



The
klahoma Mason
The Grand Lodge of the State of Oklahoma

2009 - vol. III May

page 1

Centennial Celebration Issue





From the Grand Master

Brethren,

It is an privilege for me to serve as Grand Master during the Centennial Year celebrating the joining together of the M[°] W[°] Grand Lodge of Indian Territory and the M[°] W[°] Grand Lodge of Oklahoma Territory. On May 30, 2009, in the township of Guthrie where all of the action happened in 1909, we will commemorate their accomplishment of coming together into the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge A[°] F[°] & A[°] M[°] of the State of Oklahoma with several events. Grand Lodge will be opened at 11 :00 am on the Entered Apprentice Degree (**Bring Your OWN Apron**) then travel to the line up for the parade.

A Parade: 1 :00 p.m. beginning at the Scottish Rite Center, the parade will travel west on Oklahoma street to Wentz, south to Harrison, east to Broad Street and end at the Grand Lodge Building. India and Akdar Shrine Temples will be in charge of our parade. Our thanks go out to Illustrious Garry Lowrance Potentate India and Illustrious Paul Kelsey Potentate of Adkar for their work on the parade and to their units for their participation.

A Cornerstone: 2:30 p.m. at the west side of the Grand Lodge Building (Oklahoma and Broad streets) where you're Grand Lodge Officers will lay a commemorative Cornerstone within the new Centennial Plaza outside of the main entrance of the Grand Lodge Building.

A Re-enactment: 4:30 p.m. in the main auditorium Scottish Rite Center. A 1909 witness of the convention will discuss his memory of the day. Actors playing M[°]. W[°]. David Hoag (Grand Master of Oklahoma Territory & Chairman of the Convention); M[°]. W[°]. Leo Bennett (Presiding Officer); M[°]. W[°]. Hal Muldrow (Grand Master of Indian Territory); M[°]. W[°]. Bamford; and even M[°]. W[°]. Joseph (Father) Murrow will re-enact the establishment of the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma in a short ceremony.

A Gala Banquet: 6:00 p.m. in the banquet hall of the Scottish Rite Center. TICKET REQUIRED and no more are available. Dress will be suit and tie OR if you are in period dress, that is an approved outfit to wear to the banquet (*please leave your firearms/bows and arrows in the car!*). We will enjoy an excellent meal, an interesting speaker and a "Festive Board" sure to entertain.

This will be a full day of activities with the family in mind. The Oklahoma Masonic Indian Degree Team will be on hand in full dress. Teddy Roosevelt (Doug Davis) and his Rough Riders will be available for photos, there may be some ruffians around who promise a gun fight or two around the SR Temple they even tell me there is a fellow who will ride his longhorn steers in the parade.

Below you will find the Centennial Medallion (front & back) now available. You should have already received the letter so that you can purchase this beautiful commemorative medallion. It is bright gold and will be engraved with your name under the "Presented to" (right side) on the banner as shown. These will be available only to those able to donate a minimum of \$100 and will include a 2009 Centennial Grand Master's pin.



I hope to see you and your family in Guthrie May 30, 2009. The Parade, the Cornerstone ceremony, the Reenactment play and even the popcorn are FREE. Only the Gala Banquet costs money to attend and those ticket sales are now closed.

Richard Muraw

Grand Lodge Officers

Grand Master

Richard E. Massad

Deputy Grand Master

Charles R. Belknap

Senior Grand Warden

Glenn E. Almy

Junior Grand Warden

Randall L. Rogers

Grand Treasurer

Nathan Johns

Grand Secretary

Robert R. Poole, Sr.

Grand Lecturer

Curtiss J. Baker

Senior Grand Deacon

David Williamson

Junior Grand Deacon

Jack Painter

Senior Grand Steward

Randy C. Beaird

Junior Grand Steward

John Wayne Clagg

Grand Marshal

L. Erick Stuckey

Grand Chaplain

R.J. "Buddy" Fernandez

Honorary Grand Chaplain

Dr. Paul E. Massad

Grand Bible Bearer

Skip Smothermon

Grand Pursuivant

Richard L. Allison

Grand Sword Bearer

Ray E. Hugonin

Grand Flag Bearer

S. Todd Oleson

Hon. Grand Flag Bearer

Wilford L. "Bill" Stone

Grand Tyler

Jason W. Stacy

Grand Musician

Bradley S. Rickelman

Grand Orator

Jim Tresner

Grand Historian

David W. Allen

Here's your chance to own
Oklahoma Masonic history!

Indians, Cowboys, Cornerstones & Charities - A Centennial Celebration of Freemasonry in Oklahoma

the official Centennial Book of
Oklahoma Masonry
limited edition

More than 300 illustrations, many in color, trace the wild west
Territorial Grand Lodges, the Masons who created the State
Constitution, the Grand Lodge of the State of Oklahoma,
Masonic buildings, cornerstones placed by the
Fraternity, Masonic charity, and much more.

Fine printing on archival quality, acid-free slick paper
for permanence and quality color reproduction

\$50 + \$7.50 shipping and processing
to order your copy, send a check for \$57.50, payable to
The Grand Lodge of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 1019, Guthrie, OK 73044

books will be shipped upon arrival from the printer
please include only book orders in this check

May 30 is the Big Day

11:00 AM

**Opening of Grand Lodge
Grand Lodge Building**

12:00 Noon

Parade forms at Scottish Rite Temple

1:00 PM

Centennial Parade

2:30 PM

**Centennial Cornerstone
Grand Lodge Building**

4:00 PM

**Photo on Temple steps of all who want
to be in the Centennial photograph**

4:30 PM

**Centennial Program and Re-Enactment
Auditorium of the Scottish Rite Temple
Open to Public - No Ticket Required**

6:00 PM

**Grand Banquet
Ballroom, Scottish Rite Temple
Ticket Required**

The Grand Secretary's C

O
n
n
e
n



From the Friendly Grand Secretary

A few special considerations.

There is some confusion about the tax status of Lodges. Some members buying things for the Lodge, tell the sales clerk that the Fraternity is tax-exempt, and then call the office to get a tax-exemption number. **Neither the Grand Lodge nor individual Lodges are tax-exempt. We must pay sales tax on everything we buy.** We are 501-c-10 (not for profit) organizations. We have to **report income** to the government, but we are *not required to pay tax* on that income.

Other organizations, such as the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma, the Grand Lodge Museum and Library, and the charitable foundations of a few Lodges, are 501-c-3 (charitable and educational) organizations. Again, they have to report income, but are not taxed on it. Gifts given to them are deductible from income tax, and if they file the proper forms with the state, they do not have to pay sales tax.

So, bottom line, Lodges must report income to the Federal Government, but are not required to pay tax on that income. Lodges are NOT exempt from sales tax.

SOME IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Resolutions to change the Constitution and Code must be received in the Grand Lodge office no later than July 17 in order to be considered at Grand Lodge this year. If you wish to write a resolution, be sure to send it in by that date. Resolutions must be written and signed by a Junior Warden, Senior Warden, Worshipful Master, or Past Master of a Lodge. The author of a Resolution can have as many other Brothers sign it as he wishes, but the must be one of the officers just mentioned. If the resolution is not in "proper form" the Jurisprudence Committee will assist you in the process.

Nominations for the Oklahoma Medal of Honor are due in the Grand Lodge office no later than July 17 as well. Nominations must come from Lodges, not individuals. There is no set form. The Lodge writes a letter nominating a Mason for the Medal of Honor. The Brother does not have to be a member of the Lodge which nominates him. A person can be nominated by more than one Lodge. Here are the rules from the Constitution and Code.

The Oklahoma Masonic Medal of Honor Award program was created in 1983 to recognize those living Master Masons who have contributed outstanding and meritorious service to Oklahoma Masonry. Such service may be through their lodge, the Grand Lodge, of any appendant body or all. The following conditions apply to the Medal of Honor:

- 1) No Grand Master, Past Grand Master, or Grand Lodge Line Officer (that is to say, Deputy Grand Master, Senior or

Junior Grand Warden) will ever be eligible.

2) A maximum of three Medals of Honor may be awarded at each Grand Lodge Annual Communication. Fewer, or none, may be awarded if deemed appropriate.

3) Selections will be made by the Grand Lodge Board of Trustees.

4) Each constituent lodge may annually nominate one man, not necessarily a member of that lodge, giving sufficient reasons for his nomination. Selections for the Medals of Honor will be made from these nominations.

50-Year pins have been mailed to the Lodges. Please arrange to present the pins as soon as possible. Also, be sure to fill out and return the form which tells us who presented the pin and the date it was presented. That information goes in the Proceedings, so it is very important that we get it back.

VISIT THE GRAND LODGE WEB SITE www.okmasons.org Of necessity, it is becoming the major means of communication between the Grand Lodge and the individual Lodges. With postage now at 44¢ and no end in sight, less costly means of communication have become essential. At the site, you can download many different forms including a registration form for the Lodge of the Year program. The Lodge of the Year program is a way to help your Lodge grow and prosper, and gain some well-deserved recognition.

Be sure to go back to the web site often---things change!

Those Available for Office

The official filing periods have closed for those Brethren wishing to run for Grand Lodge office or for a position on the Board of Directors of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma. Those filing for office are listed below. Brethren are listed in the order in which they filed. The information provided here is taken from the filing forms they provided.

For Junior Grand Warden

Bradley Stephen Rickelman lives with his wife, Jean, in Stillwater. He is the Assistant Director of the Meridian Technology Center in Stillwater, an institution which assists entrepreneurs in starting new businesses.

He is a member of Frontier Lodge #48 in Stillwater, and served as Worshipful Master in 2003. He has also served as Secretary and as a member of the Lodge Building Board.

He served the Grand Lodge as a Teller in 2005, as District Deputy Grand Master in 2006 and 2007, as Grand Flag Bearer and Chairman of the CHIP Committee in 2008, and as Grand Musician and Chairman of the Prevent Blindness Committee in 2009.

Brother Rickelman is a member of the Guthrie Scottish Rite Temple and the Stillwater Chapter and Council and St. John's Commandery of the York Rite. He is also a member of Queen Christiana Court #11 of the Order of the Amaranth.

He holds a Master's Degree in Philosophy from Texas A&M University, and has been awarded the University of Kansas Graduate Teaching Award, and the English as a Second Language Teaching Award in Hatogaya, Japan. In his church, he serves on the Diocesan Youth

Board, Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma and as Junior Warden of St. Andrew Episcopal Church.

In answer to the question **Why do you seek this office?** Brother Rickelman wrote:

For the good of Masonry and to serve the craft. I seek this office to exhort and call us to labor to become better men.

In answer to the question **What goals would you like to attain as a Grand Lodge officer?** he wrote:

Masonry is a state of doing, not of being. One of my favorite quotes is "What distinguishes the few from the majority of men is their ability to act according to their beliefs." I love the ritual, the history, the fraternity, but unless we actually go out and act according to our beliefs, then the entire enterprise is hollow.

The Grand Lodge exists to serve the brothers. As such, three goals I would work towards are:

- 1. Improve leadership training and operational management of local lodges:** *We can do more to assist local lodges in providing training and leadership development. It is unfortunately the case that brothers are often moved into chairs or put in positions of authority before they are ready or brothers who should not be in leadership positions are seated due to lack of ready brothers. By drawing from the experience of brothers and lodges statewide, the GL can help develop leadership in local lodges. The effect of better prepared officers will be quickly seen through improved operations of the lodge and smoothly run meetings, allowing us more time to actually do Masonic work.*
- 2. Strengthen the bonds between newer, younger masons and experienced, older brothers:** *Because of the pattern of membership, many lodges now have two distinct groups - older, experienced brothers in their 60's 70's and 80's and younger brothers in their 20's and 30's. Oftentimes the two groups sit across from each other in the lodge wondering "who let them in?" We do a great job of bringing different men together in our degree work and ritual- we can do more to bring men together in our lodges. We need both the enthusiasm of youth and the knowledge and experience of our older members to have successful lodges.*
- 3. Increase Brotherly Love and Fraternalism:** *There is no issue or problem which we cannot solve if we approach it together in a spirit of brotherly love and affection. This is central to our being masons, and yet it is often the hardest goal to achieve. Some brothers seem to equate 'for the good of masonry' with 'in my self-interest'. Brothers, if we choose our actions by asking "Will this increase brotherly love and fraternalism?" we can have a ready and true guide.*

Brad Crawford lives with his wife, Tanya, and their children Jonathan, Shelbi, and Ian in Fletcher, Oklahoma. He is a farmer and is retired from the Chickasha Police Department, where he served as Shift Supervisor, Range Master, Training Coordinator, and Administrator of the computer network. He holds state certification as an instructor, firearms instructor, trainer and pilot.

He served Valley Lodge #6 as Worshipful Master in 1988.

Brother Crawford is an A Certificate Lecturer and a member of the Great Plains Area Blue Lodge Degree Team. He is also Past State Secretary of the Oklahoma EMT Association and F.O.P. Bargaining Agent. He has received numerous commendations during his years in law

enforcement, and holds the Order of the Arrow from the Boy Scouts of America and State Farmer in the FFA.

In answer to the question **Why do you seek this office?** Brother Crawford wrote:

I seek this office with a belief I can bring to Oklahoma Masonry a viable yet alternative response to our declining membership and participation in masonry, based on straight talk, honest answers, and the ability to communicate and mediate issues within our wide and diverse range of members.

Masonry makes good men better, but getting these good men is only half the problem, molding these good men requires the men we already have to take an active part. Masonic Lodges once stood as the cornerstone of many Oklahoma communities. I feel my home lodge still does! Does yours?

As a young man raised from the floor of a small town Masonic Lodge my father told me to do but one thing, "Give back to Masonry, what Masonry has given to you" I strive to do that every day. I seek this office with that goal in mind.

In answer to the question. **What goals would you like to attain as a Grand Lodge officer?** he wrote.

I do not believe that one Mason can, in one year, fix everything wrong with our beloved fraternity. I do, however, believe that a difference can be made, a path to further Masonic light can be found, and through a concerted effort we can turn things around!

As to goals I would like to attain: See that the Landmarks of the Order shall never be impaired; promote our fraternity; be a part of turning things around; and to instill the pride we have in our fraternity, into each and every new member we raise!

David A. Ray lives with his wife, Frances, in Shawnee. He is retired from the Nicoma Park Schools where he served as Principal. He is a member of the National Association of Elementary Principals and the National Association of Secondary Schools.

He is a member of Composite Lodge #107, and served as Worshipful Master in 1997. He served the Grand Lodge as Grand Tyler in 2002, and has served on numerous Grand Lodge Committees.

He is a member of the McAlester Scottish Rite Temple and holds the 33rd Degree. In the York Rite, he is a member of the Shawnee Chapter, Council and Commandery, Past High Priest, Past Illustrious Master, Past Commander, and Past Grand High Priest. He holds the KYCH, Knight Commander of the Temple, 2006 Cryptic Mason of the Year, the Order of the Purple Cross, and the DeMolay Legion of Honor.

Brother Ray is a member of the McCloud Chapter #193 Order of the Eastern Star, where he has served as Chaplain, Warden, and Marshal. He is a member of the Allied Masonic Degrees, York Rite College, Knight Masons, MSRICF, Prince of Peace and St. Luke Conclaves of the Red Cross of Constantine, and Grand Governor of the Oklahoma Sovereign York Rite College of North America.

He is a Member of the Board of Directors of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma and serves as 2nd Vice President.

In answer to the question **Why do you seek this office?**, Brother Ray wrote:

Masonry has been a significant factor in my life for over twenty years. Election to the Grand Lodge line will enable me to continue working with the Craft statewide to promote Masonry, its principles and ideals.

In answer to the question **What goals would you like to attain as a Grand Lodge Officer?** he wrote:

To learn the duties and procedures unique to each office and work to accomplish them. To assist the Grand Lodge Officers in carrying out their programs and contribute to the success of their terms. To develop meaningful programs that way to benefit the Craft.

For Grand Lecturer

Ronald Edgar Wray and his wife Tammie live in Hitchcock, Oklahoma. He is a heavy equipment operator for Blain County. He served Okeene Lodge #357 as Worshipful Master in 1988 and currently serves as Secretary. He is a member of the Guthrie Scottish Rite Temple and is membership chairman for Blaine County. He has served the Grand Lodge as District Deputy Grand Master in 1990, as Deputy Grand Lecturer Assistant in 2006 and 2007, and as Deputy Grand Lecturer in 2008 and 2009.

In civic life, he has served as Boy Scout Leader, City Council Member, Mayor, Secretary of the Save our School Foundation. He is a retired firefighter and organist of his church.

In answer to the question **Why do you seek this office?**, he wrote:

Since earning my "A" Certificate in 1984, my dream was to become Grand Lecturer. Recently, I have been asked by several members of the Craft to seek this office. I would be proud to follow the wonderful men who have held this position in the past.

In answer to the question **What goals would you like to attain as a Grand Lodge Officer?**, Brother Wray wrote:

To preserve the ritual. To make Grand School accessible for all Masons, Certificate Lecturers and newly-raised Master Masons. To emphasize the beauty and solemnity of the work that sets our fraternity apart from all others. To pass on the kind of teaching shown me and help Masonry grow.

Carl M. Shelton lives in Heavener with his wife, Virginia. He is retired as the owner of an auto parts store and other small businesses. While in business, he had among the top producing NAPA and Ozark Auto Parts stores in sales.

He is a retired firefighter from the Heavener Fire Department, where he served as Chief for ten years. He is President of the Heavener Kiwanis Club and has held various offices in the Chamber of Commerce and the Jaycees Club. He has been the Heavener Citizen of the Year.

He served as Worshipful Master of Heavener Lodge #154 in 2004, 2005, and 2006. He served the Grand Lodge as Deputy Grand Lecturer Assistant in 2007, was elected 2nd Vice President of the Certificate Lecturers Association in 2008, and served as a member of the Masonic Light Committee in that year as well. He is a member of the McAlester Scottish Rite Temple.

In answer to the question **Why do you seek this office?**, Brother Shelton wrote:

It is my wish to serve the Masons of Oklahoma as Grand Lecturer. I have had numerous opportunities to work at attend District Schools and Grand Lodge Schools, and work with the

Deputy Grand Lecturers. I feel that I am well qualified in the Esoteric work. I believe that work should be taught and used in the way it is adopted. My former business experience qualifies me for this position because of all the extensive record keeping and employee scheduling.

In answer to the question **What goals would you like to attain as a Grand Lodge Officer?**, he wrote:

I would like to see the D.G.L.A. program started again. This is one way to train more members in the adopted work at no cost to the Grand Lodge. My belief is the more members learn the better the attendance will be, therefore membership will increase. More pride will be evident whether opening Lodge or degree work. My desire is to have every Lodge in the state attend a district or lodge school.

Available for the Board of the Charity Foundation

Ronald S. Coppedge and his wife, Lanette, live in Tishomingo. He is the owner/operator of BuiltRight Compressors. He is a member of Tishomingo Lodge #91 (which he served as Worshipful Master in 1994 and 1995, and currently serves as Secretary) and Wapanucka Lodge #200 (which he served as Worshipful Master in 2001).

M^W Brother Coppedge served as Grand Master in 2004. He served on the Board of the Foundation in 2008. He is the Founding Secretary/Treasurer (1998-2008) for the Johnston County Salvation Army Service Unit, is a member of the Johnston County Chamber of Commerce, and an active member of the First Baptist Church of Tishomingo.

In answer to the question **What strengths or experience do you feel you can bring to the Masonic Charity Foundation?**, he wrote:

Numerous years serving the Craft of Oklahoma Masonry as an appointed and elected Grand Lodge Officer and developing personal friendships and one-on-one relationships with Brethren across the State of Oklahoma and the World.

In answer to the question **How do you feel the Masonic Charity Foundation can best serve the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma?**, M^W Brother Coppedge wrote:

Foremost, to develop new ways and programs to "simplify" serving the needs of our "poor and distressed" Brothers and Sisters. It appears that the Masonic Charity Foundation has in the past been more concerned with "issues" rather than "Charity." Having the opportunity of volunteering time to the local Salvation Army Service Unit and active with Charity work in my local Church and Community, I feel I have developed a "comprehension" on how Charity should work. I have learned that the gift of "Charity" begins in the Heart and should not be bogged down with "regulations."

Glenn Earl Almy lives with his wife, Loretta Sue, in Mannford, Oklahoma. He is part owner, operator and superintendent of the ADP Construction Company. He is a member of Mannford Lodge #515, and served the Lodge as Worshipful Master in 2001. He is currently the Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma.

In answer to the question **What strengths or experience do you feel you can bring to the Masonic Charity Foundation?**, he wrote:

During my forty plus years in the construction industry as a worker and owner, I have worked, been around, and dealt with almost every kind of people. Most of the time I was in the

supervisor

capacity, and worked closely with people helping them solve problems. I think I can do the same in the Masonic Charity Foundation.

In answer to the question **How do you feel the Masonic Charity Foundation can best serve the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma?**, R[^] W[^] Brother Almy wrote:

I think the Masonic Charity Foundation could better serve the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma by coming up with a secondary insurance policy for its older members or anyone else in the Fraternity that is on Social Security.

Robert Russell Poole, Sr. and his wife Joyce live in Bokchito, Oklahoma. He is retired from the U.S. Army with the rank of Command Sergeant Major after almost 31 years of service. He is a ranch manager for privately held ranches in Texas and Oklahoma, and Ranch Manager and Instructor for Trinity Valley Community College Athena, Scurry, Texas. He serves as crop insurance adjuster for several insurance companies and as an independent consultant and military contractor for Military Professional Resources Incorporated in various locations.

Professionally, R[^] W[^] Brother Poole holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business, an Associate in Agricultural Science Degrees in Agriculture and in Ranch Management, is a Graduate of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, a Graduate of the Basic Airborne course, the U.S. Army Special Forces School, Recondo School, and the NCO Academy.

He was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason in Queen City Lodge #761, Clarksville, Tennessee, January, 1967. He subsequently affiliated with Albany Lodge #159, where he served as Worshipful Master in 2000.

He has served the Grand Lodge on the Masonic Education Committee - 2000, 2001 & 2003; the Masonic Leadership Institute - 2000, 2001 & 2003; and the Masonic Lodge Education Committee - 2002 & 2004. He was appointed Grand Marshall in 2004, DDGM for District 19 in 2008, and Grand Secretary in 2008. At the end of 2008 he was elected Grand Secretary by the Craft.

He is a member of the McAlester Scottish Rite Bodies, where he holds the KCCH. He has also served as Deputy Director of Ritual and as a member of the Sovereign Grand Inspector General's Advisory Committee.

In the York Rite, he is a member of Ardmore Chapter, Council, and Commandery.

R[^] W[^] Brother Poole is a member of Tishomingo Chapter #105 OES, and the Saint Luke Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine.

In answer to the question **What strengths or experience do you feel you can bring to the Masonic Charity Foundation?**, he wrote:

Although it is not always obvious to the "outside" world, there is a significant amount of charitable and compassionate activity in the military. We take care of our soldiers and their families. I have been in a position to understand how strong the need can be for help, and to see what a difference that help can make. Especially, we understand that charity which makes it possible for others to pick themselves up, put their lives back together, and build a future.

In answer to the question **How do you feel the Masonic Charity Foundation can best serve the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma?**, he wrote:

We are entering a time of greater economic stress and uncertainty than we have experienced since the Great Depression. I believe the Foundation will have to be very alert to changing needs and conditions, and ready to adapt its policies to meet the changing needs. Programs

such as Promises Matter are excellent programs and need to be more widely known. An effort is needed to help the rank and file become more familiar with the Foundation and how it works.

David W. Allen and his wife, Jo Nan, live in Sand Springs, Oklahoma. He is a retired Director of the Sand Springs Home. During his career he has had extensive experience working with tax-exempt organizations. He is a member of the Oklahoma Children's Agencies and Residential Enterprises, and Past President of the Southwest Association of Executives of Homes for Children. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth, and is Past President of the Sand Springs Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club of Sand Springs.

In work with non-Masonic charitable organizations, he has developed fund-raising programs for two non-profit organizations, facilitated policy development and implementation for endowment funds, and has developed budgets, by-laws, and articles of incorporation for 501-c-3 organizations.

Brother Allen is a Perpetual Member of Sand Springs Loge #475, and served the Lodge as Worshipful Master in 2000. He is a member of the Tulsa Scottish Rite Temple, where he holds the KCCH, directs the 8th Degree, acts in other Degrees and is Assistant Director of the Wardrobe Department. He received the Orient Citation in 2001.

In answer to the question **What strengths or experience do you feel you can bring to the Masonic Charity Foundation?**, he wrote:

Previous experience in development of endowment funds for not-for-profit organizations, development of fund investment policy, policy development for fund distribution programs. Supporting development programs in wills and trusts. Public speaking on behalf of non-profit organizations.

In answer to the question **How do you feel the Masonic Charity Foundation can best serve the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma?**, he wrote:

Through continued support of individual Oklahoma Lodges in their charitable and education fund-raising in their communities. Also. By continued support of individual Masons, their wives, widows and orphans. Continued support of Masonic Youth Organizations and other appendant bodies.

Robert A. East and his wife Pam live in Shawnee. He is retired as Vice President for Finance from the Shawnee Milling Company. Brother East is a Certified Public Accountant with a B.A. in Accounting. He is a Member of the Oklahoma Society of Certified Public Accountants and an Advisory Member of the Board of Directors of the Shawnee Milling Company.

His experience with non-Masonic not-for-profit groups include being Pas Chairman of his church's Finance Committee, Past Treasurer of the Shawnee Little Theatre, Past Member of the Planning Commission for the City of Shawnee, and Vice Chairman of the Zoning Board of the City of Shawnee.

Brother East is a member of Composite Lodge #107 in Shawnee and served the Lodge as Worshipful Master in 2004, He was DDGM in 2006 and 2007, and Grand Bible Bearer in 2008.

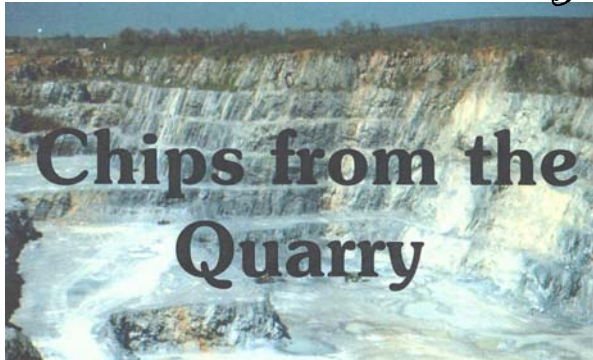
In answer to the question **What strengths or experience do you feel you can bring to the Masonic Charity Foundation?**, he wrote:

Managing the finances of a large corporation during the peaks and valleys any business encounters along with working within the constraints of limited resources for non-profit organizations gives me a broad base of experience to share with the Foundation.

In answer to the question **How do you feel the Masonic Charity Foundation can best serve the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma?**, he wrote:

By encouraging each Lodge to continue reaching out to their communities to find those people and organizations that need the assistance of the Masonic Lodge.

Material Sent In By Readers



What's in a handshake?

Lex Rutter

Every so often things occur in our lives that touch us profoundly. Often they are the very simple things that mean the most. Over the Easter weekend I was traveling from an emergency trip to help care for my mother, who was in ICU from a recent - extremely serious - illness. During the return trip I became disabled and collapsed

while trying to transition from one flight to another in Memphis, TN. At the time I was alone, or so I thought, in a distant city.

I barely was conscious on the floor of the terminal, with folks around trying to find out what happened. Through the fog I clearly recall someone tapping the ring on my finger and asking "You're a traveling man, aren't you?" I could not focus on anyone and the figures were all just a blur.

However a hand reached out and took mine, then proceeded to offer a grip I immediately recognized - a brother was at hand and seeing that I was cared for. Suddenly I knew I was not really alone.

He asked how to get in touch with my wife, and since I really couldn't speak I just handed over my electronic notebook/cell phone. Later it simply appeared back on my hip. I found out later he had called my wife, given her a report on me, calmed her fears, then on his own called back to give her the location of the hospital where I was being taken. I still don't know the man - we have his name from the call to home, but I never really saw anything other than this rather chubby, black hand offering that friendly grip - where we truly can know each other in the dark as well as in the light. For I was in the darkness of blacking out, not of night, yet the message came through loud and clear.

During this same incident I was aided by yet another brother, an orderly at the hospital who offered his own communications to get hold of my wife, and a sister of the Easter Star who helped as an airline agent. Still, that simple grip, seeing nothing but the hand offered to help, stands clear in my mind.

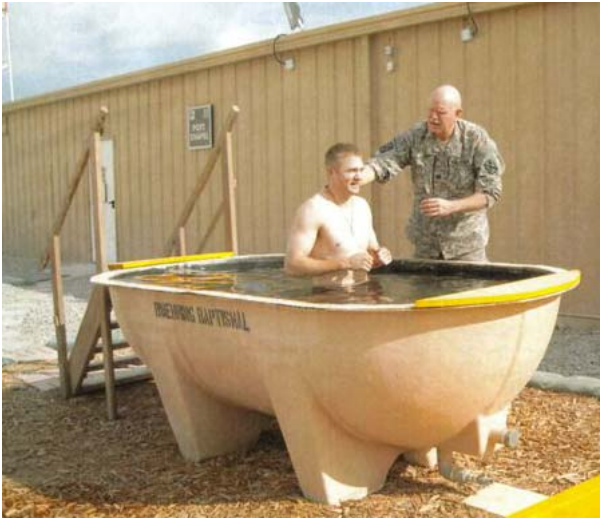
We as Masons meet and regularly work on the language and lessons of our degrees. It is the simple things - when we indeed can honor those obligations in very plain and humble aid - that truly bring the obligations to life. Just the act of lending a hand, making a brother know that he is indeed in good hands calming the fears of the moment, that proves over and over again the true value of our fraternity. Even though in many parts of the country, especially the south, white and black lodges to do "recognize" each other, I feel truly honored to have met a brother who

simply ignored the prejudice of the area and offered that grip. I only hope that he has truly inspired me to be able to do the same for a brother should the need ever arise.

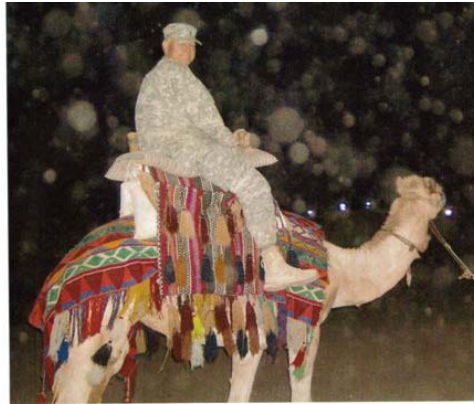
Fraternally, A.V. (Lex) Rutter

From John Bloss “Beyond the Pomp and Ceremony”

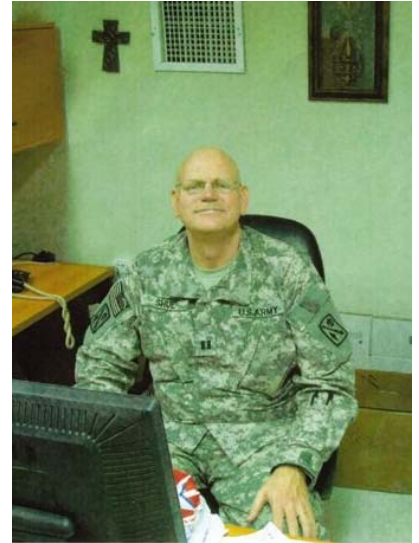
Masonry, as practiced by Ancient Free and Acceptable Masons, is service. Here are pictures of Chaplain Captain Claude Shue, a Master Mason from Kingfisher Lodge #52, at his post in Kuwait. His post is the transfer station of supply and personnel for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. About 15,000 personnel pass thru every week, to be ministered to by Captain Claude and four assistant chaplains. We are proud of his record of service! [Great pictures, and thanks, Brother Bloss. I especially like the phrase “Ancient Free and Acceptable Masons.” ed.]



Any ol' baptismal font in a storm!



Different era, different camel, still a wise man.



Rev. Brother Shue in his office

From Roger Wadley

Grove Lodge #187 is on a roll. This picture was taken just after we conferred the Entered Apprentice Degree on 1 of 4 currently in the works. Grove is fortunate to be able to confer all Degrees with members of Grove Lodge, and the Lodge is enjoying good attendance, not only on Degree nights but also stated meetings.





Distinguished Company This photo shows M^W^ Richard E. Massad, with R^W^ Tom Jackson (Grand Secretary Emeritus of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania and Mason with an international reputation, and Comedian W^ Norm Crosby at a recent event.

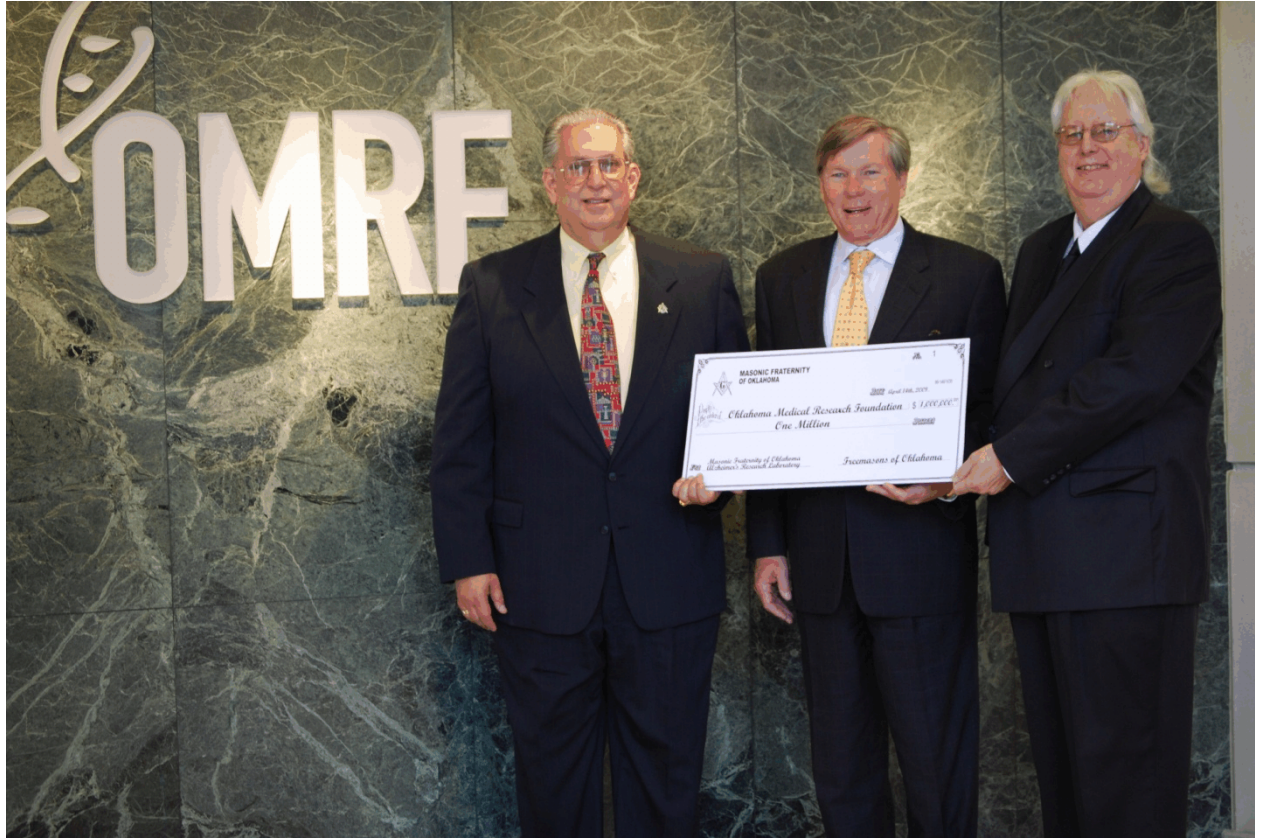
The Lodge in the Community

Rising Star Lodge #129 in Calera recently co-hosted a chili and stew fund-raiser for the Calera Volunteer

Fire Department. Shown at the check presentation are lodge members Keith Childers, Junior Doughty, Harrison Luke, and Bill Tolbert. Receiving the \$2,000 check for the fire department is fireman David Westbrook.



Worshipful Master Royce Bartee presents checks from Creekmore Lodge #74 to Masonic Students of Today and the Teacher of Today. From left to right, Taylor Bruke, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Burke, Sarah Dempsey, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Gary Dempsey, Roberto Guadian, son of Mr. Carlos Guadian, Worshipful Master Royce Bartee, Ali Selvy, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Chad Selvy, Mr. Brandon Jacks, Journalism Teacher, Madill High School, and Mathew Saxon, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wes Saxon.



Masonic Charity Foundation Gives \$1,000,000 to Help Fight Alzheimer's Disease

The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation has an international reputation for cutting-edge research and the development of new drugs and treatments for many serious medical conditions. Now, with help from the Oklahoma Freemasons, the Foundation will carry on the battle against Alzheimer's disease in a state-of-the-art laboratory facility.

A check for one million dollars from the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma on behalf of the state's approximately 30,000 Masons was presented by Richard E. Massad, Grand Master, and Kenneth R. House, President of the Charity Foundation, to the Medical Research Foundation. The money will be used to create the Masonic Fraternity of Oklahoma Alzheimer's Research Laboratory.

"It's a natural thing for the Fraternity to do," said House. "Freemasons have always been committed to a high quality of life, not just for ourselves but for everyone. Few things in our world today destroy the quality of life more viciously than Alzheimer's disease.

Grand Master Massad agreed. "Much of our public charity has traditionally focused on the young and education, trying to assure that the youth of our state have the best possible

intellectual 'tools' to build rich and rewarding lives," he said. "It is only fitting that we do what we can to assure that quality remains as long as possible."

While many Oklahomans are not fully aware of the programs and agencies supported by the Masons of our state, it has been estimated that 1 in every 3 Oklahomans benefits in some way from Masonic philanthropy each year. The fraternity's support of Public Television, vision screening programs for school children, public education, and programs for the elderly, in addition to support of local civic needs runs into millions of dollars yearly.

"This may be one of our most important contributions," said Grand Master Massad. "A cure or successful treatment for Alzheimer's Disease would be a wonderful thing."

More information about the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation can be found on their web site at omrf.org. Information about the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma can be found at mcfok.org.

PROMISES MATTER GRANTS

During the 1st quarter the Fraternal Relations committee received grant applications from 19 Lodges, of which 15 were approved.

Remember, Promises Matter Grants are made to Lodges and OES Chapters to assist them in caring for their needy, distressed members. If your Lodge or Chapter has such a need, please contact the Foundation office.

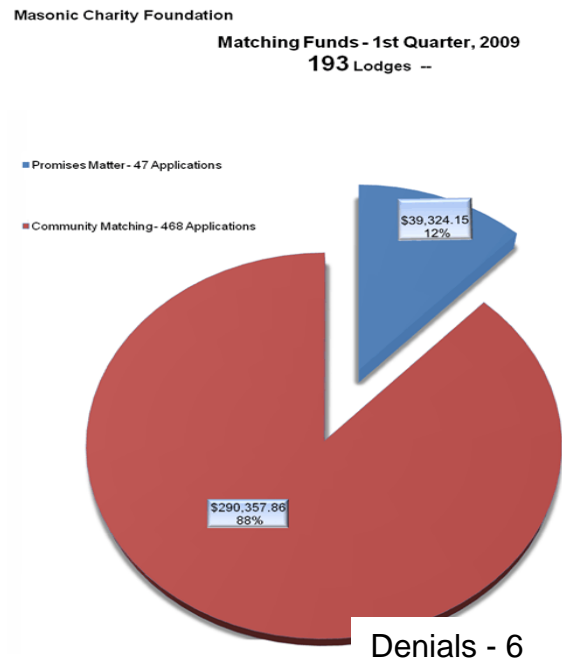


For some years now, the Lodges in Oklahoma have sponsored the finest television to be seen on Public Television in our state. The Lodges raise funds, ideally by holding a public fund-raiser, and then send those funds to the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma. The Foundation matches the funds and accumulates them, making note of the total contribution of each Lodge.

Our involvement serves two functions. It not only draws attention to the fraternity, but it makes possible for Oklahoma families to see such programming as Nature, National Geographic programming, The Antiques Roadshow and other fine educational programs. In 2009, the total contribution to OETA from 147 Lodges was \$42,068.74.

Matching Funds Program

The Matching Funds activity from the 1st quarter of 2009:



	Lodges	Promises Matter	Community	Total
Applications	193	47	468	515
Amount		\$39,324	\$290,358	\$329,682

During the 1st quarter six applications were found not to be in compliance with the program rules and denied for various reasons including requests below the \$25.00 minimum, items neither charitable or educational (flags and picture frames), religious celebration and money laundering.

Senior Essay Contest

2008-2009 Senior Essay Contest results

The topic statement was: *The Declaration of Independence states that “all men are created equal.” How true was this concept then and is it true today?*

The winners, their school and sponsoring Lodge are listed below:

	Girl	Boy
1 st Place - \$2,000.00	Heather Swadley Shawnee High School Composite Lodge #107	Travis Gerber Lomega High School Kingfisher Lodge #52
2 nd Place - \$1,500.00	Ajenda Johnson	Rick Krysiak

	Duncan High School Duncan Lodge #60	Stillwater High School Frontier Lodge #48
3 rd Place - \$1,000.00	Whitney McAteer Jenks High School Jenks Lodge #497	Tyler Slawson Silo High School Durant Lodge # 45
4 th Place - \$750.00	Rachel Hill Owasso High School Owasso Lodge #545	Kayvon Taghizadeh Southmoore High School Moore Lodge #539
5 th Place - \$500.00	Haley Johnson Owasso High School Owasso Lodge #545	Daniel McCarthy Valliant High School Valliant Lodge #301
6 th Place - \$400.00	Jennifer Siegmann Dover High School Coronado Lodge #56	Laly Vang Owasso High School Owasso Lodge #545
7 th Place - \$300.00	Lacy Newnam Stroud High School Stroud Lodge #142	John Brammer Lawton High School Lawton Lodge #183
8 th Place - \$200.00	Jourdin Watkins OK Union High School Delaware Lodge #477	Edward Peguillan, III Chickasha High School Chickasha Lodge #94
9 th Place - \$100.00	Rachel Benbrook Woodward High School Woodward Lodge #189	Ben Becker Bixby High School Bixby Lodge #359
10 th Place - \$100.00	Blythe Gentry Woodward High School Woodward Lodge #189	Tyler Fikes Marlow High School Marlow Lodge #103

State Superintendent Awards for Arts Excellence 2009



The 2009 State Superintendent Awards for Arts Excellence was held on April 27, 2009 at the Guthrie Scottish Rite Temple. 113 student awards were presented to recipients in the categories of band (14), dance (3), drama/theater (20), orchestra (15), piano (5), visual art (27), and vocal (29). Also, awards were presented to three fine arts educators and three administrators. The awards were presented by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Sandy Garrett, Grand Master Richard Massad and Foundation President Kenneth House.

Programs

As of the end of April, fifteen (15) Districts have received a presentation about the Foundation's services and programs. If your district would like a presentation for an upcoming meeting, please contact the Foundation office. The following meetings are already scheduled:

May 4 th at 6:30 PM	District 22 at Chandler Lodge
May 11 th at 7:00 PM	District 17 at Clinton Lodge
May 21 st at 7:00 PM	Checotah Lodge
June 27 th at 6:00 PM	District 26 at Murrow Lodge

Freemasonry in the World

After reading the article by Brother Cliff Porter in the last issue of The Oklahoma Mason, several Brethren have asked to read more of his work. We are happy to comply with a short story which contains a powerful lesson in Masonry.

The Ring

Cliff Porter

The morning started the same way they always had. He woke up, ran to the bathroom where his dad was, took up station on the commode as the only available seat, and watched his father getting ready for work.

He looked forward to every morning with anticipation. This was a special time of day for the both of them. He would ask questions of all kinds, musing about all the different topics his young mind could muster and Dad would answer them with a smile.

Dad drew the razor up the neckline and plowed a small row through the snow-like shaving cream in the shape of a beard upon his neck and face.

"If girls are equal like sissy said, why do you hold the door for Mommy and let her go everywhere first?"

Dad smiled in his usual manner, taking care not to knick himself from the slight chuckle. "Son, the world needs balance, it needs beauty, and it needs the touch and creative force of women. I hold the door for your mommy because I am humbled and honored that such a wonderful creature decided to share her life with me. We hold the door for all women because regardless of the standards people set for themselves, we choose to honor the essence and wisdom of women, not a particular woman. We call it chivalry, and we do it for us as much as for them."

He understood some of what his dad had said, more importantly his dad showed him how important he was every morning by answering his questions.

The shaving completed, the aftershave in place, the shirt tucked in tightly, shoes shined, dad completed the ritual the way he always had. He put on his giant gold ring with the lodge symbol on it. It always ended with dad reverently putting on the ring. Dad kissed his forehead and headed for the living room where he would kiss mom as she readied herself for the drive to work after dropping him at school.

"Dad, why do you always get so dressed up for work?"

"It's for the ladies," he said with a wink and then a laugh.

"You're teasing dad!" he said.

"I am little buddy. It's the inside of the man that important. The way he loves, the way he chooses to worship, the way he thinks and feels. But, the outside of the man is a nice way for your old dad to try and reflect how I feel on the inside. Daddy wants people to know he values them, he values himself, and he values his community. . . so he dresses for it."

Dad had just finished putting the collar stays in and synching up his tie. Dad double checked to make sure all was in place, slide on his lodge ring, kissed him on the forehead and off for another day.

As he grew and the teen years moved in, he visited less with dad, but still peeked in for council during the morning hours when something important loomed.

"Dad, John Garry said he is looking to fight me, I'm not afraid, and quite frankly I wouldn't mind shutting him up."

"Is he an idiot?"

"I think so."

Dad squared his shoulders and made eye contact, but kept a softness to his features that showed caring and concern, "And he thinks this fight would be a good idea?"

"I guess so?" the boy said.

"Why would you follow an idiot? Look son, I can't stop you if you choose to fight. You will win I am sure. But in a few ways you will lose. You will have followed a bad idea by a person it sounds like you have little respect for. If you are going to follow, then choose your leaders wisely when allowed. In this case, you can choose not to fight. If this other boy leaves you no alternatives, provide him his penance and don't use any more force than necessary to defend yourself."

The ring was put on in its normal fashion and this time a hug as dad headed for the door.

It would go like this for many years. It was funny, but those talks would prove a powerful potion through the college years and during times of stress and frustration. He could even here his dad's voice delivering its wisdoms and witticisms when they were needed. He fell, as many do, made some bad choices here and there, but again, his dad's voice...

"Son, they're called regrets, everyone over about the age of 12 has them. The difference between the victorious soul and the defeated one is that the victor got up, dusted himself off,

learned his lesson, and moved forward. The forward part is important son. People are always looking for a direction, but backwards is a direction too. Keep your head up, your mind open, and life will never be an obstacle by itself."

It was hard for him when it first happened. Harder for his dad he thought. He had first noticed it when they had brought the grandkids over for a Sunday visit. Dad refused to live anywhere but the house he grew up in, even after all of the kids were gone and mom had long since passed away from cancer. But that Sunday he noticed it. Dad's shirt was not tucked in.

He flashed to watching his dad's dressing ritual every morning the meticulous care he took of himself, even after he had retired. Dad always shaved, always combed his hair, and always got dressed in a fashion that led you to believe he was expecting company at any minute. He always had a smile ready and fresh pot of coffee was only a moment away.

"Dad are you feeling okay?"

"Sure," he said with a questioning look.

"Well its just that your shirt's not tucked in."

Dad looked down as if seeing his own clothes for the first time that day. He began to slip a little from there and it was months later that he convinced him to move into the city and stay at their house. It was the grandkids that did the trick.

As the disease progressed, he found that he had done more and more for his dad, who, losing some of his memory, still wanted his morning ritual more than ever. Its just that dad didn't have the ability to do it anymore. First he shaved for dad, fearing that dad might cut himself, then came combing the hair, and one day, much to his father's dismay, he needed help getting out of bed, getting dressed, and making it to the living room.

He saw them the day of the ring. The day that he had to put dad's ring on for him as his hands were shaking to much for dad to do it himself. Dad stopped him and grabbed his hand. Dad rotated his son's hand palm up and stared into his son's eyes for a moment. He placed the ring into the palm and shut his son's fingers around it as best as he could.

His voice did not come easy these days, but this was important and it needed to be said. "Son, some men join the lodge, take their oaths, carry a dues card, and show up to the meetings. Some men, men like you, live the life, son. They put their chest out, they love with their whole heart, they work hard, they hug kids and kiss their wives with tenderness. "

He could see tears in his dad's eyes and tried to remember a time he had ever seen him cry. Dad continued, "They care for their old dad in such a way that the old man never loses his dignity and pride. You might not be a member son, but you can wear this as much as any man I have ever met. I love you, boy."

The funeral had been at high twelve. Dad didn't say why, but wanted it way according to the will and so it was done. He had intended on burying his dad with the ring when one of the men from the lodge had come up at the viewing.

"I've got a ring here for your dad. He called before he died and said to bring it. That his ring would be yours now. . . .so put that ring on or back in your pocket, but your dad made me promise you would keep it."

They removed the blindfold and he saw them there. The men from his dad's—from *his* lodge. He was kneeling and had just taken his oath when the tears began and he couldn't stop them. His dad would have wanted to see this, he would have wanted to be there and he had always been too damn busy to join and share this with him. Why hadn't he done this sooner? The thought of regret almost consumed him and threatened to steal the beauty of the evening. The initiation part of the night over the lodge was handling some simple business when the Master of the lodge called for "good of the order" and old Mr. Henry from his dad's office stood up. He was the same man with the ring at dad's funeral months before.

He cleared his throat and said with his gruff voice, "I've got something I need to read Worshipful."

Mr. Henry looked at him square in the eyes and said, "Your dad made me promise to read this when the day came."

"Son, I knew this day would come and I promise you that I was there in the light when you received it. You see, I had my speech prepared. When the good Lord asked me what I had done right, I asked him to take a quick peek at you. I squared my shoulders and said, 'Lord, if I can simply be judged as half the man my son has become, I would be most grateful.' My spark has rejoined the flame, son. It was an honor to sit in lodge with you tonight, and the view from here was spectacular. I love you, boy."

The next morning as he shaved, combed his hair, slide on the ring and stared down at the greatest little boy God could ever create, he found himself chuckling as he said, "Daddy, can I ask you a question ?"