

My first contact with anything Masonic came when I was about 8 years old. We were going through Ottawa Kansas to my Grandparents house and I saw a DeMolay fireworks tent. For some reason the name stuck with me.

My second was when my Grandfather, Eugene Reeser, PM of Melvern #22 in 1936, passed away. He had a Masonic funeral presided over by his best friend. Afterwards the family marveled at how well Claude did his part and how difficult it had to be on him. I never forgot that either, seeing the members of his lodge as they dropped sprigs of evergreen onto Grandpa's casket, and how they comforted my Grandmother.

My father died when I was 16, and in the car coming home from his funeral, I told my mother that I wanted to become a Mason. So, Mom checked it out and found that I was too young, but there was this organization known as DeMolay that I was eligible to join. That was on Friday. On Monday a guy I knew from the YMCA, Bob Sears, came to my house and talked to me. That Wednesday I became a DeMolay and found that I had been looking for it all my life. I still remembered that Fireworks stand!

I joined Huron Chapter, which sprang from the Beta officer's line of the Mother Chapter in 1919. The Chapter was already 44 years old in 1963 when I got to be part of it. Over a 4-year period I became Master Councilor, and held District and State offices, became part of Knighthood, for the older guys, and made friendships that have lasted to this day. I am a Chevalier, and a Past Commander of the Mother Court of Chevaliers. I was nominated a Legion of Honor by the Mother Preceptory, and I am a Past Dean of the Northeast Kansas Preceptory. As I aged, I was a Chapter Dad, Priory Dad, State Priory Dad, and Chairman of an Advisory Council. And refereed the Area basketball tournament for 25 years.

I petitioned Wyandotte #3, AF&AM, the Oldest Lodge in Kansas, the day I turned 21. One of my Chapter Dads took my petition. I was Raised on March 18, 1968. I can't think of a better day for a Senior DeMolay to receive the Third Degree. That being said, I did meet some unsavory characters that night who later turned out to be my Dads from Huron Chapter.

A few months later, I left Kansas City, Kansas to complete my education at Fort Hays State University and attended Hays Lodge while I was there.

I graduated in December of 1970, moved back home, went to work, and didn't attend my own Lodge much, although I did have the keys to two others where my DeMolay met. As the 70's moved on I started going to Study Club at Lodge and got interested in ritual. I had joined the Chapter and Council of the York Rite before I left for school, because two of my Dads were High Priest and Illustrious Master. Not Commandery though. I did that in 1972, because another of my Dads was Commander.

Anyway, one of the line officers in #3 Reverend Robert Wallace, took an interest in me as I was learning my work, and made me Master of the Third Veil in the RAM when he was High Priest. He also happened to be Senior Warden in the Lodge.

While this was going on, I met and married Becky, a Majority Rainbow Girl. We married on December 27th, 1975. Keep that date in mind, some of you may have already figured it out.

So, I was in The York Rite officers' lines in 1976, and Becky thought it was great. She didn't understand much about it, but she was fine with it. (She is a Past Matron now and knows all about it). Then Bob offered me Junior Steward at the Lodge for 1977. Becky said OK, and so did I. I was installed on St John's Day, December 27, 1976. And we had an installation on December 27th every year for the next seven years. Nobody can ever say that I did not take my Lady out to dinner on our Anniversary! Fraternally, Mike.