

The following article was written by Bro. Kuba as he advanced through the degrees of Masonry in our lodge. He was Raised to the Sublime degree of Master Mason on Monday March 22, 2010.

Masonry Hit Me Like a Tidal Wave By: Brother J.J. Kuba, Jr.

Masonry hit me like the tornado in the "Wizard of Oz" that hit Dorothy's house lifting me up and setting me down in a strange new place with a new spectrum of understanding revealed to my senses. Not really knowing what to expect I entered into the Craft heart draped by a clothe of disbelief. The Idea that a bunch of old men, and their 300 year old or older (wink, wink) ideas, could change my outlook on anything in any significant way seemed to me as far from reality as that of me stepping foot on Mars. The idea that these men, these humans, flaws and all, could possibly be able to deliver on even a part of the things they insisted were nothing more than the regular state of affairs inside the lodge seemed as likely as my cat singing Janis Joplin on Oprah. Not talking politics or religion, there must be a lot of silence when they get together, after all what else is there to talk about?

I was told that help could be found in the worst possible situations, fraternity the norm, and support and friendship gained by only remembering a few words and phrases and a strange grasping of hands. Not just for me but for my wife and kids as well. It seemed too good to be true, to far fetched to be a reality. If even a part of these things could be delivered, then punch my ticket, strap me in, and let's start this ride. I am willing to give it a try after all what was the worst that could happen?

My journey began, as all journeys in the Craft begin, in due form and I was willing to go along with all of it in good fun. I thought, 'I'll attend a couple of meals and see what these kooks really have to offer'. Then a sliver of Light appeared from inside the darkness that I did not realize existed. Not a blinding Light but a taper lit in the great cathedral of life whose light only hinted at the vastness of that area previously enclosed.

They were serious about this stuff, they really meant it!!!

If six months ago you would have told me that I would be riding home from my day job holding hands with a man and whispering to him in the cab of a pickup truck I not only would have called you crazy but I would have probably tried to avoid you when ever if I saw you again. If you

would have told me six months ago that I would now understand why that guy, several years ago, on that dark road in New Jersey was disco dancing behind his stranded car I would have laughed and moved away slowly looking down as not to make eye contact. If you would have told me six months ago that I would have a completely new take on the way I could live my life, I would have asked you what you were smoking, shut the door, and hid until you stopped knocking and walked away. All of these things have come to pass and too many others to list here.

Now that taper, that glittering gem of hope in the darkness, has turned into the glorious breaking of the dawn. Nothing that I experience is illuminated to me but by way of the reflection of its light. A great heralding beacon that offers warmth and no less than that of salvation to those that gather to it, and attempt to use it's light to change their own hearts and minds; and in doing so bring hope that all mankind my some day join in it's security and warmth to fruition. The depth of feeling that wells up over me when I am in attendance with the brotherhood is of a scope and breath that I have not felt in years, if in my life ever.

Thanks to my sponsors, two brothers willing to take a chance on a poor blind candidate. I hope that I will not let them or the rest of the fraternity, cast disparaging eyes upon my actions in the future. My coaches, Bother Spach, Brother Aulbach and Brother Beagles, with out whose guidance the pitfalls of pride and predisposed prejudices would have surly stopped my ascending to the heights that I have now found myself. To the fraternity that looked at a man in need of Light and was willing to take the chance of lighting a taper for him. Thanks also to all of the Masons that I have asked question, pestered, tried the patients of, gotten support from, or offered me brotherhood from the kitchen to the room adjoining the lodge and beyond. From the time when I began this path to the condition that I now stand here before you.

The answers that have been given to me, by many different brothers on many different subjects and topics have all lead to a deeper understanding of my life upon this level of time, my role in the lives of my children and my family, and my responsibility to my country and the human race. All of this happening in the blink of an eye, compared to the rest of my life, that I only now, can say was spent under the cover of darkness and the delusion. What a wonderful thing to have happen, what a great event to take place in the existence of a man. A debt is owed that I can only attempt through my labor and my actions to repay, but not only to those who have helped to bring me to Light, but also to those that I might help come to light in the future.

All of this because I asked about the size of a chicken pot pie her husband was selling

and was amazed that my wife's co-worker was someone that laid bricks for a living, and was willing to sell pies to raise money for something. I had never thought of brick layers as being the raise money type, but I did not know any brick layers. Strange how the Great Architect can start a person on a life changing quest and just play it off as an unimportant every day occurrence. A happenstance, a right place right time event. I think that He was just showing off.

I've got my cat practicing 'Me and Bobby McGee' and am waiting for Oprah to call, the anticipation is killing me.



Hickory York Rite Bodies

The Hickory York Rite bodies held a very successful festival at the end of February. There were 16 candidates representing Hickory, Lenoir, and Wilkesboro York Rite. The degree work was outstanding and we really appreciate the participation from everyone, especially those Sir Knights that labored behind the scenes without any direct acknowledgement for all your work.

If you are a member of the Hickory York Rite and have not attended a meeting lately, you are missing out on a tremendous amount of Light in Masonry. We have gone through our rituals, regalia, furniture, and props for the bodies and we are incorporating them at our stated meetings and festivals.

We are now opening and closing the York Rite bodies in full form with each officer seat occupied. Due to this and the importance we are showing on Masonic education within the York Rite our attendance is up for meetings. So far this year we are averaging about 15—20 members attending per meeting. Please come join us. The more support we have and the more members in attendance the more visible we will be to other Masons that are not currently involved that will want to be involved. The best way to attract more participating members is for us to be participating members.

Additionally, we have interest from several Blue Lodge brothers wanting to join the York Rite and Lenoir does too. Therefore we are investigating having another festival in Aug / Sept. More information will be forthcoming on this matter so stay tuned!

OFFICERS 2010

Worshipful Master	Dan Rolon	493-3543
Senior Warden	Lee Spach	446-1924
Junior Warden	David Brandon	638-1691
Treasurer	Terry Moore	312-1006
Secretary	Kevin Johnson	244-9055
Senior Deacon	James Hope	428-3752
Junior Deacon	Paul Aulbach	514-6994
Sr. Steward	Doug Moore	312-1012
Jr. Steward	Allen Lineberger	704-798-3691
Steward	Daniel Guthrie	310-3560
Steward	Adam Beagles	302-0616
Chaplain	Chris Jarrell	308-7762
Tyler	Robert Bickel	294-6619

Caring Report: The Hildebran Family, David Reep, Henry Holland, Doug Moore, John Cansler, Al Swofford, Everette Beckom, Click Truitt, Don Hudson, Cliff Pruitts wife, Dean Brittain, Buz Hunley, Thad Johnson, Betty Burch, Glen Henline, Nolan Yount and Wife, David Duncan, Greg Conley, Herbert Chilton Jr., Richard Rozzelle's son, A.W. Morris, Rufus Smith, Todd Cline, Joe Teague, Joe Vaught, and Lee Spach all need our prayers and attention.

Our sincere and deepest sympathies go out to the Hildebran Family for the loss of our dearly depart brother; Brother Virgil Earnest Hildebran, Jr. who was born January 27, 1927 and died on March 21, 2010. Brother Hildebran was Initiated on April 13, 1970; Passed on August 24, 1970; and Raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on August 31, 1970.

The Philalthes Society

Brethren here is information about the research society that Bro. Stabler was discussing in lodge during our last Masonic Education when we talked about George Washington's aprons. This group can be found at www.freemasonry.org

The Philalthes Society, North America's oldest and largest international masonic research and education society. Our website is currently undergoing many changes and over the coming months we hope to give you greater information and new masonic educational opportunities. Come back often.

The Society has been in existence for 80 years and since 1946 we

have published The Philalthes magazine. Our new editor, Shawn Eyer, is putting out the new quarterly magazine and we hope to have it in the hands of our over 2200 members by November 1st. You will find this to be an expanded (44-page) issue in full color with more high quality masonic education papers. We welcome the submission of quality papers at any time and encourage you to contact our editor with your submissions. Our 82nd Annual Philalthes Society Feast and Forum will be coming on Friday-Saturday, March 5-6, 2010 to Minneapolis Minnesota. An outstanding array of masonic speakers will be joining us.

The Philalthes Society is in the midst of significant new initiatives to enlarge our mission of sharing good Masonic research and educa-

LIVING PAST MASTERS

J.N. Cagle	1973	D.J. Wallace	1999
J.L. Johnson	1974	H.W. Wallker	2000
E.W. Beckom	1978	J.W. Davidson	2001
J.F. Taylor	1979	M.D. Hale	2002
J.H. Elmore	1981	W.J. Hunley	2003
T.L. Hartman	1984	J.P. Kuykendall	2004
E.C. Cline	1986	D.L. Brandon	2006
J.H. Elmore	1987	W.G. Byerly	2007
J.E. Vaught	1988	J.D. Abernethy	2008
E.W. Masche	1991	R.L. Rozzelle	2009
J.D. Crawley	1993		
J.P. Hilton	1994		
D.L. Reep	1995		
P.C. Wray	1996		
L.D. Huffman	1997		
W.G. Byerly	1998		



Terry L. Tilton, FPS, President 2009-2011

Plez Teague Memorial Pancake Breakfast for Masonic Charities

Saturday—May 1st 2010

7:00am—11:00am

\$5.00 donation per person and children 12 and under can eat for FREE. This event is open to the public so invite all of your family and friends.

Tickets are available to sell in books of 10.

Contact:

David Brandon

828-638-1691

We are seeking volunteers who are willing to help sponsor the breakfast by donating money for the food. Please contact Brother David Brandon if you are able to contribute in this manner and help us raise a lot of money for our great charities.

Our goal again this year is \$5,000. We can only achieve it with everyone's assistance.

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** Return Service Requested **

April 2010

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IN GOD WE TRUST

Hickory Masonic Center March Events Calendar

Stated Communication	Monday	April 5th	Dinner 6:30 pm Meeting 7:30pm
Emergent Communication	Monday	April 12th	1st degree; Dinner at 6:30pm; Degree at 7:30pm
Stated Communication	Monday	April 19th	Dinner 6:30 pm Meeting 7:30pm
Grand Master Visit to 34th District	Wednesday	April 28th	MAIDEN LODGE Dinner at 6:00pm

Mark your Calendars NOW!

Pancake Breakfast for Charity!	Saturday	May 1st	7:00am—11:00am
St. Johns Day Celebration	Saturday	June 26th	Oxford Orphanage for Children
Hickory Lodge #343 Family Day	Saturday	August 14th	11:00am-2:00pm
Chicken Pie Sale for Charity!	Saturday	November 6th	1:00pm—5:00pm
Hickory Lodge Awards Night	Thursday	November 18th	6:30pm