



The Trestle Board

MWSA

6th Masonic District in Texas



Volume 1, Number 9

September, 2017

FROM THE PRESIDENT.....

The month of September ushered in a new season with a flurry of activities going on in the District. The second round of District Deputy Grand Master visits began and was accompanied by the often discussed and maligned District Instructor grading incursions into our Lodges.

Many Masons feel that the District Instructor grading program was poorly planned and implemented as well as being fraught with inconsistencies, unfairness, excessive subjectivity and prejudices as well as personal whims of the evaluators. Further, the evaluators appear to change objectives and emphasis from Lodge to Lodge and from evaluation period to evaluation period which creates an environment of counter productivity as well as a negative impact upon the credibility of the administrators of the program. It is the opinion of most Masons that District Instructors should be used for educational purposes only rather than a cadre of individuals to intimidate, persecute and destroy the good will of the Masons in the jurisdiction through undeserved embarrassment. Nearly every District Instructor I or anyone else has discussed the subject with relates that they received no training for the evaluation instrument, no training in the evaluation process and they all related a different set of reasoning and purposes of the program indicating a lack of training, planning and clear objectives. There is no definitive way established to determine an error other than by the subjective whim of the evaluator. This, in itself, makes every call questionable and that makes this a destructive program to Masonry. We have seen members who would not accept positions in local Lodges this Masonic year after the last round of grading. Some members have not been seen in Lodge since the reports were sent out on the last visits. The mistrust, anxiety, and feelings of utter disgust have caused the lodges to lose the support and good will of some of our members. In fact, I have been told by several District Instructors that they

are considering not taking additional appointments as District Instructors.

The one thing that tells me that this program should have been trashed from the very beginning is that I have yet to find a District Instructor who really wanted to administer this type of program because they understood the fallout it would create. Secondly, at a Forum, I asked a member of the Committee on Work why they would recommend such a questionable program and he told me that it was his recommendation not to implement the program. His opinion and caution was thrown to the wayside. When the major players are against such a questionable program it should never be forced upon a group of individuals who are essentially volunteers and have the option of taking their time & resources elsewhere. Is this the type of legacy anyone would desire to leave behind.

The Holiday season is quickly arriving and Lodges have started planning their charitable activities for the season, fund raisers, Fantastic teeth programs, Holiday gatherings and other activities for this time of the Masonic year. We continue to have an above average number of petitions and are busy conferring Degrees and teaching new Masons their Masonic work.

There are numerous other activities taking place in the District and are covered in separate stories spread across the pages of this newsletter.

Our next MWSA meeting will be held on the **fourth Thursday of October, 2017** at the Old Union Community Center. Refreshments will begin at 6:00 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. We are looking forward to seeing everyone there. Bring a brother Mason who hasn't yet attended the meetings. Brothers, don't forget that being a few minutes late doesn't mean you are not welcome. Try inviting a Brother from outside our District. We know that many

do not mind travelling as they have come to and assisted in many of our recent conferral of Degrees.

The MWSA Newsletter wants to print news from your Lodge or OES Chapter, but we need it reported to us so we can give the activities coverage. This would apply to happenings in the future that your Lodge would like to announce or reporting completed activities you would just like everybody to know about. You may contact me at 903/577-3233 or alvinrexmccgee@hotmail.com or Joe Reynolds, Newsletter Editor, at the “**contact us**” button that appears on the MWSA#6 website to report the news. If you choose to communicate by email make sure you also leave a good phone number so we can reach you in case we need to clear anything prior to publishing.

Our web site is mwsa6.org.

MWSA OFFICERS



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Omaha Order of the Eastern Star has initiation for new member

by Rex McGee

Omaha chapter # 997 of the Order of the Eastern Star met at the David Elliot Lodge in Omaha to initiate a new candidate into the order. The Chapter served refreshments to the participants and visiting members for the initiation.

The Order of the Eastern Star is a Masonic-related fraternity of women and men dedicated to charity, truth and loving kindness. Although not a part of the Masonic fraternity, membership is based on a Masonic affiliation or relationship, a belief in God, and a desire to acquire additional knowledge and for self improvement.

The degrees of the Order of the Eastern Star teach lessons of fidelity, constancy, loyalty, faith and love.

These degrees are presented in a beautiful ritualistic ceremony designed to not only teach the lessons, but also to provide insight for future study and understanding.

Local Eastern Star Chapters select their own charities and places of service in their own communities. Some statewide projects include scholarships for ministerial students, other general scholarships for youth, and supporting a home for aged members. Each year special charities are selected for that year's emphasis and might include volunteer programs in elementary schools or volunteers in literacy programs and specific community outreach.

Eastern Star proudly support young women's organizations such as Rainbow for Girls and Job's Daughters. Many Chapters actively support DeMolay for Boys.

The Eastern Star is also a social organization with frequent formal events and ceremonies. Being a member is a wonderful and a fulfilling way of life. Please ask an Eastern Star to tell you more about it!

Omaha chapter # 997 meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. with a meal prior to the meeting. All Eastern Star members are invited to attend.

THIS MONTH'S RIDDLE

Password

Q. Why do you need a password to enter a Masonic Lodge?

A. Because they don't sell tickets.

Past Masters and Politicians

Q. What's the difference between Past Masters and politicians?

A. Politicians want to change things.

Rhinoceros

Q. What's the difference between a Freemason and a rhinoceros?

A. Well, if you can't tell them apart you wouldn't make a very good Tyler.

Rough Stuff

Q. How did the ruffians try to steal the Master Mason's secrets?

A. They served Hiram Abiff in the temple.

The AGSW and the Funeral

Q. What does an Assistant Grand Superintendent of Workings have in common with a body at a funeral?

A. The show wouldn't be the same without them, but nobody expects them to say very much.

The Fellowcraft and the Tiger No.1

Q. What would you get if you mixed a Fellowcraft and a tiger?

A. A tiger.

The Fellowcraft and the Tiger No.2

Q. What happened to the Fellowcraft?

A. He's gone into the middle chamber.

Frank Sexton Lodge confers Entered Apprentice Masons Degree on September 20, 2017

Members of Frank Sexton Lodge gathered at the Lodge in Pittsburg to confer an Entered Apprentice Masons Degree upon a petitioner.

The Lodge served a meal on the occasion and everyone enjoyed an opportunity to socialize prior to the Degree. After the meal & social hour everyone adjourned to the Lodge Room for the conferral of the Degree.

Rhett McCullough, Past Master served as the Degree Master and directed the other members through the rights of passage for the new initiate.

After the Degree was conferred, Joe Reynolds, Worshipful Master of Frank Sexton Lodge, assumed his duties in the East and gave everyone an opportunity to congratulate the new Mason and wish him well. The candidate was then given an opportunity to say a few words before the Lodge was closed.

A FULL MASONIC NAME

Hiram Abiff Boaz was born on December 18, 1866, at Murray, Kentucky. He moved to Texas at an early age. In 1891 he was ordained a Methodist minister. In 1922 he was elected a Bishop of the church. He became a member of Granger Lodge No. 677 of Texas. When he received his third degree, a large attended because of the unusual name of the new member. He served as Grand Chaplain of Texas on 1953.

This brother had many interesting experiences connected with his name. He never tired of telling of the time he was traveling in the Holy Land and arrived at a Mosque in Hebron on the wrong day for visitors. When he told then his name was Boaz, it seemed as if he had given a magic password. Others were not admitted that day, but they opened the gates for him.

THIS MONTH'S HUMOR

A man is walking through the recreation ground of his local park when he notices a huge fight in full fury on the football pitch he is passing. "What's going on?" he asks a spectator watching from the side-lines. The other replies "It's a match between the Masons and the Knights of St Columba." "What's the score?" asks the first man. "I don't know, it's a secret."

Master Mason Degree conferred at David Elliott Lodge # 364

A Master Mason Degree was conferred at David Elliott Lodge as a joint project with the Masters, Wardens & Secretary's Association (MWSA) of District 6. The MWSA prepared the meal for the attendees at the Degree as well as participated in the Degree by using their meeting night and regular attendance in soliciting members to fill in where it was needed in the Degree. This method allowed David Elliott Lodge to host nine past District Deputy Grand Masters, have representatives from eleven different Lodges, and from three different Districts.

Many Lodges in District 6 needs outside help to put on a Masters Degree due to the many parts needing an individual for each specific part. This is actually an issue faced by many Lodges in this part of the State. The numbers of nights that are available for conferral of Degrees are few. The Degree being scheduled on the MWSA meeting night served numerous purposes and benefitted the MWSA, and the Lodges of our District. This may be something we would like to do a couple of times a year to help out the local Lodges and get us out to see if some of the work we are supporting is actually showing fruits of all of our joint labors.

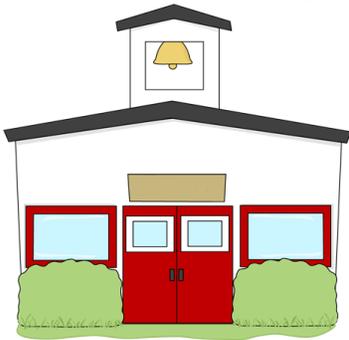
The new Master Mason had a few minutes, after the degree was completed, to receive congratulations from

his Masonic Brothers and was then given an opportunity to speak to his Brothers as the newest Master Mason in the District. He will be completing his Master's work in the next few months under the guidance of his instructor.

Many writers and thinkers have tried to define Freemasonry but it really defeats definition. It is too complex, too profound in conception, to easily expressed in words. Perhaps the simplest and best definition of all is the phrase "the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God." Our Masonic forefathers had an understanding of human needs and human aspirations. They may never have dreamed of the mindless computer which governs our lives, or the fission of matter which threatens our lives, but they understood human nature and what motivates the spirit of man. Thus from a simple process of using stone and mortar for building they progressed to the most important of life's functions, the building of character.

Louis L. Williams

Old Union Community Center



Old Union Community Center (OUCC) is planning their Annual Fall Festival for the second Saturday in October, 2017. (October 14, 2017) Dinner will be served starting at 4:30 p.m. until about 6:00 p.m. Late comers for dinner as well as take out will be able to participate while other activities are taking place on the other end of the Center.

We will have a cake auction and then the afternoon will be highlighted with entertainment by THE "C", Dale Cummings, a local singing artist that is extremely popular in this area. He does a prepared program but has been convinced to do a few requests.

The Meal Menu will be Chicken Spaghetti, Salad & Dessert, plus a drink for \$7.00. We will also have a good chili recipe

for the connoisseurs of fine country chili, salad, dessert & drink for \$7.00. Both items will be available for carry out in **sturdy carry out containers.**

Come participate in an excellent meal with your friends and neighbors, help the Community maintain its building, and enjoy a singing performance that would be worth the time & price by itself.

Old Union Community Center

Three miles east of Mt. Pleasant
on Hwy 67 East across from
Old Union Baptist Church

Saturday, October 14, 2017
starting at 4:30 p.m.
until 8:00 p.m. or so.

SICKNESS & DISTRESS

By Rex McGee

Nursing Homes, Assisted living, and Retirement Homes

Jim Clifton -----Nursing Home in Hughes Springs
Bennie Stevens-----Nursing Home in Hughes Springs
Burnis Covington-----Nursing Home in Mt. Pleasant
Glendle Lange-----Nursing Home in Mt. Pleasant
Sybil Walton-----Nursing Home in Daingerfield
Ray Burgin-----Nursing Home in Mt. Pleasant
Jerry Green -----Nursing Home in Paris

Illness, Injuries, Surgery, & Rehabilitation

Henry Moles-----Treatment
Randy Brock-----Treatment
Bobby Goswick & Wife-----Illness
J.N. Duck-----Ongoing illness
J.D Baumgardner-----Illness
Tommy G. Heard-----Convalescing
Joann Floyd-----Tests in Dallas
Lilma Godsey-----Tests & Surgery in Tyler Hospital

Deaths

Bill Butler-----Member of Temple # 70
Harry Eversole-----Member of Frank Sexton # 206
Billy J. Shaddix-----Member of Frank Sexton # 206

Contact information for reporting Sickness & Distress:

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Older freemasons told to smile and stop criticizing bid to attract millennials

(This article was sent to me several years ago and I do not know the author. I remember seeing the information in print, but it was part of a larger article and has evidently been shortened by the person who revised it and sent it out. I am posting the revised article because I think it speaks to several issues related to the dwindling members of the Masonic Lodge.)

Senior brethren are told to look like they are enjoying themselves as recruiting younger members is hailed as the new hope for halting the decline of freemasonry.

Older freemasons are being told to smile, look like they are enjoying themselves, and avoid criticizing as the movement seeks to keep younger masons and halt a decline in membership that has seen lodges closing at an ever increasing rate over the past decades.

Every mason has heard the expression “but we’ve always done it that way before.” The fact that it is used as the butt of Masonic jokes serves as proof positive of its longevity and power in maintaining a status quo. However, the status quo is draining our buckets. Many Masons do not enjoy the traditional Masonic meal that is largely comprised of recitation of minutes, tedious debates over how funds are dispersed and arguments over when and how to salute the Worshipful Master. Clearly these are not the things that appeal to the men who are leaving our ranks. If they were, they’d be with us still. But instead of spending our energies trying to retain them,we devote our efforts to finding their replacements.

For as long as I have been a Freemason, we have been trying to fill a bucket that has a sizable hole in it. Like Henry in the famed children’s song, we have whined through the infinite loop of reasons why we can’t fix the bucket and like Jack in the classic nursery rhyme, have rolled down the hill, our empty bucket tumbling behind us. Like children on a bus trip we have done our rendition of 99 Bottles of Beer by repeating the same pattern of phrases ad nauseam, as one by one our members – like the bottles of beer on the wall – vanish. Clearly, Ritual is a beautiful thing to many masons, but to the

majority, it is simply a small part of the joy of masonry; And when the small percentage of ritual experts insist on being the Captain of the ship of masonry and deride the vast majority of masons to being a lower caste of polymorphic soldiers one sees a discarding of the shackles of masonry. Experts have their place; however, in most instances their place is within that particular groupand most likely not running the ship of state.

Unfortunately, we are not doing a good enough job identifying what it is that the men who are joining are looking for, which is – in almost all cases – that which they cannot get any place else – FREEMASONRY! They are looking to be educated in the Masonic Craft, in the art of being a gentleman in a world that has largely forgotten what one was, and in how they can be part of – to quote my jurisdiction’s ritual – “the society of men who prize honor and virtue above the external advantages of rank and fortune.” In short, they want to be taught the things about themselves and the world in which they live that only Freemasonry can teach them. If we cannot teach them because we do not know these things ourselves, then we must learn alongside them. Then, and only then, can the hole in our Masonic bucket be truly repaired and we can return to that growth that once allowed us to select men who would most benefit from Freemasonry’s teaching and most benefit Freemasonry by their character and their conduct.

It will not be an easy task fixing this half-century old hole in our Masonic bucket; but it will not be possible at all until we accept that a failure to do so is the cause of our decline and the harbinger of our demise.

Ego is a strange thing. We all should have a certain amount of it to demonstrate our pride in our abilities, in our accomplishments, and in our self-respect. It is only when we get to the point that we tend to believe that we’re better, smarter or more important than the next fellow that ego gets in our way.

Masters are not the only ones whose egos have a tendency to hurt the Craft. Longfellow said, “Into each life some rain must fall....” The phrase might well be reworded to “In almost every lodge there is a nitpicker.” Or so it seems. There are some of our brethren who are never satisfied. They look for an excuse to: criticize; to complain; to “jaw”, to sound off; to grouch;--to nitpick. Their ego, as shown by their need to be heard, is frequently a thorn in the side of the Master and officers. They have a tendency to ruffle feathers.

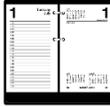
And then there are PAST officers whose egos won't let them relinquish the gavel. Two people with their hands on the steering wheel at the same time can make it an unpleasant trip for the other passengers. If the Master is not in control of the lodge, it's an unpleasant experience for the brethren. The old expression, too many cooks spoil the broth, is equally applicable to the management of a lodge or a grand lodge.

October 24th – Temple Lodge #70, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 26th – 6th District MWSA, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 30th – Oasis Lodge #79, Training and Practice Session

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



October 2nd – Oasis Lodge #79, Training and Practice Session

October 3rd – David Elliott Lodge #364, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 3rd – Border Chapter #211, OES, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 5th – Frank Sexton Lodge #206, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 9th – Avery Chapter #252, OES, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 9th – Frank Sexton Lodge #206, Entered Apprentice Degree, 6:00 p.m.

October 9th – Oasis Lodge #79, Training and Practice Session

October 10th – Iron Bluff Lodge #1376, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 10th – Pittsburg Chapter #381, OES, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 12th – Daingerfield Chapter #906, OES, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 16th – Oasis Lodge #79, Training and Practice Session

October 17th – Oasis Lodge #79, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 17th – Linden Chapter #576, OES, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 17th – Omaha Chapter #997, OES, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 17th – North East Texas Shrine Club, Monthly Meeting

October 19th – Mt. Vernon Lodge #691, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 23rd – New Boston Chapter #700, OES, Monthly Stated Meeting

October 23rd – Oasis Lodge #79, Training and Practice Session

Shrine Club VP carries three Master Masons to Hella Temple for initiation

by Rex McGee

The Shrine Club held its monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of the month at Herschel's Restaurant in Mt. Pleasant, Texas.

Shrine Club Vice-President, Jerry Rooks, took the reins of leadership in September as President Paul Dempsey and his bride, Alice was vacationing in the Western United States.

Noble Rooks gave a report on his trip to Hella Temple to carry several Masons who were joining Hella Temple as new Nobles. He said it was an interesting day and everyone attended enjoyed themselves.

Shriner's in the Omaha area are having a Bucket Brigade fund raiser on October 21, 2017 from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m., weather permitting, at the four way stop in Omaha. The intersecting highways are Highway 67 and Highway 259 in Omaha. The funds raised will go to the Shriner's Hospitals for Crippled Children. All Shriner's & Masons are encouraged to drive through and drop a few dollars in one of the buckets.

The Northeast Texas Shrine Club will have its next stated meeting at 6:30 p.m. on October 17, 2017 at Herschel's Restaurant in Mt. Pleasant, Texas. You need not be a member to attend. Bring your wife or a friend as we always enjoy having visitors.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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