EDICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TO ALL LODGES - COVID-19 HEALTH ANNOUNCEMENT

March 27, 2020

Brethren,

Effective immediately, the cancellation of Lodge Meetings and Events is extended to April 30, 2020. This action is in compliance with Executive Order No. 20-12, issued by the Governor of Oregon on March 23, 2020. This Order is found on-line on the Governor’s website.

The COVID-19 virus is still expanding rapidly in Washington, California and New York and surrounding states. In Oregon today, we have 318 cases with 11 mortalities. The Governor’s actions will continue to keep numbers low in our state, to stem the increase noted in other states. The health and safety of all of our members is of utmost concern to me. I strongly recommend that if you are over 60, to reduce your exposure to everyone by staying home. During this period there will be no penalties for not holding a stated communication.

This Edict applies to all Appendant and Concordant Masonic bodies in the State of Oregon.

This order by the Governor has caused the Grand Lodge Trustees to act now regarding our upcoming Annual Communication. No one has the ability to foresee the future. In the face of this uncertainty, and to make sure that we are taking proper actions should things become worse, we have chosen to cancel the public portion of the Annual Communication scheduled for June 3-5, 2020. There will be no banquets or receptions held and we will not meet at the Grand Hotel in Salem. The Grand Lodge Trustees are developing a plan to hold an Annual Communication which complies with the Masonic Code while minimizing risk of infection. As soon as the plan is finished, it will be released to you. The Grand Lodge office will continue to be closed until further notice. Contact by phone or email is always ok.

My Brothers, many of you are concerned about how you might carry out Lodge business in the interim. The rule is that there will be no stated communications. Usual expenses should be covered in your annual budget, approved in January 2020. If not, in the interim, and for limited business, bills for utilities, taxes and services should be approved by the Master, Senior and Junior Wardens, Secretary and Treasurer during the time this Edict is in effect. Remember that the ability of this group is limited - other business which requires the consent of the Master and members of the lodge, or the Lodge Trustees can only occur at a stated communication.
Phone, video conference and email are all acceptable modes of communication and should be recorded by the Secretary and placed into the permanent record of the Lodge. Annual returns are still due to Grand Lodge by April 10 as specified in section 213.9 of the Oregon Masonic Code. The minutes of these meetings should refer to this Edict and the Executive Order of the Governor of Oregon.

The use of electronic media provides Masons with the ability to reach out to Brothers, neighbors and friends during this unprecedented time. I encourage use of GoToMeeting or Zoom, email or text messaging during the period of separation. This is a great opportunity for us to continue our service to our communities by extending our Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth to our Brothers and Neighbors. I recommend you organize a phone tree to contact Lodge Brothers, widows and especially elder Masons who may be in need of some help. Just a phone call will let a Brother know of your concern and ability to help. Many older Brothers and friends may need help in obtaining groceries, or prescription refills. These can be left on the front porch, with no physical contact.

This period of isolation also provides us with an opportunity to spend time learning our ritual, learning a new part in a degree, or expanding our knowledge through online learning. There is a great amount of information online of Masonic material including podcasts. You might also desire to write an article for the Oregon Masonic News; prepare a brief talk on a subject of interest or expand upon ideas presented in the Short Talk Bulletins published by the MSA.

My Brothers, this is an opportunity to make lemonade out of the lemons we have been given. While each of us first have to take care of ourselves and our families, we can also reach out in a variety of ways to make things better for our Brothers and friends.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Ronald J. Eggers
Grand Master of Ancient Free & Accepted Masons of Oregon