

[View email in browser](#)



# Kempsville Lodge No. 196

## The Ashlar

May 2025



## From The East

### The Wages of a Master Mason



Our ancient brethren were financially compensated for their work. They spent years in the fraternity gaining the skills necessary to be called a Master Mason, which directly benefited them economically. But what wages do we gain from being a Master Mason? Why do we wear the square and compasses and show up to the stated meeting every month?

For me personally, the wages are substantial. The strong connection developed between brethren is truly amazing. Friendships within the lodge with men who travel in completely different circles are something I cherish. This extends further to Masons outside of Kempsville. Those members of Unanimity and Sincerity No. 261, that I see on zoom on Sunday have become very important to me. Though separated by an ocean and I have never met them in person, I enjoy seeing them and catching up on the differences in the Craft between here and there. Further, the bond is instant. When members of Purdie Lodge No. 170 conducted a funeral service for us last year, I made a connection with two people that call and check in on me periodically and are genuinely concerned for my wellbeing.

I also really enjoy the ritual, its lessons and striving to do it well. I get a great sense of satisfaction from “nailing it”, recalling all the work and energy those who mentored me put into making that moment happen. It is also in learning the ritual that friendships are deepened. Worshipful Morris White, Worshipful Frank Creasy, Right Worshipful Tom McGowan and Right Worshipful Bob Stanek all spent hours teaching me the ritual one on one. During these times I learned more about them and came to truly call them my good friends and brothers.

There is also the privilege of responsibility and leadership. The brethren trusted me with the stewardship of the lodge this year. That is something that I do not take lightly. Ensuring that the lodge not only survives another year but thrives is challenging and exhilarating. Seeing the monthly breakfast successfully happen or having a dozen brothers and their families join me at TopGolf for fellowship or travel with me to Windsor for a fraternal visit is wonderful. I truly appreciate those that have supported each of these endeavors and hope that they get as much enjoyment from it as I do.

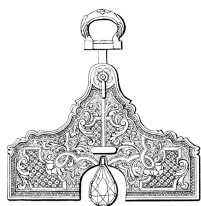
I also get the opportunity to invest in the next generation through our masonic youth groups. These organizations provided me with an opportunity to spend time with my children when they were growing up

that I would not otherwise had. Serving as an adult leader with DeMolay and Job's Daughters allowed me to pass on what I think is important not only about masonry but life. I know that it made a difference for some of them.

In short, I believe the wages of a Master Mason are brotherly love, friendship, leadership, responsibility, the ritual work and the ability to invest in the future and I am compensated abundantly!

Brother Justin Gray Worshipful Master

## From The West



Growing up the son of a Mason, I had no idea what Freemasonry was about. Anytime, I asked my father what this meeting he and my grandfather were going to 1-2 times per month was, I was simply told, "When you're old enough, join and find out – but I think you would like it." Finally, twenty years later, I took his advice and became a Mason. At that time, I did not know what I would ever get out of becoming a part of this fraternity. Twenty years later, I have learned.

Masonry has given me a better connection to my family. It was not until my grandfather received his 50 year pin that I realized he had been a Mason for so long. With my father now living in Virginia Beach, Masonry is now something that we can both share and enjoy together, much like he and his father did for so many years.

One of the greatest things I have gotten out of Masonry is the fellowship. As Right Worshipful Tom McGowan told me on several occasions, Masonry is all about the fellowship. Being able to come together on a weekly or monthly basis, even at times when I wasn't actively trying to learn more ritual, has proven to be one of my favorite times of the week.

Finally, I hope that Masonry has made me a better person. Many times, I stop and remind myself that I took a solemn obligation to do this or do that. While many times, I have not done all that I need to do in order to fulfill my obligation, I do realize that those obligations I took at the sacred altar cause me to think about things in a different manner and become a "just and upright Mason."

Brother Howard Draper, Senior Warden

## From The South



Freemasonry offers a variety of potential benefits, though the specific experience varies from person to person and lodge to lodge. Here are my personal reasons for becoming a Mason.

Self-Improvement-Freemasonry encourages introspection, moral development, and the pursuit of knowledge. The allegorical lessons and rituals prompt members to reflect on their character and strive to become better versions of themselves. I have always prided myself in being a good man. I feel Masonry has made me a better man.

Public speaking and leadership skills--regular meetings and opportunities to participate in ceremonies provide a safe and supportive environment to practice public speaking and develop leadership skills. I have been afraid of public speaking, even in college that class was a challenge for me. Masonry has given me the confidence and ability to not only do it myself but coach and lead others to be able to do it as well. Discipline and Focus--the structured nature of Freemasonry, with its rituals and degrees, can foster discipline and focus in other areas of life. The military gave me the foundation of those qualities. Freemasonry gave me the missing pieces.

Brotherhood and camaraderie--Freemasonry creates a strong sense of brotherhood and camaraderie among its members. This can lead to lasting friendships and a supportive network of like-minded individuals. I have had the pleasure of meeting some of the best men, young and older, to mentor me and made many lifelong friends. No matter where we may travel a Brother Mason will always be there for you.

Lastly, what I have gotten out of being a Mason is an easy way for charitable giving. Many Masonic organizations are actively involved in charitable work and community service. This provides members with opportunities to give back to their communities and make a positive impact. I have always wanted to make an impact somewhere and to someone. Freemasonry has given me opportunities to give to major causes and as a united group, we make huge impacts on these great and important organizations with their causes. It is important to note that Freemasonry is not a religion, a get-rich-quick scheme, or a pathway to political power. It's a fraternal organization focused on personal growth, brotherhood, and community service. Masons have their own path. Yours will hopefully be as fruitful as mine.

Brother Chris Kammerer, Junior Warden

## 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Bull Roast

Mark your calendars! The 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Bull Roast is just around corner, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 11AM to 7PM and as usual, we'll be serving

- Smoked Beef Brisket
- Home Made Baked Beans
- Potato Salad, Cole Slaw
- Cakes and Pies
- Coffee, Iced Tea, Lemonade

In the coming weeks, you'll be receiving a special mailing of tickets which you can pay for using the included envelope or online at <https://va.grandview.systems/>.

Worshipful Roger Taylor, Bull Roast Committee Chairman

## Meet Your Newest Master Masons (in their own words)

Join me in welcoming our newest Master Masons to Kempsville Lodge!

### Tim Singer

I am a husband, dad to three cats, and expectant father of a future DeMolay (he's due May 11). I work for Newport News Shipbuilding as a welder. My recreational time is spent playing music for myself, open mics, and my Green Day tribute band.

I was introduced to Masonry when I started dating my wife, Kaitlynn, as she is involved with Job's Daughters, and her father who is a member of our lodge (and our current Worshipful Master). Seeing the close bonds she and her family have through Masonic organizations led me to ask for a petition last year.

### Chris Carter

Hello, my name is Chris Carter, a second-generation Mason, born and raised in the Kempsville area of Virginia Beach since 1966. I am retired from the US Military where I proudly served 15 years in the US Navy and 8 years in the US Army. I have also been a conductor for the Norfolk Portsmouth Beltline Railroad and Norfolk Southern Railroad. I have 3 beautiful daughters, a wonderful son-in-law and 2 amazing grand kids.

## **Trestle Board**

- May 13: Stated Communication, Senior Warden Night, Dinner 6PM, Lodge 7PM
- May 16: Norfolk Tides, 7PM
- May 24: Lodge Breakfast, 8-10AM
- June 10: Stated Communication, Polo Shirt Night, Dinner 6PM, Lodge 7PM
- June 13: Khedive Shrine Rodeo, Chesapeake Shrine Center, 7 PM
- June 21: Annual Bull Roast, 11AM-7PM
- June 28: Lodge Breakfast, 8-10AM

## **Masonic Birthdays for May**

- Chris Anders, 05/11
- Brandon Angel, 05/07
- George Bunch, 05/82
- Kevin Cotter, 05/11
- Wayne DeFord, 05/93
- Frank Filippone, 05/15
- James Freeman, 05/74
- James Freihofer, 05/15
- Billy Gordon, 05/03
- Adam Hernandez, 05/07
- Monte Howell, 05/70
- Ross McLeod, 05/06
- Joseph Miechle, 05/09
- Leslie Miller, 05/72
- Steve Miller, 05/71
- Larry Montgomery, 05/97
- Stanley Moss, 05/96
- John Phillips, 05/18
- Christopher Robertson, 05/13
- Jimmy Shehan, 05/97
- Larry Strait, 05/12
- Russell Tjepkema, 05/85
- William Wyndham, 05/83

## **Fraternal Visit to Purdie Lodge No. 170**





Kempsville Lodge conducted a fraternal visit to Purdie Lodge No. 170 in April 1. Everyone enjoyed the low country boil meal prior to the meeting except for Jay, who is allergic to shellfish! The theme of the meeting was Masonic Family and all present spoke on the history of masonry in their families. This was followed by a great presentation from the Grand Senior Deacon Right Worshipful Mike Pelletier. A great time was had by all!

## March Breakfast



March's monthly breakfast was a huge success. Thank you to John Donahue and Chris Carter for doing the majority of the cooking!

## Upcoming Lodge Outings

Brethren, please join me in building closer bonds through fellowship at the following events:

- April 30th: Pub Trivia at Three Notch'd Brewery, Town Center, Virginia Beach 6:30 PM
- May 16th: Norfolk Tides game at Harbor Park, Norfolk, 6:35 PM. Please RSVP to Worshipful Master by May 9th so the correct number of tickets can be purchased. Tickets are \$21.
- June 13th: Khedive Shrine Rodeo, Chesapeake Shrine Center, 7 PM.

Brother Justin Gray Worshipful Master

## Lodge Dues

Brethren, there are still 38 members that have not yet paid their lodge dues with 13 owing for both 2024 and 2025. The Worshipful Master will be reaching out to these Brethren in the coming weeks to discuss options. Remember, dues can be paid online by accessing your Grand View Member Portal at:

<https://va.grandview.systems/>

Emmett “Buddy” Pate, Secretary



*The Grand Lodge*  
*of*  
**VIRGINIA**

You are receiving this email because you are a member of a Lodge in the Grand Lodge of Virginia.

To unsubscribe from future emails, login to the member portal to update your Communication Preferences.

[Login to Member Portal](#)