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# THE BEACON

The monthly Trestleboard of Union Lodge #3, A.F. & A.M

January 2017

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## Tidings From the East

Happy New Year, my Brothers!

Thanks again for your confidence in electing me to the position of Worshipful Master. I am honored to serve Freemasonry in such an important capacity and will be working very hard to make good things happen at our Lodge and to show you that your trust in me is well founded.

I have been in touch with the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity about the possibility of our Lodge working with them. They are currently working on a 30+ house development and have about three houses currently under construction. They would definitely be interested in us participating in as many work days as we feel comfortable volunteering. This idea was well received at our December stated communication and I expect that we will put together a day or two of volunteering with them in May or June.

Our Senior Warden, WB Johnny Edwards, has also laid the groundwork for an outreach program for Masonic widows. This program is a wonderful idea and a great way to make sure that we are fulfilling our obligations to these important members of our Masonic community.

Of course, we will also continue our long-standing Lodge traditions, such as the Sweetheart's Dinner in February, the Corned Beef and Cabbage dinner in March, and our Lodge's commitment to ongoing Masonic education and guest speakers at our meetings.

I'm excited about the new and positive directions our Lodge is looking at as well as the continuity of our fine traditions. I look forward to seeing you about these projects and events in the months to come!

Fraternally,  
Matt Gerbrandt  
Worshipful Master  
Union Lodge # 3



## Tidings From the West

Greetings from the West.

The beginning of a new year within our Ancient Craft brings into the East a new Worshipful Master with his elected and appointed officers at his side to

aid in the implementation of his designs of his Trestle Board.

I send out to our Worshipful Master Matt Gerbrandt a loud and Fraternal Hazaah!

### The Chair of the Worshipful Master

The chair of the Worshipful Master can be a very lonely place where our honorable Worshipful Brother leads and governs his lodge.

The blazon sun of this station shines brightly over our Worshipful Master giving him the brightest light to guide us through some very dark and perilous journeys which is the work of a Master Mason.

The responsibility that comes with this station of the East is difficult to fathom at the start of the Worshipful Masters year and can even be more difficult to fathom as the Masonic Year progresses.

All the officers of Union #3 elected and appointed need to be at our Worshipful Masters side to help him keep our ship afloat and above water.

Brothers of the Ancient Craft we must look to the East to assist our new Worshipful Master with the designs upon his Trestle Board and always be ready to answer his call from the Blazon Light which can be seen by all the Stations and Places within the four walls in which we call Union #3.

Fraternally,  
Johnny J. Edwards  
Senior Warden  
Union Lodge # 3



## Tidings From the South

As the old year draws to a close, we look forward to our labors in the upcoming Masonic year. But our upcoming year marks a milestone for the Lodge, as it will be 150 years since Union Lodge #43 was granted a dispensation by the

Grand Lodge of Oregon. Our Lodge has been at labor in this fair city for a century and a half, which is surely cause to celebrate. But did you know that the history of Masonry in McMinnville goes back even further?

Union Lodge as it exists today is a merger of Union Lodge #43 and Lafayette Lodge #3. Lafayette had a storied history, being one of the founding Lodges of the Grand Lodge of Oregon. They were originally chartered as Lafayette #15 under the Grand Lodge of California. They themselves had merged with Joppa Lodge #151, one of the four Lodges whom they had originally sponsored. We are the heirs of their labors, which is why our Lodge maintains the Lafayette Masonic Cemetery to this day.

One of the Lodges whom Lafayette helped create was McMinnville Lodge #31. The year was 1860, the same year that Abraham Lincoln was elected President and South Carolina succeeded from the Union. During that year Multnomah #1 lost their building, which burned to the ground—taking with it most of their possessions. Including their original charter from the Grand Lodge of Missouri, the first charter issued to a Lodge on the west coast.

But in McMinnville, the mood was optimistic. In his Grand Master's Address that year, MW Amory Hol-

brook noted that "In January, upon a petition from a constitutional number of brethren, recommended by Lafayette Lodge No. 3, I granted a dispensation for a Lodge at McMinnville, in Yamhill county, to be hailed as Yamhill Lodge, and appointed Bros. F. C. Griffith, W. M., Thomas Pettygrew, S. W., and C.G. Saylor, J. W." The Lodge appears to have set to work directly, as their returns for 1860 show two FCs and three EAs. Amusingly enough, that report shows Bro. J. Edwards as their Tyler—which should prove amusing to our SW, WB Johnny Edwards.

But alas, the good fortune which favored their efforts at the start was not to last. In the East, the Civil War quickly moved from being the short conflict most expected to being the one of the bloodiest conflicts in history up to that time. But in Oregon such concerns were quickly overshadowed by the Great Flood.

Beginning in December of 1861 through January of 1862, the largest flood in the history of Oregon, Nevada and California would take a devastating toll on the region. The Willamette River would rise 55 feet above its normal summer levels. The resultant flood spread devastation throughout the area. Most of the buildings had been placed next to the rivers—almost all were lost. In the city of Champoeg, original capital of Oregon Territory, only the Newell House and two saloons would escape destruction. The city was never rebuilt. In Government Camp, cut off by the floods, many would starve to death for lack of supply. No place in the Territory would be left untouched, as the flooding reached as far east as Idaho and as far south as New Mexico.

Going unnoticed in the carnage, the original Charter of McMinnville Lodge #31 was lost to the flood. By November of 1862, the Brothers of McMinnville had contacted the Grand Master, inquiring about the Charter. As soon as they realized that the original had been lost, the Grand Lodge began the process of creating and sending a new one. But with the difficulties presented by roads damaged in the flood, it would be 1863 before a new charter was dispatched. That charter, in turn, would be lost by the courier whilst fording a stream enroute to Jacksonville. It would be discovered two weeks later, somewhat water damaged.

But the delay proved devastating to the Lodge. During the time they had been waiting to receive their Charter, they lost a number of Brothers who, choosing to leave their flood-ravaged homes behind, set out north for the promise of the gold fields in Brit-

ish Columbia. As noted in his address in 1862, GM Bayley said that “I received a communication from the Brethren of McMinnville, stating that there were so many of them gone North that they did not want it, but wanted their money back that they had paid into the Grand Lodge for it.” There is no indication whether those funds were ever returned.

But despite its ill-starred beginnings, Masonry in McMinnville would not be long denied. In October of 1867 a Dispensation would be requested and granted for Union #43. That effort would be joined by a number of Brothers who had been involved in the earlier effort. Notably, Bro. J.R. Bean—one of the EAs from McMinnville #31 in the year 1860—would appear in the membership of Union #43 in 1868. Listed that same year as an EA is one N.B. Bean. So it would seem that Masonry was being passed down through the generations despite everything that Nature could throw at it.

It is interesting to realize that, at the time, if a Brother was involved in starting a Lodge under dispensation he automatically lost his original Lodge affiliation upon the Chartering of the new Lodge. So the Brothers who started our Lodge a century and a half ago not only persevered against one of the worst disasters in the history of Oregon, they believed so strongly in our Lodge that they gave up their stations and places in their home Lodges to make Union Lodge a reality.

So as our new Masonic year begins, let us remember the strength and resourcefulness of our Brothers past. Should we achieve even a portion of their courage and dedication, the future of our Lodge shall be very bright indeed.



### From the Secretary's Desk

*“Hope  
Smiles from the threshold of the year  
to come,  
Whispering 'it will be happier'...”  
- Alfred Lord Tennyson,  
“The Foresters: Robin Hood and Maid  
Marian”, 1892*

Welcome to 2017! I'm writing this in December and you'll get it toward the end of the month, but the focus in this Beacon is January, which puts us in both the new calendar and Masonic year.

Before we look forward too much, let's take a look back. We've had a tough year on membership.

Five of our Brethren have passed to the Celestial Lodge – WB Glen Shipman, WB Bob Orr, Bro. Sam Eastman, Bro. O.C. Yocum and WB Ray Horowitz. Overall, that puts us at 86 members, both dues paying and life members. When I was raised in 2006, roughly 10 years ago, we had about 110 members. We haven't been tracking point in time membership numbers (I am now) but I intend to go back and try to recreate the last few years of total membership, just so we can see change from year to year. Growth is not our primary concern, but a certain amount of growth needs to be taking place to account for attrition.

While petitions spiked a couple times in the last ten years, we've had trouble getting membership to “stick”: men who have petitioned and upon whom we conferred the Entered Apprentice degree haven't been consistently advancing to their Master Mason proficiency and eventually taking a place in the Lodge. This year was much lighter – partly because we started trying to address this issue making sure that men who petitioned had done some due diligence and were committed to continuing.

With those things in mind, here are some statistics related to membership that may give you a better feel for where we are. Some of the information presented, below, explains a part of the challenges that we have related to volunteer opportunities. Some of it is a restatement of the information provided in the Lodge Finance presentation from September, but there are some new data points as well. If you're interested in the full presentation (the slides, anyway), it's available on the website in the members area where minutes are published and secured in the same fashion.

Finally, letters will go out shortly related to dues and I appreciate the good response on the contact information forms. I'm still processing them, but they have been coming in steadily.

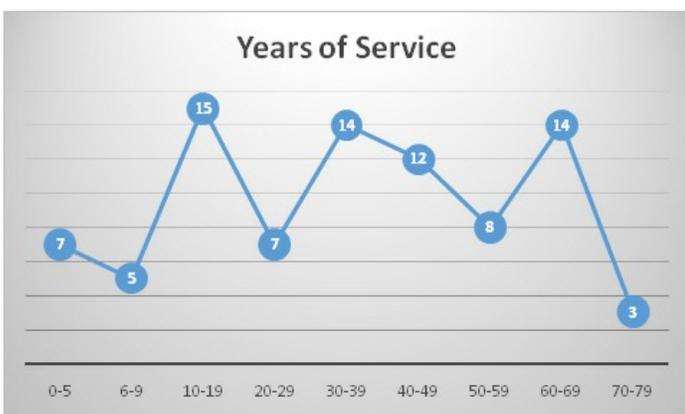
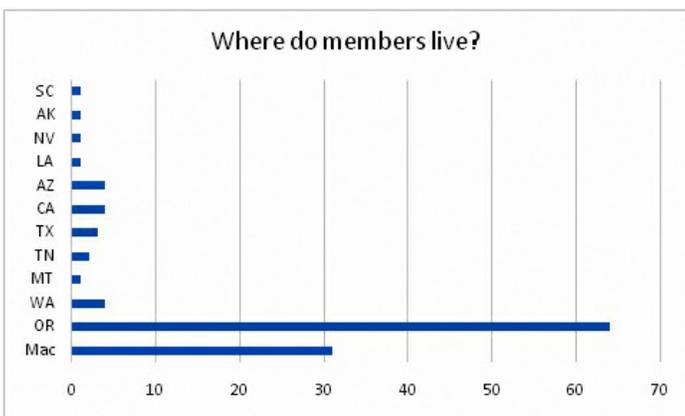
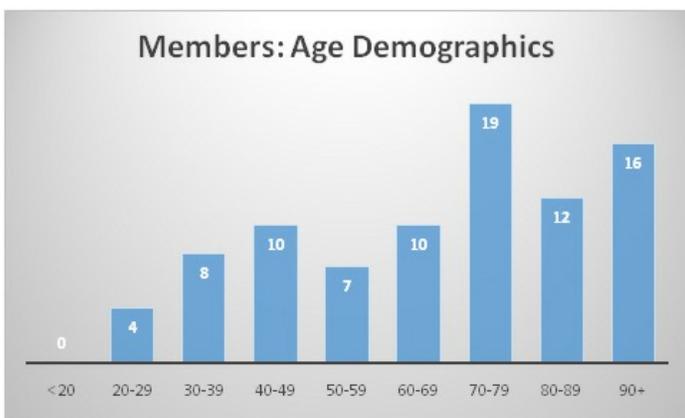
2016 by the numbers (As of December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016):

- Petitions for degrees: 1
- Entered Apprentice conferrals: 1
- Fellowcraft conferrals: 0
- Master Mason conferrals: 2
- Master Mason proficiencies: 1
- Brethren deceased: 5
- Affiliations: 1

- Reinstatements: 1
- Transfers: 0
- Demits: 0
- Expulsions: 1
- Dropped NPD: 0
- Dropped Failure to Advance: 2

Total Members: 86  
 Life Members: 31  
 Dues Notice Members: 55  
 Past Masters (Any Lodge): 22  
 Past Masters (Any Oregon Lodge): 21  
 Past Masters (Union #3): 17

Some fun with charts:



Fraternally,  
 Frank Blair  
 Secretary



### Some Thoughts from WB Johnny Edwards

Brothers lets take a little time to close our eyes and imagine walking into the Fireplace Room of Union #3.

Use your imagination Brothers.

Imagine sitting at the table in the center of the small blue room where so many important meetings have taken place from 1915 to today.

The discussions that took place within this room by our Brothers of Union would have been the sinking of the Lusitania and our entry into WW 1. Pearl Harbor and the historical speech given to congress by our Brother FDR. The Vietnam conflict which I am sure caused some divided opinions however Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth were in abundance.

Debate and discussion hopefully never got in the way of the teachings, traditions and ideals of the Ancient Craft.

The debate of accepting a consolidation request by Lafayette #3 was surely discussed and debated within this small bricked room.

The hundreds of Trustee and Officers meetings held right where your imagination has you right now happened in our Fireplace Room.

Brothers long since passed that loved this Fireplace Room, lodge building and their Union Lodge sat where your mind's eye has you right now.

When I close my eyes while sitting in our Fireplace Room I sit quietly and listen to what the Ancients are trying to tell me.

A dear Worshipful Brother said something to me in conversation not that long ago during some fun and enlightening discussion and fellowship. Our conversation was why Brothers aren't involved in Lodge. He said to me that he wondered if it was because these Brothers never took the time just to sit quietly and think. Quietly think about their God, their life, family and Lodge.

Does a Brother ever force themselves to slow down once a day, one time a week or maybe one time a month and just quietly think of nothing?

The Trustees can finally share with the Brothers of Union that the Fireplace Room is complete!

The pictures are hung and as I closed my eyes in that room after the last picture was hung I quieted my soul and thought of nothing.

What came to my mind is that I felt that our Brothers of the past generations who spent so much time in our Fireplace Room were pleased.

Before you open your eyes and return to your busy life I will ask you a few questions.

What did the Ancients tell you?

We're you listening?

Do you ever take the time to listen to their wise counsel?



## December 2016 & January 2017 Calendar

**Dec 17** - Trustees meeting 10:00 am

**Dec 18** - Installation of Officers 3:00 pm

**Jan 3** - Union # 3 - Stated 7:30 pm

**Jan 3** - Holbrook # 30 - Stated 7:30 pm

**Jan 4** - Rickreall # 110 - Stated 7:30 pm

**Jan 5** - Newberg # 104 - Stated 7:30 pm

**Jan 7** - Tuality # 7 - Stated 10:00 am

**Jan 11** - Sheridan-Dayton # 64 - Stated 7:00 pm

**Jan 31** - Union # 3 Officers meeting 7:30 pm

### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING MINUTES OF LODGE COMMUNICATIONS

To speed up our Stated and Special Communications, and to provide all brothers with the opportunity to review the minutes of the previous month's meeting(s) before the next meeting, WB Blair has made them available on the Union Lodge website. To have access to these documents you will need to obtain a password from WB Frank. Email him at [unionlodge@onlinenw.com](mailto:unionlodge@onlinenw.com) and he will contact you with the password.

After you receive the password, please do the following:

1. On the menu bar on any page of the Lodge website, click on "Meeting Minutes."
2. Click on the red & white button labeled "Meeting Minutes."
3. In the Login box on the left side of the page, click on "Sign up."
4. You will be asked for your email address, a screen name (your name for example), the password provided by WB Frank, your location and your date of birth. NOTE: The date must be entered in dd/mm/yyyy format, or simply select the month, year and date from the calendar display.
5. Click the "Agree" box and then click "Submit."

You will receive an email from "server@serifwebresources.com" that contains a link to click to activate your account.

From then on you can view the minutes by simply logging in with you email address or screen name along with the magic password.

The Brothers of Union Lodge are encouraged to submit articles for the The Beacon. Submissions should be in Microsoft Word documents. Please email your articles to Tom Gardner at [gardner\\_t@onlinenw.com](mailto:gardner_t@onlinenw.com) by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the following month's edition of The Beacon.

Be sure to keep up with Lodge activities between editions of the Beacon by checking our website <http://www.unionlodge3.com>

or



Visit Union Lodge # 3 on Facebook and be sure to Like us.



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