

St. James Lodge No. 47 F. & A.M.

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Stated Communications: 1st & 3rd Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.



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Monthly News letter for April 2006 – May 2006



If the great Almighty ever searched for a treasure house in which to store the jewels of Love, Kindness, Self-Sacrifice, Devotion, Peace and Patience, His all seeing eye must have rested on a Mother's heart.

Who are the real heroes of Life--The great leaders of nations, the statesmen, the financiers, the poets and geniuses?? NO! I offer the quiet, patient, white-haired queen of every home who has planted in the hearts of these individuals the inspiration for the acts that brought them to fame. We need not search of a test of a Mother's devotion for examples of it are everywhere.

May is the time for each of us, as a son and a Mason, to honor our Mothers.

On May 4th we will have our Honesty and Integrity Program to honor four outstanding young citizens for their achievement as students and members of the community. This will be an open meeting and guests are welcome. The guest speaker will be Worshipful Bro. Larry H. Moore, Past Master of East Gate Lodge #452.

On May 18th, I am pleased to have as our guest speaker Colonel Philemon A. St. Amant II, US Army (Retired). During his tour of duty as the Senior U.S. Military Observer to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (Palestine) in 1983-1984, when he also commanded the 16-nation U.N. Observer Group Lebanon, he made interesting discoveries about early Masonry in the Holy Land. This will give us a new perspective from a first hand account of early Masonry and will serve to further our knowledge of Masonic History. Colonel St. Amant is a Mason and is a member of Hancock Lodge #311 AF&AM of Kansas, Armed Forces Valley Scottish Rite, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, York Rite of Fayetteville, NC and Adlallah Shrine of Overland Park, Kansas.

Please make an effort to come out and welcome Colonel St. Amant. For those interested, I will have available his biography which is most interesting reading.

Finally this busy Month ends with Memorial Day, the holiday that marks the end of school and the beginning of summer vacation. But lets not forget the true purpose of of the day, which is to honor our War Dead.

Be careful out there and I will see you at the meeting place soon.

Fraternally,
David Dodge, Worshipful Master

RECENT EVENTS

Apr. 6 *Grand Master's Official Visit (Open/meal 6:30 PM)
The food was good, exceeded in fineness only by the fellowship and the excellent and inspiring talk given by the Grand Master of Masonry of the State of Louisiana.

Apr. 20 EA degree, Masonic Education Program
The Lodge now has two new EA masons. Welcome, brothers!

FUTURE EVENTS

INVITE a guest, INVITE a guest.

May 4 *Honesty & Integrity Program (Open/meal 6:30 PM)

A guest INVITE, a guest INVITE!

May 18 program by Col. Philemon A. St. Amant II to talk on being Senior US Military Observer to the UN

-----Begin Casual Summer Attire, except for Degrees-----

Jun. 1 St. John the Baptist Program

Jun. 15 *Honor the Flag of Our Country Program

* Represents possible entertainment

TBA = To Be Arranged

Other Masonic Events –

Downtown York Rite Bodies meet regularly on the 1st Saturday of each month at 8:00 a.m. with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Scottish Rite Baton Rouge Valley meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Acacia Shrine Temple meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. with dinner at 6:00 p.m.

The Lodge of The Nine Muses, No. 9, F.&A.M., meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month in the Red Room of St James Lodge. If you are interested in visiting, contact one of the members to find time, dress code and other details. Ernest Easterly, W.M., Ricks Bowles, S.W., Adib Shala, J.W., Sam Roberts, Treasurer, Larry Moore, Secretary, William Mollere, Chaplain, Naresh Sharma, Sr. Deacon, Danny Smith, Master of Ceremonies, Gerard Ruth, Sr. Steward, Robert Zinn, Jr Steward, Kristopher Easterly, Tyler, Tim Atkins, Jim Pecoraro

SICKNESS and RELIEF, keep these in your thought and prayers:

The WM's young grandson was in serious condition at the Shrine Hospital after attempts to straighten a kinked intestine with air pressure resulted in a blowout. Latest word is that he is doing better and is at home.

BRO. FRANK ALTON MCGRAW joined the Celestial Lodge. He was a 50-year Mason and a member of St. James Lodge No. 47 and Baton Rouge Scottish Rite. Masonic service was held.

Brother Wade Davis' mother passed away. Eastern Star Service was held.

"Rays of Masonry" by Dewey Wollstein -1953

DEGREES AND LIFE

We cannot introduce innovations in Masonry. However, this does not mean that we cannot put something of ourselves into Masonry. It is the responsibility and duty of everyone who has a part in conferring the degrees to not only speak the words but to deliver their meaning. His own heart must reach the heart of the candidate. Together with the words there must be a feeling that the lessons are not *related to life*, but *are life*.

Moral lessons are taught men by good mothers and good fathers. Men are morally qualified before they are qualified to become Masons. The great purpose of Masonry then is to make possible a system of moral development which will widen the path of improvement. When the lessons of Masonry fail in the objective of creating a living philosophy, a philosophy that helps to make life a richer, fuller experience, then the greatest good is lost.

A great poem becomes even greater when one takes the time and effort to study the state of mind of the author, and to clearly understand the thought and inspiration behind the printed words.

So it is with the lessons of Masonry. We must take that which is warm, pulsating, alive, and drive it into the heart of the candidate.

Don't forget to invite someone for the open meeting and meal, May 4th!

From 'Somewhere in IRAQ'

By Brother Evan E. Cooper, LCDR USN

Please Pass To the Lodge at the Next Meeting

I have owed you this news and it has been a long time in coming. I have been in country close to 40 days. I am counting each one. I have been engaged in more topics and tasks than you can imagine.

For now I am the Operations Officer. That means I am second in command when the skipper is gone. My commands send mothers, fathers and mother's sons and daughters, in their early 20's and 30's, into harms way.

They have a picture of their loved one or children stuck to the inside of their helmets. I pray every night we all make it home.

We will be moving up North before too long, to a place that is termed *Mortar Rita Ville*. Helicopter gun ships fly infrared patrols at night to protect the troops while they sleep. Good luck sleeping while a gun ship slowly patrols 100 feet overhead.

For now the weather is beautiful. Sometimes I wake up and feel like I am in San Diego, CA. Later this summer the temperature will go as high as 130.

When I am not up North, I live in a Permanently Constructed Building (PCB). It has a concrete floor, concrete walls and a metal roof. All this means is that if we were hit with enemy fire, it projects the blast upward. Thus it contains the blast, minimizes casualties to the immediate building, and only does damage to those inside the building. It is basically open bay barracks. My personal hygiene facilities are out the door and a short walk to the heads. They are not nice. 'Toilets' in one building, and walk out the door and into another building to shower. Officers and enlisted personnel use the same facilities. Not the cleanest in the world.

I eat in a fairly nice chow hall. They even have ice cream. Meals are all the same, but it beats eating MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) as an alternative.

I have been told that when Iraq invaded Kuwait, the naval base was in the hands of the Iraqis in less than an hour.

I have been to the Kuwait Naval base and their air field at Ali Al Salem. I saw a wall on the naval base where the Kuwait sailors were lined up against the wall and executed by the Iraq soldiers.

The bullet holes are still in the wall where mortar and brick were blasted out by the rounds.

On the same base is a boat where the Kuwaiti Naval Officers were forced into the hold of the boat. The boat was towed out into the harbor, and scuttled.

These sights convinced me that if I am ever in a desperate situation, I will not surrender, nor will I give up my command without a fierce struggle. At the air base at Ali Al Salem, there

is a tower where the base commander *and his children* were hung by the Iraqis. How the commander felt as he watched his children being hung, I do not know. He should never have surrendered or given up. In the end he met the same fate he would have faced had he fought to the end, except with a lot less glory.

There is a wall against a building at the Kuwaiti air field where the Kuwaiti air force met the same fate as the Kuwaiti navy. Very few of the military personnel were willing to fight to the finish, in the end they lost their dignity, pride, country and lives.

I have learned one of the tests for freedom is "how much will you give for the benefit".

There are army units all around me. After 17 years in the Navy, I am learning to speak "Army". Units with legendary names are all around me. The 3rd army, Patton's last command, the 101st Airborne, 3rd Army, General Custer's old unit, some known and unknown. Lots of heavy armor supported by infantry and artillery.

The units that bear the brunt of the casualties are the transport units. I have spoken to soldiers that have been on convoy duty for a month at a time. I spoke to a young man that had the nick name of "Force Field." He had been driving a truck; an IED exploded by his front cab and hit the trucks in front and behind him. He said it was not his time to go, others say 'divine intervention'.

Spoke to a young Marine coming down from deep in Indian country. Out of his unit alone, 7 dead, over 100 wounded. Do not know his age, and did not ask, but he was young.

I have seen some other masons in the area. Most seem to be Prince Hall. I have also heard there are some lodges in the area, but believe them to be same. Only met 2 brothers who were F&AM.

Well there is a lot more I could say, but just do not have the time. If I waited any longer to send this message and add to it, you might see me back in the states before you got it. Thank you for your support and thinking of me. My travels take me far. Will report my findings. For now have all I need.

In Brotherhood and Love, Evan

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