

Support the Child ID Program in Your Community

By **TERRY WESTER**
Chairman, Child ID Program

Does your local community know who the Freemasons are? Does your local community know that there is an active Lodge? Don't be quick to answer both, do a little soul searching first, because you might be surprised. When was the last time that your Lodge held a public function or performed some sort of community service? Is the reason that your Lodge is not doing anything in your community due to budget issues? Would you be willing to put in a few hours to increase your Lodges visibility, while providing a needed community service, at no cost to your Lodge?

Every year it is estimated that between 700,000 and 900,000 people will go missing in the U.S. Many of these situations are resolved happily, while many are not.

The Grand Lodge of Alabama Child ID Program is a resource that families in your communities can

use if they find themselves in the tragic situation of having a missing loved one. The only cost to your Lodge is a little time of the members, and even this cost is minimal as a few hours of planning and a few hours of implementation is all that it takes to be seen in your community while providing this resource.

So far this year 2487 Child ID kits have been distributed, 46 Child ID events have been held, and 13 training/promotional sessions have been put on at various Lodges across the state. To the Lodges that have taken part, we thank you for support and congratulate you on a job well done, to the Lodges that have not yet taken part, we encourage you to take the first step by contacting your Group Child ID Committee representative and start asking questions. We will support and guide you on this endeavor!

I challenge you all to do the following: check out the Child ID website at <http://www.alchip.org/>, talk about this program every month

in Lodge, contact your local Child ID representative and make plans, and finally make it happen by putting your Lodge and the Fraternity in the public eye. Check your cable tow and find the time to help your community and promote your Lodge and the positive influence of Freemasonry in Alabama.

Your Child ID Committee is ready to assist and can be reached at the following:

- Terry Wester (Chairman)
256-505-7661
- John Rogers (Group 1)
706-506-8843
- Steve McGlocklin (Group 2)
256-652-2627
- Johnny King (Group 3)
205-483-2773
- Tommy Morrow (Group 4)
334-897-2838
- Wayne Sirmon (Group 5)
251-591-3417

2013 Hooked on Decatur Team Bass Fishing Tournament



Rising Sun Lodge #29, with the sponsorship of the Grand Lodge of Alabama F. & A.M., hosted the 2nd Annual "Hooked on Decatur" Team Bass Fishing Tournament on March 30th 2013. All proceeds benefited Wounded Warrior Project.

The field consisted of 48 boats (teams), and the tournament headquarters was located at Ingalls's Harbor in Decatur, Alabama on beautiful Lake Wheeler. Start time was at safe light and weigh in started at 2:20 PM. 1st place won \$2000.00 Top five weights received cash prizes. The entry fee was \$100 per boat/team

consisting of two fishermen.

15 Wounded Warriors attended the event this year. Special guest included Mr. Joe Caley Wounded Warrior project Outreach Administrator, Major General Crosby, LT. Colonel Rutkowski, Command Sergeant Magor Glidewell from Redstone Arsenal, Mayor Don Kyle Decatur, Alabama, and Acting Grand Master Lane Weatherbee of the Grand Lodge of Alabama. A total of 102 fish were caught and the total weight was 332.36 lbs. We were able to donate \$18,000.00 for Wounded Warrior Project.

J. Collier Foster Lodge # 906 Presents

The 7th Annual Charity Motorcycle Ride

Join us November 2nd in Northport, AL for the Charity Ride, followed by Food, Festivities and Fellowship.

Registration @ 9:00 AM
Ride Out @ 10:00 AM

Serving hamburgers, hot dogs and homemade ice cream.
Door prizes to be given away.

\$25.00 fee per Motor. Donations are greatly appreciated

All proceeds go to benefit Eagles Wings.

For more information contact Greg Durr at 205-292-7305.



The Masonic Messenger

The Official Publication of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Alabama

VOL. 2 - NO. 2 GRAND LODGE OF F. & A.M. OF ALABAMA FALL 2013



Inside this edition...

THE 'UNIVERSALITY' OF MASONRY, thoughts from the Acting Grand Master on the views and values shared by Masons throughout the World.

THE MARK TWAIN AWARDS, presented by the Masonic Service Association of North America, recognizes two North Alabama lodges in its' final year.

THE ALABAMA CHILD ID PROGRAM is continuing efforts to increase the success of the program through community outreach.

RESULTS from the 2013 Hooked on Decatur Bass Fishing Tournament, which was sponsored by the Grand Lodge of Alabama.

A Message From First Lady Pat Booker

I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your thoughtfulness and prayers during our time of loss. Charlie's death has taken a great toll on us and we appreciate your kindness. Charlie is greatly missed by us all, and we appreciate your continued prayers as we try to adjust to life without him.

A special thanks goes to Carney Lodge for all that you did for Charlie. I know he would want to thank you for his Honor Day. It was so nice and greatly appreciated.

I want to thank you for the reception after the funeral. I really appreciate everything you did for Charlie and me.

I want to thank the Grand Lodge for taking care of the Southeastern Conference. A special thanks goes to Danielle, Michelle, Danielle's mother, Bridgett, and Linda

Underwood for a wonderful job. Also, thanks to Grand Secretary Jerry Underwood for making it a great Southeastern Conference.

Charlie and I enjoyed our years in the line, and we made lots of friends. We can only wish he was here to finish his year as Grand Master, but the good Lord needed him for something better. We may not know what it is, but we do know that Charlie is in no pain and is watching over the greatest Lodge from Heaven.

Charlie loved this fraternity, and his main goal for his year as Grand Master was to push for membership. Please continue to make sure that you visit lodge members who have been absent for awhile and get them interested, again, in the fraternity.

It takes all of us to make this fraternity great, and we can only achieve this through the continued

effort of each member to inspire all members, new and old, to be active.

As wives of Masons, we also have a responsibility to encourage our husbands to continue the work of the Masonic Lodge. The day after I married Charlie, I learned that he loved this fraternity because we spent the whole day at Uria's 100 year celebration. At that point, I knew I would love this fraternity, and I will continue to do everything I can to help.

I would like to thank the Masonic Messenger for the opportunity to express my appreciation to the Masons of Alabama, those I have met through Grand Lodge and special events around the State, as well as those I haven't.

Again, I want to thank all of you.
Pat Booker



A Few Good Men

By **JOHN STRICKLING, SGW**
Grand Lodge of Alabama

If you are sitting at home with your head either lost in a TV screen or looking at a computer, you might wake up and wonder what happened to all those friends you used to know. Or you may realize that life is moving on without you because you have stopped being involved in outside activities and socializing with those whose company you used to enjoy. Don't let life pass you by. Reconnect with your Lodge brothers, get involved, volunteer!

The Masonic Fraternity is composed of men from every profession and every walk of life; some are doctors, ministers, attorneys, bankers, carpenters, business owners; others are farmers or mechanics, machinist; the list could go on and on. My point is that there exists an untold wealth of talent and knowledge that is not being utilized by the Lodges.

Your Lodges are looking for a few good men to volunteer their time and talents to re-energize our fraternity and to make us an important member of our communities once again. Most Lodges are constantly looking for ways to help those who are in need of

assistance, to help our children, our communities and those around us. This is being accomplished, in some areas, in a number of ways, whether by fund raising efforts such as sports tournaments, stew or barbecue sales, adopt-a-mile projects, youth sports or child ID programs.

We realize that not everybody has the desire or time to be a Lodge Officer, also that not everyone wants to learn or work in the ritual, but there are needs beyond these in every Lodge. It takes a little effort on your part, but you can volunteer for existing projects your Lodge may have, or propose programs that you feel are worthwhile and fulfilling. This is where you volunteer your talent.

One person can make a difference! Your help and assistance is crucial and if offered will make that difference.

One of the most precious gifts that God gives us is time. We are asking for you to once again share a little time with your Lodge and Brethren. With your help all things are possible! You are one of the good men we are looking for. We hope to see you at the next Lodge meeting!

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The Universality of Masonry

By LANE WEATHERBEE, DGM
Acting Grand Master

Brethren, I call your attention to a section of the Entered Apprentice lecture you received at the end of your first degree. "The form of a lodge is an oblong square, from east to west and between north and south and from surface to center. These vast dimensions denote the universality of Masonry..."

These words have been heard by each of us, and I would like to share with you some of my experiences in learning the true meaning of the universality of our fraternity.

I always understood that Freemasonry was not only the world's oldest fraternity, but also the largest. Even though I had the privilege of visiting other states, I didn't understand the vast scope of international brotherhood. I first got a hint of the magnitude of international Masonic relations in February 2011 at the North American Grand Masters Conference. The convention was in Denver. I was fortunate enough to hear a committee review applications from a number of countries that were seeking fraternal relations with the Grand Lodges of North America. I heard translations of Grand Masters' requests to be recognized by the lodges of this continent.

I was not aware that a committee of this sort existed, but they have strict rules and guidelines that have been tried and tested over the years. While neither the conference nor the committee has any binding authority over a sovereign grand lodge, the advice we receive is good council whispered in our ears. This is also the closest thing to a national organization as can be found in this country, because each grand jurisdiction is a sovereign entity. I have been able to attend similar conferences in Atlanta and Kansas City. I continued to be amazed at the countries that were eager to share fraternal relations with the American lodges.

I am writing this from a hotel room in the nation's capital on Aug. 27. It is the final day of the 2013 Biennial Session of the Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction,

Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry. At the opening session, I was introduced as Alabama's Grand Lodge representative and was seated with 31 Grand Masters from all across the country. After our introductions, the foreign Supreme Councils were conducted into the room, each being led in by a Knight of St. Andrew carrying the flag of their country. There were nearly 40 countries represented. They came from all over Europe; France, England, Germany, Norway, Switzerland and more. They came from South and Central America, the Baltic and Iceland.

Following the session, I was invited to a luncheon, and sitting next to me was the Worshipful Master of Internet Lodge in London.

I have been in awe. I have seen a portion of the vastness of Masonic influence around the world. The language and the ritual may be different from ours, but we are all Masons. We believe in the same principals of friendship, morality, brotherly love, truth, relief and the ancient landmarks entrusted to our care. It may sound trite, but our Masonic family extends to every corner of the globe.

Like many of you, I attend my lodge and enjoy the warmth of Masonic brotherhood in my hometown. I relish visiting other lodges across the state, seeing friends, participating in work and doing all the things we do as Alabama Masons. I look forward to Grand Lodge session and seeing brothers I haven't seen in 12 months. This has been my Masonic world, but now I have a window into the universality of Masonry.

Brethren, we should enjoy the fellowship of our home lodges. We should relish to opportunity of visitation within our state. We should visit in other states and countries, when the opportunity presents itself. We should also remember that there are brethren throughout the world who share our Masonic beliefs. I would never diminish the importance and sovereignty of the Grand Lodge of Alabama, but while I love our Alabama fraternity, I have come to

realize that we are a part of a global organization. While Alabama has nearly 28,000 Masons in nearly 300 lodges, we are an integral part of the global Masonic family.

Members of Grand Lodges outside of North America share the same values as are taught in each of our lodges. They "talk the same talk and walk the same walk" as Alabama Masons, though their homes may be in countries that are thousands of miles from our borders.

I don't know about you, but it fills me with a great sense of pride and belonging when I know that I have true brethren on every continent of our world...men who believe in our

values and moral teachings. The next time you go to lodge and grip a brother's hand, remember that could be the hand of a true brother in Europe, south America the Baltic and other points of the globe. Remember that the "universality of Masonry" extends to millions of men who share our philosophy in almost every country in the world.

Consider these things and be proud that you are a Mason and a brother to men in all parts of our world who believe in our fraternity and its philosophy of bringing improvement to the human condition.

The 21st Century Mason

By S. MATTHEW JONES, WM
Greeno Lodge No. 588

Speculative Masonry began in earnest during the English Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th Centuries. Masonic principles and the principles of the Enlightenment developed concurrently, each fueling the growth of the other. The overlap in principles caused many of the best and brightest minds of the Enlightenment to be drawn to Masonry, and vice versa.

In 18th Century America, the proliferation of Masonic/Enlightenment Principles throughout the upper levels of the political and economic leadership, as well as throughout the social ladder, created an atmosphere that led to the independence of our great nation, ushering in the greatest period of liberty and prosperity in world history. Simply put, this was the height of Masonic principle in action.

Masonic principles attract many young men today just as these principles attracted many young men in the past, and our philosophy

has the same power today to make positive impacts on our society just as it did during the 18th Century.

The 21st Century Mason expects no less upon joining; he expects dynamic active lodges, but finds that most Lodges are one dimensional, lacking in dynamism and that our impact on society has dwindled both in size and in scope. We have been remiss in promoting and developing our unique Masonic principles and philosophy, in lieu of the much more common charity and degree work.

Why should a Masonic conference focus only on degree work and spare no time for education in Masonic principle? Common Sense reminds us "a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right." Charity and degree work are important, but principles are foundational.

Brethren, it is within us to restore dynamism to masonry, but to do so requires a candid examination of the status quo, and requires us to nurture other neglected aspects of Masonry. Are you in?

The Masonic Messenger

The Official Publication of the Grand Lodge of F. & A.M. of Alabama

Published Semi-Annually at Millbrook, Alabama



Please send all changes of address and membership status to your Lodge Secretary

Mark Twain Award Recognizes Two Alabama Masonic Lodges For Excellence and Leadership



Two Alabama Lodges have continued a pattern of excellence, recognized by winning Mark Twain Awards from the Masonic Service Association of North America.

Helion Lodge #1, of Huntsville, and Rising Sun Lodge #29, of Decatur, are recipients of the 2012 Mark Twain Awards, given for demonstrating excellence in 2012 activities aimed at Masonic Awareness, both among members of their Lodges and in their communities. This is the seventh time in the seven-year history of the award program that Alabama Lodges have received the Mark Twain recognition. Helion has received the honor in 2012, 2010, 2009, and 2008. Rising Sun earned

the distinction in 2012 and 2011.

The award recognizes a lodge's planning, execution, and communication in activities that both enhance Masonry's awareness in the community and enrich the quality of educational and fraternal experiences within the lodge.

During the past six years, the Masonic Information Center, the information arm of the Masonic Service Association, has presented the Mark Twain Award distinction to more than 120 lodges across the continent. "There are some 10,000 Lodges across North America, and Helion and Rising Sun Lodges should be very proud of being selected part of the elite group of Mark Twain Award winners

this year," said George Braatz, Executive Secretary of MSANA. "The Twain Award encourages Lodges to make Freemasonry relevant to their members and their communities," he added. "We feel public interest in the Masonic Fraternity is on the rise, and Lodges like Helion and Rising Sun are making significant contributions to the growing interest in Masonry that we see throughout North America."

The honor may be considered significant because the seven-year award program has been discontinued, with the Grand Lodge of Alabama claiming one of the highest totals of Lodge recognition in that history.

What Have You Done Lately?

By PARKER MOORE
Education Committee

One of the top reasons that members do not return to lodge is that they feel they have been absent for far too long and fear that they will not be welcomed back with open arms or that they will be interrogated about the reasons for their absence, which no one wants to endure. However, this is not the case, in fact we will welcome any of our brethren back at any time, without judgment.

We, as a lodge, are like a family and to make a family successful, it takes all the members working together. We need our members to step up and help us make our family successful. So, if you have skills, training or any special ability that you feel could be an asset, then I implore you to speak with your lodge and find out how you can help us achieve our goals. Become an active participant in events and programs; volunteer your time to your Lodge and Community, even if it is only for something small. Even the smallest of good deeds will go a long way toward making our lodge family more successful.

At 24 years old, I have only been a Mason for a little over a

year; I am proud to call myself a Mason, not only for what the fraternity represents, but also for the opportunities to share these experiences with like-minded people who I am honored to call my brothers.

When I first became a Mason, one of the Brothers asked me "When myself and the other older Masons are gone, who will be left to take over? We need someone to pass the torch on to, so why not you?" His words made me consider my involvement in the Fraternity and, whether I wanted to sit on the sidelines and watch or participate and take an active role in the lodge. I also realized that the future success of the lodge is dependent on myself and up and coming generation of Masons. If we don't become more involved and learn the work, then Masonry will die out, one lodge at a time.

It is because of that Brother that I am now actively involved in two lodges, serving in one as Junior Steward and Senior Deacon in the other, while also participating in various Masonic events and serving on several committees. Let me leave you with this thought. What have you done lately to keep our great fraternity going? Who

will you pass your torch too?

Please take a minute to read and fill out this survey and either submit it to your home lodge or email it to Phillip Sherman or myself at Philsherman4016@gmail.com or pdmoore1@crimson.ua.edu.

1. Why are you not able to come to lodge anymore?
2. Is there a specific reason you stopped attending lodge?

3. What kind of events would you be interested in pursuing?

4. What kind of activities, events or programs would make you want to be more involved? (Community/charitable outreach, fund raisers, etc.)

5. If the lodge had a "fun night" where we all went bowling or to a baseball game would you want to participate?

Make A Difference

By GREG DURR, JGW
Grand Lodge of Alabama

Brethren, as I continue my journey in the Grand Lodge I am overwhelmed by everything that goes with the operation of this great fraternity. I am honored that you have put your trust in me to represent you.

There is a concern I have seen over the years that we need to make an honest effort to address - our membership. We will always have losses, whether by suspension, expulsion or disinterest. The only way I see to battle this decline in membership is awareness. This is where you play a big part.

Brethren, we are not a secret society. Be proud to be a Mason, spread the word. Do not be afraid to talk in public about Masonry and what being a Mason means to you. Remember, by the regularity of your own behavior affords the best example for the conduct of others less informed.

Brethren, I believe we will draw more members to our fraternity if we put Masonry and all the good it does in view of the public. We can achieve this through the Child ID and Charitable Outreach Programs, in which I encourage every lodge to participate.

Brethren, we can make a difference.