

The Trestleboard

Acalanes Fellowship Lodge #480 ☉ September 2025
925 Moraga Road
(Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1)
Lafayette, CA 94549

Upcoming Events at Acalanes Fellowship Lodge #480

September 2 7:30 pm

[Stated Meeting](#)

Social Hour 5:30 pm
Dinner 6:30 pm
Stated Meeting 7:30 pm

September 12 6:00pm

Grand Lodge Reception -
Worshipful Gary Sparks PM

Sign-up Link in SW Report

September 20-21

Lafayette Art & Wine

Link In JW Report

From the East

A message from Worshipful Peter A Peterson

Get'er done. Get'er done. (and more) Get'er Done!

And as long as I'm borrowing (stealing) signature phrases, let me borrow one from baseball - "deep bench."



August 16...all set to raise a Fellowcraft to the sublime degree of Master Mason. Raising scheduled to begin at 9:00 am. Practices had been diligently attended, roles assigned, memory work refreshed, ritual refined, music ready, PowerPoint for lecture downloaded, and TV screen on hand. Ready to roll!

August 16, 6:28 am...curt "call me" text from not only our officer's coach and ritual expert, but also a major role player in the East for the second section of the degree. I couldn't even fake an Alfred E. Newman "What, me worry?" lack of concern. (Google it, young'uns!) I already informed him I was bringing coffee and donuts, his major demand. Why would he be texting me so close to showtime?

Didn't want to, but I did make the call. And the message wasn't good. Our officer's coach was seriously ill and would be unable to attend the degree. Panic mode isn't normally a state I let myself get into, but I came close. Not only was I concerned about my friend's health, I was also worried about how I/we were going to pull off the 3rd Degree without a key player. Would it have to be postponed?

I did what any self-respecting still-learning-the-job Master would do in such situations. I sent off equally curt texts and emails to two more experienced Past Masters requesting they contact me immediately. Apparently too curt because I got no response. Both later told me they thought the

messages looked suspiciously like spam and so didn't reply. After getting no response, I did a Boomer thing and actually called one of them via phone.

Past Master Tom Riley calmed me down and agreed to perform in the East (there's part of my deep bench). He had about an hour to refresh himself with the lines and ritual work. I was originally a sideliner during the second section, but stepped in to sit in the West, replacing Worshipful Riley. I had even less time to brush up - I had to stop off to get coffee and donuts!

Guess what? The 3rd Degree went off without a hitch - we Got'er Done!

Later that day, many of us attended the Orinda Hiram Award ceremony honoring recipient Worshipful Dennis (DJ) Trammel PM. Orinda Lodge ran into the same problem we did earlier that day. The scheduled MC for the Hiram Award just happened to be our officer's coach and also a member of Orinda Lodge. What did Worshipful Malliarys do? He went to Orinda's deep bench and got a Past Master to step in as MC.

Guess what? The Hiram Award ceremony went off without a hitch. They Got'er Done.

Our lodge had scheduled a very solemn and formal Masonic memorial service for Sunday, August 17. We were honoring thirty-four brothers who had passed away since the beginning of COVID. Food and other refreshments had been ordered for the many family members scheduled to attend.

You know this was coming: the Funeral Master for the event - the same very ill officer's coach - couldn't make it! What to do at the last minute? Go to our deep bench. Worshipful Gary Sparks PM took over the role of Funeral Master.. I replaced him as Secretary (and bell-ringer). The service went off without a hitch - we Got'er Done!

Since my involvement in Masonry, I have seen it over and over again - Masons stepping up (coming off the bench) to Get'er Done.

Past Masters have stepped in to fill line officer roles to keep the lodge intact during lean (low membership) times. If they hadn't, our lodge and others in similar circumstances would have folded or been absorbed into another lodge. They Got'er Done because it needed to be done.

Our Hall Association consists of dedicated brothers who have found a way, using spit, duck tape, and prayer to keep our lodge upright and in shape. I'm sure our Hall Association is not unique in this dedication. They all have found a way to Get'er Done with limited resources and funds.

We all know who does the "dirty work" of ordering supplies, setting up for events, cooking, clean-up duty, outside weeding, and all the little things that make a lodge and the Master look good. They Get'er Done because things need to get done. Without their dedication where would we be? All lodges have such a deep bench of unsung heroes.

Our Lodge is not unique in this determination to Get'er Done! You read monthly stories from Grand Lodge about what other lodges are doing to grow, impart Masonic values, and live the tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. Listen to stories about the work Hiram Award winners have done to earn special recognition from their lodge. They all Got'er Done in their own unique, unselfish, way.

Locally, lodges have borrowed officers to fill degree roles when they (and we) experienced a need. Many such examples in our own District demonstrate an even deeper Masonic-wide bench. Brothers have stepped up because they believe in Masonic values, and believe in the importance of passing down those values to newer Masons. They (we) are willing to step up and help other lodges Get'er Done when needed. The Brotherhood of Masonry extends much further than our little lodge boundaries.

This overwhelming willingness to step up and Get'er Done - where does it come from? How did it begin? Since the early 1700's, Masons have been developing a deep bench. From the very first Masonic Lodge (symbolically even further back in time), our mysteries and serious truths have been impressed upon our minds in certain ways. The tenets of our institution are constantly reinforced, demonstrated and lived by example.

Our deep bench has been Getting'er Done since the building of King Solomon's Temple! It's in our DNA. What a legacy to follow.

Fraternally yours,
Pete Peterson - Master 2025

From the West

Mark Williams, Senior Warden

Greetings from the West!

It has been a busy year so far, and it's not slowing down! A busy Fall season is coming up, which just underscores the vibrancy and energy of Acalanes Fellowship Lodge! In my portion here I want to outline the events and activities that are coming up in the next couple of months. Some of these you have already been informed of (but repetition never hurts!) and some may be news to you. Anyway, here we go:

We look forward to seeing as many Brothers as possible at our September Stated Meeting and dinner on Tuesday, September 2. Summer is over, time to get our focus back to Masonry!

We have the Reception of Grand Lodge Officer event honoring Gary Sparks as Assistant Grand Lecturer Division 1, to be held on Friday September 12 at the Martinez Lodge. If you have not already RSVP'd you can do so at <https://givebutter.com/TAwSIS>.

Tuesday, September 16 is the monthly DOSI (District Officers School of Instruction) at our Lodge. Officers are expected to attend. Interested non-officers check with Worshipful Pete or Kaveh or me if you would like to see what a DOSI is all about.

The weekend of September 20/21 is the Lafayette Art and Wine Festival... see Junior Warden Kaveh's section about this event. We need great participation on this... please consider joining in. It will be fun and more Brothers will make it even more fun!

We have scheduled an Informational Open House for Thursday, October 9 in the evening. We are anticipating that we may get interest from the Art and Wine event and want to present an overview of Freemasonry and our Lodge to anyone in the community who may have an interest in learning more. More information on this is coming soon.

On Saturday, October 11 we have a 3rd degree scheduled at our Lodge. Also, more on this coming.

Then on Saturday, October 18 we will hold our 2nd Annual Whiskey Seminar at our Lodge. This is a fund raiser for our Acalanes High School Scholarship program. A great event last year, this year we



plan to focus on American whiskeys (need to avoid tariffs!).

The weekend of October 24/25/26 is the Annual Communication at Grand Lodge in San Francisco. A “must” for pedestal officers, but an opportunity at some level for all Brothers. Consider attending and talk with any of the officers if you have questions.

And last but not least, make sure you mark your calendars for the Hiram Award event for Brother Frank Shoffner on Saturday, November 1. We want a great turnout to honor our longtime Chaplain!

Call, text, or email me if you have questions on any of this. Call/text 925-285-0630 or email mark51@outlook.com. I would love to hear from you!

Fraternally,

Mark Williams, Senior Warden

From the South


Br. Kaveh, Junior Warden

Greetings everyone! Before we get into the meat of my article, a quick teaser and sign up Link.

Volunteer Now: Lafayette Art & Wine Festival Booth!

We need you at the booth! The Lafayette Art & Wine Festival draws over 80,000 attendees, and this year, Acalanes Fellowship will be there front and center—spotlighting the Lodge, our Youth Groups, and the Shriners.

 Sept. 21-22

 Sign up here:

<https://m.signupgenius.com/#!/showSignUp/10C054BAFAC2DABFCC52-58106251-lafayette>



From Outreach to Impact: Strengthening Our Bonds

A book I highly recommend everyone read is *Bowling Alone* by Harvard sociologist Robert Putnam. In it, Putnam explores how Americans have become increasingly disconnected from one another since the 1960s.

He introduces the concept of social capital—the value of our social networks, built on trust, reciprocity, and shared experience. He explains how we’ve seen a decline in civic engagement, friendships, and neighborly trust—and how that loss has rippled through society.

One of Freemasonry’s foundational tenets is charity—not just financial giving, but the offering of time, presence, and effort for the betterment of our communities and each other. And in that spirit, August brought a meaningful reminder of what this looks like in action.

I had the chance to attend a Lafayette Chamber of Commerce meet-and-greet, where I connected with several nonprofit leaders and community organizers doing great work right here in our backyard. These are opportunities waiting for us—not just to help others, but to show the world that Acalanes Fellowship Lodge is present, engaged, and committed.

Some standout connections:

- Lamorinda CERT - A training program that prepares residents to be emergency responders in times of crisis. Imagine what it would mean for the community to see Masons stepping up when it matters most.
- The Art of CPR - Teaching life-saving techniques to people of all ages. This could be an amazing hands-on workshop hosted at our Lodge.
- All Ages Recreation Downtown - A community initiative that transforms public spaces, currently the parking lot behind the Lafayette Library, into a gathering place for games, conversation, and connection. Wesley and I went and played a few games of chess—but more importantly, we had deep, thoughtful conversations.
- Lamorinda Village - A nonprofit supporting local seniors. One of their most touching programs invites volunteers to handwrite birthday and holiday cards for older adults who may not have anyone else reaching out.


These small acts—writing a card, playing a game of chess, learning CPR are bridging and bonding social capital. They reflect what Freemasonry does best: bring people together, across lines of age, background, and experience, for the sake of something greater.

Looking ahead, we're not just talking—we're taking action! Acalanes Fellowship will be hosting a booth at this year's Lafayette Art & Wine Festival. This is our moment to show the community who we are and what we stand for. Our booth will spotlight the Lodge, the Shriners, and our youth groups—and we need your help.

You can:

- Help set up or break down the booth
- Staff a shift during the event and share what Masonry means to you
- Or simply stop by and show your support

We need volunteers for setup, booth coverage, takedown, and community engagement. It's a great way to bond with brothers, share our mission, and be seen in the heart of Lafayette.

 Sign up now:

<https://m.signupgenius.com/#!/showSignUp/10C054BAFAC2DABFCC52-58106251-lafayette>

If you can't volunteer, come say hi—your presence matters.

Together, We Build

Through all this—degrees, festivals, service projects, game nights—we're doing something bigger than ourselves. We're rebuilding the kind of community the world needs more of. Let's keep showing up. Let's keep reaching out. Let's keep being the Brothers we promised to be.

Fraternally,

Br. Kaveh, Junior Warden

Calendar of Events

<div> <div>2025 September</div> <div> Acalanes Fellowship Lodge #480 Birth & Raised Date Calendar </div> <div> B: Birthday R: MM Raised Date </div>  </div>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	01	02 Stated Meeting B: Andre Sternang	03 B: Arnie Simonsen	04	05	06
07	08 R: Garth Korwin	09	10 R: Alan Sherman R: Thomas Hogan R: Kishore Nath	11	12	13
14	15 R: Larry Woods	16 DOSI: AFL #480	17	18	19 B: Richard Snowden R: Harvey Uhl	20 B: Sheldon Winnick
21	22 B: Jakub Stetz R: Richard Kellogg	23 R: James Borup	24	25 B: William Simpson R: Spencer Sealander	26 R: Jay Williams	27 B: Kris Wainscott R: Marvin Kay
28	29	30	01	02	03	04
05	06	Reminders: Next Months Stated Meeting: 10/7/2025. DOSI: 10/16/2025 at Oakland #61				

Bits & Pieces (from the Master)

- ***The Little Lodge That Could:*** 2026 Incoming Grand Master, Worshipful Garrett Scott Chan (if elected and installed during the October 26 GL installation ceremony), has announced his proposed appointments to fill GL positions. We have the honor of having three of our lodge brothers appointed as GL officers: Worshipful Adam Hanin PM as Assistant Grand Lecturer for Division III, Worshipful Gary Sparks PM as Assistant Grand Lecturer for Division I, and Worshipful G. Michael Wilson PM as Grand Chaplain. (We share Worshipful Michael with Seven Hills and Phoenix Lodges.)
- We'll also take partial credit for this one: our very own Worshipful Gary Sparks PM and current Secretary is also a member of Sonora Lodge. They recently proclaimed Worshipful Sparks as their 2025 Hiram Award recipient. His award ceremony will be held in Sonora on November 15.
- Set aside Friday, September 12, on your calendars. We will be hosting a Grand Lodge Reception in honor of our very own Worshipful Gary Sparks PM, and current Secretary. He is being recognized for appointment as GL Assistant Grand Lecturer, Division 1. We're expecting a large turnout, so Martinez Lodge has graciously offered to co-host the event with us as they have a much larger dining room. Details to follow. Dress is Country Western [Purchase tickets here.](#)
- We will have a booth set up during the Lafayette Art & Wine Festival on September 20-21. We'll share the booth with the DeMolay and Job's Daughters youth groups. We will not only pass out literature regarding Masonry and our lodge, but will also distribute information regarding Shrine and the Shrine Hospital. We'll be looking for a lot of volunteers for this event. Please consider helping staff the booth for one or more shifts, we're trying to get two Masons per shift so will need a lot of help. Sign up here or at the link in JW Astaneh's report.
- October 11 we will raise Brother Wesley Brown to the sublime degree of Master Mason. Look for details in future flyer announcements.

- Another save the date: This year's Hiram Award ceremony, honoring our Chaplain Frank Shoffner, will be conducted on Saturday, November 1.

MASONIC Phun Photos



Brother Kaveh enjoying fellowship with Brother Ivan and his family



**Brothers Brad and Kaveh and his dog Summer heading up to
Lake Almanor for some R&R**



Brother Urani and Summer - now that's R&R!



**The dinner after seeing a French 1st Degree at Freemason's
Hall**



A few Brothers went to see the installation of Worshipful Tagulao's son, MJ, as Master Councilor of DeMolay Orinda Chapter



A bunch of Brothers went to DJ's Hiram at Orinda - western themed



**The chips are ready for Poker Night, presented by Aahmes
Shrine**



Brother Dealer Wesley flipping cards



Everyone ready to take each other's chips



Worshipful Pete in deep contemplation



The pot thickens



Brother Chan cleaning up



Brother Brad feeling good



Brothers Wesley and Kaveh enjoying some outdoor chess and Fellowship



**Brothers Kaveh and Brandon enjoying the return of the
Acalanes hiking club**



Memorial Service



Brother Brandon's 3rd Degree

Officers AFL #480 2025

Master Peter A. Peterson 925-487-2725	Senior Warden Mark A. Williams 925-285-0630
Junior Warden Kaveh Astaneh 925-437-6016	Treasurer Rob Seitelman 415-310-8563
Secretary Gary D. Sparks, PM 707-803-9385	Chaplain Franklin H. Shoffner
Assistant Secretary C. Randall Tolerton, PM Senior Deacon Christopher D. Benz Senior Steward Eshan Shafaei	Marshal Cody Wilbur Junior Deacon Sunil Awasti Junior Steward William P. Labit
Organist John Minagro	Tiler N/A

2025 AFL #480 Committees

Executive Committee

Pete Peterson, Master - Chair
Kaveh Astaneh, Junior Warden
Gary Sparks, PM, Secretary

Charity Committee

Mark Williams, Senior Warden
Rob Seitelman, Treasurer
Randy Tolerton, PM, Asst. Secretary

Member Retention Committee

Auditing Committee

Gary Sparks, PM, Secretary - Chair

Mark Williams, Senior Warden - Chair
Tom Riley, PM
Kaveh Astaneh, Junior Warden
Sunil Awasti, Junior Deacon

Sunshine Committee

Frank Shoffner, Chaplain - Chair
Tom Riley, PM
John Minagro, Organist

Life Membership Committee

Randall Tolerton, PM, Asst. Secty - Chair
Ryder Brose - President
Ryder Brose - President
Paul Crawford - Vice Chair
Tom Riley, PM - Member
Fred Lezak - Member

Prospect Committee

Pete Peterson - Ex Officio
Mark Williams - Ex Officio
Kaveh Astaneh - Ex Officio

Dining Committee

Kaveh Astaneh, Junior Warden - Chair
Chris Benz, Senior Deacon
Eshan Shafae, Senior Steward
Patrick Labit, Junior Steward

Endowment Committee

Adam Hanin, PM - Vice Chair

Gary Sparks, PM, Secretary - Chair
Mark Williams, Senior Warden
Kaveh Astaneh, Junior Warden