

# T R O W E L

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

*from the east—chris schonaerts*

**B**rethren; I thought I might write a little bit this month about change. During a lifetime, people have to go through all sorts of change. Much of life is learning to deal with, and live with, the changes that all of us must go through. These changes affect our lives every day. Sometimes change reverberates like a drum. At other times change is like a ripple gradually spreading out upon a lake.

As much as change affects us, the sameness of life often does too. Often you don't see how your life has changed until you look back after years of sameness and notice how much some events have shaped you.

We have chosen Masonry as a part of our lives. Much as in life, there is change and sameness here too. But once again you sometimes have to look back after years to notice how Masonry has changed and affected your life. Masonry helps you cope with life's changes and sameness, and in exchange Masonry requires help and stability from you.

Masonic events are important events to attend. It is your chance to give back to the fraternity which gives so much to you. Bringing a new brother into the fraternity is a solemn and yet joyous occasion. It shows our new brother that the members care enough about him to attend.

Called meetings, especially degrees, need to be vigorously attended by the membership. We have only had about three in the last year but we have several coming up soon. These events should be placed on your calendar and attended if at all within the length of your cable tow.

It is time for a little change.

*from the west—corey snyder*

**B**rethren; I am often asked, "So what do you do down in lodge?" If you have been a Mason long you have no doubt faced the same question. My friends and family know that I invest many hours attending lodge meetings, preparing for lodge meetings, and - sometimes - recovering from lodge meetings. Naturally, their curiosity is aroused. A very new Mason often encounters similar questions from family and friends: suddenly, the man of the house disappears for a few nights every month. What could be so important that it requires the devotion of so many men for so many hours? What do we do? I have struggled to find a fair and truthful response to the question; I have not discovered one.

The teachings enacted in the degrees are of sublime beauty, and the moral and philosophical tenets of Freemasonry most excellent. But the bulk of our hours in Masonry are expended on matters far more mundane. The activity of a stated meeting, while conducted under the protection of the Tiler's sword, is a secret poorly kept - we read the minutes and pay the bills. It is indeed strange that every Mason undergoes an elaborate initiation and learns a seemingly endless catechism in order to eat dinner and attend a business meeting each month.

Asking what we do in lodge, however, is akin to asking, "so, what do you do in life?" to people on the street. People do all kinds of things, and most of those things are hopelessly dull. Even the most exquisite products of the human imagination consume but a tiny fraction of the artist's life. Though Michelangelo devoted thousands of hours of his life to painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, this is insignificant in comparison to the hours he spent eating, sleeping, cleaning, making money, attending to hygiene, and wasting time.

We are a body of men united by shared belief in the brotherhood of mankind. Inside the lodge the Mason is more than just a single man. He becomes a cell in a larger body. The lodge is guided by the moral lessons of the degrees and the constitution, laws, and history of the fraternity. This is our collective conscience and intellect. We

*continues inside*

*from the south—paul bullock*

**O**n Tuesday, August 5th, I visited Hill City Lodge 456 during their stated meeting. I attended this meeting for two reasons: to follow up on a donation request for the Scottish Rite kitchen and to observe another lodge in their manner of operation.

It was a very rewarding experience.

Hearing for some time that 456 puts on a good feed, I arrived at 6:30 P.M. to share in their fellowship meal. The meal was enjoyable and fellowship was great. I made note of a couple of things I thought were done really well. First, one of their members was celebrating his birthday and during the course of the meal the stewards put out cake and ice cream and everyone sang Happy Birthday to him. Afterwards, many of the brothers took time to stop by the birthday brother's table to personally congratulate him and shake his hand. Second, the secretary placed the register in the meal service line so that members and guests could sign in just before their meal was served.

At 7:15 P.M., everyone started moving upstairs to the lodge room for the stated meeting which opened promptly at 7:30 P.M.. Worshipful Master, Robert Eschenburg, was well organized and handled the meeting expeditiously. The reading of the minutes covered at least 5 previous stated and called meetings and were expertly handled by Secretary Lee Kinser.

The Worshipful Master then called for lodge business, including; petitions and applications, special reports (the annual secretary's report, permanent fund report and audit and finance report) followed by an investigation committee report, committee on work, sickness and visitation and claims and accounts. Pretty standard stuff, but, the speed in which the lodge executed their business was notable.

The permanent fund report and separate reports from the audit and finance committees, which entailed summations by three brothers were well organized and delivered without delay.

Balloting on a favorable investigation committee report was handled in a business

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

David Peavy, Secretary  
Post Office Box 2046  
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# DISTRICT 50 CALENDAR

## NOVEMBER

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

## FEBRUARY

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

## DECEMBER

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

## MARCH

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

## JANUARY

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

## APRIL

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

## Is the anything upon your desk, Brother Secretary?

My Brothers; When I was Raised in Parsons Lodge five years ago next month I knew I had become a part of something very special. It took me a few years to realize that it was over and above that of being Raised to the Sublime degree. Parsons lodge is truly a very special place amongst central Texas Masonry.

I realize many who read the Trowel regularly do not or cannot attend lodge regularly. First I would like to extend a standing offer to all in the aforementioned category to call

or email me at any time and I'll arrange transportation to and from lodge meetings and events. Second, I'd like to tell the brethren a bit about their new Secretary.

I was initiated in July, passed in October, and Raised on the 8th of November of 2003 in Parsons. I became a Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret in the Austin Valley of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in the Spring of 2004. In fall of 2005 I became a Noble of Ben Hur Shrine and a Lizzyteer. Also that fall I was invited to joint the

Knights of Saint Andrew at Scottish Rite and was asked to serve as Secretary pro-tem of that body shortly thereafter. The next summer I was appointed to the post and am honored to serve as Secretary of that Body to this day. In July of 2007 I felt truly honored by the Brethren of Robert Burns # 127 when elected to the position of lodge Secretary there.

While Parsons has a fine tradition of electing Past Masters to the office of Secretary, I realize the vote of confidence and trust

*from the west—corey snyder*

have our duties and rules and forms and ceremonies that are not to be tampered with. But, so long as we do not deviate from these excellent precepts, the lodge is free to do what it sees fit.

Consider Parsons a person, and each member a cell in that body. Together we keep Parsons alive. Paying the bills, practicing degrees, and doing the day-to-day work in the life of a lodge is indeed most of what we do in lodge. Yet It is not the whole of our Masonic life. We - you - determine what our lodge accomplishes beyond its basic health and hygiene.

What would you like your lodge to do? How can you make it happen? What is your role? What can you contribute? We must not limit our imaginations or our potential as a living body. The Book of Sacred Law reminds us of our nature: "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house."

When I consider the huge array of talents and abilities in Parsons lodge I am truly astounded. Some Brothers are ritualists. Some are good with money. Others are musicians and actors. Some are eloquent, some are funny, some are fearless. Some are quiet and dependable.

But I also wonder, what talents lie yet undiscovered. The future of your lodge rests with you, and with us. Perhaps the question, "so, what do you do in lodge?" is not so pressing as the question, "what do you want your lodge to do?"

## From the Secretary

that the Brethren of Parsons have shown in me. I also realize the shoes I've got to fill and pledge to the Master, future Masters, fellow officers, and the Brethren of Parsons that I shall do my best to cheerfully and competently discharge the duties of the office of Secretary.

That having been said, get your checkbooks ready as you'll shortly be receiving your 2008 - 2009 dues notice. As a point of housekeeping, I am available to my Brethren 24 x 7. Please feel free to call or email any time with any question.

In closing, those of you who know me personally know that I am seldom at a loss for words. However, I cannot find adequate words to describe the solemn pride that can be found in being asked to serve as Secretary of one's Mother Lodge.

Remaining yours respectfully,  
In humble service to the Craft,

David Peavy, Jr., Secretary

*from the south—paul bullock*

as usual fashion. The ballot was received favorably; the petitioner elected to receive the degrees. Then the committee on work gave a summation of progress by brothers in varying stages of degree work and assigned parts for pending Master Mason degrees.

Hill City raised their first Master Mason for the Masonic year in July and they have two Master Mason degrees pending in the near future. 456 currently has approximately 9 EAs in progress.

Lastly, the Master called for claims and accounts and the lodge was closed at approximately 10:00 P.M..

In conversation with Secretary Lee Kinser, I complimented Hill City on a well organized and executed meeting. The volume of business handled at this meeting was impressive.

Brother Kinser told me that Hill City charges \$60 for each degree regardless of whether it is an EA, FC or MM degree. He also said that Hill City had been working to establish fiscal budgets each year and that they had performed critical analysis on their cash flow and developed solutions to address this issue. This has helped them overcome the lag between annual returns and receiving dues. The budget also helps keep their objectives for the year in focus.

Attendance was equally impressive—at least 45 Hill City members were present.

I enjoyed my visit to Hill City. I visited with several Masons that I know and it was good to share fellowship with them; I learned a great deal at this meeting.

Worshipful Master Chris Schonaerts has indicated that he wants Parson's principal officers to visit all lodges in District 50 this year. I think this is a great objective and would like to suggest that all members, as they are able, visit other lodges in and out of our district for their own pleasure and edification; I know you will find it rewarding.

Peace and Harmony Prevail.

## The Chaplain's Corner

*Scott Brown*

Brethren; let us give thanks for the many blessings we receive and those that we can give. We must strive to remember that as Masons we are standards for our community and as such we should not only set examples of morality, but, always be ready to demonstrate them. Faith, hope and charity are the three great principles in Masonry and charity is revered above all. May the blessings of the Great Arcitect be upon you and peace be with you.

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