



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

Minnesota River Valley Lodge #6

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

Plumblin August 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.

Partners for Life campaign On behalf of the Craft, Minnesota Masonic Charities, Grand Lodge Corporate Board, University of Minnesota, and the many cancer patients who receive state-of-the-art cancer care, thank you, thank you, thank you for your marvelous and generous response to the Grand Masters appeal for the Partners for Life Campaign. In the "2 for 1" campaign from April 17 to June 30 the Partners for Life campaign garnered 843 gifts totaling \$1,038,724. Of those gifts eligible for 2 for 1 (not all were, some were only 1 for 1) the average gift size was \$1,232. The response to the Grand Master's letter to each Mason in Minnesota raised gifts totaling \$271,174. The total raised to date, including matching funds, is \$6,345,476, leaving the remaining amount of the \$10,000,000 goal at \$3,654,524.

You have made this campaign very, very successful. Your personal philanthropy is an integral part of our craft and the life obligations we assumed at the altar.

Naming Rights “The Minnesota Masonic Cancer Center at the University of Minnesota,” is a vision that I articulated as I assumed the position of Grand Master as have others. This naming right is for the cancer program, including new facilities, it does not change currently named and agreed on programs and buildings. It is contingent on reaching a pledge agreement between Minnesota Masons, Order of the Eastern Star, and others; and Dr Frank Cerra and the University of Minnesota Academic Health Center. Naming rights, as in the past with our other cancer endeavors, entail ongoing responsibility and support of research and research facilities as the Masons and Star have provided for decades in Minnesota. We must continue to share our talents and resources to assure continued advancement and success in the treatment of cancer in Minnesota. Please continue your support. In addition to individual contributions I am thrilled with individual lodge contributions and hope that each of your lodges will be able to share in this Minnesota Masonry Initiative. It is part of the Lodge Recognition Program.

The **Minnesota Masonic Charities** (MMC) Matching Funds Scholarship Program 2007 was very successful. I was honored to represent the MN Grand Lodge at several lodges as Scholarships were presented and enjoyed the opportunity to see and hear the comments of the students, and to meet with them and their families. There were 140 lodges and OES chapters participating this year. MMC provided matching funds of approximately \$147,000 a part of just over \$328,000 awarded to 435 students. Congratulations to your lodges for their generosity and utilization of the MMC matching opportunity to enhance scholarships. Thank you all for your leadership in the success of this program.

The **Area Conference Season** is upon us. Tracy Lodge No. 155 did a wonderful job of hosting the Southwest Area Conference on 21 July. Area Deputy Grant Lillevold, Southwest District Representatives, and Grand Lodge Officers, mentored, coached, and supported by Fraternal Consultant MWB Neil Neddermeyer (and Julie) provided marvelous leadership and a great conference for the Masters and Wardens and subsequently their Southwest Area Lodges. I have every reason to expect that all the Area Conferences will be of great value and time well spent – plan to attend!!!

Northwest Area — 25 August in Brainerd at Aurora Lodge No. 100, registration starting at 8:00 a.m., conference from 9:00 until 4:00 p.m.

Southeast Area — 22 September in Albert Lea

Northeast Area — 6 October in Hibbing

Metroeast and Metrowest — 13 October at the Grand Casino Mille Lacs

The **Grand Lodge Corporate Board** met on 14 July 2007 at the Grand Lodge Offices in Bloomington. I was thrilled to see several Area Deputies in attendance and welcomed their input and the usual great discussion by your leadership. Masters and Wardens, please do not hesitate to utilize your Area Deputy and District Representative in your lodges and as needed to assist with you with communicating with the Grand Lodge.

We established a committee to look at utilization and licensing of the Minnesota Grand Lodge name, logos, bylines, etc. by Minnesota Lodges and Masons. This issue has been examined and discussed by the Grand Lodge Corporate Board from time to time. It is clear to us that we need a clear and understandable policy to include the web and as well as other venues.

Masonic Collectibles For those of you who are interested in Masonic (and other fraternal organization) collectibles, I just learned of a KARE TV “KARE Collectibles” session that will take place on live TV on the August 18th Saturday morning show. These KARE Collectibles segments happen from time to time and one of the professional antique appraisers is usually W. Brother Jim Marrinan from St. Paul Lodge No. 3. If you have a unique Masonic or other fraternal item and would like to try to get it on this show you need to send Jim a photo and other information about the item no later than August 8th. Jim can be reached at his office, 952-926-0225.

Tickets for Troops on 8 September 2007 The Grand Lodge of Minnesota is again cosponsoring the Minnesota Golden Gopher football "Tickets for Troops" football game with a \$10,000 contribution to allow our service men and women and their families to enjoy a Gopher football game. The game this year will be against Miami of Ohio. The kickoff is set for 11:00 a.m. Make your plans now to join the Grand Master and many other Masons at the game on September 8th. The Grand Lodge is offering a special ticket package that includes your reserved seat game ticket, a special Gopher t-shirt, round trip transportation on the Hiawatha Light Rail Line and the "Gopher Brunch" in our private tent on the Metrodome Plaza. Riding the light rail from Fort Snelling will mean no charge for parking!

The Gopher Brunch includes: Scrambled Eggs, Link Sausage, Bacon, or Ham, Assorted Muffins, Red Roasted Breakfast Potatoes, Fresh Cut Fruit Platter, Smoked Bratwurst and Hot Dogs. We will be serving the brunch from 9:30 until 10:30 and you can arrive for the brunch whenever you like.

Seating for the Game Day Package is limited to 150. (If you just want to take advantage of the special game ticket price of \$10.00, there is no limit.) To reserve your tickets please mail a check specifying the number of ticket packages at \$30.00 each or the number of tickets only at \$10.00 each, to:

Grand Lodge of Minnesota
11501 Masonic Home Drive
Bloomington, MN 55437

Or you may contact the Grand Lodge office, 952-948-6700 or 800-245-6050, or by e-mail to grandlodge@qwest.net to charge your tickets on your Visa or MasterCard.

Minnesota State Fair KidsID August in Minnesota means it is time for the great American Get-Together – the Minnesota State Fair. And for Minnesota Masonry that means our annual KidsID effort in the Education Building. Special thanks go to W. Brother George Miller for chairing our KidsID efforts throughout the year and also to Brother Bruce Clarke for his outstanding effort at organizing the work force and other details of the State Fair KidsID efforts. Bruce has been working for months to insure that every shift has a full slate of volunteers. He recently mailed the entrance gate tickets for the workers to either the lodge coordinators or directly to the workers. If you have not received your ticket and information yet, please check with your lodge State Fair KidsID coordinator or contact Brother Clarke at strait_ap@yahoo.com.

To each of you who work in the KidsID Booth thank you from the Grand Lodge of Minnesota and from me. What a great opportunity to enjoy fun work and show Minnesotans what we are all about. Have a good time working the booth and also while you enjoy the Fair!

Membership Committee Junior Grand Deacon Brian Beermann, and the membership committee meet regularly. The 29 July discussion included use of the internet as a membership tool. The importance of working and coordinating with Concordant Bodies was re-emphasized, as well as discussion on how that could occur. A subcommittee has been appointed to look more closely at internet utilization for membership recruitment.

The committee has evaluated several membership videos including Shrine videos. Shrine membership efforts were discussed and the importance of working together was reaffirmed. I know that the Scottish Rite Southern Jurisdiction is also laboring on this issue and understands the need of collaboration. The Grand Lodge of Minnesota is the entry point to membership in the Concordant Bodies. Greater success will be achieved if we work together. A subcommittee was appointed to outline important points necessary for better communication and cooperation between within the Masonic Family.

Membership is one, if not the most, important issue facing Masonry today. I support the multifaceted approach of the committee and the commitment of all bodies to that common goal, additionally I have asked JGD Brian Beermann to attend the Shrine Membership Conference in Tampa in early October.

Lodge Recognition Program Junior Grand Warden John Cook has done a wonderful job in pulling together and teaching the components of the Lodge Recognition Program. He has worked hard to make sure the Area Deputies and District Representatives are well versed in the program. It is now the responsibility of the ADs and the DRs to teach the Wardens and Masters who will implement the program in their lodges.

Extra Lodge furniture in storage? The Grand Secretary informs me that we have a lodge that would like to set up a second lodge room and they are in need of a set of officers' chairs, officers' pedestals, J & B columns and maybe some of the smaller items to set up a lodge. If you have been involved in a lodge merger over the past several years and are now storing some or all of these items we can help you find a good home for them. Please contact the Grand Secretary if you would like to help, grandlodge@qwest.net.

Enjoy the waning days of summer, have fun, be safe, and be well.
Fraternally
Ray Christensen, GM