



Masons at work in your community

Friends,

In October of 1852, a small group of Freemasons met to organize the first Masonic Lodge north of the Columbia River, at that time the Northern extension of the Oregon Territory. That Lodge became Olympia Lodge, the first of its kind in what would eventually become Washington State.

Over the last 150 years, the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons has grown to become an integral part of the history and development of this area. Our first Lodge Hall, built in 1854, would eventually also serve as a meeting place for the Territorial Legislature as well as a Public School. Masonic Leaders were similarly instrumental in establishing and expanding the Primary and Secondary Schools, Colleges, and Universities that constitute the strength of our communities. There are now more than 200 Masonic Lodges in Washington State, celebrating a membership of over 21,000.

Freemasonry also includes a family of organizations numbering more than 50,000, many of which sponsor well-recognized philanthropies that serve all of the citizens of our State. The Scottish Rite, for example, sponsors their Childhood Language Disorders Clinics. The Shrine Children's Hospitals, the Knight's Templar Eye Foundation, the Grotto's Dental Program, the Amaranth Diabetes Foundations are but a few of the Masonic Orders to offer free medical support. Our Youth Orders are also actively involved in charitable work; the Job's Daughters' Hearing Impaired program called HIKE and the Order of Rainbow's support of The National Children's Cancer Society are but two examples.

Of course, in keeping with our long-standing support of public education, many of our related Orders focus their efforts on scholarships. The Scottish Rite, Order of Eastern Star, Order of Amaranth, and many local chapters and Lodges award substantial scholarship support. This year the Masonic family will donate nearly one million dollars in scholarships in Washington State alone. Not all of our Orders are well-known, nor do they strive to be. But their commitment to you and to the communities in which they live and work is a persistent source of good-will. We are committed to becoming better; better persons, better citizens, and proponents of a brighter, better world.

Sincerely,
Free and Accepted Masons of Washington

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
Please call your local Lodge or the Grand Lodge
1-800-628-4732
e-mail grandsecretary@freemason-wa.org
or visit the Grand Lodge of Washington's website:
www.freemason-wa.org



Vancouver Masons host Easter Egg hunt

Each year Washington Lodge hosts an Easter Egg Hunt for local Vancouver children. They charge no fee and expect no return. They are rewarded with "miles of smiles" from the 500 children and parents who participate. Lodge members work with the youth organizations (DeMolay, Job's Daughters and Rainbow Girls) to help stuff 3500 plastic eggs, arrange three areas on the Masonic Center lawn by age, and feed the workers.

The cost to the lodge is minimal for the rewards gained. Now, parents anticipate the Annual Easter Egg Hunt. It is widely publicized in Vancouver as one of "the" Easter Egg Hunts.

Washington Lodge also puts on an annual Charity holiday dinner for the community.

The result is the smiles and happiness for all who attend.

Hats off to Washington Lodge No. 4 for helping your community.

Masons support Operation Outreach literacy program

When you teach a child you touch the future.

Masons in Washington have a unique opportunity to help teach children to read. The Grand Lodge of Washington supports "Operation Outreach - USA", a non-profit charity that supplies books and reading programs to schools.

Operation Outreach provides books and materials for pre-kindergarten through eighth grade students as well



as a syllabus for the teacher.

Each child receives two sets of books, one for the school and the other to take home. In some cases, these may be the first books the child reads or owns!

Reading is so important in

today's world. If you cannot read you will not be able to read the labels or price in the food market, read the want ads for a job or read the instructions that enable you to work better. Reading is critical to surviving and growing in our society.

To date more than 30 lodges participate in this program.

If we can help a child learn to read, we, as Masons, "have touched the future."

Tacoma Masons help local school

Fairweather Lodge No. 82 has supported several schools in the Tacoma community and received much recognition for their support. One of the schools is DeLong Elementary, only a few blocks from the lodge, near James Center in Tacoma.

For several years Fairweather Lodge has purchased GET credits for all students in a specific class who meet the stipulations of the program. GET credits are future tuition at

any Washington state supported college.

They also donate \$500 annually to the library so the librarian can purchase new or replacement books as desired. This past year the lodge also purchased the books for the Operation Outreach program for the entire second grade class.

Most recently, they grilled a hot dog dinner for 200 students, their parents and teachers at a PTA meeting.

De Long Elementary School has recently been selected by the Washington State Department of Education to spearhead what may become a statewide reading program for all elementary schools. And, as Masons we are there to help!

What is Masonry?

Masons believe in independence, liberty, freedom and constitutional rights for all, and oppose special privileges for a few! As a way of life, Masonry may be explained as follows:

- ★ In the home it is kindness.
- ★ In the business it is honesty.
- ★ In society it is courtesy.
- ★ In work it is fairness.
- ★ Toward the unfortunate it is charity.
- ★ Toward the wicked it is resistance.
- ★ Toward the weak it is help.
- ★ Toward the strong it is trust.
- ★ Toward the penitent it is forgiveness.
- ★ Toward the fortunate it is congratulations.
- ★ Toward God it is reverence and Love.

Freemasonry does ALL thisand Much More

★ Freemasonry is a staunch supporter of the Public School System, of law and order, and patriotism.

★ Freemasonry develops your ability to speak before groups and to be a true leader of good men.

★ Freemasonry allows all good men – regardless of external qualifications to mingle in true Masonic fellowship.

★ Freemasonry teaches truths that are timeless. Ritual teaches the great and important lessons of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth.

★ Freemasonry teaches us to practice charity in word and deed, to forgive and forget the faults of our brethren, to hush the tongues of scandal...to care for the crippled, the hungry and the sick...and to be fair and just to our fellowmen.

★ Freemasonry tells us that regardless of where we travel in this world we and our loved ones are under the protection of every Mason on earth who has sworn to protect and defend us...just as we have sworn to protect and defend them.

★ Freemasonry lifts members out of the hustle and bustle of today's society and reveals the more important virtues of temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice.

★ Freemasonry demands nothing of petitioners beyond a deep rooted belief in a Supreme Being and a desire to be serviceable to their fellowmen.

★ Freemasonry promises that should we ever be overtaken by misfortune, sickness, or adversity through no fault of our own, the hands of every member of our great fraternity will be stretched forth to aid and assist us.

★ Freemasonry also promises (if we so desire) that when our final exit from the stage of life has gathered round our lifeless body – friends and brothers who will recall to mind our virtues – though they be but few – and will forget our faults – though they be many.

WHAT IS YOUR HANDSHAKE WORTH?

The handshake is one of the most powerful gestures between people — symbolizing warmth, friendship, trust and honor. In business it symbolizes affirmation, reaching agreement on a contract. Members of the Masonic fraternity stretch forth their hands to all men, using the handshake as an act of brotherly love, relief and truth, a concern for others. The purpose of Freemasonry is quite simple: to strengthen character, promote respect for others, and to help those in need.



Freemasonry & Your Community
Freemasons impact our communities! Masons contribute more than \$2 million every day for scholarships for young adults, hospital care for children, language centers and many more charities.

Freemasonry & Your Family
Freemasonry helps strengthen families with its youth groups and couples organizations. They contribute time, money and talent to strengthen our communities.

How to become a Mason

The qualifications for Masonic membership? Only men of high character who believe in a Supreme Being are favorably considered for membership.

To seek membership, just ask a Mason!

The Top-Ten benefits of a Masonic Lodge

1. A place to be part of an organization with the principal tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

2. A place to meet outstanding individuals from all walks of life.

3. A place that fosters self-development opportunities, leadership training and experience.

4. A place you can seek support as well as give it.

5. A place where moral virtues are taught and practiced.

6. A place where a strong bond of trust and confidence exists between all members and their families.

7. A place where brothers, acting as good men, encourage you to become a better man – not better than others, but better than you might otherwise have been.

8. A place to become better equipped to serve your faith and community.

9. A place to become more involved with other established community members.

10. A place where – within moral and civil guidelines – members cultivate free speech, free thought, and spiritual growth.