

T R O W E L

THE NEWSLETTER OF PARSONS MASONIC LODGE NO. 222, ANCIENT FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS

from the east—chris schonaerts

I want to thank all of the brethren of Parsons Lodge for electing me to this prestigious office. It gives me great pleasure to be able to serve you as Master for the ensuing year. I appreciate the honor you have bestowed upon me, along with the responsibilities you have entrusted to me. I look forward to a successful year, and with the assistance of the officers and membership, I know we will have one.

We all need to thank Konrad Riley, our junior Past Master, for all of his hard work and diligent service guiding the Lodge through the past year. Once again Parsons achieved all necessary requirements to qualify for the Vanguard award and established a widows and orphans fund which has already been put to use. His stepping down from the East does not mean we won't be seeing him at lodge and he has already volunteered his help with the two new stewards in the kitchen. I can already taste the casseroles.

During the upcoming year I have hope that we at Parsons can accomplish some long term goals as well as the usual goals of every year. To that end the Wardens and I have sat down together and established some longer term items we hope to continue in the future.

Senior Warden Corey Snyder will be assisting me with Popham Elementary as well as heading up the re-established Scholarship committee.

Junior Warden Paul Bullock has agreed to take back the Trowel and get it back into the Brother's hands so that all of us can be informed as to what Parsons has been doing and to reorganize and keep current the website to do the same; as well as help petitioners and the public find us.

One final note to all of the Brethren, a challenge, it takes your participation to make our lodge active. Parsons needs your help in whatever capacity you can. Come to lodge. If you haven't been in a while, come and enjoy the fellowship. The degree teams need members to help. New members need help learning their work. The committees need active members to help. We have two new stewards this year and I know they

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from the west—corey snyder

Brethren, I stayed up late last night, my son's art pad open in front of me on the coffee table. I was planning. With markers, pens, and pencils I drew boxes and lines attempting to illustrate the proper chain of authority in a Masonic lodge. I began with the Master, and placed the Wardens below him. But then I lost my way. I looked to the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas, I reread the Officers' Installation in the Monitor. I went over work in my head. I was increasingly blocked on the page; the boxes stubbornly refused to arrange themselves in a convenient pyramid.

On a fresh page I began again, but this time I arranged the officers as they sit in lodge. I drew lines to indicate relationships of authority, then assigned each lodge duty to an officer. I checked my sources to catch any stray committees, duties, or obligations. I scribbled. The paper was becoming crowded, but then - it came as a surprise to me - it was finished: all work of the lodge fit neatly in the new diagram. The place of each officer while seated in lodge perfectly illustrated his duties.

Equidistant between East and West, in the center of the lodgeroom, is the altar, upon which lies our Book of Sacred Law. In the East, the Worshipful Master sits slightly elevated, between our flags, facing the altar and overseeing the brethren. To those entering the lodgeroom from the West, the eye first falls upon the altar with its many symbols and lights; the Master's station, austere, provides the backdrop. The image is one of order and harmony.

The Wardens sit in the West and the South, directly facing the altar. They assist the Worshipful Master in executing the activities of the lodge, the Senior Warden while the craft is at labor, and the Junior Warden while the craft is at refreshment.

Other officers assist the three principal officers in the dispatch of their respective duties. The Senior Deacon sits at the right hand of the Master, the Junior Deacon at the right of the Senior Warden. The Deacons are the messengers of their respective officers. The Junior Warden is flanked by the Stewards, who prepare our meals.

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from the south—paul bullock

What is Blue Lodge Masonry? The Blue Lodge is where we meet to make Masons. It is not a social order, yet, socializing is a part of our various functions. It is not a philanthropic order, yet, relief is one of the basic tenets of Freemasonry and we are obligated to provide relief within the boundaries of our abilities.

Blue Lodge Masonry is the foundation of everything Masonic. Without the Blue Lodge, the Scottish Rite, York Rite, Order of the Eastern Star, Shrine and other Masonic entities would not exist.

After being raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason, many brothers may ask themselves: "Is that all there is?" And before an answer is returned, the serene song of the Masonic lorelei lures the newly made Mason to the dangerous shores of overcommitment. *Hey...join the York Rite, the degrees are incredible, join the Scottish Rite, the degrees are amazing, join the Shrine and help support the hospitals, come see the mysteries of the Grotto* and the song plays on. All of a sudden, we find ourselves involved in so many Masonic activities, we become overwhelmed and fragmented in our focus.

Brethren; there is much to learn in the Blue Lodge.

Masonry is a system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. Think about that statement: *Masonry is a system.* Systems are always deliberate in design and while they can contain contradictions and errors, it is the principle design and implementation of the system that matters.

Some believe that when they petitioned to become a Mason, it was for the Mysteries of Masonry and that they received them upon completion of the Master Mason degree—this is not true. We petitioned for the degrees of Masonry which can lead us to the mysteries—but these will only reveal themselves after tremendous study and research.

Veiled in allegory; Illustrated by symbols—Masonic symbolism is the language of Freemasonry.

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Parsons Lodge No.222,A.F. & A.M.

David Peavy, Secretary
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DISTRICT 50 CALENDAR

AUGUST

- OES 304
- T.Neal Porter 1354
- Hill City 456
- Austin Scottish Rite
- Onion Creek 220
- University 1190
- Ben Hur Shrine
- Colorado Commandery
- 13 Parsons 222**
- Lone Star Chapter, Austin Council
- Austin 12
- Colorado 96
- 20 Parsons Practice & Degrees**
- Sojourner's Business Meeting
Noon - BAE Cafeteria
- Sojourner's Stated Meeting
18:00 - BAE Cafeteria

NOVEMBER

- T.Neal Porter 1354
- Hill City 456
- Austin Scottish Rite
- Onion Creek 220
- University 1190
- OES 304
- Colorado Commandery
- 12 Parsons 222**
- Lone Star Chapter, Austin Council
- Ben Hur Shrine
- Austin 12
- Colorado 96
- 19 Parsons Practice & Degrees**
- Sojourner's Business Meeting
Noon - BAE Cafeteria
- Sojourner's Stated Meeting
18:00 - BAE Cafeteria

The Chaplain's Corner

Scott Brown

Brethren; As we enter this new Masonic year and I begin my year as your new Chaplain, I thought long and hard about how I would use my space in the *Chaplain's Corner*. As I sought guidance from a higher power on what I should discuss, I was drawn to a simpler message just to get us going this year.

SEPTEMBER

- T.Neal Porter 1354
- Hill City 456
- Austin Scottish Rite
- Onion Creek 220
- University 1190
- OES 304
- Colorado Commandery
- 10 Parsons 222**
- Lone Star Chapter, Austin Council
- Wardens Retreat (thru the 14th)
- Ben Hur Shrine
- Austin 12
- Colorado 96
- 17 Parsons Practice & Degrees**
- Sojourner's Business Meeting
Noon - BAE Cafeteria
- Sojourner's Stated Meeting
18:00 - BAE Cafeteria

DECEMBER

- T.Neal Porter 1354
- Hill City 456
- Austin Scottish Rite
- Onion Creek 220
- University 1190
- OES 304
- Colorado Commandery
- 10 Parsons 222**
- Lone Star Chapter, Austin Council
- Ben Hur Shrine
- Masonic Family Weekend—Arlington
- Austin 12
- Colorado 96
- 17 Parsons Practice & Degrees**
- Sojourner's Business Meeting
Noon - BAE Cafeteria
- Sojourner's Stated Meeting
18:00 - BAE Cafeteria

My friends, my brothers, we often times forget that Masonry teaches us to seek the aid of Deity before any great or laudable undertaking. It is my sincere hope that as we progress through this next Masonic year that we always remember that even when we are at our lowest, we need only seek the guidance and counsel of the Grand Architect of the Universe and he will see us through the tough times.

OCTOBER

- Austin Scottish Rite
- Onion Creek 220
- University 1190
- OES 304
- T.Neal Porter 1354
- Hill City 456
- 8 Parsons 222**
- Lone Star Chapter, Austin Council
- Ben Hur Shrine
- Colorado Commandery
- 15 Parsons Practice & Degrees**
- Sojourner's Business Meeting
Noon - BAE Cafeteria
- Wardens Retreat
Radison Hotel (17-19)
- Austin 12
- Colorado 96
- Sojourner's Stated Meeting
18:00 - BAE Cafeteria

JANUARY

- Onion Creek 220
- University 1190
- OES 304
- T.Neal Porter 1354
- Hill City 456
- Austin Scottish Rite
- Lone Star Chapter, Austin Council
- Ben Hur Shrine
- Colorado Commandery
- 14 Parsons 222**
- Sojourner's Business Meeting
Noon - BAE Cafeteria
- Austin 12
- Colorado 96
- 21 Parsons Practice & Degrees**
- Sojourner's Stated Meeting
18:00 - BAE Cafeteria

Finally brethren, I'd like to ask that we all continue to remember our brethren who are sick or infirmed in our prayers. I'd also like for each of you to keep our new Worshipful Master in your prayers as he embarks on his year in the East.

May the Blessings of Heaven be with each and every one of you. God Bless.

WARDENS RETREAT 08

Open to all Master Masons. Officer of Lodges and Appendant Bodies are especially encouraged to attend the 2008 Warden's Retreat Program. Ladies are encouraged to attend and participate in program designed especially for them.

LODGE LEADERSHIP

The Warden's Retreat Program of the Grand Lodge of Texas is the education program that prepares Senior and Junior Wardens to accept the leadership role as Master of their lodges. In addition, there is an educational program for the ladies to prepare them to assist their Masons in being successful as Master. There are separate programs for the Junior Wardens and Senior Wardens. The Retreat Program is presented by the Committee on Masonic Education and Service and the elected Grand Lodge Officers and their Ladies.

Open to all interested Master Masons, participants engage in classroom type instruction, team building and group activities, and open question and answer periods. The program is structured, fast paced, intense and provides opportunities to exercise leadership and management skills. There are opportunities to visit one-on-one with the instructors and Grand Lodge Officers.

Registration begins Friday afternoon at 5:00 p.m. with the program kicking off at 7:00 p.m. and ending at Noon Sunday. Participants receive all retreat supplies and materials, three meals on Saturday, breakfast on Sunday.

Designed for Texas Masons, the program is open to all Master Masons and their Ladies. Officers of the Lodges and appendant Masonic bodies are especially encouraged to attend. Make your plans now to join us for the 2008 Retreat Program and prepare to lead your Masonic organization into the future.

The registration fee is \$200.00 for a Warden and \$125.00 for Ladies, if received four (4) weeks in advance.

The Wardens Retreat for the Austin area will take place at the Radisson North Hotel located at 6000 Middle Fiskville Road the weekend of September 12 - 14th.

All Masons interested in learning more about lodge administration are highly encouraged to attend.

from the east—chris schonaerts

would appreciate any help. Masonry gives to us a guide to live by. Won't you give back to masonry?

Again, thank you for this privilege of allowing me to serve Parsons Lodge and you. I hope to see you all at our next stated meeting. Please feel free to contact me anytime.

from the west—corey snyder

At the shoulders of the Worshipful Master are the wise counsellors: the Treasurer, Chaplain, and Secretary. They safeguard the lodge, looking after our funds, our spiritual obligations, and the invaluable records of our work.

The Marshal sits before the Secretary's desk, and is charged with coordinating candidate work - he marshals the work of the the Worshipful Master, the Secretary, the candidate, and the degree teams into a useful product: a new Master Mason. Overseeing those degree teams is the Master of Ceremonies, seated just inside the inner door.

As we conduct the business of the lodge we literally embody our philosophy, working with our brothers in peace and harmony. With time these words and actions become so familiar they seem to wear grooves in the mind. And our lives, both in lodge and out, become more orderly. For the work we do in lodge is work we do not upon the lodge, but upon ourselves.

Peace and harmony prevail

from the south—paul bullock

The pursuit of the mysteries is not a race, it is a journey and the richness of your journey will depend on how challenged you allow yourself to be. And the Masonic journey is designed to last a lifetime.

The mysteries of Masonry are very real, extremely complex and should be approached prudently with patience.

The mysteries are alive and waiting for you to solve their many puzzles.

However, the path of each Mason is different. Some may pursue a lifetime of philanthropy, others scholarship and still others will be content with friendship and fellowship. All paths are correct as it is the individual which completes the grand design in Masonry.

But who knows—one day you may find yourself looking North across the Vernal equinox from the eye of Cheops beyond the ecliptic to the darkest void in the universe where the rising and setting sun of Alcyone shines brightly for those who can see.

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