

David Elliott Lodge # 364 Newsletter

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Omaha, Texas 75571-4071
Ric Holland---Worshipful Master, 2021-2022

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NEXT STATED MEETING July 05, 2022 @ 7:00 PM

MEAL AT 6:15 PM

1. The ladies from the Omaha Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star provided the meal for the night at this stated meeting. The ladies served ham and all the trimmings including great desserts and drinks. Brother Jerome Elder is the current Worthy patron of the local OES Chapter.
2. Brother Brock and WM Ric Holland gave a report about attending the local High School Scholarship Awards Banquet. The Lodge awarded two scholarships in the amount of \$1000.00 each to two graduating seniors.
3. Right Worshipful Bill Guy, DDGM Masonic District # 6 honored the Lodge with a social visit at this meeting.
4. Brother Garrett Lyons attended the June 04, 2022, forum in New Boston as part of his certification process on his journey to qualify for the Worshipful Master position in the Lodge.
5. Brother McGee reported that he has bought and will donate two new Flags to replace the current ones hanging on the Flag poles at the Lodge. They are severely weathered and tattered and are not appropriate for display. They will be properly retired.
6. Brother Pat Tomberlain from the Douglasville/Atlanta area and a Lodge member at David Elliott was in attendance for his first visit in a while. We look forward to Brother Tomberlain being in regular attendance.
7. Brother McGee reported that some research he had been performing for the 150th anniversary celebration has begun to have some results. He has obtained a copy of all the charter members which indicates the Lodge had twenty-three charter members. Another document shows the original office holders of the Lodge. The first Worshipful Master was James R. Bridges, and the first Secretary was David R. Reynolds. David R. Reynolds is the GGG-Grandfather of our current member Larry Joe Reynolds.
8. The election for the ensuing year was held with Garrett Lyons elected as WM, Scott Brock as SW, Howard Barron as JW, Rex McGee as Treasurer and Mark Munkres as Secretary.
9. The Installation for the 2022-2023 Masonic Year will occur at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 25, 2022. The dress code will be casual.
10. Brother McGee has been discussing a Lodge training & education plan with WM Elect Lyons. Currently, he is planning to have one night of training monthly to cover such items as open/close of all four Lodges, Place Officer training, Ritual training and other associated training and education.

SUPPORT THE SHRINERS, SCOTTISH RITE & ST. JUDE'S HOSPITAL SYSTEMS FOR CHILDREN.

Masonic Education & History

THE EARLY DAYS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN TEXAS

Popular education has always been an object of vital concern to the people of Texas. It was a matter which attracted the particular attention of the Masons in the early days and was a field in which they made a most remarkable contribution to the public welfare of this commonwealth.

One of the grievances against the Mexican government, as listed in the Texas Declaration of Independence, was the failure of the government to establish any system of education. The Texas Constitution of 1836 provided: "It shall be the duty of Congress, as soon as circumstances will permit, to provide by law a general system of education."

Although Jones, Wharton, and other Masonic leaders urged repeatedly upon the Congress its constitutional duty to make some provision for a system of education, the financial circumstances of the Republic were not such, in the opinion of Congress, as to permit the provision to be made.

In the Constitutional Convention of 1845, the president of the convention was authorized to appoint a committee on education, consisting of seven members. Of the seven members appointed on this committee, four were Masons. Among other recommendations made to the convention by this committee as to what the constitution should provide, was the following:

The Legislature shall, as early as practicable, establish free public schools throughout the State, and shall furnish means for their support by taxation on property, and from and after the year eighteen hundred and fifty, it shall be the duty of the Legislature to set apart one-tenth of the annual revenue of the State, as a perpetual fund, the interest of which, at six per cent per annum, shall be apportioned to the support of free public schools; and no law shall ever be made, directing said fund to any other use.

When the foregoing report of the committee on education came on for consideration in the convention, an amendment was offered from the floor to strike out the word "shall" in the first line and insert in its place the word "may," thus changing the mandatory provision of the proposal to a mere grant of permission. The amendment was rejected by a vote of thirty-seven to eleven. Of the thirty-seven delegates voting against the proposed amendment, twenty-three were Masons, and of the eleven delegates who voted for the amendment only two were Masons. When the recommendation of the committee came up later in the proceedings for further consideration, it was changed and modified, however, to some extent before being incorporated in the constitution as finally drafted. But the mandatory provision directing the Legislature to set aside one-tenth of the annual revenues of the state for the support of free public schools was retained.

MASONIC SCHOOLS IN TEXAS

In the period from 1850 to 1873, the Legislature of Texas granted charters to seventeen institutions of learning which were organized under Masonic auspices. Among the most noted and prosperous of these institutions were the Masonic Female Institute at Marshall, the Milam Masonic Female Institute at Bowie, Linden Male and Female Academy, New Danville Masonic Female Academy, Upshur Masonic College, and Rusk Masonic Institute. In addition to these seventeen chartered institutions of learning the Masons of Texas established more than one hundred other schools which were not chartered. All these schools, with few exceptions, were open alike to the children of Masons and non-Masons on equal terms. Although a tuition fee was charged in most instances, these meagre fees were supplemented by generous contributions and abundant revenues derived from the subordinate and Grand Lodge. Moreover, after the state instituted its system of public education in the late fifties, the local Masonic lodge was the silent promoter and partner in many instances where the local school was in the charge of an independent board of trustees elected by the people.

Dr. Frederick Eby makes the following significant statement: The services of the Masonic lodges in conducting schools and furnishing buildings were greater than those of any single religious denomination. As the state developed its system of schools, Masonic interest gradually declined until it limited its activities to the education of the orphans of its former members. Their services must be regarded as one of the most important transitional steps toward free public education. A certain parallelism can be noted between the educational program of the Grand Lodge and the later organization of public education in the state.

It was not until the year 1854 that the legislature of Texas began its educational program by the passage of an act to establish a system of common schools in this state. By the terms of this act, it was provided in substance that each school established thereunder should be subject to the management of a local board of trustees to be elected by the people and that the state treasurer should be ex-officio superintendent of the common schools of the state. From this beginning the system of public education was gradually developed by the joint efforts of the state and its various political subdivisions until finally the activities of the Masons in this laudable undertaking became absorbed by and merged into the larger enterprise of all the people acting in their governmental capacity. But the singular contribution which the Masons made to the cause of public education must stand forever in the annals of history as a permanent memorial to their usefulness and beneficence for the common good of all in the early days of Texas.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OF THE GRAND LODGE OF TEXAS

In its tenth annual communication held at Houston in January 1847, the Masonic Grand Lodge of Texas adopted a resolution providing "that a Standing Committee of five be appointed, to be styled the Committee on Education." It was also resolved "that ten percent of all revenues accruing to this Grand Lodge be appropriated to purposes of education; and the same shall not be drawn from the Treasury for any other purpose."

At its eleventh annual communication held at Austin in January 1848, the Grand Lodge authorized its Grand Master to appoint a Superintendent of Education, who should have the custody and management of the Masonic Education Fund, have general supervision of all the educational interests of the Order, and who should recommend, for the consideration of the Grand Lodge, such measures for the promotion of education as he might deem advisable. E. W. Taylor was appointed the first Masonic Superintendent of Education in Texas.

Prior to 1848, however, various subordinate lodges had already begun the establishment of schools in Texas. The first Masonic School in Texas was that fostered by Orphans Friend Lodge No. 17 at Fanthrop in Grimes County; it was established in the fall of 1842 and later became known as the Masonic Collegiate Institute. After the Grand Lodge had established its education fund, it made loans to Marshall Lodge No. 22, Palestine Lodge No. 31, Lockhart Lodge No. 59, Guadalupe Lodge No. 108, and others, for the purpose of assisting each in its respective educational endeavors. In its annual communication in 1853 the Grand Lodge advised and requested all subordinate lodges within its jurisdiction to exert themselves in the establishment of schools, pledging to reimburse any local lodge for expenditures thus made.