



<http://www.mn-rivervalley.org>

Minnesota River Valley Lodge #6

“Issued with the Permission of the M.W. Grand Lodge of Minnesota

Plumbline Spring 2007

Plumb line – “a cord by which a weight is suspended to test the perpendicularity or depth of something, a sounding line”. I assume that this missive is the weight, and an attempt to determine perpendicularity, depth, and a sounding board with the leadership of the craft.

Vision-- “the ability to anticipate and make provision for future events; foresight, insight, imagination”. From Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary as is the plumb line definition.

As Masonic and Societal leaders, we should possess and cultivate leadership qualities in ourselves and in our organizations. In order for me to be successful as Grand Master and in previous Masonic and Civic leadership positions it is and was necessary that I have a grasp on vision – personal and organizational.

Mike Steinberg (www.dynamicboards.com) worked with the Grand Lodge Progressive Line on two different occasions in the past several months. He has written a handy book, “Dysfunctional Boards – Your Guide to Great Governance”. I have previously attended his presentations and was struck with his ability to simplify, teach, and engage me in the essentials of leadership.

John C. Maxwell, a favorite author of PGM Steve Johnson, also has written a great leadership book: “The 21 Indispensable Qualities of A Leader”. This book is a short read packed full of understandable information on important leadership traits.

Senior Grand Warden Tom McCarthy is working with the leadership committee and will have further recommendations and suggestions to assist members of the Craft in personal and organizational leadership.

As master of my lodge, The Grand Lodge of Minnesota, I am working to identify, define, and articulate a vision for the Grand Lodge. This past year we have crafted and approved our mission, but we must continue the process of creating and defining our vision.

My Masonic and other leadership labors have taught me that differences exist between each of us in thinking processes and problem approach and solution. I have learned to utilize these strengths in vision and function. It became imperative that I learn the value and importance of group process, which always resulted in better concepts and outcomes than I could ever

accomplish alone. Tolerance for others, their thought, and their work styles greatly improve our concepts and products.

I see vision as a dream of where we want to go, or what we want to be. The vision dictates the process of fruition. Utilization of our different skills and abilities are essential for success. Many people are uncomfortable with dreams and visions because of the leaps of faith that may be required. Further a vision should not be hampered by current capabilities, but stretch thinking of where we need to be. I think of President Kennedy and his dream of going to the moon. At the time of the articulation of that vision we did not have the technology or systems in place to make it happen, but the vision certainly gave direction and the impetus to overcome obstacles.

We have concrete goals that we can easily achieve such as naming rights for the Masonic Cancer Center, and other goals that are very philosophical such as “becoming the men’s fraternity of choice”.

Let’s look seriously at who and what we are, what we have to offer, and how to share. How we answer these and other questions is also critical to our appendant bodies and the Shrine. Our membership and member energy directly affects these organizations also.

As I write today I am reminded of the beauty of the season and the outdoors. I note that the Craft is aware of the summer season also, as there have been several requests for outdoor and joint meetings. I feel privileged to have been able to attend some. What wonderful experiences they have been!

Deputy Grand Master Tom Jackson will be laying the cornerstone for the new addition on the Fairview Lakes Medical Center in Wyoming, Minnesota at 10:00 a.m. on the 23 June. Because of usual avocation commitments, I will be unable to attend, but hope that many of you will attend and enjoy the pageantry and history of this ceremony. The new hospital is located just off of the I-35 exit ramp at the Wyoming exit on the east side of the freeway.

Please check out the website (<http://www.mn-masons.org> then Grand Lodge Leaders and click on any officer’s name) and the biographies that have been added. We are always open to praise, and welcome ideas to improve this important face of Minnesota Masonry.

The Area Conferences will be starting in the near future and we encourage your attendance in your area or in another area if that better fits your schedule.

Our Fraternal Consultant, PGM Neil Neddermeyer has provided the following schedules for Area Leadership Conferences and a list of volunteer opportunities. Your Area Deputies are planning very interesting and informative days for all attendees. Here are the dates: South West Area 21 July in Tracy North West Area 25 August in Brainerd South East Area 22 September in Albert Lea North East Area 6 October in Hibbing Metro East and Metro West 13 October at the Mille Lacs Grand Casino

Volunteer Opportunities The Grand Lodge Line Officers have taken on various committee responsibilities and are looking for volunteers in a number of areas. Please contact them directly

and offer your assistance. Their contact information can be found on the web site.

Deputy Grand Master Tom Jackson is the overall coordinator of the committee structure and is directly involved with the development of the web site.

Senior Grand Warden Tom McCarthy is heading up the Leadership Committee.

Junior Grand Warden John Cook is working with the Area Deputies and District Representatives as well as on the implementation of the new Lodge Recognition Program.

Senior Grand Deacon Tom Hendrickson is involved by being the liaison with appendant Masonic organizations and the "Minnesota Mason" newspaper. He is also working with KidsID at the State Fair and is looking for State Fair volunteers.

Junior Grand Deacon Brian Beermann is leading the Membership Committee. Senior Grand Steward Dave Olson is heading up the planning of "One-Day-to-Masonry" classes and continues as the chair of the Custodians.

Junior Grand Steward James Christensen is administrating the Mentor Program.

Tickets for Troops will be held on September 8th Please mark this date on your calendar and plan to join Masons from all over the state at the Gopher game against Miami (Ohio) at the Metrodome. Once again we will be treating 1000 relatives of troops who are stationed overseas to the game, lets help them enjoy the game.

Student information is arriving daily in the Grand Lodge office, with the information due by July 1st so we can get ready to write checks, part of Minnesota Masonic Charities matching funds grants. These will go to 444 students submitted by 125 lodges and 22 OEC Chapters, total amount of \$336,450, includes lodge and chapter funds of \$188,675 and matching funds of \$147,775. Many of the lodges are presenting their portion of the scholarship checks right now.

Rich Dohrmann (rfdohrmann@comcast.net) has recently presented the AARP Driver Safety Classes Program to the Grand Lodge Corporate Board. The Corporate Board granted permission to the AARP to ask lodges for use of the lodge facilities to host seniors' driver safety classes.

Tom McCarthy will be doing another Lawyers Guild on October 18th. I would encourage you to look to the Grand Lodge website calendar for other events and consider submitting your events. I find the calendar one of the most important advantages of the website and electronic communication. Be a part of it.

Remember, The Masonic Cancer Center Fund's "Partners for Life" fund drive and the 2:1 match for all contributions made through 30 June, please contribute.

What a great honor and pleasure it is to meet and visit with you in your lodges and at your lodge

functions. For a country doc, home visits have always been a treat. They provide wonderful insight about the individual, his culture, and family.

Be safe, be well, be Masonic!

Raymond Christensen, GM 10 June 2007