

MIZPAH BULLETIN

October 2019





Mizpah Lodge #302
A.F. & A.M.
Omaha, Nebraska

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 Mizpah Lodge #302

Instituted November 12th, 1918
Chartered June 4th, 1919

Stated communication on the first
Wednesday of every month

Mizpah Benediction

“May the Lord watch between me and
thee when we are absent one from an-
other”

-Genesis 31:49-

May the Lord Watch
MIZPAH
302
Between Me and Thee

From the West

Good day brethren!

We are 3/4ths done with 2019 as of the October 2nd meeting, preparing for winter and many fun events this season to come as well as elections and finishing out 2019 strong.

We have come a long way this year adapting to the changing needs of our established fraternity. Our secretary has provided good and timely counsel and guidance for our needs extending into the future years. Our officers have taken considerable time coordinating our efforts together in concert and established a time for regular meetings. Officer and meeting attendance and participation is doing well, and I could not be more confident about our continued communication and cooperation as a cohesive unit.

As of this writing we are soon to have our pin presentation dinner on September 25th honoring Walter Horner with his 60 year pin. Our annual lodge Halloween party is on Saturday October 26th. Wednesday November 6th we have our business meeting and elections for officers for the coming year. Saturday December 21st we have our annually scheduled visit from Santa so please make sure to bring the kids and family for a great and wholesome time.

It continues to bring me great pleasure to work with such a great group of individuals uniting for the common good of our own interests and I am proud of everyone that has helped out so much this year.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Tom Gibbs
Senior Warden



Calendar

Combating Loneliness by T. J. Brumfield III

Note: This piece is heavily inspired by a blog post by WB Christopher L. Hodapp on his Freemasons for Dummies blog: <http://freemasonsfordummies.blogspot.com/>

Wednesday October 2

Potluck Dinner 6:30pm

Business Meeting 7:00pm

Education:

Topic TBD - TJ Brumfield

Wednesday October 9

TBD

Wednesday October 16

Officers Meeting

All members welcome

6:30 PM

Wednesday October 23

TBD

Saturday October 26

Halloween Party

All members, friends, and children
welcome

Wednesday October 30

TBD

Wednesday November 6

Potluck Dinner 6:30pm

Business Meeting 7:00pm

Elections

Education:

Topic TBD - Ryan LeGrande

On September 8th, Omaha Chapter #1 of Royal Arch Masons held an omelet breakfast fundraiser. This in and of itself may not seem remarkable; if you look at Omaha-area calendars it seems like you can find a place to share a meal with Masons at least once a week if not almost every day.

I do my best to promote the omelet breakfast as well as I can every year, but we've never had a huge turn-out. We don't raise a small fortune. But I can say with certainty that the event is a success and worth my continued time every year. This was particularly cemented when one of our older members was chatting with me as we cleaned up the dining room at the close of the event. He told me his favorite part of the meal is how we have people who "work" the dining room and make it a point to stop at the tables, say hello and chat with everyone. It really seemed to make his day.

It is very easy to overlook the value of social interactions and just knowing that someone is interested in saying hello and seeing how you are doing. When we discuss the decline in overall Masonic membership over the past decades, I often hear that the fact that the average age of a Mason being 65 years old or so is the real issue. The fear seems to be that we will eventually lose our oldest members to the inevitability of our mortality, and that we should be focusing on recruiting younger members to inject new vitality into the fraternity. But we should also be careful not to overlook our older members.

The Northern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite did a fantastic study of Masons and non-Masons called "The Path Forward" (<https://scottishritenmj.org/path-forward>). One of their findings was that both Baby Boomers and Millennials have similar values and priorities. They're looking for a lot of the same things, which may be surprising to some. Both want to make a difference. Both want a values-based life based on integrity, loyalty, responsibility, and equality. Both want to be heard and respected.

Are we consistently hearing and respecting our older brothers?
Age UK did a survey of the senior population of the UK. They found that 22% of respondents only spoke to 3 people total in an entire week. Even worse, 225,000 seniors in the UK don't speak to anyone face-to-face in an average week.

When I was younger, I was inspired by the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau on self-reliance and being your own person. We should stand by the strength of our own convictions and identity, but even as Thoreau's time at Walden Pond is romanticized, I think people overlook that at the end of the book he leaves the idyllic landscape to rejoin society. Even when he tried to live as a recluse to avoid the standard distractions of society, he sought out locals to speak to and invited his friends to come visit him; and that still wasn't enough. He returned to the city because part of the human condition is craving social interactions and validation.

It is always pleasant to be reassured that there are people who care about your well-being and enjoy your company.

Caroline Abrahams of Age UK said: "Loneliness can affect your health, your well-being and the way you see yourself – it can make you feel invisible and forgotten."

As I write this, we are preparing to have our annual Pin Presentation Dinner at Mizpah (though you will likely receive this Trestle after the dinner). We are going to present a 60 year membership pin to Brother Walter Horner. Jack Tuerk and Leonard Finnegan have been Masons for a staggering 75 years. Jack now lives in Arizona and Leonard is in Virginia.

2019 Officers

W Jeffrey Coleman (Brenda) Worshipful Master
2327 Hanscom Blvd.
Omaha, NE 68144 Cell (402) 290-7243

Thomas Gibbs Senior Warden
55269 Fallow Rd
Pacific Junction IA 51561 Cell (402) 680-6678

Jeremiah Jones (Kimberly) Junior Warden
2804 Jackson St.
Bellevue NE 68005 Cell (402) 507-7190

W Adam Lowder (Mollie) Treasurer
10925 Weber St.
Omaha NE 68142 Cell (402) 850-6001

W Ben Zaayer (Stacy) Secretary
5604 N. 162nd St. Res (402) 933-4668
Omaha NE 68116 Cell (402) 880-3028

W Michael Tomaszewicz (Annette) Chaplain
1404 P St.
Tekamah NE 68061 Cell (402) 838-9977

Dalton Kock (Bri) Senior Deacon
6757 S. 90th St
Lincoln NE 68526 Cell (402) 719-0942

James Schmidt (Elizabeth) Junior Deacon
3021 S 72nd Ave
Omaha NE 68124 Cell (402) 916-0262

T.J Brumfield (Sarah) Senior Steward
1210 S. 25th Ave
Omaha NE 68105 Cell (402) 880-7823

Charles Davis Junior Steward
9336 Berry Plz. Apt. 192
Omaha NE 68127 Cell (402) 980-5394

W Tyler Goodman (Tracey) Tyler
8702 S. 17th St.
Bellevue NE 68147 Res (402) 292-2801

These are members of the lodge I've never met, and whose names I haven't even heard of before. Two of them may be out of state, but I'm curious if any brothers remain in contact with them.

I don't know in years past if there have been any particular effort to contact brothers individually every year. While we may send out dues notices and this Trestle, there doesn't seem to be much beyond these two items. We are, however, working on improving that and now send out birthday cards signed by the current officers to each Mizpah brother.

Still, I believe that we can and should go even further in our actions.

It is important to note that loneliness is not the same thing as isolation. There are some people who are more introverted and enjoy more time alone, and then there are people who feel lonely sitting in a crowded room that we can easily overlook. This could be as simple as seeing a brother on the sidelines or at meals that you don't really speak to.

This responsibility does not just lay with our officers, but with each of us. Every Mason should practice Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

With so much going on, we often don't retain everything when we first receive the degrees of Masonry. I'd forgive a candidate if they didn't recall the Worshipful Master first mentioning Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth in the Entered Apprentice degree. Some jurisdictions even include it in their Q&A that these are the primary tenets of our institution. While Nebraska does not, this overall lesson is repeated conceptually across all of our degrees, particularly in the lesson of the working tool of the Master Mason.

We also quote the Volume of Sacred Law, 1 Corinthians 13:13:

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

This translation of charity is particularly noteworthy. Charity did not always mean financial giving, but rather "Christian love in its highest manifestation". It comes from the French *charité* and the Latin *caritas* before it, which meant affection and esteem.

The Vulgate pulled from the Greek word *agape*, which was one of the four Greek words for love. This specifically referred to the highest form of love, the love of God for man and the love of man for God. They did not use the term *philia* which is brotherly love, but charity in that verse could still be more correctly translated into love. This love is greater than even faith and hope.

When translated into English, love was likely not selected by the translators because English does not have different words to distinguish different forms of love, and so we end up with charity in the verse.

For those of our brothers who follow Christ, Jesus says in the Gospel of Matthew "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

In these lessons, each of us is encouraged to practice that esteem and affection. We need to reach out to one another, especially those we do not hear from or otherwise might be overlooked.

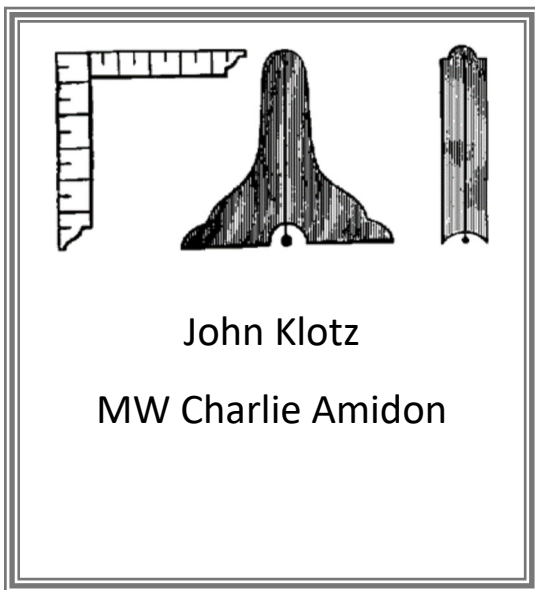
Simple consideration can have a profound impact on a brother's health and well-being.

Lastly, my brothers, allow me to leave you with a brief story. There was an awful storm in a coastal village. At daybreak, a young boy was walking along the shore where thousands of starfish had washed up on the beach, left to dry out and die over time.

He picked them up, one by one, and walked down to the undulating waves and tossed them back into the ocean as best he could.

An older man saw the futility of this gesture. "There are too many of them. You can't possibly save them all. What difference will it make?"

The boy thought for a moment and looked around at the enormity of the job before him, but did not despair. He picked up another starfish and said "it will make a difference to this one."



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From the Secretary's Table

Brethren,

As part of our communications, I am emailing this Newsletter monthly and generally send weekly updates about the goings on at Mizpah. If you'd like to be included in these emails, please let me know.

Fraternally,
Ben Zaayer
Secretary