



The Blue Lodge Roof

The violent storms that passed through greater Phoenix in October last year had caused a great deal of wind and hail damage which didn't spare the Masonic Temple of Peoria Lodge #31. The roof exhibited shameful visible damage, witnessed even from street level, and for the past few months has been a source of concern for Lodge officers and brethren alike for the potential of further loss from water damage.

Since there are no written articles in Peoria #31 By-Laws on how to approach such an issue and the repairs needed were of such a major monetary investment, the subject took months of discussion and trial and error to formulate a plan of action. Even at the Stated Meeting on the third of May this month, the officers of the Lodge were undecided as to exactly what to do. After a lively discussion among the brothers present, the Lodge did vote, to allocate the funds necessary to make repairs.

There were three different types of roof replacement to consider, each having pros and cons and varying costs. Estimates were proposed from three different companies bidding on replacements from foam to shingle (even a metal roof was considered) at costs ranging from \$14,500 to well over \$23,000. As one can easily see, the costs were substantial. The Lodge funds stood to take a serious hit. But how should the Lodge proceed? Which roofing contractor could be trusted? What type of roof should be installed? So many questions and so few answers at the time.

Eventually, your elected officers enrolled in roofing 101. A foam roof, although affording an insulation factor of R-7, has a tendency to crack and leak when installed over roof joists beyond 16" o.c. (Peoria's joists are 24" o.c.), and need costly maintenance about every 5 years to recoat the elastomeric surface of the roof (about a \$7000 cost for Peoria's square footage). Metal roofs cost much more than standard roof coverings and are installed using screws with

plastic washers. The washers crack over time and the screws back out of the wood, both causing leaks and further maintenance issues as well as a painted surface which tends to fade as the years roll by. Both of these types of roofing were decided against, for obvious reasons. It made most sense to go with the same type of roofing material that the Lodge already had - shingles.

However, there are various grades of shingles (depending on thickness) that are guaranteed for 20, 30 even 40 years and beyond. Some have tabs which tear easily and only spots of sealer, whereas, others have no tabs and full shingle length sealer. Quality makes the shingle last longer and perform better. The shingles previously purchased were of inferior quality, probably due to cost savings efforts in lean times, and installed by Masonic brother predecessors seeking a savings, installing two layers of shingles (and in some places three, which is not to code). Their intentions were good but the end result was not. One gets what one pays for in most cases.

The decision was made to use a company sporting an insurance claims specialist who went to bat for Peoria #31 against the evil insurance company. He did all the inspections, communicated with and met the insurance company adjuster, negotiated the approvals, and helped the officers with decisions to be made. I am pleased to report that this company managed to repair the Lodge's roof with no out of pocket costs to the Lodge, no payment of deductibles, and even combed the fins of the four a/c units to insure reliable service come the summer heat. The color of the architectural style 30 year guaranteed shingles is blue - because Peoria #31 is a Blue Lodge of Masons, and because it matched well with the trim already on the building. The work was finished in two days and everything went without a hitch.

Everyone reading this article must come to Lodge, at least to see the new roof. Even WB Mert McLain likes the way the building seems to glow with a renewed radiance. And we all know

how tough to please he is. I've already received several positive calls remarking about the improvement. Its beauty will last for many years to come and represents the crowning touch to the temple's exterior renovation.

Thanks to all who had a hand in helping to accomplish this much needed repair work.

Wayne De Vliegher, WM, Peoria Lodge #31

HARDLINE vs. BOTTOMLINE



We can all agree to disagree, right? Tolerance is defined by some as accepting less than one might expect, with the assumption that half a loaf is better than no loaf. Tolerance is also defined as turning a blind eye to problems because pointing them out, much less actually addressing them makes sense to those who believe easier is always better.

Some Freemasons contend the cure for what ails us as an organization, can be cured by growing our membership. They claim, solely by swelling our rosters we will increase attendance at our Stated and Special Communications, our coffers will bulge with much need revenue and all things will be set aright. But at what cost? To achieve this panacea, as they say the devil is in the details. Let's explore those details.

If sheer numbers are the answer, how do we entice men to join? Every transaction requires an answer to the age old question, “*What’s in it for me?*” Let’s examine our (Fraternity wide) current marketing plan, by first defining then comparing ourselves to our competition.

- *The competition being*; model airplane clubs, Rotary, bars, TV, video games, etc.
- *The desired demographic*; male, 18+ years old, believer in a Supreme Being, etc.
- *The expectations we impose on possible members*; Sufficient funds in checking account to cover application fees, and a pulse.

Great, we now know precisely who we want and what other enterprises are vying for their time and attention. Our next step is to assess what we currently rely on to get them to choose us:

Cost! Do we market ourselves as the least expensive, sure we do. Do you realize most Arizona Lodges charge less in annual dues than the monthly cost of basic cable service. Not that more expensive always means better, but *you get what you pay for* is more accurate.

Longevity! We are the oldest Fraternity! So? *Your Grandfather was a Mason* isn’t really a great selling point. Your Grandfather also crank started his car, burned coal in an unvented stove to cook and heat the house, and scraped the whiskers off his face with a dull straight razor.

Tradition! What does tradition mean to some fellow who is clueless of what we do, or how or why we do it.

Celebrities! Is he expected to be enamored with tales of Presidents, Kings and movie stars (mostly dead) who were Masons?

Philanthropy! *Masons give over two million dollars to charity every day.* This translates to mean, we will be coming for your wallet.

How about instead, we promote our Fraternity with some straight talk. Let's tell them about the 5,000 years of wisdom we teach, the expectations that will be imposed on them (*if they measure up to our standards to get through the door*), the time they must invest to study and learn to advance through the Degrees, and the reality that they must earn every step of the way their privilege to join us, and remain among us. More importantly, that we hold ourselves to an even higher standard.

Being a Mason isn't about fellowship, that is only a byproduct of what we do. Being a Mason isn't about becoming slathered with honorary titles, it is an opportunity to dedicate and focus your self to be an exemplary man and a leader regardless if you every occupy an elected or appointed chair in a Lodge or the Grand Lodge. Being a Mason isn't a reward because you are a nice guy, it is a measure of your character, your integrity, your intelligence and your selfless devotion to serve others. Being a Mason isn't an exemption to see how much you can get away with, it is a responsibility to examine every circumstance and strive to do the right thing every time. Being a Mason isn't a costume you wear on Tuesday nights, it is a perpetual state of mind.

May God bless us and forgive us.

Ed Barron, SW, Peoria Lodge #31



Thinking Ahead

With this being the start of June, I have been advised to already start thinking about our pig roast this fall. It may seem long in coming but time does go by fast. So I ask you to keep the early part of October in mind and thinking of how you might help the Lodge with a successful fund raiser during the two day event.

The Grand Lodge Communications was also taking place the first weekend this month. My wife has gone with me and this will be our first experience to this Grand event. I will relate some of my experiences to you in the months to come.

But till then, here is a little bit of Masonic insight.

The Masonic Ritual differentiates our fraternity from other fraternities or groups. As a form or ceremony of rites, ritual is an adhered to method, or a customary practice, of opening and closing our lodges and conferring degrees upon new candidates. While it differs from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, there is enough similarity of the Masonic rituals to allow all Masons to meet whither so ever dispersed and still feel comfortable. Think about how many “ritualistic” things we do in life. Even singing the National Anthem before a ball game has become a ritual (customary practice) as has the seventh inning stretch and the singing of “Take Me Out To The Ball Game.” In the course of a day or week, make note of all the “ritual” you perform in your activities. You will find many, I’m sure.

And in closing, with Freemasonry being an organized society of men, symbolically applying the principles of Operative Masonry and architecture to the science and art of character building, as its primary doctrines being Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, what is the purpose of Freemasonry to you? Give it some thought and my idea for its purpose for myself will appear

in the next article. With this in mind, the answer to last month's question involving a sport where the score is unknown until the end of the contest is boxing. So, till then, take care and GOD BLESS.

Dale Justus, JW, Peoria Lodge #31