

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

David Thomas Dodge, W.M.

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



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Monthly News letter for July 2006 – August 2006



August 2006

Early on, August was referred to as the "Dog Days of August," I guess because that was the time when dogs got rabies and the lazy days of summer passed without much consequence. Now the days are moving fast and everyone is in a hurry going here, there and nowhere in traffic that moves at a snail's pace.

The dress code will still be casual for the officers unless we have a degree.

However; this August it looks like we will be busy with three Entered Apprentice Degrees. We accepted three new applications last meeting and should be ready to install these new candidates this month. I will be announcing the schedule later.

The First Degree of Freemasonry, in all rites, is that of Entered Apprentice. In all languages the radical meaning of the word is a learner. It is in Masonry a preliminary degree, intended to prepare the candidate for the higher and fuller instructions of the succeeding degrees. I feel that the Entered Apprentice Degree is most important, because the impressions produced on the mind of the candidate are likely to be lasting.

Don't forget that September the 7th , "Guest Night", will be here before you know it. You should already have several good men in mind to invite. Don't assume they will remember, remind them several times of the date. This is our best opportunity to get new members and the future of your Lodge depends upon it.

Have a good month, stay cool and be careful out there. I will see you at the meeting place soon.

Sincerely,
David Dodge. WM

RECENT EVENTS

Jul. 6 a 4th of July Program was presented
Jul. 20 Treasurer's Report & Committee Reports, 1 EA degree
Jul 27 Special at 5:30pm, 2 EA degrees
The Lodge went to refreshment and traveled to Welsh Funeral Home for a Masonic Funeral for Brother "Bo" Culpepper. We returned to the Lodge to finish the degrees.

FUTURE EVENTS

-----Begin Casual Summer Attire, except for Degrees-----
Aug. 3 Masonic Education Program, FC degree
Aug. 17 TBA
-----End Casual Summer Attire-----
Sep. 7 *Guest Night (Open/meal 6:30 PM)
Sep. 21 Remembrance Night (Deceased Brothers)
Oct. 5 *Past Masters' Night (Open/meal 6:30 PM)
Oct. 19 TBA
Nov. 2 St. John the Evangelist & Election of 2007 Officers
Nov. 16 *Thanksgiving Program (Open/meal 6:30 PM)
Dec. 7 Install Officers for 2007 (Open/meal 6:30 PM)

* 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:

Please keep MW Bro Pecarraro, PM in your prayer as he faces the challenges of living with lung cancer.

It was a pleasure to see Bro Pecarraro at the July meeting of the Lodge of The Nine Muses.

He seems to be in good spirits and his attendance raised OUR sprits.

It is with regret that the Brethren are informed of the loss of Bro. John's grandson. The family is in our prayers.

BILISOLY, BENJAMIN MICHAEL (INFANT) Born Thursday, July 13, 2006, in Baton Rouge, he died one day later on Friday, July 14, 2006. Graveside service was at Greenoaks Memorial Park on Monday, July 17, at 10 a.m., conducted by Don Williams. He is survived by his parents, Philip L. Bilisoly and Trudy S. Bilisoly; grandparents, John L. and Jeanette R. Bilisoly; and a sister, Cheryl E. Bilisoly.

July 26, 2006, Brother "Bo" Culpepper was electrocuted while working on an air conditioner. Our Brother was 48 years old and leaves a wife Debbie and a teenage son, to whom our prayers go out.

Brother Turhan Ak lost his mother on July 10. He says, "She was 99 years young. She lived a very fulfilling life and she always enjoyed being with her family. We will miss our yearly visit and being with her."

Brother Ak, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

W. Bro. Bill Griffith, PM St. James Lodge, moved and demitted to Hendersonville Tennessee a couple of years ago. An email from his wife Harriet: "May 1, Bill had quadruple bypass surgery. Three of the bypasses aren't very good. The doctor said: "I didn't have much to work with. I did the best I could." Fortunately the one really good bypass is "the important one, the one that counts." He stayed in the hospital a week, came home on Monday night, and then had to go to the ER in Hendersonville (Tenn.) Saturday with a bad leg infection. The doctor there gave him a high-powered antibiotic in an IV. That sort of slowed him down, but it did the trick. He is doing fine now and started his cardiac rehab. If anyone wishes to send Bill a get well card his address is:

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Surrender is not an option -- the last bullet is mine
The real 4th of July

Since I last wrote much has happened. I have returned from Iraq and gone on a business trip to Nairobi, Kenya.

Nairobi was beautiful and the trip was desperately needed. I do have a four day pass coming but I am not scheduled to take it until late August. The temperature was perfect with highs in the mid 70s and lows in the upper 50s. That was chilly compared to what I am use to here in the sand box.

I was able to stay in a beautiful golf resort for 2 days and then I had to transfer to a hotel in the city. While at the golf resort I was able to jog along the golf greens which were cut out of the jungle. The greens were beautiful, lush and thick. Huge trees lined the fairways, and monkeys climbed in the trees and under brush. When I ran, I always watched my feet. There are not many animals that I fear, but snakes top the list. The horse flies could draw blood if they caught you and the mosquitoes were as bad as the ones in South Louisiana after hurricane Katrina. All of these environmental only made me run faster. All in all it was a good training exercise.

Early in the morning I would get my coffee and watch the sun rise over the jungle and sneak by the mountains in the distant. Quite a bit different from watching the sun rise over the desert sand.

The hotel in the city was supposed to be a very nice hotel, but in reality it was not much more than a motel six. I did get a driver from the US Embassy in Nairobi, who knew the high roads, low roads, and back roads. I got a chance to see Embassy row with all of the Embassies and I got to see the slums. That is an incredible sight. I have been to third world countries in North Africa, Europe and Central and South America, but so far Nairobi takes first place. We are blessed with what we have, for the other side is much worse.

The temperature here is the constant. Not as hot in the early morning, hot in the day, and hot in the evening and hot at night. The average temperature is close to 120 in the day. All of the potable water for the compound is stored in above ground tanks. At a minimum the water temperature is 120 degrees.

I think it gets hotter than that in the water tanks, because when the water comes out of the shower heads and the faucets it is HOT. That is on the cold side. I called public works and asked if they could shut the power off to the hot water heaters, and use the hot side for cold water. I was told the power to the heaters had been shut off several months ago.

Customs work is a booming business. Right now we have our 2 Star Admiral in the area and he is taking tours of all of the Navy Commands in the Theatre. He is high maintenance and Commanders give him quite a bit of attention. It is good

for their careers. There are more demands for Navy Custom services every day. Our relief will have more work than we had while we were on watch.

I am ready to return to the US. I have been asked to sign up for an extension, but I just do not have it in my heart and soul to stay a day longer than is necessary. The duty would be a joint duty with the Army and the tasking would be convoy duty in Iraq. That is not out of the question in the future but for now I feel I must return to the US. My response has been when the enemy gets to the Mississippi River, I will return to the fight.

Many sobering events have taken place while we were in theatre. Several weeks ago, two Army soldiers were captured by the enemy. As you know several days later their bodies were found. Tragically they died a horrible death and unconsciousness and death was a relief for them. That being said, it is the unwritten word among my sailors and fellow soldiers that surrender is not an option and the last round is yours. Several of my shipmates with whom I spend day in and day out, in each others presence, have agreed to go down fighting, but if capture is imminent the last round is not for the enemy but for our self.

After the death of the al Queda leader, resistance and hostilities have grown fiercer. As I have mentioned before, I am in Command when the Commanding Officer is out of the area. He has gone north to check on his command in Iraq. While he was flying into Iraq his aircraft took fire from ground forces. No battle damage was reported. The executive officer leaves later this week for his rotation to Iraq and when he returns then it is my turn to go north. I would venture a scientific wild guess that close to %70 of the ordinance that is shot by the enemy is a dud. That means that they are doing the damage they do with only a 30 - 40 percent chance of success. I can report from personal observation that if their ordinance had the same explosion rate as ours, we would be in a lot worse shape in Iraq and Afghanistan.

On the fourth of July we got a relaxed duty day. I was able to take a nap and slept 3 hours. I washed my clothes, had a grilled steak with my Chief, CO and XO. Then retired for the evening.

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