

In the



Daylight

Clarence F. Smith Daylight Lodge No. 866, F.&A.M.
14750 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91405
Ed: davidikarp@karpmediation.com

September 2025

The U.S. Constitution and Masonry

Foreword...

In past years, our Grand Master has proclaimed September to be Constitutional Observance Month. For instance, in 2021, MW Arthur H. Weiss declared the following in pertinent part:

“The Constitution of the United States is the foundation of our modern democratic government; ... many of the Founding Fathers of our country were Freemasons; ... through their efforts [they] developed a society that promoted democracy and was committed to upholding the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and ... as Masons, we strive to set an example for others in our society and communities through demonstrating compassion, kindness, temperance, and respect alongside the tenets of brotherly love, relief, and truth.... [Finally,] by publicly celebrating the links between our fraternity and the foundational values inscribed in the constitution, Masons highlight not only their historical significance but also their continued relevance today and into the future.”

I was surprised to learn recently i.e. in an online webinar by the Beverly Hills Bar Assn. entitled *Confronting the Assault on the Independence of the Legal Profession & Judiciary* just how few of our countrymen have a working knowledge or even much familiarity at all, with the Constitution, and that educating the public is key to protecting our rights and the rule of law.

[continues on page 2, see “Foreword”]

September Trestle Board

(We meet in person each month on the first and third Saturday of the month at 10:00 AM at the Van Nuys Masonic Center, except as otherwise noted. Always subject to change.)

Sept. 6, 2025 10AM, Masonic Education

Sept 6, 2025 11AM, Stated Meeting.

Lunch donation \$15/person. Hawaiian shirts permitted.

Sept. 13, 2025 Fundraising event (tentative)

Sept. 20, 2025 First Degree Conferral upon Messrs. Wynn A. and Rolly L.

Additional information, including any changes to the calendar, may become available subsequently. So, look to Messenger for the Master’s postings or contact him directly. Ed.



[“Foreword, continued from page 1]

By way of example, the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania published a summary of its 2023 Annenberg Constitution Day Civics Survey, which found that only “66% of U.S. adults could name all three branches of government executive, legislative, and judicial while 10% could name two of the branches and 7% could name only one. About 1 in 6 people (17%) could not name any branches.”

<https://www.asc.upenn.edu/news-events/news/m-any-don't-know-key-facts-about-us-constitution-annenberg-civics-study-finds> .

Moreover, “when respondents are asked to name the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, the only right with widespread recognition is freedom of speech: Three-quarters (77%) name freedom of speech; Less than half (40%) name freedom of religion; A third (33%) name the right to assembly; Just over a quarter (28%) name freedom of the press. And less than 1 in 10 (9%) know the right to petition the government. [¶] In all, only 5% of the U.S. adults surveyed correctly name all five First Amendment rights while 30% could name three or four of the rights. Nearly half of those surveyed (46%) could name one or two First Amendment rights, and 20% could not correctly name any.” *Id.*

In law school I had a year-long course in Constitutional Law, so perhaps I learned more than most of the general public at that time. And I retain a keen interest in the subject. This newsletter will not be a mini-course in Con Law, except in summary form. However, I think that MW Weiss was correct to suggest that Masons should highlight, for the public, the foundational values inscribed in the constitution, not only for their historical significance but also for their continued relevance today and into the future.

Enjoy the read.

Fraternally,

Bro. David I. Karp

Editor

CFS Daylight's Officers for 2025

Worshipful Master Bro. Gerald J. Alvarez
Senior Warden Bro. Joseph (“Joe”) R. Chavez
Junior Warden Bro. Roland (“Letroc”) Cortel
Treasurer Bro. Ely Ayao
Secretary Bro. Akram Al-Awar
Asst. Secretary
Bro. Thomas (“Tom”) K. Sheehan
Chaplain
WB Archimedes (“Kim”) S. Cabanig, PM
Senior Deacon Bro. Lloyd Donasco, Sr.
Junior Deacon Bro. Elvis L. Alvarez
Senior Steward Bro. Ibrahim Hannoun
Junior Steward Bro. Marvin De Guzman
Marshal Bro. Mkhitar (“Mike”) Mkrtchyan
Organist Bro. Earl Austria
Tiler WB Fernando (“Jhonny”) Lebrilla PM
Officers' Coach
WB Archimedes (“Kim”) S. Cabanig, PM
Candidates' Coach Bro. Aldrin Perez
Inspector WB Leland H. Celestre, PM

Contact information:

Master:
Worshipful Gerald J. Alvarez

Secretary:
Brother Akram Al-Awar





Thirteen Masons Signed

Editor's Note: The following is quoted from an article entitled, *Freemasonry and the Constitution of the United States of America*, published by The Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of Wisconsin available at

<https://wimasons.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Freemasonry-and-the-Constitution.pdf>.

"In the hot summer of 1787, fifty-five deputies met in Philadelphia to revise the [earlier] Articles of Confederation. They debated and ultimately produced the Constitution of the United States. Twenty of the delegates are generally regarded as having been Freemasons. Of the thirty-nine who signed the document on September 17, 1787, thirteen were Masons. Others may also have been members of the fraternity.

"George Washington and Benjamin Franklin were the best known and among the most highly regarded of the signers. Three served as the first Grand Master of Masons in their jurisdictions: Gunning Bedford, Jr. in Delaware, Jahn Blair in Virginia and David Brearly in New Jersey. Other Masons who signed the Constitution were Jacob Broom of Delaware, Daniel Carroll of Maryland, Jonathan Dayton of New Jersey, John Dickinson of Delaware, Nicholas Gilman of New Hampshire, Rufus King of Massachusetts, James McHenry of Maryland and William Paterson of New Jersey.

"While there was disagreement and ultimate compromise, the philosophical foundation upon which the Constitution was constructed is consistent with the philosophy of Freemasonry. Reflect upon the Preamble:

"We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish

justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessing of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish ...'

"The Constitution of the United States of America is a document of which Freemasons are justly proud."

Masonic Recognition

Past Masters of Clarence F. Smith Daylight Lodge No. 866, F. & A.M.

Steven A. Wolvek (2017-2018)
Rogelio ("Roger") L. Soriano (2019)
Celso V. Cardano, Jr. (2020-2021)
Edgar O. Yeghiazaryan (2022)
Fernando ("Jhonny") O. Lebrilla, Jr. (2023)
Spartak ("Spo") Khachatryan (2024)

Past Masters by Affiliation

Archimedes ("Kim") S. Cabanig, (2021)
Celso V. Cardano, Jr. (2012)
Omar Cervantes (2021)
Emmanuel D. Espiritu (2014)
Bruce L. Ewald (2004-2006)
Bruce L. Hawley (1984)*
Luc Paul, Jr. (2018)

Past Masters who are "Honorary Members"

Jovito ("Jovi") R. Rivera (2017)
Timoteo ("Tim") Zuniga (2020)

Hiram Award

Akram Al-Awar (2024)
Archimedes ("Kim") S. Cabanig, PM (2022)
Celso V. Cardano, Jr., PM (2022)
Keith S. Cotton (2017)
Bruce L. Ewald, PM (2011)
Bruce L. Hawley, PM (2000)*
David I. Karp (2020)
Fernando ("Jhonny") O. Lebrilla, Jr., PM (Imminent)
Barry Mann (2021)
John T. Seletos (2017)
Thomas K. Sheehan (2014)
Rogelio L. Soriano, PM (2018)
Steven A. Wolvek, PM (2019)

Sciots' Cornerstone Award

Ely D. Ayao (2025)

Daniel Carter Beard Masonic Scouter Award

Steven W. Engstrom (2022)
David I. Karp (2007)

* Deceased.



Adopted and Ratified

“On September 17, 1787, members of the Constitutional Convention signed the final draft of the Constitution. Two days earlier, when a final vote was called, Edmund Randolph called for another convention to carefully review the Constitution as it stood. This motion, supported by George Mason and Elbridge Gerry, was voted down and the Constitution was adopted.

[...]

“Although the Constitutional Convention met for the last time on September 17, 1787, public debate over the Constitution was just beginning. The Constitution specified that at least nine states ratify the new form of government, but everyone hoped for nearly unanimous approval. As the states called their own ratifying conventions, arguments for and against the document resurfaced. Writing under the pseudonym Publius, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and [Bro.] John Jay defended the proposed plan in a series of newspaper articles, later collected as the Federalist Papers.

“The Constitution was officially adopted by the United States when it was ratified by New Hampshire on June 21, 1788, the ninth state to do so. The first Congress under the new Constitution convened in New York City on March 4, 1789, although a quorum was not achieved until early April. On April 30, 1789, President [Bro.] George Washington delivered the first inaugural address, and within his initial term the first ten amendments known as the Bill of Rights were adopted, establishing the

fundamental rights of U.S. citizens and assuaging many fears associated with the relatively strong central government the Constitution provides.”

Source: Library of Congress at

<https://www.loc.gov/item/today-in-history/september-17/>



(Bro.) Justice Joseph Story and the Importance of the Judiciary

As you may know, Article I of the United States Constitution defines the Legislative Branch, i.e., the Congress, which consists of the Senate and House of Representatives, and sets forth their structure, powers, limitations and duties to make laws that are “necessary and proper.” Article II defines the Executive Branch and the president’s powers, duties and authority. Article III is about the Judicial Branch (more about this below). Article IV relates to the states, Article V to amendments to the Constitution, Article VI to national debts, and Article VII to ratification of the Constitution and its establishment among the states.

Being an attorney, I am particularly interested in the Judicial Branch (Article III) which did not exist under the Articles of Confederation (Kleinknecht, *infra* at p. 19.) and scholarly interpretations thereof. Also, being a Freemason, I am always interested in Masonic figures in the Judiciary.

[continues on next page, see “Story”]

[“Story, continued from page 4]

Justice Joseph Story is just such a Mason. He was a member of Philanthropic Lodge in Marblehead, MA, and served as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court from 1811 to 1845. See, <https://www.travelingtemplar.com/2017/06/justices-of-supreme-court-and.html> .

Justice Story also wrote his view of the need for the Judicial Branch (Article III), as follows:

“[E]very government must, in its essence, be unsafe and unfit for a free people, where such a [judicial] department does not exist, with powers co-extensive with those of the legislative department. Where there is no judicial department to interpret, pronounce, and execute the law, to decide controversies, and to enforce rights, the government must either perish by its own imbecility, or the other departments of government must usurp powers, for the purpose of commanding obedience, to the destruction of liberty. The will of those, who govern, will become, under such circumstances, absolute and despotic; and it is wholly immaterial, whether power is vested in a single tyrant, or in an assembly of tyrants. No remark is better founded in human experience, than that of Montesquieu, that ‘there is no liberty, if the judiciary power be not separated from the legislative and executive powers.’ And it is no less true, that personal security and private property rest entirely upon the wisdom, the stability, and the integrity of the courts of justice. If that government can be truly said to be despotic and intolerable, in which the law is vague and uncertain; it cannot but be rendered still more oppressive and more mischievous, when the actual administration of justice is dependent upon caprice, or favour, upon the will of rulers, or the influence of popularity. When power becomes right, it is of little consequence, whether decisions rest upon corruption, or weakness, upon the accidents of chance, or upon deliberate wrong. In every well organized government, therefore, with reference to the security both of public rights and private

rights, it is indispensable, that there should be a judicial department to ascertain, and decide rights, to punish crimes, to administer justice, and to protect the innocent from injury and usurpation.” Story, Joseph. *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States* 3:§1568 at https://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/a3_1s38.html . See also, Kleinknecht, C. Fred (33°, Past Sovereign Grand Commander). *Anchor of Liberty*. The Supreme Council, 33°, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction, United States of America, 1987 at p. 19. DIK.



USS Constitution

“Built in Boston and launched in 1797, USS CONSTITUTION is the oldest commissioned warship afloat in the world today. During the War of 1812 the ship gained fame and its name “Old Ironsides.” CONSTITUTION remains both a training and ceremonial ship for the Navy, as well as an educational experience for visitors.”

Its history: “Prior to independence, the thirteen American colonies enjoyed protection from pirates and foreign navies under the British Royal Navy. However, once the United States won independence, the young nation had to defend itself. In 1794, Congress authorized the construction of six warships to become the new United States Navy. One of these warships, USS Constitution, was built at Hart’s shipyard in the North End of Boston. Construction began in 1794 and Constitution launched on October 21, 1797. The ship sailed its first cruise the next year [continues on next page, see “Ironsides”]

["Ironsides," continued from page 6]
as the Quasi-War with France emerged.
Later it served in engagements with pirates off
the Barbary Coast in the Mediterranean. [¶] The
greatest glory for Constitution, however, came
during the War of 1812. Constitution's crew
defeated four British frigates during three
separate engagements. In battle, Constitution
earned the nickname "Old Ironsides" because it
appeared as if enemy cannonballs could not
penetrate the ship's strong oak hull."

Source: National Park Service. See,
<https://www.nps.gov/bost/learn/historyculture/usconst.htm>



A Brother (Justice William O. Douglas) Urges the Sanctity of First Amendment Rights

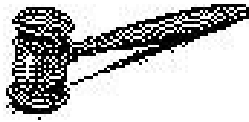
Against the backdrop of President Johnson's ordering federal troops to assist local authorities with civil unrest in the wake of Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination, a class action case arose. It sought declaratory and injunctive relief on the Respondents' claim that their rights were being invaded by the Department of the Army's alleged "surveillance of lawful and peaceful civilian political activity." The United States Supreme Court dismissed, holding that "Respondents' claim that their First Amendment rights are chilled due to the mere existence of this data-gathering system does not constitute a justiciable controversy on the basis of the record in this case, disclosing as it does no showing of

objective harm or threat of specific future harm." *Laird v. Tatum*, 408 U.S. 1 (1972).

In dissent, Mr. Justice William O. Douglas (a Brother Mason¹) wrote:

"This case involves a cancer in our body politic. It is a measure of the disease which afflicts us. Army surveillance, like Army regimentation, is at war with the principles of the First Amendment. Those who already walk submissively will say there is no cause for alarm. But submissiveness is not our heritage. The First Amendment was designed to allow rebellion to remain as our heritage. The Constitution was designed to keep government off the backs of the people. The Bill of Rights was added to keep the precincts of belief and expression, of the press, of political and social activities free from surveillance. The Bill of Rights was designed to keep agents of government and official eavesdroppers away from assemblies of people. The aim was to allow men to be free and independent and to assert their rights against government. There can be no influence more paralyzing of that objective than Army surveillance. When an intelligence officer looks over every nonconformist's shoulder in the library, or walks invisibly by his side in a picket line, or infiltrates his club, the America once extolled as the voice of liberty heard around the world no longer is cast in the image which Jefferson and Madison designed, but more in the Russian image..." *Laird v. Tatum, supra*, 408 U.S. 1, 29-30 (Douglas, J., Dissenting). DIK.

¹Bro. Douglas was a member of Mt. Adams Lodge No.227 in Yakima, WA.
<https://www.travelingtemplar.com/2017/09/justices-of-supreme-court-and.html>



The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus: It's in the Constitution

Editor's note: The following is excerpted from a web page of Cornell Law School at

https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/habeas_corpus

“*Habeas Corpus* is Latin for ‘that you have the body.’ A writ of habeas corpus is used to bring a prisoner or other detainee ... before the court to determine if the person's imprisonment or detention is lawful. A habeas petition proceeds as a civil action against the State agent who holds the defendant in custody....

“The habeas corpus first originated back in 1215, through the 39th clause of the Magna Carta signed by King John, which provided ‘No man shall be arrested or imprisoned...except by the lawful judgment of his peers and by the law of the land,’ [¶] English courts began actively considering petitions for habeas corpus in 1600. [¶] Deeply rooted in the Anglo-American jurisprudence, the law of habeas corpus was adopted in the U.S. as well....

“The sources of habeas corpus can be found in the Constitution, statutory law, and case law. The Suspension Clause of the Constitution (Article I, Section 9, Clause 2), states: ‘The Privileges of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.’ ... Only Congress has the power to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, either by its own affirmative actions or through an express delegation to the

Executive. The Executive does not have the independent authority to suspend the writ.

[...]

“As a fundamental instrument for safeguarding individual's freedom against arbitrary and lawless state action, the writ of habeas corpus serves as a procedural device, by which executive, judicial, or other governmental restraints on personal liberty are subjected to judicial scrutiny. The purpose of the writ of habeas corpus is not to determine the guilt or innocence of a prisoner, but only to test the legality of a prisoner's current detention. In other words, the writ of habeas corpus only functions to test jurisdictional defects that may invalidate the legal authority to detain the person, and the reviewing court only examines the power and authority of the governmental authority to detain the person, and does not review the correctness of the authorities' conclusion to detain the person.”



Info on the Upcoming Grand Lodge Annual Communication

Master Masons may join in the festivities at the Grand Lodge's Annual Communication, Oct 24, 2025 - Oct 26, 2025. It will take place at the California Masonic Memorial Temple, 1111 California St., San Francisco, CA 94108. Advance planning is certainly appropriate for this event. Many details are available online at <https://web.cvent.com/event/fbfad43e-9876-4b29-a44d-4b52bd50e30f/summary> . Those details include local hotels with special Masonic rates and a link to register. It should be an exciting time, enjoy! DIK.



[First Degree Conferral, July 26, 2025.
Congrats, Bro. Tony.]



[Stated Meeting, August 2, 2025]



[Hiram Attribution: © Shawn Bell]

2025 Hiram Award Recipient Announced

WB Fernando (“Jhonny”) O. Lebrilla, Jr., PM, will receive the Lodge’s 2025 Hiram Award according to the announcement from the East at the August Stated Meeting. It is well deserved! The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in California instituted the Hiram Award in 1977 to provide a means for a local Lodge officially to recognize a brother for his devoted service to his Lodge and to Masonic principles generally.

Here is some background information about our Brother:

Bro. Jhonny was made an Entered Apprentice Mason on October 10, 2014, passed to the degree of Fellowcraft on November 26, 2014, and raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on January 14, 2015, all in Granada Hills Lodge No. 378.

Bro. Jhonny affiliated as a charter member of Clarence F. Smith Daylight (U.D.) on April 23, 2017. The Lodge couldn’t have been luckier to have him join. He quickly rose through the ranks thereafter becoming our Worshipful Master on January 23, 2023, and served the Lodge from the East with distinction. Wor. Jhonny is the current Tiler of our Lodge and also devotes his time as the Treasurer of the Van Nuys Hall Association. His lovely wife, Jane, lets him travel to other Lodges in his copious spare time as well.

[Continues on next page, See “Hiram”]

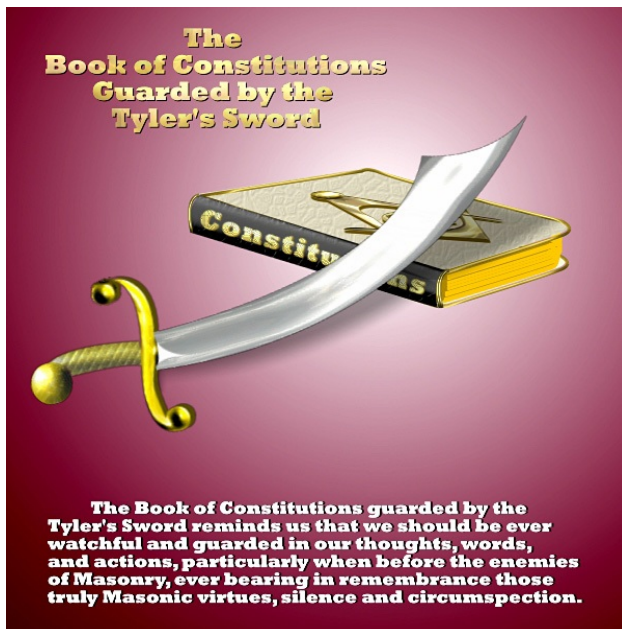
["Hiram," continued from page 8]

Sometimes we get to see their children, too, who show up at the Lodge from time to time.

Bro. Jhonny is gregarious, always wears a smile on his face, and is earnest in his devotion to the Craft. He is a valuable Lodge asset. As editor, I send heartfelt congratulations to him, for myself as his Brother and friend, and on behalf of our members.

Fraternally,

Bro. David I. Karp



From the East

Brethren,

I hope this message finds you well. First and foremost, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to our newly raised brothers, Bro. Jamille Paas and Bro. Harlem Ruiz. This milestone marks the beginning of your Masonic journey, and I encourage you to continue striving for excellence. As you embark on this path, remember to uphold the principles of our Craft. Be just, be faithful, and be true in all your endeavors. As you move forward remain steadfast in your commitment to our principles.

It's that time of year again. We're excited to invite you to our annual communication, scheduled for October 24-26, 2025. We warmly invite our newly raised brothers, and other Master Masons, to participate and join us to meet our Grand Lodge Officers. This event fosters a sense of brotherhood and camaraderie. It's a wonderful opportunity to build relationships and create unforgettable experiences and a chance to strengthen bonds and make lasting memories with fellow brothers.

As we move towards November, we'll be holding elections for our new officers for 2026 Masonic year.

Lastly, Get ready for a busy couple of months! We have events lined up every Saturday in September and October. And also get ready for a fun-filled September meeting! We're embracing Hawaiian attire, and a delicious BBQ lunch will be served.

Fraternally Yours,

Gerald Alvarez, Master

From the West

Hello Brethren,
As we begin the last half of 2025, I ask all the EA's, FC's and MM's to begin reflecting on and visualizing where you would like to be in the Lodge in the next upcoming years. Do you see yourself sitting in the East someday? If so, this is the time to start planning and gathering ideas on how you're going to execute this goal. If you're working on your proficiency and find yourself getting stuck or in need of help, please ask for assistance. We have plenty of Brothers who, I'm sure, would be willing to help out, you just need to ask. As always, your dedication and participation are greatly appreciated and never go unseen.

"Humility is the beginning of wisdom."

Sincerely and Fraternally yours,

Bro. Joseph Chavez

Senior Warden

WBro. Kim Cabanig officers coach, Bro. David Karp for his Masonic Education, and the brethren for their dedication and support to our lodge.

The Attentive Ear receives the sound from the Instructive Tongue, and the mysteries are safely lodged in the repository of Faithful Breast. Tools and implements of architecture most expressive are selected by the fraternity to imprint upon the memory wise and serious truths and thus through the succession of ages, transmit unimpaired the excellent tenets of our institution.

I pray that we all remain safe and healthy this summer, and that we continue to share our blessings to create a lasting legacy: changing lives through love, charity, and generosity to all who are in need. God Bless Us ALL.

Fraternally yours,

Bro. Roland Cortel

Junior Warden

From the South

Good day, Brethren,
Summer is still here and the hot weather can be felt as soon as we venture out into the sun. It also brings longer daylight hours giving us more time to enjoy the warmth of the season. I am deeply grateful to each and every one of us, who continue to support our lodge activities, helping to bring about more social gatherings, establishing closer friendships and strengthening the bonds that serve as a cornerstone for fostering robust camaraderie among our dedicated brothers and sisters of the Masonic Brotherhood.

I would like to congratulate Bro. Tony Bon on his First Degree Conferral and, in addition, extend my heartfelt congratulations to our 2025 Hiram Award recipient, WBro. Johnny Lebrilla. I believe you truly deserve it that award.

I would also like to express my gratitude to our sitting Worshipful Master Gerald Alvarez,

