

Ars Masonica

The Masters Word

As the sun sets on my year in the east, it gives me great pleasure to leave the lodge with two projects which I hope will be of great value to the officers and more importantly to the brethren of our lodge. The first of which is this newsletter, which has been sorely needed for some years now. Communicating with the brothers of this lodge for years has been spotty at best. We have had no effective means of communication to the brethren until, I believe, now. Only time will tell if this newsletter pans out and helps communicate with you, my brothers, as I believe it will.

The second project I wanted to finish this year was a new, updated and modern website. Another form of communication that we were sorely lacking was a modern day presence on the internet. No one knew how to find us, when our meetings were, what events we had scheduled, nothing. If you didn't know and officer of the lodge you probably had no idea about any of those things. I'll talk more about the website shortly.



I first want to detail the newsletter since this is its maiden voyage and familiarize you, the reader, with the layout. As things are now I wanted to have the main page and column be written by the Worshipful Master for each issue so that he has a podium to speak to the brethren at large. A place to discuss a current issue that is of importance to him and/or our lodge. This would have come in handy many times the past few years. For instance during the sale of our building on Oliver street it would have been much better to have been able to have a tool to effectively keep the brothers of the lodge up to date on what was going on and what our status of the building was. Well now I am hoping that this newsletter is that tool. The calendar to the right I wanted to be on the front page as well. I know how busy everyone is. Trust me I know. I wanted to keep the important information right on the front page such as the calendar so you can find it easily and quickly with a glance. No one wants to dig through pages of a newsletter to find the calendar. So it's important it's on the front page.

Calendar

November 19th, 2009

Past Masters Night @ 7:30 pm

November 26th, 2009

Study club @ 7:00 pm

December 3rd, 2009

Officer elections @ 7:30 pm

December 10th, 2009

Study club @ 7:00 pm

December 17th, 2009

Officer Installation @ 7:30 pm

December 24th, 2009

Study club @ 7:00 pm

December 31st, 2009

Study club @ 7:00 pm

Also you will note is a section on the back that lists the officers of the lodge and the contact information they wish to share so that you may reach an officer should you need to. I think it is important that brothers be able to reach an officer and know how to do so. Many times someone needs to get ahold of someone that has a petition form or perhaps needs to find something out and an officer is the best way to do so. Ideally I would like for all the officers to list their email and phone number in the section for contacting officers.

However I know not everyone is comfortable with that so I hope that at the least everyone lists an email address.

Now I wish to talk a little about the website. The new website is up and running at our old domain name, <http://www.bgb433.org>, and currently I have it designed to be easy on the eyes, minimal, yet display all important information, and it's fast. Even on mobile devices such as cell phones it loads pretty quick. And mobile devices are the future so I wanted to keep it simple and quick to load yet look decent too. It's debatable whether I succeeded or not. The website has one main menu bar containing the following choices:

Main (which links you to the main page of the website), Lodge Officers (which is a link to the photos of the lodge officers), Blog (which is where the WM can post entries which are similar to keeping a journal) it simply lets people know what is going on and gives the WM a place to post comments about things that concern him or the lodge and to

briefly allow others to keep up to date on the state of the lodge and what the current WM is thinking, a Trestle Board link (which is where our online google calendar is located that displays a calendar of our events either via week, month, or agenda view and I have included a sample of all three views with this newsletter and it also includes a print button so people can select the view of the calendar they wish and just click print and print out a calendar of that views events for our lodge, and last but certainly not least is a contact link (which includes a map courtesy of google that displays the exact location of the lodge on a detailed street map along with a brief description under the map of the location of the lodge and a phone number to call the lodge at. Also there is a small form on the left side of the map which allows people to submit an email to the lodge using the form. They are asked to supply a name, an email address, a subject line and then type their comment or question in and submit it. The mail is then sent to our new gmail email account for the lodge bgb433@gmail.com which can be access by anyone over the web with the correct username and password).

Also from the Main link on the front page of the site are two sublinks Newsletters and Presentations. Newsletters will be where I will keep online PDF copies of our newsletters for anyone to download and Presentations will be where speeches and talks, etc will be stored in PDF format for anyone to download as well.

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