



Letters from Whatcom Lodge No. 151

Free and Accepted Masons of Washington

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December 2020

Whatcom Lodge Report

Brethren,

The Chinese have a curse, "May you live in interesting times!" Given that this year has so far given us fires, pandemic, social and political turmoil, riots, looting and destruction, I'd say that these are pretty darn interesting times. Sugar coat it if you like, but that's the reality. Our nation is polarized on almost every issue and moderate discourse ceased long ago. Many of you, like me, experienced the turmoil of the 1960's and '70's and this seems much more serious and deeply rooted. It's like nothing I've experienced in my lifetime.

I've not given up hope, but I'm not of the opinion that we could all just sit in a circle and sing Kumbaya to make things better. Do I have the definitive solution to our problems? No, I do not and any person who says that he does is, at best, suspect. Each of us must consider the circumstances as he sees them, weigh potential courses and consequences of action and decide for himself what to do and how to do it. That's called individual responsibility. It's also, I believe, one of the great lessons of Masonry and we're taught to do it with respect and civility.

In our degrees and ceremonies, we're presented with allegorical and symbolic lessons. Beyond requiring a belief in the Supreme Deity, as each man is given the light to understand, and the injunction to lead a moral life, also as each is given to understand, little is specified for the individual Mason's conduct. Yes, we have obligations each to the other, but these flow from our shared morality.

As I interpret it, Masonry teaches us to view our lives through the light given to us as individuals and to act truly and faithfully in accordance with that light. In Shakespeare's Hamlet, Polonius advises his son Laertes, " *This above all: to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man .*" This could certainly be a Masonic injunction.

No, I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I do know that my Lodge and my brothers give me comfort, support and hope. We may disagree on issues and solutions, but our respect and brotherly love for each other is rock solid. The world around us may be edging towards chaos and upheaval, but we're blessed with a brotherhood to help us through the darkest of times. It gives us a focus and guides us to be better men, better citizens and better brothers. In this, we're truly blessed. If there's a bright side to our current troubles, it's that the significance and importance of our fraternity and the lessons taught become even clearer to each of us. For that, we should all be For the present, the Grand Master has issued guidelines and instructions as to what we can and can't do and how we can physically interact as Masons. You should all have seen copies and we owe obedience to the Grand Master in this matter. These directions have been given for the good of the entire Grand Jurisdiction and even though gathering in person isn't possible, we're still united by the bonds of the Craft. We all look forward to the time when we can again come together in the precincts of the Lodge, but until that time, remember that we're united in brotherly love and affection. In the meantime, stay safe and stay well.

Fraternally, WM 'City' John

Stated Meeting Dates of the District Ten Lodges

All In-person Masonic Events are Dark until the Grand Master authorizes a return to Light.

Up-coming Events

Our District Deputy Hosts a number of Masonic ZOOM castes and lets' us know about Grand Lodge sponsored internet programs. If you are not on his email list you can contact him at the email address noted below.

Kurt Gazow...kegazow@comcast.net...



Whatcom Lodge 151 meets on the 1st (special) and 3rd (stated-business) Thursdays of each month.

Whatcom Lodge emphasizes Masonic heritage and ritual proficiency. We are proud to support our Masonic Youth organizations and encourage members to practice charity outside the lodge. It is our intention to promote individuals to build their own strong moral and spiritual temples.

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From the Deputy of the Grand Master - District Ten

Brethren & friends,

I bring you greetings from our Grand Master, Most Worshipful Christopher J. Coffman, Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of Washington. It is my hope that all our Brothers, friends, family and loved ones are healthy and well and successfully navigating these challenging times. Though we are still unable to meet in our lodges, news of multiple COVID-19 vaccines entering Phase 3 clinical trials bring us hope for a return to our labors, and most importantly, to the safety and health of our Brothers, families, and friends.

Though our lodges are not meeting in person, Freemasonry is continuing to labor in a virtual quarry online! **Locally**, a Masonic Zoom meeting is hosted by your District Deputy and Bellingham Bay #44 each first and third Friday evening, focusing on fellowship, education, building connections between Brothers and meeting men who have expressed interest in learning more about Freemasonry. **Regionally**, a District 10 newsletter is circulated weekly, summarizing online Masonic education and fellowship opportunities in the next few weeks. In **your Grand Lodge**, our Grand Master and his team continue to find creative ways to continue our labors and Masonic education in creative ways, from state-wide Q&A's with the Grand Master, to bringing our Leadership Retreat to your laptop. The last ingredient needed is you!

Our Grand Master has provided guidance for our lodges and allowable activities; in brief, we are unable to meet until conditions improve, following the guidance of our state and county health agencies. Additional details are available from your Lodge Secretary, as well as in the 'Feed' section of Grand View.

While some of our labors are on-hold until we can meet in person, other important events are continuing online. One of these is our **ANNUAL DISTRICT #10 MEETING, SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 9, 2021**. The meeting will be held via Zoom; please **SAVE THE DATE** for this important event! Similar to our in-person District meetings, Masons of District #10 will host our Grand Master and our Grand Lodge Team. It will be a chance to reflect on our year, hear from Grand Lodge Elected Officers, hear reflections from our Grand Master, celebrate our brothers, and plan for our future.

Brothers, our Grand Master's theme this year speaks well to our path forward. In all our actions, we **remember the past**, the principles and virtues which drew us to all to the Craft. Our experience this year has been a reminder that now, more than ever, we must **visualize the future** of our lodges and Freemasonry; what lessons and strategies can we carry forward that will make our lodges the stronger for this experience? One thing I know for sure; as long as we're working together, our future is bright.

Sincerely & Fraternaly
Kurt Gazow
 DDGM in District 10



Notes from the Secretary...On Lodge business

Whatcom Brothers, though we cannot meet in person I do hope you have reached out to another brother or two and wished them and their families well. The Elected Officers and lodge leaders have communicated regularly with each other to keep the lodge on life-support until a vaccine is widely available.

As secretary I have regularly paid our rent and other expenses. The Dues/Assessment Notices went out and more than half of them have been returned; thank you for being so prompt. We've had some nice donations from several 50+ year members and from several Life Members who chose to donate in addition to their annual assessment.

The drama over the West Maplewood Masonic Center is drawing to a conclusion. The Bellingham Temple Association (BTA) announced that they have found a buyer and worked with Whatcom Land Title to complete a sale. If you'll recall, we had the property appraised about a year ago and the appraisal came to around \$1,010,000.00 in round numbers. The BTA noted they were able to sell the property for \$1,500,000.00 in round numbers. The proportion going to Whatcom Lodge will be added to our investment portfolio.

Even though we can't meet in person a virtual Audit will be worked out between the Treasurer, Assistant Secretary, Secretary and Auditor appointed by the Worshipful Master. A review can be undertaken once we're free to meet, even in small numbers.

Masonic Education

Brethren,

There will be a virtual education program being hosted by the Spokane Scottish Rite Valley, with MW Robert G. Davis, 33° G.C., newly installed Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Ancient Free & Accepted Masons of Oklahoma. MW Robert will be speaking at 6 pm, Monday, December 14th on one of the many Masonic books he has authored, "Understanding Manhood in America: Freemasonry's Enduring Path to the Mature Masculine."

Zoom Meeting ID: 819 9109 5047 Passcode: 233958

Please do not share this on social media or other public platforms. **However, this open to non-Masons who wish to attend.**

I hope you can join us,

Roger Nelson

Whatcom Brothers back in mid-November I sent out an email advising that I'd received a Letter from the Grand Master that due to increase spread of COVID-19 he was postponing the re-opening of lodge activities. A copy of the letter is below. Our Worshipful Master is fully supporting the Grand Master in this action for the welfare of Masons, their families and our respective communities. It is an inconvenience but then so is getting the covid-19 virus as two members of my family can attest. Fortunately they are mostly recovered but still suffer from some lingering effects.

For those of you, like myself, who take our Fellowcraft teachings seriously, I have been checking global and national data at Worldometers.info. As I write this, today, Dec. 2nd the USA reports 203,427 new cases with 2,831 new covid-19 deaths. That is the highest single day death amount, the previous high was 2,744 deaths recorded on April 21st. Yesterday December 1st it was 184,184 with 2,672 new covid-19 deaths. For hospitalizations I check The COVID Tracking Project. On Nov. 28th our hospitals recorded 91,635 covid-19 patents, on Nov. 30th the figure rose to 96,039 and today, Dec. 2nd it's at 100,226 covid-19 patients. Some smaller population States like North and South Dakota have surpassed their hospital capability and the US Military has stepped up to help them. I will keep my prayers up for those medical and front line support staff who are already bone tired with no end in immediate sight. Several vaccines are close and no doubt will go first to front line medical staff and the most critically ill patients. However it will probably March before the average citizen will be able to get vaccinated. Lets keep our prayers up and hope for a positive outcome and do our part to keep each other safe. *Secretary ~ 'Country' John Browne*



**GRAND LODGE
FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF WASHINGTON**

Chris J. Coffman
Grand Master
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November 16, 2020

LODGE STATED AND SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS

To All Lodges:

Due to increasing spread of the coronavirus and resulting COVID-19 infections, the Governor has reimposed restrictions on in-person gatherings.


Therefore, my directive dated October 28, 2020 authorizing Lodges to hold Stated and Special Communications is hereby modified as follows:

The effective date for when Lodges may hold Stated or Special Communications is postponed until further notice.

Lodges that wish to hold Lodge Communications in the future should consider the requirements specified in the October 28, 2020 directive so that they are prepared when we can again hold Lodge Communications.

I know all of us desire to meet again as Brothers. I was hoping to allow Stated and Special Communications beginning on December 1, 2020, but the spread of COVID-19 prevents this. During the interim, Lodges should continue to be in contact with their membership.

Remember the Past, Visualize the Future,


Chris J. Coffman
Grand Master
Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Washington



cc: Clinton M. Brown, Jr., Grand Secretary

The necessary hassle of *Mask Wearing*

Gosh, it really is unpleasant at times to have to *mask-up* when around people not in your living pod. But it is the only proven way to have a widespread impact on the spreading covid-19 virus. Yes, it is an imposition to what we'd like to have, but, it is a reasonable short term solution until widespread vaccinations can take affect. It is after all being done for public safety.

It's not as though we don't already impose limitations on our behavior for public safety concerns. We require child restraints in our automobiles to protect infants, toddlers and young children. We have STOP lights and signs at intersections; and yes you are legally required, in most cases, to stop even if there is no other car at the intersection. We have crosswalks at intersections to protect pedestrians when they cross over. And we have set speed limits on our streets, roads and highways, with only a few exceptions. Again, you are required to obey the speed limits even if you're the only car for any distance. We have accountability for the purchase of some poisons. When I purchased Rat Poison at the Farmer's Co-Op I had to provide ID and a signature in order to complete the purchase.

The concern for the safety and welfare of our family, friends and fellow citizens, no matter their ages, is what makes us a laudable country in which to reside. As Masons, we care about the health and welfare of our communities. Yes, masks are bothersome at times, but so will be catching covid-19, which cannot be seen with the naked eye.

Secretary ~ 'Country' John



BMC = Bellingham Masonic Center on W. Maplewood ; FMC = Ferndale Masonic Center;
 FHMC = Friday Harbor Masonic Center; NMC = Nooksack Masonic Center; SRH = Scottish Rite Hall

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| 29 | 30 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 <i>St Nicholas' Feast Day</i> | 7 <i>Pearl Harbor Day</i> | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 <i>Chanukah Begins</i> | 12 |
| 13 <i>St Lucia's Day Festival of lights</i> | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 <i>Winter Begins</i> | 22 | 23 | 24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> | 25  <i>Christmas Day</i> 1st Day of Christmas | 26 <i>Boxing Day</i> 2nd Day of Christmas |
| 27 3rd Day of Christmas | 28 4th Day of Christmas | 29 5th Day of Christmas | 30 6th Day of Christmas | 31 <i>New Year's Eve</i> 7th Day of Christmas | 1 <i>New Year's Day</i> 8th Day of Christmas | 2 9th Day of Christmas |

Widows & Orphans Fund for District No. 1

If you would like to know more about the W & O Fund contact one of the officers listed below.

Bro. Ken Peck - *Secretary/Treasurer*

Phone: 360-820-4752,

Email: sectreaswof@gmail.com

WB John Brown - *President,*

WB Jesse Petersen - *Vice President*

360-319-5556



Whatcom Lodge 151

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Has your message missed this publication. Don't get left out. Please send your group's article, event information and/or calendar note by the 22nd of each month. In order to promote events occurring at the beginning of each month I try to send out the newsletter on or about the 25th of each month.

To contribute to this newsletter please send your letter, comment, historical fact, poem or calendar announcement, by the 20th day of each month, to:

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 Maple Falls, WA. 98266

Ph. 360-599-3481

e-mail: jbrowne.brf@gmail.com