

CLAUD L. AUSTIN LODGE NO. 1450

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STATED MEETING

The next Stated Meeting of the year is Monday, May 23rd, at noon in the Green Room of the Scottish Rite Cathedral. It's a very important meeting as we will be electing those to lead our lodge for the next year, two years, three years. Hope you will be there. Lunch, always good, follows.

FESTIVE BOARD

The Spring Festive Board will have already happened by the time you receive this newsletter. In case you missed it, we met on May 6th....a lot earlier than the usual scheme of things because of the Annual Texas Shrine Association whoop-it-up.

Being early didn't seem to make much difference in the attendance, however, as there were 40 reservations made in planning to enjoy the art of Masonic conviviality.

Remember.....reservations are absolutely necessary and we appreciate your timely cooperation.

PAST MASTERS NIGHT

The now annual Past Masters Night was held at the Scottish Rite Cathedral on a Tuesday yet...the Ides of March. First of all, the food was outstanding! It was prepared and served by our own....including but not limited to Steve Brazeal APM-SS, Wendell Miller PM-Chaplain, Larry Christensen and Ron Greene PM. They may be in "trouble" when it comes to the next year's dinner...enough so that a repeat performance might be necessary.

Plez Transou APM-SW spoke briefly on the history of our Lodge and was then treated to receiving his 60-Year Grand Lodge Awards

from Texas and North Carolina, as presented to him by our own R:W: Leonard P. Harvey APM-PGM.

Zola Blicher APM presented his candle-lit Memorial ceremony.

The more than 50 in attendance were treated to a really nice, and typical, Claud L. Austin event.

INFIRMERY

For those who continue to ask about my wife, Sandy, we appreciated your cares, concerns and prayers. The chemo she endured this winter was really tough. Enough so that the Oncologist cut the number of "treatments" from six to three. After almost two months without it, she's feeling much better and ready to get on with her life. Body scans are planned quarterly for the next two years; and, if nothing is detected, we'll keep our fingers crossed that the cancer will never return.

Larry Winkle PM underwent quadruple by-pass surgery and made a quick recovery. He was in attendance at the Past Masters Night, a little thinner, but feeling pretty good so soon after the surgery. And, now I hear that he's riding his motorcycle all over the country....no doubt terrorizing the highways.

Bobby Burden PM fell victim to multiple brain aneurysms on April 2nd. It was really touch and go for quite some time, but has shown some slow but steady improvement. He was in ICU for over three weeks before moving to a regular room and beginning therapy. He may even be moving to a rehab center soon.

His daughter Sarah has a blog posted at www.sunshinesarahroberts.com which I urge all to read to see what has been going on with Bobby, his family and friends. He has yet a

rough and rugged road to travel over, but we can all hope and pray that he will have a full recovery and be back at Lodge soon.

Billy Ray Dickey APM had his shoulder replaced and from what I hear is still working out the kinks of the new one.

If you know of anyone else in our Lodge's family who is sick or distressed, please let me know so we can all share in wishing for their quick and complete recovery.

LODGE ROSTER

Since we had so few returns of roster information this past year, I will try a new tact this year. Whether I am re-elected to serve as Secretary again or not, I plan to send to each member the roster information I have. It will be up to you to respond to me that it is either correct or that I need to make changes accordingly. If someone fails to respond, as it has been suggested to me, I will leave their name and old information out of the Roster redo. After all, there is no reason to publish a name with incorrect information. Your cooperation will be most appreciated.

CALENDAR

Monday, May 23	Stated Meeting/Elections
Monday, June 27	Installation
Monday, August 22	Stated Meeting
Friday, August 26	Festive Board
Monday, November 28	Stated Meeting
Thursday-Saturday December 1-3	Grand Lodge
Friday, December 9	Festive Board
Saturday, December 10	Holiday Brunch

There can always be changes.....watch for them

SECURING OUR LODGE'S FUTURE

As we are getting ready to enter our 25th year of the practice of Masonry and Masonic Conviviality, we need to think about securing the future of our Lodge....financially.

We have benefitted for lo these many years by the generosity of our name sake, the late Claud Lee Austin PGM, when he left the Lodge the residue of his estate.

Not long afterwards, the leadership of our Lodge thought it would be great to endow each member, that there would be no "dues" to collect annually....receiving instead, the disbursement of funds from the Endowed Membership program of the Grand Lodge.

That "worked" for several years; but then, the economy started a downward trend and interest rates dropped like flies. Combine that with some really big, amateurish investment moves by the appointed Grand Lodge Investment Committee, and we (all Lodges with endowed members) are suffering from first, a very low return on our members investments in the program and second, NO return on investments for the past two years.

We, that is Claud L. Austin Lodge, have been able to protect a large part of our funds with proper investments and sound fiscal responsibility, by not touching any principle for many years.

However, with interest at all-time lows, and without any distributions from our endowed memberships, that may change. Even though we have had a program of requiring a Dining Fee to cover the costs of our Festive Boards, Holiday Brunches and Past Masters Nights, we still have some on-going expenses and the need to do some charitable things as required by the IRS.

So, what I am about to say is that we need to start thinking about securing our future by perhaps increasing our principle whether by donations or bequeaths or fund raisers.

We have had some very wealthy members of our Lodge who have departed this earth and nary a one must have given the Lodge or its future any thought....though most were very active in their enjoyment in our practice of Masonry.

We are not "hurting" at the present time, Brethren. Understand, though, that the time of our money "growing on trees" is not going to last forever.....and we need to do what we can, what we want to, for our future.

Our Lodge is like no other in Texas. Others have tried to copy us but none have had the success of Claud L. Austin Lodge.

After we think about this, Brethren, we need to act, as the future starts now.

FROM THE POST OFFICE WALL



10 THINGS THAT MAKE YOU GO HMMMM!?

1. Why do we park in driveways and drive on parkways?
2. Do Lipton employees take coffee breaks?
3. Can I yell "movie" in a crowded firehouse?
4. Can you be a closet claustrophobic?
5. How do a fool and his money GET together?

6. Why does Hawaii have interstate highways?
7. How is it that a building burns up as it burns down?
8. If a train station is where the train stops, what is a workstation?
9. If nothing ever sticks to Teflon, how do they make Teflon stick to the pan?
10. If the pen is mightier than the sword, and a picture is worth a thousand words, how dangerous is a fax?

SOMEONE'S HAVING FUN



LAWS OF.....

Law of Variation - If you change lines (or traffic lanes), the one you were in will always move faster than the one you are in now (works every time).

Law of the Bath - When the body is fully immersed in water, the telephone rings.

Law of Close Encounters -The probability of meeting someone you know increases dramatically when you are with someone you don't want to be seen with.

Law of the Result - When you try to prove to someone that a machine won't work, it will...

Law of Biomechanics - The severity of the itch is inversely proportional to the reach.

RANDOM THOUGHTS

Nothing sucks more than that moment during

an argument when you realize you're wrong.

I totally take back all those times I didn't want to nap when I was younger.

There is a great need for a sarcasm font.

I would rather try to carry 10 plastic grocery bags in each hand than take 2 trips to bring my groceries in.

MapQuest really needs to start their directions on #5. Pretty sure I know how to get out of my neighborhood.

I can't remember the last time I wasn't at least kind of tired.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE

I am now, probably for the first time in my life, the person I have always wanted to be. Oh, not my body! I sometimes despair over my body, the wrinkles, the baggy eyes, and the sagging butt. And often I am taken aback by that old person that lives in my mirror (who looks like my Dad!), but I don't agonize over those things for long.

I would never trade my amazing friends, my wonderful life, my loving family for less gray hair or a flatter belly. As I've aged, I've become more kind to myself, and less critical of myself. I've become my own friend.

I don't chide myself for eating that extra cookie, or for not making my bed, or for buying that silly cement gecko that I didn't need, but looks so avant garde on my patio. I am entitled to a treat, to be messy, to be extravagant.

I have seen too many dear friends leave this world too soon; before they understood the great freedom that comes with aging.

Whose business is it if I choose to read or play on the computer until 4 AM and sleep until noon?

I will dance with myself to those wonderful tunes of the 40's & 50's, and if I, at the same

time, wish to weep over a lost love ... I will.

I will walk the beach in a swim suit that is stretched over a bulging body, and will dive into the waves with abandon if I choose to, despite the pitying glances from the jet set.

They, too, will get old.

I know I am sometimes forgetful. But there again, some of life is just as well forgotten. And I eventually remember the important things.

Sure, over the years my heart has been broken. How can your heart not break when you lose a loved one, or when a child suffers, or even when somebody's beloved pet gets hit by a car? But broken hearts are what give us strength and understanding and compassion. A heart never broken is pristine and sterile and will never know the joy of being imperfect.

I am so blessed to have lived long enough to have my hair turning gray, and to have my youthful laughs be forever etched into deep grooves on my face. So many have never laughed, and so many have died before their hair could turn silver.

As you get older, it is easier to be positive. You care less about what other people think. I don't question myself anymore. I've even earned the right to be wrong.

So, to answer your question, I like being old. It has set me free. I like the person I have become. I am not going to live forever, but while I am still here, I will not waste time lamenting what could have been, or worrying about what will be. And I shall eat dessert every single day (if I feel like it).

MAY OUR FRIENDSHIPS NEVER COME APART ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY ARE STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART!