



THE TRESTLEBOARD



Volume 4, Issue 7

Davy Crockett Lodge #1225 A.F. & A.M.

February 2012

****From The East****

By Patrick Giles Worshipful Master

Well January was a busy month for our lodge. In addition to our stated meetings we had an EA degree and EA proficiency on another candidate. Our biggest moment was the official visit of our new DDGM our own James C. Williams IV. I can't begin to tell you what an honor that was. We had a great meeting and great program and after business R.W. Williams gave the Grand Masters message, he also presented us with an award. We packaged up the materials for the Fantastic Teeth program for Will Rodgers Elementary, which J.W. Brad Kohanke spearheaded with S.W. Wes O'Neill, great job guys, this is a very important program for the community's children and develops good habits that will last a lifetime.

On the 31st we hosted our Bring a Friend Night. Wow! If you missed this or missed bringing a friend, you really missed out. Our lodge really showed well that night. We had some really good presentations and commentaries on Masonry and a question and answer session on various aspects of the craft. We received a lot of positive feedback and some really nice compliments. Kudos to Bros. Kohanke, O'Neill, B. Reynolds, Williams and Woodfield for their talks and participation. Well done indeed! We will have another in couple of months for those who were unable to attend. Remember we are dark Feb. 14th and the 20/40 service awards are on Feb. 28th.

Fraternally
-Patrick

Davy Crockett Lodge # 1225 A.F. & A.M

Stated Meetings— 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, Meal at 6:30;

Open Lodge at 7:30 for Business Meeting Masonic Philosophy and History during meeting.

Ritual Practice and Instruction 2nd & 4th Tuesdays.

Lodge of Instruction 4th Wed. 6:30 to 8PM

Join Us For Exceptional Fellowship and Instruction!!

Upon the Secretary's Desk!

By Chris Williams

Greetings Brethren, I sure hope your year has started out well and things are going good for you. I want to say thanks to all the Brethren who have gotten their dues in. We still have about 20 Brothers who we are waiting to hear from so please get those dues in ASAP. A special thanks to all the Endowed, Life, and 50 plus year members who have sent in their per-capita this year. It is a great help to the Lodge and it is greatly appreciated. I want to put a plug in for the Masters, Wardens & Secretaries Association. The February meeting will be held at the Barn Door Restaurant on Feb 15th at 6:30. Junior Past Grand Master Rt Wor T.E. Gene Carnes will be the guest speaker. Rt Wor Carnes will talk about his year in the Grand East and his service to Texas Freemasonry. The MW&S Association is doing some new things and is trying to take on projects to be of service to District 39. Please try to attend this meeting and see what they have going on. Please RSVP to mikos30208@yahoo.com by Sunday February 12th. I look forward to seeing you there.

This Month's Humor

Letter to a men's helpline...

Hi Bob, I really need your advice on a serious problem: I have suspected for some time now that my wife has been cheating on me. The usual signs: if the phone rings and I answer, the caller hangs up; she goes out with the girls a lot. I try to stay awake to look out for her when she comes home but I usually fall asleep. Anyway last night about midnight I hid in the shed behind the boat. When she came home she got out of someone's car buttoning her blouse, then she took her panties out of her purse and slipped them on. It was at that moment crouched behind the boat that I noticed a hairline crack in the outboard engine mounting bracket. Is that something I can weld or do I need to replace the whole bracket?

*******STATED MEETING PROGRAMS *******

**Stated Meeting 2-7-12
Program**

**"The River Jordan, the Sea of Galilee"
"The Dead Sea ~ and Freemasonry"**

**Presented By
PM Brother Bill Gulick**

**Stated Meeting 2-21-12
Program**

**"The 47th Problem of Euclid"
"The Pythagorean Theorem"**

**Presented By
Brother Chris Drzmala**

**Stated Meeting 3-6-12
Program**

**"The Power Of Three"
"An Explanation of the Commonalities"**

**Presented By
Brother Wes O'Neil**

Light Reflected

A monthly “opinion” by
Brother Bradley Kohanke, 32

First of all, for those of you who weren't in Lodge for the first official visit by our new District Deputy Grand Master, James C. (Chris) Williams IV, you really missed a special night. Not only did we get to be the first Lodge he visited, but he is one of our own. It was a very good night, the ritual was performed very well, the talk he gave was inspirational, and I believe we all went away with a good feeling about the coming year and the Most Worshipful Grand Master's plans. However, I'd like to also point out that Brother Olaf Emblem presented an extremely thought-provoking Light Brigade presentation about whether Freemasonry was a “charitable” organization. He was the inspiration behind my article this month and I just had to throw in my 2 cents.

Brother Olaf's contention was that although Masonry in and of itself was not designed to be a “charitable” organization, through its teachings the Brethren are taught to be charitable in their actions towards others. What a great way to put it! But what does it mean to be “charitable?” Is it defined as helping a person who is in destitute circumstances? Is it contributing to the relief of widows and orphans? Is it aiding a distressed worthy Brother? Or are these just examples of a higher calling? Let me digress...

Back in the early 1990's, two years after being raised to the Degree of Master Mason, I was promoted to an Executive position at a fairly large company. My boss was the owner's son...which, as you can imagine was a bit difficult at times. He didn't really deserve the position of authority he had, and routinely abused it and those who worked there. I decided that my primary role in my new position was to be a buffer between him and the employees, and filter the meaningful information to my staff in order to move the Company ahead. As a reminder to myself to act in a manner befitting a Mason, I printed out a quote from The Great Light in Masonry and stapled it to the wall next to my phone so I would see it every day. It was Proverbs 3:27, which says:

“Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.”

Over the years, that passage took on deeper and more profound meaning to me. Do I want to look back on my life and say, “Well, I did my best not to be mean to anyone,” or “I donated my fair share to the United Way?” Now, I'm certainly guilty of not practicing what I preach all the time...but I have tried to live my life in a way that when it's over, I can look back and be content that when an opportunity presented itself to help someone who deserved it, I took it. So, I guess what I'm saying is, as Masons, “charity” means more than donating money and/or materials to a worthy cause. It means recognizing when the Great Architect of the Universe has placed you in a position where you can help someone complete a difficult task or even fulfill a dream, and then proactively doing what you can to help others along their lives. How many times have we driven by somebody changing a flat on the side of the road and thought, “Man, that poor guy?” Would it be that difficult to stop and offer help?

I had a situation recently where I found a musician that I thought had that magic “something” to really make it. I attended several of her performances and bought both of her CD's. She was so nice and so humble that I couldn't help but grow to like her as a person as well as a performer. One night after a show, we were talking and she told me that she thought she might have to give up singing and songwriting because she just couldn't make enough money to pay her rent. She was very distressed by the thought because it is her passion and life's dream. Now, most of you know that I worked for Shiner Beers for almost 10 years. Shiner is an independently owned brewery that financially backs certain independent musicians as part of its promotional activities. It just so happens that I hired and have remained friends with the Director of Marketing...so I called and explained the situation. Long story short, my musician friend now has enough money to pay her rent and pursue her dream.

When she asked me why I did that for her, I thought about it for a while and finally said, “Look, I could give you the long story about being a good person and helping others, blah, blah, blah. But the real reason is because I'm a Freemason, and that's what Masons do. We help others and try to be a force for good.”

Brethren, all good has to do in order to defeat evil is exist...because when all hope seems lost and the situation seems to be at its darkest point, we all go towards the light. Be that Light.

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"Try as he might, Rex could not master the freemason handshake."

"What is the proper way to wear a Masonic ring? Should the points of the compass be toward or away from the body?"

"If you were hanging the American flag, would you put the stars down? The same holds true of the ring. Usually it is a gift, and has sentimental value for the wearer. It should look right side up to him. Rings are therefore worn with the points of the compass toward the wearer." This subject is one on which Grand Lodges have made no regulation and popular opinion is divided. We must therefore reason from analogy. When the emblem of the square and compasses is displayed on a building, pennant, button, watch charm etc., universal custom requires the points of the compass point downward. When displayed on the Altar they point away from the Master. As the Master from his station views the compass from the Altar of his lodge, the points are from, not towards him. As the wearer of a compass watch charm views it, the points are down and away from his eyes. In a similar way as he views the emblem on his ring the points should be down or away from his eyes. The square is the symbol of earthly, the compass of heavenly perfection. As a combined emblem the ends of the square point up as a symbol of man's aspirations toward God; the points of the compass are down to represent heavenly qualities coming down from God to earth. Therefore it would seem that the proper way to wear a ring would be that in which its symbolism is best expressed; namely, that in which, when the hand is held in its usual position the points of the compass are towards the earth and away from the wearer's eyes.

FEBRUARY Family Night

25 and 40 Year Service Awards February 28th

This will be a covered dish dinner. The Lodge will provide the main course, bread, and coffee and tea. Please come and help us honor these distinguished Brothers.

MARCH Family Night Lamar Awards

March 27th

This will be a covered dish dinner. The Lodge will furnish the main course, bread, and coffee and tea. The Lodge will present Lamar Awards to some deserving students.

"The most beautiful thing that we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stare rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed."

.... Albert Einstein

Masonic Did You Know?

By W. Bro. Dwight Seals

Grant Garland Teaff was born November 12, 1933. He is presently the Executive Director of the American Football Coaches Association. He is a former American football player and coach. He served as the head coach at McMurry University (1960–1965), Angelo State University (1969–1971), and Baylor University (1972–1992), compiling a career college football record of 170–151–8. He was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame as a coach in 2001. Grant Teaff graduated from Snyder High School, Snyder, Texas in 1951. While in high school, Grant lettered in football, basketball, and track. He was first team All-District in football. Collegiately he played at San Angelo Junior College (now Angelo State University), and McMurry University in Abilene, Texas. When McMurry head coach, Wilford Moore went on to coach Lubbock high school in 1956, Teaff became his assistant. He then moved on to be an assistant at McMurry from 1957 to 1959. Teaff began his head coaching career at McMurry in 1960, serving there until 1965. Among his players were future Pittsburgh Steelers split end Dick Compton and future San Diego Chargers offensive lineman Ernie Park. After a stint as an assistant coach to J. T. King at Texas Tech, Teaff became the head coach at Angelo State University from 1969 to 1971. In 1972, Teaff was hired to resurrect the moribund football team at Baylor University, Waco, Texas. Baylor originally hired Rudy Feldman from the University of New Mexico, but Feldman quit after one day, leaving the job to Teaff. The Baylor football team had been 7–43–1 in the five seasons preceding Teaff's arrival. Teaff quickly built Baylor into a competitive team and in 1974, Baylor won eight games and captured the Southwest Conference title for the first time since 1924. In the process they defeated the Texas Longhorns, 34–24, after rallying from a 24–7 halftime deficit. It was Baylor's first victory over Texas in 17 years. The 1974 season and the win over Texas are commonly referred to as the "Miracle on the Brazos," named after the Brazos River near the Baylor campus. Teaff remained Baylor's coach until 1992, compiling a winning record and winning the Southwest Conference title again in 1980. His teams won the 1979 Peach Bowl, the 1985 Liberty Bowl, the 1986 Bluebonnet Bowl, and the 1992 John Hancock Bowl, his final game as coach. His teams also earned invitations to the 1975 and 1981 Cotton Bowl Classics, the 1983 Bluebonnet Bowl, and the 1991 Copper Bowl. His Baylor teams finishing with a record 10–11 against the Longhorns. By comparison, in the 15 seasons preceding Teaff's arrival and the 15 years following Teaff's departure, Baylor had a 1–29 record against Texas. Teaff gained notoriety by eating a live worm in the locker room prior to a 38–14 upset win over Texas in 1978, telling his players he would "keep the worms warm."

After retiring from coaching, Teaff in 1993 became executive director of the American Football Coaches Association, an organization headquartered in Waco, Texas that represents coaches across the United States.

Illustrious Brother Grant G. Teaff is a 33 Degree, I.G.H. Scottish Rite Mason, Waco, Texas.

Symbolism Corner

Operative Freemasonry
Wages: Master of the Work: In ancient operative times, the Master of the Work received the highest wages. His wages were corn, wine, oil and sometimes the coin of the realm.

Speculative Freemasonry
Wages: In Speculative Freemasonry, Masonic wages are not earned in coin. They are the rewards earned through acts of kindness, good deeds of service, and the gift of your time to others.

*******Davy Crockett*******

*******Annual*******

Crock Pot Cook Off **Saturday February 18th**

Anything you can cook in a Crock Pot.
Come out and enter you best dish.

Also a dessert competition

All you can eat

This is one of our two annual fund raisers for the Lodge.

Thanks for all your support!!

The Profound Pontifications of Brother John Deacon

The phone had been ringing off the wall all morning long. I couldn't remember a day that had been this busy. We even had the boss up front helping us. Roger called out that the call on hold was for me and as I reached for it he said, "I think it's your friend John Deacon." I shook my head as I picked it up. John had called earlier to tell me that he was coming by and wanted to have lunch and I had told him I was too busy to have lunch. I really hated to miss it cause I hadn't written my article yet. I figured he must have broken down someplace..... it was going to be a long afternoon. "Hello John", I said. "What's up?" "Lunch is what's up," he growled saying it with a mouthful of something. "I'm sitting here eating by myself and it ain't near as much fun as arguing with you." "I would like to take that as a compliment," I replied cautiously. "I told you I can't get away." "But I hate to eat alone andpeople are staring at me," he whined. I felt a tap on my shoulder and I turned and Leonard said, "Go eat with him real quick. He's liable to get into trouble if you don't show up." It had actually slowed a bit so I nodded and asked John where he was. He let out a big whoop that hurt my ear and I am sure got him some nasty looks from anyone close to him. "I am right here at that place you are always bragging about, the Flagstop." "That's great John," I said. "I'll be right there." The Flagstop, dear readers, is a little country café that is added on to a convenience store and gas station right on the side of Interstate 10 outside San Antonio. The main reason I brag about it is that aside from all the home cooked meals like Fried Chicken, Chicken Fried Steak, Meat Loaf, Pot Roast, Fried Fish, and yes Enchiladas with side dishes like Mashed Potatoes and Okra, and Macaroni and Cheese and a whole bunch of other stuff and even all kinds of Hamburgers, the thing I love the most is their Philly Cheese Steak Sandwich. It is one of the best Cheese Steak Sandwiches I have ever had. The meat has a wonderful flavor and they lay about six slices of that Monterey Jack cheese and a bunch of grilled bell peppers and onions on it and slip the whole thing on to a hoagie roll and I guarantee that it is truly addictive. As I walked in the door I was stressing a little because this was way too close to the shop and more than likely I was going to see one of our customers. I sure hoped John was in a calm mood. The first thing I encountered was two cowboys looking across the dining room in John's direction and mumbling in low tones to each other. As I passed them I heard one say to the other, "Emmitt, I've got ten dollars that says he can't eat all that food in front of him." I glanced back and saw Emmitt in deep thought and for a moment I thought about going back and taking that bet but I would just be taking advantage of him.Next Panel

Instead I called out, "Take the bet". I don't know if he did but I was sure that no matter what was in front of John that he would eat it all. When I got back to where John was I couldn't believe my eyes. I almost went back to tell Emmitt to get his money back. There was food everywhere on the table and he had already consumed about half of it. He had a big plate of Fried Chicken in front of him and I don't know what had been in the two empty plates next to that. There were two of the Philly Cheese Steaks with French fries for each sitting there also. I slid into a chair across from him and reached for one of the Cheese Steaks and if I hadn't been as quick as I was I might have lost part of my hand as he snatched the plate from me. "My mistake John", I said. "I thought you had been a nice Brother and ordered for me." "Not a chance," he snapped. "I didn't how long you were going to be so I went ahead and ordered my stuff." "Oh I see how it is. Well just ordering for myself at least it will be the cheapest meal I have ever had with you. He smiled as I headed over to the cashier to order. The cashier's name was Jessalynn and she and her parents are some of our best customers at the shop. She is a real nice young lady and we like her a lot. She always has something nice to say.....until today. I ordered a Cheese Steak for myself and something to drink and she went to ringing it up and a little red flag went up in my mind that she was punching way too many buttons on her machine. Just as I started to say something she said "that will be \$47.23 today. I must have looked like I was going to pass out because she quickly said, "Your friend said it was your turn to pay..... he is your friend isn't he? I looked over at John who waved and smiled which I didn't return. I turned back to Jessalynn and paid the ticket muttering something about he was lucky he was my Brother cause he was no friend of mine right then. When I sat back down at the table all he said was "Well..... it is your turn." "Yeah right," I said forlornly. "The problem is that I had to refinance my truck to be able to cover these lunches with you." He seemed to think that was funny for some reason. My Cheese Steak showed up and we ate in silence for a bit. I finished and waited for him to get done. I sure hoped he had something interesting on his mind this month. As it turned out it was at least as far as I was concerned. I waited while he took a couple of deep breaths and finally said, "Brother Chris, we had our official DistrictGo to page 6...

Deputy Grand Master visit two weeks ago and this year the Grand Master's message is all about membership, getting them in and keepin them once they are in. He talked some about not waiting for a man to ask about Masonry but to reach out to a man who you know is a good man and tell him why he should be a Mason. I thought a little about what he said and you know, it makes sense to do that. Heck who knows more non-Masons who are good men than we Masons do and we already know who would make good Brothers. I think sometimes that we are convinced that everyone, everywhere knows who we are. And since we believe that, we don't say anything to anyone about the Fraternity because they might already have a negative opinion of us. I don't know why we think this but there's a whole bunch of Brothers that do, who will never approach the good men that they know and tell them about one of the best things that they ever did, being initiated into Masonry. I did me a little survey over that last two weeks. I have asked so far about fifty men, some I know real well and some I barely know what they know about Masonry.....and I was shocked that out of fifty guys barely half knew about the Masons. The other half had no idea what Masons were. Of the half that knew about us only about half of that group knew anything about what we do and who we are. Four of the ones that knew about us had a bad opinion of the Fraternity and after talking to them for just a couple of minutes they admitted that they had heard bad things from someone else. None of the men that knew anything about Masonry knew how to become a Mason. Isn't that amazing? "Wow, that is amazing John," I said. "That means there are literally thousands and thousands of men out there who might want to be Masons who don't know we exist." "Right you are Brother Chris. We just need to get out there and talk about the greatest organization in the world and that's what I intend to do from here on out." I said, "You gotta be careful John not to push anyone into filling out a petition. You know it's got to be of their own free will and accord." "Right again my Brother but let me give you a hamburger analogy," he said with a grin. "Do you know what analogy means Brother John?" He gave me a dirty look and continued, "Like I said a hamburger analogy. If you went into a restaurant and there was a burger on the menu called the John Deacon Burger but there was no description of it at all. Nothing about what was in it or on it or what came with itno information at all. Would you order that burger?" "Well, if it was called the John Deacon Burgernext panel....."

it would be too dang big to eat but not knowing anything about it I wouldn't buy it because I wouldn't want to waste my money on something I might not like." "Exactly my point Brother Chris," he said happily way too loud. "The number of men who are going to be curious enough to ask about Masonry on their own is a heck of a lot less than the ones who might be interested if they were told about Masonry by a Brother who offers information in conversation with a man who he knows id a good candidate for the Fraternity. Do you remember when those movies came out a couple of years ago that had a lot of Masonry in them?" "of course I remember them," I replied. "Who doesn't?" "Well the Fraternity got a huge number of men asking about Masonry during that time and we got a lot of new Brothers out of it. All I am saying is that telling people about Masonry should be as easy and natural as talking about what you do for a living. In fact I know a Brother who when asked what business he is in responds that "I am a Mason but I make my money in the consulting business." "That's pretty cool John," I said. "Maybe I'll start doing that." Brother Chris you might think I am crazy but I asked a man who I have known for many years this question: Have you ever thought about giving some of your time, talents, and wisdom to something that will reward you with happiness, contentment and much more wisdom? He looked at me for about 20 seconds and I could see he was rolling it around in his mind and then he asked me what I was talking about and when I got through telling him about Masonry he asked me what he had to do to join. That was pretty cool and I am looking forward to bringing him to Lodge with me." That's great John," I said. "I am going to start talking more about the Craft too.... right away." "You know Brother Chris I think that if we just told more good men out there about our fantastic Fraternity we would have new members all over the place. But if we get them we have to keep them and that's the other thing I was thinking about. I was remembering while I was driving down here today about all the new Entered Apprentices that we have initiated in our Lodge over the past few years and how many never finished their degrees. I know that some were not ready to be Masons and their loss was inevitable but there were many more who I think we failed them. It's also not hard to think that we may have failed to live up to what we promised." "You need to explain that John," I replied skeptically. "I can remember a few that we totally ignored after the initiation. Oh heck, we didn't do it on purpose. I remember a couple of BrothersGo to page 8

Calendar for February and March

February 7th – Stated Meeting **(The Program for this meeting will be The River Jordan, the Sea of Galilee, the Dead Sea ~ and Freemasonry presented by PM Brother Bill Gulick.)**

February 14th – Practice or Degree

February 15th – Masters Wardens and Secretaries Meeting 6:30 PM at the Barn Door Restaurant. Guest Speaker Junior Past Grand Master Rt Wor T.E. Gene Carnes. RSVP by 2/12/2012 to mikos30208@yahoo.com .

February 18th – Crock Pot Cook Off. This is one of our two annual fundraisers.

February 21st – Stated Meeting _ **(The Program for this meeting will be 47 th problem of Euclid, and it about the The Pythagorean Theorem and its relationship to Masonry. Presented by Brother Chris Drzymala)**

February 28th -- 25 and 40 year Service Awards. This will be a family Night covered dish.

March 6th – Stated Meeting **(The Program for this meeting will be “The Power of Three” and why is 3 such a prominent number throughout history in both religion and secular society? An exploration of the commonalities of the number 3. Presented by Brother Wes O’Neill)**

March 13th – Practice or Degree

March 20th – Stated Meeting (The program for this meeting will be

March 27th -- Lamar Awards. Please set aside this date. This will b a family night covered dish.

February Birthdays

Wayne Whitworth	Ector Crisler	Bruce Krahn	Paul Bartles	George Morales
Franklin Scheib	David Snyder Jr.	David Moore	David Meineke	Charlie Shaw Jr
Dennis Burrer	William Southerly	Ronald Wilson	Tom Foster	John Barlow
Wayne Duncan	Burt Reynolds	Roger Cervera	Glenn Aultman	Craig Duncan
William Martin				

Happy Birthday Brothers!!

JD From page 6..... who were not very outgoing and I suppose now that I think about it a little different that they might have been a little shy or maybe a little self conscious. I can remember that some of the Brothers thought that they were just anti social. And you know, we just didn't extend the hand of Brotherly love and friendship andwell they stopped coming and we never saw them again. I feel like we failed them. And nope we didn't follow up either...we just left them alone and.....we lost them. There were other Brothers that we failed too. We told them there would be Brothers as ready to give as they would be to receive instruction. They found out that there were very few who would or could give instruction. We promised them light.....Masonic education and then we gave them instructors who weren't qualified to teach or explainagain our fault because we stopped teaching Brothers to be instructors. I wonder just how many would still be or would have continued and finished their work had we done what we promised we would." His voice was angry and frustrated and helpless all at the same time and I could see and hear the angry coming to the front and you know when the angry comes it comes out loud. I glanced around to see if anyone was hearing John and having been so intent on John's words I hadn't noticed the two cowboys Emmitt and his buddy had sat down at the table next to us and were looking towards us.

I said, "John we need to lower the volume a bit cause we are bothering some of the people in here." Before John could answer Emmitt said, "You ain't botherin us none and as he said it he got up and came over to our table and sat right down next to John and his buddy came and sat down next to me. John and I were exchanging confused looks and Emmitt said, "You know the big guy here is right. I dang near never came back after I was initiated and if it wasn't for a chance meeting with one of my Lodge Brothers at a store and him actually asking me how it was going I would have never gone back. Heck they didn't even realize what they did to run me off." He saw the confusion in our faces. He held out his hand and said, "Sorry, My name is Emmitt and this here is my Lodge Brother Roy." The grip verification was made and we were instant friends..In fact I remembered seeing them in Lodge a couple of times. Emmitt pulled two ten dollar bills out of his shirt pocket and said to me, "Thanks for the info. You knew he would eat it all, didn't you?" "Yup I sure did," I replied as John looked from Emmitt to me and back confused.next panel

Roy looked at me and said sarcastically, "Yeah thanks a lot." "Sorry", I replied. "He is a big eater. My advice is to avoid him anywhere close to meal time." "Well there you go again Brother Chris", John said defensively. "Talking bad about me in front of my new friends." "Just stating the facts, John," I said and turning to Emmitt, "So you Brothers heard what John was saying?" "We sure did," he said. "And I have myself an opinion on all of that. There's Brothers out there that are saying that we should never say anything about the Fraternity at anytime unless we are asked and that's wrong. First of all there is nothing that says that anywhere. It's all a misinterpretation of the "*of their own free will and accord*" statement. The original intent was not that we shouldn't talk about Masonry but that's the way it has worked out. We are just not supposed to push anyone into submitting a petition. Once they have all the information then they need to make the decision on their own. Back when we had plenty of membership it didn't really matter but now it does. We have Lodges about to shut down because they can't pay their bills. And if that ain't bad enough there's still Lodges out there that are so stubborn and hard headed that they refuse to raise their dues and instead blame all their troubles on the Grand Lodge. You know Brothers, if I had my druthers I would like to not have to tell anyone about our Fraternity because everyone knew about us and every man wanted to be one of us but that is just not the case. If we keep going the way we are we are going to stubborn ourselves out of business. How much worse does it have to be before we pull our heads out and turn this thing around? We don't have to sacrifice anything at all. We just have to start talking to good men about this Fraternity we all love. How hard could that be?" "That was well put, Brother Emmitt," John said. "I am glad you said it. How about we all have some dessert and discuss it some more?" Well that was my cue to get out of Dodge and I said my goodbyes all around and headed out. As I walked out the door I looked back to see John waving and..... danged if he hadn't got Emmitt to buy dessert. What a guy. Remember, all good men deserve the chance to be a Mason. Let's try to make sure that they get that opportunity. See y'all next month.

Most people are mirrors, reflecting the moods and emotions of the times; few are windows, bringing light to bear on the dark corners where troubles fester.

The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.

Sydney J. Harris, 1917 - 1986

The Sunday Masonic Paper

Thanks to W Bro

Wayne Anderson, FCF, MPS

SO MOTE IT BE

Author Unknown – from 1927

How familiar the phrase is. No Lodge is ever opened or closed, in due form, without using it. Yet how few know how old it is, much less what a deep meaning it has in it. Like so many old and lovely things, it is so near to us that we do not see it.

As far back as we can go in the annals of the Craft we find this old phrase. Its form betrays its age. The word MOTE is an Anglo-Saxon word, derived from an anomalous verb, MOTAN. Chaucer uses the exact phrase in the same sense in which we use it, meaning "So May It Be." It is found in the Regius Poem, the oldest document of the Craft, just as we use it today.

As everyone knows, it is the Masonic form of the ancient AMEN which echoes through the ages, gathering meaning and music as it goes until it is one of the richest and most haunting of words. At first only a sign of assent, on the part either of an individual or of an assembly, to words of prayer or praise, it has become to stand as a sentinel at the gateway of silence.

When we have uttered all that we can utter, and our poor words seem like ripples on the bosom of the unspoken, somehow this familiar phrase gathers up all that is left - our dumb yearnings, our deepest longings - and bears them aloft to One who understands. In some strange way it seems to speak for us into the very ear of God the things for which words were never made.

So, naturally, it has a place of honor among us. At the marriage Altar it speaks its blessing as young love walks toward the bliss or sorrow of hidden years. It stands beside the cradle when we dedicate our little ones to the Holy life, mingling its benediction with our vows. At the grave side it utters its sad response to the shadowy AMEN which death pronounces over our friends.

When, in our turn, we see the end of the road, and would make a last will and testament, leaving our earnings and savings to those whom we love, the old legal phrase asks us to repeat after it: "In The Name Of God, AMEN." And with us, as with Gerontius in his Dream, the last word we hear when the voices of earth grow faint and the silence of God covers us, is the old AMEN, So Mote It Be.

How impressively it echoes through the Book of Holy Law. We hear it in the Psalms, as chorus answers to chorus, where it is sometimes reduplicated for emphasis. In the talks of Jesus with his friends it has a striking use, hidden in the English version. The oft-repeated phrase, "Verily, Verily I Say Unto You," if rightly translated means, AMEN, AMEN, I say unto you." Later, in the Epistles of Paul, the word AMEN becomes the name of Christ, who is the AMEN of God to the faith of man.

So, too, in the Lodge, at opening, at closing, and in the hour of initiation. No Mason ever enters upon any great or important undertaking without invoking the aid of Deity. And he ends his prayer with the old phrase, "So Mote It Be." Which is another way of saying: "The Will Of God Be Done." Or, whatever be the answer of God to his prayer: "So Be It - because it is wise and right.

What, then, is the meaning of this old phrase, so interwoven with all our Masonic lore, simple, tender, haunting? It has two meanings for us everywhere, in the Church, or in the Lodge. First, it is assent of man to the way and Will Of God; assent to His Commands; assent to His Providence, even when a tender, terrible stroke of death takes from us one much loved and leaves us forlorn.

Still, somehow, we must say: "So it is; so be it. He is a wise man, a brave man; who, baffled by the woes of life, when disaster follows fast and follows faster, can nevertheless accept his lot as a part of the Will of God and say, though it may almost choke him to say it: "So Mote It Be." It is not blind submission, nor dumb resignation, but a wise reconciliation to the Will of the Eternal.

The other meaning of the phrase is even more wonderful; it is the assent of God to the aspiration of man. Man can bear so much - anything, perhaps - if he feels that God knows, cares and feels for him and with him. If God says Amen, So it is, to our faith and hope and love; it links our perplexed meanings, and helps us to see, however dimly, or in a glass

darkly, that there is a wise and good purpose in life, despite its sorrow and suffering, and that we are not at the mercy of Fate or the whim of Chance.

Does God speak to man, confirming his faith and hope?

If so, how? Indeed yes! God is not the great I Was, but the great I Am, and He is neither deaf nor dumb. In Him we live and move and have our being - He Speaks to us in nature, in the moral law, and in our own hearts, if we have ears to hear. But He speaks most clearly in the Book of Holy Law which lies open upon our Alter.

Nor is that all. Some of us hold that the Word Of God "Became Flesh and Dwelt Among Us, Full Of Grace and Truth," in a life the loveliest ever lived among men, showing us what life is, what it means, and to what fine issues it ascends when we do the Will of God on earth as it is done in Heaven, No one of us but grows wistful when he thinks of the life of Jesus, however far we fall below it.

Today men are asking the question: Does it do any good to pray? The man who actually prays does not ask such a question. As well ask if it does a bird any good to sing, or a flower to bloom? Prayer is natural and instinctive in man. We are made so. Man is made for prayer, as sparks ascending seek the sun. He would not need religious faith if the objects of it did not exist.

Are prayers ever answered? Yes, always, as Emerson taught us long ago. Who rises from prayer a better man, his prayer is answered - and that is as far as we need to go. The deepest desire, the ruling motive of a man, is his actual prayer, and it shapes his life after its form and color. In this sense all prayer is answered, and that is why we ought to be careful what we pray for - because in the end we always get it.

What, then is the good of prayer? It makes us repose on the unknown with hope; it makes us ready for life. It is a recognition of laws and the thread of our conjunction with them. It is not the purpose of prayer to beg or make God do what we want done. Its purpose is to bring us to do the Will of God, which is greater and wiser than our will. It is not to use God, but to be used by Him in the service of His plan.

Can man by prayer change the Will of God? No, and Yes. True prayer does not wish or seek to change the larger Will of God, which involves in its sweep and scope the duty and destiny of humanity. But it can and does change the Will of God concerning us, because it changes our will and attitude towards Him, which is the vital thing in prayer for us.

For example, if a man living a wicked life, we know what the Will of God will be for him. All evil ways have been often tried, and we know what the end is, just as we know the answer to a problem in geometry. But if a man who is living wickedly changes his way of living and his inner attitude, he changes the Will of God - if not His Will, at least His Intention. That is, he attains what even the Divine Will could not give him and do for him unless it had been effected by His Will and Prayer.

The place of Prayer in Masonry is not perfunctory. It is not a mere matter of form and rote. It is vital and profound. As a man enters the Lodge as an initiate, prayer is offered for him, to God, in whom he puts his trust. Later, in a crisis of his initiation, he must pray for himself, orally or mentally as his heart may elect. It is not just a ceremony; it is basic in the faith and spirit of Masonry. Still later, in a scene which no Mason ever forgets, when the shadow is darkest, and the most precious thing a Mason can desire or seek seems lost, in the perplexity and despair of the Lodge, a prayer is offered. As recorded in our Monitors, it is a mosaic of Bible words, in which the grim facts of life and death are set forth in stark reality, and appeal is made to the pity and light of God.

It is truly a great prayer, to join in which is to place ourselves in the very hands of God, as all must do in the end, trust His Will and way, following where no path is into the soft and fascinating darkness which men call death. And the response of the Lodge to that prayer, as to all others offered at its Altar, is the old, challenging phrase, "So Mote It Be!" Brother, do not be ashamed to pray, as you are taught in the Lodge and the Church. It is a part of the sweetness and sanity of life, refreshing the soul and making clear the mind. There is more wisdom in a whispered prayer than in all the libraries of the world. It is not our business to instruct God. He knows what things we have need for before we ask him. He does not need our prayer, but we do - if only to make us acquainted with the best Friend we have.

The greatest of all teachers of the soul left us a little liturgy called the Lord's Prayer. He told us to use it each for himself, in the closet when the door is shut and the din and hum and litter of the world is outside. Try it Brother; it will sweeten life, make its load lighter, its joy brighter, and the way of duty plainer.

Two tiny prayers have floated down to us from ages ago, which are worth remembering; one by a great Saint, the other by two brothers. "Grant Me, Lord, ardently to desire, wisely to study, rightly to understand and perfectly to fulfill that which pleaseth Thee." And the second is after the manner: "May two brothers enjoy and serve Thee together, and so live today that we may be worthy to live tomorrow."

"SO MOTE IT BE"

Another Funny

A guy walks into a bar in South Carolina and orders a white wine.

All the hillbillies sitting around the bar look up from their beer and whiskey, expecting to see some pitiful Yankee from the north.

The bartender says, "You ain't from around here, are ya?"

The guy says, "No, I'm from Canada."

The bartender says, "What do you do in Canada?"

The guy says, "I'm a taxidermist."

The bartender says, "A taxidermist? What in the hell is a taxidermist? Do you drive a taxi?"

"No", says the Canadian "A taxidermist doesn't drive a taxi, I mount animals."

The bartender grins and hollers, "Its okay boys. He's one of us."

Baseball as an Esoteric Ritual

By Hannah M.G. Shapero

It is the vernal equinox, and the ritual has begun. The participants enter into the sacred quadrant and take their stations at geometrically significant places. They are all men, dressed in pure white garb, marked with colorful esoteric symbols. They hold ritual implements in their hands. Four more men arrive; they are dressed in dark blue. Like concele-brating priests, they confer on the details of the liturgy. Then they too take their places. A sacred hymn is intoned, and after that come the opening words of the ceremony: "PLAY BALL!" We need look no further than the local baseball diamond to find high ritual. There is no need to hanker after secret Masonic rites in closed halls or occult workings in incense-filled chambers. Wherever baseball is played, a true ritual goes on, as exoteric as daylight, as powerful as spring. Far more than other sports, baseball shows an esoteric structure. The game is played on a geomantically perfect square. Each base stands at what would be the quarters in Western esoteric ritual. These four bases also stand for the four elements, though Attributions are variable: Home plate, with its coating of dust, seems to be Earth, while third base is traditionally referred to as the "hot corner," signifying Fire. In the center is the pitcher's mound, a circle in the middle of the square mandala, which speaks to us of the fifth element of Spirit, or the center point of wholeness.

The men on the field hold to their positions as reverently as any Masonic or Hermetic ritualist. In the outfield stand the attendants in the outer courts. On each of the quarters stands a baseman, guarding his sacred trust. The shortstop moves between inner and outer, like swift Hermes, who moves between the worlds. The catcher, at his Earth station, also serves as Guardian of the Threshold; he challenges those who would enter

or leave the quadrant as base runners. In the center is the pitcher, or Hierophant, upon whose offerings the course of the ritual depends. Completing the scene are the priests in blue, the umpires, who know the Law and keep the ritual correct.

For rookies, each time at bat is an initiation; for others, wielding the sacred wand can be either an ordeal or a triumph. (For the sake of brevity, I will not elaborate on the phallic aspects of this ritual, which is done only by men and only during the most fertile times of the year.) Baseball is enriched not only by the geomancy of the field, but also by the numerology of the play itself.

The batter's ordeal may include a trinitarian three strikes, or four balls, which answer to the quadratic structure of the ritual space. The normal game lasts nine innings, that perfect number composed of three squared. Nine men play on a team at any one time (omitting the ritually incorrect designated hitter). These numbers are fraught with religious and occult significance.

Baseball time is sacred time. Football, hockey, soccer and basketball run by the clock. Play is constrained by the seconds and minutes of linear time. Baseball's time, though, is nonlinear, relativistic, where an inning can last as little as a few minutes, or as long as an hour. Indeed, the pace of the game is determined by the motion and position of the ball. Time moves slowly when the ball is hidden in the Hierophant's glove, but moves far more quickly when that same ball is sailing over the left field wall for a home run.

When that home run flies out of the ritual space into the outer depths, the happy ritualist puts down his wand and makes a circumambulation of the quadrant. Other baseball moves and customs show a similar respect for the hidden energies unleashed in this rite. Those men who face the Hierophant and his kneeling acolyte known as the catcher are seen to do all sorts of personal ritual gestures: crossing oneself, touching various parts of the body, spitting, or gesturing with the wand. All of these are aids to concentration; they also serve as banishing rituals in this moment of pressure.

The spectators at the baseball rite are not restricted or silenced. They participate with their applause, cheers, mockery, or spontaneous cries. As would be expected of the profane, much profanity comes forth. Sacred objects are often displayed by the fans (the very name "fan" comes from "fanatic," which derives from the Latin fanum or temple); they hold banners, wear special headgear with appropriate symbols, and show garb decorated with the same symbols as the working group whose efforts they support.

Fermented libations and ritual meals are a part of the baseball experience. The rite unites a community in a closeness that few religious liturgies, whether mainstream or esoteric, can achieve. The success of a high sporting ritual such as baseball teaches us some much-needed lessons about the esoteric way. First of all, the Diamond Way is open and accessible. No secret teachings or initiatory grades are needed to participate, only a ticket to the bleachers. This is as exoteric a ritual as one can find; nevertheless, the inner structure is there for those who understand. Mystical meaning is hidden in plain sight. Second, baseball is democratic. Though the major leagues are an initiated elite, anyone can come to their games, and anyone can buy the sacred implements of wand and glove and orb and play in a sandlot ritual space. The Ascended Masters of Cooperstown smile on anyone who wishes to play.

Finally, baseball reminds us that there is an element of ritual in all games, and that a ritual is in itself a kind of game, played by a team within a sacred space, with special garb and implements. The outcome of a ritual, however, is not reflected on a scoreboard in hits and runs. The ritual game has a value that is far more abstract and less subject to the dualism of winning and losing. But a failure in ritual, like a loss in baseball, is not eternal:

there is always next game or next year. And success in ritual, as in baseball, brings joy to a community and a whole city. It connects sacred and profane, inner and outer worlds. Ritual is sacred play, which brings cosmic inspiration to its participants on common ground.

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Am I a Mason?

Some of us proudly call ourselves Mason; we wear the ring, we wear jewelry and have emblems on our vehicles. Some of us are even holding a station or place in lodge, but yet, have not set foot in one in such a long time that we do not even remember the proper signs. We all have a life and families to attend too, things come up at times that will hinder us from attending the monthly meetings. Some of us have jobs that just simply don't allow us to attend, and that is completely understandable. But then some of us simply choose not to attend... We all know that feeling of guilt when we know that we are letting our brothers down when we truly don't have a reason not to be at lodge with the men who care about us. So why don't I go?

We all get exhausted throughout the day, we all have difficult and challenging jobs, we all have or have had children, and for some of us we all have a perfectly good reason not to attend Lodge. Yet you will find brethren at every meeting that too have the same challenges that life presents to all of us day in and day out. Somehow they make the time to be there, after all, it's only a few hours out of our busy schedules to dedicate to our lodge.

Sometimes we take for granted the brethren that took the time to help us learn, the brothers that came out to our home to interview us, the brothers that planned the initiations for us, and the brothers that organized all of this to make sure we got to the point where we find ourselves as freemasons. You will always find the same brothers participating and working together; they were, are and will be there for us, but are we? Why don't I have time to show my love and appreciation for the fraternity that I proudly belong too and the brethren that are there for me?

Why is the light I asked and wanted so badly, now dimming and vanishing more and more every day that goes by? What happened that my devotion is not there anymore, who took it from me? Why don't I talk to my brothers as I used to? Why don't I have masonry in my heart? These are questions only we can answer. There is not one person in lodge that can tell you why you find yourself in darkness. When we think we know why we choose to distant ourselves from masonry, analyze your reasoning behind it and you will see that it is not a good reason whatsoever.

Don't turn your back on me, I am your brother, you can always count on me, I am there for you always, I was there when you needed me and when you did not, will you? Although some of us say that "Masonry is not my life" that is fine, but you should proudly make masonry a small part of yours. You asked and you received, you knocked and the doors of masonry were opened on to you, and opened they will remain. I am still here and will forever be there, I might not look the same as you remember me, I might not be as young as you might picture me but one thing remains the same, you are still my brother now and forever....