

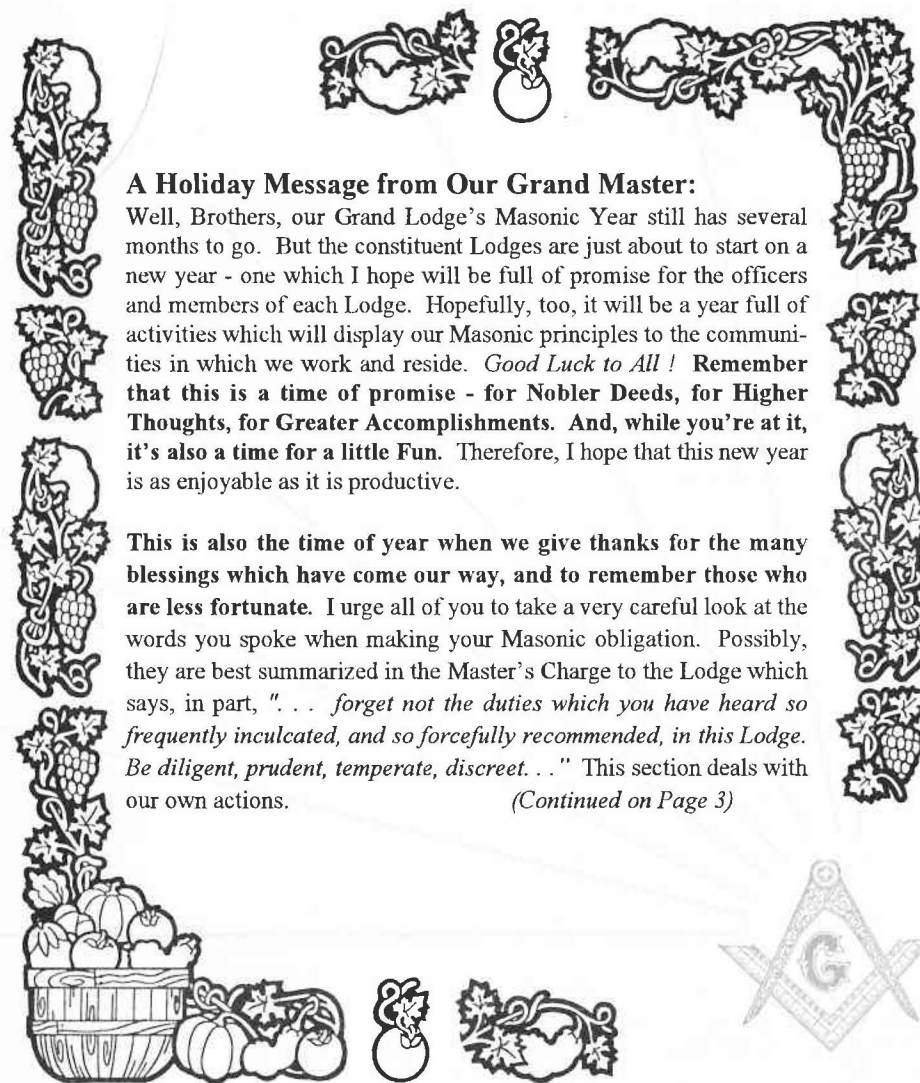
LIGHT



From The Great Land

News of the M.W. Grand Lodge of F. & A.M. of Alaska

Volume I - Number 3 November, 1994 - January, 1995



A Holiday Message from Our Grand Master:

Well, Brothers, our Grand Lodge's Masonic Year still has several months to go. But the constituent Lodges are just about to start on a new year - one which I hope will be full of promise for the officers and members of each Lodge. Hopefully, too, it will be a year full of activities which will display our Masonic principles to the communities in which we work and reside. *Good Luck to All!* **Remember that this is a time of promise - for Nobler Deeds, for Higher Thoughts, for Greater Accomplishments. And, while you're at it, it's also a time for a little Fun.** Therefore, I hope that this new year is as enjoyable as it is productive.

This is also the time of year when we give thanks for the many blessings which have come our way, and to remember those who are less fortunate. I urge all of you to take a very careful look at the words you spoke when making your Masonic obligation. Possibly, they are best summarized in the Master's Charge to the Lodge which says, in part, ". . . forget not the duties which you have heard so frequently inculcated, and so forcefully recommended, in this Lodge. Be diligent, prudent, temperate, discreet. . ." This section deals with our own actions.

(Continued on Page 3)



Some Thoughts on Thanksgiving

To some, Thanksgiving is a day off from work. Others think of it as a day when they (usually she) will have to spend a long time in a hot kitchen. Fortunately, many realize that we do have much to be thankful for. And, most, here in the U.S., know it as the fourth Thursday in November. But it wasn't always that date. And the reasons to be thankful are many. Some express their thanks in words, and some by action. Of the words, the following is a sample.

"It having pleased the Almighty ruler of the Universe propitiously to defend the cause of the United American States and finally by raising us up a powerful friend among the princes of the earth to establish our liberty and independence upon lasting foundations, it becomes us to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the divine goodness and celebrating the important event which we owe to His benign Interposition.

George Washington, in orders to his troops, May 5, 1778

The year that is drawing to its close has been filled with blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added which are of so extraordinary a nature that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the everwatchful providence of Almighty God. . . . I do, therefore, invite my fellow-citizens, in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea, and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens.

Abraham Lincoln, Thanksgiving Proclamation, October 3, 1863

Let us, on the day set aside for this purpose, give thanks to the Ruler of the universe for the strength which He has vouchsafed us to carry on our daily labors and for the hope that lives within us of the coming of a day when peace shall reign on every continent.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Thanksgiving Day Proclamation, October 31, 1939

'Twas founded be th' Puritans to give thanks f'r bein' presarved fr'm th' Indnyans; an' . . . we keep it to give thanks we are presarved fr'm th' Puritans.

Finley Peter Dunne, "Thanksgiving", *Mr. Dooley's Opinions*, 1900

Brave and high souled Pilgrims, you who knew no fears,

How your words of thankfulness go ringing down the years;

May we follow after; like you, work and pray,

And with hearts of thankfulness keep the Thanksgiving day.

Annette Wynne, "Thanksgiving Day", *For Days and Days*, 1919

So - regardless of the day on which you give thanks;
And - regardless of the things you are thankful for;
Realize that there are some who are less fortunate.

Be grateful for what you have, and (according to our Masonic obligation), share with those in need as their necessity requires, and your ability permits.

Bringing
In The
Plum
Pudding
With Joy
And
Thanks-
giving.



Happy Thanksgiving!

"MAY ALL MEN KNOW
THE LOVE AND GOOD
THAT COME WITH PEACE
AND BROTHERHOOD."



Christianity



Judaism



Islam



Buddhism



Hinduism



Confucianism

The Holidays - A Special Time

This is the period of the winter solstice. The time when (at least in the northern hemisphere) the days become short, and the weather is cold. It is a time of year which has been revered since before written history. The Druids of ancient Britain found it to be magical. The Hebrews have, from earliest dates, observed some of their most sacred services at this time. The religions of the near and far east have also found this to be a special time of year. And, of course, Christianity observes this as one of its most sacred (and joyful) periods of their calendar.

What is there about this season that sets it apart, that makes it so special? Is it just a celebration of a harvest put away and a time of rest until planting the new crops? Some have said that it represents the death of the old, followed by the rebirth of the new. That, too, sounds somewhat agricultural. But, actually it is a time when we can look to the future with hope. It is a time of opportunity - for higher thoughts, for nobler deeds, and for greater achievements.

It is also a time for reflection - on your profession, on your family, on your self, and on the future. A time to make plans for the coming year, and for the years to follow.

And, it is also a time for thanks. Thanks for the many mercies and blessings and for the bountiful goodness which the Supreme Architect of the Universe has seen fit to bestow upon us.

So, no matter how you worship, no matter what faith you profess, this is a very special time.

**May you and yours experience the joy of this season,
and have an exceptionally happy 1995.**

Visit YOUR Lodge - TODAY!

District No. 1 - V.W. Mitchell R. Miller, Deputy

Anvil Lodge No. 2Meets 1st & 3rd Thursday at 8:00

Tanana Lodge No. 3Meets Second Wednesday at 8:00

Fairbanks Lodge No. 12Meets Third Thursday at 7:30

North Pole Lodge No. 16 Meets Third Monday at 7:30

Other (special) meetings as called by the Master

The Wardens' Charge

(From a Woman's Point of View)

(Editor's Note: A vital part of the annual Wardens' Charge is to give our ladies a little better idea about what her husband will face when he becomes Master. This article first appeared in the "Tanana Valley Masonic News". The author is the wife of Brother Don Chaffin, Worshipful Master elect of Fairbanks Lodge No. 12.)

The Third Annual Wardens' Charge was held in Anchorage the weekend of Sept. 23-25, 1994. Since Don and I had missed last year's event, we were determined not to miss this one, and so off we went to Anchorage. Led once again by Marty Martinez and Vern Wertz, the Charge was a wonderful learning experience and an excellent opportunity to reestablish the bonds created from the first Charge - and forge new ones with those newcomers of this year. A big "Thank You" goes out to Marty and Vern for their impressive effort and their willingness to share their knowledge and expertise with all of us.

The sessions that we had together, as well as the split meetings throughout the weekend, were packed with valuable information and afforded some great brainstorming activity. Becky Dunbar led the women's group through sessions that covered everything from personal feelings about Masonry to important issues such as solutions to dwindling membership and beefing up family participation within the Masonic fold. An extra (and most welcome) bonus was a panel discussion put together by Becky, that included several representatives from different Masonic organizations. Eastern Star, Amaranth, DeMolay, Ladies' Oriental Shrine, Rainbow and Job's Daughters were all represented quite well, for the purpose of informing those of us who had not yet been exposed to these groups. We had a lively question and answer discussion, and everyone came away from that meeting with a solid, positive perspective about Masonic support. Becky did a wonderful job leading the women through the weekend, and I was very impressed with her intelligence, warmth and wit.

Once again, I attended a Wardens' Charge that gave me even more information than the one I attended two years ago, and re-fueled my enthusiasm for full involvement in the Masonic family. Our challenge was to support our husbands when they take their seat in the East as Master of their lodges; to do everything possible to make their year an important one, bring the families of our brothers and sisters closer together and spread the word about the wonder that is Masonry - the love and caring, the values learned and the closeness to God that we all strive for. As wives and helpmates of Master Masons, we have much power at our disposal that we have but touched lightly upon. Our men know the intricate lessons found in Masonry; they practice every day, and they pattern their lives accordingly.

Continued On Next Page -

Your Lodge NEEDS YOU - Attend Often!

District No. 2 - V.W. Raymond F. Tidwell, Deputy

Valdez Lodge No. 4Meets First Wednesday at 7:30

Mt. McKinley Lodge No. 5Meets 1st & 3rd Thursday at 8:00

Seward Lodge No. 6Meets First Tuesday at 8:00

Kodiak Lodge No. 9 Meets Third Monday at 8:00

Kenai Lodge No. 11Meets 2nd & 4th Thursday at 8:00

Other (special) meetings as called by the Master

Continued From Page 6 -

They learn the traditions, say the words, walk the path around the Altar of Life and carry forth goals that were set hundreds of years ago. What can we do, either in or out of the supporting organizations of Masonry, to help keep the flame of Masonic knowledge growing as each lodge works toward stronger membership and battles the modern apathy of the world to "build that road which never ends"? First, we can share what we know with those who do not. Whether they are new members or non-members as of yet, we women can talk about Masonry to each other, and learn as we speak. We can teach our children the value of what we learn, as we learn it - and teach it gently, in such a way that it becomes a desirable lesson instead of drudgery and boredom. We can help blend the Masonic organizations together by reaching out to members that have not attended Lodge in years, by creating social functions that remind these members that Masonry is as enjoyable as it is responsible. We are especially talented at those tasks, and much of our power lies there. We can remember that once the specific title of whatever organization to which we have dedicated our time is stripped away, we become Masonic once again... we are family, pure and simple. Nothing can ever take that away from us.

This is what I learned at the Wardens' Charge; something I already knew in my heart, but that just needed a verbal prodding to grasp hold of once more. This is what the Charge will do for you. I hope that when it becomes your time of eligibility to attend, you will embrace this opportunity and learn all you can. Man and woman alike, you will not regret your decision. You will come away with renewed purpose, better prepared to handle your year in the East, with fresh ideas and a stronger grasp on the needs of those you are about to guide.

You will come away fully "Charged".

Char Chaffin

On BROTHERHOOD

*Oh come ye all, each one of you
In brotherhood unite.*

*All Masons we; a bond to share
Of all that is upright.*

*'Tis truth we seek, we are as one
Upon the level meet*

*No dogma have, one God a must
And heaven next replete.*

*A brotherhood of man we serve
A fatherhood of God.*

*The "Golden Rule," a way of life
We lack a false facade.*

*No matter what our stations be
If high, or low - between..*

*Through brotherhood in Masonry
So much there is to glean.*

From your **Deputy Grand Master**

Greetings my Brethren. Another beautiful Alaskan summer has come and quickly gone. We are all, hopefully, back in our Lodges, diligently working for the good of Masonry.

We recently concluded our third annual "Wardens' Charge". We had 22 Brothers from around the state attending, and more than half of them had their wives attending also. Vern Wertz and Marty Martinez from Oregon again provided the instruction for this course. We owe them a great deal of gratitude for helping us to get this program started here. It was a very informative and enjoyable learning experience for those attending. "The best one yet" some said. For those of you who may not be familiar with the "Wardens' Charge", it is a workshop or seminar designed to help prepare our Wardens to be Master of their Lodge. Unfortunately, a few (5) of our Lodges were not represented. I don't know if it's because their Wardens just didn't want to come, didn't understand what the course was all about, or couldn't afford the cost of coming. In any case, your Grand Lodge officers encourage all Lodges to send someone in the future if possible - and to give them some financial support, if that is the reason for non-attendance. It will be worth it to your Lodge.

With the recent passing of W.B. Larry Nelson, we lost our Grand Organist. If anyone out there knows of a Master Mason who can play an organ and/or piano, please call me. (Hank Dunbar, 333-1518). W.B. Larry will be missed.

By the time you receive this newsletter, election day will be past. I know we cannot discuss political matters in our Lodges, and for good reason - it wouldn't be conducive to peace and harmony. I'm also not about to try to tell you how to vote nor how to think politically. However, many people, myself included, feel that we have some major problems in our society today, and in the way our nation is being governed. Masons played a big part in settling our country, writing our Constitution; and getting our government started in the right direction. That's what has made America such a great place and such a powerful leader in the world. Our society and our government needs our influence again - maybe more than ever. We can all help by paying attention to what's happening in our communities, by supporting those leaders who stand up for the principles we believe in, by supporting our Lodges, and by voting when the time comes. It's your duty (and your privilege).



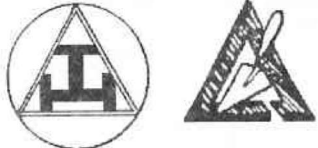

The deadline (December 1st) for submitting resolutions to the Grand Lodge for consideration at the next annual communication in April '95 is fast approaching. So, if you have an idea for improving masonry in Alaska, get it in to the Grand Secretary as soon as possible.

Happy Holiday Season to all!

R.W. Hank Dunbar, Deputy Grand Master

- When looking at all the heavy volumes in a Law Library, remember that it all started with just ten commandments.
- One of the reasons the Ten Commandments are so short and to the point is the fact that they did not come out of a committee.

The Following Organizations Have Helped
Make This Publication Possible
We Thank Them For Their Support!

<p>Tanana Lodge No. 3 Fairbanks, Alaska Rex Hasty Worshipful Master</p>	 <p>Anchorage Scottish Rite Bodies (907) 274-0277</p> <p>We Support Our Alaska Grand Lodge (We Meet 2nd & 4th Friday)</p>
<p>There's Room On This Page for YOUR Lodge or Organization, Too</p>	
<p>Mt. Susitna Lodge No. 8 Anchorage, Alaska Thomas V. Houser Worshipful Master</p>	<p>Alaska Scottish Rite Childhood Language Disorders Foundation Gerald R. Fairley, Secretary (907) 274-0277</p>
<p>Glacier Lodge No. 10 Anchorage, Alaska Loyd G. Williamson Worshipful Master</p>	 <p>Al Aska Shrine (907) 274-4344</p> <p>Stated Meetings - 2nd Monday (Except July & August) Dinner at 7:00 Meeting at 8:00 Lunch - Every Wednesday</p>
<p>Mt. Verstovia Lodge No. 18 Sitka, Alaska Richard O. Brookman Worshipful Master</p>	 <p>York Rite Masons (907) 274-8051</p>
<p>Tongass Lodge No. 19 Ketchikan, Alaska Martin W. Parsons Worshipful Master</p>	 <p>Brothers Helping Brothers (Meets 1st & 3rd Friday)</p>

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Have Helped Make This Publication Possible**

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From Your Editor:

A couple of issues back, we had an article on the "Magna Garter". To keep in touch with history, I'd now like to let you in on the story of the Mayflower Compact. It seems that on November 21, 1620, while the Pilgrim Fathers and Mothers were anchored in Provincetown Harbor after their famous trip to this country, they drew up the Mayflower Compact, which was a short constitution making them a body politic, whereas and notwithstanding. That is, the Pilgrim Fathers did this while the Pilgrim Mothers were busy collecting laundry for the Glorious Wash. The document was signed by forty-one of the seventy-five male passengers, thirteen of the remainder being minors and others who were nobody much. The most minor of all was Oceanus Hopkins, who was born on the way over. Oceanus has received little credit for this feat because Peregrine White arrived a month later and thus qualified as the first white child born in New England. It's pretty late in the day, but three cheers for Oceanus Hopkins! (No, the Mayflower Compact had nothing to do with cosmetics or powdering shiny noses.)

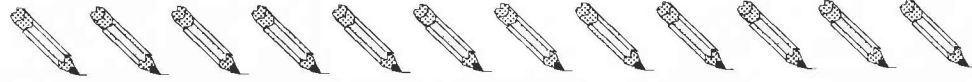
(Adapted from "How to get from January to December" by Will Cuppy)

Are you an IMP? The New Mexico Freemason published an article about the International Masonic Poetry Society. "IMPS" has been devised and launched in an attempt to serve the needs of all those Brethren who recognize the poetry of the ritual; those who take pleasure in writing of their own experiences in poetic form; those who appreciate such writing and those who seek material in this form for use at the festive board or other proper occasions. There will be a quarterly newsletter, and covers all jurisdictions recognized by the United Grand Lodge of England. For more information, contact W.V. Shorto at Barrog House Penybont-fawr, Nr. Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 0NT, United Kingdom. (Maybe W.Bro. Lee Lirette should investigate this further.)

You may have noticed that several articles are taken from other sources. I believe that it should not be necessary to reinvent the wheel, and anyway, others may be better at the art of writing than I. It is like the preacher who was so boring that his congregation threatened to fire him. He pleaded for another chance, and to the amazement of everyone, gave the best sermon any in his audience had ever heard. After the service, one parishioner praised his work, but asked why he raised two fingers on his left hand at the start of the sermon, and closed it by raising two fingers on his right hand. Well, the preacher admitted, those were the quotation marks.

One of the Worshipful Masters (elect) is very concerned about his Brothers in his Lodge. He is particularly concerned about their judgment. It seems that he looked in the mirror after being elected to fill the station representing "Beauty". Then they voted him into the station representing "Strength", and everyone knows that he's much more of a couch potato than a weight lifter. Now, the want him to represent the pillar of Wisdom. - No wonder he's worried!

Have a Great Holiday Season - and send Your article for the next issue. (Or, if you prefer, I'll even help in the writing. Just tell me the topic you want covered.)



Information Resources from Local Sources

Attention has been called to three useful sources of Masonic education, and each was prepared by local Lodges.

W. Fred Newton of Kenai Lodge No. 11 has prepared an "Alaskan Monitor Quiz Collection". This series of 14 fill-in-the-blanks quizzes was taken from the Alaskan Monitor, so the answers are available to all Masons in the Great Land. Sounds easy, doesn't it? Don't kid yourself. You have to be something of an expert to answer all these questions without having to go to the book for a little assistance (or refresher). The quizzes are set up to make it easy for use during regular sessions of Masonic Education nights, as each contain from 10 to 14 questions (some with multiple blanks). For more information, contact:

W. Bro. Fred Newton, P.O. Box 8686, Nikiski, AK 99635.

And, speaking of Masonic education, **W. Loyd Williamson of Glacier Lodge No. 10** has announced a series of **Masonic Education nights**. The Lodge will devote the **4th Thursday** of each month for a Masonic Education program. These meetings are **open to all** who are interested in Masonry, including those who are not members. (The programs will not address material which requires a tyled Lodge.) Regular attendees are asked to indicate those topics which are of interest to them. Then, someone will research those topics, and report back to the group at a future meeting. Those with special interests are encouraged to research and report on that subject, but there is no requirement to do so. (There are enough Brothers interested in doing Masonic research to allow a wide variety of subjects to be covered.) So, bring your interests, questions, friends - and yes, your wives, too - to the Anchorage Masonic Temple on the 4th Thursday at 7:00 p.m. Who knows, you might learn something from us, and we could surely learn something from you. **Note: Due to the Holidays, the November and December meetings are cancelled.**

At **Glacier Lodge's** first Masonic Education night in September, those in attendance received a pamphlet on "Reference Materials for Masons". Prepared with the assistance of the **Alaska Scottish Rite Childhood Language Disorders Foundation Library**, this 13 page list of resources covers:

- Personal Reference Sources
- Reference Material Lodge Officers Should Have in Their Personal Library
- Reference Material for Lodge Officers
- Reference Materials on Masonry (For Anyone)
- The Sources of Sources (Where to find the answer to your questions)
(Includes Commercial Sources of reference materials, and catalogs of Masonic Jewelry)

If you are interested, all of the listed materials are available for review in the Foundation's Library, so you can see what they contain before you buy. (There are many more materials in the library that are not listed in the pamphlet.) To receive a copy of the pamphlet, contact:

Glacier Lodge No. 10 or **The Foundation Library**
P.O. Box 91142, Anchorage, AK 99509 P.O. Box 101445, Anchorage, AK 99510

**Read! Learn! Enjoy! - It's FUN,
and it's INTERESTING. And,
we can never know too much
about our great Fraternity!**



Greet Old Friends, and Make New Ones! - Attend Lodge

District No. 3 - V.W. L.V. (Joe) Dees, Deputy

- Matanuska Lodge No. 7 Meets First Tuesday at 8:00
- Mt. Susitna Lodge No. 8 Meets First Tuesday at 8:00
- Glacier Lodge No. 10 Meets Second Thursday at 8:00
- Eagle River Lodge No. 13 Meets First Monday at 7:30
- Adak Lodge No. 14 Meets Second Thursday at 7:00
- Aurora Lodge No. 15 Meets First Monday at 8:00
- Anchorage Lodge No. 17 Meets Second Wednesday at 8:00

Worshipful Masters for 1994-95

The following Brothers are the newly elected leaders of our constituent Lodges. Their installation dates are shown. Why not turn out to show your support?

(The Grand Lodge Officers will attend as many of these installations as possible.)

White Pass Lodge No. 1	Dan Daigle	Not Available
Anvil Lodge No. 2	Information Not Available at Press Time	
Tanana Lodge No. 3	Johnny Johnson	Sat. 12/17/94 2:00
Valdez Lodge No. 4	Arvin Ray Smith	Wed. 12/7/94 7:30
Mt. McKinley Lodge No. 5	W. John Buehrle	Thu. 12/1/94 7:30
Seward Lodge No. 6	Elections held in December	
Matanuska Lodge No. 7	Frank Bird	Sat. 12/10/94 1:00
Mt. Susitna Lodge No. 8	W. Charles (Chuck) Wellong	Sat. 11/26/94 7:00
Kodiak Lodge No. 9	W. Grover (Charley) Hall	Mon. 12/19/94 7:00
Glacier Lodge No. 10	Gerald R. (Jerry) Fairley	Sat. 12/03/94 7:00
Kenai Lodge No. 11	Elections held in December	
Fairbanks Lodge No. 12	Don Chatfin	Sat. 1/07/95 2:00
Eagle River Lodge No. 13	Roy Hartz	Mon. 11/28/94 7:30
Adak Lodge No. 14	Information Not Available at Press Time	
Aurora Lodge No. 15	Gary Randall	Sat. 12/17/94 2:00
North Pole Lodge No. 16	Karl Amundsen	Sat. 12/10/94 2:00
Anchorage Lodge No. 17	W. James W. Morton	Wed. 1/04/95 7:00
Mt. Verstovia Lodge No. 18	Tom Smotherman	Sat. 12/10/94 7:00
Tongass Lodge No. 19	Chris Westwood	Sat. 12/17/94 7:00

The Official Obligation of a Worshipful Master at His Installation into Office:

"I solemnly promise, upon the honor of a Mason, that, in the office of Master of ____ Lodge, Number ____, I will to the best of my ability, strictly comply with, abide by and enforce the Constitutions and Regulations of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Alaska, the By-Laws of ____ Lodge, Number ____ and all Ancient Masonic Usages, so far as the same shall come to my knowledge."

These words, though few in number, carry an exceptionally heavy responsibility. All your Grand Lodge officers wish each new Worshipful Master "God Speed" and offer our "Best Wishes" for a happy, productive and successful year. Look Well To The East, My Brothers.

Be an ACTIVE Mason - Visit lodge Regularly

District No. 4 - V.W. Tom Leslie, Deputy

- White Pass Lodge No. 1 Meets Third Tuesday at 7:30
- Mt. Verstovia Lodge No. 18 Meets First Thursday at 8:00
- Tongass Lodge No. 19 Meets Fourth Friday at 7:00
- Other (special) meetings as called by the Master

Think Again

Too many times we have said, "I Quit". I know that I have said that to my wife many times in the past thirty-five years, and I know that many of you have said the same - maybe not to your wife but to someone else, somewhere. The next time you want to say "I quit" think of this little poem.

"When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
When funds are low, and the debts are high,
When care is pressing you down a bit -
Rest, if you must, **but just don't QUIT!**"

"Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns,
And many a fellow turns about,
When he might have won, had he just stuck it out.
Don't give up, though the pace is slow,
You may succeed with just one more blow.

"Often the goal is nearer than it seems,
To a faint and faltering man,
Often the struggler has given up,
When he might have won the victor's cup,
And he learned too late
When the night came down,
How close he was to **the golden crown.**"

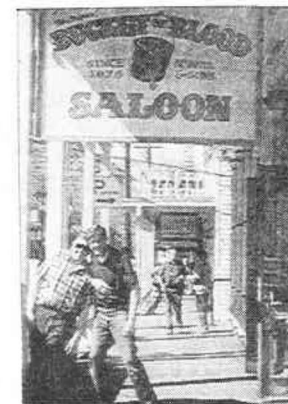
"Success is failure turned inside out,
Often there is a silver tint to the clouds of doubt,
It may be near - when it seems afar;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,
**It's when things seem worst
that you mustn't Quit!"**

Submitted by W. Lee Lirette (8)
(Brother Lee should know - he has struggled through several open-heart surgery procedures. - Ed.)

On the Lighter Side

• MW Sidney Case, Past Grand Master of Washington was heard to remark: "20% of us have, or had, or will have a mental illness - so if you have four friends who are normal - you may have a problem." Of course, MW Sidney is from Washington, so I'm sure the "odds" are more in our favor here in Alaska.

• On another page, you read about two of our Brothers from Oregon who did an excellent job (for the second time) of directing our annual "Wardens' Charge". It seems that they are active in other areas, too - but what those activities are - well, the Oregon Masonic News published the following:
"During the summer Senior Grand Warden Vern Wertz (below, left) and Junior Grand Warden Marty Martinez paid a visit to Virginia City and found themselves momentarily overcome in front of the famous (infamous?) Bucket of Blood Saloon. They succeeded however in keeping each other "on the level".



Masonry and Public Schools

(Editor's Note: The following is a report from the Grand Lodge Committee on Public Schools. It was sent to our Grand Master who requested that it be published here.)

Public education is very important to the future of Freemasonry and our nation. The Masonic fraternity believes that the preservation of our free public school system is necessary for the survival of freedom and self-government in our beloved country.

Constituent Lodges can enhance and supplement the Grand Lodge Committee's efforts throughout Alaska. Public school programs are dependent upon the planning and participation of each individual lodge. **It is therefore requested that every Lodge in this jurisdiction appoint a committee to form a Public Schools program.** We are all committed to the enhancement of Masonry's public image, and what better place to gain exposure than among the youth of our public schools. Awareness of Masonry and its principles could make an impression on the minds of our youth that would carry on through into their adult lives, making them better persons, and possibly Masons. This is truly a meaningful endeavor. Its success depends on our willingness to work hard as individuals and as a team on behalf of Freemasonry. Your committee stands ready to assist you in any way possible.

We do not need to be reminded of the many sacrifices our forefathers made in establishing this country, but we should not forget them either. Many of our sister nations in the world were free at one time, but have become complacent and lost that freedom. It is our honest prayer that we, as Americans and Masons, never have to live through that kind of ordeal. The tenets of our fraternity admonish us to be concerned and get involved with public education. We need to support our government and our leaders at all levels. In addition, we need to be vocal at times to enable us to defend our heritage and to protect it for our children and future generations.

My brothers, we should all be proud of our Masonic heritage and should commit ourselves to its continued availability to those who follow us. We must take every opportunity to exhibit our fraternity to the public. Your support of public education will give our friends, neighbors and citizens a favorable opinion of the Masonic Fraternity.

Fraternally, your Public Schools Committee

W. Arthur A. Rindahl - Chairman V.W. Will R. Josey W. Stanley Woodin

In the last issue, we printed a picture of a Masonic Lodge hall, and asked:

"Where Are We ?"

I doubt that many of you have been there, because that is the hall used by our Brothers of Adak Lodge No. 14. They are as friendly a group as you are likely to meet (even though they live on a secured island where all visitors must pass some form of clearance.) Not only are they friendly, but they really know how to put on a "Table Lodge". (If you don't know about Table Lodges, let me know. This could be the subject of a future article.) Your editor had a great time on his visit 1 1/2 years ago.

How about sending a picture of your Lodge Hall for future issues ?

Next Issue !

In the next issue, we will be featuring our Masonic Youth Organizations as well as the work we, as Masons, do for the benefit of our young men and ladies. Why should this be a topic for a newsletter of an adult organization? Simply because some of them are our future members - and others are the future wives of Masons. But, even if none of those youth with whom we have contact ever increase our membership, they are still the future of our country - and of all the world. If we want our Masonic principles to be heard by the decision makers of tomorrow, we must let today's youth know about those principles and why they are important. The best way of spreading the word about Masonry is to get to know our youth a little better. So, to provide a little background, the next issue will give us some basic information on what these organizations are, what they do, and who their members are - and some of the members' ideas.

Guest Columnists Wanted !

The three spaces below represent pages in the next issue of "LIGHT from the Great Land". Your editor needs someone from each of these youth organizations to volunteer to be their correspondent. Tell us first about the organization itself, then some information on local activities. We would particularly like to hear from their members, but advisors or combined groups are all welcome. In case of multiple entries for an organization, parts of each may be used.

You, too, can become a famous newsletter reporter!
(Articles must be received no later than January 31, 1995)



The International Order of Job's Daughters

by
?

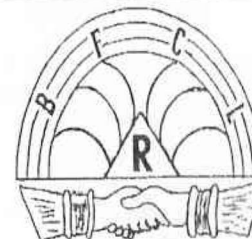
(it could be you !)



The International Order of DeMolay

by
?

(it could be you !)



The International Order of the Rainbow, for Girls

by
?

(it could be you !)

Let's Change Challenges into Opportunities

Leaves are turning. The morning air is crisp. There's even that sprinkling of snow that we Alaskans call "Termination Dust" on the nearby Chugach peaks. Mother Nature is signaling us that changes are imminent. Equally noticeable signs alert us to changes we must make to continue Masonry as a viable and vibrant force in our community, and to resume the leadership role in which we were once so active as a positive influence for the good of all men.

It's no secret that families are in crisis throughout America (and elsewhere throughout the world, as well). Daily, the news sounds an ominous drum-beat of disheartening stories. Children are killing children. Wage earners are losing their jobs. Schools are overcrowded and underfinanced. Family systems, threatened from within and without, are disintegrating. And in an era of limited resources, social service agencies must do more with less.

It is also no secret that Masonry has its own problems. Membership is down. We no longer seem to have the influence we once did when (as just one example) so many of the signers of our Declaration of Independence were members of the Craft. Lodge meetings, in many instances, are poorly attended, and seem less satisfying to those who do come.

So what do we do to respond to such challenges? We grow ! And, with growth, we must change !

Yes, there is the dreaded "C" word. But, "change" does not always imply heresy. It can, and in this case does, mean a return to old ways and old glories. As an example, in my own lifetime (and I'm not that old), I remember when the Lodge had major programs involving the entire family. Not just one annual obligatory picnic, but events throughout the year. "Change" also means returning to the position where Masonry was known throughout the community because everyone knew we were there, that we were active, and that we had the best interests of the community at heart. And, finally, "Change" means re-educating our own members about Masonry - its history, its symbolism, and its philosophy - just what it means to be a Mason, and how to really live as a Mason.

So, how do we turn this great Challenge into a golden opportunity ?

It has been said that the Chinese character representing the word "Challenge" combines symbols that mean "Danger" and "Opportunity". This ancient insight demonstrates that every challenge offers an "up-side" as well as a "down-side". The "down-side" in our case is the amount of work which will be required to overcome the apathy and lack of information (or actual misinformation) which now seems to prevail. But the "up-side" is the opportunity to work together - to work with some of the most knowledgeable and interesting people around. - to work for the good of all men - and to work for the good of Masonry.

Masonic Education programs; Public Schools programs; Community Action programs; Youth Group activities; Masonic Public Relations programs; programs which provide Family Oriented Activities - these (and more) are opportunities whereby the challenges we now face can be met - and overcome.

If only YOU - each one of you - will work together with your Brothers, your Lodge can become that vital force in the community that it once was. And, both you and Masonry will benefit.

WHEN IS A MAN A MASON?

Joseph Fort Newton ends his great book, *The Builders*, with a paragraph that has gone around the world. It has been translated into many tongues.

"When is a man a Mason? When he can look out over the rivers, the hills, and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope, and courage - which is the root of every virtue. When he knows that down in his heart every man is as noble, as vile, as divine, as diabolic, and as lonely as himself, and seeks to know, to forgive, and to love his fellow man. When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, even in their sins - knowing that each man fights a hard fight against many odds. When he has learned how to make friends and to keep them, and above all how to keep friends with himself. When he loves flowers, can hunt the birds without a gun, and feels the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laugh of a little child. When he can be happy and high-minded amid the meaner drudgeries of life. When star-crowned trees, and the glint of sunlight on flowing waters, subdue him like the thought of one much loved and long dead. When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without response. When he finds good in every faith that helps any man to lay hold of divine things and sees majestic meanings in life, whatever the name of that faith may be. When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something beyond mud, and into the face of the most forlorn fellow mortal and see something beyond sin. When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope. When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellow man, with his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of song - glad to live, but not afraid to die. Such a man has found the only real secret of Masonry, and the one which it is trying to give to all the world."

Anyone for a "Necktie" Party?

A brother from Illinois recently wrote to our Grand Master. Bro. Robert E. Isberg is seeking Masonic memorabilia - particularly Bolo Ties. Apparently, he has quite a collection, because he enclosed several pictures. If you have Masonic, Shrine, or other organizations' pins, Bolo Ties, etc., he may be interested in them. Contact him at 1622 Marquette Road, Joliet, IL 60435.

But, Who's Counting?

No wonder we're confused! The United Nations has 184 member states, but 185 countries are part of the international postal union. If you count "country codes" for international calls, you find 182 countries. The International Olympic Committee, however, has 186 members. Meanwhile, the British reference book, *"Statesman's Yearbook"*, lists 194 countries, and "Coca-Cola" claims that it is sold in 195. (Hopefully, we can all act as Brothers.)

Bones

The body of all organizations (including Masonry) is composed of four bones:

1. The WISH-BONES who spend all their time wishing someone else would do the work;
2. The JAW-BONES who do all the talking, but do very little else;
3. The KNUCKLE-BONES who knock everything anyone else tries to do; and,
4. Finally, the BACK-BONES who get under the load and do all the work.

Which are YOU ?

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