

The District Light

The information bulletin
of Niagara B District

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Activity in the District

The new year has prompted some lodges and members to become more active and proactive.

Port Colborne

A huge "Congratulations!" goes out to the brethren of Macnab Lodge # 169 who, along with assistance from the brethren Merritt Lodge # 168 and the generous donations of W. Bro. Brent Tarabalka of No Frills grocery store in Port Colborne, were able to deliver to the Port Cares Food Centre over 1900 lbs. of food to be distributed to some of the less fortunate in Port Colborne.

They accomplished this by having a food drive in the lodge, which donations Bro. Tarabalka then matched.



Ken Burke, Brent Tarabalka, Rex Harrison,
Kim Randell

Merritt Lodge

In promoting masonic education, W. Bro. Dave Spano announced "a Lodge of Discussion, where we would meet on the level, have a moderator to keep the harmony, and discuss topics relating to Masonry. I was thinking a topic for this month could be the Rough, and Perfect Ashlars. The idea is to get a better understanding of Masonry by learning from each other's experiences."

Van Alstyne Place

The building at Van Alstyne Place is an impressive site and centre for masonic activity but is in need of some repair and refreshing.

W. Bro. Michael Ferguson, as a member of the Temple Board, included this message in his summons:

"Let's put into active practice the principle learned from Hiram, King of Tyre, who supported King Solomon with men and material to build the Temple at Jerusalem by supporting our brethren who share with us the Van Alstyne Place Masonic Temple.

"We don't know just what the future holds for us at Van Alstyne Place, but one thing is for sure, all three of the lodges will need to support one another in order to ensure a happy outcome.

"This upcoming year promises to be a good one with some degree work for our Lodge (St. Mark's). Let us remember that it's Quality we seek, not Quantity. We are here to make good men better, that is to make Masons, not just members. So let's be proficient in our work and endeavor to be happy ourselves, and communicate that happiness to others."

Masonry in the Family?

There must have been a time when masonry included the man's family. Many wives used to join women's Masonic organizations like Amaranth or the Order of the Eastern Star.

In some jurisdictions, a child of a mason could join DeMolay or Rainbow for Girls.

Today, however, the "Masonic family" arguably no longer exists, especially in today's younger generation of Masons. Few Masonic spouses under 35 are actively engaged in Masonic endeavours with their husbands. Masonic and familial obligations today simply do not overlap.

But they could. [Keep reading]

Family Luncheons

For several years district masons have been attending First Friday Fellowship dinners and Solomon's Miners Luncheons.

These outings have proven to be comfortable gatherings of men and their partners.

Please include yourself.

You are invited to attend and to bring a relation or a friend to share a nice meal and to remind yourself of how many friends you have in the fraternity.



You are encouraged to attend the next gathering which will be held at the Village Restaurant in Chippawa on Portage Road across from the King Edward VII Lodge building.

The food is good and inexpensive. Greek and Canadian dishes are offered at less than \$10 each. Arrive by noon on Friday, February 5. Stay as long as you like.

Every third Thursday similar mixed groups gather for lunch at various restaurants in the peninsula. We will meet next on Thursday, February 18 at the Swiss Chalet on Lundy's Lane.

Being One

We agree that belonging to the Craft is meant to be a positive experience.

Few organizations outside of the church feel the pleasure of being able to voice their appreciation of their order and their love for each other as masons can and do.

Certainly we know the comfort level we share when we interact with the men in lodge.

We would be doing a good service if we expressed that appreciation to non-members.

Liking

Masonry tends to be distinctly' men-only' but there are occasions when ladies are welcomed. One such time is a Grand Master's banquet.

RWBro. Michael H. Shirley had this to say after he took his wife to a masonic dinner:

It's the only time aside from weddings that we both get to dress well, eat well, and have adult conversations in elegant surroundings.

We enjoyed ourselves, and when we were heading home, I asked her what she thought about the evening. Without hesitating, she said, "I like how you guys like each other so much."

And that really sums up a lot of what I love about the Craft. There's a reason the first tenet of a Mason's profession is Brotherly Love. Without that, nothing else matters.

Masonry removes the barrier of mistrust that seems to exist in the profane world which causes others to remain at a perpetual distance from one another. Almost all my closest friends in this world are Masons, and it's not just because they are likeable guys; it's because they go out of their way to like other people.

My wife saw it right away, that precious gift of Brotherly Love I've found in Freemasonry. I find it in the stated meetings at my home lodge and I find it in the Annual Communication of my Grand Lodge.

It's Good

A DDGM in New York State has said, "It is wonderful to be a mason. As we hurry through our busy trestle boards and lodge activities, it is good at times to stop and reflect on all the good our craft performs, not just for our own members, but also for the world at large.

"Few outside our circle will ever experience the brotherly love, comradeship, tolerance and patience we share with our Brothers.

"Let us always remember that we are first and foremost Brothers bound together by solemn vows to aid, support and assist each other."

R.W.Bro. Michael J. Storck

Finding the Balance

Although we remember being told that masonry involved going to one meeting a month, we soon discovered that we could be much more involved than that.

We found the pleasure of being involved but we also felt the stress of being pulled in different directions by work, family, and club demands on our time.

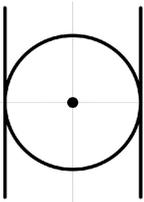
In *The Karate Kid*, Mr. Miyagi, played by Noriyuki "Pat" Morita (a mason), gave this advice:

"Daniel-san, everything in life need Balance. You must find your balance – not balance in your stance for fighting – but life balance. Find your Balance, Daniel-san."



In masonry, too, we are directed to find balance.

The 24-inch gauge reminds us to budget how we manage our time.



We are also directed to daily employ the compasses in our daily lives, circumscribing our desires and keeping our passions within due bounds toward all mankind, particularly our brethren in freemasonry.

Each of us must find our balance.

Advice

We are often confronted with slogans and posters giving advice on how to live, love, and interact with people. Most of the time we can skip over the messages because we already accept the truth being expressed. Other times we balk at the concept if it requires effort or change. For example:

Knowing is not enough; we must apply.
Willing is not enough; we must do.

We can appreciate the intention and applaud the message but question our commitment to do what is directed. What follows is "good advice".

Life

You've got to do your own growing, no matter how tall your father was.

The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the person who is doing it. Chinese proverb

Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right. Henry Ford

You miss 100% of the shots you don't take. Wayne Gretzky

When you focus on problems, you will have more problems.
When you focus on possibilities, you will have more opportunities.

You are what you do, not what you say you'll do.

Forgive others, not because they deserve forgiveness, but because you deserve peace.

We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools. Martin Luther King

