

## **Masonic / Scottish Rite Education at San Bernardino Valley, Orient of California**

*By Casey M. Latham 32°, General Secretary, San Bernardino Valley*

The Valley Membership Achievement (VMAP) project has two Subject Areas that deal with Scottish Rite education. One subject area is for candidates and the other for members. While these are two separate and distinctive Subject Areas, it has occurred to me as Education Chairman for the Valley of San Bernardino that a candidate is only a member waiting to be initiated into the Scottish Rite Degrees. With this in mind, I would like to introduce how Masonic / Scottish Rite Education has been introduced into the Valley of San Bernardino, Orient of California.

About two years ago, I was approached by a member of our valley who was interested in creating a Masonic Education program to be presented to Symbolic Lodges in our Masonic District. Having given Masonic presentations and delivering Masonic papers at various events, I was excited about being able to continue to spread Masonic light. We scheduled a meeting and went to work. My Masonic Brother had a previous lecture based upon the Entered Apprentice Degree, which had previously been curated by himself and the Grand Master of Masons at the time. This lecture dealt with historical beginnings of the Degree as well as various commentary on the symbolism of the Degree. We both saw a distinctive advantage with starting out with the Entered Apprentice Degree. We could invite all Entered Apprentices, Fellow Crafts and Master Masons as well as Scottish Rite Masons to attend.

With such a wide scope of Masonic Brethren to reach, this brought to my mind lessons of the Scottish Rite and how the Entered Apprentice Degree is expanded and further realized when traveling through the several Degrees of the Scottish Rite. I proposed to my Brother that we introduce another Lecture in order to introduce further ideas and esoteric information that are not explicitly taught in the Degree as well as to introduce basic Scottish Rite philosophy. We met agreeably on the concept and created a Masonic Education Program called *"Everything You Didn't Learn About The Entered Apprentice Degree"*. We allowed for 2 sessions with each sessions firmly set at 45 minutes with an additional 15 minutes for a Q&A session afterwards.

### ***Education Materials Created & Associated Marketing Materials***

- Two PowerPoint presentations to accommodate both sessions
- 2 Outlines of Lectures to accommodate both sessions (Most information was delivered from memory)
- Marketing Flyer
- Sign in Sheet
- Feedback form (anonymous or contact info fill-in was available)

The presentations and marketing material were completed and we advertised the program, after gaining permission from our Assistant Grand Lecturer and Grand Master of Masons. We contacted local Symbolic Lodges and emailed a flyer. The first presentation was held at our Valley's Classroom and we had many attendees from various Lodges in our district. The feedback was extremely positive and we were soon invited to a Lodge to deliver the same education program to Lodges in that area. This created a real excitement among the attendees and have led to a few of those attendees to remain in contact in order to share information and talk about Masonic topics.

This education program was a great start for our Valley. The Valley is currently creating an ongoing monthly education program that will be held before every stated meeting where further concepts and philosophy of the several Degrees of the Scottish Rite are to be studied. As the group grows, we hope to have delivered at each meeting a paper or speech by a different Brother every time, in order to enlighten those in attendance. For now, we are going to start out with a structured course beginning with "Why Initiation?". Incorporated with this program will also be online videos from the MATSOL website (<http://www.matsol.info/>), which has many excellent Masonic Education videos. These videos will be showed in order to drive the group into a reputable scholarship frame of mind, where Masonic information will be accurate and enlightening.

From an individual Masonic Education Project has grown a need to create a Scottish Rite Education program at the San Bernardino Valley to educate our membership, which falls in line with the Subject Areas of the VMAP Program.