

SENT 4-5-05

From Gordon A. Nystrom, Worshipful Master, 1972: As someone once said, "We save the best for last."
Well, here it is!

I think more changes were made with King Oscar Lodge during my year as Master, than in any other for the past 50 years.

My first, and biggest problem of all, was not having a lodge hall in which to meet. Our then current home, Ravenswood Temple, at Paulina and Wilson, was sold to the American Indians without any notice. I was able to get Humboldt Park Commandry, 2410 N. Kedzie, to hold our meetings and Installation of officers.

On December 3, after several resolutions were voted upon, we finally found Glenview Temple available to move into. The biggest change of all was that we had to change from meeting EVERY Friday, to meeting ONLY the First and Third Fridays.

On January 21, we had the best ever Past Masters Degree Night (don't we all think our year's is the best?).

March 10, 11 and 12, we traveled by bus, to Crescent Lodge # 25, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where they conferred their Third Degree. I met the incoming Master, Milton Polham, over a year earlier to set up the visitation and it was perfect.

On March 24, we had our Spring Dinner Dance.

I set up a Blood Bank and had our first Blood Drive ever, on April 28.

Our Annual Bowling Banquet was May 12, and the Golf Outing, June 10.

On June 25, we made a pilgrimage by bus, to the Masonic Home, in Sullivan, and July 15, was King Oscar's Family Picnic.

The Past Masters Dinner, always a big event, was September 29. This too, was a big change because we always held it at the Furniture Club, on Lake Shore Drive. Well it closed, so we had to move somewhere else. I found The Lido Banquet Hall, which worked out quite well.

On October 8, we had our Fall Dinner Dance.

October 14, Lovell Moore Lodge, of Muskegan, Michigan, came to King Oscar, and on October 27, we had our second Blood Drive. Beside all this, we held 35 official meetings during the year.

I started sending birthday cards to every member and I am pleased to see this is still happening.

I helped start the Police Starcraft Club with our own Tony Cutaia.

The Past Masters of King Oscar held an annual stag weekend retreat at Hermanson's Lodge, Lake Como, Wisconsin, the weekend after Labor Day. As you may know, Hermanson's closed that year, so I set it up at Lake Lawn Lodge. Unfortunately, our reservations were lost, so the outing was cancelled, and it was never held again.

I started a Past Master Club, which met the second Wednesday of each month, at Hogan's Restaurant, on Lincoln Avenue.

We had a Low Twelve Club of King Oscar, where a voluntary cash funeral donation was made, but from lack of interest, this was terminated.

I conducted the most Masonic funerals (22). Speaking of this, did you know King Oscar has 36 plots on Section 15, in Elmwood Cemetery? My grandfather, Svante Hjalmar Nystrom, who died in 1940, rests in grave # 14.

Also, from 1960 to 1972, we had a Building Committee to erect a Masonic Temple and 10-story Masonic-member only apartment building at the northwest corner of Central and Northwest Highway.

I held every office, including Chaplain for a full year, and gave every lecture in all the degree work. I joined Scottish Rite, in 1968, and Medinah Shrine, in 1970. I also served as Right Worshipful District Deputy Grand Master of the Sixth Metropolitan District from 1980-1984, overseeing seven lodges.

I ran the King Oscar Picnic for 15 years, and was correspondent for The Chanticleer, for approximately 5 years.

My grandfather Svante H., father Arnold H., and brother Ronald H. were/are King Oscar members. My mother Helen, cooked for Hesperia Lodge, for over 20 years.

My daughter Linda, was an officer in Bethel 16, Job's Daughters.

I have been married to Karen, for 43 years, and have three children: Michael 42, Linda 37, and Cynthia 36. I am the very proud grandpa of Samantha 4, and Scott 1.

I retired in 2000, from Carpenter's Union Local 58 after 40 years, where I served as Business Representative for the last 15 years.

Since retiring, I have driven over 165,000 miles, and have been to every casino in the United States, over 1,100 of them.

Our trips abroad have been to East Africa, Hawaii (cruise), Alaska (cruise), Ireland, England, Wales, Scotland, The Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, France, Switzerland, and Luxembourg. And this January-February, we spent a month touring the North and South Islands of New Zealand.

How's that for some history?

Yours Fraternaly,

Gordon A.