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One step beyond

by MW Bro. Neil Neddermeyer, Grand Master, Minnesota

Our military has a catch phrase that simply states: "No man left behind." It reminds our fighting men and women that if they are captured or lost during battle, we will find them and endeavor to bring them back. These few words add greatly to the *esprit de corps* of each soldier.

We in the Craft must also live by such a code. We must not allow any one brother to be left behind. We must actively support each other through the toughest of times. Depression, divorce, alcoholism, the death of a loved one, ill health and old age are just some of the challenges that our brothers may face. These are the hardest and most important times for us to show our brotherly love. True bonding involves more than an implied relationship. We must do more than just play at being a brother. The relationship starts at lodge.

Men who come to lodge are taking the first step in reaching out for friendship. Many of our

newest and, consequently, our most important members come a surprisingly few times before we don't see them again.

Those brothers can be seen standing just outside the circle of conversation. They stand and watch. They are waiting for their expectations of the Craft to be fulfilled and it is just too hard for them to break into the circle by themselves. We are often too involved in running a meeting, contributing to a cause, or conversing with our friends to remember why we are there. We exist for mutual support and fraternalism.

Tolerance, respect, and acceptance fall short of the mark if we expect our brotherhood to flourish. We must make a conscious effort to extend a hand of friendship to our brothers in an assertive, not in a passive, manner. The first step is to observe. We need to pay attention to every brother who comes to lodge and make sure that he is welcomed. We need to approach him and find

A popular and successful poet, Bro. Edgar A. Guest (1881-1959) wrote more than 15,000 poems; one a day from 1916 to 1959. He once said:

"Masonry has greatly enriched my life. It has given me friendships that I cherish dearly. It has, I think, whispered subconsciously to me in the silent hours, words of caution and encouragement. I like going back to my lodge. I have found it refreshing and good to step aside out of the path of my busy life and sit again with the masons who have carried on in my absence."



Edgar A. Guest (1881-1959)

Called "The People's Poet"—and known to his friends as Eddie—Edgar Albert Guest was a British-born American writer whose sentimental and optimistic verses were widely read throughout North America.

From his first published verse in the *Detroit Free Press* on 11 December, 1898 until his death in 1959, he penned some 15,000 poems which were syndicated in over 200 USA

The people's poet

newspapers and reprinted in several books such as A

Heap O' Livin' (1916)—named for his famous lines "It takes a heap o' livin in a house t' make it home"—and *Just Folks* (1917). His popularity led to a weekly Detroit radio show which he hosted from 1931 until 1942 and, in 1951, a television show for NBC. His *Collected Verse* appeared in 1934 and went into at least eleven editions.

Several of Guest's poems, such as "I see you've travelled some," either referred to Freemasonry or echoed masonic sentiments. Because of Bro. Guest's devotion to Freemasonry, his community, and humanity in general, the Grand Lodge of Michigan established the Edgar A. Guest Award for lodges to present to non-masons within the community who have demonstrated distinguished service to the community and their fellow man.

An honorary member of six lodges, he received his Fifty Year Service Award from his mother lodge, Ashler Lodge No. 91, Detroit, the year before he died.

common ground through a give and take conversation. We need to become personal with him and to open opportunities

for future bonding. Lodge advancement will not happen through leadership

continued on page 2



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development, membership programs, masonic education, philanthropies, planned social activities, public service, great ritual, or studies in philosophy. Advancement can only happen by each individual freemason reaching out to another who is standing on the fringe of involvement. The Grand Lodge can develop any number of programmes and they all work—if true personal interaction between our brothers exists.

Brothers of lodges that are succeeding assertively show that they care for every man who attends. With effort come the rewards of lodge revitalization, expanded networking, and enrichment through personal sharing. Those lodges whose members are only passively interested in each others' lives will not succeed and perhaps shouldn't.

The secret of our future is one on one.

The secret is "no man left behind."

Reprinted from the online newsletter, *Cinosam*, 8 December, 2003.

Charity

During the Kelowna fire this past summer, when thousands, including VW Bro. Mel Fairs, were evacuated, he received a \$1,000 cheque from



W Bro. Palmer Cox

Grandview Lodge No. 96 and was asked to place these funds with one of several charities established at the time. Grandview Lodge brethren can be proud of the fact that their generosity has aided in the relief of families who lost everything in the fire.

Since this past autumn W Bro. Dennis Mitchell of **St. George's Lodge No. 41** has supplied the food and organized fund-raising Saturday morning breakfasts. The charge for breakfast has been four dollars but a firm policy of not giving change for five dollar bills has helped swell the coffers.

The last breakfast for the year, on 6 December, 2003 was a festive occasion with youngsters Raul Reis and Liam Pattison playing Christmas carols on piano. The money raised was turned over to the District Deputy Grand Master for District 9, RW Bro. C. Graham McAllister to be forwarded to the Food Bank. ■

DDGMs

The following suggestions are offered to brethren who wish to become a District Deputy Grand Master:

1. You must be a Past Master. It helps if you are well known in the District.
2. You should take a Masonic Leadership Course.
3. Do not Solicit the Deputy Grand Master or any other Grand Line Officer (you will go to the bottom of the list).
4. Make your DDGM aware that you are interested. ■

Vroom!

W Bro. Alan P. Matewish of **Cascade Lodge No. 12** in Vancouver, is forming a Masonic Motorcycle Club in our jurisdiction. There is already a lot of interest in forming a chapter in Vancouver's Lower Mainland.

All members of the Craft will be welcomed and he

Kevan van Herd photo



Bro. Steven Chung of Prince Charles Lodge, W Bro. Dennis Mitchell of St. George's Lodge, Bro. Edison Reis of St. George's Lodge, and Bro. Derek Fletcher of Prince Charles Lodge serve breakfast to W Bro. George Simpson.

expects to set up other chapters in other towns and cities as interest develops.

Call 604-987-9735 or email starman@telus.net for information ■

Regalia

Our Grand Lodge Regalia Committee is requesting donations of Grand Lodge regalia and jewels from members, or the families of deceased members, who would like to see these items put back to use. The committee is also accepting Master Mason aprons and cases to be donated to needy brethren.

The committee can be contacted through our Grand Secretary's office. ■

Diminishing membership

by Bro. Neal Bradley Toutant, *Hollyburn Lodge No. 135*

There has been much talk of late regarding the dwindling numbers in our membership. I believe that this unfortunate fact reflects a loss of the true values and ethics that made our society great. Fewer persons are drawn to the Craft, because the Craft no longer reflects the values that those individuals hold dear.

In a society with flexible values, crumbling ethics and

mores, those that are true of heart are being left more and more alone to wander in darkness. If you invite such a man to the lodge now, he would likely be inclined to join and attend regularly as the sense of brotherhood and succor for the mind and soul which we as freemasons enjoy is all but gone from society at large. I know this to be true because it applies to me.

At **Hollyburn Lodge No. 135**, we were recently honoured by the visit of our DDGM, RW Bro. Doug Burke, in what was undoubtedly the most enjoyable session at lodge that I have experienced to date. The discussion that was held focused on the very issue that is the subject of this letter. Our honourable visitor shared with us information about recruitment for the lodge being undertaken in the USA where large numbers of candidates are marshaled though their degrees in a day. He further indicated that this process was successful and the majority of brethren so raised attended regularly. At first, my mind recoiled at the very notion of all degrees being conferred in such a manner, however, further consideration caused me to change my position on the matter. Permit me to share my thinking with you.

First, society has changed

enormously in the last thirty years. In North America there is a general expectation of "instant everything." Everybody wants instant gratification. Second, although it is likely unwise to alter the work of the Craft as the mysteries are well embedded therein, the lodge must modernize somewhat to meet the new social paradigm. Thus, it behooves us to develop our recruitment and degree processes to meet the modern world—instant everything—and therefore these new practices being undertaken by our brethren in the States are probably just exactly what the lodge needs to sustain Freemasonry's numbers and, therefore, social impact. Again, I stress that I do not believe that the work itself should be modernized, just the way it is delivered.

When we encounter a good and decent man who does a stranger a good turn without expectation of reward, a man truly selfless and charitable, a man who we know would be a good freemason, should we not invite him to join us? ■

Letters

Bro. Robert Nemeth of **Columbia Lodge No. 38** writes to congratulate Bro. George Parton for his article in the December *Bulletin* on the reasons freemasons quit. He is particularly pleased that someone was prepared to speak out on this controversial topic.

Bro. Allen Kumar of **Duke of Connaught Lodge No. 64** writes in response to an article on Freemasonry in the December 10, 2003 edition of the *Vancouver Courier*.

"With respect to the author's assertion—'Attracting new members is particularly challenging because it's against the rules to recruit'—I am opposed to any form of solicitation.

"How can two brothers, as sponsors, utter the tongue of

good report if they do not have a protracted personal history with one who has responded to an advertisement? I feel that a masonic lodge faced with dwindling membership should amalgamate with another lodge, for, ultimately, we are not members of a given lodge, but members of the Craft. I believe that we should focus on our similarities, not on our insignificant, immaterial and otherwise inconsequential differences such as the particular lodge that we have attended for so many moons.

I believe that the very fabric of Freemasonry is impugned by the admittance of members about whose characters and beliefs we are not (virtually) certain—that, moreover, we underwrite a non-truth when we sponsor one about whose desires, proclivities and predilections we cannot unequivocally vouch for.

"I believe that the integrity of our customs and traditions should prevail over the fact of declining membership. If Freemasonry were to vanish today from the face of the Earth in light of its dwindling membership, I would not mourn its loss, but rather embrace and re-commit to the ways and means by which I, as a previously 'good' man, have become better by virtue of my participation in the Craft.

"One of the hallmarks of the various twelve-step programmes is a public-relations policy based on attraction rather than promotion. I respectfully suggest that such a principle should be a pillar of the Craft's creed."

RW Bro. Frank Kendrick writes in response to our constitutional restriction on distributing lodge minutes:

"Don't you think that this particular regulation—and the one following it—should now be brought into the twenty-first century? The United Grand Lodge of England, normally far more cautious than others,

now permits electronic distribution of minutes to restricted lists protected by password. As a member of **Internet Lodge 9659**, Province of East Lancashire, with some 180 members world-wide, I can download and print lodge minutes from the lodge's website after every meeting. The lodge summons and other confidential matters are available to members, all with the blessings of the United Grand Lodge of England. Indeed, a number of our concordant bodies here in BC also regular post or email minutes to their members.

"Similarly, it is time for secretaries to be allowed to tape record business meetings. I would venture to say that very few secretaries today take shorthand, and accuracy in minutes is important. Grand Lodge *Proceedings* are recorded and printed, and have been for many years. We are not a secret society, and, where needed, discussions regarding candidates or benevolence, etc., can easily be left out or glossed over." ■

Publicity

The Grand Lodge of New York ran radio spots promoting its One Day Class this past November as well as running advertisements in movie theatres. One attempt at promoting Freemasonry, though, seems to have backfired on them.

Their Grand Master, MW Bro. Carl J. Atje, issued a statement this past May announcing that their State Governor, George E. Pataki, had accepted his offer to join the Craft and would be made a Mason at Sight. Unfortunately, the *New York Post* announced a week later that the governor feared he would commit "a grave sin" in the eyes of the Catholic Church and had canceled his plans to join Freemasonry. ■

Grand Lodge 133rd Annual Communication

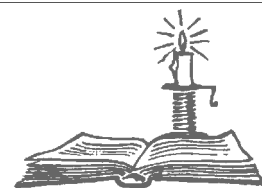
June 17-19, 2004
Salmon Arm

Our online registration form can be found at:
freemasonry.bcy.ca/gl2004

freemasonry.bcy.ca/masonic_bulletin

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The Library at Grand Lodge

One lodge

In spite of low membership and an average lodge attendance of eleven brethren, **Rainbow Lodge No. 180** has made a substantial impact in their community.

They have sponsored a Kids Fishing Derby for the last four years, each year with increased attendance. This past year Stewart Shipley, Port Hardy's Official Greeter, presented the trophy at the closing of the weekend events.

Two years ago at the BC Family Fishing Weekend the lodge sponsored a successful food tent, which led to the construction of a chuckwagon on an eighteen foot travel trailer frame. They recently installed a popcorn machine and used it at a three-day baseball tournament in July.

Members of the lodge were invited to the annual Chamber

of Commerce dinner this year, where they were presented a special plaque for their work in Port Hardy.

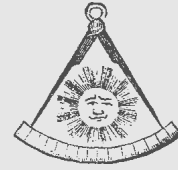
When W Bro. Norm Cole was Worshipful Master, the lodge entered a float in the annual Filomi Days Parade, decorating his boat with balloons and ribbons. W Bro. Cole made a pair of signs promoting the lodge name and sponsorship of the derby. From then on, each year, they have continued to participate in the parade.

This year the lodge offered to share the chuckwagon profits with the local Chapter of the Order of Eastern Star, Polaris No. 98. They helped staff the chuckwagon at Beaver Lake on Father's Day, and at numerous baseball games. The wagon was put to use once again in Port McNeill for Orca Fest where Polaris Chapter sold corn on the cob, popcorn, coffee and cold drinks. They

The Grand Secretary

by RW Bro. James L. Floyd, Secretary, King Edward Lodge No. 28

To be right, or not to be right—that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in a secretary to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous criticism,
Or to take arms against a sea of errors,
And by correction end them? To correct
No more: and by correcting to say we end
The heart-ache and a thousand natural shocks
The grand secretary is heir to—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd.
To correct—to work! ay, there's the rub;
For it does take work to keep lodge records straight
There's the respect that makes errors of so long life;
For who would suffer the whip, the jibes,
the spurns of the Grand Secretary,
When he himself might their quietus make
With a good typewriter? Who would bear
The scornful remarks of the Committee on Warranted Lodges,
But that the dread of further work makes us
Rather keep those mistakes we have
Than to fly to others we know not of?
But conscience may make heroes of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Be strengthened by hard work and thought,
And the goal of the Grand Secretary,
A perfect return from every lodge,
Be at last attained. soft you now!
The Grand Secretary.—Right Worshipful Sir!
May all thine errors be forgotten.



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY FEBRUARY, 2004

5	Thu	Okanagan Lodge of Perfection, Installation	Vernon
13	Fri	Concordant Bodies 10:00 am	Vancouver
13	Fri	Principal Officers meeting 1:00 pm	Vancouver
14	Sat	Meridian Lodge No. 108, Scotch Breakfast meeting.	
14	Sat	Van Zor Grotto, Monarch's Ball, evening	
20	Fri	Vancouver Lodge Education and Research	Vancouver
21	Sat	Vancouver Grand Masonic Day	Vancouver
28	Sat	District No. 16 Aviation No. 175	Richmond

plan to add a three burner gas stove for next year and expect to be called out more often, as the Port Hardy Fire Department volunteers were very happy with the service.

An insert in the Port Hardy newspaper announced that Rainbow Lodge No. 180 would celebrate Christmas with giving. The lodge held an auction at it's

Annual Christmas Party, with proceeds going to the *North Island Gazette* Hamper Fund. Those attending the dinner at the Airport Inn Restaurant were asked to donate a gift for the auction. The brethren of Rainbow Lodge are to be commended for their commitment to community participation. ■

I see you've travelled some

by Bro. Edgar A. Guest, Ashlar Lodge No. 91, Detroit

Wherever you may chance to be—Wherever you may roam,
Far away in foreign lands; Or just at Home Sweet Home;
It always gives you pleasure, it makes your heart strings hum
Just to hear the words of cheer,
"I see you've travelled some."

When you get a brother's greeting, And he takes you by the hand,
It thrills you with a feeling that you cannot understand,
You feel that bond of brotherhood, that tie that's sure to come
When you hear him say in a friendly way
"I see you've travelled some."

And if you are a stranger, In strange lands all alone
If fate has left you stranded—Dead broke and far from home,
It thrills you—makes you dumb, When he says with a grip of fellow-
ship,
"I see you've travelled some."

And when your final summons comes,
To take a last long trip,
Adorned with Lambskin Apron
White and gems of fellowship—
The Tiler at the Golden Gate,
With Square and Level and Plumb
Will size up your pin and say "Walk In",
"I see you've travelled some."