



## “IT MEANS THE SAME THING. THEY WON’T KNOW THE DIFFERENCE, ANYWAY.”

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Once a young lodge officer was struggling with some of the phrasing of the Masonic Ritual and asked the late Most Worshipful Dr. Harold O. Grauel, eponym of our lodge (672), why we used such strange language. Dr. Grauel, eminent English professor at SEMO State University, replied: “The ritual is perfect English. I advise you to learn it perfectly.”

We should strive for perfect ritual, but this should be done in private study or in practice sessions. Degree work in lodge with a candidate is not the place to teach or learn ritual, as our Grand Lecturer recently reminded us. I teach our brethren that the best way to handle a mistake during a degree is to keep speaking, even if you need to use a substitute word or add a word to keep the rhythm and meaning. This is much better than interrupting the cadence by stumbling around for the word or starting the phrase over, or (what is worse) trying to get a clue from a barrage of prompts from the brethren. We should never interrupt a brother during degree work to correct a mistake

or a movement. A practical idea is to have a knowledgeable brother nearby who is designated to help, but only when the speaker indicates subtly that he needs a prompt. All others should remain silent.

The ritual of Freemasonry may be described as “a beautiful system....” The language used is an elegant expression that was the literary model of the early 18th century. When the ritual was written, the style of writing was that of the best literature. The wording is precise and has a rhythm that is poetic. Ritual is poetry. It is designed to be spoken, not read.

I am dismayed to hear some of the substitute words that I heard in Masonic ritual. Not so much because the recited passage is not exactly as prescribed, but because of the attitude expressed when corrected, viz: “It means the same thing. They won’t know the difference, anyway.”

The fact is that all words do not mean the same thing exactly; even synonyms have different connotations. The Masonic Ritual has been

written in beautiful, literary English with the exact words needed to express the intended meaning. Do not evaluate the language based on silently reading the text or reciting it in your mind. The full impact is possible only when spoken aloud. Then you see that it is poetry.

How important, then, is having the exact word? So what if I substitute a word, say implication where it should be imprecation? I hear this a lot. Does it mean the same thing? The first refers to an unstated connotation, while the second means a curse or condemnation. Is it the same to interchange compass and compasses? One is an instrument to locate directions and the other is an instrument for describing a circle. Or, “to seek audience” suggests only asking without expectation, whereas “to crave audience” means earnestly requesting with much urgency.

Why do we use “antiquated” language? Why not modernize the wording, so that we can understand it? Rather than quoting an example

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# The Missouri **FREEMASON**

Volume 54, No. 1

Winter 2008



**Official Publication of the Grand Lodge of Missouri A.F. & A.M.**



## COSBY LODGE CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Cosby Lodge #600 celebrated its 100th anniversary on Sunday, September 7, 2008 with a Lodge dedication ceremony. RWB Rocky E. Weaver, then Deputy Grand Master, presided over the ceremony, which was followed by Cosby Lodge's installation of officers for 2008 – 2009. Wanting to celebrate the Lodge's centennial in a special way, incoming Master Dennis Vogel arranged for a Lodge Dedication Ceremony, a special and unique occasion, which is celebrated infrequently.

Grand Lodge and local Lodge officers, led by Deputy Grand Master Weaver, participated in the ceremony, circling the Lodge room and dedicating the Lodge, represented by a model of the building, with corn, wine and oil. After the dedication and installation, WM Vogel introduced visiting dignitaries and presented honorariums to Past Masters. Among those worshipful brothers receiving awards was WB Donald Hegeman who had the unique distinction of serving as the Lodge's master in 1958 and exactly 50 years later in 2008 making him the Master in both the year of the Lodge's golden anniversary and centennial years. He was also Master in 1994.

Additional Past Masters honored were WB Kenneth E. Schindler (1951, 1987 and 2000) and WB Norman "Jim" Wilkins (1960, 1991 and 2001; award accepted by his widow). Also, RWB Weaver announced WB Larry DeShon will serve as DDGM for District 7 for the ensuing year.

Attendees were seated three rows deep around the entire perimeter of the Lodge room. According to WB Vogel, the enormous crowd left some in the town of Cosby wondering what was going on at the Masonic Lodge. The Lodge hosted a reception after the ceremony.

John Short, Grand Master of Missouri, Chartered Cosby Lodge #600 September 30, 1908. Located on the north side of Main street, the Lodge burned in 1923 in a fire that swept through the entire block. The fire destroyed



virtually all Lodge records and paraphernalia. Lodge members raised money for a new Lodge by raffling off a Model T Ford and remained in their second Lodge until 1960. In that year, members moved to the current location, a hall financed by loans from members. That building was the first ground floor Lodge in Missouri.

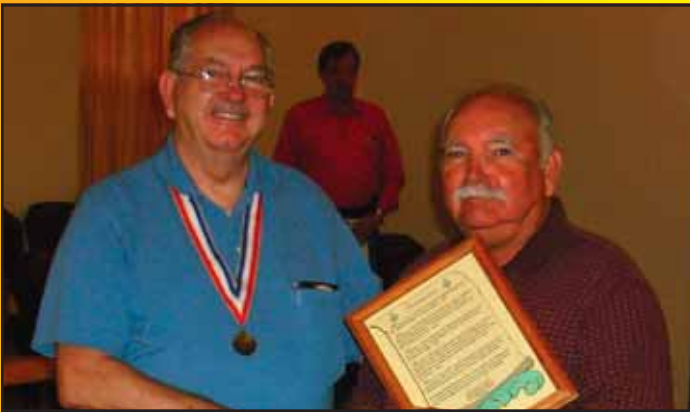




Dana DeWeese, Secretary of Jefferson Lodge #43, wasn't even a Mason when his father, Dr. Joyce E. DeWeese received his 50-year pin and Grand Lodge Certificate, but he was able to issue him a 60-year pin on December 20, 2007 at Marceline Lodge #481. WB Dana wore his Grandfather DeWeese's Masonic ring and hat for the ceremony.



On August 21, 2008, as a courtesy to Rolla Lodge #213 AF&AM, Aiken Lodge No. 156, A&FM., of South Carolina, made a 50 year Grand Lodge of Missouri Jewel and Certificate presentation to RWB Leonard E. Myers, who with his wife Bettie, accepted the honor accorded to him. Pictured (L to R) RWB Ron Parker, District Deputy Grand Master, Mrs. Myers, RWB Leonard Myers.



WB Gene R. Tucker was honored on Monday evening, May 12, 2008 at a Special Stated Communication of the Lodge. RWB Russ Tinker, S/W, presented a proclamation to Tucker on behalf of the Lodge. WB Tucker has been a member of this Fraternity since March 23, 1966, and a member of Troy Lodge No. 34, AF&AM since March 11, 1991. He recently was instrumental in the actual saving of a fellow man's life by properly and effectively applying the Heimlich maneuver during a serious choking distress. His years of service and his recent heroism prompted the Brethren of his Lodge to join the Community in recognizing his heroic actions and to proclaim him "Troy Lodge Freemason of the Year" for 2008.



Then and now...Worshipful Brother Donald Hegeman recently finished his latest term as Master of Cosby lodge. Nothing unusual about that until you learn he was master of Cosby exactly 50 years ago. With terms as Master exactly 50 years apart, in 1958 and 2008, Worshipful Brother Don had the unique distinction of serving as Cosby's Master during the celebration of both its 50th and 100th year. Cosby Lodge honored WB Hegeman for his service during its 100th anniversary dedication ceremony September 7, 2008. For good measure, he also served as Master in 1994.



On June 12, 2008, Brother Lee Roy Fowler was presented with his 50-year pin and certificate at Wayne Lodge #526 in Piedmont, Missouri. Pictured with him are (l to r) RWB Wayne Tucker who made the presentation; daughter-in-law and son, Paula and Denny Fowler; Brother Fowler; wife Jean Fowler; sister Bernice Sullivan; and Raymond Silvey, WM of Wayne Lodge.