



Sioux Falls Freemasons The Trestle Board

*Three Lodges,
One Brotherhood*

December 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Christmas Vacation

by Dane Bloch, WM Unity #130

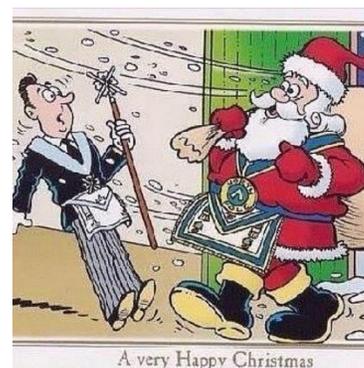
Season's Greetings! This time of year is among my favorites. Last weekend my wife, Alanna, and I watched the classic *Christmas Vacation*. Almost everyone has seen this movie where the ultimate family man, Clark Griswold, dreams of hosting the ideal Christmas by hosting his entire family in their suburban Chicago home. As we're introduced to his family, we get to meet some characters: eccentric Aunt Bethany, crotchety Uncle Lewis, and of course crazy Uncle Eddie. I think we can all relate at least a bit with the introduction of some of these family members! As you'd expect, Clark's well-intended plans go awry leading to a breakdown and a well-intended kidnapping of Clark's boss who tried to cut costs by gutting the company's annual Christmas bonus. However, the idea of a family Christmas is redeemed as the Griswold family gathers on the front yard staring at a plastic Santa in the sky sent flying by a sewer gas explosion. Although this time of year can get hectic and crazy, time with friends and family can prove relaxing and refreshing even though many times they can be a contributor to the craziness.

I think this can be seen in our Masonic family as well. Our home Lodges, the Shrine, Scottish and York Rites, and other appendant bodies are busy putting on quality programming, degree work, and conducting

normal business. However, sometimes I think that those who are not part of our fraternity see us as "the Griswold's". When those who do not know us look inside our Lodge, all they may see is a bunch of people wearing strange hats, conducting old ritual, and using archaic phrases. Sometimes they see what, on the surface, looks like people going their own way and doing their own things, a bunch of Griswold's preparing for a family Christmas.

However, they don't get to see what we do. They don't get to see that all of our work is tied together by a common commitment to leave our communities and our own worlds better than we found them. One of the tenets of our profession is Brotherly Love, as described in the EA's Illustrated Lecture. This tenet reminds us that Masonry is a common bond which can connect men of every "sect, country, and opinion" and can "conciliate friendship among those who might have otherwise remained at a perpetual distance." At the end of the day, we are all left to stand together and be representatives of this honorable hodgepodge of a family, one I am privileged to be a part of.

As you gather with your own 'Griswold's' this holiday season, my hope is that you have a time of rest and relaxation as we get ready to charge head first into a new year!



Your Masonic Education

Is Father Christmas a Freemason?

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Masonic Spotlight!

This month we are featuring the Masonic Service Association and their philanthropy.

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Salutations from the Senior Wardens

by Robert "Solo" Solorzano, SW Unity #130

Time with Family

Well...the hustle and bustle of yet another holiday season is upon us! But, I hardly need to tell any of you that. Realizing fully the harsh demand for your already extremely limited time is something that, I think, we all struggle with on a daily basis, much less with the addition of the winter holidays.

The ability to effectively and efficiently manage one's time is a skill that is to be admired. Some are blessed with the gift. Others, not so much. But fear not! The wonderful fraternity that we have, in one way or another, found our way into going has several Working Tools that can aid us during these turbulent times!

One in particular is the 24" Gauge. We are all taught that it represents the 24 hours in the day. We are even taught that it is divided and how. But, how many of us are able to fit so much in the allotted section? I personally have difficulty with taking some of the allotted time from one thing and applying to

We must plan with careful diligence and think about not only the things that are most important to us, but to those we love as well. That's right brethren, I speak of family. More often than not when time is transferred, it is the family that is neglected. It is imperative, especially this time of year, to take a personal inventory of all of our values and valuables and do our best to plan accordingly so that our time is as balanced as possible. On behalf of myself and family, or rather clan, I would like to wish everyone a safe and joyous Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa, and a very happy New Year!



A Word from the Junior Wardens

by Justin Luetgers, JW Unity #130

Our Brothers Footsteps

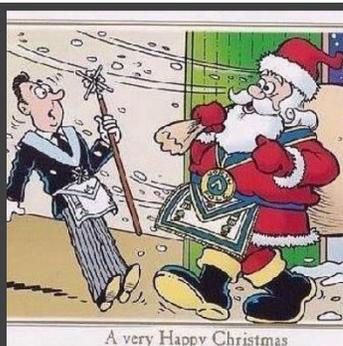
Hello Brothers, as it is the time of season to be with family and friends. We should be reminded our Brothers who are no longer with us. To some of us those Brothers are very important and influential to why we became Masons. Some impact us with an even greater force, to strive to be a better Mason in turn makes a better man. I would like you all to reflect upon those who have touched us as Masons the living ones and ones who have pass to the Great Celestial Lodge. For me this driving force was my father.

Like him, I followed in his footsteps to becoming a Mason, my grandfather was a Mason and my father followed him into the Craft. We strive to emulate those that we love and cherish. I want to experience what the Craft has that my father found rewarding.

I now have two boys under the age of 2, and I am hoping one day they will see what this great Craft has to offer them. The large family of Brothers who strive to impress what they have learned through the Craft on to the new Brothers and ones yet to join the Craft. So, again reflect upon those who have touched us as Masons the living ones and ones who have pass to the Great Celestial Lodge.

Your Masonic Education

by David Downie, St Trinians Lodge No 2050, Isle of Man



THIS MONTH'S EDUCATION TOPIC

Masonic Website of the Month!



Masonic Service Association of North America

The Masonic Service Association of the United States was created in 1919 by the Grand Lodges of the United States for the purpose of performing a number of services under one central organization. Some of those services have changed over the years, but MSA remains an organization dedicated to serving Freemasonry, our country, and the world.

<http://www.msana.com>

Masonic Phone App of the Month!



The Working Tools Masonic

Magzter Inc. Education

Everyone

Offers in-app purchases

This app is compatible with all of your devices.

The Working Tools Masonic Magazine is the magazine for Freemasons by Freemasons. All the current news and information for today's Masonic members. In-depth articles and features provide you with everything you need to be enlightened.

FAST FACTS

The oldest known Masonic writing, the Regius Manuscript or "Poem of Moral Duties," was discovered to be a Masonic document by a non-Mason, J. O. Halliwell, in 1839. It was written about 1390 and was given the name "Regius" because it was found in the Royal Library of England. It is now a part of the British Museum. Some common Masonic Ritual terms in use today are found in it such as "So Mote It Be."

Is Father Christmas a Freemason?

I have a very serious question to put to you all.

I would like to raise it with you and then do some detective work, examining the evidence that might lead us to answering it.

It is a most important question that I am sure you have often asked yourself and relates our Craft to the wider society in which we live and concerns several major issues of this season. This very serious question is "Is Father Christmas a Freemason?"

Let us consider the facts of this case: Of whom does this remind you?

A worthy gentleman, who is (we must admit) getting on a bit in years and is perhaps a little overweight, who wears a very distinctive costume as the badge of his activities, who provides the opportunity for friends and visitors to meet in fellowship, who is surrounded by secrecy and mystery, dispenses goodwill and the charity of gifts all over the world (avoiding ostentatious public display while doing so) and is there doing it year after year!

Well, fellow detectives, you must admit that this description could fit either Santa or a Freemason. But this is merely circumstantial evidence. We need some proof!

Let us start with his movements on the evening in question. All the reports have him coming from the North Pole. As the sun rises in the east to open and enliven the day, and with him needing to finish the world before dawn, then he would have to begin in the East and move towards the West. Therefore, Father Christmas must begin his journey at the north-east corner of the world. This, of course, is exactly what we do with an Entered Apprentice.

Similarly, you would assume he would finish heading for home, which would place him in the north-west corner at the end of his work, to give his salute to the world and leave. Convincing proof, you must agree!

But, think too, he undertakes this great journey to provide the gifts but once a year, and I am sure that any Brother Treasurer will agree that this is exactly the frequency with which most Brethren provide the gift of their charity to the lodge! And the secrecy, the mystery? Those of you who are parents, remember. What was the worst crime that an older child could commit at this time of the year? To tell the younger ones the secret of Santa, to break the faith that they should have kept. And I am sure your punishment of them pointed out that they were void of all moral worth and totally unfit to be received into the dinner table but be sent to their room for destroying something that was so good, so worthwhile and so innocent.

Surely all this evidence shows us beyond doubt that Father Christmas is a Freemason! He practices Brotherly Love and Relief; we are happy to meet him and the Christmas season, and sorry to part.

All the details, his wearing of a uniform, the rituals that happen year in year out, the fact he is a male ... On a more serious note, Brethren, the way the whole Christmas season has developed and is practiced does have many things in common with Freemasonry, and we can learn much about each from the other.

For instance, where did the figure we call Father Christmas come from originally? What is his background? Father Christmas, or Santa Claus, or St Nicholas has elements of pre-Christian myths and legends, which developed through the Middle Ages by being built into the great Christian story of God's wonderful gift to the world.

By the eighteenth and nineteenth century these details were formalized into the character that we still have today: his stylized uniform, his way of working, his ritual activities and sayings. This all sounds very Masonic.

The pre-Christian legends of Solomon's Temple, the pyramids, Pythagoras, and so on were developed through the Middle Ages by the great Christian cathedral builders, then formalized in the eighteenth and nineteenth

centuries into the uniform, the work, the rituals that we use today.

St Nicholas was actually a 4th century Turkish bishop who had originally been a rich nobleman. One of the stories about him was that he had helped a poor man who could not afford to pay for weddings for his 3 daughters.

St Nicholas climbed onto the roof and threw a handful of gold coins down the chimney and these coins fell into the girls' stockings that had been hung up by the fire to dry. The girls were then able to marry well and lived happily ever after.

He has been considered the patron saint of poor children ever since. The legend became very popular in Europe, especially the Netherlands where it was mixed with elements from the pagan Yule or mid-winter festivals. St Nick became Santa Claus, who would arrive on December 6th (St Nicholas' Day) mounted on a white horse and visit children to enquire about their behaviour the previous year.

Good children would be rewarded, and bad ones punished. The night before, children would leave a pair of the shoes or clogs out, filled with hay and carrots for the horse. In the morning these would be found, filled with sweets or small presents.

These traditions were taken to America by Dutch settlers, but it was the famous poem by Professor Clement Clark Moore which begins "'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house...." which settled most of the details into the Santa figure we know today.

Many of these details (such as the reindeer, and their names, the flying sledge, coming down the chimney) were first brought together in this poem, but Professor Moore took them from old traditions from as far afield as Finland and Siberia and they have stuck and become a single story. You can see how similar this is to the creation of our ritual and ceremonies.

While these also certainly include many elements that are ancient folklore, they were put together quite deliberately by identifiable people, with a specific aim: to create an impression in the minds of the Brethren taking part. Like the Santa legend, the details may be fictional, they may come from many different sources, and they may

even be inconsistent with each other. That does not matter.

It is the impression that all of them create as an entirety that is important. Would you deny all the good that the Santa story achieves, all the happiness it creates, just because it is a story? Of course not. And this is the real linking of Father Christmas and Freemasonry.

Why do we have Christmas and why do we have Father Christmas? We celebrate religious beliefs about the birth of goodness, and hope for the future; we reaffirm the belief that people are basically good and can develop into loving, caring, helpful, supporting friends to each other.

We look to a New Year where things can be better. We do this at this season whether we are celebrating the Christian Nativity, or the Jewish Hanukkah with its lights and gifts and story of peace, or the Hindu Diwali with its festival of lights and gifts of sweets and toys, or even if we hold no formal religion except the pleasure of seeing a child's face transfixed with wonder and delight. And why are we Freemasons? Because we believe that there are important things like goodness and hope for the future, and that men can develop into loving, caring, helpful, supporting Brethren to their families and each other.

We not only look to a future where things can be better, but we see it as our role, as Free and Accepted, or Symbolic, Masons, to help to build that future.

So, I feel I can safely say that Father Christmas is a Freemason. Not only does he show so many of the signs and tokens of being one, but he brings us a message that we, as Freemasons, can heed for the whole year.

Peace on earth, good will towards men!

Don't Forget to Send in Your Stories, Pictures, Events!

Brothers please remember to send anything that you want included in the Trestle Board to your Worshipful Masters whose e-mail addresses can be found on the last page of the newsletter. We have gotten some good feedback on the new Trestle Board and we would like to keep highlighting our Brothers.

Squires Seat Their New Officers!

The Squires have their new officers in the chairs for the Spring term. Please welcome Dorian Ness, Master Squire; Cody Schave, Senior Squire; Caleb Zahn, Junior Squire; Reece DeVries, Chaplain; Ryley Berry, Marshal and Connor Pulling, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer!



We Need Brothers to Join Committees!

Brothers if you are interested in any of the committees listed on page 7 please make sure you reach out to your WM and let him know. It is a great way for you to live out your passion in Masonry and have an impact on your community and the members of our Lodges!



From the Bodies of the Lodges

Minnehaha #5

Minnehaha hosted the last Chance to Advance of 2018 in Sioux Falls on 12/15. Trinity and the members of the Shrine provided the manpower for the FC and MM degrees. There were seven Brothers who completed the FC and six were raised to the sublime Degree of Master Mason (one Brother had to leave early due to a previous engagement).

A hearty THANK YOU to all of the Brothers who took time out of their weekend to help make this day a success.

Unity #130

Unity will be starting up their degree schedule by offering the EA degree in the month of January 2019. Please see the Calendar of events for the date and time.

Trinity #200

Trinity Lodge put on the FC Degree for the 12/15 Chance to Advance in fine form.

Additionally, many of the Brothers stayed around to watch and help with the various sections of the MM Degree.

We are looking forward to working with the other Lodges in 2019 to help raise more Masons in our community.

The WM is still looking for volunteers for the Calling Committee, please contact Bro. Rosenthal with your interest.



Masonic Spotlight!

IN OUR MASONIC CENTER



The Masonic Service Association

The Masonic Service Association of the United States was created in 1919 by the Grand Lodges of the United States for the purpose of performing a number of services under one central organization.

The initial reason for MSA's formation was so U.S. Freemasonry could provide aid to our military servicemen near the end of World War I. MSA's three major functions are:

1. Education and Information. Since 1923, MSA has published the Short Talk Bulletin every month. It is considered the most widely distributed Masonic publication in the world.
2. Disaster Relief. In 1923 MSA issued its first disaster relief appeal. Since then MSA has become a recognized and credible Masonic group in North America, trusted by all Grand Lodges to forward aid around the world when disaster strikes. This has been one of MSA's key services. Total disaster aid collected and distributed by MSA since 1923 has surpassed \$10 million - a milestone of which we are very proud.
3. Hospital Visitation. From the start the cornerstone service provided by MSA is our work with those who have served in the military. Today MSA has approximately 180 Hospital Representatives and State Coordinators, plus hundreds more volunteers at virtually every VA Medical Center and at many state veterans' hospitals in the United States. These individuals have given thousands of hours of service to our Veterans, giving back to those who have served our country through great sacrifice.

If you wish to donate locally please contact Kevin Tomshack at:
krtomshack@sio.midco.net

An Influential Brother

Burl Ives
Raised in Magnolia Lodge No. 242 in Santa Barbara, California On February 10, 1976.

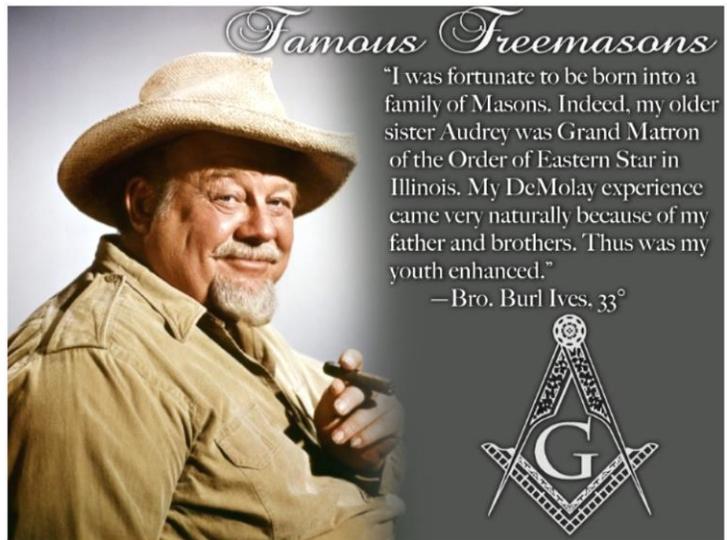
Brothers to Keep in Our Thoughts

Worshipful Brother Virgil Andersen has had some difficulties with an enlarged spleen lately. His doctors are working on the cause and hope to have him fully recovered soon. Bro. Virgil has continued to help out the Craft through this discomfort and hopes to be through it very soon.

Squires and DeMolay Have Concluded Their Last Fundraiser of 2019!

The Squires and DeMolay have been raising money and pet supplies for the Sioux Falls Area Humane Society this last quarter of the year. They started out raising money from family and friends, then moved on to the Masonic Lodges and final this last month they have been selling hot chocolate at the Shrine Wednesday night socials. Their efforts have been paying off and they have received some very generous donations from some of the Masonic bodies and individual Masons.

They have raised over \$4,500 total this year to support the following causes: Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRC), American Cancer Society, Feeding South Dakota and the Sioux Falls Area Humane Society! Thank you to all the Brothers and Ladies that made this possible!!!!



Five Masonic Brothers Become Honorary DeMolay!

On 12/15 five Masonic Brothers (Front L-R Brian Pulling, James Jensen, Jeremy Reimer, Tim Schendel, Ron Hammer) were initiated as Honorary DeMolay by the Sioux Falls Liberty Chapter. It was a deep and moving ceremony. The men went through the stations of life which was reminiscent of their journey in Masonry and watched the reenactment of Jacques DeMolay's trial that was very much like the reenactments done in the degrees of the Scottish Rite. It was a memorable evening enjoyed by all!



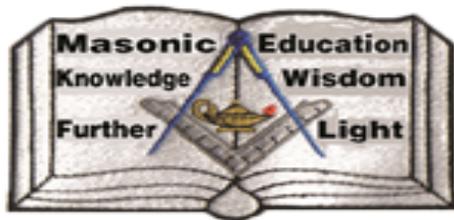
Committee Cornerstones {We need Brothers!}

by Your Committee Representatives



Good Works and Outreach Committee

This Committee is in charge of finding opportunities within the community to do good works, finding ways to help Masonic widows, and working with the other Masonic organizations to aid in charitable efforts. This Committee will also work to find opportunities to reach out to the community and get Freemasonry noticed again.



Masonic Education Committee

This Committee will be charged with keeping the Brothers tools from gathering dust. This can be done by coming up with presentations that can be carried out in each Lodge or inviting in speakers on things that may be interesting to the Brothers. This Committee will also help with things like putting together education packets for new Masons.



Mentoring Committee

This Committee will be charged with helping set up guidelines for vetting potential candidates and finding committed Masons to act as mentors to new brothers. This Committee will find ways to help shepherd new Brothers through their first year of membership.



Ritualistic Excellence Committee

This Committee will be charged with helping conduct our rituals at the highest levels. This Committee will help train Brothers with an interest in learning rituals as well as helping everyone get sharper at their ritual work. This Committee will help build degree teams as well as educating those who are interested in having a deeper understanding of our rituals.



Communication and Technology Committee

This Committee will be charged with helping all of our Brothers stay informed of Masonic happenings around the city, state and region. This Committee will also be in charge of our on-line presence and ensuring that we are communicating with our Brothers in ways that are most impactful to them.



Masonic Building Association Committee

The books have been balanced and the account has very little money in it. The Committee is looking for recommendations for how to cut costs in the building or raise revenues through rentals. The biggest cost currently is utilities. If you can think of any ways to help please let your Lodge representative know so we can try to avoid a per capita increase.

Calendar of Events

Minnehaha Lodge #5

Stated Meeting: First Thursday of the Month
Dinner at 6pm, Lodge at 7pm
Degree Work: TBD

Unity Lodge #130

Stated Meeting: Second Thursday of the Month
Dinner at 6pm, Lodge at 7pm
Degree Work: EA Degree, 1/24 at 7pm

Trinity Lodge #200

Stated Meeting: First Monday of the Month
Dinner at 6:30pm, Lodge at 7pm
Dark: July and August
Degree Work: TBD

Cigar Lodge

Date and Time: Contact Bro. Kyle Orth

Masonic Stag Night

Date and Time: Second Saturday of the Month
6-8pm (maybe longer)
Masonic Center Basement

High Twelve Lunch

Date and Time: Thursdays, 11am-1pm

Good Works and Outreach Committee

Date and Time: TBD

Masonic Education Committee

Date and Time: TBD

Mentoring Committee

Date and Time: TBD

Ritualistic Excellence Committee

Date and Time: TBD

Communications and Technology Committee

Date and Time: TBD

Masonic Building Association Committee

Date and Time: TBD

Scottish Rite

Stated Meeting: Second Tuesday of the Month at 7pm
Degree Work: Third Tuesday of the Month

York Rite

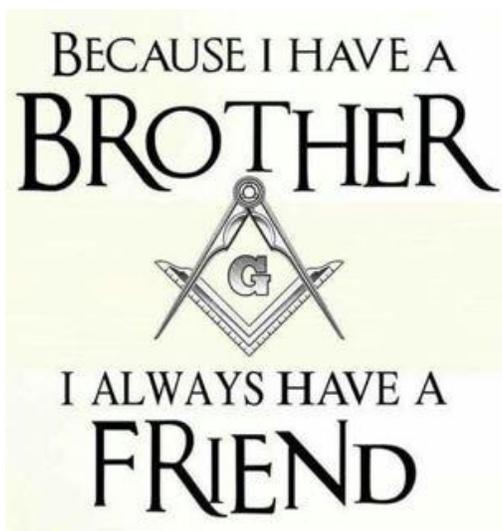
Stated Meeting: First Tuesday of the Month at 7pm
Dark: July and August

DeMolay and Squires

Stated Meeting: First and Third Monday of the Month
Squires meet from 6pm – 7pm
DeMolay meet from 7pm – 9pm

Monthly Shrine Rush Party

Third Wednesday of the month at the Shrine Temple



Part Upon the Square

Published by Midnight Freemasons

'Twas the Night before Christmas, and down
at the Lodge

Not a gavel was stirring, and in the hodge-
podge

Of aprons and jewels and chairs East and
West
you could savor the silence, most gladly
divest

All metal and mineral, it mattered not,
since Christmas was nigh and the coals were
still hot

In the hearth of your homestead, all Masons
abed,
as visions of trestle boards danced in their
heads;

When up on the roof there arose such a
clatter,
Our Tiler jumped up to see what was the
matter!

He picked up his sword and ran fast to the
door,
three knocks shook the panels - he wondered
'What for?'

He answered the knocking with, raps of his
own,
and once the door opened he saw, with a
moan

Of delight it was Santa, all jolly and red
Except for one notable feature instead!

Upon his large finger lie wore what we knew
was compass and square on a background of
blue!

'Why Santa!' he shouted and lowered his
blade
'I see you're a Mason!' the Tiler relayed.

He looked toward the Master's most
dignified chair
and said, voice near trembling, 'Most
Worshipful there

Is a Gentleman properly clothed at the gate!
The Master replied, 'Let's allow him - but
wait!

You tell me a Gentleman, but I do not see
His Apron beneath that red suit, can it be

Our visitor hasn't been properly raised?
Must we offer a test that is suitably phrased?

'I do beg your pardon,' old' Santa said quick
As he pulled up his coat and displayed not a
stick

But a cane with, engraving, two balls did
appear
and oh, what an apron, he wore and held
dear!

Adorned like the Master' complete with a
sign
Of "Lodge Number One, the North Pole" on
one line!

"Now let the man enter," the Master
declared,

and once in the Lodge room the Brethren all
stared,

For Santa was wearing a jewel not seen
for many a century - there in between

The fur of his coat and the splendid red collar
gleamed two golden reindeer that shone like
a dollar!

"It's Donner and Blitzen, who, I must confess
Are actually images brought from the West

By my Warden, a craftsman like none in the
world!"
And with a great laugh from his bag he
unfurled

An ear of fine corn and some oil from the
east,
"My friend I have plenty, tonight we will feast

On all that is good! We are Masons, kind sir!"
A murmur went throughout the Lodge, quite
a stir,

As presents and promises flew from his sack
This Santa, a Mason, showed he had a knack

For making this Christmas the best you could
glean,
And soon even Deacons were laughing,
they'd seen

On this very night only happiness reigned!
This jolly Saint Nicholas quickly explained

That only a Mason could be so inclined
to make all kids happy, make all people find

A Christmas so special, yes, Santa was right!
Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good
night!



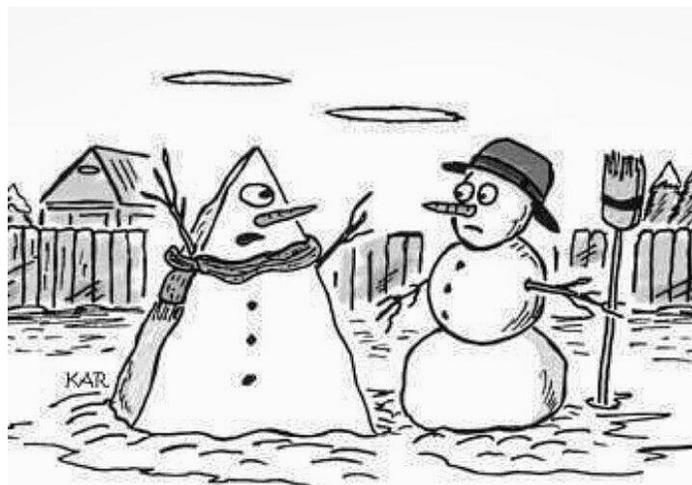
Sioux Falls Freemasons

The Trestle Board

Three Lodges
One Brotherhood

520 South 1st Ave
Sioux Falls, SD 57108

The Final Funnies



“I was built by a Freemason!”

Have a Safe and Wonderful Holiday Season!

