



February Trestleboard Eagle Rock Lodge #19 AF&AM

From the East: The annual Temple Board Meeting took place last night. There were several serious issues addressed and given proper attention. The budget has been friendly in the past, but the rising costs of taking care of the building have finally presented no option but to raise the rents. While a 50% raise is high, it could have been worse. While this is certainly not what we would like to do, Short of generating our own

electricity, building a big fireplace in the middle of the building, building outhouses and doing our own janitorial work, there was no real option. In the past there has really been no provision for a contingency account to handle the unexpected expenses. There is a move in that direction, even though it may be that it will be necessary to be more aggressive in the amounts set aside in the future, but it is a start.

There was some discussion about what was covered under the insurance and the responsibility of the groups. Brother Dave Nipper sent me the following today to try to help understand the TBA's responsibility in this matter.

Section 4. The Association property shall at all times be adequately covered by broad form insurance to include liability, and loss or damage, exclusive of tenant body property. Said coverage shall be determined by appraisal of the property at the time of inventory.

We did discuss the 5th Wednesday potlucks. It was well received and the groups all thought it was a good idea to move it around. Both Star Chapters and the Jobies jumped on it and will coordinate the dates they run it with Brother Don Taylor who volunteered to keep track of who was doing it when. One additional thing that came up that I think was good, if you don't bring a dish, you drop \$5 in the dish to help defray the sponsoring groups cost for the main course.

All in all, I was impressed with the meeting. We did get mired down a little in some details but the whole meeting moved along well. The information was well presented and minimized a lot of the questions and misunderstandings that can occur when we rely on memory only. I felt that everyone there showed understanding and cooperation in trying to make our Building work.

Another nice thing, Brother Dix Hoffman has offered to provide a program at the 2nd stated in February. It will be on "The Other Working Tools." He has already done some research on it and I look forward to learning more about our Fraternity. I tried to get a little preview but he is holding his cards close to his chest. He knows that it will have to be good to keep everyone awake, it will be after the 2nd stated dinner.

The only thing wrong with Brother Dix being able to schedule his program so quickly is that it means that we didn't have a degree to do that night. I have a probable brother to be that I need to get off dead center. Brother Jeremy C. has picked up two letters to friends. We need to get some work going. Brother Don Taylor has stepped up and set up assembly lines at OF Coffee and produced some Letters to Friends packets to last until Grand Lodge comes thru, so we do have a few. They are no good until they are out to good men we need here in the Lodge. We work hard to get Brothers started; some lose impetus for whatever reason. We have some that are lying idle in their progress. We need to examine those to see if there is anything we can do to rekindle their desire to proceed. Sometimes it is hard for whatever reason to get them moving. I can think of one that could get his 3rd degree proficiency done with 3 days work.

As usual, the biggest challenges this year are the ones that plague us every year. Declining membership and Money. We need both, to make our Fraternity capable of doing the things that we want to accomplish. Bikes for Books embodies one of our goals, helping the kids and letting them know who we are. The open house is a vehicle to encourage understanding by the community as to who we are and what we do. It is money spent, but has to be considered as an investment. It all takes money, it all takes work. More Brothers means more hands to help with the projects and does produce more \$ to help fund them.

One thing more before I shut down. We have Brothers who are pretty much tied to their houses or ill enough to be in the hospital. While we may not have the financial burden that we did in the days of the Operative Brothers, we do have an obligation to try to share some time and to make them remember that they are important to us now, as they were when they were able to be active in the Lodge. I will try to do better.