In the Daylight

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

November 2026

Why I Became a Mason

Foreword...

I *really* thought October's edition of this newsletter would be the last from me. But sometimes duty calls. In this case it was the Worshipful Master who phoned, this time to implore me to complete the year so it can end on a positive note. I have answered the call. Despite prior reservations and refusals, here I am again editing another edition at his specific "request." Note, however that this is the penultimate edition; next month's will be the last, without doubt. In any event, I chalk this up to Masonic kindness and generosity and a way of earning Master Mason's wages. As Masons we must be charitable in all our doings. Also, as editor, I want to honor and thank Wor. Joseph for his strength, fortitude, endurance and good humor in the face of the Lodge's many obstacles this year outside of his control. He has endured many difficulties on our behalf. I appreciate his leadership and his friendship. You should too.

This month the theme is "Why I Became a Mason," and I have asked my Brothers to contribute their stories. We'll see who answers *this* call. The following pages will tell.

For myself, I will say that the reason I became a Mason was to honor a family tradition in Masonry going back several generations, including my father, his father (my grandfather), and two great grandfathers, all of whom are now members of the Celestial Lodge. Other (living) Masons in the family include my brother in law, his son (my nephew) now a Past Master of Reno 13, and another nephew who didn't stick with it. So, it's a family thing. In 35 years of Masonry I have not regretted a moment of it. Also, I have always been a joiner: as a boy in Scouting; as a college student in Zeta Beta Tau Fraternity; as a lawyer in Bar Associations, as a father in Scouting (again), and as a devoted member of our Gentle Craft. I just like being a part of something bigger than myself. Freemasonry is worldwide, with a long history, and I like that a lot.

For the stories of other members of our Lodge, see inside.

Fraternally,

Bro. David I. Karp, Editor (retired).

November Trestle Board

Nov. 7, 2026 – Masonic Ed. (TBD)
Nov. 7, 2026 – 11AM. Stated Meeting + Elections – Only members in good standing may vote. Attire: Bus. Casual (polo shirt); Officers: CFS Navy Blue Polo
Nov. 18, 2026 – 6:30 PM, Fellowship at Lulu's on Roscoe
Nov. 21, 2026 – Hiram Award for Brother Bill R. – 10AM Social; 11AM Ceremony. Officers: Tux; Others: Formal (suit)
Nov. 26, 2026 – Hope The Mission Drumstick Dash – Move your feet so others can eat. Additional details forthcoming when available.

Check with the Pillar Officers, or review entries on Messenger, for additional information or changes.



Why I Became a Mason, from Bro. Barry Mann

My grandfather was a Blue Lodge and Scottish Rite Mason. I never knew anything about it and was not curious about it. It was "His Thing".

It wasn't until he passed away and I got to see all these awards he had received, that it piqued my interest.

I was aware that a friend was a Mason and I asked him about the group. He told me that I needed to ask and he would get me involved. The year was 2006 and I was initiated into Hollywood Lodge.

The more I learned, the more interested I became in the Craft. I quickly received my degrees and became Chaplain of the Lodge.

Many years and a few Lodges later, I am happy to say that many of my dear friends from Masonry are still my dear friends.



Bro. Akram's Masonic Journey

Editor's note: this first appeared in the July 2024 edition of this newsletter.

In the Middle East, Masonry is not well known: the Brothers used to meet in secrecy; Lodges don't have the Masonic emblem on the meeting place; and there are many misconceptions about what Masonry is and who can join it. (Several prominent people were known to be Masons but one doesn't hear about ordinary people as Masons).

In the mid-sixties, I stumbled onto a conversation among much older men in my village talking about a very prominent member of our family, the Al Awar family, who was a parliament member at that time and who was affiliated with Masonry.

Later I found out that my uncle who returned from Brazil in the early sixties was a 32° Mason. (This I learned from his grandson who accidently found his membership card.)

These incidents raised my curiosity a notch but Masonry would not enter my life for many years.

In 1974, I came to the United States to continue my education. I prioritized my schooling since tuition for foreign students was very expensive. Years went by after graduation and I became a US citizen and started working. While raising a family, life threw a curve ball at me and I had to re-establish myself financially.

During that time, I started to meet a lot of my countrymen who were Masons.

In July 2013, I turned in my Application to Home Lodge No. 721, and in September of that year I was elected to receive my degrees: I became an Entered Apprentice on July 16, 2014; a Fellowcraft on March 11, 2015; and was raised a Master Mason on September 9, 2015.

In April 2017, I was approached by Brother Amin Ballout, to become a charter member for a new lodge, Clarence F. Smith Daylight (UD).

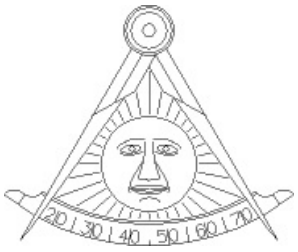
Since then I have been privileged to serve as the Secretary of this Lodge.

It has been a pleasure and honor working alongside other men who truly exemplify Masonry.

Thank you.

Fraternally,

Bro. Akram Al-Awar



A Past Master's Masonic History in Brief – WB Fernando ("Jhonny") O. Lebrilla, Jr.

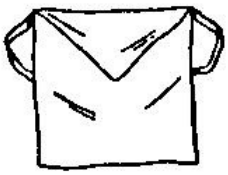
Editor's note: The following is from our February 2023 edition.

It began in the Phillippines where he was employed as a teenage caretaker of a Masonic Lodge there. That was followed, years later after emigrating to the United States, with an introduction to and initiation in Granada Hills Lodge No. 368, which inspired him one day to ascend to the East as Master of a Lodge.

Finally, upon reaching that goal on January 21, 2023, there he stood before the assembly at the Lodge Installation event, a just and upright Mason, accepting the duties and responsibilities of his station. Worshipful Jhonny received a standing ovation with resounding applause and the Brethren saluted him with a battery of Three-Times-Three.

We thank him for serving the Lodge with distinction.

Submitted on his behalf by
Bro. David I. Karp, Editor (ret.)



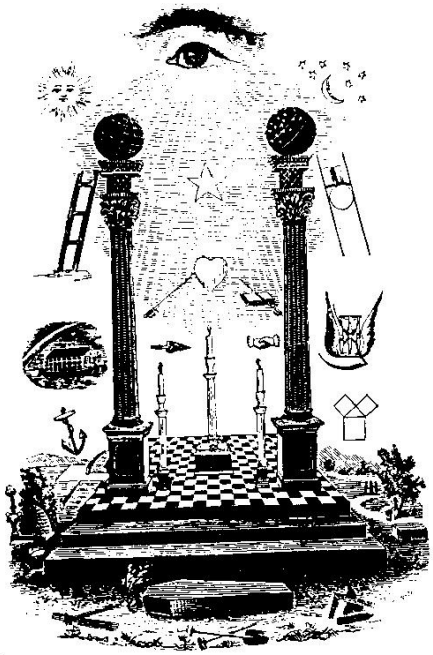
A Snippet from a Prior Interview with Bro. Ibrahim Hannoun

Editor's note: The following is from our November 2018 edition.

Bro. Ibrahim Hannoun came to the United States from Syria in 2011 because of the war there. Our Brother sought and obtained Asylum status and then citizenship here of which he is very proud. He is now married and has started a family.

When asked a few years ago why he wanted to be a Mason, he responded: "I think the answer is that every Mason I have met in my life was a good person and tried to help me."

Submitted on his behalf by
Bro. David I. Karp, Editor (ret.)





On Becoming a Mason, from Bro Rolly's Excellent Ode to His Father

Editor's note: Due to its relevance, the following is excerpted from last month's (Oct. 2026) piece by Bro. Rolly Lagsa.

My journey to becoming a Master Mason began long before I ever submitted a petition. I am the son of a Master Mason, now a member of the Celestial Lodge, who dedicated more than 30 years of his life to the Craft. His name was WB Romualdo S. Lagsa, PM. My father was a Master Mason, a Past Master, a Scottish Rite Mason and a Shriner.

Throughout my life, I witnessed the values he carried integrity, humility, kindness, and a commitment to helping. He lived its principles every day. I saw how he treated people with respect regardless of their status in life. I saw the friendships he built and maintained. Most importantly, I saw a man who lived by his word and who always sought to do what was right.

I chose to become a Mason after years of observing my father's character and reflecting on the life he lived.... I was initiated at Clarence F. Smith Daylight No. 866; my father had been raised in Antonio T. Cosin Lodge No. 308 in the Philippines. We began our Masonic journeys in different lodges and different countries but shared the same foundation of brotherhood and Masonic principles.

[...]

My father inspired me; his legacy guided me through my degrees. Now I hope to carry that legacy forward just as he carried it before me.

Fraternally, Bro. Rolly Lagsa

Another Legacy Member -- Brother Cody Morrison

Editor's note: The following was culled from our May 2025 edition.

Masonry, for me, is more than a fraternal order it is a legacy. My grandfather, Roosevelt Morrison was a proud Mason (Prince Hall Affiliated). Growing up, I observed the quiet dignity, discipline, and sense of duty he carried into every part of his life. His example inspired me to one day seek the light for myself, and when the time came, I pursued Masonry with the hope of honoring his legacy and building one of my own.

Since relocating to Southern California in 2023, I have had the privilege of sitting in a lodge with the Brothers of Clarence F. Smith Daylight Lodge No. 866 and Long Beach Lodge No. 327. From the moment I first stepped into those rooms, I felt welcomed and known. The fellowship, mentorship, and genuine care I've received have reminded me that the Masonic Brotherhood extends far beyond geography. Though far from my original Evergreen Park Lodge No. 1171 (Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of the State of Illinois), I have found family here.

Each meeting, each handshake, and each shared ritual reminds me that I am walking in the footsteps of those who came before me while also standing shoulder-to-shoulder with men who share a commitment to truth, charity, and spiritual growth. I am deeply grateful to my California Brethren for including me in their circle of light and for helping me continue a tradition that began generations ago.

Fraternally,

Bro. Cody G. Morrison

First in His Family to Become a Mason Says Why He Joined the Craft – Worshipful Joseph Chavez, Master, 2026

My journey into Freemasonry began with something as simple as seeing the Square and Compass. There was something about that symbol that caught my attention and sparked my curiosity. At the time, I didn't know much about Freemasonry, but I wanted to understand what it represented and why so many men held it in such high regard.

As time passed, I discovered that some of my coworkers were Masons or had fathers who were Masons. (No one in my family was a Mason before me.) This only increased my curiosity. I began asking questions, hoping to gain a better understanding of what Freemasonry was about.

Eventually, I was told something that has stayed with me: I was already a good person, but if I gave Freemasonry a chance, its teachings could help me become an even better man.

I didn't fully understand what that meant. I considered myself a decent person. I worked hard, provided for my family, and believed I knew the difference between right and wrong. What more could I possibly need?

Looking back, I realize there was still much I had yet to learn.

You see, at that point in my life, I was living in the fast lane. I was enjoying life, pursuing my interests, and sometimes living as though I were invincible. I was so focused on what I wanted to accomplish, where I wanted to go, and what I wanted to experience that I failed to recognize something far more important.

I wasn't always giving my family the time and attention they deserved.

I was physically present, but that didn't necessarily mean I was truly present. I was so busy with work and life, believing there would always be another day or opportunity to spend time with the people who mattered most.

However, time is something we can never recover once it has been spent, I learned.

Then I received another influential piece of advice that would eventually prompt me to become a Mason: if I allowed myself to truly listen to the teachings of Freemasonry, I would eventually find what I was searching for.

That something was Light.

At the time, I didn't completely understand what that meant. In fact, I wasn't entirely certain what I was searching for. I knew there were aspects of my life that needed improvement, but I hadn't fully recognized what was missing.

Something within me, however, encouraged me to take that first step.

So, why did I become a Mason?

I became a Mason because a simple symbol sparked my curiosity. I became a Mason because someone saw potential in me that I had not yet fully recognized. I became a Mason because, although I believed I was a good person, deep down I knew there were areas of my life that needed improvement.

Most importantly, I became a Mason because I wanted to discover the Light that would help guide me toward becoming a better man.

While I may have entered Freemasonry searching for answers, I have come to realize that the greatest lesson is not simply what Masonry can teach me, but what I choose to do with those teachings.

I became a Mason to become a better man. I remain a Mason because I know that journey is never complete.

Fraternally, Joseph Chavez

Worshipful Master, 2026



Image Attribution: © Shawn Bell

Our Hiram Award Recipient – Bro. Bill Raddatz

Editor's note: This entry is updated from a previously published article about our Brother.

Bro. William C. Raddatz, a Mason for more than 50 years, was a member of the original Clarence F. Smith Lodge (No. 482), where he was initiated in 1975 and passed and raised in 1976. Prior to his joining CF Smith Lodge 482, it was a military lodge, but that restriction loosened, and when Bro. Bill joined the Masons he was not then in the military. He joined the Coast Guard after becoming a Mason!

CF Smith Lodge 482 merged into Granada Hills Lodge No 378, where Bro. Bill continued as a Mason, but he jumped at the chance to affiliate with the newly formed Clarence F. Smith Daylight Lodge because of his prior affiliation with our Lodge's namesake. He has volunteered to occupy various officer chairs when needed. By way of example, before becoming Tiler, Bro. Bill was our Organist.

Bro. Bill is also affiliated with Van Nuys Chapter 338 Order of the Eastern Star and sometimes reports on the Chapter's activities. He has served the chapter as Worthy Patron several times.

Bro. Bill is proud to tell you that, in his youth, he attained the rank of Star Scout and attended the 13th World Scout Jamboree in Japan, and that while there he endured a typhoon which interrupted the event. He also attended the National Scout Jamborees in 1969 and 1971. While attending the 1969 Jamboree (Coeur d'Alene Idaho) he and the other Scouts received word of the Moon landing. The cheering could have been heard in Boise. His Scouting activities ended as a Unit Commissioner.

Bro. Bill's current interest is in fire fighting. He listens for fire truck deployment on a special radio frequency, participates with other fire fighting aficionados sometimes at the scene of a fire, and he maintains an extensive collection of model fire trucks and other accouterments.

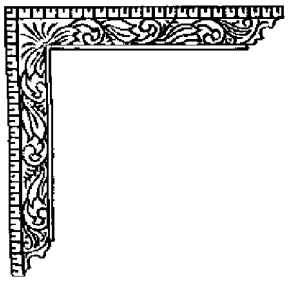
We are proud to call Bill Raddatz a Brother of Clarence F. Smith Daylight Lodge No. 866, and the 2026 recipient of the Hiram Award for Dedicated Service.

Respectfully submitted,

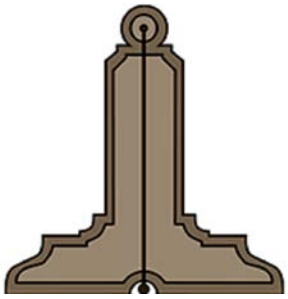
Bro. David I. Karp, Editor (ret.)



From Our Pillar Officers



In lieu of the usual message **From the East**, Wor. Joseph's thematic article on why he became a Mason appears on page 5, *supra.* Below please find the messages of our Senior and Junior Wardens.



Greetings from the West

Good day, Brethren!

We find ourselves in the heart of October when this issue is published and elections are fast approaching. Only a few weeks remain before we elect our new officers for the ensuing masonic year 2027.

I believe this year has been quite challenging for all of us. Among other things, our lodge is looking ahead to relocating to a new home. We remain united in our efforts to do so. Similar unexpected circumstances have affected other Lodges as well, reminding us that change is sometimes necessary as we seek a better place to continue our Masonic journey together.

What matters most is the spirit behind our efforts and the recognition that the vitality of a Lodge does not depend on a handful of officers carrying the entire load, but on many Brothers sharing in the work.

In Masonry, we are guided by allegories and metaphors drawn from the craft of building. We build not with bricks and mortar alone, but with people. Each Mason brings his own character, experience and effort to the structure we are raising together. Yet even the finest "stones" require something more if they are to become part of a lasting structure: unity, cooperation and a shared commitment to the work.

I would like to extend early congratulations to Worshipful Joseph Chavez and all the officers of the 2026 Masonic year for their hard work and dedication. Although we encountered challenges throughout the year, we have persevered and remained united in the end. Our ability to move forward together is a testament to the strength of our Brotherhood and our commitment to the principles of Masonry.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to our worthy Brother David Karp for his dedicated service in managing the Trestle Board. This is a demanding responsibility that requires meticulous attention to detail, strong communication skills and a profound commitment to our Lodge. Throughout your tenure, you have carried out these duties with the utmost professionalism and dedication. Your work has served as a vital bridge, keeping our members informed, connected, and engaged with our upcoming degrees, events, and monthly messages. While we are sad to see you step down from this particular role, we completely understand and respect your decision. You leave behind a well organized and highly respected publication that will serve as an excellent blueprint for the future. Thank you once again for your tireless efforts and enduring commitment to our Lodge. We look forward to your continued fellowship and wish you all the best.

[Continues on next page, see "West"]

["West," continued from page 7]

To the Brethren, who traveled and participated in this year the 177th Annual Communication: Your attendance, participation, and dedication to the Craft are what make our Masonic Brotherhood thrive. Let us carry the fellowship, inspiration and renewed energy from this gathering back to our home Lodge. May we continue to support one another, strengthen our bonds and work together for the good of our Lodge. Thank you all for your unwavering commitment to our Brotherhood!

Fraternally yours,
Bro. Roland Cortel
Senior Warden



Greetings from the South

Brethren,

I am happy to announce and recognize the presence of our brethren who took the time to attend the 177th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of California ("AnCom") in San Francisco. They are: Bro. Roland Cortel Senior Warden; Bro. Harlem Ruiz Junior Deacon; Bro. Earl Austria Junior Steward; Bro. Rolly Lagsa; Bro. Wynn Apao; and yours truly, Archimedes Cabanig, PM Junior Warden. Thank you, Brethren, for taking the time to participate in this Masonic gathering.

At AnCom, we had the privilege of witnessing the opening and closing ceremonies of the Grand Lodge, observing how the officers executed their respective stations, and learning

[Continues on next page, see "South"]

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)
Gerald J. Alvarez (2025)

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 (for dedicated Service)

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 (2025)
Barry Mann (2021)
William C. Raddatz (November2026)
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.

["South," continued from p.8]

about the legislation and adoption of Grand Lodge resolutions. Overall, it was a meaningful and enriching experience that gave us a greater appreciation of our Masonic traditions, leadership, and governance.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to our November birthday celebrants. May the Great Architect of the Universe continue to shower you with abundant blessings, good health, wisdom, and happiness.

As the elections and installation of officers for the 2027 Masonic year draw near, we look forward with excitement to seeing the new line of officers who will lead and govern our Lodge. Let us give them our full support, cooperation, and encouragement as they prepare to assume their respective responsibilities.

May we continue to uphold the principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, and may peace and harmony always prevail in our Lodge.

Thank you, Brethren, and May the Great Architect of the Universe guide us and bless us all.

Fraternally yours,
Archimedes Cabanig, PM
Junior Warden



Happy Thanksgiving from me and my family to you and yours. Fraternally, Bro. David I. Karp

CFS Daylight's Officers for 2026

Worshipful Master – Bro. Joseph R. Chavez
Senior Warden – Bro. Roland Cortel
Junior Warden –
WB Archimedes ("Kim") S. Cabanig, PM
Treasurer – Bro. Ely Ayao
Secretary – Bro. Akram Al-Awar
Asst. Secretary – WB Gerald Alvarez, PM
Chaplain – Bro. Aldrin Perez
Senior Deacon – Bro. Ryan Lim
Junior Deacon – Bro. Harlem Ruiz
Senior Steward – Bro. Lloyd Donasco, Sr.
Junior Steward – Bro. Earl Austria
Marshal – Bro. Jamille Paas
Organist – Bro. Cody Morrison
Tiler – Bro. Marvin De Guzman
Officers' Coach –
WB Archimedes ("Kim") S. Cabanig, PM
Candidates' Coach –
Inspector – WB Leland H. Celestre, PM

Contact information:

Master:
Worshipful Joseph Chavez

Secretary:
Brother Akram Al-Awar

