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You Think They Don't Know?

In many instances, a Mason gives freely to the Home and the Orphanage because of the impulses of a generous heart, without any real knowledge of those his gifts benefit. He has never visited either institution, has never had the very real pleasure of a warm embrace from a grateful child at Oxford, or of welcome smiles from our elderly Brothers and Sisters at Greensboro. Most North Carolina Masons, unless trends change, will be initiated, passed and raised, then live out honorable Masonic lives and die without ever looking upon the majestic oaks on the Orphanage campus or the gently rolling grounds of the Home.

Those at the Home and the Orphanage need those gifts from the Masons that never come, those gifts are just as important as any others. But each Mason owes it to himself to go to Oxford and to Greensboro, to see for himself what he is supporting, who he is helping. There is just no way we can visualize what we have at those two homes, what we are doing for those that live in them, without the evidence of our own eyes. I have never known a Mason to visit either institution without coming away with a sense of pride he never quite felt before, and a renewed determination to do more for those in our care than he had ever done before.

If you have never been to either place, it's easy to believe that this giving and receiving that goes on between the Masons and the two homes is all quite impersonal, that a Mason never knows to whom he is giving and that the recipient never knows from whom he or she is receiving. It may well be impersonal on the Mason's part, if he has never visited the two homes, but it certainly is not an impersonal matter with the residents at the Home or the children at the Orphanage; they know full well what Masons mean to them and do for them, and they have a real love for Masons that you cannot fully appreciate without going there to experience it.

And relationships between Masons and those in our care many times becomes very personal.

On many occasions I have seen an Orphanage child I know tightly holding the hand of a Mason I did not know, and the child would proudly introduce him to me as "MY Mason." You just have no idea how your heart can swell with pride when one of those beautiful children calls you "MY Mason." This is a child you can maintain correspondence with, visit with, provide with small gifts on appropriate occasions; perhaps that child will even be able to visit in your home sometimes. That child can grow up secure in the knowledge that there is someone out there that really cares about and loves him or her. Many such relationships persist after the child leaves the Orphanage to go out into the world, perhaps to college or a career, right on up until that lucky Mason is even made an honorary grandfather.

There is no reason why each child at Oxford cannot grasp the hand of more than one Mason and proudly proclaim, "This is MY Mason." We have more than enough Masons to go around, many times over.

Personal relationships with those at the Home are different, of course, but just as important and just as warm. Too often we tend to think of the residents there as being financially destitute. Actually, in these times, just about everyone has some form of income, small though it may be, and there is not near the financial destitution that

once existed. Nevertheless, many of our residents at the Home are destitute in quite another fashion. Over the years, most or all of their loved ones and close friends have passed away, so there is no one with whom they can feel that special closeness all of us so desperately need. These particular residents of the Home are reaching out for someone with whom to feel that special closeness, and we can be that someone. But we cannot be that someone unless we go to Greensboro and meet with those that need us.

You think they don't know, at Greensboro and at Oxford, who the Masons are? Let me give you a couple of illustrations.

Years ago, during my first tenure as editor of this paper, I ran on the back page of each issue a picture and a brief interview with a child at the Orphanage and a resident at the Home, side by side. So it was necessary that I visit each home rather frequently, and I came to know most of those then in our care at them.

At the Orphanage, in good weather, you would usually find groups of children and adults sitting on the steps of the main building after lunch. One day a little fellow of six or seven was sitting a few feet from me, and I noticed he was really looking me over when he thought I was looking elsewhere. I started to say something to him but he beat me to it; "Are you a Mason?" he blurted. I told him I certainly was, whereupon he jumped up, ran to me and threw his arms about my neck. "Then I love you," he said.

How much do you suppose it was worth to me to be a Mason right then?

At the Home, one day, back when Troy Robbins was Superintendent, I asked him who would be a good resident for me to interview that day. He suggested a blind lady—I can't remember her name—who, because of her blindness, lived in the Care Center. He took me to her room and knocked at the door. She opened it, Troy introduced us and told her I wished to ask her a few questions, and he went back to his office.

She invited me in, we sat down, and after a few preliminary remarks, I began asking her the usual questions concerning her life prior to and after entering the Home. She seemed to be very withdrawn, and she was barely responding to my questions. Finally, she asked: "Mr. Davenport, are you a Mason?" When I promptly answered affirmatively, she said, "In that case, ask anything you wish, I'll tell you whatever you want to know."

Well, it was obvious that I or Troy should have more fully explained who I was and what I was there for, but I am glad neither of us did, for I would have then missed her simple expression of faith in Masons.

You think they don't know who we are?

My brethren, there is no way that I or anyone else can ever describe for you what we have and what we do at the Orphanage and at the Home, what it is like to meet and be with those we care for. You must go there yourself and experience it for yourself. You must experience those feelings that bring tears of pride and joy to your eyes. These are trips you will thoroughly enjoy, never regret, and never forget.

Because they KNOW who we are!
Reynold Davenport

Editorial

Prepare for '89

During its first stated communication next month, each North Carolina Lodge will elect its Master for the coming year. Also to be elected at that time are the Masons who will likely advance to the East in a year or two, and the Masons most responsible for attending to the financial and administrative affairs of the lodge. A small percentage of our lodges will also elect Deacons and Stewards, but in most lodges these will be appointed by the Master.

These elections are of the utmost importance to Masonry in general and to each lodge and its members in particular. The Masons elected next month will accomplish one of three things: they will improve their lodges and move them forward, or they will barely maintain the status quo, or they will permit their lodges to slide backward. Only the first of those three options is desirable and acceptable, and no member should vote for a Mason for any office unless he is convinced that Mason has the ability and the desire to improve the lodge.

This is why it is so important for each of us to exert every reasonable effort to be present at the first December stated, and to be prepared to cast ballots that will be for the good of Masonry. No run-of-the-mill excuse should be allowed to prevent our attendance that night, and no lack of preparation should permit a member to cast a harmful or worthless ballot.

On infrequent occasions a Mason is confronted with most disagreeable choices. An example is when a certain Mason is in line to advance to a particular office and you know in your mind and heart that his advancement will not be in the best interest of Masonry. He may be a good friend, or he may be a most likeable individual, and he may be a splendid all-around Mason, and you are in any case reluctant to deprive another Mason of the advancement he expects and longs for; nevertheless, you cannot, in good conscience, vote for a Mason for any office when you are convinced his election to it will do harm to the lodge and the Fraternity. We are required by our Masonic obligations and principles to vote for the best Mason available for each office. We may, in some instances, have no Mason available for a given office who is qualified by reasons of ability, character and desire to render a really good performance in that office, but it is certain that some will be more qualified than others, and it is for the most qualified that we are obligated to vote.

We must not wait until election night to make our decisions, for in many instances there will not then be enough time to ascertain and to weigh all the pros and cons. Granted, no large amount of preparation is needed if you are one who has attended regularly in a lodge where all the officers are doing acceptable jobs and where none will be dropping out of line; you already know the qualifications of those to be considered. But in even the steadiest lodges, resignations, deaths and other circumstances causing vacancies in offices are not unheard of, and these situations call for some degree of preparation on the part of all members.

Most of us are aware of the severe penalties for any act of electioneering on behalf of ourselves and/or others. No Mason can ask another member to vote for him or for someone else, it is a violation of our law even to hint along those lines. This is as it should be. The harmony and dignity of Masonry in its lodges would be severely harmed should our election process be given over to the free-for-all of electioneering.

But it is not intended that you must vote blindly, without any real knowledge of the qualifications, or lack of same, of those for whom you may cast your ballots. How, indeed, could we expect a new Master Mason, raised only a few days past, to know enough of the membership to be able to vote intelligently for lodge officers? Shouldn't he have some opportunity to acquaint himself with the qualifications of those available? Well, he does. In REG. 97-02 (15) permission is given for a member to inquire of a second member concerning the qualifications of other members for lodge offices, and it is lawful for that second member to respond to such inquiry in an appropriate manner. This regulation does not in any fashion or particular open the door for electioneering, and we be unto the Mason that interprets it as doing so, but it does enable members that are generally ignorant concerning the qualifications of certain other members to enlighten themselves through proper and careful use of the regulation.

All members of a lodge have certain responsibilities with respect to lodge elections, and not the least of these are the responsibilities of those who are to be voted upon.

Lost Minds

In some lodges the Chaplains offer prayers of their own composition during the opening and closing ceremonies; in other lodges the prayers from Bahmson's Manual are used. The opening prayer in the manual has a sentence that begins thusly: "And we beseech thee, O Lord God, to bless our present assembling, and to illuminate our minds..." It is really surprising the number of Masons, in reciting or reading that sentence, that substitute "eliminate" for "illuminate."

Well, some years ago, in one of our lodges, the Master had a pet project he asked the brethren to support but, to his surprise and chagrin, they flatly rejected his proposal. He went home that night in a dark frame of mind that was still prevailing when the next meeting night rolled around.

At the appropriate moment during the opening of that next meeting, the Chaplain knelt at the altar and earnestly beseeched the Lord "to eliminate our minds." As he returned to his seat, the Master told him: "Brother Chaplain, you didn't need to ask the Lord to eliminate your minds, He had already done that at the last meeting."

Each lodge officer knows in his own heart and mind whether or not he has proved himself worthy of advancement. If he has not, then he should relieve his brethren of their painful duty to halt his advancement by voluntarily stepping aside, and he should do this in ample time to permit unhurried consideration of possible replacements. The lodge officer that takes this action demonstrates himself to be one that has the best interest of Masonry at heart, and he thus earns the respect and gratitude of his brethren.

The election for Secretary merits special attention. A good lodge Secretary is a member of a very special breed, and the lodge that has a good one can never adequately reward him for his services. A man can be a good Mason in just about every facet you can imagine; he can be a truly outstanding Mason, perhaps the most outstanding in his lodge or district, and yet be totally and woefully unqualified to be Secretary. If your lodge has a good Secretary, and if he is willing to continue serving, by all means re-elect him—year after year after year.

Only our larger lodges are financially able to even partially pay their Secretaries for their time, talents and efforts; in most lodges their labors are simply contributions. Yet, it is amazing how few members have even a dim awareness of the true value of a good Secretary or any real knowledge of all that the Secretary does. It is equally amazing how ready so many members are to unthinkingly add to the work of the Secretary. Each member that is late in paying his dues causes needless additional work for the Secretary. Each member that fails to promptly report any change of address to the Secretary causes him added work and problems. And how often have you seen some brother get to his feet in lodge and say: "I move that the Secretary write letters to so-and-so?" Or another brother may say: "I move that the Secretary obtain prices for this and for that." The Secretary has quite enough to do without having heaped upon him additional work that can just as well be handled by a competent committee.

If you have lost or are losing your Secretary, and if you must elect a new Secretary this year, do it with the utmost care. Take full advantage of REG. 97-02 (15) on this one, seek all the opinions you can garner and study them with great care. Having arrived at a determination, go to the Mason you have determined upon and ask him if he would serve if elected. If he will not, go to your second choice, and so on. But do remember this: No lodge, no matter how excellent its ritual, no matter how well it is attended, no matter how well it excels in other areas, can ever be a truly top of the line, superior lodge if it does not have a good Secretary, if it is going to pot administratively.

Prepare yourself to vote for the good of Masonry at your first December stated, then go out and DO IT!
Reynold Davenport

Unscramble

Rearrange the letters in the following six words to form six new words familiar to Masons: Molar, later, hated, dingo, renet, thing. Now take the first letter of each new word you have formed and arrange these to form a six-letter word familiar to Masons. The answer means to claim by right. If you should arrive at a final answer meaning to infuriate, keep right on rearranging, you have the right letters. Answers on page four.

Diamond Jubilee at Home

(Continued from Page One)

addressed stamped envelope to Mrs. Hilda S. Halliburton, P.G.M., P. O. Box 286, Connelly Springs, North Carolina 28612.

Overnight accommodations are available at Holiday Inn, Four Seasons and may be arranged by calling 1-800-465-4329. A block of rooms have been reserved for Masons and members of Eastern Star.

Round trip shuttle transportation will be provided from Holiday Inn, Four Seasons to the Home on the hour between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. Saturday afternoon for those who are staying at Holiday Inn and desire transportation for the open house visitation.

The Grand Master and the Grand Matron strongly urge and encourage all members to join in celebrating this significant milestone in the history of our Masonic and Eastern Star Home.

William C. Hilton, Past Grand Patron

Seminars Shaping Up

(Continued from Page One)

presented at each seminar. A committee is now at work selecting those who will present the several subjects in each geographical area.

As now planned, each seminar will commence at 9:30 a.m. and close at 12:30 p.m.

As each lodge Master will have 10½ to 11½ months left in his term of office when he attends a seminar, it is anticipated he and his lodge will benefit measureably from the knowledge and information he will gain by his attendance at a seminar. The Wardens will, of course, be tremendously benefitted by the opportunity to incorporate ideas from the seminars into their planning for their year in the East. Interested Masons other than Masters and Wardens are welcome to attend the seminars.

ACCORDING TO JIMROD

We present below this month's poetical offering from that distinguished Mason and philosopher, JIMROD Q. WAXPILLOW.



This irate Mason named Fred
Kicked the old cat off the bed
He did it because
Her scratching claws
Had raked raw furrows in his head

Masons and Stars Slice, Hook, Putt On Way to Pig

(Continued from Page One)

Home, enjoying the perfect weather, the beautifully rolling grounds, the folding chairs, and the first offerings of seductive, succulent pig. All this took place against a backdrop of scores and scores of bright signs, painted and erected in acknowledgement of the individuals, lodges, chapters, commercial organizations and others that had put up \$25, \$50, \$100 and more to sponsor golfers.

Members of the Home staff had attractively decorated parking lots and other areas on the spacious grounds. Residents lent a big assist by conducting groups (some seeing the Home for the first time) on tours through the many fine facilities of the Home, while other residents helped direct traffic. Superintendent Tommy Jones hustled back and forth between the festive board and his office much like a genial shuttlecock. Members of Amran Shrine Temple handled the ever-important food end of the arrangements. Various Masons and Stars performed a variety of chores and services. It was the kind of cooperative effort absolutely essential to successfully carry off an undertaking of this scope.

Grand Master L. R. Thomas, Jr. and Grand Matron Viola Hardison were both on hand to lead their respective troops over the courses and through the pig. Each was delighted with the evident success of the occasion and grateful for the profits that will be used to great advantage in offsetting spiraling operating costs at the Home.

On every hand could be heard to "Let's do it again next year." Given the excellent results, and with so many thoroughly enjoying themselves, it would be difficult not to predict that it will indeed be repeated in 1989.

Much of what would normally be costs was in this instance donated, adding measureably to the bottom line. Profits were realized from tournament entry fees, from the sale of meals, from the sale of caps and such, and from the "sponsor" contributions—over \$21,000.00 profit came from those sponsors alone. A final accounting was not available at press time, but it is estimated the event netted about \$30,000.00 for the Home. Credit for these proceeds will be divided equally between the Grand Lodge and the Grand Chapter (Masons are responsible for 60% of the costs at the Home and Stars are responsible for 40%).

One newspaper editor found this note in his morning mail: "Dear Editor, Please cancel our subscription to your wonderful newspaper. We have bought a garbage disposal and don't have to wrap up our garbage anymore."