

# CLAUD L. AUSTIN LODGE NO. 1450

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## STATED MEETING

The next Stated Meeting is only a couple of weeks away....set for noon on Monday, February 23rd at noon on the Green Room of the Scottish Rite Cathedral. Our new DDGM, R:W: Paul Hunter from Washington Lodge, will be making his Official Visit. We hope you will plan to be there. Of course, lunch will follow the meeting.

## FESTIVE BOARD

The next Festive Board will be held on Friday, February 27th. As usual, it is a Dining Member function, and will be at DAC Country Club.

Attitude adjustment begins at 6:00pm, with a Call to Table at 6:45pm.

We always have a convivial good time and want everyone to make sure you have called or e-mailed your RSVP to Zola preceding the Festive Board. His contact information is 972-661-8977 and/or [zbblick@aol.com](mailto:zbblick@aol.com).

**Reservations are absolutely necessary** as we have no crystal ball for telling the Club how many to prepare for. There are always several who, for some reason, fail to do so....making it almost like you require us to call you. PLEASE do your duty and make your reservation timely. We always appreciate your consideration and help.

## GRAND LODGE DOINGS

The Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Texas was held in Waco from December 4<sup>th</sup> through December 6<sup>th</sup>. As usual, there were a plethora of resolutions presented for consideration.

Of the 23 resolutions presented, nine were passed along with two Grand Master's Recommendations.

The most pertinent resolutions passed were:

- The Gift of Life Committee was made a Permanent Committee
- One Brother may vouch for another without having to remember the exact date they sat in Lodge together
- The Grand Lodge Assistance Fund will now be limited to individuals whose sponsoring Lodge also contributes to the individual, unless the Lodge can show proof that they are unable to do so
- In the third degree, the Master may appoint another Mason present to read the passages of scripture during the circumambulation
- No smoking is allowed closer to the doors of the Grand Lodge, except in designated areas on the basement level
- The Grand Lodge may now choose to publish documents in an electronic format when found to be appropriate

The Grand Master's Recommendations passed were:

- Addressing the closing of the Masonic Home & School, restructuring that resolution to provide the appropriate wording to describe the current offering of financial support for individual housing and services for children previously qualifying for the School's offerings
- Addresses the qualification and proficiency of incoming Worshipful Masters, requiring that a Brother shall be proficient to open EA, FC and MM Lodges as well as a Lodge of Sorrow as approved by a member of the Committee on Work or District Instructor. That Brother shall also

complete the L.I.F.E. Program prior to being installed as a Worshipful Master

What ever happened to keeping things simple?

## HOLIDAY BRUNCH

On Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, the Dining Members and their spouses, along with a couple of widows of our members (Sue Regian and Pat Gordon), enjoyed the Annual Brunch at Lakewood Country Club. The conviviality and fare were really good, as usual, and the entertainment was outstanding.

The Dallas Police Department Choir sang some traditional Christmas carols....and some new ones, too. The best was when they started out singing, by special request, from guess who, "The Eyes of Texas." What a great song!

Not a Dining Member? You and your spouse or significant other missed something really good!

## DOWN, BUT NOT OUT

Our Senior Past Master, Brother Gerald Bradshaw was in quite an automobile accident and sustained a broken leg and ribs. After surgery and a few days in Harris Methodist Hospital in Ft. Worth, he moved to Northgate Plaza in Irving for rehab. If all goes well, he has expressed high hopes of being there for the Stated Meeting and Festive Board.

There are several who, at this time of year, are nursing colds and allergies. Hope you all get well soon, too!

## NO DISTRIBUTION FROM ENDOWED MEMBERSHIPS THIS YEAR

The following explanation is from the Grand Secretary's Office: The Grand Lodge Trustees do not believe that they will be able to declare a distribution from the Endowed Membership Fund to Lodges on August 1, 2009. Per Article 318(a), Section 4, each unit of the Fund cannot be less than \$100 after the distribution. As the

current value of a unit is less than \$100, the Trustees believe that it is unlikely that the world economy will improve sufficiently in time to provide a distribution to the Lodges in 2009.

Also, according to Article 318(a), if Lodges do not receive a distribution, the Grand Lodge does not receive any fee or other money from the Fund. Lodges come first! Please note that the Grand Lodge Investment Committee advises the Trustees on investments but the Trustees make all decisions about the investments. No Trustee or Investment Committee member receives any compensation, directly or indirectly, from the investments.

Even though our portfolio has lost its value this past 12 months, our Investment Committee's recommendations have resulted in the Fund's portfolio doing better than many other private and not-for-profit organization's portfolios.

***As good as they (Grand Lodge) want it to sound in the above paragraph, the result for us is a loss of operating capital of \$3762 (based on the 2008 distribution). That, Brethren, is substantial in light of the fact that we are an endowed only Lodge and have no dues to make this up. To be sure, we are not alone in this plight.***

Article 163 requires Lodges to pay per capita fees ***(for us, \$14.25 per member in 2009 – approximately \$755)*** to the Grand Lodge. The Grand Lodge annual budget is primarily funded by these per capita payments.

Under Article 318(a), each Endowed Member is relieved from paying annual dues to his Lodge, and therefore the Lodge cannot require him to do so. However, the Lodge can request that Endowed Members make a donation of the Lodge's annual dues or the Members per capita fees made by the Lodge for that Endowed Member.

Lodges and the Grand Lodge must realize that we are all in this together during these tough economic times. We must work together as our forefathers did during the Great Depression

and keep Freemasonry alive in Texas.

Grand Master Counts is addressing the Endowed Membership issue at his Grand Master Conferences and his Official Visits. Lodges are encouraged to attend one of these meetings near their area. The Grand Master's calendar is available on the Grand Lodge Web Site.

## HARRY S. TRUMAN

Boy, people sure have changed.....

He was a humble man who entered the limelight, took care of business, then returned to being what he was; a humble man.

Brother Harry Truman was a different kind of President. He probably made as many important decisions regarding our nation's history as any of the other 43 Presidents. However, a measure of his greatness may rest on what he did after he left the White House.

The only asset he had when he died was the house he lived in, which was in Independence, Missouri. His wife had inherited the house from her mother and other than their years in the White House, they lived their entire lives there.

When he retired from office in 1952, his income was a U.S. Army pension reported to have been \$13,507.72 a year. Congress, noting that he was paying for his stamps and personally licking them, granted him an 'allowance' and, later, a retroactive pension of \$25,000 per year.

After President Eisenhower was inaugurated, Harry and Bess drove home to Missouri by themselves. There was no Secret Service following them.

When offered corporate positions at large salaries, he declined, stating, "You don't want me. You want the office of the President, and that doesn't belong to me. It belongs to the American people and it's not for sale."

Even later, on May 6, 1971, when Congress

was preparing to award him the Medal of Honor on his 87th birthday, he refused to accept it, writing, "I don't consider that I have done anything which should be the reason for any award, Congressional or otherwise."

As President, he paid for all of his own travel expenses and food. Modern politicians have found a new level of success in cashing in on the Presidency, resulting in untold wealth. Today, many in Congress also have found a way to become quite wealthy while enjoying the fruits of their offices. Political offices are now for sale.

Good old Harry Truman was correct when he observed, "My choices in life were either to be a piano player in a whore house or a politician. And to tell the truth, there's hardly any difference."

## UH, OH



## CALENDAR

Saturday, February 14	VALENTINES
Monday, February 23	Stated Meeting DDGM Official Visit
Friday, February 27	Festive Board
Tuesday, May 26	Stated Meeting Election of Officers
Friday, May 29	Festive Board