

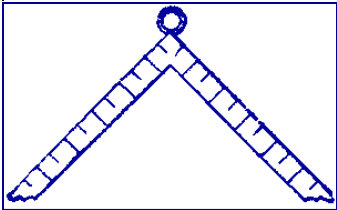


TRESTLE BOARD

VOLUME XIX, ISSUE I

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SENT TO SHAKE THE HANDS WE CANNOT REACH



From the East

by Reed Houge, Worshipful Master

I first wanted to say thank you and how honored I am to be elected into the East. This is a big task I don't take lightly and will do my best to engage the brothers, Past Masters, and Grand Lodge to make 2019 a successful year for Flagstaff Lodge #7.

I would also like to extend a big thank you to Junior Past Master Ralph Doudna who has put countless hours into the lodge and the members of Flagstaff #7 to ensure his line of officers had the wherewithal to be able to pick up where he left off as well as the many brothers who have gone this way before.

I was recently told by a PGM that there are two main items all Worshipful Masters NEED to do: make new Masons and prepare his officers to lead the lodge.

- Make New Masons: I took this to mean make the craft, and Flagstaff Lodge #7, something that is interesting enough to see it as an endeavor they want to put time and effort into.
- Prepare his officers: I believe this is to ensure they know what is expected of them by the brothers and to provide them with the experience needed to fulfill their duties for their next office.

This is very similar to the tasks we take on in our usual vocations where we are taught that the only real job a manager has is to disseminate information and remove roadblocks.

Disseminate information is really just clear communication on the tasks needed for the team to be successful which gives the individual direction and outlines the priorities so he is working towards the same goals and objectives as desired by the organization.

To remove roadblocks is more nebulous and requires a good listener to understand the actual problem and the roadblocks associated with it. You will then be better enabled to incorporate your experiences and authority to address the situation to allow progress.

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In 2019 it will be my main focus to understand any concerns with the lodge and work with brethren to outline options to overcome them. This will be accomplished by working as a team and leveraging the strengths of each individual to better serve the lodge.

In parting, I want to leave with a reminder for the New Year to reflect on some of the things we were first taught in Masonry because they should be constant resolutions for all of us as Masonic leaders:

- Refer to God with reverence and ask for His aid in all my undertakings.
- Act upon the square and do unto my neighbor as I would have him do unto me.



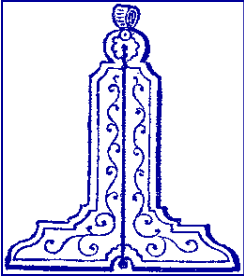
Grand Canyon Chapter #4 Order of the Eastern Star

To all Grand Canyon #4, Order of the Eastern Star members:

This is your official notice that dues for 2019 (still only **\$28.00**) are due and payable now. No further notice will be sent. Please mail your payment to:

**GRAND CANYON CHAPTER #4
P.O. BOX 1657
FLAGSTAFF, AZ 86002-1657**

THANK YOU,
KATHY LINDSTROM, SECRETARY



From the West

By Don Hartwell, Senior Warden

As Masons, we find a great deal of joy in the company of our brothers, and in our solemn rituals, but we are often caused (by the necessities of modern life) to spend the balance, even the majority of our time out in the broader society. It comes as no surprise, therefore, when I say that the footprint of Freemasonry is receding: Fewer and fewer people seem aware of the fraternity. Even when we are known, it is as our eternal, adulterated alter-ego; that of the shadowy puppeteers of some vast conspiracy. Even this dubious distinction is waning in the broader public conscious. Having recently undertaken a new course of education, I am unsurprised to learn that this trend is even more pronounced in a younger audience. Few young people are aware of Freemasonry at all, and only then as either some nebulous, ill-defined plot device for conspiracy theories or as a boys' club for glad-handers looking to network for financial gain.

This isn't a new trend. In the so-called "Golden Age," as many as 40% of the adult, male population belonged to either the Freemasons, our twin fraternity the Odd-Fellows, or one of the many younger fraternities that we inspired. This was in 1900. Except for a brief surge in membership, following the Second World War, all fraternal societies have been declining in membership. As of 2014, the membership of American Freemasonry was estimated to be within 1-2 million members.

The question of why this has occurred is likely one of the oldest and most tired conversations that exists in modern masonry. Brothers, young and old, can sit and chat for hours, pontificating on the subject. Most consistent of the answers that has arisen is that Freemasonry is simply not apparent enough. We aren't involved in the opening of every new public building, we don't have a booth at every festival. In other words, it is simply that our name recognition is low. While it is true that, as we have seen, many people are unaware of the fraternity, this argument is a red-herring.

People tend to become aware of things that interest them. A small, local coffee shop became the largest coffee chain in the world, with no town worth the name having less than two locations. A website for networking amongst college students and alumni now has a presence in almost everyone's lives, spawning the term "social media," and is of such universal utilization that mismanagement of it is the subject of congressional hearings. One could list a near infinite number of such stories of things which, while once unknown to practically anyone, are now buzzwords throughout the world. It is of course true that Freemasonry has drawn in on itself in recent decades. We were visible and active in the world but and are much less so now. Any discussion of our decline, and the necessary steps to halt it, must address this. The root cause, however, in the decline of fraternal societies, is not that they are not visible enough. This is a symptom of a larger problem. Freemasonry is failing to provide a wanted service to potential members.

Proponents of the theory that Freemasonry needs to simply become an active and present force in the outside world to cure the fraternity's slow decline usually profess that

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Freemasonry itself has not changed and does not need to. I believe this to be an incorrect assertion on both fronts. In the first, Freemasonry has changed in many ways over the course of years. Our rituals and symbols may have been unaltered by design, but the character and place that Freemasonry has held in the world have changed.

It was common, in the early years of the craft and as the idea of Fraternity spread throughout the 1800s, for fraternal aid to be a principle part of any societies' role in the life of its members. Aged, sick, or otherwise distressed brothers could count on the fraternity to be there with aid whenever they required. Brothers would often retire to homes for the fraternity and could draw upon the charity of their fraternity to support them when in dire need. While we still endeavor to provide for the aid and comfort of our distressed brothers, much of the need for continuing and complete support has been obviated by the presence of state agencies designed for such, to greater and lesser success.

So too has our charitable purpose been taken over in the public sphere. Where State aid fails to fill the role, charitable organizations exist in multitudes to cover the gaps. Freemasonry still attempts to perform what service is needed after those others have done their part, but primarily our charity exists only in our individual efforts (Bikes-for-Books, and Clothe-A-Child in Flagstaff), and in supporting other organizations designed to their own specific purposes. This is an example where Freemasonry has adapted well to the changing societal conditions it finds itself in. We have altered our charitable efforts to do what is still needed, without unduly clinging to past efforts which would prove duplicative, or unnecessary. We still fulfill these older roles, where needed or wanted, of course, but increasingly we pursue other methods to express that principle rung.

In other ways Freemasonry has not adapted well. While we continue offering our timeless moral instruction, this has never been the principle draw of the fraternity. It is certainly a primary purpose, but not a lure to the uninitiated. A man needs must, by our own laws, profess a moral underpinning—as derived from a religious belief—in order to become a member. Freemasonry exists merely to build upon a firm foundation, not set one. Unfortunately, the need to have one's moral architecture expounded upon is, at times, unobvious. Even when we can accept the need for such, it is difficult to pursue as a primary goal in and of itself. We could, after all, pursue a strictly ascetic, even monastic lifestyle if all we sought was enlightenment. Many still pursue philosophical academia as either a hobby or a profession. Indeed, if Freemasonry is to survive as a source of moral education, it must supply a framework to do so that provides for other, unmet needs of the men it hopes to attract.

In the past, this was accomplished by the idea of fraternalism. Of providing a comradely organization of the like-minded to fill a sort of social void that could exist in a smaller, less connected society. Before the modern conveniences of the internet, cell-phone, and television, this was a critical need. When one travelled, knowing that the ability to find men of similar predisposition was assured in the presence of fraternal branches the world over, was a comfort. At home, the fellowship provided a much-needed refuge for men whose only other interaction might well have been vocational. As such, Freemasonry could couch its moral purpose in a social one, comfortable in its ability to draw members in by their prior isolation, as well as to provide for their intellectual fulfillment. In an age where a social experience of some sort is always available, at any hour—without leaving the comfort of one's home—it would appear that mere fraternalism,

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of the sort characterized by like-mindedness and socialization at least, is no longer a sufficiently unmet need in the modern age. Freemasonry has, in this instance, struggled to find a suitable replacement or adaptation.

The fact that a need has existed for Freemasonry to adapt, over the years should, by this point, be obvious. The world has changed, and Freemasonry has often changed with it. We still, however, require an adjustment in the manner in which we provide for the needs of our members, if we are to survive in the modern age. While fraternalism is still attractive to many men, it is increasingly (and perhaps unfortunately and damagingly) easy to find groups of likeminded individuals anywhere in the world. Whether one's interests trend toward the political, the esoteric, the historical, or anything else you can imagine; there exists groups and organizations to unite isolated people by common pursuits. There may not be a single answer to this pressing question, but in examining my own reasons for approaching the fraternity I have found one which I feel bears investigation

While the television, the internet and the portable phone have filled the ability to communicate with persons of similar interest, and while not properly fraternal in nature, these things have assumed the lion's share of that role. What has not been filled is the need for community. Community is something which has existed in ages previous. In smaller civilizations—less connected or supported by a broader society—towns, churches, guilds, and associations were required to cater to the social requirements, as a necessity for survival: Society itself would collapse without the presence of communities, even if they are only as large as a single family, or small village. The education and care of children, the provision of basic needs, and even the indefinable needs of a social animal, all of these can be (and often were) things which a community provides.

Certainly, the word isn't absent from the vocabulary of our modern age. Many groups boast of their sense of community. Social media is rife with discussion of community standards, the nebulous and seemingly never-ending list of behavioral rules that websites have generated in an attempt to tame the rampant incivility bred by distance and anonymity. Popular online games refer to the mood and tenor of their players using this terminology. Many fan clubs, news organizations, and others refer to their patrons' communications with one another, almost always via keyboard, as "communities."

These things, perhaps, mimic the broader strokes of community. It is certainly true that, for every interest, there is some form of discussion at least. Video gamers have found guilds, clans, and websites to locate and associate with each other. People of every political persuasion have found it terrifyingly easy to immerse themselves in the appropriate echo chamber, never again to return to the realm of reasonable discourse. It was, however, the things that these shallow mockeries lacked, more than anything else, which drew me to masonry.

The personal, warm, and loving company of the people one chooses to associate with is not easily, or even potentially, replaced by modern convenience. Community has grown to mean certain things, to me, shaped in no small part by my early experiences with the lodge. From the first I was welcomed into the embrace of the fraternity, with a well-prepared meal, good conversation, genuine warmth, and constant opportunity for association. Even in the company of men who far outstripped my own years, accomplishments, wealth, and intellect I was regarded as an equal.

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Even amongst those with which I shared little or no common ground, I was treated with friendly respect, and courtesy. It is this sense of community, bounded in fraternity which, more than anything else, drew me in and convinced me to stay. It gave me the impetus to learn our rituals and practice those moral virtues out of the lodge.

I have since learned that our lodge, while not unique, is rare in the fraternity. Especially, even, amongst all the various fraternities. The prevailing sentiment amongst most lodges seems to be that the lodge, as many have become, is merely a once or twice monthly meeting, of a few hours. The ritual is the centerpiece, and once it is completed, lodge is ended. I don't hesitate to say that I would likely never have joined such a lodge, or at least would never have stayed long or been active in it.

It is with this in mind that the officers' line has become invested in preserving our rare and beloved lodge as the very model of community in Freemasonry. Your Stewards are taking over the kitchen in a big way, and I am excited to see what they can do with it. Our major events are being planned and funded earlier and in greater detail, in order to ensure a higher quality than ever before. Last, but certainly not least, The Pillar Officers, together with the Deacons, are bringing back the smaller events we've had in the past. Starting in February, we will see the return of the Flagstaff #7 Superbowl party, which has always been great fun. In March we are planning a St. Patrick's Day meal, and April will be a blast with our first ever Chili Cook-off. If these activities prove successful, you can expect to see many more in the coming months.

Brothers, I am proud to be ringing in this New Year as your Senior Warden and, together with the officers' line, I am excited and delighted by the changes and improvements we are hoping to bring over the coming masonic year. These things sound like awesome steps in the right direction to me, Brothers, but we obviously can't do it without your help. A community is nothing without its members. Keep your eye on the trestle board, your emails, and the coming stated meetings for further details, and be sure to bring your friends, your families, and particularly yourselves.



Flagstaff #7 installed its new officers for 2019 on December 9. Pictured are: (front row, l-r) Robert Hack, SD; Carlos Vilanueva, JS; Don Hartwell, SW; Reed Houge, WM; Greg Howe, JW; Ralph Doudna, Chaplain. Back row, l-r Don Hack, Marshal; John Kains, Sec.; Richard Ale, Treas.; and Tom Carpenter, SS. Not pictured: Tom Hover, JD; Phil Cobbin, Tyler.

Photograph by Tom Alexander Photography



From the Secretary

by John Kains

Lost Brothers

The following brothers are members of Flagstaff #7 whose whereabouts eludes me at this time. If you know these folks, or have current contact information, I would greatly appreciate it if you would enlighten me in order that we may “shake their hands” even if we cannot reach them:

Charles Carson III

Milton Evans

Ward Steward

Scholarships

If you or a member of your family would like some help with your college expenses next year, please be aware of the deadlines for applying for Grand Lodge and Flagstaff Lodge scholarships. The deadlines are April 1 for the Grand Lodge, April 15 for Flagstaff #7 and are strictly enforced. Applications must be **received** in this office by these dates. If interested, please let me know and I will be sure to get the applications to you.



Masonic Library Update

by Brother Nick Yates



Last year, a couple of brothers and I began the quest to remodel the Masonic library as it was previously used as a storage facility. We completed extensive work cleaning the area and shelving the books. Now that we have the library organized, we are looking at how the room can be further improved. Recently, WB John Graham had the windows tinted to protect the books from sun damage. To continue this effort, I would like to ask any of the brothers if they have any books that are relevant to masonry that they would like to donate. This also includes books from any other Masonic bodies (York Rite, Scottish Rite, Order of the Easter Star, etc.) We believe it would help others learn about the different organizations and raise interest in joining them. Furniture is also welcome. We have a couple of renovations that will require added finances. The current plan is to get new furniture including shelves, chairs, and tables. We also need to repaint the room and add locking doors. I will be setting up an account to fund these projects in the near future. If you wish to donate to the cause (furniture, time or money) please let me know. Thank you for your time and consideration.

In Memoriam

Brother Jimmey Lin Watson passed away on November 20, 2018 in Camp Verde at the age of 81. He was raised in Mac McClure Lodge #65 in 1983 and affiliated with Flagstaff #7 in 1991. He was also active in the Grand Canyon Chapter #4 of the Order of Eastern Star. Military and Masonic services were held in Buckeye on December 15.

Brother Fred E. Phillips passed away on November 29, 2018 at the age of 72. He was raised in 1967 and lived in Pinetop. Masonic services are being planned for May or June. Further information will be disseminated as it is determined.



Jordan Jost
Operations Manager - Flagstaff

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Masonic Anniversaries



Manuel Ramirez PM	1/4/2010	Ralph Doudna PM	2/18/2010
Leon Berger	1/16/1976	Todd Barrett	2/19/2015
James Duval	1/16/1958	James Vandevier	2/19/1959
John Graham PM	1/18/1994	Kevin Wright	2/20/2014
Brad Biglow	1/19/1995	Bruce McDonald	2/21/2002
John Beamer	1/27/1955	George Dorado	2/22/2011
Eugene Bernhard	1/27/1965	Lawrence Morton, Jr.	2/22/1955
Todd Garfield	1/29/2005	Donald Benjamin PM	2/26/2000
Earl Wunder PGM	1/31/1970	James Glenn	2/26/2004
Earl McLain PM	2/1/1989	Jesse Pilcher, Jr.	2/26/1998
Ray Teague	2/3/1967	Michael Byrnes	2/27/2014
Sam Belkin	2/13/2014	Cecil Neal III	2/27/1974
J. Sidney Saunders	2/15/1968	Ted Gibson, Jr.	2/28/2013
Nicholas Bilyk	2/17/2010		



Birthdays



Ralph Doudna PM	1/2/1939	Ronald Linebarger	2/5/1945
John Watson	1/5/1953	Carl Sechrist	2/5/1932
Bruce Jacks	1/7/1957	David Skillern	2/10/1948
Alan Adams	1/14/1955	David Merritt	2/12/1935
Terrence Schick PM	1/18/1934	Donald Benjamin PM	2/15/1950
Kevin Wright	1/19/1992	Richard McNeill, Jr. PM	2/16/1946
Stephen Sedillo	1/19/1990	Glen Beeson PM	2/18/1923
Jeffery Browne	1/20/1957	Marvin Franklin PM	2/18/1957
Donald Skaggs	1/20/1932	Kevin Johnston	2/18/1989
Joel Shapiro	1/21/1949	Eric McElwain	2/19/1963
Jay Barrett PM	1/24/1944	Christopher Rose	2/24/1989
Donald Galyon PM	1/25/1951	Walter Hochstrasser	2/25/1924
Allen Jensen	1/25/1948	James Wilson, Jr. PM	2/26/1976
Sam Belkin	1/26/1990	Brian Kolb	2/27/1942
Christopher Hartwell	1/27/1991	Jesse Pilcher, Jr.	2/27/1945
Steven Lucero	1/29/1950	John Brooks	2/28/1931
Warren Smith	2/3/1950		

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb. 3, 3:00 pm	Super Bowl Party
Feb. 7, 6:30	Stated Meeting
March 7, 6:30	Stated Meeting
March 17, 4:00 pm	St. Patrick's Day Dinner
March 28 - 31	Leadership Conference in Casa Grande
April 4, 6:30	Stated Meeting
April 27	Cemetery Cleanup
May 2, 6:30	Stated Meeting
May 3 - 4	Tucson Scottish Rite Spring Reunion
June 6 - 8	Grand Lodge Annual Communication
June 13	Stated Meeting (Postponed due to Annual Communication)
June 19 - 21	Celtic Festival at Ft. Tuthill
July 4, 6:30	Stated Meeting
July 27	Widows/Awards Banquet
Aug. 1, 6:30	Stated Meeting
Aug. 17	Flagstaff #7 Outdoor Degree
Sept. 5, 6:30	Stated Meeting
Sept. 21 - 22	Wayfarers Annual Get-Together
* Oct. 17	Masquerade Ball/Casino Night
Nov. 1 - 2	Tucson Scottish Rite Fall Reunion
Nov. 16	Clothe-a-Child
* Dec. 8, 12:00 pm	Officer Installation
* Subject	to change.