

Secretary's Notes: *Please submit your dues ASAP!*

The office computer has been down and I apologize for not having you dues notices out. I plan to have them in mail sometime this week.

Our 150th Year Nebraska Lodge "Pins" have arrived. They will be disseminated to our brethren along with the New quarterly Trestleboard. Each member of Nebraska Lodge will receive a pin free of charge; however we will accept contributions to offset the costs of the pins and for special events during our 150th year celebration.

Annual Christmas Party- Officers appreciation Dinner was held at Gaetas Restaurant & Lounge on December 15th at 6:00pm. This annual event can be traced back to December 26th, 1899 when Worshipful Master William S. Heller held the first recognition dinner for Past Masters.

Ever since the lodge year was changed in 1933 we have had two dinners on an annual basis, one for officers: Officer Appreciation Dinner held in December, and one for the Past Masters or Past Masters' Dinner. This dinner usually includes the annual roasting of the most recent Past Master and is held in late spring or early summer.

In attendance were the following Past Masters and their wives: Howard Speck, Keith Winheim, Joseph Restivo, John Holzhey, Lyle Ward, Pepper Aasgaard, Jack Duffield and Ray Blakeman. Officers were Mike Beardmore, Aric Aasgaard, Rick Logsdon.. Invited guests and honorees were Keith Winheim and his wife Gretchen, his daughter Christy Miller, widow of the late Gary Miller, Past Master 1983 and Carol Eckwall, widow of the late Bob Eckwall, Past Master 1992.

Pepper Aasgaard will be holding a workshop for the Grand Lodge February 6th 2003:

"Building Effective Websites"

We hope more lodges get involved in sharing information over the internet.

Because of the high cost of printing and postage the lodge elected to eliminate monthly Pioneers in favor of a Quarterly Pioneer. All Members will be receiving the Pioneer quarterly with monthly updates. The internet **Pioneer** is updated at least four times a month with current events, pictures, graphics and a rich history of our lodge.

www.WeHelpChildren.org (or) www.FirstLodge.com

Note: Please remember to send us your email address if you have one. We will send you your Pioneer monthly with pictures games and more. Would you like a FREE "FirstLodge email address? We would be more than happy to set you up with one.

There is absolutely no advertising allowed on this service.

Just send a blank email to: Setup@FirstLodge.com

You will receive an auto responder with a form to fill in. Just follow directions!

Schedule: 1st Monday 6:30 pm PotLuck-7:30pm Business Meeting

2nd Monday 7:00 pm EA Degree or Practice (All Lectures)

3rd Monday 7:00 pm FC Degree or Practice 4th Monday 7:00 pm MM Degree or Practice

We pray that you and your families have a Joyous

Holiday Season! . . . Pepper Aasgaard, Master

The PIONEER Season Greetings 2002

We invite you to visit our Website and explore the Lodge's rich history.

Please sign up for our online Trestleboard . . . or "**ePioneer**".

You can do this by going to www.FirstLodge.com and at the top of the page, click on "Please submit your eMail address and send us your email address". It's that simple.

For those who do not have internet access we will provide Quarterly Trestleboards with much more detail as to what is happening in your lodge.

Please come and join us . . . need a word, no problem I did too a few years ago... and I am glad I became more involved in the spirit of Masonry in Nebraska!

We have an extra long Pioneer this time; we thought you might want to know how the lodge was doing, and not just times of practice etc. . . We went to work this summer and fall and have good news to report!

Please Welcome Our Newest Members! Br. Kirk Collins, Br. Brent Karstens, Br. Chris, Donnelly, Br. Mark Parmenter. In all Fourteen New Members this year!!!

December 2nd Business Meeting: We are very pleased to welcome long time friend of Nebraska #1 Thomas Brazer as an affiliated new member of our lodge. W.: B.: Brazer is the current Master of Covert and has been very supportive of our lodge during our plight to build our membership roles. Covert Lodge along with Florence Lodge has been the difference in our year being as successful as it was. Thank you.

It was by unanimous vote that we update our bylaws, as such Pepper Aasgaard directed John Holzhey to chair a committee and have such needed changes set forth by the March business meeting.

November 4th Business Meeting: Twenty members and two visiting brethren were in attendance. It was the first time in many years that the majority of members in attendance were younger than 35 years of age.

M.:W.: Phillip A. Lorenzen sat in the West for W.:B.: Cary Manson. Three of our newest members signed the bylaws of our lodge and attended their first business meeting. Brother Dave MacDonald came through with another petition which was read in lodge. It was also reported that W.:M.: Pepper Aasgaard, W.:B.: Cary Mason and Mike Beardmore both have petitions pending for next month.

W.:B.: John Holzhey reported (*lied*) that W.:M.: Pepper Aasgaard pushed him in the lake again during a Bass fishing trip the prior week and warned other brethren not to catch more fish than the Master or they may suffer the same. W.:M.: Pepper Aasgaard was speechless.

W.:B.: Jack Duffied announced that he would not seek another year as secretary. We are grateful for all the work Jack did over the years to help preserved the lodge.

Master's message: "Thank you W:B: Duffield for all the hard work and the commitment you gave to our lodge for the past 10 years we are all indebted to you. Jack had a 100% record regarding timeliness of paperwork and monthly reports.

Election results: Brethren by your ballot you have re-elected W:M: Pepper Aasgaard to serve the ensuing year once again as Master. W:B: John B. Holzhey was elected Senior Warden, Brother Mike Beardmore was elected Junior Warden and W:B: Cary Mason was elected Treasurer and Secretary. The Worshipful Master announced that the installation would be on Monday January 6th 2003 at 7:00 pm. We are going slower to ensure a strong foundation is built with younger members. *(Pepper Aasgaard, John Holzhey, Cary Manson, Jack Duffield and Ray Blakeman continue to hold positions until our younger members have a chance to learn and develop in Masonry).*

If you were not there, you missed a great Chili Feed!

Several types of Chili were served after our November Business Meeting.

October Business meeting: the craft voted to donate **\$200.00** to the Omaha Home for Boys, **\$200.00** to the Eastern Star Home for Children and **\$100.00** to Masters and Wardens Club of Greater Omaha for the annual Christmas Cheer program.

Our field trip to the Masonic Eastern Star Home for Children, in Fremont, NE. was enjoyable. Ben Harvey (the Director) explained to the group how the children's home was started and how the homes are funded. 100% Masonic Funding!

The tour included W:M: Pepper Aasgaard; Junior Warden Bill Schwiesow and his wife Margerie; Jack Duffield Secretary and his wife Pat; and Lyle F. Ward.

Our tour included a stop at one of the homes. We were warmly greeted by the young residents, who escorted us around to each room of the house. These rooms included the kitchen facility, the living room with fireplace, the basement which is a craft room and laundry room and the resident's apartments and each of their bedrooms.

The girls maintain the house very well, and it was very clean and organized. Each girl shares a part of the household chores and they rotate responsibility for maintaining different duties on a weekly basis. This includes cooking . . . which we heard about but unfortunately for us we arrived a 2:00 p.m. Next time we should plan to be there earlier or a "bite" later . . . we may get lucky!

The girls proudly displayed their bedrooms and shared some personal experiences. Each girl got a Grand-Motherly hug from Pat "Grand Ma" Duffield. Who would have guessed? This fine organization was selected to be our charitable fund drive this year. Our charitable fund drive goal will kick off the fall and winter.

Pepper volunteered to help Ben with the Children's Website. We complement Brother Ben Harvey on his fine work with these aspiring teenagers.

Four-Candidates and More! (September)

We are delighted to announce new features to our website. First, we have a webpage dedicated to Departed Brethren, second we have a 150 Year History page and last we have a fun page: Masonic CrossWords. We hope you enjoy these new features.

We have two candidates in September and it appears that we have two new petitions for membership for Octobers. September will be a very busy month for the Lodge. We have three candidates and one petition to be read. Mike Beardmore conferred an entered apprentice degree on Chris Martin in August, Good Job Mike!

Congratulations to Brother Ron Suhr and wife on their new arrival . . . a baby Girl! Both Mother and Daughter are doing well according to the proud father.

Please welcome our newest affiliated member: Brother Kevin S. Meyer of **Mt Moriah #28 F&AM** in Bordentown NJ. Brother Meyer now has the distinction of being the first affiliate member to find us, then apply for affiliation online and pay his initial membership dues totally on the internet. **Congratulations Brother Kevin!**

Lawrence H. Clay was present to receive his 60 year pin. Brother Clay was initiated 9/8/1942 passed 10/20/1942 and Raised 10/27/1942, two days later he enlisted in the armed services!

Please welcome our newest members: **Paul Tiede** raised in May 29, 2002 **Doug Brown**, raised in April 22, 2002. We have four candidates in the wings, most likely we will have degree work resuming the first week in September.

The Widows and Orphans Dinner held on July 13th was very successful. Thanks mostly to the extra help we received from Dave and (his most helpful loving wife) Mary MacDonald. . . if we were able to bring joy to one widow: we were successful in fulfillment of one of our basic obligations.

Each widow received red roses and the eldest widow received a dozen. Dinner was served and it was delicious. Eight different types of Chinese specialties were served. Past Master's widows Christy Miller and Carol Eckwall took a ride on the new elevator. All who attended were very pleased with the recognition we gave them and appreciated the dinner in their honor. They have expressed overwhelming support for the direction our lodge is taking and are very thankful we are there for them.

Pepper Aasgaard had several heart warming conversations with many widows during the past few days. He expressed that we continue having dinners and activities for our widows and stated that either in the Spring or as early as this Fall we would be again contacting the widows for a future planned activity.

The Worshipful Master Pepper Aasgaard launched a committee for our 150 year celebration which is charged with the coordination of events for the year(s) November 2004, 2005 and concluding on September 23rd, 2007. For this event we will begin as our ancestors did in the planning stage, on the days leading to and through the chartered first year. It should be a fun time. Hopefully we can coordinate with the **Illinois Grand Lodge** so that they can re-enact the event.

Past Master's Dinner: The Past Masters Dinner is a time honored event or ritual that the lodge has on an annual basis. This year we roasted "Sweet Soul" Schwiesow our most recent Past Master.

During this dinner Ron Suhr and Pepper Aasgaard reviewed the website progress with the Past Masters and received several nice complements for the progress made.

Bill Schwiesow received his past Master's apron and a couple of gifts along with a surprise visit from Past Grand Chaplin of Iowa Ken Robinson. Ken and his wife were hidden in the archives until an appropriate moment. Ken Robinson was the installing officer when Bill became Master.

All it takes is a few young executives who believe in God, Our country, and Our Flag. Men who take care of their families, friends and neighbors. . When you have this type of internal fortitude strength and wisdom all obstacles become challenges that easy give away. They who have joined our organization are now making things happen. . .