

WLN20 Trestle Board

May 2023

FROM THE EAST – MAURO LARA – WORSHIPFUL MASTER

Hello Brethren, Family, and Friends.

I hope everyone is enjoying the good weather that came our way. I trust the cold and heavy rains we experienced this winter are behind us. Now we look forward to spring and summer.

As **California Freemason** magazine published by the Grand Lodge mentions, spring is a chance for new beginnings. To quote Most Worshipful **Randy Brill**, Grand Master of Masons of California:

“To see the seasons changing so gloriously is to be reminded that life is full of cycles – endings and beginnings.”

As winter ends and spring comes in, our Lodge reflects the cycle as well, especially the new beginnings part. Brother **Kelvin Kimball** was initiated into our Ancient and Honorable Fraternity on April 27th.

Congratulations and welcome, Brother Kimball!

To this point, we increased the number of brothers in the Lodge by three with two initiations in February and this most recent one in April. Way to demonstrate new beginnings. Additionally, new beginnings are also experienced as we see our brethren progress on the Masonic journey. Brother **Moises Gonzalez** underwent a new beginning in his degree journey by being passed to the Fellow Craft degree in March. As you can tell, I am excited and hopeful for spring and for our Lodge in a big way.

Last month, Brother **Brandon Jenkins** planned and carried out our annual **Bowling with Brothers**. It was held at **Country Club Lanes** with pizza and soft drinks to accompany some great bowling. I am amazed at the level of bowling expertise among the group. Not only was it a lot of fun, but we were able to experience quality fellowship. Here is a picture of those of us attending:



In May, we hold a special celebration in our country. On the second Sunday in May (this year on **May 14**) we celebrate **Mother's Day**. We honor mothers and mother figures. Whether mom, wife, grandmother, great-grandmother, stepmother, foster mother or other mother figures, we try to go all out by recognizing them with candy, flowers, meals, and many other such appreciations. To all moms and mother figures, Happy Mother's Day. No matter how, it is an honor for us all to recognize each and everyone one.

Coming Soon

Add to your calendar events and/or activities that are on the horizon.

1. On **June 15th**, we have our **Annual Table Lodge** in the Banquet Room. This event is for Masons only.
2. On **June 22nd**, we have as part of our Masonic Education Nights: "**Forget-Me-Not**" **Lecture**. presented by Worshipful **Narbeh Bagdasarian, PM**. He will focus on Freemasonry in Germany in the 1903's into World War II. This is open to Masons, Family, and non-Masons. Dinner at 6:00 PM and program at 7:00 PM.
3. On **July 20th**, we will be hosting a reception honoring Worshipful **Joseph Dongo, PM**, who is serving as Grand Standard Bearer of Masons in California this year. The event will be catered by **Tony's Deli** and the recommended dinner donation is \$20 per person (Masons and guests). Menu options are **Tri-Tip Steak, Chicken Cordon Bleu, or Vegetarian**. RSVP by July 13th and please let us know if you have any dietary requirements [HERE](#). The agenda includes 5:00 PM Social | 6:00 PM Dinner | 7:00 PM Program.

4. On **July 29th**, we have our **Charity Drive** by providing assistance at the **River City Food Bank**. This is well worth our time, and typically lasts 3 to 4 hours. This makes a difference in the life of many and is fun to do as well.
5. On **August 12th**, our **Annual Family BBQ Picnic** is on the calendar. We are partnering with our sister Lodge **General Douglas MacArthur Lodge No. 853** for fun and festivities.
6. On the horizon, we are also doing a fundraiser at the **River Cats** in partnership with **Union-Tehama Lodge No. 3**. We will be manning one of the concession stands. This promises to be full of fun and the funds raised will go toward charitable endeavors.
7. **Annual Past Masters' Night** on **September 21st**. We are looking forward to having a full slate of Past Masters join us and perform a Third Degree Ceremony. Not only is this fun and educational, but it will also be very significant to our Lodge and especially to our Brother going through the ceremony. Past Masters, please note this in your calendar, we look forward to this special night.

There are several other activities, Degree Ceremonies, and events at subsequent times of the year. As you can see, our line of Officers is very, very busy practicing, and preparing for Degree Ceremonies, planning and executing events and activities, and also participating in our monthly meetings. This is a great line of Officers of whom we are all very proud. Thank you, Officers.

Hope to see you at all, or as many of these events as possible. Hope you have a most enjoyable **Cinco de Mayo**. Nothing like a good chip with guacamole combined with a refreshing margarita. By the way, did you know that we in the United States consume a staggering 81 million pounds of avocados for Cinco de Mayo?

That's a lot of guacamole!! We also consume a massive 126 million liters of tequila for margaritas, representing 47% of drinks ordered on that day. If you remember the next day how good the guacamole was, you are better than most.

Gracias!

FROM THE WEST – MATT MASON – SENIOR WARDEN

Brethren,

Why is it important for Master Masons to attend Degrees?

The common answer is that we need to support our new Brethren in their journey. That is not wrong, in any way, shape, or form. But that's not why you should go.

As noted in the latest issue of **California Freemason**, which was adapted from a writing of Brother **Brett McKay** (Veritas 556, Norman, Okla.):

"One of the maladies of our age is a feeling of disconnectedness from our physical selves. We spend much of our time interacting as disembodied personalities online and don't navigate the tangible world or connect with other people in the flesh as much as we used to.

Ritual provides an antidote to this malady, for, as Dr. Tom F. Driver notes, 'no good ritual is disembodied.' In fact, physicality is one of the linchpins of Ritual's effectiveness. Its physicality engages all the senses and activates the imagination."

What that means is that we can't just sit back and post a note of encouragement on Facebook when a new brother is initiated to benefit us. We need to be there, physically, to get the fulfillment of remembering our rituals.

This isn't a "you need to be here" appeal to you. You need to be at lodge for you. We don't join Freemasonry to put it on our resume, we join to be a better man — for ourselves, spouses, families, and friends.

The way to help keep that commitment of masonry to build better men is to remind ourselves of where we came from, and our journey through the stories, by being on the sidelines during a degree. It reminds us of our obligation and what it meant when we knelt at that Altar to change our lives.

Do you need to be at every Degree? No. But regular attendance at degrees is for you to enjoy and remember, which is arguably more important than having a full lodge during one.

We all begin as imperfect stones or "rough ashlar." With education, hard work, and Brotherly Love, a Freemason is shaped into a being that has been tried by the square of virtue and encircled by the compass of his boundaries.

The following poem, written by **Mary Brooks Picken**, entitled, "Thimblefuls of Friendliness" was written in 1924, and, perhaps, says it best.

*"Isn't it strange that Princes and Kings
And clowns that caper in sawdust rings,
And just plain folks like you and me,
Are builders for Eternity?"*

*To each is given a bag of tools,
A shapeless mass and a book of rules,
And each must make ere life is flown,
A stumbling block, or a stepping stone."*

FROM THE SOUTH – JOE WALLACH – JUNIOR WARDEN

As we enter into May, there are many days to celebrate, some light-hearted and some somber.

Star Wars Fans of course look forward to "May the 4th be With You", **Star Wars Day**, followed by the **Cinco De Mayo**, which is usually marked with food, drink, and music.

On May 29th this year we observe **Memorial Day**. A day to remember those who have lost their lives while serving in the U.S. Military and honor their contribution to the enduring freedom of the United States.

We have fifteen birthdays this month, including our Lodge Master, Worshipful **Mauro Lara**.



May The Lodge Be With You

Francisco Marques, PM - Masonic Education Committee

Since our Stated Meeting falls on **Star Wars Day** this year, I wanted to share a few lessons we learned from Worshipful **Russ Tomas, JPM**, our ultimate Coruscant Ambassador. No, it's not a typo. Some use JPM as Junior Past Master. To me, he is our **Jedi Past Master**.

Like the Force, **Washington Lodge No. 20** is in and around every living thing in our **Masonic Odyssey**.

Whether our Entered Apprentices start as scruffy nerf herders, frog-eater younglings, or the sporadic midi-chlorian-loaded overachiever ("Wayne"?), all of them can build a better future for the Craft with the right support and leadership.

In our Lodge, we won't have access to **bacta tanks** and memory readers to grow genetic clones of our best Officers, but we will need to consider how WLN20 social and educational events, as well as coaching practices, might affect membership progress and retention.

Worshipful **Tomas** introduced us to a new way of performing Masonic Ceremonies and Ritual. It turns out it was possible to lighten up our Degrees with video games and pop culture references or the occasional soundtrack by the virtuoso **John Williams**, composer of the music of all nine **Skywalker Saga** films. In doing so, good seeds of innovation and creativity were planted, and the effects produced on membership are still felt and carried on by a good number of faithful **Padawan** to this day.

I'm no **Dan Zehr** but I do immerse myself into some Star Wars canon here and there, and - by a fortunate light-saber stroke of serendipity - I came across a piece written by Brother **Erik Marks**, published by the **Southern California Research Lodge**. This work caused me to reflect on some of the many philosophical aspects that are common to **Freemasonry** and the **Star Wars Universe** and made me realize that our JPM was right all along.

The author adroitly propounds:

"Far, far, away, in an era long ago, the archetypal battle between dark and light took an intergalactic turn, which several generations

know and love. The mythologies of old were presented with an updated articulation that heralded a mass-media shift to more complex backstories and openly troubled souls of heroes and anti-heroes alike."



"An esoteric duality of a different sort awaits the patient knight aspirant if he is willing to explore the mysteries. The spiritual foundation that Star Wars rests upon is a blend of Western and Eastern spiritual or wisdom traditions and related iconography, similar to those of the fraternity to which many of us belong.

"Like Jedi, Freemasons use tools to practice subduing urges to wrongdoing in the service of self and others. Jedi train to know their emotions without being swayed by them. Jedi, we could say, work towards the clairvoyance that enlightenment, or seeing the truth, offers, with the additional task of protecting other beings. They are supposed to be selfless servants to society through voluntary charity and strive to be pillars of their community by being exemplary citizens. They train to subdue emotions that would cause them to act out negatively towards others, which would lead to increased suffering. Jedi purportedly focus on self-improvement, making themselves, um, ...better.

"For the Freemason, the forces that bind us all together are brotherly love and affection. As such, these are the basis for tremendous acts of charity, compassion, and relief. They have inspired and maintained oral and written traditions that we will

transmit across space and time to the next generations of men who join."



Yes, it is no secret Freemasons cherish historical tradition. Most fraternal organizations advocate for themselves a tradition, which usually refers to a distant past. But the truth is that our Fraternity has been undergoing innovations for centuries and those steps have in actuality kept the Craft alive and moving forward, our Lodge included. There are many innovative changes that have been successful at the time, but have later been regarded as a backward step or had a very limited life, sometimes leading to membership resistance to change in general.

When our Lodge Brothers attended their first Stated Meeting at the new **Masonic Temple** on J Street on **April 1st, 1920**, many expressed disapproval and disappointment. The building was "too modern" or "not remarkable enough." To our present generation, however, our building is "distinguished" and "full of history."

Changes to how we "have experienced Freemasonry in the past" can be uncomfortable to some. This is not a problem with the Masonic Fraternity only, it is human nature to dislike change. It becomes uncomfortable to think that things are no longer going to be the same.

The **first Star Wars film** spawned a number of prequels, sequels, **stand-alone films, television series, books, theme parks**, and all kinds of merchandise. And, of course, there are those who consider the original trilogy the "real Star Wars." The new generations of fans may like the animated

series better. Nevertheless, the message is very clear to me: there is something for everyone.

Is this why the Star Wars franchise has been so successful? What is its enduring appeal, and why does it resonate with so many people? Similarly, I wonder, why is Freemasonry still going strong, even after centuries of existence?

Adaptability and Innovation

The new generations of Freemasons have already embraced the Craft as they know it.

Virtual Dues Cards? No problem!

Electronic Playlist for Ceremonies? Cool!

Online Candidate Learning Center? Love it!

Digital Trestle Board? Well, thank you for reading it!

Zoom Meetings? Meh...

Finding ways to determine our willingness to change ahead of time will become as important as learning Ritual and hosting coaching sessions. While we may not be able to predict the future, we certainly should be able to start thinking about how to position ourselves for whatever is coming next.

171 Years of Washington Lodge no. 20

A long time ago, 20 Master Masons met on Thursday, February 19th, 1852, for the purpose of organizing a new Masonic Lodge in the midst of the **Gold Rush** chaos. They drew up and signed a petition for a dispensation and presented it to the Grand Lodge of California, who granted it two days later.

On Wednesday, **May 5th, 1852**, those Brothers received their charter as **Washington Lodge No. 20**.

[Eight days later, on Thursday, the 13th, Nathaniel Curtis](#) was elected the first regular **Worshipful Master of Washington Lodge No. 20** under the charter. He was re-elected **Worshipful Master** of the same in 1853-1854 and 1857. For a full list of all Past Masters of our Lodge, please click **[HERE](#)**.

Congratulations, Washington Lodge No. 20!

May the past be your guide, may the future be your force, and may the Lodge be with you, always.



Washington Lodge No. 20

Mission Statement

To practice and promote a way of life that binds like-minded men in a worldwide brotherhood that transcends all religious, ethnic, cultural, social and educational differences.

Through Masonic principles and tradition, and by the outward expression of these through its fellowship and compassion, Washington Lodge No.20 Free & Accepted Masons provides ways in which to serve God, family, country, neighbors, and self in an environment that contributes to the enrichment and betterment of its members, mankind, and its communities.