



DECEMBER 2006



NO. 426

GUARD WELL THE WEST GATE

Because of a recent incident in one of our lodges, it is the order of Grand Master Thomas E. Valente, Jr. that, sometime in the next two months, all lodges conduct instruction on the proper way to investigate a first-time visitor to your lodge. The instruction will include, as a minimum:

1. Insuring that the prospective visitor has a valid, up to date dues card. It is his right to ask to see your lodge's charter during the investigation.

2. Insuring that the prospective visitor's lodge is a constituent lodge of a Grand Lodge that is recognized by the Grand Lodge of Montana. All brothers present for the instruction will examine the lodge's copy of the book, "List of Lodges Masonic" published by the Pantagraph Printing & Stationery Co. of Bloomington, Illinois.

3. Administering the Tyler's Oath to the prospective visitor.

4. Asking sufficient questions concerning the modes of recognition, and if necessary, the ceremonies of initiation, passing and raising, to satisfy each committee member that the prospective visitor is, in fact, a Master Mason. All brothers should be aware of the fact that some of the ritual words may differ in some jurisdictions, but the modes of recognition are the same. Remind all brothers that the purpose

of the examination is to prove to the examination committee that the prospective visitor is, in fact, a Master Mason. It is not to determine how much of the ritual the prospective visitor remembers.

5. Reviewing the necessary conditions when a brother may vouch for a prospective visitor as a Master Mason. The vouching brother must have attended a lodge of Master Masons with the prospective visitor. Another possibility: If Brother A has sat in a lodge of Master Masons with Brother B, Brother A may vouch for Brother B to Brother C, and then Brother C may vouch for Brother B to the Worshipful Master. Sitting in a lodge open on the first or second degrees, or in an appendant body is NOT sufficient to vouch for a brother as a Master Mason.

Brothers, guard well the west gate.



THE LEVEL BIKES FOR BOOKS 2007



If you are planning to participate, remember that you will need to provide the following information to the Grand Secretary by US Mail, E-mail or Fax (please do not call by phone):

- number of Schools to be included, 50% matching funds up to \$600 to participating Lodges
- grade levels, number of classes
- approximate number of students
- number of bikes to be presented

Grand Lodge will provide Posters, bookmarkers, and a Serialized Masonic decal and number to be placed on the winner's bike.

The program has been well received in every school and all of them have requested that we continue the program. Grades 3,4 and 5 have been the most successful grade levels participating.

The optimum start date is 1 February 2007.

LIST OF LODGES PARTICIPATING AS OF DECEMBER

- No.20, Sheridan
- No. 44, Choteau
- No. 46, North Star
- No. 53, Doric
- No. 57, Malta
- No. 82, Cut Bank
- No. 71, Unity
- No. 72, Corinthian
- No. 92, Sts John
- No. 113, Billings
- No. 93, Eureka
- No.95, Treasurer



ANNUAL RETURN PACKAGES MAILED

The Annual Return Packages have been mailed. Keep a look out for a large envelope marked Annual Returns and put it somewhere where you will be able to find it when you are ready to make your entries.

Remember that the Annual Returns are due prior to 15 March. If you have been keeping copies of your Monthly Reports you will be able to complete the worksheets in just a few minutes. Please try to complete and mail the completed form in as soon as possible.

GUIDELINES FOR GRAND MASTER'S ONE-DAY CLASSES

2006 - 2007

- February 10 - Great Falls
- March 10 - Drummond
- April 21 - Lewistown
- May 19 - Miles City

The "Request for Conferral of Degrees" form for each candidate must be in the hands of the Grand Secretary not later than twenty-one days prior to the scheduled class. If there are not twelve or more confirmed candidates by the deadline, the class will be cancelled.

1. All candidates must have received the Entered Apprentice degree in their lodge or in another lodge by courtesy work, and have passed proficiency in the first degree, prior to coming to the Grand Master's class. Only the Fellowcraft and Master Mason degrees will be conferred during the Grand Master's classes during February, March and May.
2. For the April Grand Master's Class the above restrictions are not applicable. The "Request for Conferral of Degrees" form still must be in the hands of the Grand Secretary not later than twenty-one days prior to the class.

However, there will be no minimum number of candidates for the April class; this class will be conducted regardless of the number of candidates. In addition, the Entered Apprentice Degree will be conferred in this class.

Worshipful Masters ensure that a mentor accompanies each of their candidates. The role of mentor is extremely important, and using a total stranger from another lodge as mentor takes away much of the bonding that is necessary for the candidate to feel welcome and at ease. Finally, please inform all members of your Lodge that appropriate attire for candidates, mentors, and sideliners is coat and tie.

DUE DATE FOR GRAND MASTER'S CLASSES

Request for Conferral of Degrees are due for each of the various GM Classes are listed below. Forms for each class must be received by the Grand Secretary by these dates:

<u>GM Class</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
10 February, Great Falls	22 Jan
10 March, Drummond	20 Feb
19 May, Miles City	30 April

DISPENSATIONS

The Grand Master and Grand Secretary have received numerous phone calls asking for dispensations to permit various actions. Dispensations are covered by Sections 1030 and 1040 of the Code of Statutes of the Grand Lodge A.F.&A.M. of Montana. Section 1030 requires a vote of a lodge prior to requesting a dispensation and lists three exceptions when no vote is required. Section 1040 describes the eleven actions for which dispensations may be issued, and specifies the required lodge vote (unanimous or majority) to authorize the application. No dispensations will be issued unless the requirements of these two sections are followed by the requesting lodge.



THE LEVEL

CELESTIAL LODGE



Robert C. Baker	Morning Star No. 5	11/25/2006
Thomas F. Basinger, Jr	Morning Star No. 5	12/02/2006
Donnel G. Merrell	Morning Star No. 5	04/12/2006
Norman E. Woodruff	Morning Star No. 5	May 2006
Bruce H. Johnston	Morning Star No. 5	10/11/2006
Walter W. Dunham	Bozeman NO. 18	11/05/2006
Arnold E. Doig	Bozeman No. 18	11/12/2006
George W. Morrison	Valley No. 21	10/23/2006
Pat M. Goodover	Cascade No. 34	11/28/2006
John C. Snyder	Ottawa No. 51	08/21/2006
Richard H. Bouma	Ottawa No. 51	11/05/2006
Kenneth S. Engdahl	Ottawa No. 51	10/03/2006
William R. Gould	Ottawa No. 51	12/11/2006
Lee C. Stevens	Belgrade No. 68	11/01/2006
Harrison E. Thmpson	Libby No. 85	11/23/2006
Robert A. Elliot	Unity No. 71	04/08/2006
George C. Shelhamer	Unity No. 71	February 2004
Ray E. Harris	Corinthian No. 72	11/14/2006
Charles Thompson	Cut Bank No. 82	August 2006
Charles A. Loberg	Judith No. 86	07/09/2006
Raplh E. McKelvie	Billings No. 113	11/06/2006
Herman Salverson	Billings No. 113	10/26/2006

CELESTIAL LODGE

Clifford M. Hansen	Loyalty No. 121	11/26/2006
Lawrence E. Hart	Bigfork No. 150	11/09/2006
Paul E. Lawson	Bigfork No. 150	10/22/2006
Elmer J. Wallace	Helena No. 3	06/03/2003
William Reed	Missoula No. 13	09/26/2003
James D. Stewart	Butte No. 22	12/09/2004
James A. Cox	Ottawa No.51	Unk
Ralph D. Wyman	Rimrock No. 149	Unk

My Brethren, the roll of the workmen has been called, and one more Master Mason has not answered to his name,

He has laid down the working tools of the Craft and with them he has left that mortal part for which he no longer has use.

His labours here below have taught him to divest his heart and conscience of the vices and superfluities of life, thereby fitting his mind as a living stone for that spiritual building—that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Strengthened in his labours hereby faith in God, and, confident of expectation of immortality, he has sought admission to the Celestial Lodge above.

Author unknown

THE LEVEL**MEMBERSHIP CHANGES****September/October****Note: The following is based upon 31% of the 100 Lodges having submitted the Monthly Report.****RAISED**

Dustin D. Harmon	Euclid NO. 58	12/05/2006
William J. Kudrna	Euclid No. 58	12/05/2006
Ronald S. Zobrak, II	Euclid No. 58	12/05/2006
Richard J. Felton	Doric No. 53	11/21/2006

Dimit To Non Affiliate

Douglas C. Taylor	Bozeman No. 18	10/23/2006
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Affiliations

Tristan E. Kohut	Acacia No. 33	10/03/2006	Retaining Rapid City No. 25
Maurice G. Hardie	Ottawa No. 51	06/16/2006	Retaining Lincoln NO. 157
Gary J. Long	Ottawa No. 51	06/16/2006	RetaininMorning Star No. 5
Burce J. Luke	Ottawa No. 51	10/20/2006	Pusan Korea, GL Scotland
William J. Smith	Ottawa No. 51	06/02/2006	Retaining No. 175 GL. IILL
Kyle D. Dubbs	Judith No. 86	Nov 2006	From Inyo 221, CA
Stephen C. Boettger	Meridian No. 105	09/06/06	From A.Hopper, MI
Clayton D. Anderson	Bigfork No. 150	12/14/2006	Retain Infinity 546, PA
Donald R. Franchi	Bigfork No. 150	12/14/2006	Retain Woodland 81, CA

Withdrawal of Dual/Plural Membership

Gary T. Ellstad	Boulder Basin No. 41	12/08/2006	Retaining No.3,5, 51
John E. Monson, Jr	Boulder Basin No. 41	12/08/2006	Retaining No. 5
Jerry L. Williams	Corinthian No. 72	1106/2006	Affiliate with Huntley Project No. 144

Rejection of Membership

Jacob R. Pannell

Ottawa No. 51

10/06/2006

Suspended NPD

Patrick B. Barrett

Judith No. 86

Suspended 12/31/2006

Larry C. Biere

Judith NO. 86

Effective date 01/01/2007

Ronnie O. Brewington

Judith NO 86

Daniel T. French

Judith NO. 86

Stacy J. Grove

Judith NO. 86

Charles W. Maddox

Judith NO. 86

NAMES AND MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

When reporting any membership change to Grand Lodge; new Master Masons, Affiliations; Death or reinstatement, please include their current U.S. Mailing address with your report.

When reporting membership changes please use their full given name. If the brother also uses a nickname or his middle name add that in in quotation marks.

**MASTER BUILDER AWARD**

Contact W. Bro. Paul Peterson for questions or for copies of the worksheets for the Master Builder program. You should have a copy of the form in your Lodge Assistance Package, the same form used last year. Or call Bro. Paul at 585-7430.

REINSTATEMENTS AND ADDRESSES

When submitting a Reinstatement please include the member's full given name and their current U.S. Mailing address. If a reinstatement is submitted without the member's address the address of the Lodge Secretary will be used.

THE LEVEL EVENTS TO REMEMBER

HALL OF FAME NOMINATIONS

DUE PRIOR TO 1 APRIL

January

January is Sts John Observance Month

- 1 New Years Day
- Installation Al Bedoo Shrine
- Grand Lodge Office Closed
- 6 Installation Algeria Shrine
- 13 Installation Bagdad Shrine
- 16 Sts John Table Lodge—Three Forks
- 18 Sts John Table Lodge—Bozeman
- 20 CMR District Meeting—Hobson, 10 a.m.**
- 22 GM Class—Great Falls, Request Forms Due
- 23 Sts John Table Lodge—Hamilton
- 25-27 Grand Lodge of Colorado, Denver

**Annual Returns Due Prior to 15 March
Resolutions and Committee Reports due
to Grand Lodge 24 Feb**

February

February is Americanism Observance Month

- 1-3 Grand Lodge of Utah
- Grand Lodge of Alaska
- Grand Lodge of Nebraska
- 10 GM Class @ Great Falls, 7:30am (FC & MM)**
- 16 - 20 GM & GS of North America Conference
- 20 GM Class Drummond, Request Forms Due
- 24 Resolutions and Committee Reports due**

March

- 3 GL Idaho Degree exemplification
Portneuff NO. 18, Pocatello
- 10 GM Class—Drummond (FC & MM)
- 10 York Rite Chapter Degrees, Missoula
- 15 Grand Lodge New Mexico
- 16 Grand Lodge Japan
- 17 Fraternal Mother of the Year Nominations due to Committee Chairman
- 31 Grand Lodge Officers Meeting
—Wolf Point



THE MONTANA MASONIC NEWS

**Submission deadline for the
March issue of the Montana Masonic
News is *** prior to 23 February******

Lodges are encouraged to submit photos and articles about news and events. You are the news and we need you to make submissions of interest to our readers.

Pieces submitted should be typed, double-spaced and preferably accompanied by a computer disk in neutral PC format (MSWord preferred with formatting off) or via e-mail. Editor:

Montana Masonic News
c/o Grand Secretary
PO Box 1158

Helena, Montana 59624

or e-mail to mtglsec@grandlodgemontana.org.



THE LEVEL

GRAND MASTER'S SAINTS JOHN OBSERVANCE MESSAGE

Tidings from the East,

Our Code of Statutes requires each lodge to observe Holy Saints John Day during the month of January. This observance is to consist of a tyled table lodge and a luncheon or dinner. When a lodge fulfills this requirement, it is in fact observing not one but two ancient traditions of the Craft, honoring our patron saints and enjoying fellowship at a table lodge.

We honor the patron saints of our order, Saint John the Baptist and Saint John the Evangelist. During the Middle Ages, many guilds and orders adopted patron saints for protection and for examples of conduct. The reasons for adopting a particular saint have been both obvious and fancied. An example of an obvious connection is the selection of Saint Matthew, a former tax collector, as the patron saint of bookkeepers and accountants; to this day, accountants assist all of us who contribute to the IRS. A more obscure relationship between patron saint and occupation is the selection of Saint Barbara as the patron saint of artillerymen. According to her legend, when her abusive father was about to chop off her head, a mighty thunderclap was heard and fire from heaven struck him and reduced him to a mound of ashes. The explosive demise of her father made her the patron saint of explosive handlers.

The selection of these two saints as patron saints by the Craft is neither as

obvious as Saint Matthew and the accountants nor as fancied as Saint Barbara and artillerymen. Masonic historians are not sure when their selection occurred, but there is documentary evidence connecting Saint John the Evangelist with Masonry as early as 1598, more than one hundred years before the formation of the first Grand Lodge. The first Grand Lodge, which was formed in England in 1717, held quarterly assemblies, similar to today's Grand Lodge Communications. One of the assemblies was held on Saint John the Baptist Day, June 24, and another on Saint John the Evangelist Day, December 27.

Why were the two Saints John selected, rather than one or two other saints? Both devoted their lives to Jesus, but in different ways. The Baptist was the first of the Christian ascetics, living in the desert on a diet of locusts and wild honey. He wore a cloak of camel hair and preached a fiery message of repentance. His condemnation of the conduct of King Herod eventually led to his execution. His every act was characterized by zeal, the same zeal that should actuate all Masons.

Despite the fact that our ritual refers to the two saints as parallels, the Evangelist was in fact the opposite of the Baptist. He was the favorite apostle of Jesus, and remained at the crucifixion when all of the others had fled. He wrote

not only the fourth Gospel, but also three letters and the Book of Revelation. He was the only apostle that escaped martyrdom, living a long life first in prison in Patmos and then in Ephesus. His constant message was "Love one another." His learned teachings are a perfect counterbalance to the Baptist's zeal. The lives of both Saints John are examples for our lives, passion counterbalanced with reason.

We celebrate the Saints John through the conduct of the Table Lodge. This is a remembrance of our origins in Great Britain. Lodges used to meet in pubs, where in addition of the serious work of instructing Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts, the members enjoyed feasts, fellowship, singing, jokes, toasts, and wine. During my army service in Europe, I was fortunate enough to enjoy monthly visits to an English Lodge in Germany. This lodge conducted a Festive Board, another term for table lodge, in a restaurant after every monthly meeting. The fellowship and fun of this gathering greatly strengthened the bonds of brotherhood enjoyed by the members of the lodge. It is a practice that I wish was more widespread in the United States.

To conclude, I would like to quote an article that appeared several years ago in the Knight Templar magazine.

When a Table Lodge is a feast and not pie and coffee refreshments, when the table service is attractive and complete, when it is a time of cheer, mirth, and singing as well as eating, then it becomes a true Table Lodge. The "mystic tie" becomes more tangible when we experience the true feeling of brotherhood, and we can see that the old toast, "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we shall be better friends," exemplifies the true spirit of our mystic tie.



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