

The Guiding Light

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Welcome

If you have any items relating to Lodges within District 51, or anything for the good of Masonry from anywhere in the country, please let us know and we'll be glad to submit it for publication. Please feel free to chat with us on our [Facebook page: Lodge #794](#)

From The East

The Eyes Have It

I was raised in Schertz, 25 miles northeast of San Antonio. My grandfather, G.W. "Jack" Pickrell, Jr., was the first EA initiated into the newly chartered Randolph Lodge #1268 in 1933. He ultimately went on to become Worshipful Master in 1953 and DDGM in 1954, then, he served as Secretary for the Lodge until his death in 1975. "Poppy", as we affectionately called him, was a retired Master Sergeant in the USAF, became the Justice of the Peace and Judge for Schertz, and eventually, the Secretary for the City. There is a park posthumously named in his honor next to the old High School, which is now the Junior High School. He was my father figure, as well. I grew up in that old Lodge building that had a raised ceiling, and I have wonderful memories as a kid of sliding across that big old wooden floor on my knees, and attending every sausage supper and function of the Lodge, the Eastern Star, Rainbow Girls, DeMolays and Shriners.

Poppy was a man of very few words but highly regarded, well respected and loved by all. The most striking thing about him was his eyes. They were fixed, clear and purposeful, like any good leader of men. He could raise that one left eyebrow and never say a word and you would know he meant business. Or, he would playfully wink that right eye and it just immediately conveyed love and kindness. Both of those looks were extremely powerful.

Every year, Poppy would portray Santa Claus for the Lodge Christmas Party. He had the big red padded suit, the beard, the whole get-up and he was real good at it, too. I can recall one specific year though, as it is undoubtedly my fondest memory of all. I was about six or seven years old, just young enough to still believe in Santa Claus, but getting old enough to know better. I can remember it so vividly, even today. When my turn came, I crawled up in Santa's lap and looked into his eyes and realized, 'Hey, that's Poppy!' Now, this could have been a crossroad in my life that could have been devastating, finding out there was no 'real' Santa Claus, but instead, it turned out to be the first serendipitous moment of my life. Poppy looked at me with those crystal clear eyes and he just mischievously winked that right eye. I was overtaken by a feeling of love that instantly bathed over me and I realized that, 'Hey, my Poppy is really cool! He's playing Santa Claus just to make these kids happy, and they don't know it's really him, but now I do and, I ... uh, uh ... but ... I ... uh, uh ... and ...,' well, needless to say, my mind was racing. I don't remember much else that night except that I was in shock, not in a bad way, just kind of numb, trying to understand it all.

The next morning I got up and went into the kitchen like I always did. I loved sitting with Poppy in the mornings, just the two of us, while he drank his coffee, always before everybody else got up, just our time, maybe never even say one word, just hang, the boys, you know, something I continued to do even when I was grown. Anyway, after a while, Poppy waited until he knew I was looking at him, and then he smiled and winked that magical right eye of his and said, "Merry Christmas!" What a neat way to let a kid down and tell him there was no Santa Claus. I couldn't have loved anybody any more than I did him at that moment, and I know that he felt the same way, and we both

could feel it, like a lightning bolt shooting through the kitchen.

The Randolph Lodge building is still there and being used by the Craft today, but it doesn't have those hardwood floors anymore, it's carpeted, and they have a dropped ceiling now. And of course, it seems so much smaller now than it did back when I was a kid. Poppy's been gone for almost forty years. Every time I'm in Schertz I drive by Pickrell Park and see the plaque put up in his honor, and I roll down my pickup window and yell out, 'Hey Poppy!' His picture as a Past Master and DDGM proudly hangs on the north wall of Randolph Lodge and every time I walk into that Lodge Room, I can't help but smile, and I can feel him wink at me. I sure do miss him. All of the old timers remember him well. He was a community leader and helped develop that town into a crowning jewel of the San Antonio area.

But to me, I only remember how good a man he was, and I know it was because he was a Mason. It took me years to figure that one out. Yes, he loved me, and I loved him, everybody did. But that fraternal love as a Mason is what gave him his character and persona. He walked the walk and those eyes I'll never forget those eyes.

Masonry regards no man for his worldly wealth or honors, it is the internal, and not the external qualifications that recommend a man to be made a Mason. Let us all remember, as Masons, how much we can impact other people's lives, especially our family and loved ones, with just one simple look of kindness and brotherly love, and maybe, just maybe, a wink of the eye.

Everyone have a Merry Christmas.

Duke Davis, Worshipful Master

The West Gate

"A Mason's Belief"

by John R. Nocas

The Royal Arch Mason - Fall 1972

Of the millions of people in the world, most know nothing of Masonry and a few know only that it is a "secret" society. Yet our principles and our aims are highly moral, just and good, and our contributions to the peace and liberty of mankind are many and great. Why then do we still continue to "hide our light under a bushel"? Here, in my opinion, is our Motto, our Creed and our Commandments - and we should proudly proclaim them to the world!

A MASON'S MOTTO

Brotherhood for all Mankind

A MASON'S CREED

Brotherly Love - A Charge to all Masons

Equality and Justice - For All

A Helping Hand - To the Distressed

Love and Loyalty - To our Country

Strong Support - Of our Public Schools

Belief and Faith - In a Supreme Being

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF A MASON

1. Believe in God
2. Practice Brotherly Love
3. Relieve the Distressed
4. Search for Truth
5. Be an Exemplary Citizen
6. Be Pure in Life and Conduct
7. Be Temperate
8. Be Courageous
9. Be Prudent
10. Be Just “

May You and Family have a blessed holiday season!

Sal Pacheco, Senior Warden

The South Gate

December is upon us, and Christmas is right around the corner. It seems that the countdown begins earlier and earlier each year. The bombardment of advertisements and music seemed to start before Halloween had even gotten here this year. I want to use the opportunity to focus on brotherly love.

It is that time of year that we should really embody brotherly love and affection. Not just to our fellow brethren within the lodge, but also the community. I mentioned last month that our lodge sponsors a Christmas party for a group of local youth and their families from the elementary school. We also sponsor at least two local families through the school system, to make sure they have a merry Christmas.

This is the perfect time for us to show brotherly love and affection. We see it daily among ourselves, but how often do we extend it to those in need that are not within our fraternity. We will need volunteers to help serve at the Christmas Party on Friday, December 12th. This can be done literally by serving punch and cookies, or helping direct traffic around the lodge by meeting and greeting parents and children. We need people to help prepare goodie bags to hand out to the kids after they visit with Santa Claus and still others to help with clean up. A warm smile and a hearty Merry Christmas go a long way for many of these kids and families during this season.

Finally, we will need a small group of men to deliver Christmas Cheer to a couple of local families by shopping, and or carrying presents to a family or the school to be given to the parents of a child or children that might not have a visit by Santa.

These are all ways to show that brotherly love and affection that is such a vital part of who we are as men and

Masons. There is a feeling of inner peace and satisfaction that goes with this effort. In the words of Linus Van Pelt, "That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown."

Randall S. King, Junior Warden

Mouth To Ear

"...in order that I might travel in foreign countries, work and receive Masters wages..."

This saga began in the fall of 2009 when I was invited to participate in the Raising of a brother from a sister Lodge. Bro. Sergio Motter was leaving for the Middle East and his home Lodge wanted to raise him before his departure. Four Lodges were going to come together at Centurion Lodge No. 195, Monument, CO and do a courtesy MM degree. After the meeting, I was talking with Sergio and learned that he was born in Italy, had lived in Venezuela for a time and now made his home in the Pueblo, CO area. When I indicated that I would be traveling to Ecuador in March 2010, he indicated that he had a colleague, Carlos Tejada, from Quito, Ecuador who he would be joining shortly. As it turned out, Carlos Tejada contacted me to advise me that his home Lodge was Jose Mejia Lequerica No. 35 in Quito, Ecuador and that he would contact his Lodge to see if they would be meeting while I was in Quito. After a couple of Emails with Carlos, I was contacted by Victor Hugo Donoso from Quito who informed me that he would be my Masonic Ambassador in Ecuador during my visit. As the time grew closer for our trip, Victor Hugo communicated to me that he planned to meet my wife and me at the Quito airport upon our arrival and take us to our hotel. On Sunday evening, March 7, 2010, Edee and I arrived in Quito, Ecuador at a little after 10:00 PM in the evening. After going through the normal Immigration and Customs formalities, we made our way out into the Terminal where a large group of friends and families members eagerly awaited the new arrivals. Many were holding signs for different hotels, cruise lines, etc., but in the back there was a large sign that read "STEVE & EDEE". It was Victor Hugo. He greeted us warmly

like a long lost brother and gave Edee a big hug. We then proceeded to his car that we filled up with our bags and then proceeded to our hotel, some 20 minutes away. On the short trip to the La Carolina Hotel, Victor Hugo detailed the plans that he had made for us during the week in Quito. As it turned out, Victor Hugo is the Secretary of the Grand Lodge, Northern District of Ecuador. Before leaving the hotel that evening, he invited us to see the Equatorial Monument and the old city of Quito the next day and in the evening, I was invited to attend his Lodge at 7:30 PM.

That first Monday was a blur as we did a lot of sightseeing in the old colonial city of Quito and the Equatorial Monument, Mitad del Mundo. Quito is an interesting city, established over 350 years ago in a valley high in the Andes at the Equator. The city is approximately 8 Km. wide and 40 Km. long, the southern part being the old Colonial city and the northern part the newer city with the airport.

Immediately to the north of the city is the volcano Pichincha that is covered by snow the year round. Quito is at an elevation of 9,400 feet (the same elevation as our home in Woodland Park, CO). The Quito climate is one of eternal spring with daytime temperatures in the mid to upper 70 degrees F. and night time in the lower 60 degrees F.

On that first evening, I attended Jose Mejia Lequerica Lodge No. 35. Their Worshipful Master, J. Javier Villalba V. insisted that I sit in the East with him, which was an unexpected honor for me. Although all of the Stations in their Lodge are exactly the same as here in Colorado, the Places are arranged slightly differently. After the normal ritualistic opening of the Lodge (in Spanish, of course) they conducted some business and then had two brothers return proficiencies. This is where things there are very different. The two brothers returning their M.M. proficiencies did so individually, but not from memory. They were required to write an essay of about 20 to 25 minutes in length and read their essay in open Lodge. The essays were a detailed explanation of the symbology and lessons that were learned in the degree. Other differences that I observed:

- 1) The Lodges do not do ritual from memory, rather all officers read from their Clear Text books;
- 2) When the Wardens (1st and 2nd Vigilantes) stand to address the Master (Venerable Maestro) instead of saluting the V.'M.'. as we do, they stand and hold their gavel in the right hand over the left breast before speaking.

There were several other minor differences, but as I was drinking from a fire hose that evening, they have slipped my mind. After the Lodge was closed, we adjourned to refreshment – red wine and finger sandwiches. At this point, Victor Hugo invited the entire Lodge and their wives to a reception on the next Saturday afternoon at his home for Edee and me.

The rest of the week went by all too quickly and when Saturday, March 13th arrived, Edee and I had been treated to a fantastic week in Quito and the high lake country north of Quito with Victor Hugo being the most attentive host that anyone could have asked for. At this point, I must tell you that Victor Hugo does not speak English, although his wife, Carmen and son, Juan Sebastian do. Although my Spanish, from studying at the National University of Mexico in 1960 was a bit rusty, it served me well and much of it came back to me. The unmistakable communication was that of friendship and brotherly love.

On Saturday, Victor Hugo picked Edee and me up at our hotel and we drove to his home where his entire Lodge, their wives AND the Most Worshipful Grand Master, Jorge Riofrio and the Most Worshipful Deputy Grand Master and their wives were waiting for us, nearly 30 people in all. Many of the Brothers do speak English as well as many of their wives. The BBQ, drinks and comradeship were fantastic and we were made to feel like we were special visitors. It is hard to put into words the feelings that we had by being able to share our Masonic connection in a far away land.

The second week in Ecuador, we spent cruising in the Galapagos Islands on the 90 passenger Celebrity Xpetition Cruise Ship that was a dream that Edee and I have had for a long time.

The third week, we spent 4 days in the Ecuadorian Amazonia along the Napo River with the Anuangu Kicha Indians at their Napo Wildlife Center. The Napo River is a tributary of the Amazon River and the headwaters of the Napo River start in the glaciers of the Andes just east of Quito. Bro. Javier Ruales and his wife Marta joined us for coffee on the last evening of our time in Quito and invited us to come back soon. I explained to Javier that it was our custom that he and Marta would have to come visit us before we could return to Ecuador. I expect to see Victor Hugo & Carmen, Javier & Marta and perhaps some of the other Brothers here in Colorado over the next few years. My hope is that we here in Colorado can show the same hospitality, brotherly love and genuine friendship that was my distinct honor to receive while in Ecuador.

Without question, I have received a Master's Wages throughout my journey through Masonry and my life is all the richer for these experiences. Since becoming a Master Mason in 1972, I have had the privilege of visiting MacArthur Lodge No. 183 in Seoul, Korea in 1972 and St. Alban's Lodge No. 4 in London, U.K. in 1978 as well as many Lodges in the United States. I encourage every Brother to carry your Light in Masonry to whatever corner of the world that you may be traveling in.

Note: The year after this article was published in the Al Kaly Dust, our Brother, Javier Ruales laid down his earthly working tools and left us for that Great Lodge above.

Steve Gresley, PM
Ute Pass No. 188
Woodland Park, CO

Labors of the Craft

We raised one Master Mason last month, Brother Walter Pletz. Congratulations! A special thanks to Right Worshipful Mike Gower, Past Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Texas for delivering the lecture and presenting the apron to Brother Pletz, and to the present Kendall Lodge Worshipful Master, and our current District 51 Instructor, Dave Bruton for assisting in the degree, as well. We have one Fellowcraft turning in his proficiency at our stated meeting this month on December 8th, so it looks like we'll have another brother raised for Christmas. In addition, we have one Entered Apprentice preparing for his proficiency, as well.

Our Annual Christmas Party is scheduled for Friday, December 12th at 6:00 PM. As you know, the 'real' Santa Claus will be there again, along with Mrs. Claus and some elves. This is for Kiddos (young and old)! Light refreshments will be served.

Kerrville Lodge will receive the "Traveling Masters" this month on Tuesday, December 2nd. Supper at 6:30 PM followed by stated meeting at 7:30 PM.

Words of Wisdom

"I am so clever that sometimes I don't understand a single word of what I'm saying."

- Oscar Wilde -

"Reading is no substitute for action."

- Colleen Wainright -

"Adapt or perish, now as ever, is nature's inexorable imperative."

- H.G. Wells -

"There can be no happiness if the things we believe in are different from the things we do."

- Freya Madeline Stark -

Tongue in Cheek

"Chewin' Tobacco"

by Duke Davis

I took this gal out, and friends, I mean to say,
she wasn't exactly well versed in the cowboy way.
Cause she'd always seen me with this big ol' plug a'chaw,
A knot this size of a golf ball, stuck right there in my jaw.

I told her, 'Yep, it's somethin' a lot a'cowboys do,
Instead of smokin', well, it's a little more convenient to chew'.
So, she figgers to fit in and to be no slouch,
She'd go out and buy her some Beechnut Tobacco in a pouch.

Now, she loaded up purtty heavy, and she gave this wispy little grin,
Then, she swallered real hard, and her eyes began to spin!
She said, 'I'm feelin' a little faint, I must be gettin' the flu!'
I said, 'No darlin', it's from all that tobacco that your tryin' to chew!'

She said, 'No... no... I'm gettin' a little dizzy, and man, is it gettin' hot?'

I said, 'Yep, it's from all that durned chewin' tobacco that you got!'
She said, 'Nooo... but I am feelin' queasy, and I think I'm gonna get sick,'
I told her, 'I know, I reckon you better find you a bathroom purtty quick!'

Well, she's gone for about an hour, then she finally returned,
But she was blue, all around her edges, and a valuable lesson she'd learned.
She bemoans the fact that we cowboys are such a hearty lot,
But, as far as the art of chewin' tobacco, well, she'd just rather not.

I told her, 'Well, I appreciate the fact you hold us waddies in such high esteem,
But, I figger on one point, well, it's best I come clean.
You see, it's really nice you think we cowboys are all quite so dandy,
But I reckon I shoulda told you, hon I been chewin' licorice candy!'

Recipe of the Month

“Chocolate Almond Mocha Cake”

By DeDe Kellum

Duncan Hines Chocolate or Mocha Cake Mix

Prepare according to package instructions and bake in two 9" cake pans. Cool.

ALMOND CREAM FILLING

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon milk
¼ cup shortening
2 tablespoons butter, softened
1 teaspoon almond extract (I use a little more, but do it to taste)
1/8 teaspoon salt
2 cups sifted powdered sugar

Combine flour and milk in a small saucepan; cook over low heat, stirring constantly with a wire whisk, until mixture is thick enough to hold its shape and resembles a soft frosting (Do not boil). Remove from heat; let cool completely.

Beat shortening and butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until soft and creamy; add flour mixture, almond extract, and salt, beating well. Gradually, add powdered sugar, beating at high speed 4 to 5 minutes, or until fluffy. Yields 1 ½ cups.

Use one cup of mixture as filling between layers. Place ½ cup of filling in a small plastic bag. Snip off corner and pipe on top of cake as decoration after frosting with mocha frosting. You can be creative with this.

From the Fredericksburg Lodge #794 “Recipes, Remedies and Ramblings” - 2012