



The Masonic News



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June 2020

Grand Master's Edict #3 and Missive #3

Most Worshipful Grand Master Ronald D. Stites

To: All members of all subordinate Masonic Lodges in Nebraska

Acting under my authority as Grand Master of Masons in Nebraska, I do hereby extend my order to cancel all lodge activities, including but not limited to all Regular and Special Communications of subordinate lodges, ritual practice, fund raising, and social events until June 30, 2020. The Supplemental Directions published on March 16, 2020 and March 30, 2020 remain in effect.

With nearly 70% of Nebraska Masons in the high-risk category to contracting the Coronavirus, exposure to the Virus could have a devastating effect on our entire Masonic Family. With that in mind, reporting indicating that the COVID19 threat has not leveled in Nebraska, and after consulting with a number of Past Grand Masters and the Grand Lodge Officers, the difficult decision was made to extend the Edict of no Masonic gatherings through June. No one wants to return to the good work that Masonry is known for more than I, but at this time it is felt our activities are not worth the risk to our Brothers, their families, and their communities.

This Edict will be reviewed regularly. If the state of emergency is lifted, or recommendations of State and/or Federal authorities substantially change, this Edict will be revisited and updated as required.

Please continue to pray for those afflicted, their families and caregivers, those responding to and treating the afflicted, and local, State, and Federal officials.

Grand Master's Missive #3 - June 10, 2020

Greetings to all Nebraska Masons,

This Missive focus once again revolves around the COVID-19 Pandemic, returning to labor in the Masonic quarries, suspensions, and a few items of information.

Coronavirus Pandemic:

Is the COVID-19 Pandemic over? NO

Is the COVID-19 Pandemic winding down? NO

Is it possible for you to contract the virus? YES

Should Nebraska Masons comply with the government guidance and restrictions? YES

Will the COVID-19 Pandemic continue to affect Nebraska Masonry for the foreseeable future? YES

Will changes need to be made in how Nebraska Masonry labors in its quarries? YES

Will Nebraska Masonry be able to resume activities? YES, but in a limited and phased approach

What is next for Nebraska Masonry? READ ON

0 to 60 mph . . . Gradually: The health, safety, and well being of Nebraska Masons, their families, and communities continues to be the primary goal of the Nebraska Grand Lodge during its response and following of the restrictions to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Unless there are significant changes in COVID-19 numbers and the Governor increases

restrictions, Edict No. 3 will expire at midnight June 30, 2020. A new Grand Lodge Edict containing Guidance and Directives for lodges to resume their labors as well as supplemental information will follow.

The restart will be primarily in two parts. The first being the Guidance and Direction for Nebraska Masons to return to their labors in the quarries. The second will address ritual and degree conferral. When returning to its labors, it is recommended lodges spend July catching up with lodge business and working on ritual. It is hoped degree conferrals will be able to resume in August.

As an aside, a consideration for a lodge meeting as an outdoor lodge meeting – If your lodge does hold an outdoor lodge meeting, you would need the approval by the members at a preceding regular communication, as well as obtain a dispensation from the Grand Master to move your Charter.

Suspensions for Non-Payment of Dues: The months of May and June are not favorites of any Nebraska Grand Master due to suspension for non-payment of dues reporting. I have requested each Nebraska lodge with 2020 suspensions to contact those brothers suspended in the hope of gaining information as to what Nebraska Masonry can do differently to make Nebraska Masonry more appealing to retain members. To facilitate the information gathering, the Grand Lodge Membership Committee developed an "Exit Interview" to guide the person making the contact in preparing himself as well as including information gathering questions.

At this time I would also request all Nebraska lodges that have suspended brothers over the past 1 to 5 years to use the "Exit Interview" found on the Grand Lodge Website to contact the suspended brothers and use the "Exit Interview" to obtain as much information as possible. Further, it is requested that any information obtained would be provided to the Grand Lodge Membership Committee.

Masonic Labors: I have been asked what can Masons and their lodges do during this period of inactivity. While not an all-inclusive list, I offer the following:

As an individual, donate blood

As an individual, donate your time to a neighborhood effort

As an individual, assist a neighbor

Conduct a "drive by" food drive for a local pantry

Lodge Leadership Seminars: The Seminars have been scheduled and will take place in mid to late July, and August in one case. Go to www.gln.org/news.html for more information and to register to attend one of the Leadership Seminars.

Fraternally yours,

Ronald D. Stites
Grand Master
Grand Lodge of Nebraska



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Columbia Chapter #275

Darrel Weers



Columbia Chapter #275 presented Dawson Wright an Eastern Star Education Scholarship. Making the presentation are his Grandparents PM Nancy and PP Darrel Weers. His parents are PM Tracy Dickes and David Wright. Dawson was a 2020 Lincoln Northeast graduate. He will be going to Wayne State, and will be playing football.

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Grand OES

Karan Birdsall



Hugs and prayers flow to each of our members! As the warmth, green and fresh veggies of summer appear we trust you are savoring these blessings. We continue to live in a changing and challenging world. At times it seems everything is out of control and the truth is IT IS and ALWAYS HAS BEEN. We are not in control of our world. We are

not in control of those around us. We are only in control of our own responses. I pray you are taking care of yourself, taking one moment at a time, and listening to God as He directs you through these times. He is always there with you, for you and ahead of you.

At Nebraska Grand Chapter, we continue to expand our abilities and opportunities to communicate and connect. We hope you are engaging with these tools as together we work for our Order. In addition to Zoom Socials, and Facebook pages we now have in a place a Nebraska Eastern Star YOUTUBE channel. YOUTUBE will hopefully help us provide sharing of communications, ideas, opportunities and messages that you can also share with your chapters

whether we are together in one place for a meeting or practicing safe social distances. We invite you to check it out and watch as the playlists of new videos continue to grow.



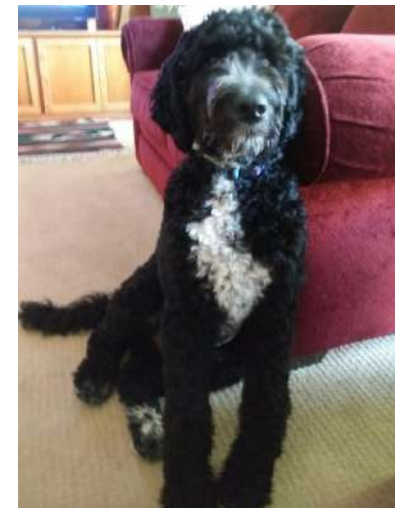
The ranks of our Star Dogs also continue to expand. We welcome Gibson, a bernadoodle puppy who has joined the John and Betty

Kirby family. He came equipped with some great training and is well on his way to certifications. Stay in touch as we reveal our other new furry servants.

What do we need more of in the midst of these times? We need more RESILIENCE! What is RESILIENCE? It is the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back and even grow when faced with life's down turns. Dr. Ginsburg encourages "7 c's" to grow and strengthen our RESILIENCE. It amazes me how these "7 c's" describe our Eastern Star experiences, expectations and opportunities. The "7 c's" are: competence, contribution, character, connections, confidence, coping skills and control. Prayers abound for each of you and for our chapters that

together we are RESILIENT and will grow in our competence, contributions, character, connections, confidence, coping skills and respond with control for our own responses to what happens around us.

Star love, gratitude and with great expectations, Karan and Bruce



Bethel #27

Marissa Roesler

Greetings from Bethel 27!

Looking for a way to spread joy to your friends and loved ones? Looking for a way to send a message to your Masonic Family? Would you, yourself like to walk outside and see something beautiful? Look no further!!! Bethel 27 is offering to come decorate your driveway! It can be a surprise for a co-

worker or something for you and your family to admire!

Our rates are:

Driveway: \$7 per square, \$1 off of the 4th square
Sidewalk Art: \$3 per square
Window/Door Decorations: \$5

We are extending our order deadline, so feel free to contact Becky Bless at 402-314-1669 or bethel27lincoln@gmail.com to place your order!



Driveway Art: \$7 per square, \$1 off the 4th square
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APART

Lincoln Lodge #19

Bruce Anderson

As I write this article, we are still social distancing. We really don't get to see each other face to face, just mask to mask. Our last two meetings have been via "ZOOM". Yes, we get to see and talk to each other on our computers but it's not the same. We also can't do business as usual. I just hope we can remember how to hold a business meeting and do ritual work. Everybody just take a few minutes and review our ritual so that we can hit the ground running when the Grand Master says GO.

We do have a couple of candidates to confer degrees on, so we have that to look forward to!

I do have one bit of news. One of our Brothers was downtown during one of the protests and accidentally got hit in the eye by a paint ball. He has had surgery. Keep him in your thoughts.

I did find an article on the internet that I thought everybody might be interested in reading.

A MYSTIC PAST. A VISIONARY FUTURE. A LEGENDARY BROTHERHOOD.

Freemasonry is the largest, oldest and best-known gentleman's fraternity in the world. Historically it is based on the Medieval stonemason guilds who built the great castles and cathedrals of Europe. Mythologically it is founded upon the building of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem, as told in the Old Testament of the Bible. Modern Freemasons likewise use the tools, traditions and terminology of those earlier stonemasons as allegories

for building Temples in the hearts of men.

At its core, Freemasonry is simply an attempt to make the world a better place, one man at a time. For each man, it can become as simple or as complicated as he himself desires.

It's said that we are a secret society. We do indeed have secrets – secrets that each individual man has to discover for and about himself.

It's not for everybody. It never has been and was never meant to be. That's the point.

Maybe it's for you. Ben Praomayon

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Bethel #5

Kristin Swisher

Bethel #5 has made many adjustments since March! In keeping with the Supreme Guardian Council's recommendation of no in-person activities until August 31st, we have been holding our meetings via Zoom. I'm sure many other organizations have been utilizing this tool, but if you haven't, it is a good way to keep in contact with your members.

Last month Bethel #5 held their election of officers via electronic ballot and we are excited to announce our Fall Term officers. Lauren, PHQ, is Honored Queen-elect, Katrina, PHQ, is Senior Princess-elect. Faith, PHQ, is Junior Princess-elect, Sara is Guide-elect and Serenity is Marshal-elect. Our Installation of Officers is tentatively set for July 11th at 2:00pm. This will be an online Installation, but we plan to broadcast a link to watch it live on YouTube so feel free to check our Facebook page for all the details! Just search for "Bethel #5, Lincoln, NE JDI" and see everything we have been up to!

With the restrictions on in-person activities, Bethel #5 will be starting an online fundraiser with Fatboy All

Natural BBQ rubs and sauces. Visit our Facebook page for all the information or if you would like to order!



Speaking of fundraisers, Bethel #5 is excited to be able to do our Fireworks Stand again this year! We will be moving locations and will be out at the Sam's Club parking lot on North 27th Street. Just look for the big Wild Willy's tent and come see us for all your fireworks needs this year!

Bethel #5 is also proud of our 2 high school Seniors this year! Faith graduated from Lincoln Northeast and plans to attend the University of Chicago in the fall and is going to study psychology and political science. She plans to stay busy with

speech and also get involved with psych and political activism clubs on campus. Katrina graduated from

Lincoln East and will be attending Coe College in Cedar Rapids, IA. She will be studying in their pre-engineering program and will keep herself busy by participating in the collegiate bowling team, pep band and possibly their archery program. We are so incredibly proud of you two and cannot wait to see what your futures hold for the both of you! Congratulations Katrina and Faith!



As if that wasn't enough to be proud of, we recently learned that Bethel #5 received the Beehive of the Year award! This means that our wonderful Bethel Beekeeper Cora did an outstanding job making sure these girls had fun, did lots of activities, interacted with the older girls in the Bethel and ultimately joined our Bethel when they reached the age of 10. We are so happy for these young ladies and would love to have our Beehive grow again this year! If you have a young

lady that is between the ages of 8-9 and think they might be interested in joining Job's Daughters, this is a great way for them to test the waters and learn a little about what Job's is and meet new friends before they decide if they would like to join, Please contact Bethel Guardian Kristen Swisher, or our Bethel Beekeeper Cora Redwine for more information.



Electa Chapter #8

Mike Lagueux

Dickens said it best, "it was the best of times; it was the worst of times." This isn't the first pandemic we have experienced, but certainly the first for many who are not of my age. And they are having difficulty dealing with the sheer magnitude of everything going on around them.

I was coming out of the grocery store the other day and heard a child of perhaps 6 or 7 ask her 20-something mother if this was "the end of the world" from behind her mask. I'm not sure her

mother actually knew what to say to her.

I believe it is important to hold onto the reality we are currently living in. This is something we have never seen before; at least not in this form. Even as we speak this virus is changing, what did work yesterday may not be what works tomorrow. Scary stuff, but it could be so much worse. The Spanish flu of 1918 decimated fully one third of the world's population. We are currently experiencing around a two percent mortality rate with

COVID19. Although that is horrible for those who have lost friends and family, we need to remember that death is a natural part of life. And those of us who are still alive must go on and be sure to remember those who have succumbed to this virus. There is nothing else we can do for them, and remembering them is the best way we can ensure they survive in our, and others memories.

A number of historical events have come and gone since we have been "social distancing," Mother's Day, Memorial Day, The remembrance of the D Day invasion in Europe, and soon, Father's Day. We are currently experiencing yet again social unrest due to a loss of life. There have been peaceful demonstrations; there has been violent confrontations, and there has been some progress in relations...but not without regressions. There will always be those who just want to cause unrest and break things...those are the 10% of our society who work for chaos and destruction. The important thing we must all remember is change will happen when it is needed; however, change simply for

the sake of "doing something" seldom lasts or makes a significant contribution of any kind.

As disturbing as some of these events and outlooks may be we have to believe that our society will survive and grow. I have seen neighbors and friends come together to help others with no thought of the possible consequences. I have seen people come together over various forms of media to accomplish what needed to be done to keep operating in a changing world. We have hope my friends. As long as the human spirit continues to find new and different ways to keep us in the fight, we have hope.

When the COVID19 virus first began there was a lot of profiteering going on. People bought hand sanitizer and toilet paper in an effort to capitalize of these essentials. I was happy to see E bay, Etsy, and Amazon simply refuse to let this happen on their sites. I distinctly remember seeing a man and his daughter set up a card table at 28th and O Street, in the church parking lot, in Lincoln and put out a display of hand sanitizer and toilet paper on it with a sign. I

thought as I passed it was another person taking advantage of others in a trying time. I couldn't have been more wrong. The sign said they were giving away these items to senior citizens, the most vulnerable group in our society...for free.

Friends, we have an opportunity now to be the hope someone needs. It may be as easy as a smile, a good morning greeting, or just spending a few minutes talking to someone who has no one else to talk to. Electa is still engaged in the business of caring for others, of making sure they know there is someone out there who cares about them and they are not traveling down this uncertain road of life we are now in, alone. Cards have been sent, calls have been made, lives have been reassured.

Until next month, difficult times will happen, people will act like fools, and friends will reassure each other that although we are living in strange and changing times... God will not bring us to what He will not bring us through. Stay well my friends, God bless you and keep you.



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North Star Lodge #227

Bob Tooker

Since my submission to the news for what ever excuse was not included in the May edition, I will just add to what I had already written.

Here we are, going into our fourth month of seclusion and sequester. I imagine I'm like the rest of you, in that my fun meter is pegged out. The only thing that has saved my sanity is reading of the perils of the former royals, Harry, Megan and baby Archie. As I understood it, they wanted to get away from the limelight of being royals and live normal lives. Seems to me they jumped from the skillet into the fire. Maybe Harry can get a job at a Jiffy Lube and Megan can work at a Walmart. That is being normal! On top of that, there was the tragedy in Minneapolis. The unrest that followed was expected and justified. "BUT" when the first punch was thrown, and the violence, with looting and burning began, it became domestic terrorism. I fault spineless politicians for condoning the resulting violence.

The professional politicians are busy establishing blame for the virus and soothing all of their

professional voters that have their hand out. "Politician's need to either step up or step back." I would give up my stimulus check to have Bro. Will Rodgers brought back to life to witness and then hear his comments on the present situation. My respect and admiration goes to all the health care workers dealing with this mess. I admire those that run to danger rather than to run away. I know why they do it. It is called duty. "Doing your duty isn't part of your job. It is your job." And they live it.

I suppose most have heard of the water leak at the Lodge last month. It didn't affect the Lodge area as much as the renters' store downstairs. Fortunately, none of his product was damaged, however he has been inconvenienced. The damage was discovered in a timely manner by a pedestrian walking by and noticing the water dripping out of the ceiling and called the fire department who then called the trustees and the water was subsequently shut off. The strange thing is it was on Face Book before the fire dept. arrived and the water shut off. As an update, most of the

restoration is now complete. WB Steve Wetzel needs to receive 99.5% of credit for his hard work in managing the project. Like anything, there will be a few "ya buts." However unless you helped!!!!

It will be good to be able to meet together again but I'm sure it will be a long time before people will have the confidence to gather in close proximity. I'm sure the Business Meeting dinners will be curtailed for a while. Maybe we will cater more.

I feel confident. Our family farming partner has had the corn in for almost a month, it looks good, and things are really green. Mother nature is doing her thing without fail. Memorial Day is now past. I hope you took time to remember those that gave their last full measure of devotion that we may live and be free. Please don't forget what they have given us. Summer is here so lets try to enjoy it.

I've rambled long enough. Till next month.

Tales From The North (Dakota)

Tyler T. Hall

Greetings from Bismarck/ Mandan, North Dakota, from Brother Tyler, a perpetual member of North Star Lodge No. 227 in Lincoln, Nebraska, and dual member of Mandan Lodge No. 8 in Mandan, North Dakota. I bring you news and experiences from my travels from DeMolay to Masonry to other appendant bodies in Lincoln, Nebraska, to the Twin Cities of Minnesota, and finally to western North Dakota. Hope you enjoy each month as we go on a trip together in search for that which may not have been too lost.

Back at it?...

Brotherly Love; Relief; and Truth... That was the message for the first few months in 2020. Now it feels that we need that more than ever.

In this pandemic era, we are slowly getting back to normal through coordination between State/Local Governments and Grand Lodges of different Jurisdictions. Things are starting to reopen and, although Zoom meetings or other similar online gatherings still are the norm, we are starting to see in-person meetings, activities, and even degree work happen in limited capacities, with restrictions of physical distancing and using masks/gloves for those in close proximity including leading candidates. Tokens

and grips are shown by the presenter, but not shown physically, and limited number of candidates and guides during the degrees are used to further precautions.

Mandan Masonic Lodge #8 in Mandan, North Dakota, plans in mid-July to pass our current Entered Apprentice Masons who were initiated back in February. We had a Zoom meeting or two, but started an in-person meeting during the first week in June.

We have a Bismarck/Mandan area group that meets every Wednesday for coffee and chats at 9:00 AM. We typically have met at Bismarck Masonic Center, but with the pandemic, we've met over Zoom. We are still meeting in that platform, but at least it's a meeting...its social closeness, and yet adhering to physical distancing.

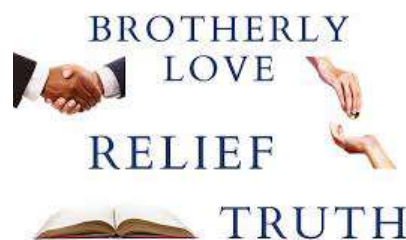
The first week in June, the Bismarck Valley, Orient of North Dakota, Scottish Rite, conferred the 30th Degree. As the immediate past Degree Master for the 30th Degree, I helped mentor in a new 30th Degree Master, who is also currently our VMAP Committee Chair. That is certainly a relief to have someone step up for the role as Degree Master. As Valley Secretary, I fill other duties and roles with each degree including fees, cast

lists, other documentation.

As a Senior DeMolay and Advisor, I do love the 30th Degree and will always be involved in that degree in some capacity. We wouldn't want to see "burn-out" happen... Burn-out is real, as I've seen it before in others, even though it doesn't seem like it would happen to such an involved member. I'm sure you all know what I mean there...

Next month, I plan to update you on the Grand Lodge of North Dakota Annual Communications which is planned in a different way for here in June after writing this article.

Lots of stories in between, but more articles yet to come...Thanks for listening.



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