

Date July 1st, 2025

Master's Message

I hope everyone enjoyed the 120th anniversary Dinner. It was a great night for friends and family. I hoped that everyone enjoyed themselves. On 6/24 we had an EA degree. Great job to everyone that took a part in the degree. Congrats to our newest EA Kevin Yoblin. It's been a minute since we had a degree. It was refreshing to see the lodge put on a degree. Please have a safe 4th of July, can't wait to see the improvements to the parking lot when we get back to the lodge on 7/8. That night at dinner we will be presenting a check to the South Milwaukee K9 unit. It is also sports Jersey night. Please wear your favorite team Jersey. Double EA is coming up, along with 8/12 stated will be Suit Jacket with shorts night, 9/7 is the family Zoo trip \$5 for those 13 and up, if interested please email Nolan at _____

you in Lodge,

Jake Harycki



Meet your Officers

This Month is JD Eric Vesel



Hello everyone! I'm Eric Vesel, 44 years old, and married to my favorite wife—Christina (also my only wife, in case anyone's wondering). Christina and I met in 2000 and tied the knot in 2006. Since then, we've built a life filled with kids, chaos, and just the right amount of sarcasm. We have three young adult children:

Julia (25) – the favorite oldest, who's getting married in September 2026 (yes, the

countdown is on.

Abigail (20) the favorite middle child, a title she proudly claims and fiercely defends.

Aiden (18), the favorite youngest and snowmobiling partner-in-crime.

With one wedding on the horizon, Christina and I are hopeful that grandparent status isn't too far off in the future.

We've lived in Raymond, WI for the past 24 years on a small hobby farm. Our three children filled our days in their younger years, by proudly showing steers and pigs at the Racine County Fair and the Wisconsin State Fair. Those were some of our best memories—and maybe the messiest.

As an entrepreneur, I've always thrived on staying busy, building things, solving problems, and taking on new ventures. Now that the kids are old enough to fend for themselves (mostly), Christina and I are enjoying the chance to travel as much as possible, making the most of every season and spare weekends.

TV, movies, and sports? Not really my thing. I'd rather stay busy, keep working, and take on new challenges—even if it means dragging the family along for the ride. I'm a creature of habit but love to be spontaneous and to try new things.

If we haven't met yet, I look forward to meeting more of my brothers!

2025 Lodge Officers

- Worshipful Master
Jake Harycki PM
- Senior Warden
Mike Cornell
- Junior Warden
Brian Bertram PM
- Treasurer
Matt Schmidt
- Secretary
Mike Myers PM
- Senior Deacon
Nolan Swendrowski
- Junior Deacon
Winston Herman
- Senior Steward
Greg Neal
- Junior Steward
Eric Vesel
- Tiler
Larry Chadderdon PM
- Chaplain
Byron Borck PM
- Councilor
Butts PM

Nate

Damascus

Zoo Trip

Sunday September 7th

\$5 For Adults (13 and Up)
Kids 12 and Under Are Free!
1 Parking Pass per Family

Email nrswendr@gmail.com

or

Text **(414)-550-1387**

by **August 12th!**

Meet by the Giraffes at 2pm for a photo!

Broken Column

Outdoor MM Degree

Saturday, July 12th
Coffee/Carbs 8:30AM
Degree 9:00AM
Three Pillars Campus



Held In Memory of Tom Tourville and others
whom we have lost

Volunteers Needed to Staff The Degree
Paul.Tourville@WIMasons.org
Call or text 414-659-5205

RSVPs appreciated for Planning of Carbs

Wisconsin FREEMASONRY

Freemasonry At WI State Fair

July 31--Aug 10

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Need Three Volunteers/Shift
Shifts 10AM-4PM & 4PM-9PM

Volunteers Receive

- * Fair Admission
- * WI Freemasonry Polo
- * Free Parking
- * \$15 Food Voucher

Sign up via link in body of this post

Any Questions paul.tourville@wimasons.org



Latest Degree Work



On June 24th, Damascus Lodge conferred its first degree of the year. Bro. Kevin Yoblin was initiated an Entered Apprentice. Special thanks to Bro. Josh Armstrong and MWPGM Ken Gorgan for their help. Congratulations to our officers on a good job with the degree work. We are looking forward to a double EA in July and welcome visitors and spectators to see the work this degree has put in!

120th Anniversary Celebration



Our 120th Anniversary Dinner was a huge success! We were honored to have as our guests MWGM Jeff Shoenfeldt and WGM Jan F. Talaga. It was well attended the members and guests were quite impressed with the food and service. Guests also received a pamphlet of our lodges history over the last 120 years as well as a special challenge coin. Special thanks to our JW WBro. Brian Bertram for putting all of this together!



Damascus Lodge No. 290 F. &A.M. 1235 East Howard Ave. Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207

May 31st was Mini golf At 'Big Putts Mini Golf'. The Brethren and their families of our lodge met for lunch at Oscar's on 27th street for burgers and milkshakes before heading over to the mini golf course down the street. Keep in mind, Oscars didn't pay me anything to talk about their restaurants, but if you want burgers and custard, and you're sick of Culver's, and don't want to pay Kopp's \$, don't miss out on Oscar's. Its a great option and I wish there were more of them around. I recommend the classic cheeseburger with ketchup, mustard and pickle, with a chocolate malt. Don't mess with the classics.

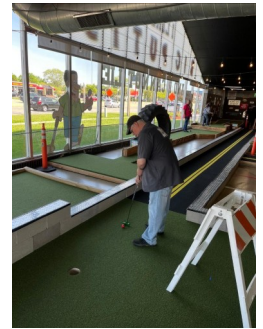
Fun fact: Big Putts Mini Golf also sells car stereos. The building is located by multiple car dealerships that provide business for 'Big Putts'. The whole place feels like an auto garage that tacked on an entire 18 hole mini golf course and skee-ball, to make some extra cash. I mean that in a good way; the place has character. Its impressive how it all fits. It does not look like an entire 18 hole course could have squeezed into that space, but it does. And there is plenty more room to hang out and



talk afterwards, which many of the brethren and their families did after golf. Ours truly, Worshipful Master, Jake Harycki, got the best score of 40, beating Matt Schmidt by 1 stroke. He claimed, dubiously, that he has never played

that course until that day. It was great to catch up with old faces and have some fun with the brethren. This was personally my first Damascus event, and it was a blast. Thank you, to everyone who came, and those who didn't, I will see you next time.

Submitted by Bro.Winston Hermann



Lodge Birthdays

July

Richard T. Lang Jr 7/4, James J. Janczak 7/6, Jeff Woosley 7/9, Basil E. Ryan 7/24, Mick Olson and John Delakis 7/30.

August

Paul Graeven 8/14, Bernard C. Baumgardner 8/21,



Upcoming Dates

July 8 Stated Meeting Dinner at 6pm and Gavel drops at 7pm. (Favorite Team Jersey night) (Donation to South Milw. PD K9 unit)

July 12 Damascus with the Milkmen Game. Pick up tickets from Bro. Mike at the front gate at Franklin Field. Pick up Tix by 5:30pm.

August 5 Double EA degree

Aug 12 Stated Meeting. Dinner at 6pm and Gavel drops at 7pm. (Suit Jacket and Shorts)

Sept 7 Damascus Zoo Trip



If you have any questions, edits and or suggestions for this newsletter, please contact Bro. Mike Cornell .

If you have an article that you would like to see published, please have them into the WM by the 15th of the month .

Damascus Lodge No. 290 F. &A.M. 1235 East Howard Ave.

"Sideline Scribbles"

Michael Fairbanks
Damascus Lodge #290

July 2025

"Influence"

I get the biggest laugh out of celebrity and sports figure interviews when the interviewer asks "And who was the one person that influenced you in your climb to stardom?" I will laugh out loud with an occasional obnoxious and fake guffaw then go into a diatribe on influencers and at what point in life they entered or left.

Generally, I do not believe that in most people's lives there is just one influencer. My wife, finally tiring of the diatribe somewhere about 20 years ago, started using "the look" and I have figured out that it probably is not a good idea to go into the "influencer" diatribe for the millionth time with her around.

In one's life, and at any point in time remember my mum and dad being sister had somewhat of an influence a good whack at the back of my



there can be and usually are multiple influencers. I the ones with the most influence on me. My older with the immortal words of "I'm TELLING" right after head. I love my sister!

Then on entering kindergarten, my me and teachers to correct any misdeed arising from this coercion, and this in addition to a phone call to my mum and dad. I was never quite able figure out how to influence my mum that I was an angel and it was my friends that got me into trouble.

influencers increased. I now had peers to coerce

Upon arrival at High School, I had already gone through multiple "the one influencer". Elementary, Junior High School teachers, baseball, hockey, and football coaches. During elementary school the "one" influencer was Mrs. Knight who was the most patient and kind teacher. Always at the ready with some lesson on kindness and forgiveness.

Then in Junior High, and depending upon the day or what sport we were playing the "one" influencer was Mrs. Kroncke, or Mr. Alderich, or Mr. Baney, or Mr. Cole, or Mr. Cook, or Mr. Love, or Mr. Hanson, or Mr. Baker, or Mrs. Baker. All of them most respected and beloved by everyone. All them being influencers during this time in our lives. And of course, there was mum, dad, and big sis waiting at home with even more influence.

High School saw influencers change to Mr. Quade, or Mrs. Strunk, or Mr. French, or Mr. McKee, or Mr. Zigler, or Mr. Woolhite or Miss Lake, or Mrs. Sempert or Miss Meyn. All teachers and coaches and all with a different influence on behavior and manners. All them always available to help a troubled student and guide them away from trouble or just be there to have someone to talk with. And unlike today, none of them – not one ever gave up on a student.

My biggest influencers in the Marine Corps were my Drill Instructors. They enhanced and honed my drive to treat everyone with respect, never give up, to assess, adapt, and overcome difficult and near impossible situations.

Fast forward to 2006, when my cousin, who was my first Masonic Influencer, introduced me to Freemasonry. On September 26, 2006, I walked into Damascus Lodge and met four of the six people who influenced my Masonic Career and my life in ways I never imagined.

As Masons, we strive to keep our behavior circumscribed and in due bounds with all mankind, more especially Brother Masons. Always keep in mind that our newer and less informed Brethren are always watching and listening as is the public. What we say and what we do will become an influence on someone, somewhere.

Damascus Lodge meets every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at 7:00 P.M., dinner served at 6:00. If you have not been to Lodge in a while, come back and "experience" the fellowship and workings of Lodge.

Be there AND be square.