

St. John's Lodge No. 9, F. & A. M.

Trestleboard

MAY 2018

Jim Russell, editor



Serving Seattle since 1860

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FROM THE EAST

Seann Maria, Master



Brethren,



The recent weeks have been challenging in my personal life. The health of my loved ones continues to be the focus of my life as several of the most important people in my life have presented new symptoms and confirmations of existing conditions. As the mortal coil of life often does, this recent focus comes on the doorstep of our annual Family Brunch. I am moved to reflect on the importance of family, what they mean to us, and what we can mean to them.

I have so many different forms of the concept of family. I have the bloodline I was born into, I have the people whom I have chosen to make my family from what we have shared in the world, and I have those select few that comprise what I call a home. No matter which of these means family to you, I would think the following would be worth considering for them.

This world is only so big and this life is only so long. Those souls you share it with should not be selected at random and should not be taken for granted, for they have chosen you as well. We have our parents, our siblings, our children, our partners, and our closest friends. Each one of these deserves the promise of not just your kind offices, but your wise offices, your understanding offices, your listening offices, your strong offices, and your forgiving offices.

We travel through a temporal thread through time that by its nature has a beginning and an end, and if you consider that how precious these members of your family are in the list of names that amount to everyone you will ever know, then please take a moment sometime soon to stop and reflect on whether they know how much you love them, how much you need them, and how no matter if you were born without choice to be related to them, that you still choose them. Knowing someone sees you, listens to you, and chooses to stand with you still is one of the most honored awards anyone can hope to achieve.

"The bond that links your true family is not one of blood, but of respect and joy in each other's life."

— Richard Bach

St. John's Family Picnic

11am Sunday, July 22 – at the Nile
Bring family and friends

CALENDAR



- May 5 (9am – 4pm): Scholarship Applicant Interviews
- May 6 (10am): FABulous Family Brunch *Columbia Tower*
- May 9 (6pm): Board of Trustees
- May 10 (7pm): Officers meeting
- May 13 – Mother's Day
- May 16 (6:15pm) 7:30pm: St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated
- May 22 (7pm): "Intender" Masonic Education Study
- May 28: Memorial Day
- May 30 (6:30pm): District 5 Assoc. meeting (Razzis Pizza)
- June 8 – 9 Annual Communication Grand Lodge (Wenatchee Convention Center)
- June 13 (7pm): Master Masons Study Group
- June 14 (7pm): Officers meeting
- June 16-17: Fremont Fair (*Masonic information booth*)
- June 20 (6:15pm): St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated; *Scholarship Night*
- June 26 (7pm): "Intender" Masonic Education Study
- July 11 (7pm): Master Masons Study Group
- July 12 (7pm): Officers meeting
- July 18 (6:15pm) 7:30pm: St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated - *Herb's Night*
- July 22 (11am – 4pm): Lodge picnic at Nile (Sunday)
- July 25 (6:30pm): District 5 Assoc. meeting (Razzis Pizza)
- July 25: Seattle Teachers Autism Symposium
- August 1: Seattle Teachers Autism Symposium
- August 4 (10am): Open Air Degree, Masonic Park
- August 8: Seattle Teachers Autism Symposium
- August 11 (6pm): family night Everett AquaSox baseball

REGISTRATION TIME FOR GRAND LODGE 161ST COMMUNICATION

Have you made plans to attend this year's annual communication of Grand Lodge? Don't delay much longer. The block of rooms set aside by our Grand Lodge at the Coast Hotel has already been filled and undoubtedly those in nearby hotels are filling, as well.

In recent years as many as twenty-three members and ladies of our Lodge have enjoyed participating in this annual gathering for fellowship, to consider proposed changes in our jurisdiction's legislation, and to elect officers and Trustees to govern our affairs.

This year we'll be meeting at the Wenatchee Convention Center. Most of the action will be Friday, June 8 and Saturday, June 9; an invitation-only dinner will be held Thursday evening for Grand Lodge team members, while at the same time a BBQ buffet open to everyone will be held, as well. The "usual" Fellowship dinner will be Friday evening. Installation of newly elected and appointed Grand Lodge officers will be Saturday evening. A going-home, kick-off breakfast will be Sunday morning.

St. John's members usually gather for a no-host dinner the evening prior to the Saturday installation.



St. John's will again hold this month's stated communication May 16. **Please make your dinner reservations with the secretary at 206 623-0261 by Friday, May 11**, prior to

the meeting. If you need a ride, the secretary will be happy to find one for you. Do you know of a brother who has not attended Lodge in a while? Call him and ask if you can pick him up and bring him to Lodge.

St. John's Bus to Spokane, Grand Coulee

Worshipful Master Seann Maria invites all brothers and ladies of St. John's to join him on a visit to the Shrine Children's Hospital in Spokane and a tour of the Grand Coulee Dam this coming September.

A tentative itinerary arranged by Fellowship Committee Chair VWBro. Ashley Brinkley shows departure by bus Friday morning, September 7. We'll stop in Cle Elum for lunch and then head for Spokane with a rest stop or two before arriving at the hotel in Spokane.

The next morning (Saturday) we'll tour the Shrine Hospital before departing for Coulee House Inn and visit the Grand Coulee Visitors Center. Following dinner at the Coulee Dam Casino or Melody Restaurant in Coulee City, we'll enjoy a laser light show viewed from the lawn of the hotel.

Sunday morning we'll tour the Grand Coulee Dam before making our way back to Seattle.

If interested, contact VWBro. Brinkley at threehounds@aol.com or 206 601-5118.



Take Me Out to the Ballgame

St. John's Masons and families will once again head to the Everett AquaSox baseball game August 11. "Pre-



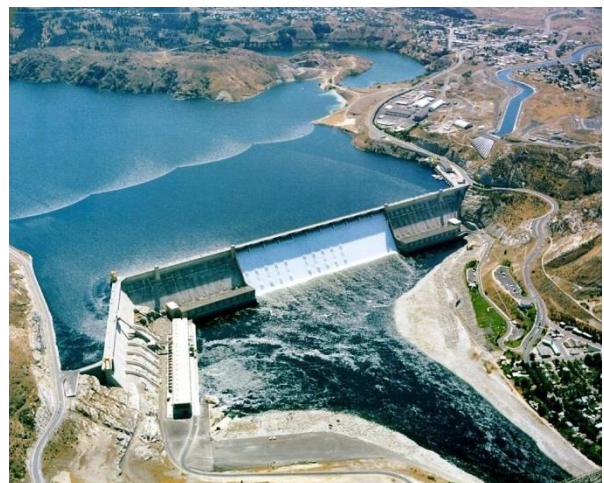
admission" opens at 6pm into the Coca Cola Food Pavilion, with hot dogs, hamburgers, fruit salad, baked beans, soft drink and reserved seating. Free parking on site.

Here's a look at our future Mariners vs. the Eugene Emeralds (Chicago Cubs farm club). Game seats will be in the lower rows on the 1st base side of the field. First pitch will be thrown at 7:05; fireworks following the game.

Get your \$10 ticket (\$24 value!) from WBro. Terry Grove (425) 610-4561. Only sixteen tickets remain, so act now!

Visit Our District Brethren

District 5 Lodges	Next Meeting	Time
St. John's 9	Wednesday, May 16, 2018	7:30pm
Eureka 20	Monday, May 7, 2018	7:30pm
University 141	Monday, May 7, 2018	7:30pm
Daylight 232	Saturday, May 19, 2018	10am
Lafayette 241	Thursday, September 6, 2018	7pm
Queen Anne 242	Thursday, May 10, 2018	7:30pm
Esoterika 316	Tuesday, July 24, 2018	7:30pm



SEATTLE TEACHERS AUTISM SYMPOSIUM

With a solid three-year foundation of success, the St. John's-sponsored Seattle Teachers Autism Symposium will again be held on the University of Washington campus, this year at the UW Autism Center, 1981 NE Columbia Road below the UW Hospital.



Seattle Teachers
Autism Symposium

Bro. Kent Curtis reports that by mid-April nearly 25% of the available seating has already been reserved for the three sessions – July 25, August 1, and August 8.

Members of St. John's are asked to call on their local schools and drop off a few of the flyers (available for printing from the Lodge Secretary) to post in the teachers' lounge. As this is our 4th year, the concept should not be a surprise to the local school staff.

This year we have a little different format as requested by the teachers. We have formed three separate – and smaller – sessions so that the participants can work a little more one-on-one with the presenters, all part of the University of Washington Autism Center. Attendees should register for whichever class they wish to attend – or they may register (separately) for all three!

The symposium is presented by professionals from the UW Autism Center. *St. John's volunteers to staff the check-in station* should contact Bro. Curtis.

The UW Autism Center is a nonprofit organization devoted to supporting individuals and families affected by autism spectrum disorders. It is an internationally recognized leader in the field of autism and will lead the symposiums with certified instructors.

Token

The word token is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *tacen*, which means a sign, presage, type, or representation, that which points out something; and this is traced to *taecan*, to teach, show, or instruct, because by a token we show or instruct others as to what we are. The word is well known to the Fraternity, and was in use at the time of the Revival with precisely the same meaning that is now given to it as a mode of recognition.

The Hebrew word *oth*, is frequently used in Scripture to signify a sign or memorial of something past, some covenant made or promise given. Thus God says to Noah, of the rainbow, "it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth"; and to Abraham he says of circumcision, "it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you." In Freemasonry, the grip of recognition is called a token, because it is an outward sign of the covenant of friendship and fellowship entered into between the members of the Fraternity, and is to be considered as a memorial of that covenant which was made, when it was first received by the candidate, between him and the Order into which he was then initiated.

- Source: Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry

COLUMBIA TOWER OFFERS NEW VENUE FOR FAMILY APPRECIATION BRUNCH

Last year's venue for our FABulous Family Appreciation Brunch was pretty much a disaster. So, we've made another move and chairman VWBro. Ashley Brinkley assisted by VWBro. Chuck Brockway under the direction of our Worshipful Master Seann Maria have made arrangements for all of us to enjoy a brunch at the [Columbia Tower Club](#) atop the Columbia Tower. Starting time for the brunch will be 10am.



This 76-story structure has the tallest public viewing area on the West Coast and west of the Mississippi.

Like last year, costs have increased, so still feel free to invite your family, but parties over two will be assessed \$10 each payable at the event. (Party of two – no charge; party of four will cost \$20.) Please remind your guests that this is *not a casual-dress affair*. Please dress accordingly!

Reservations closed Wednesday, May 3.

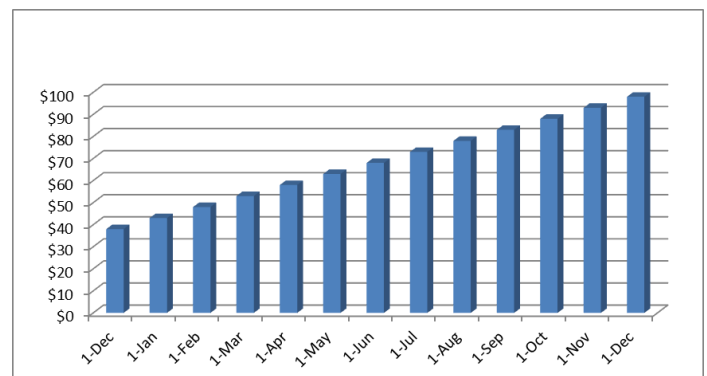
You Think We're Kidding?

Look in your wallet – if you don't have a dues card for 2018, its w-a-a-y past time to send that check! Or – if you receive a printed copy of the Trestleboard – check your address label to see if there's a small \$ sign in the upper corner. *This year's dues for members prior to June 2014 were only \$38, but if you missed the December 31 deadline, they've gone up five times already to \$63.* Want to miss again in May? Sorry, that'll be \$68 in June! Mail your check today to PO Box 30069, Seattle 98113.



St. John's bylaws: Section 4. The annual dues of members of the Lodge shall be payable in advance of the first day of January of each year for the calendar year.

a) Any member who has not paid his dues by the first day of January shall be assessed an additional \$5 for each month beyond that date.
(6/18/14)



Why Is There An Altar in the Lodge Room?

Today, the Masonic altar, within the Masonic Lodge, upon which resides the Holy Book(s), is a symbol of our place of communion with the Supreme Architect of the Universe.



However, in ancient times, they were a place of sacrifice, ... atonement, ...and communion with the Supreme Architect.

Today, as then, ...each of us must sacrifice ourselves up to the Great Architect, atone for our sins and only then, may we

commune with Him.

Altars are usually found in sacred places such as shrines, temples and churches. All major religions such as Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Shinto, Taoism, etc. have altars. Even the pagans built altars to their gods.

Historically, an altar is an elevated place, pedestal or structure before which religious ceremonies may be enacted or upon which sacrifices may be offered.

Both the Altar and its utensils were considered to be sacred, and the priests had to vest and wash their hands before touching them...even when removing the ashes from it.

The Masonic altar within the Masonic Lodge represents the sanctity of the Altar of Incense within the Holy of Holies (*Sanctum Sanctorum*) in King Solomon's temple.

The scriptures in the Holy books tell us that many men of great faith erected an altar to God. God commanded that each of them build an altar unto Him and in many places in the scripture, He specified the exact material, size and even the material which the tools were made of that they should or should not use in its creation.

Their quest to commune with our Creator, even though they did not possess a Masonic altar, is the same quest which Freemasons are in search of...that of being pleasing in our Creator's eye and therefore, to receive His blessings.

While Masonic ritual is different from Church dogmas, (just as each Church/Temple's dogmas are different from one another), the desire to "reap the plenty" of God's blessings is universal.

Like each of our ancient forefathers before us, our Masonic altar is symbolic of our quest to commune with our Creator.

A recent study has found women who carry a little extra weight live longer than men who mention it.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Company Store If you want anything that's currently in our company store inventory, WBro. Hans Wehl will be glad to open the store locker before or following any of our stated communications. Last month he displayed a sample of a "neck wallet" that can hold your badge and voting credentials while attending the coming annual communication of Grand Lodge in Wenatchee.

Fellowship VWBro. Ashley Brinkley reports that our FABulous Family Appreciation Brunch will be a great festivity at the Columbia Tower Club atop the Columbia Tower. We anticipate around 100 members and guests. VWBro. Charles Brockway cautioned that the CTC expects "proper" attire in its facilities, which he described as jackets for the men – ties optional.



VWBro. Brinkley has arranged for a trip/tour September 7-9 to the Spokane Shrine Hospital for Children, with a return stop at Grand Coulee Dam.

Scholarship Committee WBro. Eric Koteles reports that last year's student scholarship recipients have been contacted about renewals of scholarships, with interviews scheduled for Saturday, May 5. The Master has volunteered to assist with the interview process.

Seattle Teachers Autism Symposium Bro. Kent Curtis reports that the curriculum is finalized for the STAS. The website to register participants is being made available this year by the UW Autism Center. WBro. Fred Eastman has distributed about 75 flyers to educators at a recent Science Fair. Some flyers were distributed at our April communication to brothers who are encouraged to visit their local schools to promote these symposiums of July 25, August 1, and August 8. The Secretary has emailed a copy of the flyer to all local brothers of the Lodge encouraging them to print copies and visit their schools.

MAY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

Here's a look at what's happening at our May stated communication:

Dinner - guests welcome

1. **Menu:** Fresh corn chowder; Roasted Ling cod w/ béarnaise sauce and baby potato/ spring vegetable salad; Chocolate mousse w/ raspberries
(allergies, vegetarian? Let us know a week before.)

2. **Welcome & Introductions**

3. **Announcements & Good of the Order**

Stated Meeting - filed

1. **General business**

2. **Masonic Education "St. John's future"**

Refreshments

Kick back, visit, and enjoy a beverage and dessert



GRAND LODGE ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

The 161st annual communication of Grand Lodge is practically around the corner. The 2018 communication will be Friday, June 8th and Saturday, June 9th at the Wenatchee Convention Center.

Pre-registration is required. Get the registration information from the [Grand Lodge registration website](#).

Will you be ready? There are a number of important Resolutions and recommendations that will be brought up for your consideration. Many of these will have far reaching and long term impacts on our Fraternity and justify that you be an **informed** member. Read them! Ask questions! Assume nothing! Consider the financial and operational impacts!

Two have declared their candidacy for Junior Grand Warden. They are VWBro. Cameron M. Bailey and WBro. John R. Lawson. VWBro. Clinton Brown and MWBro. Sam Roberts are candidates for Grand Secretary. Do more than read their biographies. Ask the hard & meaningful questions. You want to know what kind of Grand Master the Brother would be and how relevant he would be to you, our Lodge and our Jurisdiction. Those type of questions tend to be more in depth than, "What would you change?" and more along the line of, "How would you react to..." types of questions.

And you have representatives running for Board Trustees of the Grand Lodge Building Association and for Washington Masonic Charities. These too, are important and responsible positions.

To view a copy of the 2018 Resolution Packet and candidate biographies:



From Mouth to Ear to Cipher to Cipher

In 1730+/- Samuel Pitchard published his *Masonry Dissected* and disclosed the ritual and secrets of the GLE-Moderns. This publication was a run-away best seller with four editions coming out in one week's time. Who was buying this booklet? – Masons. It became an aid to the memory and standardized the ritual to a great extent.

In the 1738 book of Constitutions, Anderson devoted a number of pages to refuting Pitchard in his "Defense." Later exposures such as "Jachin and Boaz" and "The Three Distinct Knocks" added more of the secret ritual that traditionally was going from mouth to ear. It was in the 1770s that William Preston at popular request produced the Masonic world's first Monitor - "Illustrations of Masonry."

MASTER MASONS RAISED IN MAY

Date Raised:

5/3/1955 Morton B. Blager
 5/31/1956 Harry L. Arthur
 5/16/1962 Eugene V. Kashpureff
 5/26/1965 Morrey Eskenazi
 5/29/1971 J. Michael Wilderman
 5/10/1973 Vincent Di Giulio
 5/29/1974 Charles S. Tine
 5/29/1974 George S. Serpanos
 5/19/1978 Serco S. Tokatlian
 5/26/1979 Edgar H. Carthell, Jr.
 5/17/1984 Bryan E. Hopkins
 5/13/1987 Helmuth P. Svoboda
 5/29/1993 J. Joseph DuWors
 5/11/2002 Kenneth D. Wehl
 2/21/2006 John O. Nance
 5/22/2012 Jeffrey L. Pullen
 5/22/2012 Paul N. Bernal
 5/22/2012 David J. Holdsworth



ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Under this headline, the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) placed in February 2018 full-page ads in The Times, Daily Mail and The Guardian newspapers to defend Freemasonry and two Lodges against insidious allegations, defamation and innuendo. The Guardian (yes, the foregoing paper) had published the banner headline "Secret Freemasons' Lodges for MPs and journalists revealed". ("MP" is a Member of Parliament.)

The accompanying article has two, perhaps more secret Lodges of journalists and politicians in the House of Commons do all kinds of secretive things to influence laws, pending legislation, promotions and demotion of personnel. Named Lodges were "New Welcome" and "Gallery", the latter presumably in the Gallery of the Commons.

UGLE points out that there is nothing secret about either Lodge. They have been and are regular Lodges and work in a regular Masonic building. Neither Lodge has an MP or journalist as member.

UGLE announced launching a general information campaign shortly.

What does the future hold for St. John's?



Come to our May communication and share in the discussion about the future of St. John's. What will our Lodge look like five, ten, fifty years from now?

Will we be growing? Will we be shrinking? Will we be meeting at Greenwood? A building of our own? No building whatsoever? Only a distant memory or vibrant leader in our community?

LET'S LOOK AT THAT A LITTLE CLOSER



“What makes you a Mason?” Your obligation? It’s got to be more than a two word answer. “Improve myself in Masonry.” What does it mean? How does one improve oneself in Masonry? When we volunteer, we need to be held accountable. We need to be educated. This should be the first and foremost duty of a Lodge of Freemasons. We like to say that we take good men and make them better, but how do we do that? You have to teach them, and that means that there has to be education. We need to remember that we represent something bigger than ourselves. How many times have you seen something on Facebook posted by a fellow Mason that is in questionable taste? We shouldn’t be engaging in religious or political debate on social media if we have Masonic symbols all over our Facebook homepage. We need to watch what we say in public. Lastly, set high expectations for spectacular meetings that none will want to miss them.

Whence Came You?

by Midnight Freemason Contributor
WB Darin A. Lahners



Whence Came You? Three simple words. A question. What came you here to do? Another Question. You are a Mason, I presume? Another question.

What makes you a Mason? Another question. However, does the answer to this last question really all that makes you a Mason? Yes, technically, but aren’t we more than that? Is the answer to the last question what really makes you a Mason? I don’t believe that. I believe that it’s part of what makes you a Mason, but being a Mason is more than just that two-word answer.

I envy the Odd Fellows. They know exactly what they are all about. At the end of every Odd Fellow meeting, you recite the Odd Fellow Valediction. It is pretty much their mission statement. It is as follows:

“I AM AN ODD FELLOW:

I believe in the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Man;

I believe in Friendship, Love and Truth as basic guides to the ultimate destiny of all mankind.

I believe my home, my church or temple, my Lodge, and my community deserve my best work, my modest pride, my earnest faith, and my deepest loyalty, as I perform my duty “to visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead, and educate the orphan” and as I work with others to build a better world because in spirit and in truth, I am, and must always be, grateful to my Creator, faithful to my Country, and fraternal to my fellow man;

I AM AN ODD FELLOW!”

If you ask any Odd Fellow, what the Odd Fellows do, they can recite this and give you a pretty good idea of what they are about.

What would happen if you ask a Freemason about our Mission Statement? I’m going to go out on a limb here and say that if you ask 10 Freemasons this question, you’re going to get 10 different answers. This is part of the problem we have. We don’t have a singular identity. Yes, we have a long history that we like to talk about. We have a list of famous dead people (for the most part) that were Masons. We talk about the halcyon days of Masonry, when all of these magnificent buildings were built, when Pike and Mackey were writing, when we think the Lodges were packed to the rafters with Masons. The truth is, that Pike and Mackey were experiencing the same things we’re seeing now. To compound matters, there are so many differences from one Grand Lodge to another in the United States. There’s hardly anything to unify us as a fraternity.

Do we need a valediction like the Odd Fellows? I don’t think it would hurt to have some idea of what our Mission is. I believe if we have one, it’s in pieces in our ritual. In order to not break my obligation, I’m going to just try to piece something together, paraphrased from our ritual. Here’s what I came up with:

“I believe in a supreme being. I believe that I should meet my brothers on the level, act by the plumb and part upon the square. I believe in brotherly love, relief and truth. I believe that I need to subdue my passions and improve myself in Masonry. I am taken and accepted among brothers and fellows. I have been often tried, never denied, and I am ready to be tried again. I hold my obligations as binding. I know the meaning of letter ‘G’. I try to apply the cardinal virtues in my everyday life. I believe that I have a four-fold duty to my country, my neighbor, my family and myself. I will work to aid in the relief of distressed brother Master Masons, their widows and orphans. I work every day in the quarry to make my rough ashlar into a perfect one. I am a Master Mason!”

Does the valediction above sum up what it is to be a Freemason? Would this be something that you’d be willing to repeat in your Lodge at the end of your meetings? I think it gives a good summary of core beliefs, but I’m not sold on it. There is one thing that really bothers me about it. The phrase: “Improve myself in Masonry.” What does it mean? How does one improve himself in Masonry?

How many of you have been at the end of the third degree to hear one of the various men assembled say something like this to the newly raised Master Mason: “You get out of Masonry what you put into it!”? Are we

not already basically telling the new Master Mason, "Hey Bro., I'm glad you're a Mason! Don't sweat coming back though, as long as you pay your dues, it's cool." Don't we need to set our expectations instead of lowering them? The idea that we are perpetuating is that we only care about the candidate until he's raised. After that, they are on their own. We don't seem to care about the guy once he walks out that door as a Master Mason. This is so utterly and completely wrong.

It also irritates me when someone hands the newly raised Master Mason a petition to an appellate body right after his degree. I mean seriously, give the brother a break. If he wants to join the Shrine/Grotto/York Rite/Scottish Rite, he can do it in due time. Let him enjoy his moment in the sun, don't shove something in his face, and pressure him to join xyz body. It's just rude, and unbecoming behavior for a Mason. I'll get off my soapbox now.

You see my brothers, there is a relationship between the expectations we should set for a newly raised Master Mason, and those we should have for ourselves in order to improve ourselves in Masonry. I believe that they are one and the same. We need to be educated. This should be the first and foremost duty of the Lodge of Freemasons. We like to say that we take good men and make them better, but how do you do that? You have to teach them, and that means that there has to be education. How do we get teachers? You have to educate them. You see, we need to start a train-the-trainer process. Those that have knowledge need to give that knowledge to those that do not. I'm not only talking about Masonic knowledge. Part of becoming a better man is learning how to be one. We need to teach each other how to behave in public, on social media, in private. We need to teach each other what to wear to Lodge, and the importance of a good suit. We need to teach each other how to use technology. We need to teach each other how to be leaders. Then of course, we need to share our knowledge of ritual, floor work, esoterica, and our ideas about the history of Freemasonry. We need to mentor each other, and the mentoring shouldn't be a one way process. It should be reciprocal. Each man should have something that he can contribute that the other man or men in the Lodge don't know. By sharing this information, we learn and become well rounded individuals.

We need to be held accountable. How many times have you been to a stated meeting and had an activity in the community or socially in the Lodge come up for a vote? Everyone thinks it's a marvelous idea, and everyone votes unanimously to do it. Then the time for the event comes, and it's you and one other brother who shows up.

My brothers, this is unacceptable. If you don't want to participate, don't vote for an activity! If you vote for an event, then you're basically volunteering to be there and participate. It is quite frankly disheartening for me as a Worshipful Master to say that this happens time and time again in my Lodge. Yes, I understand that Family and Work comes first. Which is why I stated above to not vote for something if you have no intention of showing up. This doesn't just apply to social gatherings or community events. If we have a degree or other work, you need to show up. Once again, there's a good chance the date was discussed in the meeting. If you can't make it, then you can explain why in the meeting. That's assuming that you're coming to the meeting. I'll address that in a second.

We need to remember that we represent something bigger than ourselves. How many times have you seen something on Facebook posted by a fellow Mason that is in questionable taste? Remember that if you post an opinion and you have a Square and Compass as your profile picture, people are going to make assumptions about Masonry. We shouldn't be engaging in religious or political debate on social media if we have Masonic symbols all over our Facebook homepage. We also need to watch what we say in public. Don't cry about the lack of Millennials joining Lodge when you were just calling them snowflakes a minute ago. I'm tired of having to bite my tongue when you spout off about Gay People, African Americans, Muslims, Jews, (insert minority or religion here). I don't agree with you. I don't want to say anything because you're a brother and I'm trying to be respectful of my obligation, but

you're an idiot if you're doing this. Don't put me in a position where I need to hold you accountable in public (or on social media). You should be able to hold yourself accountable (see the part about subduing my passions above.). Remember, you represent Freemasonry all of the time, there's no off duty time.

We need to make our meetings into quality events. We should have a nice meal before the meeting. We should think about having a nice cigar or drink after the meeting. We should dress up for every meeting. We should have quality education at every meeting. We should have some discussion about the education at every meeting. We should keep the business to a minimum so that we can focus on the above things. The same holds for degree work. We need to set a standard that everyone agrees to follow. We need to work so that everyone who is there knows their role. Because once again, it boils down to expectations. If we set the expectation with our degree work for the candidate, they think that this is what Freemasonry is all about. Telling them that they get out of



Freemasonry what they put in has led us to our current predicament, set the expectation of having them come to meetings and make the meetings so spectacular that they don't want to miss them. Continuing to read the minutes, communication, etc. was necessary when we didn't have the ability to mass communicate. Now most of the business can be done via email or a private webpage or Facebook group. The business part of meetings shouldn't be taking 2 hours. If they are, you're doing it wrong. Trust me, I'm currently worshipful master of a Lodge doing it wrong.

We need to guard the West Gate. When we begin to only admit men that will adhere to and buy into the above, then we will be able to advance ourselves. If the current members of your Lodge aren't buying into what needs to happen, it's because they weren't vetted properly. If we continue to vote in every man with a checkbook and money for dues and degree fees, what are we really doing? We need to be closing the doors and guarding them, not letting them remain open for everyone. Not every man deserves to be a Freemason. Call it elitism. I only want the best for the Fraternity. If we profess to make good men better, then we should only be admitting good men. We need to admit men that agree with the core principles I've laid out above.

You see, not every Mason takes the meaning of improving themselves in Masonry to heart. If they did, I wouldn't have to set out the expectations above. They say their obligation, they kiss the bible, but did they really understand the words? Did they listen during the lectures? They should already be doing the things I've mentioned above. Not every Mason is. They think they are working on their rough ashlar, but it's quite clear that they are just making them rougher. They are not subduing their passions.

So what's the solution, you may ask. My answer is this. If you are not getting the experience in Masonry that you desire, either join a Lodge that gives you this experience, or find like-minded individuals and form a Lodge that gives you this experience. You can't expect to change Freemasonry wholesale. It's too institutionalized. There are too many members that will resist any change you offer, even if it makes the most sense. So I say, reject their reality, and substitute your own. Create your own little corner of the world with some like-minded brethren. It's going to take work, but wouldn't you rather work for something that you have a say in building and creating? I know I would.

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Nevadaville Ghost Town

How did the population of a 19th century town in the American West go from 1,000 to 2? The usual story: The gold dried up.

Nevadaville was established in 1859 as a primarily Irish-American gold mining town in what would eventually become the state of Colorado. Although a fire destroyed over 50 buildings in 1861, the town rebuilt and reached its peak around 1880 with a population of over 1,000.



The deserted ghost town is home to a Masonic Lodge that, strangely enough, still holds meetings

But with the area's gold veins almost tapped out, Nevadaville's best days were already behind it. By the 1920s and '30s, the town was a shadow of its former self, and by the second half of the 20th century the

population had declined to just a handful of individuals. 1950s census data shows just six residents living in the town. Today, Nevadaville is mostly deserted, with just



Lodge room of the Nevadaville Temple

two determined residents still calling Nevadaville home.

Several original buildings are still standing in Nevadaville, including a saloon building, city hall, and a Masonic Lodge that,

strangely enough, still holds regular meetings. The town's abandoned mining shacks and equipment can still be seen, but beware: the mine shafts are dangerous to approach as the ground nearby can collapse under a person's weight.

Know Before You Go

Warning: Do not go near the mine shafts as the edges may cave in due to the pulverized granite sides.

Nevadaville is located south of Central City, Nevada, off of Central City Parkway on Nevadaville Road (County Road 1-S).

PILLARS IN THE PORCH

There are two pillars, placed before the entrance of King Solomon's Temple, which are symbolically represented within every Lodge of Fellow Craft Masonry. These pillars are symbols of strength and establishment and by implication, power and control. One must remember that power and control are placed before you, so you might realize that power without control is anarchy, or that control without power is futility. Man must have both if his life is to be successful.