

# Letters to the Editor

## A Special Thank-You

I come from a "Masonic family". Both my father and grandfather were Master Masons as is my son, Lewis Kester, III. Masonry meant a great deal to my grandfather when he was raised in 1920. Its ideals and values so impressed his son-in-law, my father, that he too became a Mason. The honor and decency shown to me by these men led me to Masonry as well. I have tried to instill these same qualities in my son and so he also has become a Master Mason. All of us were raised within the Grand Lodge of Delaware.

My son Lewis married a girl whose father, Carl Kurten, was also a Mason. Carl was a Past Master of Ionic No. 31 in Newport, Delaware some years ago, but moved 90 miles south to their new home near the beach. Sadly, retirement for them was short-lived as Carl was diagnosed with lung cancer and give about six months to live. When the dust settled, I spoke with Carl and Sue about funeral arrangements and Carl stated that it was his wish to be interred in northern Delaware and with a Masonic memorial service. Following that conversation, and with a heavy heart, I contacted the secretary of Ionic Lodge, Chuck Simmermon, to give him the bad news and asked him to relay this to Carl's lodge brothers. Ionic Lodge immediately contacted Carl and Sue with offers of help and assistance. Brothers Carl hadn't heard from in a few years also contacted them. On what was to be Carl's last birthday on earth, Ionic Lodge gathered a group of brothers together to make the 90-mile trip to southern Delaware to be at Carl's party. This effort was truly a show of Masonic brotherhood and touched Carl very deeply. During this visit questions were answered for Sue and she was advised she could call on Ionic Lodge for anything they might need in the coming months.

It is at this point that my story takes yet another turn through the brotherhood of true Freemasonry, this time with the Grand Lodge of Delaware. You see, Carl's eldest son, Carl, Jr. is an Ionic Mason who was raised by his dad. During Carl's illness his other son, Matt, made application to join Ionic as well. It was at this time we realized that Carl would not live long enough to raise Matt. Once again Ionic Lodge stepped up with the suggestion that Matt participate in the "Grand Master's Class" to be held at NUR Shrine Center the weekend of April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>. We were advised that Matt could receive all three degrees in this

class, a concept with which neither Carl, Carl, Jr. nor myself was familiar. However, in light of Carl's rapidly declining health it was decided that Matt would be a part of this class.

On the weekend of the Grand Master's Class, Carl's condition was very poor and he was on constant oxygen. My son Lewis made the 90-mile drive to southern Delaware to fetch Carl and bring him north to see his son raised. He was to spend the weekend her at his daughter's home. He was extremely weak after the long car trip and was unable to attend the events on April 30<sup>th</sup>, which I attended to be with his son Matt that evening. I explained Carl's situation to Grand Master, Most Worshipful Wayne D. Mower, III. There were 40 other candidates, three degrees to confer and countless brothers in attendance the following day, however, MWGM Mower arranged a place for Carl in front of the stage with Matt directly in front of his dad. Part way through the third degree Carl was in pain from sitting on a hard chair and a soft chair, complete with pillows, was brought in for him. When it was time for Matt to be raised, MWGM Mower and his staff helped Carl to the stage and assisted him in raising his son. Once again Carl was deeply touched by his Masonic connection. In the end, all three degrees were presented with flawless lectures, perfect ritual involving all the candidates with the entire ceremony, putting to rest any concerns we might have had about a class of this size. With the help of MWGM Mower, Carl made a barely audible presentation to his son saying this would likely be his final participation in a Masonic event. The Grand Master cried and there were few dry eyes in the room at that moment.

Three hours after Father's Day, Carl departed this place for that "Temple not made with hands". When Ionic was informed they went into action once again, helping Sue and the family with Masonic protocol and Masonic service arrangements. They arranged for a luncheon to follow the service in Newport, which was attended by the Grand Master and his staff as well as many family, friends and co-workers. It was a day Carl would have been so proud to be a part of as the Masonic membership of Delaware stood tall. This story is an excellent example of the tenants of true Masonry at work.

Lewis Kester, Jr.

## Thanks

Thank you for awarding me the Gunning Bedford, Jr. Scholarship. It will be put to good use in aiding my endeavors to give back to the fire service.

Alison Wilson

# We Salute You

A Tribute to Charles E. Farrell, PGM

As one looks across the breath of the membership of Freemasonry, one is struck by the variety of good men and women who have embraced this fraternal order. Indeed, they come from a multitude of backgrounds, careers, education, occupations and ages. Some have received high honors within the fraternity and others are content to take their rewards from the excitement of participation and the feeling which comes from jobs well done. Many have also achieved notable recognition from outside the fraternity.

One of those so recognized is Past Grand Master Charles E. Farrell. A Korean War Veteran, Most Worshipful Brother Farrell was, on May 15<sup>th</sup> of this year, inducted into the Delaware National Guard Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame. Induction ceremonies were held at the National Guard Training Center in Bethany Beach. The Hall of Fame recognizes those graduates of the O.C.S. who have distinguished themselves in their military or civilian careers. It is a most prestigious Hall of Fame whose membership all comes through the same door titled "devoted valiant service".

Brother Farrell enlisted in the United States Army in 1949 and served in Korea. Following his active service, where he twice received the Purple Heart for injuries sustained in combat, he joined the National Guard and attended O.C.S.

Since 1993 Brother Farrell has been appointed by the Governor to serve the State of Delaware on the Commission of Veterans' Affairs. His service on this Commission over the last 11 years has been legendary. During

Brother Farrell's term of office, the Commission has been instrumental in having Route #1 named "The Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway", the establishment of Korean War Veteran vanity license tags and the establishment of the Sussex County Veterans' Hospital. However, most recently, Worshipful Brother Farrell's labors have been successful in the establishment of a Veterans' Home in Delaware. The home, which has been recently approved by the state, will be situated on a 13 acre site in Milford and is scheduled to open at the end of 2006. Delaware is the last state in lower 48 to provide a Veterans' Home.

Brother Farrell, your induction into the Hall of Fame is unique and most deserving. Your Brethren salute and thank you for your service, dedication and labors on behalf of all those touched by your commitment.



### Lombardy Hall Christmas Open House

The Officers and Members of Lombardy Hall Foundation  
The officers and Members of Granite-Corinthian Lodge No. 34  
Friends of Lombardy Hall

Cordially invite you, your family and friends

To a Christmas Open House

Saturday December 4, 2004

And

Sunday, December 5, 2004

1:00 - 4:00 P.M.

