

# The Benevolent Order of Scurritious Monks

## Abbot's Report

### Winter Solstice, 2014

#### Brother Swallow Goes to Yale

Our friend Brother Swallow (Johnny Fox) has been performing as a sword swallower and magician at renaissance faires along with the rest of us for more than thirty years. Very few of us knew that he used to deliver newspapers to Mark Twain's house in Hartford, Connecticut. Although his high school refused to give him a diploma in his senior year, he



is currently being pursued by Yale University. They recently asked him to lend them some pieces from his extensive art collection. He'll also be performing at the University on Jan 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

#### Brother Ozark Makes Hot Sauce

Brother Ozark (Bill Pierce) has been inventing, manufacturing and marketing toys at renaissance and medieval faires for more than thirty years. When he's not at the faires, he spends most of his time at his home in the woods in the Missouri Ozarks. Bill's mom, Robbie, died in June at the age of 91. She always insisted on having her son bring her cartons of Kool cigarettes and two large bottles

of Seven Crown whiskey whenever he visited. Bill traveled to Dallas during her final days and was able to show her photos of her new great grandson and hold her hand as she crossed over to the other side. Earlier this year, Brother Ozark bought a used Dodge Caravan and he liked it so well that he bought two more of



them later on. He gave one of them to one of his three daughters and keeps another as a spare. He and his wife Jan use a drip irrigation system to grow almost all of their own food in

their extraordinary garden. Jan freezes mounds of vegetables and Bill cans several varieties of hot sauce. He harvested some more of his oak trees this year and used his portable saw mill to turn them into lumber. His home, shop, garage and lumber drying building have all been built with oak lumber grown on his 40 acre estate. Bill and Jan traveled from Missouri to Colorado a half a dozen times this year to visit with family including the aforementioned new grandson. Recently, Brother Ozark and Brother Clevenstein (Clevenger Peters) have been brainstorming with our Abbot to figure out a way to help Brother Charles (Chuck Dixon) get his electric wheelchair into and out of a vehicle. In a surprise development, Brother Clevenstein has shaved off his mustache.

#### News From New York

New York State has two major renaissance faires along with a couple of upstarts. In early August, our Abbot traveled from The New York Renaissance Faire, near New York City,

to the Sterling Renaissance Festival, near Lake Ontario, to attend a Weenie Roast. He arrived in the company of Brother J Sparrow (J Wrobel) and Brother Bonehead (Norman Wylde). Norm and J had both been major players during the opening season of the Sterling show back in 1977. We were pleased to reunite with Brother Manyidea (Cliff Menter) who had also been instrumental during that inaugural season. We four ended up together in the photo below. Cliff now lives in Arizona but he returned to Sterling this summer to restore a bit of order to the chaos engendered by an inexperienced and financially challenged festival owner. During the Sterling Weenie Roast, Brother Can-You-Spare-a-Dime (Ray St. Louis) petitioned our Abbot to grant a monkhood to Laura Bridson. His request was seconded by several others from the Sterling Order. This monastic group photo was photo



bombed by Kenny Silkie who was wearing a white cap. He later made an impassioned plea directly to our Abbot on his own behalf requesting that he also be made a member of the Benevolent Order. Eventually, both requests were granted. Welcome Laura Bridson and Kenny Silkie, our two newest brothers.

In more recent Sterling news, a November 13, 2014 article in the *Auburn Citizen* says, *The festival's owner, Ontario Realty, of Oswego, currently owes Cayuga County more than \$150,000 in back taxes. As a result of the unpaid taxes, County Treasurer James Orman initiated foreclosure proceedings against Ontario Realty with a notice posted Nov. 3. According to the notice, Ontario Realty has until Feb. 20 to redeem the debt. If it doesn't, the property will go to auction in June or July. Ontario Realty President Doug Waterbury said "We're all set, We're completely refinancing the property. It'll all be squared away — that's nothing new. We've got a fantastic year planned for 2015."*

The Tuxedo show was also in the news this week. In our last *Abbot's Report*, the story entitled "Tempest in a Teapot?" told how A Malaysian Corporation had plans to build a new Thruway exit which would have led directly to a parking garage, a luxury spa, some restaurants, a thousand room hotel and a casino which would all be built in the Tuxedo Renaissance Faire's parking lot. Eventually, according to the plans, the renaissance faire would have been bulldozed and replaced with a year round renaissance faire themed shopping mall. On December 17, all of those plans were scrapped when the New York State Gaming Commission refused to grant the requested casino license. Although it made for a very lively discussion with plenty of interesting speculation, the entire hub bub turned out to be no more than a tempest in a tea pot.

## Obituaries

Brother Billious (Bill Jezzard) posted this eulogy for Brother Sister Smoking's or Brother Sister Ho's (Heidi Thomann's) father, Al Thomann, on Facebook.

*My friend Al Thomann heard his closing cannon this morning a couple of weeks after entering the hospital during the Maryland Renaissance Festival. He was a loving husband and father, a master jeweler and an all around crusty old fart. Al was one of my favorite old curmudgeons.*

*Being the old renaissance pro that he was, he waited til the Monday after the show was over to take his leave (10/20/14). Peaceful travels my friend. This picture of Al at the 2010 MDRF Beach Party shows him at his crustiest best. He has finally gone into that light that is shining on him. Much love and blessings to Nellie, Michelle, Heidi, Doreen, Gary and all those who knew and loved him.*



Brother Babi's (Mary Palmer's) husband, David Palmer, died in September. Mary is currently bedridden and living in Arlington, Texas. We've been thinking of her fondly. Here is the obituary from the Fort Worth Star Telegram:

*David Webb Palmer left us on Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2014. David Palmer was born Jan. 13, 1933, and raised in Erie, Pa. After graduation from high school, he attended Baldwin Wallace for three years, and Carnegie Tech for two years. He received his master's degree in mechanical engineering from SMU. He married Joan Myers and had three children, James, John and Elizabeth. In 1968 he married the love of his life, Mary, who brought four sons, Mark, Tom, Dick and David Hicks, to the marriage. In 1972 they took a deep breath and David became an artist after nearly 15 years in the defense industry. He began to show his sculptures at street shows then added four Renaissance fairs starting with Scarborough Faire, then moving on to Bristol, Wis.; Arizona Renaissance and Texas Renaissance Festival. He was now creating large wall pieces and beautiful fountains. After living in Fort Worth until 1976, he and Mary bought a home near Lake Whitney where David found time to sail. They built a studio for David and lived there for 35 years. After retiring in 2008, they traveled some and finally settled in Port Isabel where David walked the beaches and swam in the ocean. Mary's health failed and David became her full-time caregiver until the day he died. David left us on Sept. 9 leaving behind a grieving family and many friends. He will be deeply missed by all who loved him. He was preceded in death by his parents, Edward and Aleatha Palmer; and his brother, Don Palmer.*

David used to take truckloads of unruly rennies from the Wisconsin King Richard's Faire to Wrigley Field in Chicago to see the Cubs play baseball. In this picture, David is on the left sitting next to Brother Who (Magical Mystical Michael) and Brother It's Hot(?) (Jerry Leaders). We think that's Brother Recardo Montobon (Richard Prawitz) on the right in the Chicago shirt. Here's what Richard wrote on the Star Telegram's memorial page: *I met David and, of course, Mary at the Texas Renaissance Festival. We were neighbors in a small campground behind our booths. Almost every night on those weekends we would chat and drink and tell stories. David and Mary would come to Houston to go to Ninfa's and sometimes we would go to Zorba's with a large crowd from the fair. We always had good times with David and Mary wherever we were. David was one of the kindest men I ever met. He was always ready to help no*



*mater what. Many people loved him and many will miss him. Love you Mary. Richard Prawitz* Here's what Brother Jack Benny (David Casey) had to say regarding David Palmer: *When I read about David's passing, I was amazed that I felt gratitude and pride instead of grief and loss. When I remember David Palmer, I remember a man who exemplified the best of human traits: kindness, gentleness, generosity, intelligence, and balance. David's impact on my life was heartfelt; he showed me the best side of a man, a husband, and a friend. I feel proud and grateful that David considered me worthy of his friendship. I will remember him, as long as I remember, as a man to emulate and celebrate. I remember him with love.*

*David "Oaf" Casey* Here are some more new members of the *Dead Wren Singing and Dancing Society*: Dan Rist died on Dec. 6 Mark Lewis, storyteller, died on Dec. 7 Sherri Adkinson died on December 10. Jim Savidge, Lord Magistrate, died on on Dec. 11. Bob Heath of Dragon Scale Jewelry died on December 16. John Fisher (potter) died on December 17.

## News Tidbits

While in Sterling, we enjoyed ourselves at *The Wheeler Inn*, a community center financed by Brother St. Sedulous (Michael Reilly). When Brother Aloysius X. Hambone (Fred Ledden) broke down in Texas, he was able to raise \$5,340 with a GoFundMe campaign. Brother Nom de Plume (Sean Poole) sold five of his original paintings last week and will be traveling to Cuba in June. Brother J. Sparrow (J. Wrobel) is working on having stained glass windows restored in a synagogue in Auburn, NY. Bro Ro Mo (Ron Moses) has returned to Texas. Brother Doctor (Danny Lord) recently sent our Abbot a much appreciated care package from California. After spending 25 or more years prosecuting bankers as an attorney with the Justice Department, Brother Consigliore (Sunny Pietrafesa) has retired and has recently traveled to Spain, Egypt, Ecuador, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand. Brother Francis (David Doyle) has shingles. The Order's treasury currently has \$14,841. Brother Bonehead has a new grandchild and is expecting another.