Polar Plunge events benefit Special Olympics

Through a strong effort by many, Minnesota Masons have exceeded the original goal for donations to the Special Olympics – Polar Plunge events throughout the state of Minnesota. Currently the total donations are just over $40,000, double our original goal.

There were three major goals for this effort: generate donations for a worthy cause, build the bonds of brotherhood, and increase Masonic visibility. Judging by our totals and looking at some of the pictures, it was a success on all accounts.

About 120 Minnesota Masons participated in eight plunges throughout the state, stretching from Rochester to Grand Rapids, some jumping at multiple events. The St. Cloud team won the award for the largest corporate donation for that event. Our largest event was Minneapolis with about 50 jumpers. Everybody had a great time, and many were wearing costumes along with the specially designed shirt showing that they were part of the Minnesota Masons’ team. At least three of the Grand Lodge officers participated in one or more polar plunges.

To learn more about the events please visit www.plungemn.org. The Grand Lodge of Minnesota logo is displayed on nearly every screen of that website. When the logo is clicked, it links to the Grand Lodge website. What a great way to increase the visibility of our great fraternity.

Thank you to everyone who coordinated, designed shirts, printed shirts, fund-raised, donated, jumped, generally helped others, got the word out, etc.

It was truly inspiring to see the craft working to this common goal.

Curt Quast
Wayzata Lodge No. 205
Heroes of ’76 members pictured with the United States Marines, left to right, W. B. Don Wurden, No. 19; W. B. Jay Lidowse, No. 237; W. B. Dale Seubert, No. 277; R. W. B. Fred vines, No. 346; W. B. Don Bauman, No. 263; and W. B. Robert Seiden, No. 1.

The Minnesota Masonic Code contains the following provision: “SECTION S1.06 George Washington’s Birthday. The Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Minnesota designate Washington’s Birthday, February twenty-second (22nd) of each year, as a special Masonic holiday and recommend the observance thereof by the Lodges within this Jurisdiction through appropriate open or closed communications. (Adopted in 1947.)”

The brethren of Cass Lodge No. 243 and Anoka Lodge No. 30 take the provisions of the code very seriously. For the ninth consecutive year, they sponsored a George Washington’s Birthday celebration and table lodge. The facilities of the Coon Rapids American Legion Post were converted into a revolutionary war era pub and table lodge. The Minnesota Mason, the George Washington Inaugural Bible to Minnesota. For the first time ever, by special arrangements, the George Washington Inaugural Bible to Minnesota. The Minnesota MASON, vol. 59, no. 6

Issues: 1) providing funds to maintain the Lodge building, and 2) conducting meaningful meetings with formal openings and closings and conferring memorable degree work.

When a Lodge has trouble making ends meet, what can it do? A Lodge should be permitted, with approval of the Grand Master, to occupy a hall jointly with, or sublet to, another organization [G13.14]. Also, a Lodge shall be permitted, again with approval of the Grand Master, to unite with a suitable non-Masonic organization in a joint lease or ownership of property [G13.14]. However, the Lodge shall maintain exclusive control of that portion of such building to be used for Lodge purposes [G13.14]. Also, the space used for Lodge purposes shall not be connected to any other area where intoxicating liquors or beverages are consumed on the premises [G13.19]. A Lodge may permanently move its meeting place by a 2/3rds vote of the Lodge [G13.17(a)]. The above suggestions may be retained Lodges, not to do away with them. The Grand Master sees that all of consolidated or surviving Lodge is liable for all of the new Lodge [G15.03]. A Lodge shall be permitted, again with approval of the Grand Master, to unite with a suitable non-Masonic organization in a joint lease or ownership of property [G13.14]. Also, a Lodge shall be permitted, again with approval of the Grand Master, to unite with a suitable non-Masonic organization in a joint lease or ownership of property [G13.14]. However, the Lodge shall maintain exclusive control of that portion of such building to be used for Lodge purposes [G13.14]. Also, the space used for Lodge purposes shall not be connected to any other area where intoxicating liquors or beverages are consumed on the premises [G13.19]. The Grand Master explains that all of the new Lodge [G15.03]. A Charter of Lodges which are given up are forwarded to Grand Lodge.

The same Article XV also deals with surrendering a Charter. I will not cover that issue, as the intent of this writing is to retain Lodges, not to do away with them. The procedure for surrendering a Charter consists of the following:

1. The Grand Master presides over the first meeting of the combined Lodges.
2. The Lodges notify each other and when all are in favor, the Grand Master is notified.
3. The Code provides the procedure to follow which is essentially the same for consolidations and mergers [G15.01]. Committees from all participating Lodges prepare a Resolution setting forth the consolidation or merger in detail, i.e. by-laws, charter. The Lodges notify each other and when all are in favor, the Grand Master is notified.
4. The Grand Master sees that all of the new Lodge [G15.03]. The Lodges notify each other and when all are in favor, the Grand Master is notified.
5. The Resident Master of the combined Lodges is given the Resolution setting forth the consolidation or merger in detail, i.e. by-laws, charter. The Lodges notify each other and when all are in favor, the Grand Master is notified.

How to improve your lodge website

Here’s a checklist for essential content on your lodge website, broken down by section. This includes info that’s relevant for both members and the general public, who may be seeking information about your lodge or Masonry in general.

• General info, such as number of members, any community partnerships, annual events, and major initiatives
• Photos of the Lodge building and members
• List of officers
• Lodge history, including historic facts about the town
• What is a Mason

If someone is available at the lodge during certain days and times

Website calendar

Lodge events

• Date and time, location, who’s invited, if food will be served, cost, and if RSVPs are required.
• Fraternity-wide events, such as Annual Communication, including links to registration forms
• Highlight events that are open to the public.
• Summary of past events, number of people who attended, and any special thank yous. Don’t forget pictures!

The Masonic Code on merger/consolidation

At almost any Masonic communication one might attend, the subject of membership brings up—lack of membership. The Grand Lodge is in the forefront by providing resources on its website and conducting seminars. As noted on the front page of the January-February 2012 Minnesota Mason, the 3rd Annual Membership Seminar was held on March 3, 2012, in Minneapolis.

The 10th annual event is underway now. The Minnesota MASON, vol. 59, no. 6
March 17th several officers and members of Golden Fleece Lodge No. 89 in Litchfield were joined by members of the local community and a few Grand Lodge officers and visitors. The Masonic Roundup this year honors the memory of some of the Civil War veterans. The conundrum included two quotes, one by a minister and the other by a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, and the first one by date and the second by entry number. The first quotation was by Rev. Wm. Bartlett, who said: "To those who love the art of war, the world is a theatre; to those who love the art of peace, it is a stage." The second quotation was by U.S. Representative Robert Livingstone, who said: "The great cause of civilization is the abolition of war." The first quote was agreed to be the correct answer, and the winner was David L. Cooper of the St. Paul lodge. The second quote was agreed to be the correct answer, and the winner was Jim Melander of the Montgomery lodge. They both received a nice prize from the Grand Lodge. The conundrum is not only a fun way to learn about the history of the lodge, but it also helps members to think critically and examine their beliefs. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on the importance of our nation's history and to honor those who have served in the military. Additionally, it encourages members to research and learn more about the lodge and its history, which is an important aspect of Masonic education. The Grand Lodge of Norway currently has roughly 20,000 members, and I am told that they have a waiting list for membership. Interestingly, Norwegian Freemasons take things much slower and a bit more solemnly than many American Lodges, with often several years between degrees. A few practices from the Norwegian Lodges are used by Traditional Observance Lodges, such as length of time between degrees as well as slow and contemplative ritual work. The theory is that this will create a Sacred space in the tyled meetings, a place for repose from the world where Freemasons can experience solemn ritual and be transformed by it.

Now, I must disclose a personal bias, as I am a dual citizen with Norway and the U.S. (my father was born above the Arctic Circle in Norway). I am the current Worshipful Master of Saint Paul Lodge Number Three, which is a Traditional Observance Lodge. It is possible that I am biased and perhaps a little Norwegian-headed, but I am sure that my other Scandinavian brethren can see past this. I am half German too, so that gets me a few more sympathizers! Regarding the conundrum: In the United States we generally have two Masonic Rites: the Scottish Rite and the York Rite. The first three degrees in Minnesota are part of the York Rite. In Norway they have a different Rite, which is supposedly a descendant of the Rectified Rite and the German Rite of Strict Observance. What Masonic Rite do they practice in Norway?

When you have the answer, send an email to masonicconundrum@gmail.com. Please remember to include your name and your Lodge name and number. We will keep track of who sends in the correct answers, and the first one by date and time from each area of our jurisdiction will receive a nice prize from the Grand Lodge Education Committee.

Studying Masonry is the Key!
The willingness of American Veterans to sacrifice for our country has earned them our lasting gratitude.

John F. Kennedy

On February 9, 2012, a joint presentation made by representatives of Grand Lodge and Minnesota Masonic Charities recognized the patriotic service of those Minnesota veterans in need with a gift of $20,000 to the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV). MACV is a non-profit organization, approved by the Charities Review Council of Minnesota, and has served veterans (and their families) in crisis—including those who are experiencing homelessness—throughout Minnesota for more than 22 years.

As many as 4,000 veterans are homeless in Minnesota or at risk of becoming homeless at some time throughout the year. While MACV does not duplicate services already provided or available to veterans, it coordinates and partners with many organizations, such as the statewide network of County Veteran Service.

Additionally, MACV:
- Operates three regional outreach offices: Mankato, Duluth, Twin Cities
- Provides ten transitional homes for veterans
- Offers Permanent Supportive Housing for disabled veterans in Mankato and Duluth
- Assists veterans (and their families) with securing affordable housing

Because of these valuable services being provided to our veterans, the MMC Board of Directors voted to approve the gift of $10,000 this year (matched by the $10,000 gift of Grand Lodge) and to continue in collaboration with Grand Lodge annually through 2014. This will jointly provide MACV $60,000 in a 3-year period. The appreciation was immediate and literal: “You helped us to keep the lights on,” said MACV President Kathy Vitalis. “We cannot thank you enough.”

Participating in the presentation, left to right, are PGM Thomas McCarthy, Grand Secretary Douglas Campbell, MMC Vice Chair David Wething, Pres. MACV Kathy Vitalis, MACV Metro Regional Director Jimmy Collier, Deputy Grand Master Brian Beermann, Sr., Grand Warden David Olson, MMC Pres/CEO PGM Eric Neetenbeek, Sr. Grand Steward John Studell.

Inscription:
Thank You for Helping Bring These Veterans All the Way Home

The last few years have been a time of renovation and renewal at North Ridge, both in the Senior Housing building and in the Care Center. Research into the needs and wants of potential customers showed that space could be much better utilized with some simple, yet striking, renovations.

An increase in vacancies in the independent living apartments provided an opportunity to create assisted living apartments. Today’s consumer desires larger apartments, the option and space to live with a spouse and good value in a beautiful setting. By renovating common areas into spacious dining rooms and gathering areas and changing the type of services delivered, out-dated living spaces were revitalized into vibrant, airy communities. Today, through the hard work and dedication of staff, North Ridge Senior Housing enjoys outstanding occupancy rates and feels like a close-knit family.

On the other side of the campus, North Ridge found the opportunity, in a too-large care center, to rethink the purpose of the North Building and create a premier Transitional Care Unit with spacious therapy gym. Updating rooms and a drab dining area has transformed an older care center building into a breathtaking TCU dedicated to providing outstanding care and service to short-stay patients.

Therapists and patients are able to work together in a comfortable setting that includes a model home ideal for occupational and physical therapies.
**Our 16th U.S. President, Abraham Lincoln, has been oft quoted as saying:**

*Commitment is what transforms a promise into reality.*

On Saturday, February 25, at the annual MMHSM George Washington Dinner in the beautiful surroundings of the Landmark room at Masonic Home in Bloomington, Mr. Lincoln (as portrayed by nationally recognized actor, George Buss) made the promise of a wonderfully entertaining and informative evening a definite reality.

Sharing “insider” stories of his presidency and the times in which he governed, his remarks were particularly touching when he spoke of his wife, Mary, and then, the loss of their son, Willie. With a wink at the audience, he also admitted to having to resort to political maneuvers to achieve goals; but nothing was more fervent than his message of keeping the union strong and together as his stated mission.

Guests were invited to ask questions, and many did, with the President frequently asking their names and speaking personally to them.

Preceded by a delicious meal served family style (and a perfect apple pie dessert...known to be Lincoln’s favorite), guests departed with many of them saying they had particularly enjoyed this event and would be looking forward to it next year. *And it should be something to plan on, as next year’s speaker will be President Theodore Roosevelt. Bully!*
Fellowship and education at Palestine Lodge No. 7 PHA

Evergreen Lodge No. 46 in Clyde started 2012 off with the Master Mason Degree on January 3, 2012, for three new brothers. They had twelve of their 22 members present to help welcome the new members. Pictured from left to right, front row, are uncle Kit Sackreiter; grandfather Leon Sackreiter; Kerry Sackreiter, father of Jarrod. In the back row are new brother, Laremy Ellsworth; Larry Ellsworth, father of Laremy; and new brother, Jarrod Sackreiter. Not shown in this photo is new brother, Doug Wirt, and his uncle, Lyle Campbell.

North Ridge Masonic lunch group


In February, the North Ride Masonic lunch group had its third Minnesota Masonic Home North Ridge Masonic lunch meeting. A few Masons with a special bond and mutual interest decided to form a group and get together. There were nine at the first lunch; now they have grown to eleven.

Jim Burlingame, 33° and Past Master of Plymouth Lodge No. 60, came to discuss having the group visit their lodge. Plymouth Lodge may also hold a lodge meeting at North Ridge and invite all the Masons at North Ridge to the meeting. It would be an enjoyable evening as most of the lunch group have not been able to attend a lodge meeting lately. The lunch group has decided to have a purpose by starting to visit the men in the care center, and they are looking for more ways to serve North Ridge. If any one knows of a Mason who is a resident of Minnesota Masonic Home North Ridge, please contact PM Bill Bram, Masonic lunch group chairman, at bill@bramgroup.com.

Minnehaha Lodge installs 2012 officers

Minnehaha Lodge No. 165, Minneapolis, installed its 2012 officers. Shown, left to right, are Treasurer W.B. Gary Oldgard, Chaplain W.B. Foster Solem, S.W. Carl Laidstrom, Lodge Education Officer W.B. Jay Weikblatt, W.M. Jason Pibal, Tyler Melvin Pibal, J.W. Robert Peterson, J.S. Patrick Rosengren, S.D. Douglas Beach, S.S. Eric Thomsen, Marshal W.B. Ronald Campbell, Sec. W.B. Stanley Singleton. Not pictured is J.D. Brian Neisig.

Brother John Gann, St. Grand Deacon, was present and spoke on behalf of the Grand Lodge, giving a fine talk of great interest to the attendees. Bro John Schwartz of Minnesota Masonic Charities also participated.

Aurora Lodge installs new master

2011 W. Master Pete Siekas passing the gavel to newly installed W. Master Larry Lundblad on January 10, 2012, at Aurora Lodge No. 100 in Brainerd.

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Brother Wally McKay of Aurora Lodge No. 100 in Brainerd and his wonderful wife Margaret were clearly pleased as the Dan Patch Club at the Minnesota Masonic Home presented him with a 60-year certificate and pin on February 4, 2012. W. Bro. John Gann, Sr. Grand Deacon, was present and spoke on behalf of the Grand Lodge, giving a fine talk of great interest to the attendees. Bro John Schwartz of Minnesota Masonic Charities also participated.

Brother achieves 60-year certificate

Pictured, left to right: Bro. Ed Morse, Lebanon Lodge No. 346; Margaret McKay; Bro. Wallace McKay, Aurora Lodge No. 100; and Brother Glenn Kiecker, Cataract Lodge No. 2.
Masonic Discount! St. Paul Shrine Circus
March 29-April 1, 2012
Minnesota State Fairgrounds Coliseum
Discount is $5 per ticket, 20% saving from regular prices!
For the best discounts and to select your own seats, get your tickets on-line at http://www.OsmanCircus.com
Use the special Masonic Discount Code: MASON2

News from the Masonic Family

Red Wing Lodge No. 8 receives national Mark Twain Award

Silver Spring, MD — The Masonic Information Center (MIC), the information arm of the Masonic Service Association of North America (MSANA), has awarded Red Wing Lodge No. 8 of Red Wing, Minnesota, one of the nation’s Mark Twain Awards for demonstrating excellence in 2011 Masonic activities.

M. W. Brother George Braitz, Executive Secretary of the Masonic Service Association, presented the Mark Twain Award to Red Wing Lodge No. 8 on Saturday morning, March 3rd, in conjunction with the 159th Annual Communication to the Crane Grand Lodge at Red Wing.

The award recognizes Red Wing Lodge’s creation of new programs and enhanced activities that help invigorate Freemasonry’s identity throughout the community and enrich the quality of educational and fraternal experiences within the lodge.

During the past six years, the MIC has presented the Mark Twain Award distinction to more than 100 lodges across the continent. MSANA is headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland.

“With these new programs and our continuing programs,” according to Bennett Manning, who was lodge master during the award year, “we are again being recognized as a leading fraternal group in Red Wing, not just for the benefit of our members, but for the community as a whole. Internally, the lodge initiated a new mentorship program; family activities, and improved communications, while at the same time began implementing a child ID program at the YMCA, a bike for books literacy effort, scholarships, and other community projects.

“There are 10,000 Lodges across North America, and Red Wing Lodge should be very proud of being selected part of the elite group of Mark Twain Award winners this year,” said George Braitz, Executive Secretary of MSANA.

“The Award encourages Lodges to make Freemasonry relevant to the diverse backgrounds and ages of its members and its communities,” he added.

“We feel public interest in the Masonic Fraternity is on the rise, and Lodges like Red Wing are among making significant contributions to the growing interest in Masonry that we see throughout North America.”

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March 29-April 1, 2012
Minnesota State Fairgrounds Coliseum
Discount is $5 per ticket, 20% saving from regular prices!
For the best discounts and to select your own seats, get your tickets on-line at http://www.OsmanCircus.com
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Grand Lodge website
www.mn-masons.org/Calendar

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North Star Travelers #201
A Masonic Family Camping Group
We are looking for new members—must be a Mason to join.
Spring Camp-in
April 21, 2012
Where: Sherburne Lodge
Elk River, Minnesota
Time: 12 noon
Bring a tent or have a campervan
Usually Camp-in Weekend is the 3rd weekend in May, June, July, August and September.
Also the 1st weekend in October.
Contact:
Wagram Mason Glen Gober
320-243-1803 or
Secretary Louise Fulgham
320-253-9881
RSVP or call if you have any questions—please contact either Glen or Louise.
"It got me a little bit weak in the knees." A beaming 89-year-old Arthur LeSage finally got the recognition he deserved Saturday. Duluth Mayor Don Ness declared February 11th in his name, something LeSage never expected.

"No way, no I never thought. It was No way, no I never thought. It was a well kept secret," LeSage said. "I knew he was a prisoner of war but he never talked about it ever."

The presentation of medals helped get that conversation going, and gave the family a better insight into the root of LeSage’s warm personality. "I think because of his experiences, he has a real life for that very few people have. To have, laughter is the key to life," Richard said, which is easy to see. General Ostapenko said he would like to take down LeSage’s stories to help preserve them in history. LeSage responded jokingly, "I’ll tell him a few things. I’m not going to tell him everything. I’ll try." But he’s not holding back when it comes to his gratitude, "They’ve done a wonderful job here on this and I really didn’t expect to see this with so many people out and get as much recognition as I did. Thank you very much," Richard said, which is easy to see. General Ostapenko said he would like to take down LeSage’s stories to help preserve them in history. LeSage responded jokingly, "I’ll tell him a few things. I’m not going to tell him everything. I’ll try."

Minnesota communities, by and large, are unaware about the great fraternity, which is called Freemasonry. This is due, in part, to Masons being quiet about their good works, and a time when men actively sought to join. Today, Minnesota has no more than four to five chosen in communities or other organizations vying for their membership. The Grand Lodge of Minnesota recognizes that Brethren who do not have to be reinvented each time, would maximize the Masonic experience for others and would inform communities of their presence in a meaningful way.

Public Relations Resources on the website

The documents on the Grand Lodge website, which have come from many sources, are there for the public to be able to make changes to meet the needs of your lodge. Masonic companions and their family are encouraged to come up with ideas and resources for their local lodge. These ideas can be shared on the website or placed on the Grand Lodge website.

New Minnesota Master Masons raised in 2011

Congratulations to each of the 376 new Master Masons raised during 2011, to their Masonic family members and the lodges that brought them into Masonry.