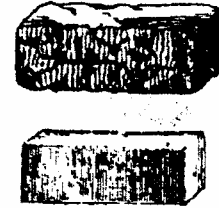




# **ASHLAR TIDINGS**

*April 6002 A.L.*



## **Mozart Reception**

This Month, on April 20th, the Billings Blue Lodges, the Scottish Rite, York Rite, and Shrine will host a reception for the Billings Symphony and it's 200 largest donors. Historically, Freemasonry has had a wide appeal to all segments of society. This reception is designed specifically to increase local awareness of exactly what the fraternity is and how it benefits the community. The Mozart reception will aid us in accomplishing this in two important ways. First, it is intended to specifically increase awareness of the relationship between the Fraternity and the Arts. Second, it is designed to increase the opportunities for those who typically support organizations such as Freemasonry but whom have not heard much about our Fraternity to interact with and get to know members of the masonic community.

## **Volunteers Needed!!!**

Because the entire purpose of this event focuses around giving the community a chance to interact with members of the Fraternity and their families, we **NEED VOLUNTEERS!!** Our membership depends upon an individual becoming interested and having the opportunity to converse and learn about the fraternity. Through the entire process, individual attention is not only necessary but vital. This means that your participation and financial support are necessary for our success. As a result, we need **EVERY** freemason and their family to help us in our efforts.

Please call Nathan Vincent, our secretary at 259-6557 (O) or 259-5398(H) to volunteer or make a pledge. Send checks to Ashlar Lodge #29 with a note on how you desire the donation to be used.



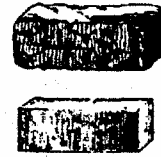
## **Freemasonry and it's Goals**

"I have applied myself, not to that which might seem most for the ostentation of mine own wit or knowledge, but that which may yield most aid and profit to the student." - Lord Bacon

The purpose of Freemasonry is "self improvement" not in the material sense, but in the intellectual, moral, and philosophic sense of developing the whole person so as "to fit ourselves to take our places, as living stones, in that great spiritual building, not made by hands, eternal in the Heavens." Such a whole, developed, complete person must, in the course of his life and in his interaction with others, make a larger contribution to society in general. By doing this, he achieves the expressed wish on initiation to gain more light. Such are the lofty, laudable, and lawful aspirations of the Order.



## The Master's Musings



By Worshipful Master Randy Parker

No, it's not your imagination: there were no *Ashlar Tidings* for March. Our Secretary, Brother Nathan Vincent, an expert computer consultant and video producer, was on a month-long business trip to Nashville, Tennessee, that included the National Religious Broadcaster's Convention.

Nathan learned a lot during his trip, produced some recordings and videos, served as the registration coordinator for the 5,000 + attendees, and made numerous business contacts during his stay in Nashville. Plus he got to see some of the sights, including the Grand Ole Opry. It was a very productive trip for Brother Nathan!

As we enter the month, we welcome two new Entered Apprentices, Dane Ray Higgins and Kelly McCann, both young professionals in their 20's. We are blessed that these two fine, young outstanding men have decided to join the world's greatest fraternity in general and the best (Yes, I am biased!), oldest and biggest Masonic lodge in Billings!

Brother Dane is a HVAC technician for Comfort Heating and Air Conditioning, and Brother Kelly is a computer technician for ConsulComp Technologies – Brother Bill Murphy's Computer Consulting Company. Brother Dane, who took the Entered Apprentice Degree in February, successfully gave his Entered Apprentice proficiency in open lodge at our March 22 Lodge of Instruction. He did an excellent job! Brother Kelly received the Entered Apprentice Degree at the same Lodge of Instruction, and he is diligently studying his Entered Apprentice Proficiency.

The coach of both young Masons is Brother Bill Murphy, our Junior Steward. Brother Bill takes great pride in his ritual work! Our next Lodge of Instruction will be held on Friday, April 26. Soup and sandwiches will be served at 6:30, and the Lodge of Instruction will follow for the Fellow Craft Degree.

Our regular stated meeting for April will be held on Friday, April 12. Dinner—a very delicious dinner prepared by Ashlar Chef Extraordinaire Alice Daughtery, ably assisted by her daughter Tina, will be served at 6:30 PM, followed by the stated meeting at 7:30. Please RSVP by the Thursday before both the Stated Meeting and the Lodge of Instruction by calling the Billings Masonic center between 9 and 2 at 259-6557. Need a ride? Call the same number, and we'll come and pick you up!

Do you know a worthy high school senior that likes to study, earns good grades, and is honest and dependable? Have him or her contact his high school counselor to apply for one of four McGirl Fund \$750 scholarships to be awarded to one student apiece at the three Billings Public High Schools as well as one student graduating from a public high school in the Beartooth District. This scholarship program is jointly administered by Ashlar Lodge and the York Rite, and was started by Thomas McGirl, a prominent Freemason, York Rite Mason, and Roman Catholic, who was Master of Ashlar Lodge in 1910, the year after our old temple was dedicated in downtown Billings. The money is to be used at a unit of the Montana University System, the best one of which—by a country mile—is **The University of Montana!** (Guess where I went to school? **Go GRIZ!!!**) The deadline for applying is April 15, 2002.

The First Annual Vigilante Masonic Dinner went over well on February 26, 2002. Approximately two hundred people attended the dinner held to celebrate the Freemasons that originated the Vigilantes of Montana and to honor the local law enforcement community. Included in this number were over 40 law enforcement officers, including Sheriff Chuck Maxwell and Captain David Dill of the Montana Highway Patrol.

The dinner started with the Marines presenting the colors, following which the Shrine Chanters under the expert guidance of Brother Art Brandvold sang the Star Spangled Banner and Montana. Stillwater County Sheriff and the Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Montana Brother Cliff Brophy offered grace.

The Rainbow Girls, Job's Daughters and Demolay then served a mouth-watering Baron of Beef. The dinner was expertly prepared by Al Bedoo Chef Bob Snow. The evening concluded with Dr. Keith Edgerton of MSU-Billings describing the transition from vigilante justice to a modern judicial and penal system in Montana, and then Lieutenant Governor and Brother Karl Ohs described the importance of Freemasonry to himself and his experience in 1996 in successfully negotiating the surrender of the Montana Freemen in Jordan.

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# The Master's Musings

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For weeks Karl rode his horse in the morning into the compound to negotiate with the Freemen and then at the end of the day he rode back out to report to the FBI. (A grateful Dan Vierthaler, Agent -in-Charge of the Billings Office of the FBI since 1989 and also FBI Agent in Charge at Jordan in 1996 introduced Brother Karl and told of Brother Karl's courage!) Unlike earlier negotiators, he had the trust of both the heavily-armed Freemen and the FBI.

Brother Karl is a good man—you're just put at ease when you meet him—a man of faith and I am proud to call him Brother! Without his efforts, the country could have experienced a bloody repetition of the Branch Davidian tragedy in Waco, Texas in 1993. As it was, no one lost their life in Jordan thanks largely to Brother Karl.

**I WANT YOU!** The Billings Masonic Community, all four Billings Blue Lodges, the Scottish and York Rite, and the Al Bedoo Shrine are hosting a reception for the Billings Symphony and Chorale after their last performance of the season on Saturday, April 20 at approximately 10 PM in the Old Hart-Albin Building at 208 North Broadway.

The Symphony will perform Mozart's Symphony #40. As many of you are aware, Mozart was not only a brilliant composer but also a Freemason. This was also true of Beethoven, some of the Bachs, John Phillip Souza, George M. Cohan, Irving Berlin, Louis Armstrong, Count Bassey, Duke Ellington, Nat King Cole, Burl Ives and Eddy Arnold. There is a very strong connection between the Craft and music that most people, including professional musicians, are often unaware of.

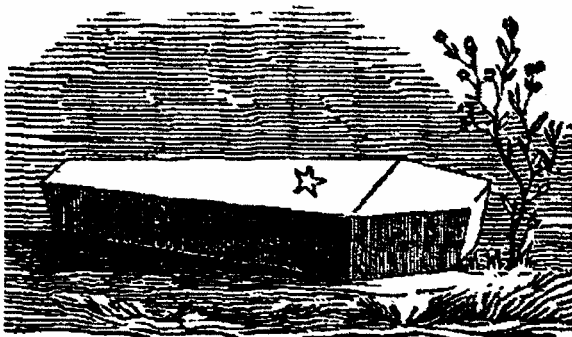
We need Masons in tuxedos to help serve wine and cheese to the Symphony members, their spouses, and their approximately 300-400 largest donors. We will have static displays positioned around the atrium describing Freemasonry and information packets available for those guests that want them. If you don't have a tuxedo, rent one! We will provide the Masonic apron! This is for the good of the Craft, and we need your help!!!

To volunteer, call the Billings Masonic Center at 259-6557 between 9-2 during the week. You can also reach me during the day at 248-7851. To order tickets for the Billings Symphony, please call the Alberta Bair Ticket Office at 256-6052.

## Freemasonry and it's Goals

Ashlar Lodge will be participating in the Beartooth District Annual Hiram Competition. The competition will take place at the Billings Scottish Rite Temple on April 27, 2002. The competition, which is scheduled to begin at 10 am, is designed to encourage the lodges to increase their proficiency with their degree work. This years event will focus on the degree of the Entered Apprentice.

Ashlar's team will consist of the Worshipful Master Randy Parker, Senior Warden Jason Biggins, Junior Warden David Loos, Senior Deacon Charles Fowler, Junior Deacon Jim Baskett, Senior Steward Bill Rubich, Junior Steward Bill Murphy, Chaplain Roy Dalrymple, Tyler Craig Norwood, and Instructor Morris Irion.



The team will be scored on the floor work, presentation, knowledge of the ritual, and being well dressed. We would like to encourage each member of the team to be well prepared and well versed in their part of the ritual.

Ashlar Lodge #29  
Billings Masonic Center  
P.O. Box 21036  
Billings Montana 59104



## APRIL/MAY EVENTS



**12th - Friday: Ashlar's Stated Meeting Dinner at 6:30 PM.**

**Lodge following.**

**19th - Friday: Lodge of Instruction Topic: 2nd Degree Soup & Sandwiches 6:30 PM.**

**Lodge Following.**

**20th - Saturday: Mozart Concert and Reception For Tickets call the Alberta Bair Ticket Office.**

**26th - Friday: Friends & Family Night Guest Speaker: Border Patrol**

**May 10th - Friday: Ashlar's Stated Meeting - Dinner at 6:30 PM. Lodge Following.**

**May 17th - Fishing Night: Dinner at 6:30 Games to follow.**

**May 24th - Step Up Night**

**Please note—an RSVP is appreciated for all dinners to allow for adequate food.**

**Call the Center at 259-6557.**