Melha Shrine Circus Begins Its Four-Day Run April 26

The smell of the popcorn, the excitement of the aerialists, the smell of the sawdust, the jugglers working wonders, the smell of the elephants. It’s all part of Melha’s annual extravaganza.

A year’s effort by many Melha Nobles and Ladies culminates in four days of crowds and circus thrills. Be a part of it, sell tickets, bring friends to the performances, participate in the march throughs.

You need help, there are many jobs and services still needed to be done, it’s our circus and we need your support.

—See Page 4

‘Never Been a Quitter,’ Young Patient Tells Her Own Story

A Springfield Shriners Hospital Patient tells her own story of how, with plenty of grit and determination and support of family, friends and hospital staff, she faced surgery because she always remembered a quote from a TV character who said, “I’ve Never Been a Quitter.”

The report is written straight from the heart by a young 12-year-old girl who shares with the reader her thoughts and emotions as she faced a personal ordeal and how she got through it.

“If there’s one thing I learned from this experience . . . it is that you can’t quit. There will be times when you want to scream and pound your head against something, but you can’t quit! If you hold on, you can pull through to the end,” she concludes.

—Story on Page 5

Mohammad, Afghan Child, Helped by Boston Hospital

Mohammad Hashimi was born in Afghanistan with a severe cleft lip and palate that greatly impacted his daily life. Mohammad’s condition made feeding him a difficult, intricate task. When he tried to swallow, food would exit through his nose, causing a typical meal to take many hours to ensure that he was properly fed. Mohammad has overcome many of his challenges, thanks to the expertise and philanthropic mission of Shriners Hospitals for Children-Boston.

It was a very long journey; however the care that Mohammad received from his surgeon, Dr. Michael Lewis, and the entire Shriners team was miraculous.

—Story on Page 11

**MELHA CALENDAR**

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<td>Saturday, April 7</td>
<td>Comedy Night, Adult language and content. $15 p.p., tickets available at Melha Office. Bring your own food, doors open at 7, Showtime at 8 p.m.</td>
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<td>Friday, April 13</td>
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<td>Saturday, May 26</td>
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<td>Saturday, May 26</td>
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Potentate’s Message

Greetings Nobles,

I am very pleased to report that the Uncle Milty Memorial Game Supper, held in January, was a huge success. Once again, I cannot express what a GREAT job done by all who helped. Each year a member of the Divan serves as a liaison between the Game Supper committee and the Potentate and this year 1st Ceremonial Master Ray Turrini had that very difficult task. I want to thank him and his son Michael, for doing a great job.

On February 19th, we held a presentation for our Charlotte, NC Imperial trip. Oriental Guide Brian Connor did a super job presenting the information. If you don’t have a reservation by now you may be out of luck. On February 24th, we held our 1st Melha Adult game night. The evening was full of fun and laughter and all who attended had a great time. (I wish I could have been there instead of Florida). Remember, we are having family and adult fun game nights every month on the last Friday of every month.

The next two months will be very busy for us. It looks like the weather will be cooperating for the St. Patrick’s parade, Worcester on the 11th and Holyoke on the 18th. The Mid-Winter meetings on the 15th – 18th start a run of events that don’t stop for a while.

The Sphinx Temple Potentate’s Reception visit on the 23rd – 25th, the LOSNA Installation, Nile installation and the Home Show on the 24th. Hopefully I’ll have a circus update for the next article in June.

Conquering challenges and achieving successes, making it happen for the kids.

April starts another month of fun and travel. The 7th begins the month with some very good local comedians at our comedy night. Of course, the next weekend is the Potentate’s reception weekend with The Bobby Darling Show on Friday night and the reception on Saturday night at the Log Cabin.

The Highlanders will be hosting their annual Spring Fling on the 21st and there will be a fundraiser of a comedy show that Smith & Wesson is sponsoring for our hospital. The month ends with the Rhode Island visitation and last but not least our CIRCUS!!!! Please try to attend!!!

Here are some things to look forward to in May. The 11th is looking very good for our boxing match to take place at the Sturbridge Hotel in Sturbridge MA. (See the flyer for more info).

The Knights of Columbus dance at the Castle of the Knights in Chicopee is on the 12th and on the 19th the Riders will host a Sock Hop at Melha with the live band the Skidmarks. This is a local band that has performed at Melha before. Closing out the month will be the Memorial Day Parade in Auburn.

That’s all there is for this month. I hope to see you all at the different parties and parades and especially at the Potentate’s reception...and remember “We’re only here for a good time not a long time”

Russell Mitchell
Russell Mitchell, Potentate
From the Editor’s Desk

• From the program for Quaboag’s Celtic Ball: “On my list is the October 16 Mass Bands Tornado Relief concert. It was a pleasure to have been part of it, bringing pipe bands together to raise money for those affected by the tornado. I thank the Melha Highlanders for organizing it. It was through contacts with the Melha Shrine Circus that made it happen. The pipe bands resolved to have a similar event annually. The Committee changed its name to “Mass Pipes and Drums Charities.” Each year, the concert will have a new host band and benefit a charity of their choice.” That’s a real tribute to our Highlanders and shows how far-reaching ideas and good deeds can go.

• Each year when we report on the Annual Meeting, we include the Extended Melha Divan comprised of Nobles who have taken on specific positions for Melha. We have discovered that we erroneously omitted the Membership Committee this year. This is a very important committee for Melha right now as we work diligently to increase our membership as it has declined quite a bit over the last five years. Here are the members of the Membership Committee for this year: Chairman: Peter Magagnoli, assisted by Edgar Gilliss and Paul Schafer. Thanks to them for what they’re doing, and good luck. A reminder to all Nobles that you are also a part of the membership team. Keep looking for candidates and bring them into the Shrine. No time to waste.
  • Here’s a head’s up on the Chowder Bowl All-Star Football Classic. It will be played on Friday, June 22nd, not really that far away. Keep that in mind.
  • This year’s Game Supper brought in $18,273. Congrats to all who made it happen. Lots of hard work really paid off.
  • A request has been received from our Hospital Transportation group. A need of drivers is critical. Drivers are needed from: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.; 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.; 3:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
  • If you can help on a particular day or days, please call Chris Hamel at 413-787-2008.
  • In New York recently travelling the Bronx Blvd., there we saw a billboard that caught the eye. Its message was “If you could help a child . . . Would you?” Under that was the Shriners Hospital logo. The billboard was back to back with a second Shriners Hospital billboard.
  • There are plans in the works for a Bermuda Cruise. We expect a presentation on April 22. See Page 9.

Jack Butterfield Auditorium
RENOVATION PROJECT

GIFT LIST

You can make a contribution to the Renovation Project by sending a check to the Melha Office made out to the Renovation Fund. To date the total amount contributed to the Renovation Fund is $36,080.48

HOSPITAL/NURSING HOME

Report

Joe Surprenant
417 Welden Center

Ronald Gagnon, P.P.
33 Butterfield Rd., Westfield

Gerry Morin
at home

Richard Skorvon
at home

Art Driscoll
at home

If you know of a Noble who is sick or hospitalized, please notify the Melha Office at 413-376-3647 or contact Chairman David Duncan at 413-348-4766, email ambass- cary@comcast.net, or Co-Chairman Broom Prefete at 413-237-1638 or email him at jb4mail@comcast.net.

ATTENTIONS MEETINGS

Stated Meetings are scheduled for Wednesday, April 25 and May 23, for the purpose of conducting the business of the Melha Shriners, as well as balloting on individuals for initiation, obligating candidates, and for the dissemination of information to the membership on matters relating to current Shrine events.

All Nobles are invited to attend, all Unit and Club leaders are required to attend. Please wear your Fez.

Russell Mitchell
Potentiary

Attest: Philip E. Thomas, P.P.
Recorder

THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE

THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE 

OPPONENTS TO BE DETERMINED LATER

For Information or Tickets Contact:
The Melha Shrine Center at 413-376-3647

This event is to benefit Melha Shrine activities

STURBRIDGE HOTEL HOST HOTEL
366 Main Street (Route 20), Sturbrige, Massachusetts

DIRECTOR’S MEETING

Mon., May 28, Auburn Memorial Day Parade

Details for parade not complete at this time. Further information will be available soon.

A Way to Help the First’s Lady Project: A Shrine Necklace

The Melha Shrine is offering a necklace for $20, the proceeds from which will benefit First Lady Anna’s project for the year.

The project is to purchase a piano along with multi medium a docking stations for patients in the Springfield Shriners Hospital.

The pendant will include a black cord necklace. Actual pendant is 1” by 1”. Purchase is not tax deductible.

To order the necklace, contact Anna Mitchell at 413-596-2376. Orders can be placed through the mail by sending a check for $23 (includes $3 S&H) payable to Anna Mitchell to First Lady Anna Mitchell, 87 Manchonics Rd., Wilbraham, MA 01095.

FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2012—7:30 P.M.

Melha Shriners Present

The Massachusetts State Police Boxing Team

TICKETS
$15.00 Regular
$20.00 Ringside

Children under 12 - Free

Why are these Nobles smiling? They’re just having a good time at the Tuesday evening coffee hour at Melha. They’re all enjoying the coffee and good company. Stan Rubinstein is especially happy because he found a donut without a hole—“More doughnut!” he said. There were conversations about decaffeinated green tea, kids’ amateur bomb making a long time ago, the need for cheaper coffee and bigger doughnuts. Come on down next Tuesday between 8:30 and 10:30, they need to hear your opinion on a few things. Nothin’ like this at Dunkin’ Donuts.
Melha Shrine Circus Opens April 26

THE ROAR OF THE GREASEPAINT, the smell of the crowd, as the parade goes, as the circus comes to West Springfield in the form of the Melha Shrine Circus as it has for almost 60 years. Still big, still exciting, it remains one of Melha’s biggest events of the year. It wouldn’t be Spring without the Shrine Circus. It’s a time for Nobles to help sell tickets and help this year’s circus be a big success. Here is a chance for the Shrine to be seen as a viable fraternity by the public. There is always something to see at the circus, and as the public gathers for a thrilling show, let them take home happy memories of a fun time for their families, for their children, with thanks to the Melha Shriners for bringing this great show to the community.

Hamid Circus Is Part Of Our Circus Tradition

The Hamid Circus had its genesis in the tiny town of Broumana, Lebanon, where a small boy practiced the national pastime of tumbling through the dirt streets of this Mid-Eastern community. This is how it began for George A. Hamid, Sr., co-founder, along with Robert Morton, of Hamid-Morton Circus, now Hamid Circus.

After traveling to America in 1907 with the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show, George Hamid progressed from performer to theatrical agent to circus owner. The partnership with Morton resulted in a show which became one of the largest producers of sponsored circuses in the United States.

Using Morton’s ability to contract with Shrine organizations and his contacts with agents and shows all over the world, Hamid was able to bring the best attractions to American circus patrons.

When Morton passed away in 1957 the Hamid family where it remains today. George, Sr. operated the show from 1957 until 1971 when control went to George A. Hamid, Jr. and it became one of the varied entertainment ventures run by the younger Hamid. In 1997, George, Jr. went into semi-retirement and Hamid-Morton became Hamid Circus under the ownership of James M. Hamid, Sr., grandson of the legendary circus pioneer.

Since 1998, the circus route has tripled, and all new lighting and equipment went into use under the supervision of Vice President and Production Manager James M. Hamid, Jr., the fourth generation of Hamids to be involved in this sawdust spectacular.

Hamid has produced the Melha Shrine Circus since the year 2000.

Shrine Circus Information for Nobles

You might have guessed by looking at the cover photo, the Melha Shrine Circus is revving up for its four-day run at the Big E at the end of this month. Ill. Russ Mitchell looks as if he is getting ready and we know he hopes you will be helping to sell tickets and providing so much of the help that is needed for this big Melha event. It’s our biggest fundraiser of the year. There are always things that need to be done, ushering is one of them (see Page 11) and so is answering the phones (see page 6). There isn’t a street parade this year but you can participate in the march through at the beginning of performances to show off your unit.

CIRCUS PROMOTIONS:

Saturday, April 21—the Big Y—Boston Road, Wilbraham. Sunday, April 22—Noble Bob

Opening Night Promotion:

Friday, April 27—7:30
Saturday, April 28—2:30 and 7:30
Sunday, April 29—12:30

C. COMMUNITY SERVICE SHOW:

Friday, April 27—4:00 P.M.—Come over and help out.

D. NOBLES AND FAMILIES SPECIAL TICKET INFORMATION:

1. $5.00 coupons on sale—April 2 through April 16 only—these may be turned in for $14.00 tickets at the time of purchase or at any time the box is open. Upgrade to box seats requires an additional $15.00 with the coupon. Coupons available at Melha and at the box office.

2. Box office open for Nobles and families—April 9—April 13(open to public on April 14).

3. E. Big E parking tags available only at Melha—$5.00 per day—purchase daily pass or 4 day pass.

SELL TICKETS—sell TICKETS—sell TICKETS—sell TICKETS!!!
I have repeated that line to myself over and over through my experience and beyond. I suppose I should start at the beginning.

When I was about eleven my parents noticed my legs were bowing. We went to see this strange doctor, I don’t even remember who sent us to him. He took x-rays, walked in, said “She has Blount’s Disease,” and walked out. He left me in tears and with the realization that the worst fear of my life — surgery — was going to be a reality.

I was referred to the Shriners hospital in Springfield. The first thing they found out on our first appointment was that the other doctor had been wrong. I did not have Blount’s Disease. I had a bowing of my legs caused by growth hormone that I had to take for Turner Syndrome. The first order of business was to stop the growth plate and I was scared silly. I’ll admit it. I strongly disapproved of my legs. The first trip to the OR was going to be a reality.

A year or so later, I went through the growth plate surgery. I was terrified. They showed me around the upstairs, but I hardly paid attention, I was so scared. The patient who was in the room next to mine, Kalia, and her roommate were my closest friends while I was there. Kalia asked me over for a movie that first night. At first I didn’t want to go, but eventually I decided; what the heck? We had a grand time laughing. The next day was my surgery. I had a quick debriefing from Allison in Child Life, who I’d come to like, then a rather painful ordeal with an attempt in inject- ing anesthesia. I don’t remember exactly what ended up happening or if I was awake. I do know that Mom was reading to me one minute, the next minute I was being wheeled in for surgery. Then I woke up with IVs in me and pain in my legs.

Doesn’t Remember Anything

I hardly remember anything of note for quite a while after that, except the IVs getting taken out and varying degrees of pain, until my first physical therapy appointment. Tenney, one of the physical therapists, came and showed me how to get out of bed. At first it hurt terribly, but eventually I was able to get onto a gurney to Facebook my friends. It was so wonderful just to be able to leave the hospital, and over through my experience and beyond, I suppose I should start at the beginning.

Colleen, shown with her parents, was the hospital’s August 2011 Hero of the Month. In this article she recounts her personal experiences in her own words.

A few days after that I was able to try to stand. I went with Yvette to the P.T. Department where we tried to stand. I couldn’t quite do it. I tried the next day. I couldn’t do it. Finally, I decided I was going to do it. Almost all the PTs were there to help me when I stood for the first time. After that, I worked with P.Ts each day until I could walk on my own. I had wonderful visits during this time, including my cousins Tom, Sandra and Tracy, and my friends Sarah, Esther, Hannah, Gloria and Sue. plus visits from Uncle Bruce and Aunt Sherry.

Visits Were Fabulous

All of those visits, plus wonderful nurses (particularly, Cindy, Judy and Christy) were fabulous. They helped with my recovery almost as much as the physical therapy, but the worst were the baths. I had to be wheeled on a gurney, then lowered into the tub. The tub itself wasn’t bad, but the wheeling was darn embarrassing! We had to do it during the day because one of the night nurses was allergic to bleach and my legs had to be bleached. But, baths aside, I managed to get home by the end of ten days, which was exactly the amount of daily presents I received. It was so wonderful just to be able to leave my room!

I went home.

At home there were many new challenges; dealing with cramps, taking baths, relearning to walk by myself. Thank goodness my Aunt Rowan came. She helped us get to and from Shriners for appointments, helped me move around, and did a lot more emotionally for me than she probably knows. It was a long, tedious process and I won’t pre-tend I didn’t have my moments of frustra-tion, but I was showered with gifts, loans of movies, and support from my church, well as many other people. My parents were wonderful as were my friends and because of them, I managed to make a sixteenth birthday that was the most wonderful I’ll ever remember.

At last the doctors said I could have the metal removed. I went back to Aunt Sherry and Uncle Buck’s. This time I wasn’t quite as nervous. It was a much shorter surgery. Many of my friends from the staff came by my room to wish me luck. Yvette came by for a long chat. Finally I went to pre-op. I had a conversation with Allison, Dr. DeWeese and a very nice anesthesiologist, then I was wheeled in the OR. The last thing I remember was explaining to Allison what a boom was. The next thing I knew I was waking up in my room. This time the recovery took me only one day. I ate, walked to the bathroom, sang and left. The next stage was wearing extremely hot foam braces during a summer of theater. Again, support from friends and family helped me pull it off.

‘You Can’t Quit’

If there’s one thing I learned from this experience that might be helpful, it is that you can’t quit. There will be times when you want to scream and pound your head against something, but you can’t quit! If you hold on, you can pull through to the end. Just remember… “I’ve never been a quitter, and I won’t be one now!”

A special thanks to: The Shriners, Dr. DeWeese, Yvette, Tenney, Megan, Lauren, Maureen, Christy, Cindy “de liner”, Judy, Barbara, Allison, Kathy, Uncle Bruce & Aunt Sherry, Aunt Rowan, Sarah, Tracy, my “home school co-op” & friends, my church, my parents, and the rest of the staff at Springfield Shriners Hospital.

Thank you all so much for your help and support.
Help Needed to Answer Phones
In Shifts at the Circus April 25-29
Calling all ladies and nobles who just love to answer the phone. OK, how about those who want to see our 2012 Melha Circus be a success? Your assistance is needed to answer phones from April 25th through 29th in 4-hour shifts (10 am - 2 pm & 2 pm - 6 pm). Once Circus starts (Thursday April 25th) we operate longer hours and answer lots of questions & lots of questions. We answer three questions at a time but it all goes to help our circus be a success. If you can help please call Marilyn Ishler (after April 3rd) at 413-536-7742 or email her at mgiretired@comcast.net

By Don Hankel
This edition of The Melha News is a two-month issue. Please keep this paper and pass it around for April and May. We have one Melha parade schedule for this time. The Aubur parade will be on Monday, May 28th. Please see the parade info for complete details and I hope to see the streets loaded with Hadjis vehicles.

A reminder to replace the ramp truck is in process and appears to be going very well. Thank you to Dave Duncan and Tom Wehr for their efforts on this endeavor. I am sure that they would appreciate any help you can get to raise the money needed for this project. Please contact Dave Duncan or Tom Wehr if you, or a business you know, may be interested in purchasing a Fez statue.

The circus is rapidly approaching and there are too much to do. Ballrooms, inflatables, novelties, programs, and ushering, to name a few. Please sign up to help out at this major event for Melha. It is a lot of work, but it is also a good time, for a good cause. There will be two promotions again this year. One will be on Saturday, April 21st at Big Y on Boston Road in Wilbraham, and the other will be on Sunday, April 22nd at the BHP on Riverside Road in West Springfield, both from 10 AM to 1 PM. It would be nice if Hadjis could make a good appearance, so bring your Facz and have some fun!

Our next dinner meeting will be on April 12th. The meals have been good and the company has been great, so come out and see for yourself. If you did not sign up for dinner at the March meeting, please make your reservations before April 8th by calling Brad Dimero at 413-687-7736.
By Paul Bryant

Now hearing that you have a double issue covering the months of April and May. April gives us Good Friday and Easter. Melha will host a comedy night on April 7th. Also on tap is the Potentate’s weekend. April 13th has a buffet dinner and the Bobby Darling Show for entertainment. The cost is $35 per person. Saturday will find us at the Log Cabin for the Potentate’s reception. This is $49 per person. On Saturday, April 21st Smith & Wesson will be presenting a comedy show to benefit the Shriners Hospital and the Ronald MacDonald House. If we support their comedy night, they will support our events. The big event in April will be our circus. It will run from April 26th to the 29th. All manner of help is needed for this, our major fundraiser. Look for details on the circus and other events in this issue. April showers bring May flowers. The Shrine/K of C dance will be held on Saturday, May 5th. Mother’s Day is on Sunday, May 13th. The Melha Sock Hop is slated for Saturday, May 19th. Our next parade will be on Monday, May 28th in Auburn. You know the drill, look for the parade information in this issue. It was with some shock that I learned of Dick Skowron’s open heart surgery. I have heard he is doing well. He must be, or he wouldn’t be giving the donation in his name. The shrine hospital and the Ronald McDonald Hospital and the Ronald MacDonald Hospital and the Ronald McDonald House are honoring. So tape the TV show you are honoring. See you there. Let’s have a big Berkshire Shrine Club turnout for the Appreciation dinner and the Circus. See you all there.

Greetings from the Past Masters Unit

By Richard Poudrier

As we all know, the Potentate’s Weekend is on April 13th & 14th, let’s get out there and support Ill. Russ and his Lady Ann in their quest for “If you can’t do two—one will do.” There is a tremendous amount of events going on in Melha for the next couple of months. The Past Masters unit has their share of events too. It’s “All aboard” time for the Masonic Railroad. On Friday, April 20th is pulling in to the Esoteric/Sherwood Lodge Station, 475 Main Street, Feeding Hills to railroad some new members. There will be a “Hobo” dinner at 6 PM at a cost of $10. Following the dinner those taking the degree will be charged $30. For more information and to sign up call Bob Allard at 413-783-5189.

The Comedy Night being held at “The Cedars” on April 21st is an event that is going to glean a donation to the Shrine Hospital and the Ronald McDonald Hospital. We need to have as many Shriners at this event as we can, so that Smith & Wesson (the sponsors of this event) will keep supporting these events in the upcoming years. The Cedars’ capacity is 630 and, as of this date, more than 500 tickets have been sold. A full house is expected. Our unit has purchased at least 4 tables. New to the Past Masters Unit Picnic. Our President, Les Lohnes, has changed the site of our picnic this year to the Young Men’s Club of Hadley on Friday, June 29th. Note: the new day and time. It is located on East Street, Hadley, MA (just off Route 9) 2.6 miles from the Rt. 91 and the Berkshire Roundabout. For an advertisement elsewhere in this issue. Members, Prospective Members, Ladies, Friends and Guests are invited. George Sachs should be getting out the reservation and cost cards shortly. By the time you read this article, the cast of the “December’s Rose Play” will have had a rehearsal. The cast of the “Rose” play is quite large and we are looking for more people to take a part or back up someone else in the play. Contact Les Lohnes should you be interested. His number is 413-506-4582. Our meeting in April falls on the opening day of the Circus. Therefore, we will be moving our meeting the week to April 19, 2012. It is listed in the Shrine calendar book as April 19, 2012. The dues this year are coming in very slowly. If you have forgotten, please send them in soon. The events listed above are only “the tip of the iceberg.” Consult The Shrine News for other events not listed here.
By Craig (Doc) Kaizin

An unusually beautiful March 11 greeted us in Worcester, as seven of your Melha Shrine Clowns participated in the annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade. Many thanks to Al (Poppie) Surprenant, Charley (Choo Choo) Burke, Jack (Homer) Jasinski, Roy (Caddie) Martin, Rich (Shorty) Pirog, and apprentice Dave (Patches) Manreschen for taking time out of their busy lives to represent us at a truly wonderful parade! Hats off to our brother Jesus!

At press time, the weather is looking great for the Holyoke Parade, where we hope many more of our Melha Clowns will endeavor to support the unit and support our Shrine. I am sure that by the time you read this, many will have taken the Rainbow Girls’ breakfast at Melha preceding the parade to fuel the long march!

After the parades, I think the Circus is coming up, but details on the Clowns’ activities are a bit fuzzy at this time. We know that Mike (Chappy) Reading, this year’s Producing Clown, will whip the “ornery” clowns into shape.

We were encouraged to hear that Mike (Binder) Kagan continues to make improvements in his health, and for this, we are grateful. Our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

That’s it for now, and remember to make someone smile today!

By By Ray Huber

Spring is in the Air . . . and it’s time to re-commission our boats as well as our minds for all the good times ahead. Our meetings are on the second Thursday of each month so our April meeting will be on Thursday, April 10.

In support to National Burn Awareness Week February 5-11, local firefighters, from the Western MA S.A.F.E. (Safety and Education) association visited our Shriners Hospital for Children in Springfield. This visit has been an annual event for 15 years and it’s nice to see so many fire fighters teaching countless patients and families life saving burn awareness tips in a fun way.

On February 15th, fifteen fire-fighters and Sparky the Fire Dog interacted with patients in the hospital’s outpatient department. Fire causes the death of nearly 1,000 people in the U.S., hundreds of children are taken to emergency rooms for treatment of scald burns caused by contact with hot liquids, steam or foods. Approximately 65 percent of children under age 4 hospitalized for burn injuries were scalded by hot liquids. Approximately 16,000 children under age 5 are treated in U.S. hospitals for scald burns annually. Ninety-five percent of scalds occur in residences. Fire causes the death of more than 600 children ages 14 and under each year, and injuries about 3,000 more. Nearly 50 percent of children injured in fires or fire-related incidents are under age 5. We can reduce these with education and getting the message to the younger ones which is what the Burns Brigade mission is. Come and join us! What a feeling that would be.

So in closing, Chief Joe Surprenant get well soon, we are thinking of you. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of September at 7:00 PM in the Station house just left of the Melha Office. We need you to be part of a unit that keeps people safe from Fire and Burns! Come and join us. Until next month, be safe.

By Allen Kinsley

Greetings fellow bandsmen. We have had a busy start to our month already. Our Pastie Night was a huge success with a huge turnout. Good job to Chris Parker for nailing our first fundraiser of the year. Also thanks to Terry and Gary for getting behind the scenes getting ready for the event. We have had some great weather for our parades so far, as well as great turnouts too. Don’t forget...we are planning on attending Imperial and entering the ASOB competition so every Friday that is not the business meeting we will be meeting in a place to plan on being there so we take home first place this year. By the time we next see each other the circus will have a huge success. Don’t forget the jewel page signup, and there should be a few more this month. The next meeting at 413-455-8466 for more details. We’re working on plans to tour Block Island and take the Iron Horse for all our members, and to re-commission our boats as well as some great turnouts too.

By By Bill Judd

Burn prevention is a key endeavor of Shriners Hospitals for Children, which is why the health care system began its Burn Awareness campaigns more than 70 years ago.

In an effort to support National Burn Awareness Week February 5-11, local firefighters, from the Western MA S.A.F.E. (Safety and Education) association visited our Shriners Hospital for Children in Springfield. This visit has been an annual event for 15 years and it’s nice to see so many fire fighters teaching countless patients and families life saving burn awareness tips in a fun way.

The students were taught safety rules and how to prevent fire and burn injuries. They were taught to always have an adult present when using matches and to never use matches to light their own cigarettes. The students were also taught to not use burnable materials like paper towels to clean up spills, but to use absorbent material like floor sweepers. They learned the three “R’s” of burn safety: Reduce, Rest and Recovery. They were also taught never to put a burn in water.

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September 30th Bermuda Cruise Presentation Set for April 22nd
The Potentate has announced a cruise setting sail on September 30th for Bermuda on Royal Caribbean Lines. There will be a presentation at Melha on Sunday, April 22nd. Details for the cruise were not available in time for this edition.

A Bermuda Cruise is a tradition for Potentates who are in Ill. Doug Spangler’s Shrine family line which includes Ill. Russ. Call the Melha Office for additional information as it becomes available.

**BERLINER LAW FIRM**
L. Jed Berliner

The courage
to ask for help—
Bankruptcy and alternatives.

**MILITARY BAND**
By Dave Yeager

Greetings, Fellow Bandmates and Nobles! It was an excellent day to be Irish or whatever else as our band traveled east to participate in the Worcester St. Patrick’s Day Parade. It was sunny though a bit breezy, near 50 degrees. By the time this comes out the Holyoke parade will be past, but we can only hope for weather just as good for that.

Sidelight: I’ve been playing open mic’s for years, but always bass guitar or any keyboard. Finally tonight I played trumpet at one, down in Windsor, CT. Back to the band, we’d like to thank Bob and Nate, our guest musicians, for playing with us both parades. Upcoming is the circus. Always a good time of year, as with us both parades. Inverness to take part in the MM degree in full costume. Malcolm and I took part in it last year, and will do so again this year. The weather is supposed to be nice for the outdoor degree in a field, at a member’s farm.

On the 14th of March, Malcolm and I will go to Egypt Shrine in Tampa for their stated meeting. Remember to visit local Lodges. I visit five Lodges locally, here in Florida. Malcolm and I have been meeting snowbird Masons from all over the states. Last week we met a member from the Grand Lodge of England.

**THINGS AS THEY USED TO BE . . .**

We can remember when you could get a great cup of coffee at the Automat in New York for only 5¢. Now you’re lucky to get a cup at Melha for only a buck. And remember that cents sign (¢)? Take a look at your computer keyboard, but you won’t find one there. Things ain’t what they used to be. Well, that’s not really so, check in at Melha for the coffee hour every Tuesday morning—8:30 ‘til 10:30. You’ll be smiling, too.

**Melha Flyers**
By Lance Whitcomb

Greetings from Florida. The weather down here has been real nice. I have played some golf— that is if you consider what I play golf?

The other night Malcolm and I went to Brotherhood Lodge to witness an E.A. degree. The E.A. has quite a deal of difference than back home.

The 10th of March we are going up to Inverness to take part in the MM degree in full costume. Malcolm and I took part in the cruise were not available in time for this edition.

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Howdy, Cuzzins! Still no info given me for now. Have a nice spring, and remember ta Honor the Cob!

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Melha Shriners & Knights of Columbus present their annual
Ladies Night Dinner Dance
Honor the Memory of Noble Chet Sweeney
Knights of Columbus Liaison
Saturday, May 12, 2012
Castle of Knights
1599 Memorial Drive, Chicopee
Cocktail Hour: 5:30 p.m., Dinner: 7 p.m.
Dinner Menu:
Chicken Cordon Bleu, Petal Filet Mignon or Baked Stuffed Scrod
Dancing from 7 p.m. until 11 p.m. to DJ Bob Ingram
Tickets: $27.50 per person
Dress: Business suit and Fez for Nobles
For information and Reservations, contact the Melha Office at 413-736-3647.
Melha Potentate’s Reception is enclosed in the amount of $________.

Potentate’s Weekend
Friday, April 13, 2012
6 p.m. Social Hour — 7 p.m. Buffet
House Salad w/Sherry Wine vinaigrette
First course served at table followed by buffet dinner
Stuffed Pork Loin, Teriyaki Chicken Breast, Rice Pilaf,
Roasted Baby Potatoes, Chef’s Vegetable and Dessert

Entertainment will be

$35.00 per person
Come and join us in a fun and entertaining evening to start off the Potentate’s Reception Weekend
Cash Bar
Dress for the evening is Shrine Casual
Contact the Melha Office at 413-736-3647.

Shrine Potentate’s Reception
is enclosed in the amount of $________.

Name________________________________________
Address______________________________________
City___________________State______ZIP__________
Charge my ___VISA, ___MasterCard, ___Discover
Card Number: _____________________________________
Expiration date: Month_________Year__________
Print name as it appears on card________________________
Signature__________________________________________
Mohammad Hashimi was born in Afghanistan with a severe cleft lip and palate that greatly impacted his daily life. Mohammad’s condition made feeding him a difficult, intricate task. When he tried to swallow, food would exit through his nose, causing a typical meal to take many hours to ensure that he was properly fed. Mohammad has overcome many of his challenges, thanks to the expertise and philanthropic mission of Shriners Hospitals for Children-Boston. Mohammad’s parents, Wasil and Mangia, had explored options in Afghanistan. However, the surgery at an Afghan hospital would have cost $6,000-$7,000 and the doctors could not guarantee a successful outcome.

Mohammed’s Uncle Steps In

Mohammad Nasiri, a Massachusetts resident, learned about Shriners Hospitals for Children from Joseph Papparella, a member of the Board of Governors. Mr. Nasiri realized that the doctors at Shriners could change Mohammad’s life. Although it would be difficult for his nephew to come to the United States, there were even more challenges to come for Mohammad and his family.

While Mohammad’s physical challenges were very daunting, geography and finances also presented some obstacles for the family. But fortunately, through the generosity and support of his uncle Mohammad Nasiri, Mohammad and his mother were able to obtain passports and travel to the United States. On February 1, 2011, Mohammad and his mom flew over 7,400 miles from Afghanistan to JFK Airport and then traveled an additional 200 miles to Boston.

It was a very long journey; however the care that Mohammad received from his surgeon, Dr. Michael Lewis, and the entire Shriners team was miraculous. The surgery was such a remarkable success that upon his return to Afghanistan, family and friends, including the nurse who delivered him, could not believe he was the same child. Mohammad has undergone a life-changing experience that will always have a tremendous impact on his life.

He will continue to receive treatment and be a part of the Shriners family, as he will have followup care and nose surgery in the years to come. His family is forever thankful.

About Dr. Lewis

Dr. Michael Lewis, M.D., physician mentioned in the story, has the following current hospital or affiliated institution appointments: Active Medical Staff, Shriners Hospital for Children-Boston; Chief, Pediatric Plastic Surgery, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston; Associate Professor of Surgery, Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston; Associate Visiting Surgeon, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston.}

Circus Ushers Needed

Even though the Circus is only a short while away, we can still use volunteers to usher. Ushers can be Nobles, wives, or friends. Young people under 14 must have an adult with them to supervise them at all times. It’s a great way to see the show and the only cost is parking.

The shows are: Thursday, April 26, 6:30 P.M.; Friday April 27, 4:00 P.M. (Special Benefit Show), Friday April 27, 7:30 P.M; Saturday April 28, 10:00 A.M., 2:30 P.M., 7:30 P.M.; Sunday April 29, 12:30 P.M., 4:00 P.M.

Please contact Bob or Nancy Waltermire before April 24th at (413-663-5472), or get in touch by e-mail: rmdw@roadrunner.com.

Saw it in The Melha News!

For additional information on how to advertise in The Melha News call Ed Gelinas at 413-568-6120

April-May 2012

The Melha News is effective, easy and affordable

No matter what you’re advertising, it will be seen by every Shrine family in the area.

Every issue of The Melha News can also be read and seen on the Internet— increasing your ad’s audience.

Advertising rates are as follows (on an annual basis):

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<td>1/2 page</td>
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One column width is 2.375”
Two columns: width is 4.916”

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Everyone has a story to tell. Start your next chapter at The Overlook. Contact us today to schedule your tour of central Massachusetts’ most desirable community for those 62 and better.

www.overlookcommunities.org 866.753.5429

Sponsored by Masonic Health System of Massachusetts

Would you like to know more about The Overlook?

☐ Please send me more information.
☐ Please keep me informed of news & upcoming events.
☐ Please contact me to schedule a tour.

The Overlook Life Care Community
88 Masonic Home Road, Charlton, MA 01507
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THE POTENTATE’S RECEPTION
Saturday, April 14, 2012
The Log Cabin
Holyoke, Massachusetts

You are cordially invited to join Melha’s Divan and the dignitaries from the Northeast Shrine Association as Melha honors its 2012 Potentate—Illustrious Russell Mitchell and First Lady Anna in a gala event.

Join in the celebration

Dinner Menu
Choice of
Gorgonzola Sirloin
Chicken Piccata
Stuffed Sole topped with Lobster Sauce

Dress for the Evening will be formal with fez for Nobles, jacket and ties for non-Shrine guests.

Program

7:30 p.m. Dinner is served
6:00 p.m. Following dinner
6:30 p.m. Entertainment
6:45 p.m. DJ Bob
7:15 p.m. Dancing from 9:30 p.m. until 11 p.m.

Potentate’s Reception Reservation Form

Potentate’s Reception
Melha Shriners
133 Longhill Street
Springfield, MA 01108

Please reserve ______ tickets for the 2012 Potentate’s Reception at $49.00 per person. Reservations must be received by March 25th.

Enclosed is my check payable to Melha Shrine Potentate’s Reception for $______

__ Gorgonzola Sirloin __ Chicken Piccata __ Stuffed Sole

Name________________________________________

Address______________________________________

City___________________State______ZIP__________

Phone Number: (____) ________________________

I would like to sit with __________________________

Charge my ___VISA, ___MasterCard, ___Discover

Card Number:______________________________
Expiration date: Month________Year________
Signature____________________________________

For those wishing hotel accommodations for the weekend, they may be made at the Homewood Suites, Holyoke, MA at $135.00 per night. Reserve rooms through the Melha Office at 413-736-3647.

RESERVATION FORM:

Imperial Session, 133 Longhill St., Springfield, MA 01108

Name__________________________

Address____________________________________

City___________________State______ZIP__________

Telephone No._____________________

( ) Package: Five night double occupancy: $795.00 pp X $796.00 ________________ = $____________

( ) Circle choice: King Bed 2 Queen Beds

( ) Room Upgrade: Whirlpool tub 5 nights $75.00 = $____________

( ) Extra Nights $150.00 Per Night ________________ = $____________

Give date(s) for extra night(s)

( ) NASCAR Hall of Fame Tour ________________ = $____________

( ) NASCAR Hall of Fame Simulator ________________ = $____________

( ) NASCAR Hall of Fame Pit Challenge ________________ = $____________

TOTAL PAYMENT DUE ________________

Imperial Shirts (one per person, CIRCLE sizes below):

Man’s shirt: S M L XL XXL

Lady’s shirt: S M L XL XXL

A $150.00 pp deposit due by April 2, 2012

Deposit ________________ Date___________

Final payment due by May 25, 2012

Questions, information call Brian Connor at 413-636-4270

Comments/Questions: