

# DISTRICT 50 CALENDAR

## 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

## 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

## APRIL

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

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

David Peavy, Secretary  
Post Office Box 2046  
Austin, TX 78768-2046



# T R O W E L

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

*from the west—corey snyder*



**B**rethren, best wishes for this happy season—may you and your family prosper and thrive in the new year.

Christmastime was bittersweet for our family this year; on December 13th, 2008, my mother's father, Lester Habegger, passed away at the age of 91 in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Our usual vocations prevented my wife and me from attending the funeral. Though we shared a happy Christmas with friends and family here in Texas, Grandpa's passing sat heavy in my heart—I needed to honor my grandfather. And so my brothers, I turn to you, and I ask that you allow me to express my esteem for a great man.

Lester Habegger was born December 12th, 1917 to Menno and Lydia Habegger (nee Lehman) in Berne, a little town in Wabash County, Indiana. The place had been settled only 65 years earlier, in 1852, by a group of 70 devout Swiss Mennonites fleeing persecution in their homeland. Even now the culture of the Amish suffuses the region; they still drive the roadsides in their black horse-drawn buggies. Despite the morally austere environment in Berne, Lester was a free-spirited young man, devilishly handsome, prone to pranks, and, according to Grandma, "a little wild."

At a church social he met Harriet Schaefer, a pretty and gracious girl from nearby Geneva, who then played in the town's all-girl accordion band. He caught her eye as he sat on a rooftop. In the following weeks Les would travel miles by rollerskate to her stately home to court her. When he had access to a car he took to "peeling out" as they sped off for dates, to the horror of Harriet's father Cornelius Schaefer. Grandma and Grandpa, many, many years later, told me that Cornelius, a chauffeur, was never seen outside his bedroom without being fully dressed in collar and tie. Grandpa said he never once saw Mr. Schaefer allow his back to recline against a chair.

In 1939 Les and Harriet eloped to Kentucky, where the teenagers could obtain a legal marriage, and moved north to the industrial town of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Les joined the Merchant Marines in WWII and afterward joined American Legion Post 499 in Fort Wayne. After the war he founded Habegger Plastering, and worked on stilts for 25 years. Family pictures attest to Les and Harriet being very active on Ft. Wayne's social scene, looking elegant at tables, laughing with friends, and dancing in an immense ballroom.

They had a son, Neil, and a daughter, Sherry, my mother. As the children grew older, Les moved into the collections business, founding General Collections and running it for 20 years. In his later years he performed lawn maintenance at Crossroads Children's Home, finally retiring from his labor in 1997.

Grandma was a lifelong Christian whose faith never seemed to waver. She attended church weekly and read the Bible daily throughout her entire adult life. She was always beautifully dressed and coiffed, well-spoken and delicate, but with a quirky sense of humor. Grandpa attended church, too, but not Grandma's - he preferred Brookside Community Church. Family legend has it that Les and Harriet also voted oppositely. He was a loyal father and a good provider for his family, though very independent and often mischievous. Les Habegger made a wonderful grandfather, always playing tricks and telling jokes and acting like one of the kids; he had a wonderful sense of humor, good-natured and slightly absurd. Careful and exact, he kept a daily journal and wrote the prices on everything he bought. He was humble and kind. He loved desserts and seemed to always be dishing out ice cream. He and grandma sent me care packages of food, clippings, photocopied articles, letters, and pictures - this despite my having lived in Texas since I was eight years old.

Grandma passed away in August of 2007 at the age of 87. Thereafter Grandpa's spirit weakened and his health declined. He endured a series of strokes in the autumn of this year, and

*from the south—paul bullock*



**P**arsons is a very small lodge. With our membership topping out at 147 members, we must act with care in everything we do. Over the past six years, Parsons

has consistently lost money from our investments. In 2002, we had almost \$100k in the bank. Today, we have scant more than \$91,000. This is a disturbing trend. We are averaging losses of approximately 1.5% from our savings each year.

This translates to an annual average loss of approximately \$1500. Losses affect the quality of our investment returns. As our investment principle continues to diminish, investment returns drop as well and if spending trends continue unabated, losses will accelerate.

This is why it's important at the beginning of the year to analyze our spending trends and set a budget. A budget is a great way to prevent dilatory spending and helps us control our finances. Fiduciary responsibility should govern all spending and creating a budget each year is the first step in making this happen.

Masons are passionate individuals and sometimes we vote with our hearts when we should be voting with our brains. Even a seemingly trivial amount, such as \$100, not included in budgetary planning can trigger unacceptable losses.

This leads us to the responsibility of each Mason who would entertain bringing a motion to the lodge.

Is your motion well thought out?

Motion makers should be able to answer the following questions before presenting their idea to the lodge.

1. Will your motion create dependencies?
2. If so, what resources (facilities, time, people) will be required to accomplish the goal of the motion?
3. What will it cost?
4. Where will the money come from?

This is usually where we get into trouble. Without the regulatory instrument of a budget, it's easy to spend with our hearts instead of employing logic to determine the best possible course of action.

Before bringing a motion to the floor, we must ask ourselves the above questions. If it is going to cost money then the motion

*continues inside*

*continues inside*

# 2008 G.L. Resolutions

2007 Holdover Resolution—Adopted

## 2008 Resolutions:

No. 1	Not Adopted
No. 2	Not Adopted
No. 3	Adopted
No. 4	Not Adopted
No. 5	Not Adopted
No. 6	Not Adopted
No. 7	Adopted
No. 8	Not Adopted
No. 9	Not Adopted
No. 10	Tabled for legislation in 2009
No. 11	Adopted as amended
No. 12	Not Adopted
No. 13	Not Adopted
No. 14	Adopted as amended
No. 15	Withdrawn
No. 16	Adopted as amended
No. 17	Withdrawn
No. 18	Withdrawn
No. 19	Adopted
No. 20	Adopted
No. 21	Adopted
No. 22	Not Adopted
No. 23	Adopted

## GRAND MASTER RECOMMENDATIONS

- No. 1 Adopted
- No. 2 Adopted

## Electronic Distribution

For the past two issues of the Trowel, we have been separating the distribution list into two buckets:

1. Those that do not have email and need a physical copy mailed to them.
2. Those members that do have an email and are willing to receive the Trowel electronically.

Currently we are mailing the Trowel to 90 of our members and emailing to 59.

Let's translate that into Dollars and Cents.

We have a fixed printing cost of \$40 for 175 copies. Mailing to 90 members cost \$37.80, totaling \$77.80 per issue.

However, we can continue to reduce the cost of postage. For every member that elects to use electronic distribution, Parsons saves \$0.42.

Doesn't sound like a lot does it. But, emailing the Trowel to 59 members is saving Parsons \$24.78 each month. On a yearly basis, \$297.36.

If you have email and will accept electronic distribution of the Trowel, please send your address to me at [pbullock@austin.rr.com](mailto:pbullock@austin.rr.com).

Thank you.

—Paul Bullock, Junior Warden

## Brotherly Love

Just as our ancient brethren became masters of the operative craft through diligent work to perfect their skills, we as Speculative Masons should work diligently to perfect our own skills. Our newsletter gives us a good opportunity to review and refresh some of those skills. Being the first publication of the new calendar year, I would like to share my thoughts on the first principle tenet of Freemasonry—Brotherly Love.

A number of years ago, before I joined the Craft, I was flipping through the television channels and came upon a program discussing the history of the Bible. The person speaking made note of the fact that when Cain asked God *Am I my brother's keeper?* God did not give him a direct yes or no answer. Not being any sort of religious scholar, I decided to look it up for myself. After finding my Bible (which took a few hours) I found that the speaker was technically correct. The few years of pondering this was one of my reasons to join the Fraternity.

Our work teaches us that *by the exercise of brotherly love, we are taught to regard the whole human species as one family – the high and low, the rich and poor; who, as created by one Almighty Parent, and inhabitants of the same planet, are to aid, support and protect each other.*

This sounds pretty straight forward and is pretty easy to apply toward fellow Masonic brethren while at stated meetings or official Masonic functions.

I have found that the hard part comes when away from the lodge. Perhaps I shouldn't feel contempt when I see a less fortunate stranger on the corner holding up a cardboard sign; if someone makes a mistake at work or at home, instead of getting angry or pointing fingers, perhaps I should try to share my thoughts and experience to help them not repeat it; maybe I shouldn't dismiss what someone has to say just because of their political affiliation. The list goes on.

Our ancient brethren constructed magnificent structures and monuments after spending long hours, days, and years practicing their craft. By practicing our Craft both at labor in the Lodge and in our communities and homes, we may construct magnificent friendships, families, institutions, and societies. As Brotherly Love is our first principle tenet, I can't help but wonder if Cain's question was the first of all the Ancient Mysteries.

—Steven Briggs, Tiler

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

Parsons Lodge is fortunate as of New Years Eve 2008 to have 146 living Master Masons comprising her active membership.

We have one life member. We have Forty-seven endowed members. We have two offices that have been voted exempt from paying dues (Brad and I both thank you very much.) That leaves 97 fine Master Masons who owe the Lodge \$70 each for their 2009 Dues.

Your Secretary makes it a habit to check the post office box daily for Grand Lodge and other communications of a Masonic nature, notices from banks and others holding Lodge Investments, and of course dues checks. To date 27 of those who owe have paid or otherwise made arrangements with Brother Secretary. That means 72.2% of the membership will be in arrears as of midnight tonight.

I could go on and on about the importance of paying dues, however I'll just put it like this: In November we tabled giving \$100 to needy orphans until December because we didn't have the cash on hand. The principal tenets of Craft Masonry are as I see it: Truth, Brotherly Love, and Relief. We all realize times are tough and if \$70 is a hardship, please contact me.

There are options. As I glance at the clock in the bottom right hand corner of the screen, I notice those dues shall be in arrears in eight hours and seven minutes and it's time to get the black-eyed peas and cabbage on the stove.

And last upon the Secretary's Desk are my very best wishes to each of you and to each of your families for a safe, healthy, happy, and prosperous 2009.

—David Peavy, Secretary

*from the west—corey snyder*  
finally, on a Saturday, he passed on to that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns.

My brothers, I thank you for allowing me to share some of my memories of my grandfather. He was very dear to me, and always will be. It is my hope that by sharing this with you I can somehow express to the world my love for this man, and perhaps feel a little less lonely in his passing.

*from the south—paul bullock*

maker should have a plan on how to obtain necessary financing without negatively impacting the operating funds of the lodge: fund raisers, contributions from lodge members, pancake breakfasts, etc.

And, it is the motion maker's responsibility to cover these topics when bringing a motion to the floor.

Then, it is the responsibility of every member present to listen carefully to the motion and if anything is unclear, call for discussion. Don't sit quietly in lodge hoping that someone else will ask your question, stand up and voice your concern. Parsons belongs to all of us and we must actively participate in discussions in order to make the best decisions possible.

There is a stigma which plagues good discussion in lodge. It's the feeling that you will be the *bad guy* if you raise questions about spending money for something like a charitable donation. On the contrary, this is exactly the right time to ask questions and you will find that there are other brothers sitting in the lodge room with the same reservations who will voice their opinion once someone stands up and breaks the ice.

So—be an ice breaker.

I have had many conversations with some of our most respected senior Past Masters about lodge finances. Some of them remember a time when Parsons literally had to conduct garage sales just to pay the bills. We don't ever want to be in that situation again.

I wish for you and your family a wonderful, happy and prosperous New Year.

## Grand Master's Banquet

Most Worshipful David Counts invites all Texas Masons to The Grand Master's Texas Banquet. The banquet will feature the music of The Texas Gypsies playing classic Texas swing from the 1930s and 40s.

Grand Master's Texas Banquet  
January 31st, 2009, 6:30 p.m.  
Hella Shrine Center  
2121 Rowlett Road  
Garland, Texas 75043

Dress code: suit and tie for men, party dresses for women.

Put on your dancing shoes.

Reservation deadline is January 21st.

\$25 per person, payable to:  
The Grand Lodge of Texas

Mail to:  
Gary A. Evans  
2917 Dove Meadow Drive  
Garland, Texas 75043

Additional information:  
[http://www.grandlodgeoftexas.org/GM\\_Banquet\\_1-31-09.pdf](http://www.grandlodgeoftexas.org/GM_Banquet_1-31-09.pdf)

## Parsons.com Update

Traffic on Parsons website increased over the last week of November and December 2008. Who knows how many of the "Unique Visitors" are indeed unique week over week. The statistics represent unique visits each week, however, it could mean that some or many of the visitors are regular visitors to our website. Regardless, traffic is a good thing.

Week Start	Unique Visitors
Dec 20, 2008 09:25	54
Dec 13, 2008 09:25	79
Dec 6, 2008 09:25	65
Nov 29, 2008 09:25	58

## Living Past Masters

2007-08	P. Konrad Riley
2006-07	Mark K. Dermit
2005-06	George W. Schalles IV
2004-05	James M. King
2003-04	James C. Yelvington III
2002-03	Jerry L. Martin
2001-02	Jeffry N. Deitrich
2000-01	Robert E. Emrie
1999-00	Keye E. Perry, Sr.
1998-99	Octavio T. Garza
1997-98	Andrew J. McVeigh, III
1996-97	Bobby R. Antilley
1994-95	George M. Robbins
1993-94	Cecil C. Goodwin Jr.
1989-90	John Rewjuk
1982-83	Stephen Decovic, Jr.
1981-82	Russel Edward Hain
1979-80	Curtis V. Peterson
1978-79	William R. Banks
1977-78	James G. Dougherty
1976-77	Forest C. Roan, Jr.
1975-76	David B. McCormick
1974-75	David L. Sikes
1973-74	David L. Herrington
1971-72	Ollie C. Jones
1970-71	Glen E. Page
1968-69	Victor Y. Armstrong, Jr.
1963-64	Joe E. Shuberg
1948-49	Ira L. Gallaway

## Famous Quotations

*The insufferable arrogance of human beings to think that Nature was made solely for their benefit, as if it was conceivable that the sun had been set afire merely to ripen men's apples and head their cabbages.—Cyrano De Bergerac*

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