
THE BILLBOARD

JULY 2024

For The Valley of Billings, Orient of Montana - Serving Eastern Montana Scottish Rite Members

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**To The Celestial
Lodge:**

Message from the Venerable Master



Greetings, Brethren!

I ask you this profound question. What is the character of a Freemason? Is it how he acts, what he believes or represented by the works he has accomplished in life? Is it amplified by the placed he's traveled, what he's seen and who he's met? Well, on November 16th, 2023, several of the members of the Billings Valley Scottish Rite and I discovered the answer to that question and more.

On that eventful afternoon, Brothers Jason Ascheman, Cody Catlin, Gerald Giebink, Cody Thormahlen, Tom Watson and I took a trip to Sheridan Lodge #8 in Wyoming. The purpose of the journey was to visit Bro. Dylan Crouse, a member of our Blue Lodge, Ashlar #29, who had relocated there the year prior to begin a new career. Maintaining a membership in both lodges, Bro. Dylan invited us south of the border to fellowship with him and his newly joined brethren. His hope was to foster new and enriching relationships between like-minded men who had previously never met.

As fate would have it, though, we discovered upon entering the lodge that a couple of its members had been known to us for years. As our groups were being introduced, I learned that Sheridan Lodge's secretary was Bro. Ken Thorpe, a classmate with whom I graduated from Billings West High School in 1988. Another one of its members was Bro. Steve Rathburn, who is Bro. Tom's cousin that he had not seen in over twenty years. For us, the reunion was a surprising and joyous one.

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Message from our Personal Representative

Overcoming the Barrier of Asking for Help

In a world that often values self-sufficiency and independence, it is not uncommon for individuals, especially men, to find it difficult to reach out and ask for help when in need. This reluctance to seek assistance can stem from a variety of factors, including social expectations, fear of appearing weak in front of your peers, or a desire to maintain a sense of control.

The reality is that many men, like myself, struggle with asking for help. However, it is crucial to recognize that there is strength in vulnerability and courage in reaching out for support. When a man finally musters the courage to ask for help, it can be an indication of how dire his situation has become. It is a moment that should not be overlooked or taken lightly.

I recently had an older friend reach out to me for some help. He is a veteran of the Air Force and then bounced around doing odd jobs for years. Poor health and bad hips forced him to quit working a few years ago. When he finally got the courage to ask for help, it was almost too late. He was about to lose his home, internet and TV had long been shut off and he had not eaten in a couple days. Unfortunately, my first thought was how am I going to find the time to help this gentleman? My thoughts then turned to the question: why did it take so long for him to ask for help? The latter question prompted me for this article.

As Masons, it is our duty to support and uplift those who find themselves in need. We must create a culture when asking for help is not seen as a sign of weakness, but rather as a sign of self-awareness. When someone does reach out for help, it is essential that we respond with empathy, kindness, and a willingness to extend a helping hand. Listen actively, offer practical solutions and follow through on any commitments you make.

We all have a responsibility to move mountains for those who are unable to help themselves. Whether it is a friend, family, brother, or a stranger in need, finding the time to offer support and assistance can make a world of difference. By coming together and offering help when it is needed most, we can create a more compassionate and caring community for all.

Although it would have been easier to help him if he had come to me sooner, my friend is doing much better in his own home. Let us remember the power of asking for help and the importance of extending a helping hand to those in need. Together, we can break down the barriers that prevent us from seeking assistance and create a world where support and compassion are readily available to all who need it and brotherly love prevails.



THE RITE CORNER

“Masonic Family”

David L. Nielsen, S.G.I.G. in Montana

Scottish Rite Freemasonry, like all other Masonic-affiliated organizations, such as York Rite, Shrine, Eastern Star, Nile, DeMolay, Rainbow and Job’s Daughters, among others, are all part of the larger Masonic family. We respect and support all the members of the Masonic family, even if we are not card-carrying members. All the family member organizations are based upon a shared common belief and reverence to a higher power, regardless of what name is used to call the Creator—God, Allah, Jehovah, or the name used by Mason is—Grand Architect of the Universe.

Another commonality within the Masonic Family is that we are kind and courteous to not only our Masonic family members but to all people. We work for the good for all. Within our respective organization we go to learn and teach one another how to live the most virtuous life that we can. When we are in the teaching-mode of our Masonic values, we should, to quote the educational philosophy of my past departed friend and elementary school educator, Ill. Brother Thomas W. Miller, “Know your stuff; Know whom you are stuffing and stuff them.” Our common beliefs, yearning for learning, and setting goals for doing kind acts are what binds all the Masonic family together as sisters and brothers.

As a youth growing up in Bozeman, my first friends were the boys that lived in my immediate neighborhood. When I started school, my friends included classmates from other neighborhoods. Later my neighborhood friend asked me if I wanted to join DeMolay in Bozeman. Because I liked and admired him, I was honored to be asked to join.

From there my Masonic journey expanded as I met and enjoyed more comradery and close ties of brotherhood. We were beyond friendship—we were brothers that cared for each other and for all.

When first joining the Masonic family, I expanded even more my circle of new friends, with whom we enjoyed learning new skills together, having fun, and sharing stories. For most of my life, being a part of the Masonic family—whether through lodges, chapters or valleys—was a way to learn how to be better than myself. I was both a student and a teacher, always learning my stuff to share.

As happens in life, not all times are fun and joyful. Just as dark clouds in the sky can block the sun, so to our lives will have dark moments—career failure, illnesses, and even death of family and friends. When we lost our grandson in late May from a tragic drowning, we were devastated. Thankfully during this sad time in our life, we received many gracious words and acts of compassion. Most of the time we look at the fraternity as only being a place of good times with our sisters and brothers. We often do not appreciate that our sisters and brothers of the Masonic family are there for us all time—not only to share our

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(S.G.I.G. Message cont. from page 3)

joy of success but in weeping and consoling in our sorrow. From our experience, the outpouring of concern and empathy exceeded anything we ever could have imagined. The lesson is that the Masonic family is always there to help you throughout what life may bring, from the best of times to the very worst. The Masonic family always has your back.

Enjoy being a part of the Masonic family. Relish the fun times and know that it is always there to support you and care for you for whatever comes your way, and of your duty to console others. In our Masonic family, it is not about me, it is about all of us. We are an important part of each other's lives. Thanks for being a part of this great, caring family.

2024 Valley Information 224 Members

(Remember– you can pay your 2024 dues on-line or through the office!)

Active Members with Dues Paid in Full: 6 2.7 %

Members with Current Dues Balance: 132 58.9 % ←

Active Members with Arrears Dues Balance: 21 9.4 %

Active Members that are Dues Exempt (ALR): 40 17.9%

Active Paid Life Members (E): 25 11.2%

A note about 2024 dues Renewal Notices coming from Supreme Council: Remember your dues must be paid by 01 January to be in good standing.



**Happy Birthday
America!!**

2024 Officers & General Information

2024 Officers

LODGE OF PERFECTION

Venerable Master	John Hugdahl, 32°
Senior Warden	Tom Hanel, 32° KCCH
Junior Warden	Nate Frickel, 32°
Orator (all bodies)	Gerald Giebink, 32°
Almoner	TC Chatman, 32° KCCH
Secretary	Llewellyn Fletcher, 33°
Treasurer	Dan Jobrack, 32° KCCH
Prelate	David Jobrack, 32°
Master of Ceremonies	Cody Catlin, 32°
Expert	Robert Cauckwell, 32°
Captain of the Host	Michael Ebert, 32°
Tyler	Anthony Morse, 32°
Organist	John Baber, 32° KCCH

ROSE CROIX

Wise Master	Jacob Clos, 32°
Senior Warden	Rick Ingram-Hegenbart, 32°
Junior Warden	Mitch Burns, 32°

COUNCIL OF KADOSH

Commander	Tom Watson, 32°
1 st Lt. Commander	Cody Thormahlen, 32°
2 nd Lt. Commander	Anthony Morse, 32°

CONSISTORY

Master of Kadosh	Tom Hornung, 33°
Prior	Tracy Dinkel, 32°
Preceptor	Marc Sewell, 32°
Minister of State	TBD

2-Month Valley Calendar Snapshot

(Detailed upcoming events on page 10)



Rite Care Board Meeting	July 2 nd , 2024
Stated Meeting	July 3 rd , 2024
KSA Meeting	July 17 th , 2024
Rite Care Board Meeting	Aug. 6 th , 2024
Stated Meeting	Aug. 7 th , 2024
KSA Meeting	Aug. 21 st , 2024
Valley BBQ-Picnic	August 24th, 2024
Honormans Luncheon	Aug. 30 th , 2024

Membership Breakfast

2nd Saturday of each Month

7:30 a.m.

At: **Perkins Restaurant**

765 S 20th Street W., Billings MT 59102



Billings Scottish Rite Office Hours

Wednesday and Thursday
9 a.m. – noon

Coffee Klatch

Every Thursday morning beginning at 7:30 a.m.
in the Temple Dining Room



(VM Message Continued from page 1)

Little did we know that not only would we be reuniting with a brother after a year's absence, but two of us would be reuniting with people from our past after decades of separation as well.

After spending quality time meeting new brothers and reminiscing with old, Sheridan Lodge #8 was opened in form by Worshipful Master Spencer Morris for business. After the normal and customary work, Bro. Steve arose to deliver an amazing enlightenment for us all to enjoy towards the end of the evening's proceedings. The topic of the enlightenment was an essay printed in the 1823 Farmer's Almanac published in Andover, Massachusetts. The title of the piece was called, The Character of a Freemason, and here is what it stated:

"The real freemason is distinguished from the rest of mankind by the uniform unrestrained rectitude of his conduct. Other men are honest in the fear of punishment which the law might inflict; They are religious in expectation of being rewarded, or in dread of the devil, in the next world. A freemason would be just if there were no laws, human or divine except those written in his heart by the finger of his creator.

In every climate, under every system of religion, he is the same. He kneels before the universal throne of God in gratitude for the blessings he has received and the humble solicitation for his future protection. He venerates the good men of all religions. He disturbs not the religion of others. He restrains his passions, because they cannot be indulged without injuring his neighbor or himself. He gives no offense, because he does not choose to be offended. He contracts no debts which he is certain he cannot discharge, because he is honest upon principle."

What struck me was the last sentence in the first paragraph regarding how a Freemason would be just if there were no laws. I know its original meaning was something completely different, but I couldn't help thinking about the Law of Probability in our particular circumstance that evening. What was the possibility of four gentlemen being separated by two states and over two decades reuniting in a Masonic Lodge in northern Wyoming? It was not a likelihood that I had even contemplated.

The first sentence of the second paragraph states that Freemasons are the same in every climate. Neither Bro. Tom nor I were aware that Bros. Ken and Steve had even joined Freemasonry. However, after years of traveling down separate paths and going our own ways, there we were reunited again by the strong bond of Masonry.

In closing, I am certain that improving our character through Masonry is a life-long journey for most of us. What I'm also certain of is throughout that journey, Masonry has dramatically improved my existence. Whether it is meeting new brethren, congregating with current, or joining with old, those opportunities would not have been available to me without the benefits of Freemasonry.

Neither would its impressive events, fascinating stories or cherished memories. If all that is helping to improve my character over time, then Freemasonry has met its purpose. At the very least, it has enriched my association by knowing all of you, my brethren, and consequently, my life for the better. For that, "I kneel before the universal throne of God in gratitude for the blessings I have received."

With Masonic Regards!

Bro. John Hugdahl, 32°
Venerable Master
Billings Valley Scottish Rite



365 CLUB

Ronny & Mary Beth Aasterud

LANGUAGE CLINIC OPERATIONS

St. Bernard Catholic Women Club

Ed & Beth Heiliger

COURTESY TRANSPORTATION VAN

Casual



DINNER

DINNER RESERVATIONS REQUIRED. PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATION WITH THE SECRETARY (**259-6683 NLT 7/01/24 @ NOON**) OR REQUEST THE SECRETARY ADD YOU TO THE CALL LIST. THOSE ON THE CALL LIST WILL RECEIVE A REMINDER CALL 2-3 DAYS BEFORE STATED DINNER.

MEAL MENU by Cody

Main Dish and Sides (choice) - \$15.00

Fresh Veggie Spring Rolls with Sweet Chili Sauce

Salad with Creamy Sesame Dressing

- 1. Grilled Teriyaki Chicken
Asian Coleslaw
White Rice**
- 2. Grilled Teriyaki Vegetables
Asian Coleslaw
White Rice**

DESSERT

Strawberry Sheet Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting

Billings Scottish Rite Bodies

514 14th Street West
Billings, MT 59102-5216

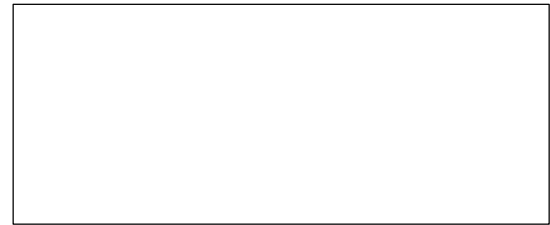
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Office Hours Wednesday & Thursday
9:00 a.m. – noon

**Email the Secretary to be added to
our Email list for an electronic
Billboard**



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Billings Scottish Rite



Orient of Montana
Freemasons of Montana

Lodge of Perfection

Venerable Master
John J. Hugdahl, 32°

Chapter Rose Croix

Wise Master
Jacob Clos, 32°

Council Knights Kadosh

Commander
Tom Watson, 32°

Consistory

Master of Kadosh
Tom Hornung, 33°

Upcoming Events

MEETINGS/EVENTS

Rite Care Board Meeting	July 2 nd , 2024 noon Conference Room
Exec. Board Mtg.	July 3 rd , 2024 Conference Room
Stated Dinner	<u>July 3rd, 2024 Dining Room –</u>
NO UPSTAIRS MEETING!	<u>Dining Room Presentation-ALL INVITED!</u>
KSA Meeting	July 17 th , 2024 Lodge Room
Rite Care Board Meeting	Aug. 6 th , 2024 noon Conference Room
Exec. Board Mtg.	Aug. 7 th , 2024 Conference Room
Stated Dinner	Aug. 7 th , 2024 Dining Room
Stated Meeting	Aug. 7 th , 2024 Lodge Room
KSA Meeting	Aug. 21 st , 2024 Lodge Room
Valley Picnic/BBQ	Aug. 24 th , 2024 at the Temple
Honormans Luncheon	Aug. 30 th 2024 Dining Room @ noon