Trestle Board
Volume 138
290
November 2026
Issue #11
South Pasadena Masonic Lodge of F&AM



www.southpasadena290.org



NOVEMBER

4

WEDNESDAY

Stated Dinner and Meeting 6:30pm
Election of Officers

6

FRIDAY

Hiram Award Ceremony
Wor. Sergio Gomez, PM

6pm

13

FRIDAY

Illumination Lecture

C. Douglas Russell
The Esoteric Art of Memory

7pm

19

THURSDAY

Fireside Chat Book Club

7pm

21

SATURDAY

Masonic Breakfast & Meditation

9am

25

WEDNESDAY

Gentlemen's Night

7pm

27

FRIDAY

Thanksgiving Dinner Set-up

5pm

28

SATURDAY

FAMILY THANKSGIVING DINNER

Attire: Formal Wear

5pm



HALL ASSOCIATION MEETING
Tuesday, November 24, 2026
6:30pm In Person

EASTERN STAR DINNER and MEETING
MONDAY November 9th, 2026
Dinner @ 6:30pm Meeting @ 7:30pm

Happy Birthday!

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS



Mirza Alli (11/03); David Ybarra (11/08); Wallace Emory, Joseph Steele (11/11); Arthur De La Barra (11/12); Jeffrey Rewald (11/14); Erik Strom (11/20); Miguel Ayala, Jordon Hollett, Max Rittenberg (11/26); Gary Gole (11/27); Aaron Tarazon (11/28).

From The East



Worshipful Nate Brown

Greetings Brethren,

November is our election of officers, so please attend our Stated Meeting and make your voice heard. The future of our lodge depends on entrusting our management positions to those who have the best interest of our Lodge in their hearts. Speaking of elections, our congratulations go to M.∴W.∴ Ara Maloyan on ascending to the chair of Grand Master of California. We look forward to a great year with him at the helm. Lastly, the *Sages & Scholars Conference* was a big success! Thank you to The Hermetic Consistory Foundation for holding it at our Lodge, and for providing complimentary tickets to our brethren. It was a unique and very well received educational opportunity.

Freemasonry contains the teachings of the Rough and Perfect Ashlars, which are two of the three "Movable Jewels" of a Masonic Lodge. Although operative cornerstones are most often cubical in dimension, formed to a 1:1 ratio, the perfect ashlar of speculative Masonry is oblong in shape, formed to a 2:1 ratio, or, a "double cube." The symbolic Lodge temple room is also built to a 2:1 ratio, which is consistent with dimensions used in the Tabernacle of Moses, as well as King Solomon's Temple. In fact, the 2:1 ratio can be found all around us, in both sounds and shapes.

A monitorial part of our ritual states that Masonic Lodges are a representation of King Solomon's Temple, and that they should likewise be positioned due east and west. It has been posited that the dimensions of our temple room derive from the ancient belief that the inhabited world was of the shape of an oblong square. From this perspective, an oblong square-shaped temple room represents the mesocosm—the earthly place between the macrocosm of the celestial universe above, and the microcosm of Man, positioned between them. Our temple room, therefore, would have symbolized the terrestrial world to our ancient brethren.

All of this being considered, would it then be the quality of an Ashlar's polish that makes it "perfect;" or would it be the sacred 2:1 ratio that it has been shaped into?

Fraternally Yours in L.U.X.,
Wor.∴ Nathaniel Brown, PM
2026 Lodge Master

From The West



David VanderSmith

Greetings Brethren,

In last month's Trestle Board, our Worshipful Master gave us some historical context as to why the North is traditionally regarded as a place of darkness. As November begins, and the clocks change and the daylight hours shorten. I find myself contemplating what further lessons we might discover in the symbolism of darkness, particularly in the North of our lodge.

While we traditionally associate darkness with the absence of Light or with ignorance, perhaps we might also consider it a place of possibility. When we gaze deeply into darkness, our imagination fills the void with what might be. Yet it is through the Light that we can bring those possibilities to begin to take shape. And there, in what is traditionally considered the darkest portion of our lodge, sits an empty chair.

That chair might remind us of our brothers who are absent, or of those who have yet to knock upon our door. Thus, it represents not merely a vacant place, but also the possibility of new perspectives, renewed friendships, and opportunities to strengthen our fraternity.

Our bonds of brotherhood, however, extend far beyond those who occupy the chairs within our lodge. In our practice of the *Chain of Union*, we form a circle which symbolically connects us not only with the brethren standing beside us, but with those who came before and those who have yet to join. Each of us is but one link in this greater chain, entrusted with preserving and strengthening the bonds of our great work.

Yet the strength of that indissoluble chain requires far more than simply standing next to one another. It calls upon us to align our thoughts and actions with the Masonic the ideals we hold in esteem, to recognize our own imperfections, and to remain open to the wisdom, counsel, and brotherly love of others.

As the daylight diminishes and darkness claims more of our waking hours, may we reflect upon the possibility that the darkest corners of our lodge—and within ourselves—are not merely places devoid of Light; they are places awaiting illumination by a worthy brother.

Fraternally,
Brother David VanderSmith
Senior Warden



From The South

Sebastian Schmidt

Greetings from the South, Brethren!

On October 17, our Lodge hosted the *Sages & Scholars Conference* 2026. It was an event I personally enjoyed very much, and I thought it was a great success, for nothing quite like it had been attempted since the 1970s, as far as I know. As somebody who has been curiously drawn to the world of magic from a young age and yet always had a rational outlook on life, I found it a truly fascinating chance to hear opinions from some of the world's most renowned scholars.

Among the addresses that most clearly illuminated the meeting of modern inquiry and older wisdom were those of Dr. Fran Fairbairn and John Michael Greer.

Dr. Fairbairn spoke of inference webs: structured networks of claims, associations, and inferences that form the largely unspoken backdrop of how we reason within a given domain. These webs license moves we make almost without noticing—what counts as an obvious next step, what seems naturally connected to what else. Because the connections remain tacit, they shape our opinions, our speech, and our interactions even when we would reject the underlying assumptions if they were brought into the open.

John Michael Greer spoke of real magic in terms that echo Aleister Crowley's classic definition: "Magick is the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will." He illustrated the point with commercial advertising: specialists are paid to forge associations that lead us to desire ordinary products, altering preference without our conscious consent.

These observations speak directly to the work of the Craft. Our rituals are dense with symbolism and with language that candidates and Brethren commit to memory. On the surface we initiate, pass, and raise; beneath that surface the same words and emblems act upon every participant. They refine perception and continue the labor of perfecting the Ashlar even when we are not deliberately engaged in self-examination. The process is already a kind of ordered change of mind.

Awareness of inference webs supplies the next step. To recognize the tacit structures that still operate outside our Will is to begin the work of the magician in our own lives. We learn to distinguish what we have freely chosen from what has been impressed upon us—whether by external campaigns or by unexamined habit. In that awareness the ancient charge to know ourselves takes on fresh force: we are not merely the rough Ashlar, nor even the polished one, but the workmen who, by aligning mind with Will, finish the stone.

Fraternally,
Brother Sebastian Schmidt
Junior Warden

Lodge News & Notes







Brotherly Wedding
October 23, 2026

Love was in the air in Mission Hills as our Junior Deacon, Brother Art Amadian, exchanged wedding vows with his beautiful bride, Meline, surrounded by family, friends, and loved ones. Among those sharing in this joyous occasion were 30 of our Brothers and their partners, with Wor. Geno Nadirov, PM, standing proudly beside the groom as his best man. Following a romantic outdoor ceremony, guests gathered in an elegant ballroom for an unforgettable evening of fine dining, laughter, music, and dancing, celebrating the beginning of a beautiful new chapter in their lives. May their marriage be blessed with a lifetime of love, laughter, friendship, and countless cherished memories.

Meet Our New Grand Master
Most Worshipful Art Maloyan



Most Worshipful Brother Ara Maloyan was raised a Master Mason in Hayastan Lodge No. 94. He affiliated with Santa Monica-Palisades Lodge No. 307 in 2000, serving as its Master in 2005. A recipient of the prestigious Hiram Award in 2015, he has devoted decades to Masonic leadership and service. Since 2006, he has held numerous positions within the Grand Lodge of California, serving on all five constitutional boards and being elected Junior Grand Warden in 2023. He is also a Past Master of George Washington Lodge No. 4 in Armenia, and an active member of numerous Masonic organizations, including the Scottish Rite, York Rite, Shriners, and the Masonic Rosicrucian Society (SRICF), where he holds the distinguished Knight Grand Cross honor.

Beyond the Craft, Brother Ara enjoyed a distinguished career in civil engineering and public service before retiring in 2025. He is the proud father of two adult children, Nicholas and Michelle, and remains active in his church and community. His personal interests include photography, collecting rare Masonic books, reading, music, and exploring the great outdoors. An enthusiastic hiker and backpacker, he especially enjoys the beauty and solitude of America's national parks and the wilderness of the High Sierra.

Annual Communication
October 9-11, 2026

At this year's Annual Grand Lodge Communication, Worshipful Nathan Brown, Senior Warden David VanderSmith and Past Master Mimo Akkari, represented SPML 290. Close to 1000 Master Masons ascended San Francisco's Nob Hill, for the annual meeting of California Masons. The Grand Lodge conducted its business as usual by voting in new legislation, passing a new budget and installing the new Grand Line of Officers, led by the first Armenian-American Grand Master, Ara Maloyan, who was installed in an emotional ceremony.



Image: (L-R): David VanderSmith; Wor. Nate Brown, PM; Mimo Akkari, PM

Illumination Lecture Series



October's Illumination Lecture

Friday, October 16, 2026

This past month, we had the distinct pleasure of welcoming esteemed author, and scholar - Brother John Michael Greer to our monthly Illumination Lecture Series for his very first visit to our Lodge. His fascinating presentation, *Introduction to Geomancy*, captivated the 52 guests in attendance, offering an insightful exploration of this ancient divinatory art. With more than 80 books on esotericism, mysticism, and the occult to his name, Brother Greer brought a remarkable wealth of knowledge and wisdom to an unforgettable evening.

The intellectual excitement continued the following day as our Lodge hosted the **Sages and Scholars Conference**, where approximately 80 guests gathered for thought-provoking discussions led by distinguished scholars on the evolving role of artificial intelligence in our everyday lives.

Two extraordinary days, two fascinating explorations of ancient wisdom and emerging technology, and yet another reminder that our Lodge remains a vibrant home for curiosity, enlightenment, and the pursuit of knowledge!

Officer Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, October 14, 2026



The last quarterly officers' meeting of the year took place on October 14. Officers brainstormed on the continual growth of our lodge and planning for 2026, with our Senior Warden discussing his plans and visions for the upcoming Masonic year. A highlight of the night was singing Happy Birthday to our Secretary, Wor. Bro. Mimo Akkari, PM, who celebrated his 28th birthday – or so he says.

South Pasadena Masonic Lodge No. 290

PROUDLY INVITES YOU



WOR. SERGIO GOMEZ, PM

Hiram Award Ceremony

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2026

6:00 PM	RECEPTION
7:00 PM	CEREMONY
7:30 PM	DINNER

MUST RSVP FOR DINNER AT:

NiftyMimo@yahoo.com

SPOOKTOBERFEST



Spooktoberfest!

October 31, 2026

Spooktoberfest 2026: A Frightfully Record-Breaking Success!

Neither rain nor restless spirits could stop this year's **Spooktoberfest** from becoming one of the biggest and most unforgettable events in our Lodge's history! Spearheaded by Bro. David VanderSmith and Bro. Matt Faulkner, and brought to life through countless volunteer hours, extraordinary creativity, and a tremendous spirit of teamwork, this year's haunted celebration shattered all expectations, welcoming **over 1,100 visitors**—quite possibly the largest single-day event our Lodge has ever hosted!

As eager guests gathered in the dining room, a live DJ kept the energy soaring while games, vendors, and a mysterious Tarot reading experience courtesy of Bro. Esteban Lopez offered a little distraction from the awaiting horrors. But the real thrills lurked inside the **Haunted Lodge Maze**, where nearly two dozen scare actors waited in the shadows, ready to unleash screams around every corner! From eerie laboratory rooms and a terrifying zombie apocalypse to the spine-chilling *Haunted Tunnel of Love*, and a cemetery filled with unexpected surprises, no one was safe from a good scare! Through the rain, the laughter, and the screams, Spooktoberfest 2026 proved what happens when imagination, dedication, and Brotherhood come together: One incredible day. Over 1,100 brave souls. Countless screams. A Halloween celebration for the record books!



















2026 Line of Officers

MASTER Nate Brown	SENIOR WARDEN David VanderSmith	JUNIOR WARDEN Sebastian Schmidt	TREASURER Sergio Gomez, PM
SECRETARY Mimo Akkari, PM niftymimo@yahoo com	CHAPLAIN Charlie Fisher,PM	ASST. SECRETARY Dago Rodriguez, PM	SENIOR DEACON Angel Perez
JUNIOR DEACON Arthur Amadian	MARSHAL Kevin Mack	SENIOR STEWARD Derek Stillman	JUNIOR STEWARD Max Mironenko
MUSICIAN Jason Wilson, PM	TILER Adrian Howard	DISTRICT INSPECTOR Matticus Abshire,PM	

South Pasadena Masonic Lodge No. 290 Meets On the First Wednesday of Every Month At 6:30pm. Please make a reservation at (626) 799-2695 if you wish to visit our Lodge.

1126 S. Fair Oaks Ave. South Pasadena CA 91030