



THE DEPUTY'S NEWSLETTER

November 2009



Dear Sublime Princes of the Royal Secret:

As I write this, the great experiment the Supreme Council called "SRD" or Scottish Rite Day has just ended. This was a specific initiative of our Sov. Grand Commander, John William McNaughton, and he had a very specific agenda in mind which he insisted upon. It isn't often that we in the Scottish Rite experience a top driven event, but we did this time. Instructions were that every Consistory in our 15 States would open at 10AM, present the 31st and 32nd degree and have a luncheon without any introductions except for the Grand Master of the State. And this is exactly what happened on Nov. 14th at the Montpelier Masonic Center.

Just by chance Vermont was also celebrating the opening morning of "rifle season" that morning. Illus. Rick Rayfield, the Consistory's Commander in Chief, accounted for this by extending to our members freedom to arrive in hunting clothes, and by offering deer and elk stew for the luncheon. Very creative, Rick, and the stew was delicious too. In the end, I don't think we lost too many attendees. Several were in hunting clothes and came in from the field- a hard steady rain outside may have encouraged this- and I did what I could to honor the season by wearing a red bow tie.

Illus. Roland Smith's staging crew had transformed the lodge room into a well thought out set for the degree work. Attendance was good, with 55 brothers including 14 candidates from our four VT Valleys. Our MWGM Thomas Johnston IV attended, together with two Past MWGMs of our State. The officers of the Consistory did an outstanding job with the explanations of the Scottish Rite "Camp," the nonagon enclosing a heptagon, and so forth. The candidates were obligated and then in an unusual twist each candidate was dubbed at the altar, one at a time, by the Commander in Chief as a Sublime Prince. After the investiture of the Exemplar with the clothing of a Sublime Prince, brother Rayfield concluded the work with the stirring and beautiful flag charge of the Consistory.

Following a brief costuming recess labor continued on the concluding allegory of the Scottish Rite, the beautiful story of Constans and the four temptations written by Illus. Brother John Lloyd Thomas in 1916. The cast performed their labors to perfection. Of special note was the performance of brother Jay Purvis, whose rendition of Constans was

thrilling, and his performance was ably supported by every member of the cast. All in all, a suburb presentation that awoke in each brother the deep meaning of the Royal Secret. Our candidates, now Brothers, received a wonderful entry into the ranks of the Kadosh.

The degree work was immediately followed by a great luncheon served by Montpelier's Aurora Lodge square and compasses club. I confess I had thought that many brothers would slip away after the work was done and not stay for the food. Boy, was I wrong. Nearly two hours of great fellowship equaled the degree work in cementing the meaning of Scottish Rite Masonry. At one point I looked around and noticed there was no one not engaged in animated conversation with his brothers. Surely the fellowship was every bit as important as the work in the lodge room had been.

So in conclusion I can only say SGC John William had hit on a winning formula, as was evidenced by the success of the day. A huge thank you must go out to Commander Rayfield and all the brothers of VT Consistory for the hard work they put in to make this event such a success. This is the first year for a long time we have had two candidate classes in a single degree season, but with 14 new sublime princes now added to our ranks no one can say the effort was not worth while. And of course our brothers all enjoyed the event tremendously- I know I did. If you missed the fun, we will be doing it again at the Williston Masonic Center on April 24, 2010.

A NEW LOOK AT VALLEY OFFICERS

For many years the officers of each of the Bodies of a Valley have been fixed by the constitution of the Supreme Council. Besides Secretary and Treasurer, which serve all the Bodies, a three Body Valley has been constitutionally required to elect 22 different brothers to officer positions. Add in a Consistory and the number rises to 33! Although each of these positions is supposed to be a different officer, small Valleys- and that is most Valleys- simply do not have enough brothers to fill all these slots. So for years the Actives looked the other way while Valley officers filled several of these slots at once. It was a good example of just not wanting to admit a problem existed.

Then two years ago our previous Deputy, Illus. Fred Jackson, petitioned the Supreme Council to allow VT to use an experimental and non-constitutional officer arrangement called the "Green Bay Model" after the Valley which initiated it. This was adopted by the Valley of Burlington and last June approved by the Council of Deliberation for use throughout Vermont. In essence, this new model calls for the elimination of all Body officer positions below the top two- the first officer in each Body being "the boss," and the second one being the "boss in training." All other positions are simply appointed by the Body heads as needed. Under this structure, one important difference from the past is that there is no "progressive" line: each officer is voted into place from the entire membership, with confidence in their leadership abilities being the only criteria of office.

There is no doubt that this is an advancement over the old model inherited from the 19th Century. However, this model is still not reflective of the actual functions of a Valley in the 21st Century. Positions of great importance to a Valley are either not included or not given the prominence they deserve. For example, the position of Valley Publicist was little needed in the 1800's, and so Valleys today still routinely either have no one doing this

work, or a brother just informally involved. Yet publicizing our Valley's work through newsletters, email and the internet is of vital importance to our survival.

I would therefore like to have our Vermont Valleys reorganize their officer structure from the 19th Century Model or even the Green Bay Model into a new form we will call the 21st Century Model. The first consideration is a reduction of emphasis on the historical "Bodies" and a basic focus on the Valley as the primary unit of governance. The Bodies will still, as in the Green Bay model, be represented by a Head Officer bearing his traditional title. However, these three or four brothers should not think of themselves as king of their own turf, but as co-producers of one of a Valley's most basic events: the Meeting.

All other officer positions will apply to the Valley as a whole.

21st CENTURY VALLEY OFFICER MODEL

- [Heads of Each Valley Body](#)
- [Secretary](#)
- [Treasurer](#)
- [Publicist](#)- the duties of this officer are: 1)publish the newsletter 2)produce flyers for Valley events 3)distribute event notices via email 4)produce programs for Valley events 5) manage website information 6)maintain social networking sites
- [Education Officer](#)- the duties of this officer are: 1)in charge of candidate mentoring 2) manage educational programs at meetings 3)produce educational articles for publication
- [Membership Officer](#)- the duties: 1) recruitment, especially via direct talks to Master Masons in their Lodges 2) class marshal in charge of candidates at meetings 3) maintaining the candidate spreadsheet 4)communication with candidates 5)membership retention work
- [Degree Director](#)- an office of the greatest importance and should be the equal of any other officer.
- [Stage Manager](#)- an office that also deserves parity of rank with any officer in importance to the Valley and in difficulty of execution.

It's still not a short list- 10 good brothers (11with a Consistory)- but running a Valley is not simple but requires a well oiled team to succeed. If each of these officers does a good job then the Valley will take off and become not good but great.

SCOTTISH RITE HAS ANOTHER NEW WEB SITE

The Valley of Burlington's Children Center for Dylexia Tutoring has just launched a new website: www.vtmlc.org This very professional looking site was created by Illus. Eric Steele recently to fulfill the great need of a web presence for our tutoring Center. Jan Ellis-Clements, the new director of the Center, will be responsible for keeping the site updated with the latest information about the Center. I urge you all to visit the site and become better informed about this, Scottish Rite's major charity here in Vermont. Thanks Eric for a great job on this!

By now I hope you all have had a chance to visit our official Vermont website, www.vermontscottishrite.com . We owe a huge debt of gratitude to brother Mason Pratt who has selflessly contributed his extraordinary design and graphic talents together with large amounts of time to its creation. But, the chief job of a web site is communication, and while the site is packed with information about the Rite in a general way, only YOU can fill in the blanks concerning your own Valley or Body. There is a calendar any brother can add to so we will all know the facts about your event. And very importantly there are news pages for each of our Valleys. I urge our members to post their newsletters, announcements, event flyers, photographs and whatever else you would like in these areas. Simply put what you have in a common electronic format and send it to Mason at mpratt@madscape.com.

The website is only a first step in the work of the new IT committee of our Council of Deliberation, and is one example of "your tax dollars at work." I am committed to bringing our Rite into the 21st Century by making modern forms of communication the way we do business. You will find a large graphics area on the site. Please use these for your publications, programs, etc.

WHERE HAVE THEY GONE?

Any salesman will tell you that it is far easier and more cost effective to sell to one who has been a customer in the past than it is to develop a new customer. Well, our "customers in the past" are our own members, who are trying to tell us something by sending in those Demit requests or, more usually, just not sending in anything at all until they become suspended, joining the ranks of our SNPDs. Sometimes it seems like we are all at the front door working to bring in Master Masons and behind our backs far too many men are slipping out the back door, never to return. My friends, they are voting with their feet. Perhaps we painted in glowing and imaginary terms what we had to offer, and the excited new member found disappointment rather quickly. In fact, we lose most of our SNPDs in the first three years after their joining. Perhaps we should keep an eye on that back door too.

Of course, men join for many reasons, and leave for many reasons too. Yet I think there is one outstanding reason men join any Masonic group: brotherhood. We offer a sense of belonging to a group with shared values and shared experiences. We know the Scottish Rite is a collection of some of the odder and more interesting members of society. Generally speaking, they are men seeking beyond the mere material qualities of life, seeking to bond and feel accepted by men of like quality. I think it is foolish to look to material things to interest these members. A flashier degree presentation is nice, pins and jewels help, interesting programs go a long ways; but in the end it is a simple hand shake, a thoughtful word, considerate listening, sharing of the experiences of life that really matter. We claim we seek the brotherhood of all men- but are we really practicing it? All those guys going out the back door have a message for us, one we may not be willing to hear.

So I would urge our Valleys not to be quick about giving up on our past customers. I think only the Valley of Burlington under Bob Gockel did a really outstanding job with this. A simple letter is not enough. Call them up. Find a brother who knows them and have him

visit. PGM Jack Campbell expressed it well when he used to say "Masonry is a one on one thing." And the time to begin this is not when they stop coming to the meetings, but on the very first night they attend. Open up your heart to them, and they will open to you. That is what Masonry is really all about.

One of my favorite quotes from the Boston meeting is Commander McNaughton saying "Here at the Supreme Council we have \$25,000 in our almoner's fund, and we spend millions on our charities. A small sum for our own brothers, but millions for the profane world, most of whom neither know nor care about us. Isn't this saying something about what Masonry has become?"

If we expect to have brothers in our lodges, at our meetings, then we must be brothers. I think it really is that simple.

Note to editors: Any portion of this newsletter may be used for publication, only please give me the credit (or blame!) for the writing.

Spes Mea in Deo Est:
Eric Ginette
Deputy Inspector VT



AN

INVITATION:

**TO ALL MASTER MASONS TO JOIN THE SECOND CLASS OF 2009
ANCIENT ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE**

**DECEMBER 12TH : MUMMER'S PLAY; POTLUCK & MUSIC
MONTPELIER CENTER 2PM**

**DECEMBER 13TH : RUTLAND'S AASR HOLIDAY PARTY
SOUTH STATION RESTAURANT 6PM**

ALL MASONS WELCOME: MEET YOUR BROTHERS!

LODGE OF PERFECTION WORK

MONTPELIER 1/23 4° 9AM BREAKFAST AT 8AM

BURLINGTON 1/21 14° 7:30PM SUPPER 6:30

BRATTLEBORO 1/16 4° 10AM

COUNCIL & CHAPTER WORK

MONTPELIER 2/20 15° 9AM BREAKFAST AT 8AM

BURLINGTON 2/18 16° 7:30PM SUPPER 6:30

MONTPELIER 3/13 18° 9AM BREAKFAST AT 8AM

BURLINGTON 3/18 18° 7:30PM SUPPER 6:30

VERMONT CONSISTORY SPRS
BURLINGTON 4/24 31° & 32° NOON LUNCH 1:30PM OPENING

INSPIRATION

CONVENIENCE

ENJOYMENT

FOR DETAILS CHECK

WWW.VERMONTSCOTTISHRITE.COM