

“THREE STEPS UP - THOUGHTS”

Brethren, the Grand Lodge Planning Session held in Boise on October 22nd was well attended, considering other Masonic events happening on the same date. It is utterly impossible to schedule any event that doesn't compete with another Masonic Event. I want to thank everyone that attended the Grand Lodge Planning Session and the IMFA meeting that followed. The item on the agenda that led to most of the discussion at the session was regarding the upcoming training conferences in the spring. The Spring Communications have been revised to Training Conferences, which may include a name change for the conferences, to all those desiring further light needed to advance up the line as officers in their Lodges or just to gain further knowledge about our fraternity. The consensus on how to finance these conferences is that each Lodge would be asked to contribute \$30.00, which would cover the cost for all members from their Lodge that desire to attend the conference in their area. As advertised at the Fall Communications there will be 5 conferences held around the state in; Pocatello, Twin Falls, Boise, Lewiston and Coeur d' Alene. This should give everyone a choice of location to attend.

In the IMFA meeting, lots of ideas and suggestions were discussed. The new Rainbow Assembly scheduled to be instituted in Twin Falls had a problem with withdrawal of several of the new girls due to their parent's decision that the Masonic Fraternity is a cult. I don't know how we are ever going to get rid of this stigma perpetrated by those that do not understand who we are or what we do. The unfounded claims that are printed on the internet are unworthy of consideration. It is truly amazing to me how much people are influenced by the statements made on the internet and other writings. It is certainly frustrating that those that believe those writings don't take the time to do their own assessment of Freemasonry and make their own decisions.

I for one am not ashamed to say that Freemasonry has improved my life. Freemasonry has lots to offer to those that seek to improve their lives. We do require a belief in a Supreme Being of your choice as part of the requirement to join Freemasonry. If that is a cult, I am part of it! In your contact with those that have the belief that we are a cult, ask them what their standards are for becoming a better human being in this journey we are all pursuing? What are they doing to improve themselves? Freemasonry means just as the name applies, “FREE”. Freemasonry encourages all of us to be Free thinkers, Freedom of religious choice, Free from persecution, Freedom to assemble, Freedom of choice in our lives and Freedom to speak without accusation of cultism.

Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth are our great standards! We live by Faith, Hope and Charity. Being a cult is the farthest thing from my mind. Please exercise the Freedom you have, the Freedom of being who you are.

“Building Character” James A. Hensley MWGM