

## From The East

Let's dispel a few myths right away. A job that's done haphazardly IS NOT a job well done, ignorance IS NOT bliss, and what you don't know CAN hurt you. All these seem rather obvious but how many times are these idioms, and many more like them, taken to heart in our everyday life, and more especially, in Freemasonry?

Masons are held to higher moral standards than those outside the Craft. Your Lodge established that precept from the first time three members of an Investigative Committee were assigned to interview you and report their findings. As you progressed through the degrees, continually gaining light, that principle of 'uprightness of conduct' was further implanted in your heart, all the while chipping away at those nagging little traits of the profane world and replacing them with Masonic principles that symbolically gave you the tools in which to build your own personal Masonic edifice. It's a natural growth process in Freemasonry and one that we occasionally don't even realize is occurring.

How many times have you heard it, 'there's something special about that man but I can't put my finger on it though?' And the reply from others is often, 'oh, well, he's a Mason,' which seems to satisfy their curiosity, even if they're not a Mason, or know little of the Craft. We sometimes get a little overprotective about Freemasonry so that we may guard our gates to prevent unworthy men from entering our midst but we must remember that the outside world typically has a very favorable impression of Freemasonry, in general. It's too obvious. We maintain a high profile in the community with benevolent works, charitable activities and good men who are members circulating throughout everyday life spreading brotherly love with their actions. We openly have our symbol of the square and compasses displayed on our buildings, we wear Masonic jewelry so others might see who we are, and to remind ourselves of our commitments and obligation, and we are constantly producing events and activities in our neighborhoods to benefit others. Freemasonry is right out in the open and as Brother Benjamin Franklin once stated, 'the only secret in Freemasonry is that there is no secret.'

A Masonic edifice is a possession of every Master Mason. How big and strong their personal edifice is depends on just how much labor they put into that edifice. The mortar is their heart and dedication while their building blocks are their actions and deeds. A newly initiated EA is placed in the northeast corner of the Lodge room, there to receive those first instructions upon which to rear his future moral and Masonic edifice but the building of that edifice should never cease as long as that man walks the face of the earth. We all should continue to strive to build our edifice to such height and strength that we come closer to our Maker. That's what all the grand cathedrals built in medieval times by our ancestral operative mason brethren were attempting, to come closer to the Supreme Being by building churches that rose to spectacular heights. Our mission, as speculative, or Freemasons should be no different.

Operative masons of old required Entered Apprentices to serve under a Master Mason for seven years before they could advance to a Fellowcraft and Fellowcrafts would serve another seven years before they could advance to a Master Mason. Fortunately, in speculative masonry, or Freemasonry, the length of that process has been shortened extensively to a period by which a Mason could be declared proficient before advancing to another degree. It behooves us to always remember that we should not only seek knowledge and light from Masons that we respect and admire, but we should also never forget that there are those Entered Apprentices, Fellowcrafts and newly raised Master Masons that might be looking to any of us for good and wholesome instruction, as well. That's where the trowel comes into play, my brothers. If we spread the cement of brotherly love to ALL, then our personal edifice and the overall condition of the Craft will be strong.

We all know Masons who carry their Masonic edifice structure in such harmony with the profane world that they do stand apart from others. Our credo of 'we take good men and make them better' seems an understatement but that core value is true and one that is easily recognizable to all.

Though the number of members of Freemasons might have diminished in these modern times, it doesn't mean that the work we indulge ourselves in is of less value. Good men always need to lead good men and that is our legacy, one that we must protect, nurture and continue to strengthen, regardless of how many members there may be. The Craft will always flourish if we apply the basic principle of building one's own personal everlasting moral and Masonic edifice that seeks to be closer to divinity.

**Duke Davis, Worshipful Master**

## The West Gate

It is said that Masonry make a good man better. Friends and family have asked me, how? Is it like a religion? What I read recently explains it pretty good:

“The Symbolism of the Degree

The primary symbolism of the Degree is that of death and transfiguration. It is not that Masonry claims to be a path to salvation – that is the role of religion, not a Fraternity. Rather we assert that there is a life to come and the one should make preparations for it. We also assert that each of us can and must make a difference in the world during this life, and that the example we set and the results of our interactions with others are of critical importance.

The Meaning of the Obligation

The obligation of a Master Mason is of central importance. We say in the ritual, and we mean it when we say it, that it is the Obligation which makes a Mason.

The Obligation is a promise, made to God in the presents of the Lodge, to act in certain ways. While the exact words of the Obligation are esoteric [not to be written down] because the ability to quote the language is one way to prove you are a Master Mason, there is nothing secret about the ideas and values involved. In simple language, then, what have you promised to do and not to do?

You have promised not to cheat, in any way, either a Brother or a Lodge. That's simply a matter of building trust.

You have promised to help a Master Mason or his family when they are in need, as much as you can without harming yourself or your family, if his needs are legitimate.

You have promised to go on an errand for him, if he needs it, just as he has promised to do the same for you.

You have promised that, if you know of any sort of danger which is approaching him or those he loves, you will warn him. As a part of that, if you see him doing or about to do something which is wrong or foolish or hurtful, you will quietly tell him about it and give him the best advice you can.

You have promised you won't say bad things about him or “run him down.” You'll protect his reputation just as you would your own.

You have promised to respect the integrity of his family and treat his wife or widow or mother or daughter with courtesy and with appropriateness, just as you would your own mother or sister.

You have promised to keep in confidence the things he tells you in confidence.

You have promised not to strike at him unless you are actually defending yourself or your family.

You have promised to follow the rules of the Masonic jurisdiction where you happen to be.

You have promised that you won't hold Masonic conversation with a person who is not recognized as a Mason in good standing.

You have promised that if you receive a summons from your Lodge or the Grand Master to attend a meeting, you will attend.

You have promised that, if you see a Brother in danger, you will try to rescue him if there is at least as good a chance of saving his life as of being killed yourself.

You have promised that you will not be involved in making a Mason of the person is not a man, nor of at least the minimum age, nor if the person is insane or senile, or simply too unthinking to understand Masonry and live as a Brother should.

It may seem to you that you have promised a lot, and you have. But they are things that make Brotherhood possible, not to mention civilization itself. For all practical purposes, the promises are simply applications of the Golden Rule. You have promised to treat a Brother as you would want to be treated yourself. There is nothing secret about that."

I thought that sharing would be beneficial as a reminder to some, and something new to others, but in any case it will only yield results if applied to daily life. May we continue ahead with the assurance that if we do indeed apply the lessons learned we will surely please God, benefit ourselves, and win the respect of others.

**Sal Pacheco, Senior Warden**

## The South Gate

Well brethren, it seems the old groundhog may have been right this year. Winter has seemed to hang on just a little longer. March is here, and it remains to be seen if it is a lion or a lamb. The Fredericksburg Lodge #794 Masonic Education Banquet is fast approaching. Please contact Brother Senior Warden Sal Pacheco for tickets. Hope to see you there in support of this worthy endeavor.

The charge in the Entered Apprentice Degree continues to have my attention as of late. In it we are asked to be a quiet and peaceable citizen, true to your government and just to your country. These days, that can be a challenge in this politically charged world. I think it is important that no matter our political leanings, we remember that we are all part of the same country, and that we stand united as such. We are each entitled to our own opinions, but we must put our country first. We must in our words, deeds and actions show support of our country. The charge continues with the demand that we carry ourselves appropriately to avoid censure and reproach in our outward demeanor. To put it simply, we should not just talk the talk, but walk the walk in our daily lives.

It goes on to remind the young entered apprentice to be faithful in attendance at regular stated meetings, but this should not interfere with his usual vocation. I know at times, it is a challenge to be present at all functions. As a teacher and coach, I find some parts of the year, extremely difficult to commit as much time toward Masonry as I would like. I appreciate the fact that it is understood in Masonry that our usual vocation should have priority. The young Mason will soon find his niche in the craft and devote his time to it. I think we all find that area where we can best serve our lodge, brethren, and community.

**Randall King, Junior Warden**

## Mouth To Ear

“From Mouth to Ear” and “Taking the Next Step”, phrases that should be meaningful for each of us in Masonry. “From Mouth to Ear” was special to me during my time in Fredericksburg Lodge 794 and became even more significant after moving to San Antonio in April 2013. In no way would I ever wish to diminish my time in Fredericksburg Lodge 794. It was a wonderful experience and I will always be grateful for my colleagues there from whom I learned so much about Masonry and enjoyed so much fellowship.

Shortly after moving to San Antonio I began attending weekly Masonic study sessions at Army Lodge across from Ft. Sam Houston. There, Masons from Lodges throughout San Antonio and adjacent communities gather to attend the two-hour sessions such that there is a collegiality of exchange of ideas and Masonic knowledge from many Lodges and many personalities. The sessions are divided into classes, generally by classification of certificate study, A, B & C, plus a unique class that concentrates on lectures for each degree and every class has the benefit of marvelous teachers. Every Mason there from first-time participants to those who have attended for years is always made to feel welcome. Additional to the study sessions is an exchange of information about important events at other area lodges including degree conferrals, special study sessions, fundraisers, celebration events, and information on the passing of brethren who have laid down their working tools of life. Every week in San Antonio there are degree conferrals at one or more Lodges and all Army Lodge study session attendees are encouraged to attend. This additional study does not replace the dedicated weekly Masonic study of questions and answers, certificate degree study and practices for degree conferrals in area Blue Lodges but mainly serves to amplify them.

I submit that another phrase with special meaning to Masons is, “Taking the Next Step”. Our degree initiations teach us the various physical steps necessary to approach the Holy Alter of Free Masonry. Important as those ritual steps are, consider the metaphorical steps that can lead to more knowledge in Masonry. The point is this; many brethren choose to concentrate their practice of the craft in Blue Lodge only and conclude their degree trajectory with the Master Mason degree. I find absolutely no fault in that and commend those brethren who support and participate in their lodges. I can say, however, that for those who choose to practice Masonry beyond the Master Mason’s degree in either or both of the York Rite and/or Scottish Rite there is an incredible wealth of knowledge out there of which to take advantage and with that, Masonic education increases and each week.

In Fredericksburg I enjoyed a very fulfilling experience working in Blue Lodge degree conferrals yet never chose to venture beyond the Master Mason degree. Since relocating in San Antonio I have enjoyed an enriched Masonic experience from my involvement with York Rite Chapter and Council meetings and Knights Templar conclaves. Here I was immediately thrust into work in degree teams in Chapter and Council and Knight’s Templar Commandry conclaves albeit I was reluctant at first. How, at my age I thought, could I learn an entirely new set of degree ritual and floor work after learning the Blue Lodge material? In these two years I’ve learned so much more of the significance of the craft of Masonry beyond what I thought I knew. Consequently I though I knew a great deal about the Holy Bible, having been brought up in a Christian home and attending church and Sunday School from childhood to present. Biblical scripture and the connection to the craft of Masonry continues to be ameliorated by the weekly sessions and camaraderie at Army Lodge and from having taken “The next step” in York Rite.

**Lance Tatum**

**C.W. Anderson Lodge No.1413**

**Bluebonnet 470 R.A.M and 409 R. & S.M.**

**Brownwood Commandery No. 22**

## Labors of the Craft

Thursday, February 26th we had our Community Builder Award presented to Tami King. She is a retired Lieutenant Commander USN, with 19 years of service and has assisted in establishing veteran benefit programs locally and nationally. She also served with the Red Cross in disaster relief programs throughout the world including the New York City WTC disaster in 2001. This is an outstanding woman in Fredericksburg who now serves the community working as Veteran Service Officer to assist veterans in attaining benefits, among other things. A wonderful turnout of family, friends and Masons enjoyed a great meal and an evening for a very special person. Congratulations Tami!

The Educational Banquet, our premier event of the year, is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18th at the Fredericksburg Inn and Suites in the Barons Creek Conference Center. We will be presenting our scholarships to the deserving youth of Fredericksburg and Harper High Schools as well as the Mirabeau Lamar Award to an outstanding educator from each school. A catered dinner from CalBob's Smoke Shack and live music will all contribute to an outstanding evening. Tickets are \$20 and are available by contacting Brother Senior Warden Sal Pacheco through our FaceBook page.

Our final Traveling Masters night of the year is scheduled for Monday, March 2nd to visit Medina Lodge. Supper is at 6:30 PM followed by stated meeting at 7:30 PM. All Worshipful Masters and Wardens of District 51 are encouraged to attend and all Masons from any Lodge are welcomed also.

The Breakfast Boys Social Club will convene this month on Tuesday, March 17th at City Café beginning at 8:00 AM. All Masons are welcome for an hour full of food, laughs and an occasional 'windy' story.

The Lunch Bunch will meet on Monday, March 23rd at Gatti's Pizza at 11:30 AM. Masons, wives and friends are all invited.

Join us for the Master Wardens Secretary Meeting at Rising Star Lodge in Center Point on Wednesday, March 25th. All Masons, especially new Masons, and wives are invited. Dinner will be served at 6:30 PM followed by the meeting at 7:00 PM.

We currently have one EA preparing for his proficiency in the first section.

## Words of Wisdom

“You create opportunities by asking for them.”

- Patty Hansen -

“Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. The fearful are caught as often as the bold.”

- Helen Keller -

“Read something no one else is reading, think something no one else is thinking, and do something no one else is doing.”

- Anonymous -

“Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.”

- Darrell Royal -

“Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you respond to it.”

- Lou Holtz -

## Tongue in Cheek

A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office.

"Is it true," she wanted to know, "that the medication you prescribed has to be taken for the rest of my life?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her.

There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied, "I'm wondering, then, just how serious is my condition because this prescription is marked ... 'NO REFILLS' ..."

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An older gentleman was on the operating table awaiting surgery and he insisted that his son, a renowned surgeon, perform the operation. As he was about to get the anesthesia, he asked to speak to his son.

"Yes, Dad, what is it?"

"Don't be nervous, son, do your best, and just remember if it doesn't go well, if something were to happen to me, your mother is going to come and live with you and your wife ..."

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A lady dies and goes to Heaven. There, at the Pearly Gates sits Saint Peter.

"Am I dead?" she asks.

"Yes," Saint Peter replies.

"Is this Heaven?" she asks again.

"Yes," Saint Peter replies.

"Thank God, I was so nervous about getting to Heaven because of the mean way I treated my husband down on earth when I was alive."

"No problem," quips Saint Peter, "all is forgiven. However, you have to spell one word before I can let you in."

"Sure, what is it?" inquires the lady.

Saint Peter says, "Spell the word 'love'."

"Oh, okay, let's see," she says, "L-O-V-E."

"Congratulations, you're in!" says Saint Peter. "Now, if you could do me one favor and sit here and watch the Pearly Gate, I haven't had a break in a long while and I have to go to the bathroom. If anyone comes up, just ask them to spell a word, and if they spell it correctly, let them in."

Meanwhile, back on earth, the lady's husband is so distraught over his wife's death that he dies of a broken heart, and goes to Heaven. He sees his wife sitting at the Pearly Gates.

“Am I dead?” he asks.

“Yes,” she replies.

“Is this Heaven?” he asks again.

“Yes” his wife replies, “I’m watching the Pearly Gates while Saint Peter is on a break and he said no one gets in until they spell a word.”

“Fine with me,” retorts her husband, “what’s the word?”

His wife says, “Spell ‘Czechoslovakia’.”

## Recipe of the Month

### Momma's Floating Peach Cake

by Rebecca Clark

1/4 cup sugar

1 cup flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 cup milk

1 pint frozen sweet peaches

2 tablespoons butter

1/2 cup sugar, separate

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Cooking spray

Preheat oven to 375 degrees

Put ¼ cup sugar, flour, baking powder and milk into buttered deep dish and mix together.

Pour peaches on top of batter and dot with butter.

Mix remaining sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle on top of peaches. Bake at 375 degrees for 45 minutes.

Batter will rise to the top and bake crusty.

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

## Lodge Officers

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