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FREEMASON

On the Masonic Road

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A Time to Travel and Remember

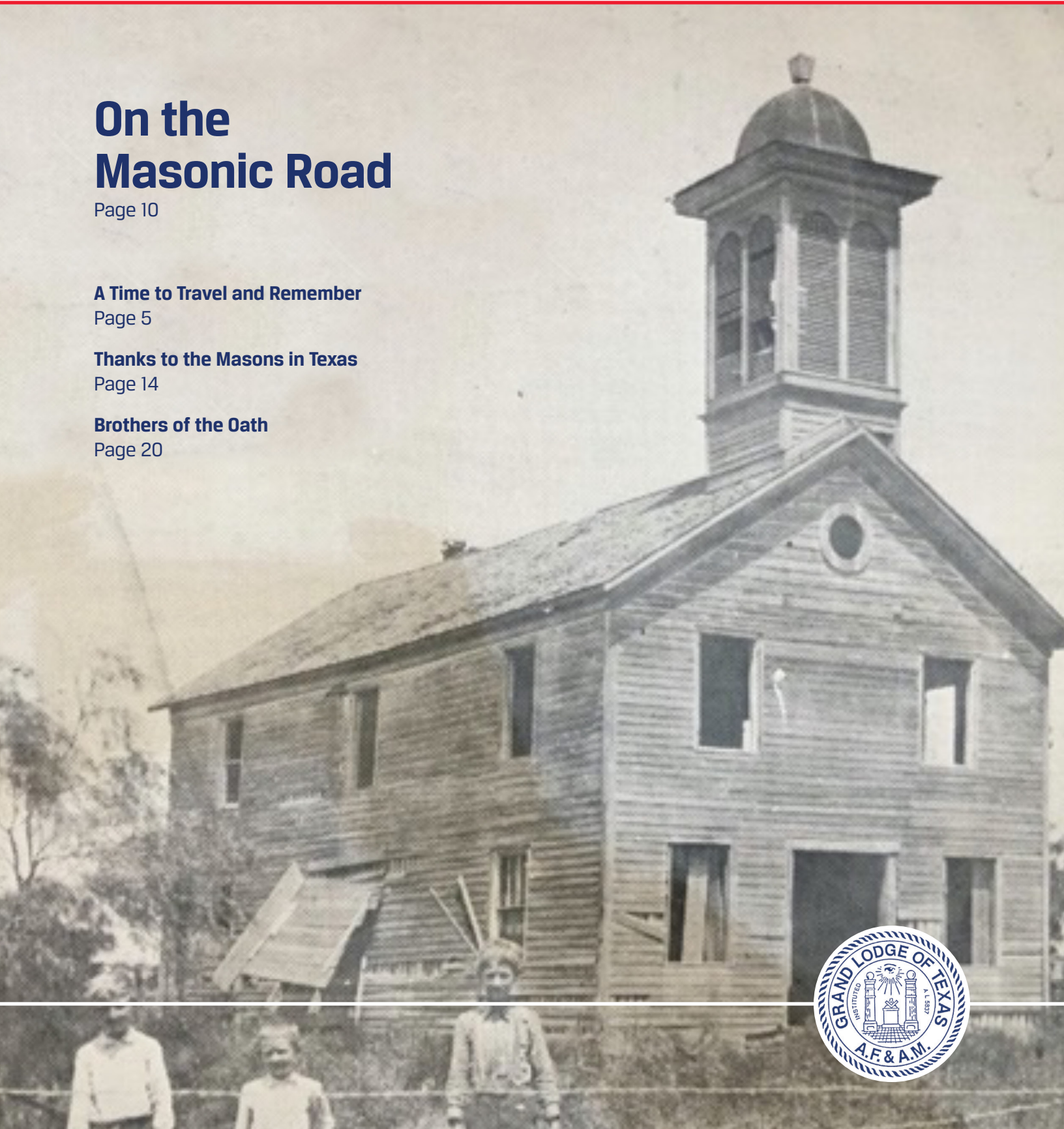
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First Free Public School in Jacksboro, ca. 1903.
The boys are Mizell, Roy, and Cless, Stewart

The Texas Freemason Magazine is an official publication of the Grand Lodge of Texas A. F. & A. M. It is published four times a year for the members of Texas Lodges and subscribers. Spring and winter issues are available in print. Summer and fall issues are available in PDF format at <https://grandlodgeoftexas.org>. Opinions expressed by the Editors and contributing writers do not necessarily reflect official positions of the Grand Lodge of Texas Copyright 2020, by the Trustees of the Grand Lodge of Texas. All rights reserved.

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News and articles from around the state will continue to be published in a web-based format on the Grand Lodge of Texas website The Grand Lodge website is accessible at <http://www.grandlodgeoftexas.org>

Please continue to send your articles and Lodge events and news to the Editors of The Texas Freemason Magazine.

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Archives

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A WORD FROM THE Grand Master



Brethren of Texas,

While traveling this great state for the past five years I have often been asked questions about the continuity of programs and policies from one year to the next. This has resulted in the 2022 Team focusing on some of the great ideas from the previous administration. I wanted to highlight a few of these here.

First, everyone will remember the “Bring a Brother Back” theme. While discussing this with Grand Master Curry last year, he expressed the thought that the best way to move this idea forward was for each Lodge to hold a social event twice a year. That idea dovetailed perfectly with the 2022 plans and is currently one of the Vanguard requirements.

In 2021, the Communications Committee started a Lodge Officer Newsletter, which was meant to keep the chief officers of the Lodge informed of important events and the administrative duties of their respective offices. The Committee has just issued its third newsletter of the year and has already begun to draft the fourth. A quick shout out to Brother James Hoffpauir for his invaluable work on this project.

2021 also pioneered a new way for DDGMs to communicate with the Lodges in their districts by sending a pre-meeting survey prior to the official visit. This survey allows the DDGM in advance to look for ways to help the Lodge and to identify areas where guidance may be needed.

One unplanned line of continuity came from Grand Master Curry’s Recommendation No. 3, which gave the Worshipful Master and Wardens of a Lodge an additional option to fulfill the proficiency requirement by attending a Committee on Work forum. This recommendation was adopted by the Grand West and has resulted in record forum attendance in the months leading up to installations.

The continued implementation of our well-respected DEOs and DCOs was an easy choice. They continue to take on new roles and have become essential components of the District Teams.

Finally, we come to what I consider our most important point of continuity and a huge focus for the 2021 year: our Grand Lodge committees. Last year, Grand Master Curry painstakingly assigned duties to each committee in addition to the duties prescribed within our laws. The 2022 Team built on this concept with the first-ever Committee Day, which took place on April 2 in the lower auditorium of the Grand Lodge building. It was an overwhelming success with 30 committees reporting and 65 Brothers in attendance; three of whom were not even on a Grand Lodge committee but cared enough about the business of their Grand Lodge to show up and learn.

One of the best things to come out of Committee Day was the interaction of the various committees and the “cross-pollination” of ideas. It reaffirmed what I have always believed: our committees are the bedrock of our Grand Lodge. Each new year may bring new ideas or shifts in emphasis or direction, but the committees provide both stability and continuity and maintain our great Fraternity along the path of prosperity. The next Committee Day is set for November 12, and I hope to see you all there.

I’ll leave you with this quote from C. S. Lewis: “Mere change is not growth. Growth is the synthesis of change and continuity, and where there is no continuity there is no growth.”

Fraternally,

Brad Billings
Grand Master 2022



GRAND LODGE

A WORD FROM THE Grand Secretary



Brethren,

As we march towards the sweltering summer months here in Texas, I would like to update you all on the exciting things we have planned. I would first like to thank Grand Master Billings and his team for the great job they have been doing, and I look forward to the rest of this year's events. If you have not attended one of the Grand Master's weekend conferences, you are missing out on a wonderful opportunity for fellowship with your brethren. The dates for the remaining conferences can be found on the Grand Lodge of Texas website.

Registration for Officer Leadership Training is open and available via Grandview in the Events Tab. If your Lodge already participates in the program, we thank you for your support! If your Lodge does not currently participate, I would encourage you to consider sending your officers to the training. The information presented at the conference will give your upcoming officers the tools they will need to be successful in their roles as leaders. The weekend conferences are also an excellent opportunity to network with

other brothers advancing through the various leadership roles in the Lodge.

We are once again conducting our Secretary/Treasurer Schools of Instruction. There is no cost for the one-day training session, but we do need an RSVP from you to ensure we have enough space at the venue. Please RSVP through the member portal under the events tab. The schools last year were a great success, and we hope this year will be even better.

The schools will be held on the following dates:

August 13

Dallas

August 20

Houston

September 3

Corpus Christi

September 17

Waco

October 22

Tyler

November 5

Lubbock

November 19

New Braunfels

Please contact my office should you have any questions.

The Grand Lodge of Texas online store is up and running. You can find all the 2022 and 2021 merchandise, as well as select items from previous years. Many of the items from previous years will be available for sale at a significant discount. All Lodge forms and awards are now available for purchase online. I encourage all Lodge Secretaries to use the online store to order Lodge supplies. As an aside, I'd like to remind everyone that Grand Lodge Service Awards will now be printed and shipped on July 14th. All the information regarding the new process is available in the Grand Secretary's Monthly Communication.

Finally, I have continued working to improve the communication from the Grand Secretary's Office to the constituent Lodges and improve the overall service you receive from my office and will continue to do so throughout my tenure as your Grand Secretary. I want to thank my entire staff for their hard work and dedication. The day-to-day activities of the Grand Secretary's Office would not take place without their efforts.

Fraternally,
Justin B. Duty
Grand Secretary

A Time to Travel and Remember

By Roger Landry, Staff Writer



The Alamo Observance March 5th 2022

The Masons of Texas will no-doubt, “Remember the Alamo.” This battle-cry is often recalled with Texas pride and as Masons we are well aware of its significance. However, sometimes we need to proclaim to those unaware of this historic event by not simply stating this cry, but by setting aside our busy schedules and join a larger body in Masonic fellowship on a particular day of the year, and demonstrate to the world how we, as Masons, “Remember the Alamo.”

With his childhood visits and fondness of those Texans that stood up to the siege at the Alamo, this remembrance was a challenge set forth from our new Grand Master, Brad Billings, to the many thousands of Masons across the State. His challenge actually began nearly a year before the March 5th, 2022 celebration. He

dreamed of having “A thousands Masons” in Grand procession, marching in celebration of our brave ancestral Texas Masons.

This challenge would be easy were it the 1950’s, but in 2022, with the Fraternity coming out of nearly two years of a world-wide pandemic, this would be tall order for any leader.

With the help of many Masons sending the word out to the Lodges across the State, and with some interesting social media posts chronologically describing the daily events from 1836 at the Alamo itself, the big weekend was approaching fast.

With sold out hotels the night before and the major freeways busier than usual, the long awaited morning had arrived. All the downtown shops were open and busy, families were mingling, and slowly, larger and larger crowds of men in coats, ties, and aprons, began to fill the streets of downtown San Antonio.

GRAND LODGE



As the Masons began to form at the Scottish Rite Cathedral, several blocks away, everyone could see that this was going to be really big. With unusually beautiful weather for early March, the Grand procession underway, there were many hundreds of cameras and cell phones recording this wondrous day. A young man's dream had come true. Visiting Grand Masters from other States, City Mayors, and many other city Officials, were on hand to speak and to remember why they were all there.

The Grand Orator, R.◌W.◌ Chris Livingston, presented a stirring oration of the remembrance of our Texas Ancestors, the lives they lived and the resulting birth of a Republic." There was no question that he truly had this cram-packed standing room only crowd "Remembering the Alamo."

The Alamo, that terrific organization that promotes the remembrance and preservation of the Alamo, stated that on the somber, final day of Commemoration this year, Masonic Last Rites were given to the Freemasons who died defending the Alamo including James Bonham, James Bowie, David Crockett, Almaron Dickinson, and William Barret Travis. <https://www.thealamo.org/remember/commemoration/the-alamo-observance>

According to them, and based on historical records, this was the first time Masonic Last Rites were given to the Alamo Defenders, making it a truly historic occasion.

On this day, March 5th, 2022, well over a thousand spectators and participants witnessed and remembered that for thirteen days, brave Texans fought for some semblance of independence, they had hoped in vein that reinforcements would arrive. On the early morning of March 6th, 1836, all the Texan Mason combatants in the Alamo laid dead. They refused to surrender to continued and certain tyranny. Their legacy has lived on to inspire novels, films, and thousands of articles, journaling the event.

Months after the battle, the burned remains of the Alamo defenders were laid to rest near the site of the Alamo. Presiding at the ceremony was Brother Juan Sequin.

The words spoken at the interment lived on as well:

"The spirit of liberty appears to be looking down from its elevated throne saying: Behold your Brothers: Crockett, Bowie, Travis. They preferred to die a thousand times rather than submit themselves to the tyrants yoke. Their sacrifices are worthy of inclusion in the pages of history. What a brilliant example for others to follow."

After the laying of wreaths and honoring our fallen defenders, The Grand Master addressed the now very attentive and silent crowd. The wonderful words spoken by our Grand Master as he stood before the huge crowd, wearing that very colorful apron, that beautiful jewel, and that incredible hat, convinced all present that Texas Masonry is our past, to truly live a life that is cherished by those around you, and that Masonry must also be our future.



According to them, and based on historical records, this was the first time Masonic Last Rites were given to the Alamo Defenders, making it a truly historic occasion.



After the celebrations concluded, the families and Masons enjoyed wonderful fellowship with each other and then attended the nearby Grand Masters Southwest Regional Conference hosted by Alamo Masonic Lodge No. 44 with its own celebration of 175 years strong. The meal and the incredible time at the conference will be remembered by so many.

The Grand Master also has a dream of getting his Masons to travel. Travel to places they have seldom or have never seen. His weekend long conferences and historical Masonic observances are designed to get the Masons out and to see each other again. To experience things, places, and events, that will make life long memories.

As I attended this event with my family and grandchildren, it was so wonderful to have them see it as well. Seeing so many Masons from my own Lodge and still others that traveled many hours to witness this celebration was unforgettable. May we always “Remember the Alamo!”



A Look Back



Preface to the newly Adopted **OFFICIAL MONITOR** of the Grand Lodge of A. F. & A. M. State of Texas - 1922

During the 1918 Communication of the Grand Lodge a resolution was introduced and adopted, as appears on page 200 of the printed proceedings, calling attention to the fact that the price of the Taylor-Hamilton Monitor, under the then system of management, had increased from fifty cents to one dollar and fifty cents per copy, and requesting the Committee on Printing to secure the lowest bid from the then publishers. The Grand Secretary, in his 1919 report, stated that he had been unable to secure a satisfactory bid from the publishers who were custodians of the copyright, but had received a satisfactory bid from a concern which proposed to electrotype the plates, the same to be the property of the Grand Lodge. (See P. P. 1919, page 138.) This report was referred to the Committee on Grand Officers' Reports, which rendered a detailed report and introduced the following resolution, which was adopted. (See P. P. 1919, Page 314.)

Your Committee is most thoroughly of the opinion that this Grand Lodge should at once relieve itself of all such co-partnerships and entangling financial alliances. We are fully competent, and every legitimate interest demands, that we should provide our own authorized Monitor, and own outright the copyright and plates for same, as well as for our laws. To meet any existing or possible emergency, we know of no reason why this Grand Lodge may not have published our old Taylor Monitor, which our subordinates are already authorized to adopt and use. This would give us a much smaller volume, and one which we could furnish to the Craft at not to exceed one-third the present cost of the Taylor-Hamilton Monitor. We therefore offer the following, viz:

Resolved, That the Grand Master appoint a committee of three with our Grand Secretary as its Chairman, whose duty it shall be to make all necessary investigation and secure all needed bids, etc., and to report at our next Annual Communication definite recommendations looking to the securing and printing of a Monitor for this Grand Lodge; said contract whenever made to provide for the copyright and plates to be

vested in and retained by this Grand Lodge, and further, Resolved, That if in the judgment of the above named Committee, the emergency should demand, they are hereby authorized and instructed to have a sufficient number of the Taylor Monitor published to meet the urgent demand, provided, however, same may be furnished to the purchaser at a price not to exceed 50c per copy, and further that any and all such contracts for printing shall be first approved by the Grand Master.

Fraternally submitted,

W. M. FLY,

NAT M. WASHER,

WILLIAM JAMES,

J. J. DAVIS,

JOHN R. ARNOLD,

GUS BRANDT,

Committee.

The Grand Master then appointed the following committee: M. W. Pearson, Grand Secretary, Chairman; K. Robey and J. F. Scott.

This committee rendered a full and complete report on revision of the Monitor, By-Laws and Forms at the 1920 Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, which was referred to the Jurisprudence Committee, as appears on page 171 of the printed proceedings.

The Jurisprudence Committee approved the report of the Revision Committee at the 1921 Annual Communication, and the report was finally approved and adopted on December 7th, 1921. The By-Laws and Forms have been eliminated from the Monitor and will be found with the Constitution and Digest.



Grand Lodge Committee on By-Laws

By Bill Crow, Associate Editor

Governance and purpose are provisions that all societies must follow to ensure that consistency and function are established. Our Grand Lodge of Texas, its subordinate Lodges, appendant Masonic organizations and service organizations all have laws, policies and procedures, and By-Laws, by which governance and purpose can be measured and corrected, or revised.

The Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas, A. F. & A. M., are rules and regulations that guide and ensure consistency in governance and purpose for all of our Texas Masonic Lodges. Our autonomous Lodge By-Laws incorporate and amplify the statues of Grand Lodge Law and provide a means to govern our Lodges, while conforming to those Laws of The Grand Lodge.

The Committee on By-Laws is a Standing Committee consisting of seven individuals that have responsibility and authority for the receipt, examination, and approval of By-Laws submitted from Texas Masonic Lodges. The Committee on By-Laws consists of seven members who are responsible to the Trustees of the Grand Lodge. The term of office of each member of the Committee on By-Laws is seven years. Their work is governed by The Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas as defined below in references to the appropriate articles of law.

All by-laws and amendments submitted for approval to the Grand Lodge Committee on By-Laws, must be filed with the Grand Secretary's Office no later than September 1st of each year. The structure of Lodge By-Laws are set forth in Form 23, appended to The Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, as a guideline to be used by existing Lodges, and Lodges working under dispensation in preparing or amending its By-Laws. The use of Form 23 by existing Lodges is recommended, but is not required. If the Form 23 is adopted by an existing Lodge, it is not necessary that those By-Laws be submitted to the Grand Lodge for approval. However, a true and exact copy of the Form 23 By-Laws shall be forwarded immediately upon approval by the Lodge, to the Grand Secretary and filed in the archives of his office.

The Grand Lodge of Texas Committee on By-Laws reported, in the 2020-2021 Masonic year, that there were eighteen Lodges and two Masters, Wardens and Secretaries Association (MWSA) By-Laws approved by the Grand Lodge Committee on By-Laws. There were five holdover Lodges By-Laws approved from 2020, thirty-three Lodges and one MWSA By-Laws approved by the Committee, for a total of fifty-nine Masonic Lodge and service organizations By-Laws approved. There were six Lodge By-Laws disapproved, and three Lodge By-Laws were received and approved for name changes. During his period, a total of sixty-eight sets of By-Laws were received, reviewed, and approved, by the Committee.

There are several articles and two forms in The Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas that provide guidance for the By-Laws for Texas Masonic Lodges:

CHAPTER 16

TITLE I, Article 105 and Art. 126d. By-Laws.

The Committee on By-Laws shall examine, consider and report its conclusions on all by-laws and amendments to by-laws of Subordinate Lodges which may be referred to it by this Grand Lodge or the Grand Master.

CHAPTER 5

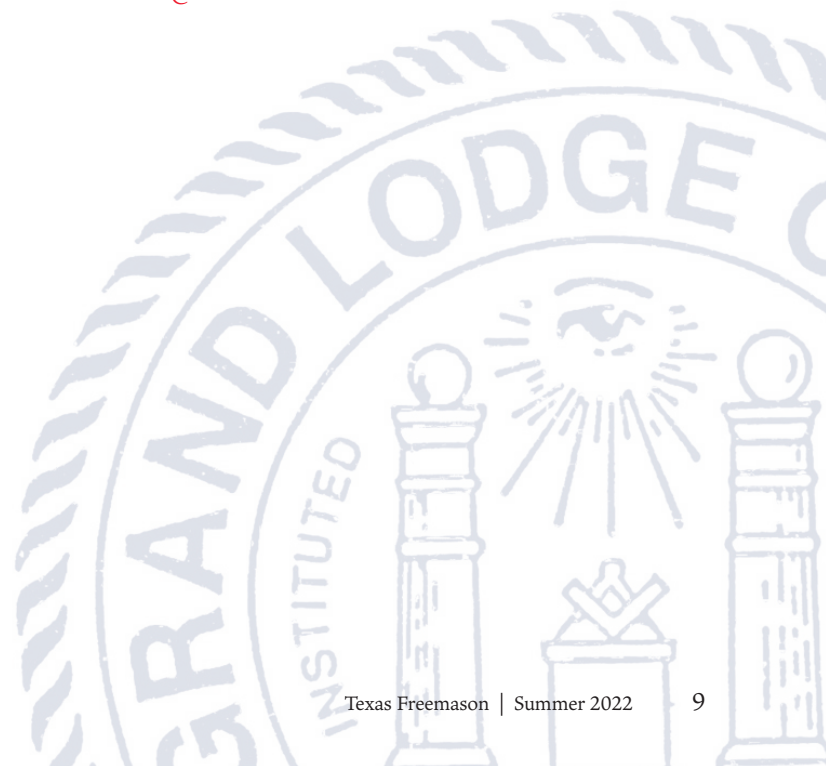
TITLE II: Article 218: Presentation and Adoption of By-Laws, Art. 219. By-Laws:

Approval by Grand Lodge, Art. 220. By-Laws: Void if Conflicting with Constitution or Laws, Art. 221. By-Laws: Changes Not Requiring Approval, Art. 222. Lodge Seal: Approval of Grand Lodge, and,

DIVISION IV, Masonic Forms:

Form 23 and Form 23a, Used by Masonic Lodges and Master, Wardens and Secretaries Association

The Chairman of the Grand Lodge of Texas, Committee on By-Laws, is Brother Dennis Reader. If you have any questions or have interest in learning more about the Committee on By-Laws, you may contact him at: ddreader@comcast.net





On the Masonic Road

By Bill Crow, Staff Writer

How often do you stop what you are engaged in, and simply pause for a moment and count your blessings? We all know and feel there are events that alter and change our lives, for the better or sometimes for the worse. Have you ever considered that sometimes heinous and difficult events in our lives may be a blessing for others, as they respond to that difficulty?

On March 21, 2022, an F-3 tornado with wind speeds of 140-150 miles per hour rampaged and destroyed a significant part of the city of Jacksboro, Texas. At approximately 3:10 P.M. a tornado warning was issued for Jack County. Minutes later, a tornado, approximately 2 miles wide, began its path of destruction through Jacksboro.

While assessing the damage during the aftermath of the tornado, it was determined there were in excess of 80 homes in the southwest part of Jacksboro that were destroyed or heavily damaged by the storm. The Jacksboro High School and Elementary Schools also sustained major damage. Thankfully, there were no fatalities, only minor injuries that were identified throughout the city.

In the wake of the terror and devastation caused by the tornado, many witnesses began to share their recollection of the storm. Of the many that were heard, there is a story that will warm your heart and cause you to have pride in the manner, professionalism, and dedication, of the teachers and workers in the Jacksboro High School and Elementary School, who provided leadership and protection to the children during and immediately after the tornado.

School was just letting out for the day; the mass of students were gathering to be picked-up by their parents under the safety and leadership of the staff at the elementary and high schools when the alarm was sounded.

Immediately, because of the intensity of the storm, the school staff, teachers, administrators, and workers, began to move the students to a planned place of safety, comforting them and keeping them calm. The tornado hit with magnum force and the school teachers and staff stayed with the students prepared to offer their lives to protect them while the tornado tore their building to pieces.

Yet, there is another story, a story that will be recollected with pride for a small band of Brothers in Jacksboro and some of its surrounding communities. This story is about the Fort Richardson Masonic Lodge No. 320 in Jacksboro, Texas. It is a story for today as well as a look back into Jacksboro, Texas history and the history of Fort Richardson Masonic Lodge No. 320.

History tells us that the March 21, 2022, tornado was not the only noteworthy event that damaged the city of Jacksboro. On Monday, the morning of November 26, 1962, a devastating fire destroyed the Jacksboro High School, displacing the entire high school student body and causing the community to come together to find locations where the high school could continue classes. The officers of Fort Richardson Lodge immediately offered the use of the Lodge building, as did the leadership of the First Baptist Church and Memorial Christian Church. The owners of the Cooper Building, soon followed suit with temporary classrooms, offered, and then accepted by the school board to be set up there as well, all in Jacksboro. Mrs. Martha Hackley Salmon, now Chairwoman of the Jacksboro School Board, was a student in the High School in 1962 when the fire occurred. She had this to say about the City of Jacksboro and those that provided space for the continuance of the 2022 school year ... "The city of Jacksboro is a great community of proud people that will quickly come together and repair the damage of today

just like in 1962. This Masonic Lodge is special to me as well as others because its members work hard to help the city. They participate in everything, either collectively as a Lodge or individually, volunteering as firemen or in other capacities where they can help others and such. My Grandfather and Father were both members of The Masonic Lodge here and I have proud memories of those times.”

Fort Richardson Masonic Lodge No.320 was chartered in 1870 and has continued in an unprecedented way to be an important part of the Jacksboro community. In the Lodge, a picture of the original building hangs on the wall of the Recreation Room. It was built in May 1870. It has a typed note that says;

“In this building was held the first Free Public School in Jacksboro as we know it today. This building was erected by Fort Richardson Masonic Lodge Number 320 A. F. & F. M., in May of 1870 on lot 6 of block 34 which is 226 West Pine street today and it faced East. The upstairs was for the Lodge and the ground floor was used as a Free Public School from 1870 until 1884. A community union school and a church were held in this building until 1884. It was known by everyone as the Masonic school room. The school room was also used for district court, the Community Christmas Tree, dances, etc. The Bell Tower was added in 1885 with a 100-pound bell. This building was used for Lodge purposes from 1870 until July of 1898 when the Lodge moved to Hensley Hall and the building was rented for mercantile storage. The photograph was taken around 1903 and the boys are Mizell, Roy, and Cless, Stewart. Mizell was a member of this Lodge.”

(Mizell's son, Ed Stewart, went on to become Worshipful Master of Fort Richardson Lodge. As Worshipful Master in 1962, he and his officers offered the use of the Lodge building to the school.)

A look back at the January 6, 1964 minutes of the Fort Richardson Masonic Lodge we read in part:

“Motion made by J. W. Hulsey, second by, William Fowler that Fort Richardson Lodge No. 320 lay the cornerstone in the new High School building now being erected. Lodge approved the motion and a committee of Brother Leon Hawkins, R. L. Moore, and Worshipful Master B. B. Davis, appointed to make the necessary arrangements for laying, also selection of stone, and other details. This is a special committee.”

“Motion made by Joe Gillespie, second by Lark Gunter that the following statement be entered in the minutes as of this 6th day of January, 1964, written by Brother William W. Dennis, Past District Deputy Grand Master for the 89th District”

“Whereas; Since the Jacksboro Public School system lost their school building because of fire and while a new building is being built, the Fort Richardson Lodge Recreation Room is being used for a classroom. The History department of Jacksboro High School now occupies the Recreation Room of Fort Richardson Lodge and the Teacher is Mrs. Bernice Hill who is a member of the Jacksboro Chapter of the Order of Eastern Star. The High School Building burned down on November 26, 1962. Fort Richardson Lodge immediately offered it to the school and the history department moved into the Recreation Room the next day.

Be it resolved that Fort Richardson Lodge number 320 is proud to be of service to the Jacksboro, Free Public School at any time and will endeavor to always exhibit a true Masonic image to the people of Jacksboro and the world at large.” Signed by; W. B. Hartrict, W. M. and Earl Hill, Secretary.



Well, they say “History repeats itself,” and as the terrible tornado event plays out, we find Fort Richardson Masonic Lodge No. 320 back supporting the Jacksboro community and Public School System again. Following the tornado event on March 21, 2022 the officers of Fort Richardson Lodge contacted the Jacksboro Public School Board offering to provide space for classrooms. On March 29, 2022, Third Grade students were in place at the Fort Richardson Lodge with their teachers, Mrs. Rater and Mrs. Davenport, in that same Lodge Recreation Room that was used by the Jacksboro Public School System from November 29, 1962 through June 1964.

Although this “On the Masonic Road” salutes the Fort Richardson Masonic Lodge No. 320 and the city of Jacksboro, Texas, all Texas Masons can be proud of what and all the Fort Richardson Lodge has and is doing for its community ... This is what Masons do ...

Our Masonic purpose is to help good men become better men and to help good communities become great communities. This is evidenced by what and how the Jacksboro citizens and our Masonic Lodge have once again come together for the good and greatness of the community.

When our Most Worshipful Grand Master, Bradley S. Billings, became aware of what was happening in Jacksboro and the involvement of the Fort Richardson Lodge he was taken with pride that Masonry, specifically Texas Masonry, was fulfilling its duty and obligations. Not because they had to, but because they wanted to, because they were a part of something bigger than themselves, something that molds people and cities together.

Shortly following notification of the Jacksboro situation, the Grand Master contacted several Grand Lodge Officers and planned a visit to Jacksboro and to the Fort Richardson Lodge to encourage and support

FEATURE

the Lodge and to offer resources to the city of Jacksboro that may be needed where appropriate.

The visit to the Fort Richardson Lodge by the Grand Master carried with it a very special and personal memory for our Grand Master; a meeting had been arranged for him to be introduced to the Principal of the Elementary School. Neither our Grand Master nor the Principal knew beforehand who they were meeting, as all either had been given was the title of the individual. As it turns out the Principal is Mr. Michael Qualls, who just happens to be a cousin of Grand Master Billings. This is one of those inexplicable occurrences that can only be attributed to divine intervention. What an incredible coincidence and opportunity for family members to share a significant and meaningful common purpose and experience!



While visiting the Lodge, our Grand Master and Grand Lodge Officers were able to see and visit with the third-grade class and their teachers present in the Lodge. Our Grand Master was naturally drawn to the “kids” and enjoyed a time of praise and encouragement while there speaking to the class, the Grand Lodge Officers, and leadership from the Fort Richardson Lodge.



The Grand Lodge Officers that accompanied our Grand Master were: Worshipful Grand Senior Deacon, Ricky Cliatt, and Right Worshipful District Deputy Grand Masters, Michael White, James Tapscott, Robert Reams, and Roger Landry. The Fort Richardson Lodge Worshipful Master, Michael G. Coker, and Lodge Secretary and Past Master, Mitchell Davenport, were also in attendance for the Grand Masters visit.

Hopefully, this “On the Masonic Road” causes us, Texas Masons, to look outside the periphery of our lives and see the greater good Masonic Lodges often engage in to be a part of their communities. Our Masonic purpose is not only to indulge in the business of our Lodge, but more so, to become involved in our communities. Not just involved to the point of being “known” by our communities, but also involved in the governance and the leadership of our communities. Being a Mason in Texas is a privilege, not a right, and we need to continue to “earn” that privilege by our actions and by helping to build great communities.

As you have the opportunity, you might send a note to the Fort Richardson Lodge members to share your pride as a Texas Mason because of what they have done and what they are doing.

There are undoubtedly other Texas Lodges that are just as engaged, who also deserve our pride in their work as readily as the Brothers we are celebrating from Fort Richardson Lodge and the great City of Jacksboro, Texas; our hat is off to all of you as well.

Well, the ribbon on my typewriter is about out of Ink, so see you next time, “On the Masonic Road.”

It's Great to be a Texas Mason ... ★



A special thank you to Worshipful Master Michael G. Coker and Lodge Secretary Mitchell Davenport, as well as Right Worshipful Brothers Michael White and Roger Landry for their assistance with this article.



Just A Bunch Of Leftovers, And How It Really Feels

By James C. "Chris" Williams IV, Staff Writer

I knew I was taking a chance sending him a text when I did it. John is self admittedly an electronically challenged person. In fact, he is one of the few people I have ever been around who, if every cell phone, fax machine, and computer, suddenly disappeared, he would be back on an equal level with most of the population.....and a very happy man. Nevertheless, I had kind of a goofy plan...half thought out, I admit, but the half that was thought out sounded pretty good to me, partly because it was going to save me a lot of money and partly because it was going to ingratiate me with Pam. Of course, if he never saw my text and never responded, the whole plan would be a failure, but I texted him the co-ordinates anyway.....and I waited.

I figure that about now you are waiting for me to give you some explanation, so here it is. John had called a couple of days before and told me approximately when he would be in town and for me to decide on a good place to eat. It was the day he was arriving and I still hadn't decided on where to go. I walked in the kitchen and saw that Pam was standing in front of the refrigerator shaking her head. I heard her mutter something about throwing everything away and starting over. I looked over her shoulder and realized that it was so jam packed full of leftovers that there was no place to put anything else. And, there was no way to tell what was there because everything was inside a Styrofoam or plastic container. That's when the plan started taking shape. I went out to the garage and got the big Yeti cooler and told Pam that I was going to get rid of all the leftovers for her. She gave me a "you are crazy" look and shook her head and walked away. With my Mom's voice in my mind telling me to not waste food because there were kids starving in other countries, I crammed that cooler completely full with every size and kind of container imaginable, and with a little ice on top, loaded it up into the truck and waited for the time for us to meet. I knew that nothing would go bad inside that Yeti that wasn't already bad. It is my opinion that there has not yet been invented a food that John Deacon does not like. So whatever was inside that Yeti cooler should be something he would eat.....I hoped. What I didn't think about was whether or not I would like any of it... it was one of those details I failed to think through.

What I texted John were the co-ordinates of a little spot on one of my Lodge Brother's ranch north of San Antonio that I am quite partial to. If there is one thing John does know how to use (because he was on the road all the time) it is the navigation device that came with his truck when he bought it. The co-ordinates I gave him were to a little meadow surrounded by pretty old and large oak trees. On one side of the meadow is a creek that flows year round and on the opposite side is a sheer cliff that rises a hundred feet up from the base of the meadow. Trees and rock formations along with all kinds of other vegetation cover the cliff and I don't think I have ever looked up at it and seen the same thing twice... and the sound of the breeze rustling the leaves on the Live Oaks and the sound of the water flowing over the rocks in the creek are about the most relaxing sounds I have ever experienced. Even better, is that right in the middle of the meadow are laid out, log benches complete with officers stations, resembling a Masonic Lodge Room. I needed to clean it up a bit for a degree that we had planned in a few weeks, and it just so happened that his needing to see me on this day and me needing to do



a little maintenance on our outdoor degree site, along with needing to do something with the leftovers, all came together in a plan to take care of all three at the same time.

To my surprise and satisfaction he actually texted me back and agreed to meet where I suggested (I love it when a plan comes together). I made sure I got there in plenty of time to set up a little (although very strong) aluminum table and two oversize chairs. I had a couple of plates and some plastic-ware on the table and some condiments that I had grabbed at the last minute. I didn't know if they were going to be needed but it seemed like the right thing to do. A gallon of tea that I drove through Bill Millers to get, rounded out what I hoped would be a satisfactory (and cheap) lunch with John. I figured if everything in the cooler was good enough for Pam, the nieces and the granddaughters to eat, it was certainly good enough for John and me.....I hoped. With everything ready, I sat down to await the arrival of Big John.....the Sultan of snacks.....the Chieftain of chow.....the Lion of Lunch....the.....wellyou get the picture.

It wasn't long that I began to hear a faint sound that got closer and louder really quick. I looked up in time to see that big black truck of his roaring across the clearing toward me at a higher rate of speed than was prudent for that place. As I was just about to run for cover, he slid to a stop in a cloud of dust. Instead of getting out of the truck he just sat there looking around. I waited for a couple of minutes and finally walked over to the driver's door and spread my arms apart like, "what the heck are you doing"? I could see him still looking all around as he rolled his window down a fraction of an inch and said, "I must have ticked off a bunch of bees back up the road a ways and they came after me. Are they gone?" "John," I said trying to keep the aggravation out of my voice. "Get out of the truck. There are no bees here." As he slid down and followed me, still looking around, I muttered just loud enough for him to hear, "They probably know you have to come back by them on the way out and are waiting for you." I heard him say, "WHAT???" I ignored him but I know that got him to thinking because he kept looking back down the road every few minutes.

Visit <https://grandlodgeoftexas.org/just-a-bunch-of-leftovers-and-how-it-really-feels/> for the rest of the story.

Thanks to Masons in Texas

By jim hoffpaur, Staff Writer

Colton Peterson, just another in a long history of ho-hum Masonic journeys. A 27-year-old newly raised freemason of San Gabriel Lodge No. 89 in Georgetown – just another successful and growing suburb of a large Texas city - our state Capital, Austin. Story sound familiar so far? Though we cannot say how or when young Colton's Masonic journey will culminate, most of us can relate to those first months of excitement and can't-wait-to-dive-headlong-into-the-craft enthusiasm.

What brought young Colton into the craft. Family history, close friends entering the fraternity, and – hopefully more often than not among us all – a burning desire to study the philosophy and history of Freemasonry.

“I was seeking something new. I was drawn to the craft by community, a sense of being part of something bigger than myself, my heritage, a yearning for knowledge, and a keen interest in history,” beams Colton. These yearnings came to a climax when several of his Delta Sigma Phi college fraternity buddies joined Freemasonry shortly after graduation from South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City. “They petitioned just before I moved to Texas. I called my grandfather (Maurice D Peterson, PGM of South Dakota) about it. Finally, after moving here to Georgetown I asked him the “Right Question” and he got busy.” PGM Peterson contacted Brother Gregory Yalch, then Worshipful Master of San Gabriel Lodge to assist in the process. And assist he did.

What brought young Colton into the craft. Family history, close friends entering the fraternity, and – hopefully more often than not among us all – a burning desire to study the philosophy and history of Freemasonry.

A chemical engineering graduate, Colton moved to Texas to take a job with a local facility of articulating crane manufacture Manitex International in Austin where he has served as Director of Sales & Development for five years. He attributes Brother Yalch with helping see him through the process of becoming a Master Mason after being Initiated March 3, 2020.

“It was tough. I wanted to keep moving but the last few years have been a blur. Brother Greg was instrumental in getting me through after suffering delays with the virus and my work travel schedule throughout Past Master Michael Loney's (2021) year,” Colton mused. “Thanks to Worshipful Master David Yeager and the Brethren for making my raising to Master Mason such an enjoyable event for myself and my family this past March 3rd.”

Colton grew up surrounded by Masonic symbols and items throughout his grandparents' home. He went to Shrine Parades and followed along behind the Foot Patrol. He loved watching Nicolas Cage in National Treasure and going to Masonic events with the family. He longs to travel to other jurisdictions throughout the nation, Europe, Israel, and elsewhere. Oddly enough – or was it – fraternal bonding, travel within the craft, and contact with other jurisdictions was something grandfather Maurice chose as his theme during his year in the Grand East. Do you think maybe one of those seedlings has taken root?

Family history? Colton, like many of us, has plenty. Though his mother and father, the former Kristin Edwards and James Colton (Past Master Counselor of Aberdeen DeMolay Chapter), are not members of the Masonic family, Colton's heritage goes back to great grandfather William Edwards – a lifetime member of Sunrise Lodge No. 211 in Aberdeen. William was active in the Scottish Rite and Yelduz Shrine in Aberdeen. Great uncles Bob and Ron Edwards were each members of the aforementioned organizations. Ron was also a Knights Templar and active member of an undercover Masonic lodge in Saudi Arabia.

Through Peterson lineage uncles James and Robb Peterson were also Master Counselors of Aberdeen DeMolay as well as Past State Master Counselors of the South Dakota State DeMolay. They were each life-time members in the Masonic fraternity.

Grandmother Susan Peterson has been very active in the Order of Eastern Star where she served as Worthy Matron of the local chapter and Grand Organist of the Grand Chapter of South Dakota. She has been President of her local hospital auxiliary of Yelduz Shrine and organist for Daughters of the Nile chapters in Aberdeen and Deadwood.

Grandfather Maurice D Peterson served as the 105th Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of South Dakota in 1986 at the age of 44. He became a Mason at Wahpeton Lodge No. 50 in Wahpeton, North Dakota on March 8, 1973. During his 49 years in freemasonry, PGM Peterson



Pictured: Maurice Peterson, PGM South Dakota and Sue Peterson (grandparents) Colton Peterson, Ashlie Hess, Kristin and James Peterson (parents)

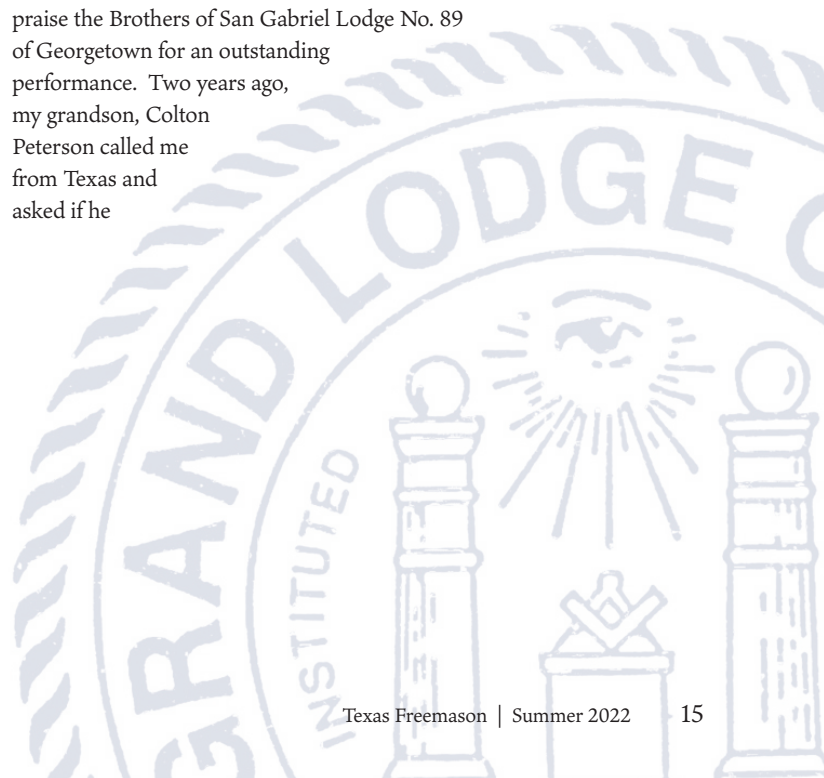
moved his family to Aberdeen where he served as Worshipful Master of Sunrise Lodge, Worthy Patron of OES Chapters in Aberdeen and Sturgis, Grand Chaplin South Dakota OES, Chief of Staff Naja Shriners of Deadwood and Sturgis, and Chapter Dad and Honorary Member of the International Order of DeMolay. He also served as Highmore Independent School District Superintendent and President of National American University at Ellsworth Airforce Base for 17 years.

PGM Peterson presented Colton with a Black Hills gold Masonic ring in the presence of family members after the evening event at San Gabriel Lodge. Then later flew the 1100-mile journey back to South Dakota with family members. Thinking of the warm reception and hard work the Brethren of San Gabriel put into grandson Colton's raising, he sat down and penned the following message to Most Worshipful Brad Billings, Grand Master of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Texas:

Subject: Thanks to Masons in Texas
Most Worshipful Brother Bradley Scott Billings
Grand Master of Masons of Texas

It is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity to thank and

praise the Brothers of San Gabriel Lodge No. 89 of Georgetown for an outstanding performance. Two years ago, my grandson, Colton Peterson called me from Texas and asked if he



ACROSS THE STATE



Pictured: Brother Eric Sims, Secretary; Brother Craig Yalch, Treasurer; Colton Peterson; Worshipful Master, Brother David Yeager and Maurice Peterson, Past Grand Master of South Dakota 1986.

could become a Mason. I, as a Past Grand Master of Masons in South Dakota, was excited about this request and so – since he lived and worked in Georgetown – I called the Worshipful Master of the lodge, Brother Gregory Yalch (2020) (when we submitted the petition) with a request for getting a petition to Colton. Brother Yalch followed up and got everything in order and the degree work began along with instructions, social contacts, etc. Now, last week on March 2nd, I and my wife Sue, the Grandparents, and James and Kristin Peterson, the parents boarded a plane for the 1100-mile flight to Austin so that I could be there for the Master Mason Degree on Thursday, March 3rd.

The evening began with Worshipful Master David Yeager leading a welcoming party of Masons upon our arrival at the Lodge. This was followed by a most excellent and delicious dinner prepared by the Brothers for all Masons and spouses in attendance.

The highlight of the evening was the conferral of the Master Mason Degree upon my Grandson. The proficiency and ritualist perfection were a treat to behold. All of the Brothers involved and, in all stations, demonstrated their desire to perform at a level which demonstrated their desire of pride to behold. Each of those involved will be remembered by the new Mason for a long time to come. Watching the degree work take place at this level of perfection made me extremely proud to have taken the trip to witness it. I congratulate the officers and Brothers of San Gabriel Lodge No. 89 for all they did over and above for my grandson to start his life of Masonry off on a very positive level. We traveled back to South Dakota on Saturday knowing he was in good Masonic hands and direction.



Texas Masonic Charities Foundation

FAITH - HOPE CHARITY



2022 Scholarship Breaks the Record

Texas Masonic Lodge's have expanded their contributions to Scholarships to over \$1.3 million.

The Texas Masonic Charities Foundation has matched grant requests of over \$1 million in 2022.

a Texas non-profit 501(c)3 <https://txmcf.org/>



EDUCATION AND COMMITMENT

A Father Speaks

By Bill Crow, Associate Editor

During our Grand Annual Communication last January, several of us “older” Masons were talking during a break for lunch on Friday. We were voicing our thankfulness that we were recovering from the pandemic, and our disappointment with the curtailment of our craft during and following it.

We recognized that attendance at the Annual Communication seemed to be less than the years prior to the pandemic, and that the number of Masons who had not returned to our Stated Meetings in many of our Lodges, following the pandemic, had increased. Then the subject of our Entered Apprentice Masons came up, which sparked a combined voice of concern resulting in a frank and open discussion about our feelings for that group of new Masons.

It just so happened that three of the group were Fathers whose sons had petitioned and become Masons in the past with varying levels of success. One Father commented that his son never finished the degrees of Blue Lodge Masonry. The question came quickly, “What happened?”

The Father, a little disturbed, simply stated “He just did not want to continue with the proficiency requirements.”

We continued our conversation regarding petitioning, investigating, initiating, passing, and raising, and we soon “fell back” into our memories of when we became Masons and what it was like “back then.” “Back then,” took on the meaning of “way back” in the 1970’s, the 1980’s, and 1990’s.

Here is what the collective discussion, among three Masonic Fathers who recalled and spoke about their experience of when they became a Mason, sounded like:

“When I first became interested in becoming a Mason, I remember visiting the Lodge several times and eating meals with the members. They were interested in me and who I was, about my family and my job. They invited my wife and children to visit as well and showed us around the Lodge. During one visit, one of the members asked me if I thought I had a sincere interest in becoming a Mason. I recall I said yes, and he responded by telling me he had been assigned to help me understand Masonry a little more, and that if I petitioned for membership and was elected to receive the degrees in Masonry, he would be my mentor and “best friend” while receiving the degrees.”

“After about three months of visiting the Lodge, I told my mentor I would like to become a Mason and he helped me prepare the petition, and explained the process of investigation followed by a ballot of the members to decide whether I was to receive the degrees. Fortunately, I was elected to receive the degrees in Masonry. My new friend, Brother, and Mentor stayed with me, talked with me two or more times a week, attended proficiency work with me, and often came to my home to check on how I was doing, always practicing the “work,” and encouraging me every step of my young Masonic journey.” After being



raised a Master Mason, my mentor officially became my Brother and is still a best friend to me in many ways.”

“After being elected to receive the degrees, and before I was initiated as an Entered Apprentice Mason, the Worshipful Master called, telling me that I had been elected by the Lodge to receive the degrees in Masonry and asked if he could come to my home to visit with me and my family. He did so and shared some information on what would happen before and when I would be initiated. We talked about the investigation process and its importance to the Lodge and to me as a petitioner for the degrees in Masonry. He also shared with us the Lodge’s responsibility to me, and we finished by discussing my responsibility and accountability to the Lodge.”

“I felt as though I knew what to expect and was comfortable in every step of my journey in Masonry because I had been prepared appropriately, and knew something about every step I was about to take.”

The resulting question that arose among our group was: What would you expect of our Lodges if your son was a petitioner for the degrees in Masonry today? We all agreed that was the big question.

The Father who informed us that his son never came back to Lodge after being initiated was quick to comment. He obviously had been discouraged when his son quickly decided to drop-out following initiation. Here is what he had to say:

“I failed my son by not being more diligently involved in his induction into Masonry, but I also have concerns that the Lodge he petitioned

The resulting question that arose among our group was: **What would you expect of our Lodges if your son was a petitioner for the degrees in Masonry today?** We all agreed that was the big question.

could and should have done a better job of preparing and leading my son through the processes of becoming a Mason.”

“I recall as my son stated to me, there were no contacts or visits by any of the officers of the Lodge or anyone being a mentor to him. I remember the night, the first night, when he and I visited the Lodge, a petition was given to him to fill out, and it was passed around to get signatures before we went home after the meal. Following the next Stated Meeting an investigation committee was assigned and all three members of the investigation committee met with him at the Lodge one evening. My son later told me they had said, “We know your dad and respect him, so we feel we know you as well, so our investigation will be complete tonight. You will be voted on and elected to receive the degrees at the next sated meeting.” The Lodge later contacted him and told him when he would be initiated and what time to be at the Lodge.”

“I also received a call from the Lodge asking if I would be the Senior Deacon for his degree. When my son and I arrived at the Lodge I was informed the Lodge did not have enough members to open an Entered Apprentice Masons Lodge or confer the degree, but they were calling around to try to get help from another Lodge.”

“Needless to say, after getting some help, the Lodge struggled through opening the Entered Apprentice Masons Lodge, and my son’s initiation began two hours late. As I looked-back at the lack of leadership, lack of Lodge support, and not following tried and true methods and procedures in preparing and initiating new Masons, I felt sadness and disappointment in myself, and my duty to my son.”

Now, the question came up: What should our expectations be today when we initiate new Entered Apprentices? Here is the collective answer:

First and most important, we need to understand, our Entered Apprentices are the most important group of Masons in our Lodges. As a whole, they are the future of Masonry and when they are properly initiated, passed, and raised, will eventually govern our Lodges when the senior Masons are unable to participate in Lodge functions or have passed on to that house not made with hands, eternal in heavens.

Regardless of the age of the new Entered Apprentice Masons, we should be mentors and “best friends” with them, beginning when they are first introduced as visitors of our Lodge and are thinking about becoming a Mason. There is no greater calling in life than being a mentor to a friend, neighbor, or prospective member, of our Lodge. Being a mentor to a new petitioner in our Lodge, is the culmination of all of the best practices and virtues of what we believe as Masons. Being a mentor is a precious gift to the person you are mentoring, and to you as a mentor. Mentoring affords rewards both will remember for a lifetime.

We need to be diligent to see that all of the initiation, passing, and raising, processes are accomplished appropriately, as they are directed by Grand Lodge Law, by the Committee on Work, our Lodge’s best practices, and our high commitment to strongly and professionally support our new Masons.

We should expect that our sons and others will be regarded as our Masonic future. We should expect every Lodge to follow, without exception, the tried and true processes that have been used, and in some cases improved, for decades with proven success. We must, each of us, be strong and professional Masonic leaders as well as engaged mentors to ensure the future of Freemasonry.

Many of our Texas Lodges are doing a great job initiating, passing, and raising, our new Masons. They are diligently following our procedures and best practices to ensure great results with our new Masons. They are providing great mentors and support to our new Masons. Unfortunately, some Lodges are not as purposeful as others are in supporting and providing leadership and mentorship as they may be able to do.

Our entered Apprentice Masons are our future. We cannot and should not lose them because we are not fulfilling our duty to them. We must do it right every time!

EDUCATION AND COMMITMENT

Brothers of the Oath

By Wayne Sirmon, PM Texas Lodge of Research 2010-2011



Standing outside the building which is home of a Masonic Lodge, a man tries the door and finds it locked. He gives three sharp knocks and awaits a reply. From inside he hears a question familiar to Masons. The Brother offers the question with what sounds like a smile and expects a lighthearted reply for a latecomer to the night of food and fellowship.

To his surprise the reply is “A traveling Master Mason in distress.”

The door opens to reveal a grandfatherly man who shows none of his usual signs of friendliness, but rather an uncommon seriousness. Confused, the questioner cocks his head as he extends his hand to receive a Mason’s grip. The older man, notices the confusion and adds to his statement “I am serious. I need your help.” Without pause he is ushered in the Secretary’s office which is crowded with the Lodge’s Master, Secretary, their District Deputy Grand Master, and a young man identified as a Fellow Craft. Almost in unison, they ask what is the problem and how can they help.

The white-haired Brother explains that his son, also a member of the Craft, had died unexpectedly in their town, and he has driven across three states to arrange for his body to be returned to his hometown. There he will be buried a few feet away from his grandfather and namesake. The final arrangements are to be handled by a long established funeral home which has corporate connections across the nation – but the local office is only a cemetery and not able to receive a body from the coroner and prepare it for the flight home. Goggle listed half dozen possibilities, but where should he turn. Who should he call?

The weight of the decision added to his grief. None of his son’s friends offered suggestions.

In an act of near desperation, the father drove to a place he has once visited with his son – the local Masonic Lodge.

Hardly had the words tumbled from his mouth before he was surrounded by men ready to help; Men who would serve and assist this Brother in distress; Men who would ensure that the young Brother would be cared for in death. Immediately the Secretary jots down a name and number, saying this man owns a local funeral home and is a Brother in this lodge. Over his shoulder another notices that the number is that of the funeral home and adds a cell phone number while stating “Call him. Call him right now.”

Eager to return to his wife and younger son, John, he opened his wallet to retrieve something. Although he was told to put it away, the father continued knowing that he could never repay what they had offered. From behind his Masonic dues card he removed a challenge coin from his home Grand Lodge. Its symbolism was not lost on these men, and it was gladly accepted as representing a duty fulfilled.

Returning to his car, he called the funeral director and as the man drove to the hotel, he repeated his story. He was told everything would be arranged. The family would meet in the morning, and all details would be handled.

A few minutes later the father opened the door to their hotel room. His son John saw the change in the father’s face. The massive burden had been replaced with relief. His wife then asked what had happened. The reply was simple. “My Brothers were true to their oath.”

Wayne Sirmon, a forty-seven year Master Mason and Past Master of Texas Lodge of Research, was called from Alabama to Texas when his oldest son died unexpectedly. William, named for his Past Master grandfather, was a third-generation member of Mobile Masonic Lodge No. 40. He taught history and coached at Dawson High School in Pearland Texas. The Sirmon family is eternally grateful for the kindness extended by the members of C. F. Spencer Masonic Lodge No. 1384 and Clayton Funeral Home.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR UNDERSERVED AND SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR!

Masonic Children & Family Services (MCFS) have been helping children for over a century. That legacy continues to thrive through our work for underserved and special needs children. Thanks to the generosity of those who support our mission, we change lives daily.

Liam's story especially touched our hearts. This precious little guy gets around with the help of his wheelchair and a dedicated family that loves him. Moving him from a wheelchair to a child car seat has been challenging and time-consuming. Transporting the wheelchair has also been difficult. As Liam has gotten older and reached the 50-pound weight limit for car seats, he's outgrown that option, thus creating the need for a change to keep him safe.

The family desperately needed a modification to their vehicle, but because of the significant financial burden that would create, they could not afford it on their own. Liam's parents began searching for help and found MCFS along the way. This crucial modification would secure him in his wheelchair safely inside the van. These changes would help reduce the strenuous physical

demands placed on Liam's parents and make life more comfortable for him.

True to our mission, to improve the quality of life for children and families in Texas, assisting Liam and his family was a reminder that the work we do touches lives in so many ways.

Liam's mother wrote a heartfelt message about her experience with Masonic Children & Family Services. "MCFS was wonderful, generous, helpful, kind, and compassionate. They have improved the quality of all our lives, especially Liam's life! We are so grateful to travel as a family, even just to doctor's appointments. We have peace of mind knowing that Liam is safer and more comfortable being in his wheelchair in our modified van. Thank you so much!"

To learn more about the many services we offer to children or how you can help, please visit our website at www.mcfstx.org or call Sandy Shelby Lawrence, Director of Development, at **817-503-1510**.



Liam



Liam and His Sisters

EDUCATION AND COMMITMENT

The OES/Scottish Rite Connection

By Jerome Weilmuenster, Staff Writer

By definition, Masonic concordant and appendant bodies are all related to Masonry and there are certain similarities between Craft Masonry and those bodies. Interestingly, I also find a relationship between the Order of the Eastern Star and the Scottish Rite degrees that has been overlooked by many.

Brother Rob Morris created the Order of the Eastern Star, its organization and its star points before Brother Pike re-wrote the Scottish Rite degrees, so it is highly unlikely these relationships are intentional. At the same time they are not totally accidental since OES and AASR subscribe to the same basic philosophies. Therefore, the relationship between the star point heroines and the degrees of the AASR, SJ deserve a closer look.

The first star point of the Eastern Star is Adah, known for her sacrifice and obedience to duty, or the binding force of a vow.

Adah's father promised God that if he were successful in battle, he would sacrifice the first thing he saw upon returning home from battle. It happened that he was successful in battle and the first thing he saw was Adah, his daughter. This meant he would have to sacrifice his daughter in order to keep his promise to God. Adah submitted willingly.

The story of Adah is related to the 15th degree, Knight of the East, noted for his willingness to submit to execution in order to keep his obligation not to reveal secrets that had been entrusted to him. This degree features Zerubbabel, a Jew, and Cyrus, the King of Babylon.

Zerubbabel was in the custody of King Cyrus, and Cyrus wanted the secrets of Masonry. King Cyrus first tempted Zerubbabel with great riches and then he threatened his life if he did not surrender these secrets. Zerubbabel said he would submit to execution before revealing the secrets.

Adah and Zerubbabel both showed obedience to duty and willingness to die rather than disregard their obligations.

The second star point is Ruth. The story of Ruth is a special case and will be covered later.

The third star point is Esther, who displays honor and courage through being the peacemaker and enlightened leader.

Esther was a Jew and, by marriage, a queen married to King Xerxes. An ambitious vizier persuaded Xerxes to pass a law calling for the extermination of all Jews in the country. Neither King Xerxes nor the vizier knew Esther was a Jew. When Esther found out about this law, she formulated a successful plan to reveal the vizier's true ambition, which was to reward himself with the property of the dispossessed Jews. With this knowledge, Esther persuaded King Xerxes to rescind the law. Esther was the leader in seeking peace and justice for her people.

Esther's beliefs and actions are reflected in the 9th and 10th degrees, where three assassins are discovered and executed due to the efforts of the Elu of the Nine and the Elu of the Fifteen. The 9th and 10th degrees are related to the third star point because the assassins represent ignorance, fanaticism, and ruthless ambition, three traits displayed by the vizier in Xerxes' court. The three assassins and the vizier all met an untimely death.

The fourth star point is Martha, the epitome of faith and devotion.

Lazarus, Martha's brother, died but Martha believed Jesus could bring him back to life. Several days after Lazarus' death, Jesus visited Martha, went to Lazarus' tomb, and resurrected him. Martha maintained undeviating faith in these dark days.

This fortitude to keep the faith is shown in the 18th degree where Masonry seems to be in great disarray and unable to continue working to attain its goal. Nevertheless, Knights of the Rose Croix vow to continue their efforts, building on the groundwork laid down by their predecessors.



"Where you go I will
Your people will be r

Martha and the Knights Rose Croix display faith in the unbounded and unswerving beneficence of the Great Architect of the Universe.

Electa, the fifth star point shows power, strength, and endurance.

Electa and her children were arrested and threatened with death unless they denied their Christianity. In spite of being imprisoned for months, Electa refused to deny her beliefs, so she and her family were crucified.

Who better to exemplify keeping a promise than Hiram Abiff? Although Hiram Abiff's murder takes place in the Master Mason's degree, his death continues as a major part of the first degrees of the Lodge of Perfection. Electa and Hiram Abiff both demonstrate perseverance in the face of trials.

Now, we return to the second star point and our heroine, Ruth, in a greatly condensed version of the story of Ruth and Boaz.

Ruth was a widow and a Moabite, the daughter-in-law of Naomi, a Jewish widow living in Moab. Naomi, her husband and two sons had moved to Moab due to extremely poor living conditions in Judah. Since her husband and sons had died and since living conditions in Judah had greatly improved, Naomi decided she would return to Bethlehem. Although one Moabite daughter-in-law decided to return to her people, Ruth declared that she would accompany Naomi to Bethlehem. Consequently, we find Ruth saying these famous words to Naomi:

"Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God."

Upon their return to Bethlehem, they were virtually penniless. Since it was harvest time, Ruth decided she would glean the wheat fields. Naomi instructed Ruth to glean the fields of Boaz. Naomi also told Ruth that since Boaz was a relative, Jewish law obligated him to provide for Ruth,

ostensibly through marriage. Naomi further instructed Ruth to go to Boaz in the night and explain their relationship and his obligation.

Ruth followed Naomi's instructions and this resulted in the marriage of Ruth and Boaz. From this marriage came Obed; his marriage produced Jesse. Jesse was the father of David, who was the father of Solomon.

Throughout this story, Ruth exemplifies the three theological virtues as well as the seven cardinal virtues. Ruth has Faith in God's protection; she has Hope that He will provide for her and Naomi. By taking care of Naomi, Ruth personifies Charity.

Since Ruth does not rush into a relationship with Boaz she shows Temperance. Ruth's Fortitude is shown throughout the ordeals of travel and gleaning and otherwise providing for Naomi and herself.

Prudence is demonstrated by Ruth's evaluation of her situation and weighing the outcomes of various options. Finally, Ruth seeks Justice by asking Boaz to take care of her and Naomi.

There is much for the Master Mason and the Scottish Rite Mason to glean from a study of the Eastern Star ritual. Additionally, if you do not belong to your local OES Chapter or Scottish Rite Valley, maybe you should consider joining.

go, and where you stay I will stay.
my people and your God my God."

TEXAS FREEMASON

The Grand Lodge of Texas
715 Columbus Ave
Waco, TX 76701







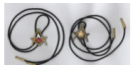





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