

When we started the year, I came in front of you to lay out some goals. As I stand before you this evening, I am happy to report that the lodge and its members have accomplished much in a short time.

In January, I outlined three areas where we would concentrate our labors: Education, Fraternity, and Awareness.

Tonight, I will provide a status on the goals that we outlined at the beginning of the year.

Education (Make our lodge wiser)

- Raise the current EA's (5) through the third degree by April 30th
Status: We raised the EA's, though it was slightly behind schedule.
- Initiate three (3) new candidates to EA by March 30th
Status: We have initiated 1 new EA (Josh), we have 1 approved and waiting, and 1 waiting for the investigating committee. So, if everything plays out, we should be able to meet this goal. But, that is not the best news. The best news is that we have 4 petitions out and we have 6 months left in the year.
- All officers (Sr. and Jr. Wardens, Sr. and Jr. Deacons) pursue card certifications
Status: We haven't had any officers complete any card work, but we have had some accomplishments in the Masonic Education area. Officers: I challenge you to work at a minimum for your Silver card.
- Pursue certified Masonic education for all brothers
Status: I am proud to say that our Tyler, Brother Bob Cooper, has achieved all 6 of the certifications.
- Have one (1) prompter for meetings and ceremonies
Status: I am happy to say that we haven't needed all that much prompting. Hopefully, we will continue that trend.
- Quality Masonic Education at each meeting
Status: We have had some quality presentations. The most memorable was R.:W.: Ray Davis' remembrance of our late brother, W.: Robbie Robinton.
- Conduct regular degree team meetings
Status: I am happy to report that under the leadership and direction of R.:W.: Fred Latsko, there has been regular degree team meetings.

Fraternity (Make our lodge stronger)

- Increase lodge attendance through Calling Program
Status: It appears that this is one of the more difficult things to do. I suppose because it is very time-intensive and most of the brothers have a cable tow to consider. I respect that. So, let me say this. When you see a brother that you haven't seen in some time, give him a firm handshake and a warm welcome. Let him know that it would be great to see him and sit with him in lodge. (Reminder: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays)
- Increase membership by 10 new brothers
Status: We are well on our way, but we have more to do.
- Mentor new brothers and instill the principle tenets of Masonry
Status: We have had a lot of the senior brothers providing the kind of guidance that a new brother needs. This is great for the fraternity. Our Senior Deacon has been working with some of the new brothers on setting up the lodge in the proper manner. Thank you, Brother Pete.
- Provide a path of involvement for new brothers, so that they can participate in lodge activities and actively pursue Masonry
Status: We have done a very good job at this. Several of the new brothers are already pursuing opportunities in the chairs. Brothers Kevin Hanson and Henry Bariteau (and recently Brother Josh Bichelman) have been contributing greatly through the lodge's web site.
- Be vigilant in our Masonic pursuits and be honest to the Craft
Status: Brothers, this is a goal that should be never-ending.

Awareness (Make our lodge more beautiful; in our eyes as well as others)

- Institute a new program that will open the doors of our lodge EVERY Saturday from 8 am to 12 noon
Status: We have been surprisingly successful with this new program. We have had a brother at the lodge nearly every Saturday, ready to assist other brothers with their catechism work or welcome a member of the public. We still have 26 Saturdays to go and I still have several sought-after front door keys. Basically, I need 6 brothers to take 4 Saturdays each. For that, you will earn a key to the lodge's front door.

- Invite prospective members –men who you already know to be “worthy and well qualified-- to come visit the lodge or supply Masonic promotional material

Status: We have been doing a fair job on this. We have 6 months to go in the year, let's continue to pursue this.

- Use our resources to gain a place in community activity; find a way to use our Funnel Cake machine.

Status: Well, this goal has not really gotten addressed, but we do have many Summer and Fall activities that the Funnel Cake machine could be used for. Let's put our "thinking caps" on and come up with some good opportunities.

- Launch Gainesville #41 web site

Status: The site has been launched. We have experienced a fair amount of traffic and the comments have been very positive. We are also beginning to see the "upside" of using this method to communicate with current brothers, prospective members and the community at large.

Currently, our web site is hosted for free by mastermason.com and our web address is www.mastermason.com/gainesville41. While this was a good start, there are some limitations to keeping our web site here --it is a little slow to download and there are some technological limitations.

So, tonight I would like to donate \$36 to the lodge. This \$36 will provide 1 full year worth of high-speed hosting, increase technical capabilities, and our very own website name -- www.gainesville41.org, which is shorter and, I think, easier to remember. Brother Kevin Hanson has also pledged his support (another \$36) to cover the costs for next year.

If this tool brings in type of candidates that we have had this year --young, active men, that \$36 might be the best annual investment this lodge can make.

- Lodge Beautification Program

Status: This is an area where I don't have much good news to report. Brothers, our lodge is old and needs significant restoration. I would like to tell you that it only needs minor

repairs, but I would be lying. I would like to tell you that a few hundred bucks will fix what needs fixing. This, too, would be wholly incorrect.

I have convened a committee to review and assess what we need to do in order to provide the type of restoration that is needed so that this lodge will survive another 100 years.

I **am** going to tell you now it is not pretty. Expect the numbers to be high and the restorations many. I fear that if we don't take action now, then in 5 to 10 years we will not have a lodge to be proud of.

- Find 10 ways in which our Fraternity and lodge can gain positive public exposure
Status: It is only a matter of time before the public discovers this historical treasure and we will get some positive exposure for the lodge. As far as positive exposure for the fraternity, we are working towards this everyday simply by being good men and Masons.

Conclusion

Lastly, I want to thank the Past Masters of this lodge who have been so helpful in the first 6 months of my term. Brothers, you have been very supportive. I appreciate your advice and even your criticisms. Thank you for making me a better Worshipful Master, but, more importantly, a better man and Mason.

Thank you for your time and attention tonight. We have accomplished much in 6 months. We have more to do. Let's get to it!