

WEBB LODGE #166 F. & A.M.  
FEBRUARY 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2011 TRESTLEBOARD (#278)



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Happy Valentine's Day from the Officers of Webb Lodge #166



BRETHREN: THE **REGULAR COMMUNICATION** OF WEBB LODGE #166 F. & A.M. WILL BE HELD AT 3201 WRIGHTSBORO ROAD, AUGUSTA, GEORGIA, ON **FEBRUARY 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2011**. DINNER WILL BE SERVED AT 7:00 P.M. AND A LODGE OF MASTER MASONS WILL BE OPENED AT 8:00 P.M. PLEASE REMEMBER TO CALL A BROTHER OR WIDOW AND INVITE THEM TO COME AND SHARE AN EVENING OF FELLOWSHIP WITH US ON THAT DATE. IF YOU, ANOTHER BROTHER OR WIDOW NEED TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE LODGE PLEASE CALL ONE OF THE OFFICERS. (TELEPHONE NUMBERS ARE LOCATED ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS NEWSLETTER) **WIDOWS HAVE AN OPEN INVITATION TO COME JOIN US FOR DINNER EACH MONTH AND PLEASE BRING A GUEST.**

- 10<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT'S GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION:** The 10<sup>th</sup> Masonic District will host the 2011 George Washington's Birthday Celebration on Saturday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Coffee and donuts will be served around 9:00 am with the program beginning at 10:00 am. There will be a luncheon following the program. The event will be held at the Scottish Rite Center, 2553 Washington Road, Augusta, Georgia, 30904. It is open to all Master Masons, their family and friends.



- COURAGE IN THE EAST:** (Taken from an article in the Short Talk Bulletin published by the Masonic Service Association of North America and written by Thomas K. Sturgeon, RWGM, Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania) For the last one-half century, membership in Freemasonry has continued to decline. Our fraternity has lost approximately 66% of its members during that period. To solve this issue requires a need for change that makes the fraternity more contemporary to 2011 than to a past era, say 1911. But, to make this level of needed change requires courage, most especially from the East. It also takes patience, tolerance and flexibility from the general membership. **SOLUTIONS:** **1.)** Membership Process; Some Grand Lodges still do not permit a member to invite a good and decent man to join, instead still depending on the ancient and archaic policy of requiring an interested man to ask. Truth be told, many Masons have not adhered to this policy anyway, so why not permit what has already been an "Underground" practice. If we expect our membership numbers to rise, this practice must change. Many good men never join our fraternity because they never know that they had to ask. This change has been authorized in the state of Pennsylvania. The state of Pennsylvania has recently held a one day class in 13 different locations throughout the state and added thousands of new brethren to their rolls. These types of classes should not be conducted on a regular basis; probably no more frequent than once every five years. This is a valuable membership development tool that allows many good men to become Masons who just cannot join the lodge in the traditional manner. Many detractors of this idea say that these members come in one door and go out the other. Proof is in the states of Ohio and Pennsylvania; the opposite is true. The majority of these brothers continued their Masonic education in appendant bodies and went on to become officers in their lodges. Also we need to change the voting process to protect a decent man from being rejected because someone does not like his recommender or for some other non-Masonic reason. The time has come to require more than one blackball and if there is only one blackball, he must explain his reason to the District Deputy in total confidentiality his reasons for that blackball and the District Deputy would have the authority to uphold or reject the blackball following a thorough investigation. **2.)** Gaining membership is one problem; another is getting brothers to the meetings both regular and called. How do we do this? How about asking those who do not attend. Call them up and ask them why? Equally important is to ask what active members think of the meetings. I have been told that brothers want to attend meetings not only for fellowship but to learn something, for the meetings to be more social, shorter, less ritualistic and provide an opportunity to listen to an interesting speaker. More brothers do not want to hear the minutes, bills etc. That is one reason why the Scottish Rite has had a 35%-45% increase in attendance the last 4 years. We do not always have tiled meetings, have interesting guest speakers and involve the families, especially the spouses of the membership. I also think that it is appropriate to relax the attire. While jeans and t-shirts should not be permitted, neither is a suit and tie required. **3.)** Courage to change also means that the ritual should be available to each Director of Work in each lodge. Do we not trust each other enough to keep this information private? Just go to your computer and "GOOGLE" degrees of freemasonry and anyone can come up with all the information available to our District Custodians. We need to be able to do more efficient and accurate work. **4.)** We need to be more aggressive in dispelling the misinformation about our fraternity. We must become more transparent, while at the same time maintaining our privacy. We need to have open houses in our lodges, march in parades, visibly help in community projects (blood drives, habitat for humanity etc) and generally let our neighbors know who we really are, what we stand for and the good that we do (advertise ourselves). If we can do this it will be our best Membership Development Tool. **CONCLUSION:** To do nothing and expect better results will not solve our problems. All of these changes, and a myriad of other changes, must occur if we expect to be a significant fraternity in the future. Webb Lodge's membership in 1988 (when I became Secretary) was 337; I am still the Secretary 23 years later and the membership is now 97. This should cause all of us to pause. As leaders of this greatest of fraternities, we need to ask ourselves and our brothers, "**Are we doing all the right things**



today to assure there is a future Masonic Fraternity, including one for those Masons yet to be born.”

The time to change is now and no change will take place unless there is **Courage in the East**. I challenge our current Worshipful Master, Past Masters and Future Worshipful Masters to meet this challenge, think out of the box and do the right thing.

3. **QUOTABLE QUOTES:** 1. When you relinquish the desire to control your future, you can have more happiness. (Kidman) 2. People always call it luck when you have acted more sensibly than they have. (Tyler) 3. Humor is a rubber sword; it allows you to make a point without drawing blood. (Hirsch) 4. The reward for conformity was that everyone liked you except yourself. (Brown) 5. Concentration comes out of a combination of confidence and hunger. (Palmer)
4. **LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE:** These words have been used by me for several years for this light hearted section of the newsletter. But now I know that they are true. I recently received a letter from the wife of a brother who has just recently passed away which stated the following, “I wish to inform you of the death of my husband. I do want to mention to you how much he always enjoyed receiving your monthly newsletter. He read every word of it and always read the jokes to me; you were always in his heart.” A letter like that justifies to me the time to produce this newsletter and that some of the brethren enjoy it. **1.** Over the years I have heard my share of strange questions and silly comments from people who call the computer software company where I work as a tech support operator. But one day I realized how absurd things can sound on the other end of the line when I heard myself say to one caller, “Yes sir, you must first upgrade your download software in order to download our upgrade software. **2.** After drilling his platoon in the hot sun, the sergeant barked out a final order: “All right you idiots, fall out!” The men dispersed, but one rookie stood firm. The sergeant stared as the rookie smiled and said, “There sure were a lot of them, weren’t there, Sergeant? **3.** The lieutenant wanted to use a pay phone but didn’t have change for a dollar. He saw a private mopping the floor and asked him “Soldier, do you have change for a dollar?” “I sure have, buddy” the private answered. Giving him a mean stare, the lieutenant said, “That’s no way to address an officer. Let’s try it again. Private, do you have change for a dollar?” “NO, Sir” the private replied.
5. **GUARDING THE WEST GATE:** (Contributed by our SW, WB Huggins) **Investigating Committee:** Let us present six little words which may help a Brother who finds himself a member of this important committee. Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How. The following will give you an idea of some of the questions that spring from these key words. **WHO:** Who is he? (Not just his name) Who does he know? Who does he associate with? **WHAT:** What are his reasons for petitioning? What is his profession? What is his standing in the community? What is his general reputation at work? What is his attitude toward God? **WHEN:** When did he become interested in Freemasonry? When did he come to this district? **WHERE:** Where does he live? Where did he come from? Where does he spend his leisure time? **WHY:** Why is he seeking membership? Why did he wait until now? Why is he petitioning your lodge? **HOW:** How does he intend to serve Freemasonry? How does he intend to conduct himself? How has he lived in the past? In addition to the above suggestions there are a few **DON'TS** which should be considered: **Don't** look at a man and think he is alright. **Don't** think he will reform. **Don't** be guided by his own reports. **Don't** be afraid to ask questions. **Don't** report until you are satisfied. **Don't** leave your work of investigation until the last day. **Don't** let the other two thirds of the committee do your work. **Don't** forget he may be the Master of the Lodge someday. So Mote It Be.



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**WEBB LODGE #166 F. & A.M. 2011 OFFICERS**

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