

SANDOVAL LODGE No. 76 AF & AM

TRESTLEBOARD



MAY
A:L:.
6025

2025 ELECTED LODGE OFFICERS

MASTER

BURX NORROD

CALL OR TEXT: (208) 571-9705
BURXNORROD@GMAIL.COM

SENIOR WARDEN

JOHN KEEL

CALL OR TEXT: (505) 358-6224
K_JOHN87@YAHOO.COM

JUNIOR WARDEN

BILL WHELCHER

CALL OR TEXT: (505) 980-5545

SECRETARY

EUGENE MORSE, PM

CALL OR TEXT: (505) 527-7998

TREASURER

TIM DONOVAN, RWB

TIM@TAXHELPRR.COM



SANDOVAL LODGE No. 76

1420 BARBARA LOOP SE
RIO RANCHO, NM 87124

MEETS ON THE 2ND & 4TH
MONDAY OF EACH MONTH
LODGE OPENS AT 7:00 PM
FESTIVEBOARD AT 6:00PM
(\$10 CASH OR \$11 CARD)

VISITORS: To RSVP EMAIL
BURXNORROD@GMAIL.COM

A NIGHT OF LIGHT, LEARNING, AND CULTURE ***AT SANDOVAL LODGE***

SANDOVAL LODGE CONTINUES TO SHINE AS A BEACON OF MASONIC LIGHT, WITH A STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO MASONIC EDUCATION AND RITUAL EXCELLENCE.

AT OUR SECOND STATED COMMUNICATION IN APRIL, WE WERE HONORED TO HEAR A COMPELLING PRESENTATION BY OUR LODGE TYLER, BRO. WALEED ASHOO, ON FREEMASONRY IN THE MIDDLE EAST. BRO. ASHOO OFFERED NOT ONLY HISTORICAL CONTEXT BUT ALSO PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON HIS FAMILY'S MASONIC HERITAGE IN IRAQ—A RARE AND MEANINGFUL PERSPECTIVE THAT DEEPLY RESONATED WITH ALL IN ATTENDANCE.

BEFORE THE PRESENTATION, BRETHREN AND GUESTS ENJOYED A SPREAD OF AUTHENTIC IRAQI CUISINE PREPARED BY BRO. ASHOO HIMSELF, TURNING THE EVENING INTO BOTH A CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE. IT WAS A NIGHT TO REMEMBER—ONE THAT EXEMPLIFIED THE SPIRIT OF BROTHERHOOD, KNOWLEDGE, AND HOSPITALITY THAT DEFINES SANDOVAL LODGE.



BRO. WALEED PRESENTING,
PRECEDED BY DELICIOUS IRAQI
CUISINE HE PREPARED



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FROM THE EAST - W.M. BURX NORROD

BRETHREN,

AS WE CONTINUE OUR JOURNEY THROUGH THE YEAR, SANDOVAL LODGE REMAINS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO THE TWO PILLARS THAT DEFINE US: MASONIC EDUCATION AND RITUAL EXCELLENCE. THESE AREN'T JUST ASPIRATIONS—THEY'RE THE LIVING FOCUS OF OUR EFFORTS, AND I'M PROUD OF HOW FAR WE'VE COME ALREADY THIS YEAR.

WE'VE BEEN FORTUNATE TO HOST SOME TRULY OUTSTANDING PRESENTERS—BOTH FROM WITHIN AND BEYOND OUR LODGE WALLS. OUR LODGE WAS HONORED TO WELCOME WB JAIME PAUL LAMB, WHO GAVE AN INSPIRING PRESENTATION ON THE SEVEN LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES DURING OUR FIRST STATED COMMUNICATION IN APRIL. THAT WAS FOLLOWED BY A MOVING AND PERSONAL PRESENTATION BY OUR OWN BROTHER WALEED ASHOO ON

FREEMASONRY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, HIGHLIGHTING HIS FAMILY'S MASONIC LEGACY IN IRAQ. THAT EVENING WAS MADE ALL THE MORE MEMORABLE BY THE IRAQI CUISINE HE PREPARED FOR US—A BEAUTIFUL REMINDER THAT FREEMASONRY, IN ALL OF ITS FORMS, IS BOTH UNIVERSAL AND PERSONAL.

WHILE I'M HAPPY TO CONTINUE BRINGING IN SCHOLARLY MASONIC SPEAKERS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY—AND THE WORLD—I WANT TO USE THESE INFLUENCES NOT JUST AS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION, BUT AS A CALL TO ACTION FOR EACH OF YOU. MY HOPE IS THAT SEEING SUCH PRESENTATIONS WILL INSPIRE YOU TO DIG DEEPER, TO READ MORE, TO REFLECT ON WHAT PARTS OF FREEMASONRY TRULY RESONATE WITH YOU—AND TO SHARE YOUR INSIGHTS IN THE FORM OF A PRESENTATION TO THE LODGE. THE MOST MEANINGFUL LIGHT WE CAN SHARE OFTEN COMES FROM WITHIN.

THIS JUNE, AT OUR FIRST STATED COMMUNICATION, I'LL BE PRESENTING ON **ALCHEMY IN FREEMASONRY**, DELVING INTO SOME OF THE MORE ESOTERIC ELEMENTS OF THE CRAFT. WHILE I'VE GIVEN PAST PRESENTATIONS ON PRACTICAL TOPICS LIKE THE CHARGES, ANCIENT LANDMARKS, AND GRAND LODGE BY-LAWS, THE REMAINDER OF MY PRESENTATIONS THIS YEAR WILL LEAN MORE TOWARD THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND SYMBOLIC DIMENSIONS OF FREEMASONRY—SUBJECTS THAT CAN'T SIMPLY BE ABSORBED BY READING A HANDBOOK. THEY MUST BE EXPERIENCED AND EXPLORED.

THAT SAID, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO PRESENT ON? WITH MORE THAN HALF THE YEAR STILL AHEAD OF US, I'D LOVE TO SCHEDULE YOU IN. THERE'S NO BETTER WAY TO LEARN THE CRAFT THAN TO TEACH IT. IF YOU'RE NOT SURE WHERE TO START, I'D BE HAPPY TO HELP YOU FIND A TOPIC THAT FITS YOUR INTEREST.

AS YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED, I'VE BEEN SENDING OUT REGULAR EMAILS TO KEEP EVERYONE UPDATED—NOT ONLY ABOUT OUR LODGE'S DIRECTION, BUT ALSO ABOUT EVENTS HAPPENING ACROSS THE JURISDICTION. WE'VE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WITNESS SOME UNIQUE MASONIC EXPERIENCES RECENTLY, INCLUDING THE UNFORGETTABLE ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREE AT THE QUARAI RUINS, AS WELL AS FRATERNAL VISITS TO OTHER LODGES LIKE BETHLEHEM LODGE No. 56. THESE EXPERIENCES ARE THE TRUE TREASURES OF FREEMASONRY—NOT BECAUSE OF ANY TOKEN OR COIN COLLECTED, BUT BECAUSE OF THE LIGHT, FELLOWSHIP, AND INSIGHT GAINED.

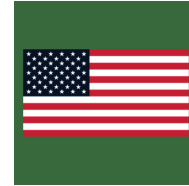
LASTLY, I'D LIKE TO THANK ALL OF YOU FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT AND DEDICATION. OUR MEETINGS CONTINUE TO RUN SMOOTHLY AND WITH PURPOSE, THANKS IN PART TO THE MONTHLY OFFICER ZOOM MEETINGS, WHERE MUCH OF THE FOUNDATIONAL BUSINESS IS ADDRESSED IN ADVANCE. THIS ALLOWS OUR STATED COMMUNICATIONS TO REMAIN FOCUSED, MEANINGFUL, AND RESPECTFUL OF EVERYONE'S TIME.

AS ALWAYS, IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR THOUGHTS TO SHARE, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO REACH OUT TO ME DIRECTLY. SANDOVAL LODGE IS STRONG BECAUSE OF YOU, AND TOGETHER, WE CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER TO ***BUILD THE INNER TEMPLE /G***

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ILLUMINATING THE FELLOWCRAFT JOURNEY: WB JAIME PAUL LAMB'S ZOOM VISIT TO SANDOVAL LODGE

WE BEGAN THE MONTH OF APRIL WITH A TRULY ENLIGHTENING EVENING AT OUR FIRST STATED COMMUNICATION, FEATURING A PRESENTATION BY NONE OTHER THAN WORSHIPFUL BROTHER JAIME PAUL LAMB, AUTHOR OF **APPROACHING THE MIDDLE CHAMBER**.

WB JAIME IS INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED NOT ONLY AS A MASONIC SCHOLAR BUT ALSO AS A LEADING VOICE IN THE STUDY OF THE WESTERN ESOTERIC TRADITION AND THE OCCULT SCIENCES—FIELDS DEEPLY INTERWOVEN WITH THE SYMBOLIC TEACHINGS OF FREEMASONRY. HIS PRESENTATION ON THE SEVEN LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES OFFERED PROFOUND INSIGHT INTO THE FELLOWCRAFT DEGREE, CONNECTING CLASSICAL EDUCATION TO THE DEEPER CURRENTS OF ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY AND THE ROLE OUR CRAFT PLAYS IN PRESERVING THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES.

FOR ANY BROTHER SEEKING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE FELLOWCRAFT JOURNEY, THERE IS SIMPLY NO BETTER RESOURCE THAN HIS BOOK '**APPROACHING THE MIDDLE CHAMBER**'. THE CLARITY, DEPTH, AND SCHOLARLY RIGOR WB JAIME BRINGS TO THE SUBJECT MAKES IT A FOUNDATIONAL WORK FOR ANYONE EXPLORING THE SYMBOLIC HEART OF OUR RITUAL.

WE WERE ALSO HONORED THAT EVENING BY THE UNEXPECTED VISIT OF WB DAVID BACHMANN, A PAST MASTER OF SANDOVAL LODGE WHO HAPPENED TO BE PASSING THROUGH DURING HIS CONTINUED TRAVELS. HIS PRESENCE ADDED TO THE RICHNESS OF THE EVENING, REMINDING US OF THE ENDURING BONDS OF BROTHERHOOD THAT TRANSCEND TIME AND DISTANCE.

EVENINGS LIKE THIS REINFORCE WHY MASONIC EDUCATION REMAINS AT THE CENTER OF OUR LODGE'S FOCUS THIS YEAR—BECAUSE THROUGH LIGHT, WE GROW /G\

TO ORDER THE BOOK '**APPROACHING THE MIDDLE CHAMBER**', VISIT
WWW.THELAUDABLEPURSUIT.COM

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*FRATERNAL VISIT TO BETHLEHEM LODGE No. 56:
A NIGHT OF BROTHERHOOD, UNITY, AND SHARED LIGHT*

IN APRIL, WORSHIPFUL MASTER BURX NORROD AND BRO. KENNETH FREEMAN OF SANDOVAL LODGE No. 76 MADE A FRATERNAL VISIT TO BETHLEHEM LODGE No. 56 IN BELEN TO WITNESS THE CONFERRAL OF THE ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREE UPON BROTHER MICHAEL WHITE.

THIS EVENING WAS A SHINING EXAMPLE OF MASONIC UNITY IN ACTION. THE DEGREE WAS NOT CONFERRED BY ONE LODGE ALONE, BUT BY A COLLECTIVE OF BROTHERS REPRESENTING SEVERAL LODGES FROM ACROSS THE JURISDICTION—EACH LENDING THEIR TIME, PRESENCE, AND RITUAL SKILL TO CREATE A POWERFUL AND MEMORABLE INITIATION FOR A NEW BROTHER ENTERING THE CRAFT. AMONG THOSE PRESENT WAS RW DANNY LUCERO, A BROTHER WELL-KNOWN THROUGHOUT NEW MEXICO FOR HIS STEADFAST DEDICATION TO ASSISTING WITH DEGREE WORK AND SUPPORTING LODGES LARGE AND SMALL. HIS CONTINUED SERVICE TO THE CRAFT IS A REMINDER OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SHOWING UP—NOT JUST WHEN IT'S EASY OR CONVENIENT, BUT WHEN IT'S NEEDED.

AS MASONS, WE OFTEN HEAR THE ENCOURAGEMENT TO "TRAVEL," AND WHILE THE CUSTOM OF RECEIVING A PIN, PEN, OR TOKEN COIN MAY ACCOMPANY SUCH VISITS, THE TRUE VALUE LIES NOT IN THE MEMENTO—BUT IN THE MOMENTS. VISITING ANOTHER LODGE OFFERS THE CHANCE TO SEE THE RITUAL DONE A LITTLE DIFFERENTLY, TO HEAR A NEW PERSPECTIVE DURING MASONIC EDUCATION, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, TO BUILD FRIENDSHIPS WITH BRETHREN WE MIGHT OTHERWISE NEVER MEET. IT IS IN THESE ENCOUNTERS THAT THE UNIVERSALITY OF FREEMASONRY IS MOST DEEPLY FELT.

WE ENCOURAGE ALL MEMBERS OF SANDOVAL LODGE—AND ALL MASONS—TO MAKE THE EFFORT TO VISIT OTHER LODGES WHEN POSSIBLE. WHETHER NEAR OR FAR, EACH VISIT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE LIGHT, DEEPEN YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE CRAFT, AND STRENGTHEN THE BONDS THAT UNITE US ACROSS DISTANCES AND DIFFERENCES. BROTHERHOOD IS NOT A DESTINATION—IT IS A JOURNEY, AND ONE BEST TRAVELED TOGETHER.

SANDOVAL LODGE EXTENDS ITS SINCERE THANKS TO THE BRETHREN OF BETHLEHEM LODGE No. 56 FOR THEIR WARM HOSPITALITY, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO MANY MORE SHARED LABORS IN THE QUARRIES AHEAD /G\



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LODGE IN THE QUARAI RUINS AT MOUNTAINAIR

IN APRIL, SEVERAL OF US FROM SANDOVAL LODGE HAD THE PLEASURE OF ATTENDING THE DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS HELD AT THE HISTORIC QUARAI RUINS IN MOUNTAINAIR—AND WHAT AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE IT WAS SET AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF ANCIENT ADOBE WALLS AND CLEAR NEW MEXICO SKIES, TWO ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREES WERE CONFERRED IN A SETTING THAT TRULY BROUGHT THE SPIRIT OF FREEMASONRY TO LIFE.

OUR OWN SENIOR WARDEN, BRO. JOHN KEEL, STEPPED IN AS SENIOR WARDEN FOR THE DEGREES, EXEMPLIFYING THE STRENGTH AND UNITY OF OUR LODGE. WE WERE ALSO PROUD TO HAVE ONE OF OUR NEWEST BRETHREN, ENTERED APPRENTICE BRO. MIKE MULDER, IN ATTENDANCE—AN EXPERIENCE THAT DEEPLY INSPIRED HIM AND IS HELPING HIM AS HE WORKS TOWARD MASTERING HIS OWN EA PROFICIENCY.

IT WAS A POWERFUL REMINDER THAT A LODGE IS NOT DEFINED BY A BUILDING, BUT BY BRETHREN DULY ASSEMBLED WITH THE HOLY BIBLE, SQUARE AND COMPASSES, AND A CHARTER AUTHORIZING THEM TO MEET AND WORK /G\

LEFT TO RIGHT: WM BURX, RW LARRY MIKKELSEN, BRO. MIKE MULDER, BRO. KENNETH FREEMAN, BRO. JOHN KEEL



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**TOP: TURNING THE QUARAI RUINS INTO A WORKING LODGE OF
ENTERED APPRENTICE MASONS**

**LEFT: NEW ENTERED APPRENTICE BRO. BILL SHOWING HOW
WINDY IT WAS IN THE RUINS**

**BOTTOM: BRO. MIKE MULDER, RW JIM COMBS,
PARK RANGER JADAIR, WM BURX**



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**MAY CALENDAR OF EVENTS –
SANDOVAL LODGE No. 76**

SUNDAY, MAY 4 @ 6:00 PM
MONTHLY LODGE OFFICERS' MEETING (VIA ZOOM)

MONDAY, MAY 5 @ 6:00 PM
MASTER MASON DEGREE PRACTICE

SUNDAY, MAY 11 @ 6:00 PM
MASTER MASON DEGREE PRACTICE

MONDAY, MAY 12 @ 7:00 PM
1ST STATED COMMUNICATION OF MAY
CONFERRAL OF THE MASTER MASON DEGREE FOR
BRO. KENNETH FREEMAN
(LODGE WILL OPEN ON THE MASTER MASON DEGREE)
FESTIVEBOARD BEGINS AT 6:00 PM

MONDAY, MAY 19 @ 6:00 PM
FELLOWCRAFT DEGREE PRACTICE

SUNDAY, MAY 25 @ 6:00 PM
FELLOWCRAFT DEGREE PRACTICE

MONDAY, MAY 26 @ 7:00 PM
2ND STATED COMMUNICATION OF MAY
CONFERRAL OF THE FELLOWCRAFT DEGREE FOR
BRO. BOB TYLER
(LODGE WILL OPEN ON THE FELLOWCRAFT DEGREE)
FESTIVEBOARD BEGINS AT 6:00 PM

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HELP CELEBRATE THE 51ST ANNIVERSARY OF SANDOVAL LODGE!

JOIN US AS WE COMMEMORATE 51 YEARS OF MASONIC LIGHT AT SANDOVAL LODGE No. 76 ON MONDAY, JUNE 23RD, DURING OUR SECOND STATED COMMUNICATION OF THE MONTH. THIS SPECIAL EVENING WILL FEATURE A FESTIVE DINNER FOLLOWED BY A HISTORICAL PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTING THE LEGACY, MILESTONES, AND MEMORABLE MOMENTS THAT HAVE SHAPED OUR LODGE SINCE ITS FOUNDING.

WE ARE CURRENTLY ASSEMBLING THE PRESENTATION TO BE DELIVERED IN THE LODGE ROOM—AND WE WELCOME YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS! IF YOU HAVE OLD PHOTOS, DOCUMENTS, OR PERSONAL STORIES RELATED TO THE HISTORY OF SANDOVAL LODGE, WE WOULD LOVE TO INCLUDE THEM. PLEASE SEND ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE TO BURXNORROD@GMAIL.COM.

LET'S COME TOGETHER AS A LODGE TO HONOR OUR PAST AND LOOK AHEAD TO A BRIGHT FUTURE. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

TRESTLEBOARD



ALCHEMY IN FREEMASONRY: THE PATH OF TRANSFORMATION

BY BURX NORROD

FREEMASONRY IS OFTEN DESCRIBED AS A SYSTEM OF MORALITY VEILED IN ALLEGORY AND ILLUSTRATED BY SYMBOLS. AMONG THE MANY ESOTERIC THREADS WOVEN INTO ITS TEACHINGS, ONE OF THE MOST PROFOUND—AND LEAST UNDERSTOOD—IS ALCHEMY. WHILE POPULAR CULTURE MAY REDUCE ALCHEMY TO THE PURSUIT OF TURNING BASE METALS INTO GOLD, IN THE CONTEXT OF FREEMASONRY, IT TAKES ON A MUCH MORE SYMBOLIC AND SPIRITUAL DIMENSION: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SELF.

SPIRITUAL ALCHEMY: THE REAL WORK

AT ITS CORE, ALCHEMICAL TRANSFORMATION IS THE PROCESS OF PURIFYING AND ELEVATING THE SOUL. IN THE SAME WAY THAT THE ALCHEMIST STRIVES TO TRANSMUTE LEAD INTO GOLD, THE MASON STRIVES TO TRANSMUTE IGNORANCE INTO WISDOM, SELFISHNESS INTO BROTHERHOOD, AND VICE INTO VIRTUE. THE TRUE "PHILOSOPHER'S STONE" OF THE CRAFT IS NOT A LITERAL OBJECT, BUT THE REFINED AND AWAKENED INNER SELF—A MAN WHO HAS LABORED TO SUBDUCE HIS PASSIONS AND IMPROVE HIMSELF IN MASONRY.

STAGES OF THE GREAT WORK AND MASONIC PROGRESSION

CLASSICAL ALCHEMY DESCRIBES THE MAGNUM OPUS, OR "GREAT WORK," IN THREE PRIMARY STAGES:

NIGREDO (BLACKENING) — THIS STAGE REPRESENTS THE BREAKING DOWN OF THE OLD SELF. IT ALIGNS WITH THE ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREE, WHERE THE INITIATE SYMBOLICALLY DIES TO THE PROFANE WORLD AND BEGINS HIS MASONIC JOURNEY.

ALBEDO (WHITENING) — A PURIFICATION PROCESS, MIRRORING THE FELLOWCRAFT DEGREE, WHERE KNOWLEDGE, STRUCTURE, AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT BEGIN TO ILLUMINATE THE PATH.

RUBEDO (REDDENING) — THE FINAL STAGE, REPRESENTING SPIRITUAL REBIRTH AND MASTERY. THIS RESONATES WITH THE MASTER MASON DEGREE, WHEREIN THE CANDIDATE IS RAISED FROM SYMBOLIC DEATH TO NEW LIFE, ENLIGHTENED AND TRANSFORMED.

THESE STAGES ARE NOT MERELY RITUALISTIC—THEY ARE DEEPLY PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS OF INNER EVOLUTION, ENCOURAGING THE MASON TO ENGAGE IN CONTINUAL REFLECTION, DISCIPLINE, AND MORAL PURIFICATION.

SYMBOLS OF ALCHEMY IN THE LODGE

MASONIC SYMBOLISM IS RICH WITH ALCHEMICAL ALLUSIONS:

THE ROUGH AND PERFECT ASHLARS REFLECT THE ALCHEMIST'S WORK OF REFINING CHAOTIC MATTER INTO PERFECTED FORM.

THE WORKING TOOLS ARE NOT ONLY INSTRUMENTS OF LABOR BUT ALLEGORIES FOR SELF-MASTERY.

EVEN THE CHAMBER OF REFLECTION, USED IN SOME LODGES PRIOR TO INITIATION, IS BORROWED DIRECTLY FROM ALCHEMICAL TRADITION—A PLACE OF ISOLATION, CONTEMPLATION, AND PREPARATION FOR TRANSFORMATION.

THE TRUE GOLD OF THE PHILOSOPHER

IN THE END, THE GOLD SOUGHT BY BOTH THE MASON AND THE ALCHEMIST IS NOT MATERIAL—IT IS THE PURIFIED SOUL, THE ENLIGHTENED MIND, AND THE COMPASSIONATE HEART. BOTH SYSTEMS ASK THE SAME OF THEIR INITIATES: "KNOW THYSELF." THE JOURNEY OF ALCHEMY WITHIN FREEMASONRY IS ONE OF INNER WORK, A GREAT WORK, THAT DOES NOT END WITH THE THIRD DEGREE, BUT CONTINUES THROUGHOUT A MASON'S LIFE /G\

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A CALL TO ACTION!

AS WE MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER IN THIS MASONIC YEAR, I'D LIKE TO TAKE A MOMENT TO ASK EACH OF YOU TO REFLECT ON YOUR ROLE IN THE LIFE OF OUR LODGE. OUR SUCCESS AS A LODGE ISN'T SOLELY THE RESULT OF RITUAL PRECISION OR STRONG ATTENDANCE—IT'S BUILT ON THE COLLECTIVE MOTIVATION, TALENTS, AND EFFORTS OF EVERY BROTHER.

I ENCOURAGE YOU TO CONSIDER:

WHAT INSPIRES YOU ABOUT FREEMASONRY?

WHAT ASPECTS OF LODGE LIFE DO YOU FIND MOST FULFILLING?

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO MORE OF—OR HELP IMPROVE?

WHETHER YOUR INTERESTS LIE IN RITUAL WORK, MENTORSHIP, HISTORY, OUTREACH, FUNDRAISING, EDUCATION, HOSPITALITY, OR SIMPLY KEEPING THE GEARS TURNING BEHIND THE SCENES, THERE'S A PLACE FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION. MY HOPE IS THAT WE CAN ALL WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE OUR LODGE OPERATE NOT ONLY MORE EFFICIENTLY, BUT WITH GREATER JOY AND MEANING FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED.

IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA, A PASSION, OR EVEN JUST A WILLINGNESS TO LEND A HAND, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO REACH OUT BY EMAILING BURX_NORROD@GMAIL.COM. LET'S ALIGN OUR LABORS WITH OUR STRENGTHS, AND CONTINUE BUILDING SOMETHING GREATER THAN OURSELVES.



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BRINGING BACK THE SPIRIT OF MASONIC EDUCATION

BY BURX NORROD

FROM 2013 TO 2016, I HAD THE HONOR OF SERVING AS PRESIDENT OF THE BEEHIVE CLUB—A MASONIC EDUCATION GROUP FORMED WITHIN MY LODGE IN VIRGINIA WHERE WE HAD UP TO 0 MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE. OUR MISSION WAS SIMPLE YET MEANINGFUL: PROMOTE DEEPER MASONIC UNDERSTANDING BY GATHERING TOGETHER AND LISTENING TO TWO SHORT PRESENTATIONS GIVEN BY TWO OF OUR BROTHERS, FOLLOWED BY THOUGHTFUL, OPEN DISCUSSION. IT WASN'T FORMAL OR INTIMIDATING—IT WAS ABOUT EXPLORATION, INTERPRETATION, AND ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER TO SPEAK AND REFLECT ON OUR CRAFT.

DURING THAT TIME, I WROTE A SHORT PIECE TITLED **LET THERE BE LIGHT**, WHICH OFFERED BROTHERS GUIDANCE ON HOW TO COME UP WITH IDEAS FOR MASONIC PRESENTATIONS. THE CENTRAL IDEA WAS THAT YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A SCHOLAR OR PUBLISHED AUTHOR TO OFFER SOMETHING VALUABLE. EVERY MASON, FROM THE NEWEST ENTERED APPRENTICE TO THE MOST SEASONED PAST MASTER, HAS A VOICE WORTH HEARING WHEN WE ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS AND FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON THE DEEPER MEANINGS OF OUR RITUAL, SYMBOLS, AND VALUES.

THAT SAME CONCEPT IS ONE I'D LIKE TO CONTINUE HERE AT SANDOVAL LODGE.

WHEN WE DON'T HAVE DEGREE WORK SCHEDULED, WE WILL USE THAT OPPORTUNITY FOR MASONIC EDUCATION—PRESENTATIONS PREPARED AND DELIVERED BY OUR OWN MEMBERS, INSTEAD OF ME BRINGING IN SCHOLARS OUTSIDE THE LODGE AS I'VE BEEN DOING. EACH STATED COMMUNICATION WITHOUT A DEGREE CONFERRAL WILL INCLUDE A SHORT PRESENTATION BY ONE OF OUR BRETHREN, FOLLOWED BY TIME FOR OPEN DISCUSSION. THIS WILL BE OUR OPPORTUNITY TO RECLAIM THE LODGE AS A TRUE PLACE OF LEARNING AND REFLECTION.

SOME SUGGESTED TOPICS INCLUDE:

A BREAKDOWN OF THE BIBLE VERSES PRESENTED IN EACH OF THE THREE DEGREES, AND THEIR ALLEGORICAL MEANING TO THE FREEMASON.

AN EXPLANATION OF THE OBLIGATION IN THE MASTER MASON DEGREE, INCLUDING INSIGHTS INTO THE SYMBOLIC MEANING OF ITS LANGUAGE AND PENALTIES.

A REVIEW OF ANY OF THE CHARGES DELIVERED TO CANDIDATES AND WHAT THEY ARE TRULY INSTRUCTING US TO DO AS MASONS.

A PRESENTATION ON THE HISTORY AND SYMBOLISM OF THE MASONIC APRON—WHY IT IS “MORE ANCIENT THAN THE GOLDEN FLEECE OR ROMAN EAGLE,” AND WHAT IT SHOULD MEAN TO US TODAY.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? BECAUSE LEARNING THE RITUAL IS ONLY HALF THE JOURNEY. TO TRULY UNDERSTAND IT—AND TO BE ABLE TO MEMORIZE IT WITH MEANING—WE NEED TO GRASP THE SYMBOLIC WEIGHT OF THE WORDS WE ARE SPEAKING. WHEN A BROTHER RECITES A LECTURE OR DELIVERS A CHARGE, IT SHOULD BE DONE NOT FROM MEMORY ALONE, BUT FROM UNDERSTANDING.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO PRESENT, OR HAVE A TOPIC IN MIND, PLEASE REACH OUT TO ME. I'VE ATTACHED THE ARTICLE 'LET THERE BE LIGHT' TO HELP INSPIRE IDEAS AND GUIDE NEW PRESENTERS.

LET US RECLAIM THE EDUCATIONAL HEART OF FREEMASONRY—ONE STATED COMMUNICATION AT A TIME.



LOGO CREATED FOR THE BEEHIVE CLUB
FOR HERNDON LODGE No. 26

Let There Be Light!

By Bro. Burx Norrod
Herndon Lodge No. 264 A.F.A.M.
March 6013 A.:L.:

There are numerous articles on various Masonic topics I am in the process of writing, inspired by my many thoughts and illuminations of the Craft as they progress. Because there seems to be no one 'cookie cutter' answer to the explanations of its' symbolisms, the individual must study these mysteries on his own accord to and then realize for himself what Light is being bestowed upon him.

Having read many books and countless online articles thus far on the teachings of Freemasonry, I've come to conclude that having done so was just the door opener for an understanding that to duly & truly understand Freemasonry, one would have to start from the beginning with the Catechisms. Simply reading an entire book on Freemasonry may leave you with still a bit of wonder, as the teachings are philosophical in nature, and is not so transparent - and its interpretations will vary from book to book, and from person to person.

The Catechism, as defined by the Mentor's Manual, is: *"a series of questions and answers that is intended to teach each initiate the language of Freemasonry, to fix in his mind the teachings of the degree, to impress upon his consciousness the facets of the obligation he has assumed, and to enable him to prove to his satisfaction and that of his Brethren that he is a Mason."*

Thus, my suggestion is an exercise that can be alluded to by any Mason, regardless of Degree. Learning the Catechisms is vital to the Freemasons' education. It's not designed to simply enable one to be a parrot by learning how to recite these words by memory, but rather to have a blueprint to be able to reflect on. I would challenge any Brother to start from the beginning, with the Entered Apprentice's Catechism, and pick out words or phrases that he does not truly understand, research it, and then write a paper about it. It doesn't have to be long or eloquent at all ... about as long and as informal as this article I'm writing now.

Being able to write the report, and if possible, present it to the Brethren in the Lodge, will certainly enhance ones' own proficiency in the Craft, and help to expand the thought horizons for those in attendance. Being a Freemason isn't simply one of occasionally coming to the Lodge as a social club member, wearing a ring, or other paraphernalia, but rather a lifetime of study and reflection.

It's being able to understand the revelations of its' signs, symbols, and allegories, and then being able to interpret them for yourself to utilize in your everyday life. In this day and age, with the amount of books written and online sources available, an Observant Mason must know more than the average non-Mason who's simply read the book 'Freemasons for Dummies' - an excellent book by Chris Hodapp.

While there are numerous esoteric books that provide Masonic truths - I find that if the reader is not a philosopher by nature, that book will not be read. However - all Freemasons have a philosophic subconscious as there would be no other way to explain one's participation wanting to learn meanings behind symbols & such.

This is more especially becoming important as the current average age for men being initiated into Freemasonry is 37 years old. In this Anno Lucis year of 6013, it is the age of the internet - where simply 'googling' a question will pull up an answer, even those on Freemason topics. If this is the case, what would be the reason one should even attend Lodge meetings if one can find this information online?

Digging deeper - I discovered that one would attend the Lodge Communications in the same way one would attend a religious service, even though the Bible or other Book of Sacred Law is already out in the open for all to read. What draws in the Brethren is being in a surrounding of like-minded thinkers, and the environment of the Craft's atmosphere.

I would challenge those who are reading book after book on the Craft to desist, and to start writing about what the Craft means to you, subject by subject. The hundreds of thousands of books and online articles exist for a reason, they're all written by those who have had a belief in what the Craft means to them - and along the way had published their findings. We must not let one man's truths become our own, for this is what kills the internal spirit. If the Supreme Architect Of The Universe wanted soul-less creatures, he would have created those who did not have the power of thought.

There are those who may say that there's not enough time in the day to put a paper together, or to even write their thoughts out, much less read a Masonic book. To those I will ask, is that TV Show being watched or video game being played more important than learning about the Tenants of our Institution?

Many of the new generation of Masons are being intrigued by the Craft due to the mysticism that surrounds it, partly due to works such as Dan Brown with his published books and movies. Pure fiction - but representative of a Masonic truth. The thoughts of it being an ancient philosophical order shrouded by secrecies is another. Thus, it is equally important, more now than ever, to become well-informed Brethren.

If you are a Master Mason, ask yourself - do you understand all 3 Catechisms, and how to explain them to a new Catechist if asked? If not, get started!

Just a few topics among many to consider researching:

- ❖ What does 'Free' in Freemasonry mean to you?
- ❖ Why do Masons wear an Apron?
- ❖ Who are the Holy Saints John?
- ❖ What are the Ancient Landmarks?
- ❖ What does being an Observant Mason mean?
- ❖ Exactly what is Freemasonry?
- ❖ Why is the Symbolic Lodge called the Blue Lodge?

You get the idea. In just a minute I could rattle off over a dozen more Masonic topics that are not truly understood by most in the Craft. While these may appear to be elementary for a few learned Brethren, it's light that hasn't yet been illuminated by most.

This short report is designed by nature to encourage the individual Mason to begin his journey in the Craft by learning what goes on in the Craft for himself. Thus, he will render himself deserving of the honor which has been conferred upon him.

For these reasons, there must be no recruitment or encouragement for others to enter Freemasonry. The Lodge room will always be filled to its' capacities when it contains those who are being observant of its philosophies and illuminations - not with warm bodies, but with warm hearts heated by the burning fire of Masonic Light.

Let there be light!

RIFLE RAFFLE



Up for raffle is an Aero Precision M4E1 5.56x45mm rifle. This is an excellent rifle for the seasoned professional, the enthusiast looking to add to their collection, or the beginner looking for a solid rifle to learn on. This rifle is chambered for 5.56x45mm or .223 rounds and comes with two 30-round magazines. It is optics ready and comes with Magpul Gen 3 Backup sights as well. The forend furniture is MLoc compatible and ready for accessories.

This raffle benefits Sandoval Masonic Lodge who's charitable events directly support children's education and families in Rio Rancho and throughout Sandoval County.

Only 400 tickets are available and the drawing will be held on May 30th 2025. The winner will be contacted and arrangements will be made with the winner to transfer the rifle. The winning ticket number will be formally announced not later than June 2, 2025.

To purchase tickets, use the QR Code below. A confirmation email will be sent to you within 24 hours confirming your ticket.

NOTE: All federal and state laws apply and the winner must be legally able to receive the rifle for them to receive it. If the winner is ineligible, a new ticket will be drawn.



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