



Braden Lodge

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NEWS

December 2020

COVID Quarantine Issue

Staying Connected To The Brotherhood In A Time Of Pandemic


Braden Lodge, like much of the country and the world, has had its activities impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. The last Lodge function before the outbreak forced a cessation of in-person activities was the Fellowship Night held March 12th, 2020. Since then, the Lodge re-opened in July under tight restrictions to keep everyone safe — then shut down again, as a second wave of infection overwhelmed hospital capacity in Minnesota. New vaccines promise hope, but may take months to be widely available, so your Braden officers have sought to stay connected in new ways: using WebEx and Zoom in place of our in-person gatherings to continue to provide some friendly companionship, words of support, and Masonic relief during these trying times.

If you are in need, whether for Brotherly Relief or just the friendship of brotherhood, please reach out — we are here for ALL of the Brothers of Braden Lodge, for we know we will get through this the only way we know how: **together.**

Lodge Activities On Hold

March of 2020 started as one would expect, with a regular Stated Communication on the first Thursday of the month on March 5th: minutes were approved, bills were paid, and our Lodge Education Officer, **WB Jesse Williams**, gave an interesting presentation, the second in a series of papers, on the topic of creating community. Just business as usual — but by the end of the month, nothing would be business as usual.

- Thursday, March 12th, was a Fellowship Night, and **SW Erik Fairchild** conducted a rehearsal of the First Degree in preparation for an Entered Apprentice Degree scheduled for March 19th.
- March 13th, **MN Gov Tim Walz** declared a state-wide peacetime emergency and issued Stay-At-Home orders to go into effect Mar 25th designed to slow the spread of COVID-19, giving Minnesota much-needed time to prepare hospital capacity, testing, and personal protective equipment for health care workers and first responders.
- On Sunday, March 15th, the Grand Master of Minnesota Masons, **MWB Ethan Seaberg**, issued

 the first of several Edicts regarding the coronavirus pandemic. Initially, we could go ahead with Lodge meetings, but had to maintain 6-ft social distancing, and degree rituals were forbidden for now — so we continued with plans for our next Stated Communication slated for Thurs March 19th (without the EA Degree.)

- The successful series of “Murder Mystery” fundraisers organized by Treasurer **WB David Allison**, was not immune from the virus: the Bakken Museum, where we had scheduled five performances starting April 25th, notified us March 17th they were closing during the pandemic and cancelled all events, returning our deposits.

“Lodge Activities On Hold” continues on next page)

Neighborhood Fire Threatens Lodge

On Sunday afternoon, March 22, 2020, a fire broke out in an apartment located above the El Taco Riendo Restaurant, located just four doors down the block from the Arcana Masonic Center in North-



Smoke billows from apartments above two Central Ave businesses, El Taco Riendo, a Mexican restaurant, and Anelace Coffee Shop, on Mar 22, 2020. The sandstone building behind the tree at the right is the Arcana Lodge Masonic Center, rental home of Braden Lodge since Jan 2015.
- photo courtesy KSTP-TV

east Minneapolis where Braden Lodge now meets. Winds were coming out of the South at the time — meaning the Lodge building, directly North of the fire along Central Ave, was located squarely in the path of the approaching fire and smoke. The four-alarm fire caused severe damage to the restaurant and an adjacent business, Anelace Coffee, but both businesses were unoccupied, as they had been closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. All of the apartments on the second floor above the two businesses were totally destroyed, but the residents were safely evacuated by the Minneapolis Fire Dept, which did a remarkable job of knocking down the flames before the fire could advance to neighboring buildings.

Brothers of Arcana and Braden Lodges were notified and given time to retrieve their charters and other irreplaceable records and relics for safe-keeping. While the fire did not reach the Lodge building, the ventilation system sucked in the smoke-laden air, causing smoke damage to the walls and Celotex ceiling panels of the Lodge room, Lounge, and Dining Hall. Arcana’s building insurance is currently completing repairs, including re-painting of walls and replacement of the ceiling tiles.

Those Brothers who answered the emergency call to help rescue items from the Braden archives, which included our minute books, aprons and jewels, and an heirloom carpet that figures prominently in the staircase lecture, were: **Br Michael Bearfoot, WB Erick Crail, Br Jason Edwards, WB Tim Grube, Br Christopher Larson, WM David Potter, and Br Mark Steiger** — and one “Friend of Braden”, **Mr Dustin Korbel**, who had petitioned to join Braden just before the pandemic shut down Lodge activities in March. *[One of the first actions undertaken when Braden resumed Lodge meetings on July 16th was to vote to approve Mr Korbel’s petition for the degrees!]*

New Officers Elected For 2021

On Dec 3rd, 2020, Braden Lodge #168 held its annual Election of Officers for 2021, meeting virtually via Zoom. Our Senior Warden, **WB Erik Fairchild**, was elected Worshipful Master for the coming year. WB Fairchild has been active in our Lodge Scholarship Program, Technology Team, Trustee, and as a Degree lecturer, and looks forward to bringing an emphasis on Lodge Education to his year in the East. He is employed by Apple as a xxxxxx

The complete list of elected and appointed officers for 2021 follows:

Worshipful Master:	WB Erik Fairchild	Secretary:	WB Erick Crail
Senior Warden:	WB David Potter	Treasurer:	WB David Allison
Junior Warden:	Jay Koelsch	Chaplain:	WB Andy Harvego
Senior Deacon:	Arik Oversmith	LEO:	WB John Stitely
Junior Deacon:	Michael Bearfoot	Tyler:	WB Steve St John
Senior Steward:	Christopher Larson	Marshall:	<vacant>
Junior Steward:	William Otto	Trustees (3):	WB Jesse Williams
Funeral Coordinator:	WB John Stitely		WB Andy Harvego
Historian:	WB Tim Grube		WB Tim Grube
Librarian:	Charles Knutson	Food Svc Dir:	WB David Potter

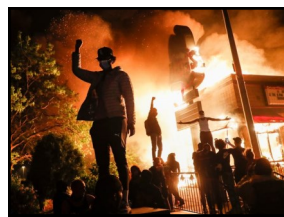
An Installation Ceremony was held via Zoom conference on Dec 10th, 2020, with **WB Andy Harvego** serving as the Installing Master, and **WB Brian Silverain** serving as the Installing Marshall.



(Sorry! No group officer photos until Covid allows us to once again meet together safely!)

Lodge Activities On Hold *(Continued from Page 1)*

- On March 18th, in response to the increasing severity of the pandemic in Minnesota and our nation, MWB Seaberg cancelled all Lodge activities throughout the state thru April 3rd. *(Remember when we thought this would blow over in a couple of weeks?)* Our March 19th meeting was cancelled — as was the Grand Lodge Annual Communication set for April 3rd & 4th.
- Then came the fire of March 22nd *(see separate article)*
- Starting April 2nd, we have been meeting “virtually” for Fellowship — using video conferencing platforms like WebEx and Zoom — to stay connected as a Fraternity and support one another during these difficult times.
- The March 18th Edict from Grand Lodge authorized the five elected Lodge officers (Worshipful Master, Sr & Jr Warden, Treasurer, and Secretary) to conduct the business of the Lodge in the interim while in-person meetings were suspended. We have had a number of Officers’ Meetings to pay the bills, act on requests for Brotherly Relief, and plan for re-opening.
- An Edict issued May 20th laid out a safe path for “A Return to In-Person Masonry.” We have tried since then to meet in-person, following all prescribed safety protocols: social distancing, limited attendance, no food, and no personal contact (handshakes or whispering the pass.) But many Braden members have medical conditions that make them high-risk, or live in households where others are in high-contact occupations, such as nurses and teachers, so they are minimizing risk by staying home. Two meetings were unable to garner a quorum.
- Then came May 25th, and the tragic death of George Floyd while in police custody that triggered numerous protests that led some to loot, vandalize, and burn buildings across the Metro. The violence affected the first-floor tenants of the Lodge building with broken windows and looting. The glass



Arby's at Lake St & Minnehaha ablaze. - Photo courtesy Associated Press

doorway of the North entrance to the upper floors (2nd floor Lounge, Kitchen, and Dining Hall, and 3rd floor Lodge room) was boarded over for

two weeks and escaped damage.

- Several Brothers of Braden assisted other Brothers who live close to the center of the protest activities to move to safer places during the unrest, while others volunteered at emergency triage units at area churches, providing meals, water, and medical care to anyone injured during the protests.
- As the “second wave” of Covid-19 infections struck Minnesota this fall, we have returned to Zoom for Lodge activities, working with Grand Lodge to develop safe and secure procedures for voting and installation.
- We do hope to return to in-person meetings at Lodge as soon as it is safe for us to do so. Be watching the website and Slack media for news of when we intend to resume in-person meetings.



Masonic Service Anniversaries

*The Coronavirus Pandemic kept us from having our 2020 Annual Awards Night, so we want to recognize here these Braden Brothers who would have received Service Awards for their years of membership in Masonry in 2020. They will be invited to a combined 2020-21 Awards Night and Banquet scheduled for **Nov 11, 2021**.*

70 YEARS:

Charles Cable
Russell Christofk

15 YEARS:

Joseph Cathcart
Brian Silverain
Anthony VanWagner

50 YEARS:

Robert Tackman

10 YEARS:

Michael Edman
Timothy Grube
Daniel Horon
Jac Martins
Jermain Thomas

45 YEARS:

Randall Grilz
L H Hansen

35 YEARS:

Cecil Ferguson
Joseph Musha

5 YEARS:

J P Armstrong
David Coleman
Charles Knutson
Danny August
Arik Oversmith
Matthew Rairie
Brandon Rossell
Damian Sheridan
Miguel Viana

30 YEARS:

Donald Woebkenberg

25 YEARS:

Jay Whitcomb

20 YEARS:

Bernard Craig
Jason Craig

Congratulations!



BRADEN LODGE NEWS

Published periodically by Braden Lodge #168, 920 Lowry Ave NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418
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Written and edited by WB Erick Crail, Lodge Secretary, except as noted.
Published under the authority of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Minnesota.

