



Freemasons Lodge #363
790 N. Van Buren St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202



Lodge Activity

October 22	5:30pm	Degree work ~ MM	HRSMC
November 5	5:30pm	Stated meeting	HRSMC/ dining out
December 3	5:30pm	Stated meeting/Holiday party	HRSMC/Steak Out Restaurant in Hales Corners

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Freemasons Lodge #363, Milwaukee, WI

www.freemasonslodge.org

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STATED MEETING:

1st Wednesday, monthly

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FREEMASONS LODGE #363 HOLIDAY PARTY

THE STEAK OUT RESTAURANT IN HALES CORNERS.

6300 Industrial Loop, Greendale, WI 53129

(2.74 miles from Hales Corners)

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3
FOLLOWING STATED MEETING**



Details and pricing will be in the November TB. It will be necessary for you to book your reservations, and we do hope you will bring your spouse or significant other!



The Sound of the Gavel

Master's Message
by Bob Roth

Greetings, Brothers,

We had a dandy turn out at Lodge at the stated meeting on 1 Oct, and it was just great to see some faces out there on the side that I'd not seen for awhile. Thanks to all of you for your interest in the Lodge and your desire to sit with us for our Stated Meeting activities. It was also a treat to welcome our newest MM, Brother Sylvester Cutler, raised by the Lodge on 24 Sep, to his first stated meeting, and to acknowledge our new MM Brothers Miller, Stibbs, and Riedel, raised by the Grand Lodge Line on 6 Sep.

As we look forward to our activities and duties, it was noted by our Secretary, Brother Bob Manske, that Grand Lodge regulations require that all three degrees be given within a year of each other, and that with so many good men seeking degrees in the Lodge, it may be necessary to step up the pace of the degree work. As you all know, each degree must be presented individually, though some of the parts of the degrees can be given to more than one candidate at one time. We all know how much time this takes.

I have tried to strike a balance between getting the chores done, and not burning out the degree teams, all of the time noting that many of the degree team members are members of all three degree units. We have also received special support from Grand Lodge in raising three of our FCs to MMs this past month, and may very well have their help again in the February/March time frame this coming Lodge year. But all of this effort isn't going to get the job done in the time frames we have without more special meetings to, in particular, raise our group of FCs to MMs. We will seek help from degree teams from other lodges, the Scottish Rite and elsewhere and see if we can't step up the pace.

But the real secret, my Brothers, is for more of you to step forward, learn a small part or two, and give us more "depth on the bench" for the work we need to do. It is a joy to have so many petitions come into the Lodge, and have opportunity to shed light for so many new good men. But with good fortune and many petitions comes duty as well. Please, if you have the inclination, do let one of the officers know of your interest in helping with the degree work, and we'll work with you to find a part and a place in the process. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. As mentioned in Lodge, we will conduct an **MM degree on 22 October**. All are invited.

Our **November Stated Meeting will be on 5 Nov 08** and we will dine out. Then we will have our **holiday party on 3 Dec 08 at the Steak Out Restaurant in Hales Corners**. Details and pricing will be in the November TB. It will be necessary for you to book your reservations, and we do hope you will bring your spouse or significant other and share a very special evening together. It has been a good year for this Lodge, and brotherhood is evident all about. Let us celebrate this year and our preparations for the next in style and with good cheer in our hearts on 3 Dec.

I would also like to personally thank our Lodge Counselor, Bill DeLind, and all members of the degree teams for the excellent degree work, the timely and supportive help all of have given, and our EA/FC candidates who have really worked hard to prove up and be ready for their advancement in the degrees. It has been a special privilege to see this work unfold and keep moving at the pace it has. It is a humbling reminder of the power of brotherhood, and of the value of the lessons we learn and the landmarks we preserve.

Thank you all!

s/f

Bob Roth
Worshipful Master



Junior Wardens Station

By Brother Tom Curtis

"To call the craft from labor to refreshment..."

Brethren:

The **Sponsorship Program** continues to expand but we still have some FCs who have no sponsor. If you're not already traveling with one of our new masons, helping to guide him along the way, and making him feel welcome, please give us a hand. All it will require of you is to give him a call every once in a while, answer his questions as best you can and make him feel at home in our Lodge. It's really what Freemasonry is all about.

In the way of refreshment, we're looking forward to a wonderful holiday get-together after our December Stated Meeting. It's something that's a bit of a tradition by now...and is a great way to involve yourself and possibly your Lady in one of the nicest gatherings that the Lodge puts on during the year...a fine way to welcome in the Season!

See you there!

Tom Curtis

Junior Warden



Senior Stewards Station

By Brother David W. Alderfer

I'm preparing a log of lodge activities for 2008. I have found a great deal in the Lodge's minutes, Trestleboards, Wisconsin Masonic Journal, etc., however I am sure many individual efforts have not been identified. Lodge members who have performed individual activities in either of the following areas during 2008 please contact me. The activities are: SERVICE TO OTHERS (e.g. Children's Hospital, V.A. Hospital, Nursing Home, School, etc) and PERSONAL VISITATIONS (e.g. Shut-ins, Hospitalized, Health Center, Widows, etc.). For example a number of our lodge members volunteer with the 32⁰ Children's Learning Center.

David W. Alderfer

Senior Steward



Poet's Corner

"Of Coast and Forest"

by Brother David J. White

Of coast and forest,
time before time.
Where the surf meets land
the trails cut back to old
stone telescopes pointed at the sun.
May these moments never end.
Of coast and forest
Salt water and the silt breeze
tilt your head back and fill it with dreams.



The Winding Stairs

Editor's Light ~ By Brother Tommy Baas

"0 - The Fool"

I've embarked on a project of designing my own Tarot deck, painting each card myself and giving each my own interpretive essay. Here 'tis the first of

78...

Before the first card, the Magician, or the Initiate, is the Candidate, the Zero, out of which the First is formed. In the traditional version of the card, the dog at the Fool's left side is interpreted to be hostile, trying to bite the boy. I've felt that's either a yucky misinterpretation accepted over time or at least unbecoming of the feeling I personally get with the image. Naturally, Tommy is gonna make the small dog to be the boy's affectionate companion. A prince by birthright, the Prodigal Son, having wandered off from his spoiled sense of security out of stubborn restlessness to experience the world and observe its laws and also the breaking of them and record his impressions in his journal (under right arm, with pen - the poet's magic wand—and I could just as well call this card the Poet), the Fool peers longingly from atop a hill high, shedding tear for the heart (crying blood down the castle walls, as if out a bedroom window open) he craves back home at the castle where he belongs. He has only to descend the hill and cross the bridge. He is weary from travel, his jeans are ripped and he is barefoot. Perhaps they resemble the pajama pants worn by the Masonic candidates, with one leg rolled up. The grass is green and it is full of red and yellow flowers which are soft to his barefeet. Being a prince by birthright, he never had to worry about security and having all needs met. So restless he went off to prove to himself that he could earn and deserve what had been given to him freely by the Grace of God. What he did was find Knowledge. He carries a small sack over his left arm and it carries his essential belongings, as he travels conservatively, so to make sure he can make it home if he has to. Like a turtle, he carries his home on his back. He has a hard shell and it is important for him to be strong, and as you can see by his flushed cheeks, the shame of Fallen Man which is the Cross carried, he is full of humbled adoration for the Lord and only wants to come before Him innocently. He is alone but for his dog and a dream. He carries a simple slingshot in his backpocket (though as a prince and a knight he's certainly entitled to carry a sword, he is modest and only means to protect) for he is like David to Goliath. ("He is an artist; he knows to create, not destroy" -a.b. 74). He is a conservative, like his father. And uses only the resources he can carry, for what is most important is the journey, because at home is everything. He feels a fool for having strayed, yet is wise for it, and is also the wiser for wanting to return home really ready. He is the Prodigal Son of the great parable.

He knows he cannot afford to be insecure or hasty. If he did not so firmly believe that he could make things better, he would not so firmly assert his wish; for that would be selfish egotism, whereas he Loves. He knows that poverty is not to be fancied a virtue but is modest about his riches. You do not see it because he doesn't show it—he shares it. He does not live on credit, but work. He knows what's wrong with this world fallen as it is from Eden and is not afraid to sing about it. Some have interpreted the Fool as a Troubadour. I capitalize the term because such was an actual society of people, and in the days before the Information Superhighway and such, their thing was to travel across the land conveying the news in storytelling songs, sometimes embellishing. The Fool of the Tarot is often shown as a jester. He entertains with song and dance, yet he is the most serious and wise of all. Nothing really means anything to him but that Kingdom that gives everything else meaning, because it is the source of Love and Family. From that home full of meaning, everything that seemed meaningless is now full of meaning, as if the clouds of age and trial have parted and Son, now almost Father, sees the world again as if through the eyes of a child. He is about to go dancing and laughing in the rain as he descends the hill, and so will his little dog.

Looking at the image, it is raining around the castle, though not upon the hill (yes, punners, he's "The Fool on the Hill."). The Fool has Freedom. The castle and the heart represents not only his goal of a home, but the home from which he was born. It is owned by his Father. The Sun is peaking out from behind the clouds, just as the Son is peaking out at the castle from beside the clouds. The dog halts in awe of the prospect of home. Anxiously her tongue hangs out and she shakes excited. The Fool is both smiling and crying. But the tears are for relief as much as they are for longing; for he can see from his vantage point that he is almost home (Alas, it is still there! The walls are crumbling, but they have withstood many wars and now withstand much rain, and there is shelter and Love inside...it is still there, and he is almost there!), just down the Mountain and across the River.

The "Fool"? not such a derogatory thing at all. The Fool finds Humor--a sign of Intelligence--in life in just how graciously beautiful the ways of the world have of balancing Sunlight & Rain, both essential for growth (just as innocence & experience, or thinking and acting, wrong and right, progressive & conservative). A William Blake (who interpreted God to be the Poetic Genius inherent in man) proverb that I keep coming back to is "if the fool would persist in his folly,



he would become wise." In other words, go to it with your bad self...take that initiative...write your own adventure...design your own oracle... find what you want and set your sights and actions and spirits to manifesting that goal, believing it into existence, hoping Faith makes Fate. What might seem crazy at first and to much of the rest of the world, should he not give up his Faith in it, the foolishness becomes ultimate Dignity, and the dream becomes reality. Thus is the creative poet like a god. ("Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law... Love is the Law...Love under will."). To be Something, all it's going to take is Initiative. The Love is There. He knows best that the best he can do is do his best. If he gives it all he's got and fails, at least he gave it all he had and he has still come that far. And there is no failure anyway, for where time does not exist (the Aether) (which is the space between him and home, the Heart), he is already home. If he doesn't try, he will fail anyway, and if he could've succeeded had he given it his best, and fails because he didn't, then he would be truly foolish, whereas in committing to take the challenge, he is the Fool...all possibilities ahead (zero), and a simple home (1) the real goal. A familiar home, longlost, now found to be not so far away. And the Bridge looks to him like surely something he and his little dog can certainly handle. All that he's seen across the vast world in his traveling, when all the while all he wants is there at home. And this is the first card, the beginning of the deck, and not the last, though actually, being Zero, it has no technical chronological placement. It is the Wild Card and it is the citadel backbone origin which exists in everything. Its position in the Deck is in Eternity, as is the Fool's perspective as he travels in a zero circle...the Aether just before manifestation, the thought behind the first Word.

Indeed the essence of this card lies between and within every card, for it reflects the very one who is addressing the Oracle; the limelight protagonist looking in looking out at the cards, interpreting into and from the reading. The book in his hands--the Book of Life, the Book of Love-- is both to write in and to read from at once. The Fool is Fallen Man, having eaten of the Fruit of Knowledge of Good and Evil, seeking return to Eden, having strayed. From clues he's collected out in the world, he believes he has the answer to the riddle posed by the evertwisting cherub with the flaming swords who guards the Tree of Life in Eden. He will come knocking, with three raps. Beneath his book of poems he covers his heart, which peaks out at the one that looks back at it from the Castle. The key number of the Fool card is 11. The pillars of the temple at the entrance to the Sanctum Sanctorum, or Holy of Holies. 11 which is 2. 74 & 56. It is ruled by Air, or Aether, and in this interpretation of the card, we see all aspects of it through cycle: clouds, rain, river, healthy grass, and the clear air atop the mountain. And believe me, the air is not always clear up there. It is almost humbling to see the almighty Castle being pet by rain. Yet atop the hill, the prince turned fool turned wiseman is overwhelmingly humbled so by the essence of the Castle like nothing he's even cared so much about before. In his little shoulder sack he keeps his birthright. He has only to take it out his sack, show it to the doorman, and the drawbridge would be drawn, as would the doorman, a suddenly humbled servant kissing the prince's feet. The doorman exclaims his name and surprise and raises his hands to God in gratitude. His father and mother shower their returned son with gifts, who has had his play and is ready to begin the Great Work. He has both the strongest and the most loving support he could ask for. There is a warm fire and healing ailments inside the Castle...Family and Love. He has been off on Adventure and they all want to hear his stories at the dinner table (which is immense with feast!), but for him, the real adventure has just begun.

The Fool is still the zero card, the candidate, the young prince who is also a jester. He is a candidate who will be Raised a Master Mason the easy way, and so wants to prove up the hard way. In mathematics, sometimes he shows his work, sometimes he doesn't. He is the source of elements, being spirit Aether, the zero substance out of which all is formed...the "rough ashlar"...the stone which the builder refused yet becomes the headcorner stone of the entire temple. Next stage, he will be the builder himself, the initiate, Magician, the Son come to claim his Fatherly inheritance, just as Space opens up to manifest Substance. As such, it must be remembered that he is Young...an open slate...a candidate for initiation, and wearing the rags of such, with one knee exposed of the intuitive left foot ready to take that first initiatory step forward, wearing the blindfold of teary eyes and flushed cheeks, all that keeps him from seeing the Light clearly... Yet. Zero is not so much the lack of quantity, but the potential of all qualities.

He has only to open the Book in his hand and the Adventure begins...both reading and writing... and when he takes up his purple pen to write, he becomes the Magician. He is walking toward the other trumps of the Deck, about to pass through the various cards, spiritually hoodwinked and a bound neophyte, but brave, curious, and open-minded, immersing himself upon the passage through the gates of Divine Wisdom on the path from All-Potentiality to All-Fulfillment. His equivalent in the playing card deck (which is modeled after the Tarot) is the joker. The Wild Card. Though it appears to have no value, and the figure to be young and both farcical & destitute, he hides subtly within him the resources to potentially take on any value, even the Ace, as each draw most requires in context, and it is because of his simple conservativeness that he is able to do so. The Zero card is Ain Soph, the First Cause.

Next card, the Magician...