

## Gateway to the Stars.

Did you hear what they discovered at the center of Jupiter??? The letter I. That joke came about since I was so tired waiting up all night for the Sun.....then it dawned on me.

As we place our feet on this final step of the winding staircase and look to the stars, we are reminded that this is just the beginning of our Masonic journey. As I began researching this subject for my lecture, I realized that the lessons available to us as Masons as numerous as those stars our ancient brethren gazed upon in the night sky and would take more than a lifetime to learn them all. The subject of Astronomy itself could be a series of educational items that would last many years due to the vast nature and significant integration it has with our fraternity.

I have chosen one element that I came upon during my research that illuminates this continuing path of enlightenment. Masonic Astronomy references the Royal Arch of the Heavens many times. When you think of grand or royal arches, what usually comes to mind? For me, it is the Gateway arch in St Louis. This arch is known as a catenary curve which geometry tells us is created by supporting a chain or cable at its ends and allowing the curve to form under its own weight. From the architectural perspective there is no other curve that is as strong as the catenary. It is this very strength that allows the Gateway arch to stand and support itself since it is just a catenary that hangs into the sky.

In Speculative Masonry, I found reference to this arch as being supported by two points that many of us are familiar with, those two brazen pillars that all of us here have passed through. We know them as Boaz and Jachin, and they talk strength and establishment but they have another purpose. They serve as cryptic names for the luminaries, Jachin deriving from the Hebrew Jarac or moon, and Boaz with its two roots representing motion and fire which we could call the Sun. The catenarian arch is referenced in the encyclopedia of Freemasonry and is the goal of the arrangement of every Royal Arch chapter. While I have limited knowledge of this appendant body, I cannot help but feel that my journey into Masonic learning is just beginning. These first fifteen steps have been exciting, and are just the beginning. I will continue to bring you further steps on the path as I walk them with you.



***'The Winding Staircase - A 15 step path to improving yourself in Masonry'***

**By: Michael J. Caro, LEO, Tuckahoe Lodge No. 347      5-19**