

THE



OKLAHOMA

MASON

THE GRAND LODGE OF
ANCIENT FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE STATE
OF OKLAHOMA

December 2023



John Carter
Grand Master

As the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Oklahoma begins our 116th year, I am humbled and honored to serve as Grand Master. My first and most engaging goal is to help Lodges achieve success in our jurisdiction. We can accomplish great things for Oklahoma Masons and Masonry by working together.

Let me draw your attention to the 2024 Grand Master's pin. That pin displays the theme for our year – **Building A Civil Brotherhood**. The theme has been selected in the hope that our Fraternity may demonstrate,

model, and teach a moral characteristic that is vitally important, yet sadly, too often missing in today's society – civility.

Webster's dictionary defines civility as "formal politeness and courtesy in behavior or speech." We, as Masons, are familiar with extending formal politeness and courtesies in the Lodge. The primary focus of those Masonic courtesies and procedures is to foster peace and harmony in the Lodge.

"Civility also indicates awareness, the ability to control one's passions, and having a deeper understanding of others." Controlling one's passions are also words familiar to Masons. "Freemasons and members of the Masonic family have had a long history of fostering civil dialogue and building civil societies. Masonic Lodges represent a peaceful assembly of people of different places of origin, languages, backgrounds, and be-



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liefs."

"Civility is more than just politeness. It is about disagreeing without disrespect, seeking common ground as a starting point for dialogue about differences..." I sincerely hope we may exemplify those lessons taught in our ritual: control our passions, treat others as we would be treated, disagree agreeably, treat all with respect, and meet on the level, part on the square.

NINE PILLARS OF CIVILITY

- Be considerate of others' opinions. It's okay to agree to disagree.
- Manage your emotions. Get curious instead of furious.
- A silent voice is not always a weak voice. Sometimes, it's okay not to respond.
- Be Kind! Make your point about the issue, not the person.
- Listen actively, and learn how to Engage respectfully!
- Think about the impact of your actions and not the intent.
- Ask questions to learn. Answer questions with respect.
- Remember the acronym QTIP (Quit Taking It Personal).
- Have empathy! Just because you have not experienced it does not mean it does not exist.

We have many challenges and opportunities to confront in the coming year. I sincerely hope we can meet and overcome each challenge with civility and unity. As we consider opportunities looking to the future, a few of the words in our state song, Oklahoma!, come to mind:

It ain't too early, and it ain't too late...

Brand-new State, gonna treat you great!

Plenty of air and plenty of room...

Plenty of heart and plenty of hope!

Let us attend to the critical tasks of our Fraternity, challenges, and opportunities with plenty of heart and plenty of hope!





Consecration Of Providence Lodge #558



Esprit de Corps

The Holiday season is upon us, my brothers, and we are all rushing around, but let's take a moment and reflect on our Annual Grand Communication Session this past November.

"Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity".

It is always the most enjoyable and satisfying time when we can all get together. Seeing brothers, whom we may only see once or twice a year, is always a gratifying and rewarding time. Something about the Masonic Brotherhood cannot be duplicated anywhere else.

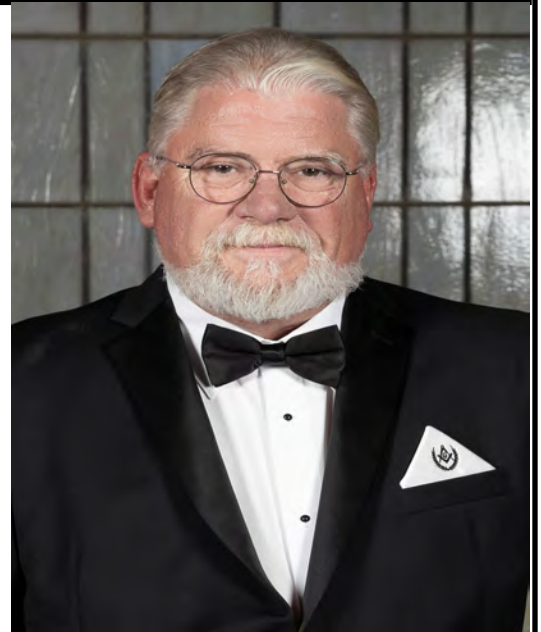
There is a French term for that. It is called "Esprit de Corps". It is a very common phrase, especially in the military, but it is also used in many other organizations where unity, teamwork, and brotherhood are essential.

The definition or explanation of its meaning is Pride and Morale within the group and what it stands for. It is the familiar spirit existing in the members of a group and inspiring enthusiasm, devotion, and strong regard for the honor of the group.

It is the proud, loyal, and comfortable feeling that you are a member of a group whose purpose you believe in, the sense of shared purpose and fellowship, the morale, sense of identification, feeling of solidarity, unity, and cohesiveness concerning the brotherhood.

It is no mistake that recent Grand Master's coins like M.W. Scott Vincent's "Together We Stand, United We Grow" and M.W. Glen Chaney's "Brotherhood for Life" say what they say. It is a crucial ingredient in what Masonry is all about.

Now add to that M.W. John Carter's "Building a Civil Brotherhood", and you have the whole package of what it means for Masonry to survive and thrive.



James Roderick

Deputy Grand Master

When we have that unbreakable bond, that feeling of solidarity and unity coupled with treating each other with respect, ethics, and courtesy, coupled with that Harmony we speak of at each meeting, we have the perfect formula.

The formula that brings good men in, the mixture that keeps good men there and coming back.

If your lodge doesn't have Esprit de Corps and Civility, or if it doesn't have enough, then let's work on that. Let's regain and build that in our lodges until it spills into the streets. Then, let's spread it around the Community.

It is what Masonry was built on. It's who Masons Are.

Happy Holiday, my Brothers. May yours be filled with the joy of family, friends, and brothers.

Your 2024 Grand Lodge Officers





**Cherokee
Lodge
#10**

**175 Year
Cornerstone
Ceremony**





Focus



Don Stanton

Senior Grand Warden

As I approach the end of the year, I am reminded that I can often lose my focus on what matters most. For example, the Christmas season is upon us. I become obsessed with gift giving. I cause my own stress as I hurry about to shop. The trip to and from the mall is exhausting. The stores are packed with people. I feel my blood pressure rise as I race home to decorate, wrap, cook, clean, and prepare for December 25th. As I lay my weary head on the pillow at night, I realize I forgot Christ. How could I forget Christ? I was busy doing everything imaginable for the holiday; however, I just lost sight of the true reason I do all the other activities of Christmas. I am indeed busy, but am I focused on what matters most?

Let's pause at that question for a moment and ask another. Are you busy doing Masonic events or focused on the reason you chose this fraternity? I have been and continue to be blessed with the lessons taught me by my Masonic mentors. In many examples, I was not even a Mason at the time. These men exhibited the best qualities of friendship, honesty, charity, kindness, and courage. I knew they were all Masons because they attended Lodge together. Once or twice a month, they ventured off in suits. While I did not know what they did behind closed doors, I did know that I wanted to be like them.

So fast forward to the end of 2023. I am a bit reflective. Do I exhibit those qualities I found so appealing many years ago? If I do, who is watching, observing, absorbing those qualities? While these attributes are commendable inside the Lodge, they are most important outside the Lodge. I propose that what we do outside the Lodge in our daily lives matters most. An entire generation needs these qualities more than ever. Unfortunately, our fraternity is not self-perpetuating. We, our fraternity, must mentor those men who are willing to learn.

Take a moment and think about just one man you can mentor. Most of this work will be done outside of your Lodge. We all must be servant leaders and teachers of friendship, honesty, charity, kindness, and courage. Give another man the gift of Masonic

brotherhood. In so doing, you will indeed reproduce yourself just like I was forged in those same lessons.

As we reflect on the Christmas season, I hope each of you has the opportunity to give a gift worthy of the season. You will not need to fuss with the holiday crowds nor traffic. Decorating the house and tree will lose its importance. Christmas dinner will seem very dull. Focus instead on the qualities you can give to another man. We all have been given an extraordinary gift from Christ even when we were not worthy. Surely, you can find someone worthy of the very best qualities Masonry can offer.

Merry Christmas, and remember Iron Sharpens Iron.

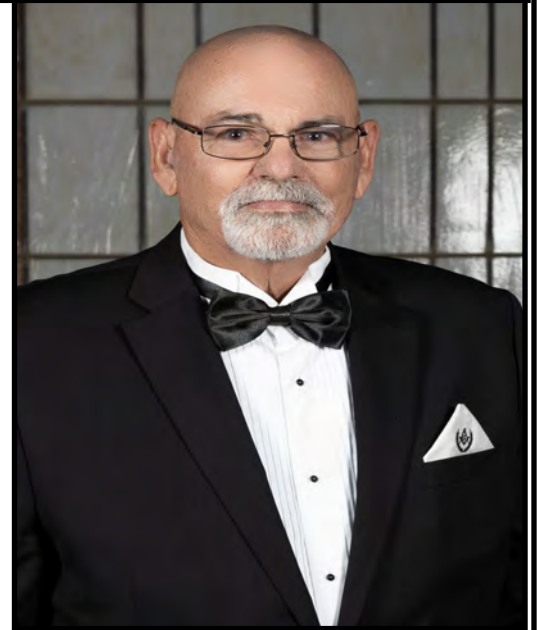
Master Mason Degree at Delta Lodge #425 by Indian Degree Team



Many Thanks

I am writing to express my deepest gratitude to you for electing me to the Office of Junior Grand Warden at the recent Annual Communication. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve you in this capacity, and I want to thank each one of you who took the time to attend Grand Lodge, cast your vote, and put your trust in me.

The journey to this moment has been both inspiring and humbling. Throughout the past year, I had the opportunity to connect with so many incredible individuals who are passionate about our Fraternity. Your support, encouragement, and engagement have been the driving force behind my decision to make myself available to serve our Craft. I am immensely grateful for the counsel each of my Brothers gave me. Please continue.



James Oates

Junior Grand Warden

I want to acknowledge the guidance and friendship of our Past Grand Masters. Not one of you fine men were in any way less than supportive. I look forward to working with you for the betterment of our Fraternity for many years to come. I am also honored to have been able to serve in our Grand Line and learn from such Past Grands as MW R. Scott Vincent in 2022 and MW Glen A. Chaney in 2023, as well as all of the dedicated Brothers in their respective lines...where do we find such committed men? I am grateful for the friendships formed across our Jurisdiction over my travels these past years.

I also want to extend my appreciation to W. Craig Simon, who also made himself available to serve. Running for office is a challenging and demanding endeavor, and I respect his commitment to contribute to our community.

As I step into this new role, please know that I am fully dedicated to serving the best interests of our Fraternity. I am committed to transparency, open communication, and working collaboratively to address the concerns and aspirations of all Lodges and Brothers. Together, we can build a stronger, more vibrant Fraternity that we can all be proud of.

Once again, thank you for placing your trust in me. I am excited about the opportunities and challenges ahead and eager to work together to make positive and lasting changes for our Grand Lodge and Jurisdiction.



**65 Year
Pin
Ceremony
At
Ingalls-Glencoe
Lodge #128**



The Year Ahead



Mike Dixon
Grand Secretary

As we begin this new Masonic year, it has been my pleasure to work with the Lodge Secretaries and the members of our gentle fraternity this past year. Also, thanks for granting me the privilege of serving you another year. I believe the Grand Secretary and the office staff are here to provide service and support to the membership and the Lodge Secretaries. You are our customers, and my goal is to provide the best level of customer service we possibly can with the resources available.

Changes are in the wind here. As many of you have learned by now, Karen Dixon will be leaving on January 1st. As sometimes happens, an offer came along that she could not refuse. She will be greatly missed, and we wish her all the success as she begins her next adventure. Additionally, the annual operating budget the craft approved will likely require some office operations changes. However, Grand Master Carter and the other elected officers are working diligently to stretch every dollar as far as possible to avoid negatively impacting service to the lodges and you, the members.

I want to take this opportunity to remind the Lodge Secretaries that Unable To Pay reports must be completed by December 31st. Unable To Pay reports not received or postmarked by December 31st will be disallowed.

Lodge officers for the new year must be entered into the Grandview membership system by December 31st. Also, Annual reports and lodge audits must be completed and reported to the Grand Lodge office by January 31st. Please get the reports to me as soon as possible.

We are currently working on scheduling a few Secretary's Workshops around the state. If your lodge is interested in hosting a session, please get in touch with me as soon as possible. The only requirement is for tables for the attendees to sit at and take notes, and Internet access must be available in the lodge building. Usually, the lodge dining room is sufficient.

At the annual communication, the voting delegates granted the issue of a new Charter to Providence Lodge No. 558. Providence is a traditional observance lodge meeting in the Lawton Lodge No. 183 building. By the time this publication is out, the lodge will have been officially constituted, officers elected, installed, and will be at labor. Welcome, gentlemen!

I also want to welcome R.W. James Oates, III to the Grand Lodge advancing line as our Junior Grand Warden. I have had the pleasure of knowing James for some time now and look forward to serving with him as a Grand Lodge Officer.

As always, please call or email me if you have any questions the Grand Lodge office staff or I can help you with.

May peace and harmony prevail!



**Capture of
Myrtle Lodge
Jachin
Gavel by
Siloam
Lodge #276
At
Edmond
Lodge #37**



Two new EAs at Frontier Lodge #48

New Master Mason at Myrtle Lodge #145





The Grand Lodge *of* OKLAHOMA

**Whatever life throws at you,
you have millions of brothers
to help you catch it.**



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