

TRESTLEBOARD

Blackmer Lodge #442

A monthly bulletin of information for the members, families and friends of
Blackmer Lodge #442, Free and Accepted Masons, California, USA

February, 2007

Volume XCIV, Number 2

A MAN PLUCKED OFF HIS SHOE

"Now this was the manner in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe and gave it to his neighbor..."

Ruth 4:7

During the ceremonies of the Entered Apprentice Degree, the candidate is instructed about the above-referenced passage of scripture, which is meant to indicate both the confirming of a contract, as well as the commitment to fully perform the terms and conditions of that contract. In Freemasonry, this symbolism is intended to convey the sanctity of the contract made between the candidate and the Masonic institution when he assumes his vows. For the Israelite of Ruth's era there was nothing more essential than shoes, or sandals without which men and women were compelled to walk across hot sands, dirt and rock. Consequently, giving a shoe to another person not only conveyed the importance of the commitment, but a sense that the person to whom the shoe was given was as important as the person giving it.

This symbolism is repeated throughout Masonry by way of different lessons, because it is the purpose of the Craft to ensure that each Mason appreciates the importance of his vows and promises. Entire charitable institutions rely upon the keeping of such commitments. Hospitals operated by Shriners would vanish if Masons suddenly decided it was unimportant to care for the helpless. Homes for the aged would no longer receive funding if groups of Masons turned their backs on the needs of others. Members of individual Masonic lodges would never experience random acts of kindness by their brethren if Masons concluded that self interest was more important than assisting others. It is the agreement, or covenant made by each Mason that guarantees that the world will experience the fruits of Masonic labor. Yet, as with other Masonic symbolism, there are also other esoteric lessons to be learned from the scripture found in the book of Ruth.

"Plucking off one's shoe and giving it to another" also symbolizes *redeeming* and *changing* and is equally important to Masons. For those who regularly attend religious services and observe as the collection plate is passed, it is intriguing to note how often people toss in some change, a dollar or two, or perhaps nothing at all. To some simply having

attended the service is sufficient enough, for it represents the sacrifice of time, if nothing more. Similarly, the Mason who works for a living has quite likely observed fellow employees voice support for the needy during holiday times, but how often does he observe real acts of charity – the giving of time, food, shelter and compassion? It is within this realm that *redeeming* and *changing* apply.

Theologians frequently remind their audiences about man's original fall from God's grace, commonly referred to within those circles as "original sin." The villain here is *temptation*, about which much has previously been written. Temptation represents the transition from obedience to disobedience. The man who has given in to the temptations that have invaded his life is truly in need of *redeeming* and *changing* to recapture his original obedient nature. The Holy Writings offer us the allegory of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to convey to us the importance attached to all men making an effort to subdue the passions and to keep them within due bounds toward all mankind.

In the book of Genesis, Eve listened to the voice of the serpent, saw that the tree of knowledge was good for food and took and ate what she desired in complete contravention to God's command. There is no greater symbolism of disobedience recorded anywhere in our Holy Writings, or elsewhere in any other traditional story. The voice of the serpent represents the living being whose intelligence is most advanced and whose consciousness is turned toward the horizontal, or material plane rather than the vertical, or spiritual plane. The intelligence of both Adam and Eve before the *Fall* was entirely vertical. Their eyes had not been opened to their own "nakedness" and they were conscious of everything vertical, or of God. After the *Fall*, their understanding about their condition changed radically. Suddenly aware of their nakedness, fig leaves were adjusted to cover the most private of human body parts and their entire consciousness was consumed with things related to the material plane.

Here, the serpent symbolizes the principle of power apart from God. The remainder of the histories and stories set forth in the Holy Writings relate to man's journey back to the living God. Temples are erected in His name; prophets admonish

[continued on page 2](#)

Contents for February, 2007

Two

*From the Secretary
Shoe (continued)
Masonic Student
Assistance Program*

Three

*Birthdays
From the East
Dining Out Italian Style
News from a Brother
Dinner and Dancing
Bulletin by Email*

Four

*Blackmer Lodge Officers
Lodge Events Calendar*

Five

*Do you know these men?
Great Seal of the United
States*



contact us
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619-291-0465
FAX
619-291-1364

FROM THE SECRETARY

Well one month passed and I have a greater appreciation of all Blue Lodge officers and what is required to run the Lodge.

I have a request of all the Brethren of Blackmer Lodge. Please make sure that your dues card is current. If yours is not, please send your dues in so we can keep everyone current. Your dues help run the business of the Lodge. If you have any questions, you may call me at the Lodge (619-291-0465) or at home. I am here to serve all of you, our Lodge Members.

In an effort to keep an accurate count for our Stated Meeting dinners, I ask that you call by Tuesday before the Stated Meeting. I am creating a permanent dinner list for our Stated Meeting. If you would like to be added to the list please call me. If you are unable to attend our Stated Meeting dinner, just call and I will not count you for that Meeting.

I would like to urge all the Brethren who are able to attend one of our Degrees and greet our new Brethren as well as see old acquaintances in brotherly fellowship. The new officers would appreciate more sideliners for our Degrees.

If you have any questions you may contact me at the Lodge or at home.

Fraternally,
Arnold L. Korey



continued from page 1

generations to obey His laws; wars are waged in His cause; men suffer in obedience to His word; and, man searches for a *messiah* to deliver salvation. Along the way, man also discovers that the true principle of obedience is devotion without reserve to the sole voice from above. It is precisely at this juncture that Freemasonry generally steps aside to allow Masons and their families to seek their own route to salvation, for be it ever known to all men at all times and in every place that Freemasonry is not a religion.

Those who follow the Jewish faith find the way to *redeeming* and *changing* through the law of Moses, including the Ten Commandments. Buddhists travel the road of inner serenity, as do the Hindus, each seeking the peace within themselves that illuminates the soul. Christians resolve to accept the divinity of Jesus Christ. Moslems attempt to align themselves to the teachings of Mohammed and his descendants to ensure a proper place in the world of obedience to God. But what of the Mason who has not selected a formal religion to follow? If he does not adhere to a particular dogma, is his journey from the *Fall* back to obedience destined to fail? Freemasonry tells such a man that he will not fail, if he devotes himself without reserve to the sole voice from above – the voice of the Supreme Architect of the Universe.

All human existence is about choices – the choice to live in the *light*, as well as the choice to live in *darkness*. Mankind is offered a plethora of religious doctrine from which to choose and is surrounded by the philosophies developed by the greatest minds that ever lived. History, literature and science also weigh in lay before each and every person a literal banquet of choices. He who has chosen well has selected the path that leads him directly back to obedience. Man is both *redeemed*, or reclaimed by the Creator, and *changed* when he resolves to ask God to reveal His will; seeks to understand how to apply that will to his own life; and, knocks at the door of the Great Architect with faith that the door will be opened. One never opens the door by force. One waits for it to be opened by God's will.

It is relatively easy to discern the obedient person. He avoids anger and replaces it with kind words to his fellow man. He acknowledges his own faults, apologizes for his slights to others and resolves to do better next time. He freely gives of his precious time to serve, comfort and compassionate others. He visits the widows, orphans and elderly. He avoids disputes and builds harmony. He understands different points of view and keeps self-pride well under control. And, he regularly kneels in humble praise and supplication to the Almighty Father of the Universe – the one living God. Simply stated, he is a Freemason.

May the Great Architect of the Universe
Bless You,

John R. Heisner, PM

NOTICE:
Mark your calendars. Honored
Ladies luncheon is Thursday,
May xx at Noon.

MASONIC STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Masonic Student Assistance Program (MSAP) is a team approach to student assistance.

"Today's teachers face more difficult issues than ever before. Many children lack social skills and self-discipline. We have to deal with these issues before we can teach." -Second-grade teacher, California Elementary School, Costa Mesa.

MSAP is an innovative three-day workshop that builds educators' skills in identifying at-risk students and providing appropriate guidance. Behavior issues are often symptoms of a bigger problem. Because students in distress may not ask for help, it falls to their teachers to read the signs and intervene before it's too late. Funded by donations from California Masons, the MSAP program is offered to California's public schools at no cost.

MSAP helps good teachers be even better by training them to work as teams. The MSAP approach considers the child as a whole, identifying all the factors that might contribute to the student's behavior or inability to learn. The team collaboration is what leads to a solution, giving these students a greater chance of staying in school and becoming productive members of society. Who will benefit from attending?

A school district should send six to eight workshop participants per school who will form a core MSAP team at their site. Team members should include: Administrators, Counselors, Teachers (regular and special education), School psychologists, school nurses, drug/alcohol abuse assistance providers, and mental health service providers..

Location and accommodations

The MSAP workshop is held at the Masonic Home in Covina. Participants stay in homes on the campus. All meals are served on campus and are included in the scheduled agenda.

Workshop cost and arrangements

The California Masonic Foundation pays all participant expenses for training materials, lodging, meals, and transportation to and from Covina. The Foundation coordinates and pays for travel arrangements, including flight reservations. School districts are responsible only for providing substitutes for participating teachers.

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Blackmer Lodge

A monthly bulletin of information for the members, families and friends of Blackmer Lodge #442, Free and Accepted Masons, California, USA
Our objective is to disseminate information of interest to the members, families and friends of Blackmer Lodge #442, F&AM of San Diego, California, USA

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DINING OUT ITALIAN STYLE

Please call to let Harry by January 31st to let him know you will be coming to Dining Out Italian Style at Lido's Italian Restaurant, 7252 Broadway in Lemon Grove. We will be gathering for dinner at 6:30 p.m. This is a great spot with great food. All Brethren, Ladies and Friends are invited, just be sure to call Harry Besnoy to let him know.

A BROTHER'S NEWS

Brother Jim Furrh writes: "We have moved to a new home in Plano, Texas." When he wrote, "The weather is freezing rain and pretty miserable." Ah, well... tis winter, me thinks.

FROM THE EAST

Brethren,

It was a pleasure to come across this article "The Apron" by Brother E. Hays., Jr., part of which follows:

It is an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason. More ancient than the Golden Fleece or the Roman Eagle, more honorable than the Star or Garter, or any distinction that can be conferred upon you at this or any future period, by king, prince, potentate or any other person. (The Monitor and Officer's Manual)

When the Master of the Lodge presents the candidate with his apron, using these impressive words, he is performing perhaps the most important single act in all the ceremonies of Masonry. In this act alone, the craft speaks to the candidate in worldly terms calculated to impress upon him all of the esteem in which Masons hold the fraternity. In every other ceremony, Masonry teaches man his duty to God, his neighbor and himself, but only in those few words does Masonry speak of itself.

To a real Mason, the fraternity and

its teachings, its ceremonies and its associations are very precarious. The brothers who first gave voice to these sentiments were stating the veneration in which Masons hold their craft as compared with other very noble human institutions.

The Roman Eagle, going back to Pre-Christian Era, was the standard under which the legions of Rome marched to conquer the ancient world. The Order of the Golden Fleece was an order of nobility founded by Philip, Duke of Burgundy in 1329. The Order of the Garter was founded by Edward III, King of England in 1349. To be compared to the dignity and antiquity of these organizations is to speak most highly of the craft. To compare the simple, snow-white apron, to the ornate trappings and insignia of these orders, is to set its value as a pearl above price.

To be part of this fraternity, to help fulfill its mission in the world by a faithful adherence to the duties imposed in its obligations, are the meanings of this spotless vestment. To don the badge of a Mason, to wear it with pleasure to oneself and honor to the fraternity is to take upon oneself the highest, purest and noblest standards of humanity. It is an ever-present personal challenge to the craft, to be worthy to wear this badge. Virtue and exemplary conduct are said to be the title of our privileges, and the right to wear the apron worthily is the only reward we get for virtue in this world.

Mihailo O'Zdravkovic

DINNER & DANCING

East San Diego Lodge is having a St. Valentine's Day Dinner and Dance on Saturday, February 10th with dinner at 6:30 p.m. and dancing to follow. \$20 per person covers an evening of fun.

East San Diego Lodge is located at 7849 Tommy Drive, San Diego (in the San Carlos area near Cowles Mountain. Blackmer Lodge has been invited. If you would like more information, contact the m a 619-474-2243

BIRTHDAYS

Ralph Barnes, PM	2/09
Thomas Buckel	2/08
Kenneth DeVault	2/01
Richard Disraeli	2/26
Larry Gerster	2/23
Charles Griffin	2/08
Thomas Hom	2/15
Errol Kader	2/27
Richard McKee	2/15
Greg Maizlish	2/24
Guy Michael	2/15
Tommy Nilson, PM	2/18
Charles Reid	2/12
Norman Ross	2/07
Bernard Surovsky	2/06
Joseph Van Holst	2/04

Average age = 72.125 years old

Oldest = 88 years old

Youngest = 42 years old

Happy Birthday to these Brethren!
We would like to wish you a happy birthday in person at the Stated Meeting dinner of your birth month. Please do join us and remember that your dinner is on the Lodge.

BULLETIN BY EMAIL

We want YOU.

To begin receiving your bulletin by email, send a note saying "I'm in!" to

Coren Andrews at ctandrews@comcast.net

TELL YOUR BRETHREN

PAGE 5

for email subscribers

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additional articles and information

PLEASE CHECK YOUR DUES CARD. IT SHOULD SAY "PAID THROUGH DECEMBER, 2007."

Please be considerate and make your dinner reservations early. If you are going to come to one of our dinners, make reservations. Two days in advance is sufficient, but please reserve.

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BLACKMER LODGE NO. 442, F&AM

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LODGE AND ITS
PROGRAMS.**

**YOUR
ATTENDANCE IS
NEEDED AND
ENCOURAGED!**



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FEBRUARY 2007 CALENDAR

February

Thurs 1st **STATED MEETING** at 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.
Reservations must call 619-291-0465. Business casual.

Mon 5th **Family Dine Out**-LIDO Italian Restaurant in Lemon Grove at 6:30 p.m.

Thurs 8th **SECOND DEGREE PROFICIENCY & THIRD DEGREE CONFERRAL - 7:15 p.m.**

Mon 12th Dark

Thurs 15th Second Degree Practice - 6:45 p.m.

Mon 19th First Degree Practice - 6:45 p.m.

Thurs 22nd **FIRST DEGREE CONFERRAL - 7:15 p.m.**

Mon 26th ISI - All Officers to attend - 574 works MM 2nd Section and Lecture Options. Call Inspector 619-461-5724 if you need to be excused.

March

Thurs 1st **Stated Meeting** at 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.
Reservations please call 619-291-0465.

Mon 5th Family Dine Out

FEBRUARY STATED MEETING DINNER MENU

BBQ Chicken and Baked Snapper
Rice Pilaf and Green Beans Almandine
Tossed Green Salad and Assorted Rolls
Iced Brownies
Beverages

You must call your reservations to Arnie at 619-291-0465



Do you know these men? Hint, they were Officers of Blackmer Lodge. Your duty, if you accept it, is to email the editor at ctandrews@ca.rr.com with their names, the year, and where the picture was taken. Hopefully, this bulletin will not self destruct before you have time to do your research.



THE GREAT SEAL OF THE UNITED STATES

Before it adjourned on July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress of the newly independent United States passed a resolution: Resolved, that Dr. Franklin, Mr. J. Adams and Mr. Jefferson, be a committee, to bring in a device for a seal for the United States of America. Thus, three of the five men who had drafted the Declaration of Independence were brought together in further service to their country. The revolutionaries needed an emblem and national coat of arms to give visible evidence of a sovereign nation and a free people with high aspirations and grand hopes for the future. The task proved far more difficult than anticipated; it took six years, two more committees, and the combined efforts of 14 men before the Great Seal of the United States became a reality on June 20, 1782.

Symbolically, the seal reflects the beliefs and values that the Founding Fathers attached to the new nation and wished to pass on to their descendants. The report which Thomson submitted to the Congress explained the obverse this way: The red and white stripes of the shield “represent the several states... supporting a [blue] Chief which unites the whole and represents Congress.” The colors are adopted from the American flag: “White signifies purity and innocence, Red, hardiness & valour, and Blue, the colour of the Chief, signifies vigilance, perseverance & justice.” The shield, or escutcheon, is “born on the breast of an American Eagle without any other supporters to denote that the United States of America ought to rely on their own Virtue.” The number 13, denoting the 13 original States, is represented in the bundle of arrows, the stripes of the shield, and the stars of the constellation. The olive branch and the arrows “denote the power of peace & war.” The constellation of stars symbolizes a new nation taking its place among other sovereign states. The motto E Pluribus Unum, emblazoned across the scroll and clenched in the eagle’s beak, expresses the union of the 13 States. Recent scholarship has pointed out the probable source of this motto: Gentlemen’s Magazine, published in London from 1732 to 1922, was widely read by the educated in the American Colonies. Its title page carried that same motto and it is quite possible that it influenced the creators of the seal. The reverse, sometimes referred to as the spiritual side of the seal, contains the 13-step pyramid with the year 1776 in Roman numerals on the base. At the summit of the pyramid is the Eye of Providence in a triangle surrounded by a Glory (rays of light) and above it appears the motto Annuit Coeptis. Along the lower circumference of the design appear the words Novus Ordo Seclorum, heralding the beginning of the new American era in 1776.

Uses of the Seal and the Coat of Arms The Great Seal is used to seal documents 2,000-3,000 times a year. Although custody of the first seal had been assigned to the Secretary of the Continental Congress Charles Thomson in 1782, the 1789 government assigned it to the Secretary of State. Mr. Thomson hand-carried the seal and press to President Washington; delivered his resignation with genuine regret; and surrendered the books, papers, and records of the late Congress. Thomas Jefferson thus became the first of a long line of Secretaries of State to have custody of the Great Seal. The actual sealing is done by an officer from the Department’s Presidential Appointments Staff. At present it is impressed on the following types of documents, after they have been signed by the President and countersigned by the Secretary of State:

- Instruments of ratification of treaties and other international agreements;
- Proclamations of treaties and other international instruments;
- Appointment commissions of ambassadors, Foreign Service officers, Cabinet officers, and all other civil officers appointed by the President whose commissions are not required by law to issue under another seal; and
- Assignment commissions for consular officers. The seal is also affixed to the envelopes that contain letters accrediting and recalling our ambassadors and other ceremonial communications from the President to heads of foreign governments.