madison Hgts MI

How Much: \$10/person at the Door Food available



Let's Shoot Some Pool, 21 February at 7:00 pm

Let's meet at the Pool Hall and enjoy some fun and fellowship.

When: 21 February 7PM

Where: Hall of Fame Billiards 5775 E Thirteen Mile Rd, Warren, MI 48092

How Much: It is a public space, so you are on your own for Pool and drinks

FOOTNOTES FROM THE EDITOR



Brethren,

As Editor of the Trestle Board for the past year I have to say it's been fun. But I do want to broaden the scope and provide a platform for Brothers of all backgrounds and experience levels to explore the rich history, philosophy, and practice of Freemasonry by providing a wide range of articles. Here are some potential topics for upcoming issues: **Masonic history:** Uncover a fascinating forgotten figure, or delve into the symbolism of a particular ritual,

Masonic principles: Explore how the tenets of Freemasonry are applied in daily life, **Masonic practice:** Share insights on innovative approaches to community outreach or provide guidance for new Brothers. Send your submission directly to me at berklich@aol.com and thanks in advance.

Yours in Brotherhood – Bill Berklich