

Greetings Companions;

My schedule is increasingly busy. I attended seven councils last month of which several conferred degrees. I was honored to be able to take part in making new companions and friends. Most of the work was well done and our new companions received more light in masonry. Several councils had not conferred degrees in years, so it is very encouraging to find this interest. Another point to be made: either the candidates are getting younger or I am getting older, maybe a combination of both.

Our elected line officers were in attendance and supported the Rainbow York Rite pilgrimage at Bloomington November 12. Five out of seven in attendance observed very good work. In fact, the young ladies spoke loud enough so that even I could hear them! It is encouraging to see our young folks advancing in our youth groups. They set a high standard and challenge for masons to be able to do the same.

If the weather holds, I will visit seven more councils in December. Everywhere I go; there is a warm greeting and great fellowship. I am reminded that we all are brothers, but as companions, we travel together, spending more time with one another.

Turn off the TV and attend your next masonic meeting. You will find it more enjoyable and a great place to put aside the cares of the world. You will notice some missing. Why not make it a point to call them. Does not our masonic charity and fellowship begin with remembering and encouraging our companions?

Speaking of charity, I received an email last month from one of my brothers. In it he told of how much money is used by charity groups. Some groups spend a lot on administration, salaries, and publicity. Others like the Salvation Army and our masonic groups spend little or none. During this season of giving, make your donations go far. Give of your time and funds to support our charitable causes.

On December 3, I attended an occasional Grand Lodge at Joliet where I met Harry Truman's grandson and got to visit with him a bit. Our Grand Master Terry Seward and the Grand Master of Missouri supervised making him 'a mason at sight'. The attendance was great! If you were there, you saw all masons dressed appropriately for degree work. When the obligation lines were formed, they stretched from East to West, three rows on each side. WOW! Wouldn't it be great to see that at every degree?

There may not be that many at our degrees, but the dress can be the same. How we dress and act before, during, and after our meetings indicates how we value our fraternity. In a recent article in *Illinois Freemasonry*, Grand Master Seward requested you to look in the mirror to see how you are dressed. What is your standard? The same should go for our degree robes and equipment. There can only be one – first impression.

May the reason for this season of Christmas bring joy, happiness, and prosperity to you and yours.

Fraternally,

Dale Lynn Corrice
Most Illustrious Grand Master