



Official publication of the Scottish Rite bodies of the Orient of Nebraska

November-December, 2020 • Volume X, Issue 6

Features:

Gene Gatti, 33° Presented with Quilt of Valor in Alliance

Hastings Presents ROTC Cadet Medals

Lincoln Hosts Education Series

Omaha Enjoys Summer Members Picnic at Mahoney State Park

RiteCare News of Nebraska

... and much more!

Finger lickin' good s'mores at the August Scottish Rite picnic. See page 5 for story...

Membership

A friend of mine asked about the definition of a gentleman. By way of example, he presented a photo of a man in a finely tailored suit standing in a study furnished with oak bookshelves, leather chairs, and a fine desk. His measurement was the outward qualifications, rather than the inner. I thought that image sure looks nice, but that is no guarantee of a gentleman. There is plenty of evidence of men in expensive suits with fancy titles who are nothing more than charlatans and frauds.

I don't think I could define the concept myself, but to paraphrase Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, I know it when I see it. A gentleman may be found on his back under a car, or wearing coveralls splattered in grease, paint, or horse manure. He may stand behind a shop counter as much as he may sit behind a desk at the law firm



Immigrant, Freemason...and a Gentleman: Wolf Novit (left) at his country store, c. 1920

or bank. He may be the first to arrive in the shop in the morning and last to leave, as quick to make copies or clean up a mess as he is to lead a meeting of staff or board members.

Regardless of his profession, the gentleman can be found giving generously to philanthropies, not for the recognition, but simply because it is "that which it is right to do." He may patiently mentor

a Brother learning his Lodge ritual or master some new skill. I could go elaborate at great length, but you get the point.

Most of these ideas, if boiled down to their key concepts, are found in the charge to incoming officers of every Nebraska Lodge:

- to be a good man and true, and obey the moral law,
- to work diligently, live creditably, and act honorably by all men,
- to avoid private piques and quarrels, and guard against intemperance and excess,
- to be courteous to your brethren and faithful to your Lodge,
- and to cultivate social virtues.

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Orient Calendar

- Nov 20-21 Omaha Fall Reunion (O)
- Dec 5 Christmas Banquet (L)
- Jan 9 KSA Members Appreciation Dinner (O)
- Jan 18 Installation of 2021 Officers (O)
- Jan 23 Robert Burns Celebration (L)
- Jan 30 Scottish Society of Nebraska Burns Dinner (O)
- Feb 4-6 GLNE Annual Communication (Kearney, NE)
- Mar 6 Hastings Spring Reunion (H)
- Apr 22-24 Omaha Spring Reunion (O)
- May 19 Spring Outing at Papillion Gun Club (O)
- May 14-15 Lincoln Spring Reunion (L)
- May 19-21 RiteCare Conference (St. Louis, MO)
- Aug 6-7 Lincoln Summer Reunion (L)
- Sept 25 Hastings Fall Reunion (H)
- Oct 22 Nebraska KCCH Investiture (Lincoln, NE)
- Oct 29 Friends of RiteCare Dinner & Auction (O)
- Nov 11-13 Omaha Fall Reunion (O)

**Please check with your Valley
for current updates to events
and cancellations due to
COVID-19 virus**

Lodge of Perfection meetings:

Alliance, 4th Friday of each month

Nov 27, Dec TBD, Jan 22, Feb 26, Mar 2

Hastings, 1st Tuesday of each month

Nov 3, Dec 2, Jan 5, Feb 2, Mar 15

Lincoln, 3rd Wednesday of each month

Nov 18, Dec 16, Jan 20, Feb 17, Mar 17

Omaha, 3rd Monday of each month

Nov 16, Dec 21, Jan 18, Feb 15, Mar 26

For more information,
contact the General Secretary in your Valley

- Gene Gatti (Alliance) (308) 762-4324
- Phil Odom (Hastings) (402) 462-5813
- Bruce Wood (Lincoln) (402) 435-2144
- John Maxell (Omaha) (402) 342-1300



Gene Gatti, 33° received a handmade quilt from the Quilt of Valor Foundation. This program began in 2003 when the mother of a serviceman in Iraq dreamt of a young man sitting on his bed hunched over as his war demons dragged him down into despair. Then seeing him wrapped in a quilt, his whole demeanor changed from one of despair to one of hope and wellbeing. The quilt had made this dramatic change. Since then, over 250,000 quilts have been presented to servicemen and women and veterans in all fifty states.

The Quilt of Valor Foundation presented Gene with a quilt in recognition for his service in the United States Navy from June, 1961 to June, 1965. During his time, Gene served attended the Electronic Tech School in Treasure Island, California, where he learned to repair radar units. He served at Norfolk, Virginia on a LORAC support team, and traveled up and down the east coast from Iceland to Barbados setting up 100 foot antennas. He was sent to London, England and Asmara, Ethiopia at a Naval transmitter site. After a long career in law enforcement, Gene has served as General Secretary for the Alliance Valley since August, 2008. As Gene says, his Naval training wasn't so much what was needed, but just learning on the job as you go - kind of like being General Secretary!

Congratulations, Gene, and thank you for your service to our nation and your service to the Craft!

Spring 2021 Reunion

Like the other Valleys, we have been reluctantly compelled to cancel the Fall Reunion, out of an abundance of caution over COVID-19 uncertainties. Please reach out to Candidates for the Sprint Reunion - date still to be determined. We are planning meetings around the Panhandle this Fall, with Bridgeport scheduled for September, and we would love to have a meeting in your community. Simply reach out about hosting a meeting at your Lodge or local restaurant, and I'll work with you to set it up.

~ Gene Gatti, 33°
General Secretary
gene123@mail.com

HASTINGS VALLEY PRESENTS ROTC CADET OF THE YEAR AWARD

The University of Nebraska Reserve Officer Training Corp (R.O.T.C.) Hastings Valley Cadet of the year, Cory Holsapple, was presented a Certificate and Ribbon on September 17, 2020 by Brother Ron Nielsen 32° KCCH at the Kearney National Guard Armory. Mr. Holsapple is a 2017 graduate of North Platte High School.

Cadet Holsapple is a Senior at UNK, majoring in International Studies with a minor in Military Science. After 32 credit hours, he has maintained a 4.0 Grade Point Average with plans to graduate in the Spring of 2021. He has received the Kearney Bound and Chancellor's Scholarships.

While at UNK, Cory has lead workshops focused on the leadership characteristics of social responsibility, creating change and positive attitude. As a member of the student Environmental Club, he was active in street cleanups, planting trees and other clean environment activities. Cadet Holsapple also worked with resident hall Resident Managers in planning events, study groups, and fun nights.

His military activities include the completion of Basic Training and Advanced Infantry Training in 2018. While at A.I.T., he was awarded 1st Squad Leader and Distinguished Honor Graduate. Cadet Holsapple will continue his military career after graduation in the Nebraska



ROTC Captain Damien Cullen with Cory Holsapple and Ron Nielsen, 32° KCCH

National Guard. The Scottish Rite ROTC award is given annually to a student demonstrating community service, academic excellence, and patriotism.

One Mom's RiteCare Journey Takes Her Life on a New Path

Agriculture has always been a big part of my life. I grew up on a fourth-generation family farm in southwest Nebraska, my grandpa (who is 102 years old) still works full-time today alongside my dad, brother, and sister. When I completed my degree in Animal Science at UNL, I took a position in animal nutrition with a major corporation, got married, had a few kids, life was great!

When my daughter was about a week old, I noticed that she was not focusing on my face reactions like her twin brother was. Yes, I knew something was "different," but she continued to reach all of her milestones, so her pediatrician found no reason to think that she was "different."

At her 18-month check-up (after she had passed all her screens given to all children her age) I voiced my concern to her doctor. "Why can she count to 20, but yet she can't tell me which shoes she wants to wear? Why can she correctly tell me which shape a triangle and rectangle is, but will only play dolls by herself and not with her siblings?"



It was then that our pediatrician introduced me to the world of Speech-Language Pathology. Our family was fortunate enough to meet one of the kindest, most understanding person who changed my daughter's life. Our SLP was able to help my daughter communicate with the world in ways that I never thought were possible! For over a year we traveled three hours round trip twice a week so that my daughter could attend her speech therapy services. It was worth every penny! The progress my daughter was making was amazing!

Then again life happened. The hospital that my daughter was receiving her therapy services was going through budget

cuts and could only keep "severe patients" on their speech therapy services. I live in a very rural area, where Speech Language Pathologists are in high demand and low supply.

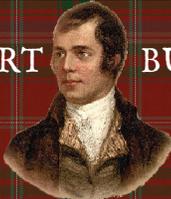
The news that we were no longer able to receive services in our area was devastating. I didn't give up; I searched the internet to find out how my daughter could still receive speech therapy in our area. After hours of searching the internet and dozens of phone calls, I finally discovered teletherapy in Nebraska. I made a phone call to the University of Nebraska-Kearney RiteCare coordinator to see if my daughter was eligible to receive their services. A few days later I got the call that my daughter was able to receive teletherapy services two times a week, FREE through the Scottish Rite RiteCare Clinic. I was overjoyed! What a wonderful relief this was going to be for our family!

We have been using the RiteCare teletherapy services now for three years, and what a difference this amazing service

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Don Albrecht, 32° KCCH introduces M.W. Tom Hauder, 32° KCCH for the first Orient of Nebraska Masonic Education presentation



ROBERT BURNS

Dinner & Celebration

Saturday, January 23, 2021

5:30 PM Social Time

6:30 Program and Dinner

\$40/person

Visit
ScottishRiteLincoln.org/events
 for details

Masonic Education Series Kicks off on Zoom

After the Valley of Lincoln Scottish Rite Lodge of Perfection meeting, brother Don Albrecht, 32° KCCH often conducts interesting discussions on Masonic education. Rather than a lecture, Don has hosted education - often surrounding the lessons and philosophy of a Scottish Rite degree - as a conversation among the members engaging members in active discussion and debate.

As the “University of Freemasonry,” Don believes education is one of the valuable benefits of Freemasonry, and wanted to extend educational opportunities statewide. He enlisted Dan Deffenbaugh, 32° KCCH, Associate Dean of Instruction at Central Community College, and Venerable Master for the Hastings Valley Lodge of Perfection. Dan often presents Masonic history in the Hastings Valley as part of the Master Craftsman program, bringing his background as a professor of religion and philosophy

into conversations about Scottish Rite Degrees. And the monthly Masonic education series was born, with a new presentation on the last Monday of each month, open to all Masons, via Zoom.

The first educational program was hosted on Monday, August 31, with M.W. Tom Hauder, Past Grand Master of Masons in Nebraska in 2013, offering the first of two lectures on the history of the Catholic Church and Freemasonry. The second part of the lecture was in September. Future lectures will include Masons during the Revolutionary War, a history of Nebraska as told through historic maps, and other interesting topics. Members who are interested in presenting a lecture can reach out to Don at dalbrecht@albrechtgfx.com.

You can watch M.W. Tom Hauder’s presentation online at <https://vimeo.com/454372899>.



Amy Nordness, Ph.D. provides an update on clinical sessions held at each of the Nebraska RiteCare Clinics

icant increases in telemedicine sessions, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Clinicians reported that the online sessions resulted in less missed sessions, while still providing quality therapy for the children. In some ways, telemedicine offers less distractions for the children and better engages them in the therapy.

Clinicians also discussed their goals for the coming year, including increasing services in under-served rural counties; Dr. Nordness reported that five new counties had been added to the list of communities receiving service - another benefit of telemedicine. Other goals include expanding clinical services, such as Preschool groups, partnerships with the YMCA’s Healthy Kids Day, hosting an early childhood fair, and marketing RiteCare therapy to family practice clinics.

The RiteCare Retreat is open to all Scottish Rite Masons, and the next statewide retreat will be hosted in September, 2021.

Annual RiteCare Retreat Discusses Future of Speech-Language Clinics

The annual RiteCare retreat is an opportunity to meet the Clinicians and learn about what the Clinic has done during the past year and their plans for the coming year.

The RiteCare Retreat is usually hosted at the Lincoln Valley Scottish Rite, but this year it was hosted via Zoom on

September 25th. RiteCare Director Amy Nordness, Ph.D. began the meeting introducing the Clinicians, including Suzanne Feinstein, M.S., CCC-SLP, the newest clinician to join RiteCare at the Munroe-Meyer Institute in Omaha.

Clinicians spoke about their year’s accomplishments, which included signif-

Scottish Rite Family Picnic



This year, the Scottish Rite tried something new for the annual members' picnic, hosting it at Mahoney State Park at the Burr Oak Picnic Pavilion. For only the price of the parking permit, guests could come for a 11 am – 1 pm lunch or a 4 – 6 pm dinner, and were free to enjoy the park the rest of the day with the hiking trails, horse trails and pony rides for the children, miniature golf, a ropes course and a zip line.

Between the lunch and dinner servings, over 70 members, wives, and children attended enjoying pulled pork, Cole slaw, and baked beans, prepared by the Culinary Masters. Guests enjoyed making s'mores afterward on the grill!

Gary Unger, 32° KCCH said, "It was nice to see such a great turn out! We had some of our newest Scottish Rite Masons and some of the old guard. From the looks of it, the kids enjoyed the s'mores and the adults enjoyed the pulled pork."

Mark your calendars for next year's Scottish Rite picnic, again hosted at Mahoney State Park!

Photos: Top: Dylan Peters and son enjoy pulled pork served by Gary Unger; Right (top): Greg and Sally Carlson show us the right way to toast marshmallows; middle: Dylan Peters and Zach Flott and families; bottom: Dylan's son and Zack's daughter get a bit sticky with s'mores.



Scottish Rite Masons Presented with 50-Year Pins at September Lodge Meeting

About 70 Scottish Rite Masons and their ladies enjoyed an excellent dinner of roasted chicken, candied carrots, rice pilaf, and cowboy caviar salad, prepared by the Culinary Masters for the September Lodge dinner.

Dr. Mark Pilley, 32°, Wise Master for the Chapter of Rose Croix, and his 2020 Officers led the members in the traditional toasts of the Feast of Tishri. Dr. Pilley reminded members that by observing the Feast of Tishri, Scottish Rite Masons share the fraternal spirit and reaffirm our dedication to human concord and the brotherhood of all men.

Andrew Muska, 32° KCCH recognized James Larsen, 32° and Richard McClure, 32° as our new 50-year members, and their wives Pauline and Jan placed the 50-year pin on their lapels. Both gentlemen thanked the Scottish Rite and were grateful for many years of being Scottish Rite Masons.

2020 Fifty Year Scottish Rite Masons

- Jerry A. Ebers, 32°
- Philip W. Feese, 32°
- Joel A. Finkel, 32°
- Anton T. Hallac, 32°
- Clemens K. Holmes, 32°
- Harold H. Johnson, 32°
- Thomas C. Johnson, 32°
- James R. Larsen, 32°
- Nicky L. Mayfield, 32°
- Richard M. McClure, 32°
- James L. McDowell, 32°
- David C. Rasmussen, 32°
- Arthur S. Raznick, 32°
- Douglas C. Rhodes, 32°
- Denny L. Witt, 32°



Sons of the American Revolution members Ben Harvey, 33°, John Parsons, 33°, MW Ron Stites, 33°, and Hal Daub, 33°

Freemasonry and the Sons of and the American Revolution

Most Masons have heard the stories of some of their Masonic predecessors and their roles in the American Revolution. Paul Revere, George Washington, Francis Warren, the Marquis de Lafayette, Ben Franklin and a myriad of others are idolized by many American Masons for their roles in the struggle for American independence. While not all the signers of the Declaration of Independence nor all of Washington's generals were Masons, a great number of Masons involved in the fight for independence, and historical records, such as service records, can confirm that.

The Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) is an organization composed of men whose forefathers, as proven in historical records, actually fought in the war or provided some other service such as providing supplies in the war for American independence. It was founded in 1879 and now has over 500 chapters across the US (and some overseas), with its headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky. There are SAR Chapters in Omaha and Lincoln. In order to join a Chapter, an individual must be able to prove direct descent from a Revolutionary War veteran or patriot through documentation, including birth, marriage, and death certificates, service records, and other pertinent information.

I have had the honor of serving as the President of the Omaha Chapter and the Nebraska State Society and as such I have met and become friends with many members, a good number of whom are also Masons. In the Omaha Chapter, for example, nearly 20% of its members are Masons, and the Lincoln Chapter has a number as well. I was also fortunate to obtain an SAR Masonic apron which was worn during the laying of the cornerstone by the Grand Lodge of Kentucky for the new SAR headquarters building in Louisville, Kentucky several years ago.

If any of you wish to become a member, please give me a call or e-mail.

by John T. Parsons, 33°
Past Grand Master of Masons in Nebraska (2010)
parsoni1@q.com



Top left: A resident uses an iPad to talk to relatives. Top right: Andrew Muska, 32° KCCH presents an iPad

Almoner's Fund Presents iPads to Assisted Living Homes to Help Residents Stay in Touch with Family

The officers for the Omaha Lodge of Perfection approached the Scottish Rite Almoner about supporting iPads for assisted living homes to help residents stay in touch with family and loved ones.

Mike Stuhr, 32° KCCH, Director of Transportation with Immanuel PACE, and Andrew Muska, 32° KCCH, Venerable Master, identified 8 area Assisted Living Facilities with the greatest need for iPads. Andrew said, "Having personally delivered four iPads, I was left with a deeper understanding for the situation that many of our Seniors are finding themselves in during the Pandemic." A thank you note from one of the homes thanked Scottish Rite Masons for reminding them that as we navigate these uncertain times, their residents are not alone.

Your gifts to the Almoner's Fund continue to make a difference to people across the state!

FALL OUTING



The Valley of Omaha Fall Outing is always a well-attended event. This year, the Lodge officers figured it would be sparsely attended, due to COVID-19, but they were pleasantly surprised to find 180 Brethren and prospective members at the Papillion Gun Club on September 16th for steaks, trap shooting, cocktails, and fellowship. Several prospective Masons even turned in petitions after the evening! Plan on the next outing this Spring on Wednesday, May 19, 2021!

One Mom's RiteCare Journey, *continued from p. 3*

has been for our family. We live in such a remote area, it would just not be possible to receive this high-quality therapy without traveling over an hour and a half two times a week.



endure to get her where she is today.

Why was it so hard for us to get her the help that she needed? It was then that I knew what I needed to do: I needed to be the change. I want

It is funny how life doesn't care about "your" plans. UNK RiteCare has been such a huge part of my decision to go back to school to become an SLP. If the teletherapy services that RiteCare offers in a rural area didn't exist, I would not have known about the need and opportunities for SLP's in a very rural area.

What I am very excited about in my

graduate program is the fact that I am now providing teletherapy services through UNK RiteCare to other families in need across Nebraska. I try to make all of my lessons very engaging for my clients by using an interactive background

What I was most excited about when my twins entered Kindergarten, the school Speech Pathologist walked into the classroom (having no previous knowledge of who my daughter is), she observed the classroom for thirty minutes. She was trying to see if she could identify my daughter without asking the teacher or looking at the nameplates. I had previously mentioned to her that my daughter has some "Autism tendencies and may not fully understand how to play with her peers." The new SLP could not identify my daughter out of twenty kids on the first day of school, in a new classroom with new people.

to be the person to help make a difference in our community, and I want to help other families succeed just like my daughter's SLP's did for us.



I contacted the University of Nebraska-Kearney and was so excited to get signed up for Communication Disorders leveling courses. I had completed about 35 credit hours of leveling courses before being admitted into the Speech-Language Pathology Graduate program at UNK. Never would I have thought that I would be "back at school" after I had kids, AND in a completely different career path than I had originally planned.

and using several therapy games to help my clients achieve their communication goals.

If this isn't proof that speech therapy works, I don't know what is. I think of my daughter's first day of Kindergarten, and I am happy for my daughter, yet sad to reflect on the long road that we had to

For the first time in my life, I feel as though I am on a path to making a difference in our rural area. I am very hopeful that I will be able to provide speech services with kindness and understanding just as the first speech therapist did who truly "saw" my daughter.

Membership, *continued*

Regardless of a man's calling, Freemasonry's core values plant the seed of a gentleman's behavior: knowledge of self, accountability, humility, hard work, patience, treating all men with dignity, and charity.

The true brilliance of Freemasonry is that the Mason carries these attributes outside the Lodge as well as he does inside. Personally, Freemasonry has given me patience (or at least, somewhat more than I had) and a daily reminder to strive toward respect to all people no matter what. Like all people, I falter from time to time, but my Masonic convictions remind me to realize my failings and strive toward the ideals of the Perfect Ashlar.



But think about the irony of the situation. Freemasonry quite literally raises men up toward the qualities of being gentlemen; yet, we stress the egalitarianism of the fraternity. No man is better than another man. The plumber's apprentice is the equal of the business executive. And yet, as gentlemen, we *are* in fact raised above the common, the ordinary, and the profane. We are simultaneously equal yet better.

That illustrates the odd nature of our membership. We cast a wide net for candidates: the student, the businessman, the working man, the retired man - *any* man who meets the basic qualifications may be a Mason. Yet, we want men who are capable of being gentlemen rather than just anyone who wanders into Lodge with \$100 and a few free evenings.

Someone wrote that being a male is a matter of birth. Being a man is a matter of age. But being a gentleman is a matter of choice. If we are to both grow our Craft and demonstrate that we are in fact better than the average person, Masons must work to cultivate the traits of gentlemanly behavior.

Giving the Gift of VOICE

On March 27, the President signed into law the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act to help combat the impacts of COVID-19. The bill provides increased tax incentives for charitable giving for both individuals and corporations, signifying an intent to stimulate philanthropy throughout America.

This creates several positive and significant benefits for your charitable donations, particularly as we near the holidays and year-end giving.

Are you itemizing deductions?

The adjusted gross income (AGI) limit for cash contributions was increased for individual donors. For cash contributions made in 2020, you can now elect to deduct up to 100 percent of your AGI (increased from 60 percent).

Not itemizing?

The CARES Act allows for an additional, "above-the-line" deduction for charitable gifts made in cash of up to \$300. If you are not itemizing on your 2020 taxes, you can claim this new deduction.

What about IRA Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD)?

The CARES Act did not change the



rules around the QCD, which allows individuals over 70½ years old to donate up to \$100,000 in IRA assets directly to charity annually, without taking the distribution into taxable income.

However, remember that under the CARES Act an individual can elect to deduct 100 percent of their AGI for cash charitable contributions. This effectively affords individuals over 59½ years old the benefits similar to a QCD; they can take a cash distribution from their IRA, contribute the cash to charity, and may completely offset tax attributable to the distribution by taking a charitable deduction in an amount up to 100 percent of their AGI for the tax year.

If you're planning a large donation in 2020, this may be a smart strategy as long as you are between the ages of 59½ and 70½ and are not dependent on existing retirement funds. As always, please consult a financial advisor or tax advisor to see how a donation affects your personal situation.

Micah I. Evans, 33°
Orient Development Director
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micah@SRNE.org

SGIG Circle Donors (\$300+) to the Scottish Rite Foundation of Nebraska: July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

Name	Valley
John Adam.....	Alliance
Kenneth Beebe.....	Lincoln
T.J. Brumfield.....	Omaha
Micheal Buchardt.....	Lincoln
Gary Bunnell.....	Omaha
William Cook.....	Lincoln
William Craig.....	Omaha
John Ferguson.....	Alliance
Michael Gray.....	Lincoln
Schadd Gray.....	Omaha
Charles Hastings.....	Hastings
James Heinke.....	Lincoln
William Kimme.....	Omaha
Reginald Kuhn.....	Lincoln
Terry Nelson.....	Omaha
Jeffrey Passer.....	Omaha
Robert Pelletier.....	Omaha
Ernest Reese.....	Omaha
Michael Roe.....	Lincoln
Robert Schapp.....	Omaha
Charles Sederstrom, Jr.....	SGIG in Nebraska
Charles Sohm.....	Omaha
Michael Stuhr.....	Omaha
Gary Unger.....	Omaha
Dale Whitefoot.....	Hastings

Thanks to the generosity of Scottish Rite Masons, Nebraska RiteCare children receive all the speech therapy they need, without regard to a family's ability to pay. SGIG Circle donors have pledged \$300 or more toward speech therapy for the year. **Please consider a donation or pledge and join these Brethren in making a significant impact on our ability to provide exceptional Speech Therapy for Nebraska children.**

SCOTTISH RITE[®] JOURNAL

OF FREEMASONRY ♦ SOUTHERN JURISDICTION ♦ USA

“Your dues change the light bulbs.
Your donations change the world.”

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