

Masonic Minutes—June One

Who is in the South?

The Junior Warden stands in the Masonic south of the Lodge to assist the Worshipful Master in directing the Craft and to watch over them in their hours of refreshment. The opening ritual of the Lodge eloquently captures the duties of the Junior Warden as he responds to the Worshipful Master's query, "Why in the South Brother Junior Warden"?

As the number three officer, the Junior Warden is elected by his Lodge, and he should be prepared to step into the position of Master and open the Lodge if the Worshipful Master and Senior Warden are unable to attend. Familiarity with these duties will greatly enhance the operation of a Lodge and the incoming Junior Warden should be prepared for anything that the Worshipful Master may require of him.

In many Lodges the Junior Warden is responsible for the meal or refreshments provided before or after the meeting. This planning process is helpful in teaching this officer that the nourishment of the Craft is an important part of leadership. The Junior Warden may rely on the support and help of the Stewards in his duties of refreshment so that his burden might be lightened and to also begin training the Stewards in the logistical operation of the Lodge. While the Junior Warden may be focusing on meeting the needs of the physical hunger, through the act of "feeding" the brethren to help them maintain their strength, he is learning the importance of surveying the need and providing sustenance for building strong character within his Lodge as he continues his journey to the East.

The task of the Junior Warden watching over the Craft to guard against excess or intemperance has changed in context as our Grand Lodge now allows individual Lodges to determine the use of alcohol on premises at certain functions. This change in the Grand Lodge By-laws creates the necessity for the Junior Warden to be ever vigilant in his duty to keep the Brethren in good order until they are called on again by the Worshipful Master for alcohol is never to be a part of a tiled Lodge. The Junior Warden should be familiar with the Grand Lodge By-Laws and his responsibility in representing the Lodge when enforcement is required. Please review your Lodge By-laws, the Grand Lodge By-laws and visit with the rest of your line officers to ensure that the performance of your duties as the Junior Warden meets or exceeds this expectation. The Worshipful Master, Lodge Secretary, and the DDGM are always good sources for support should the Junior Warden have questions or need clarification concerning all of the duties of Lodge Leadership.

The faithful fulfillment of the duties of the Junior Warden is entrusted to you by your Lodge. Make certain that the Brethren are always "well fed," and look to support them well beyond the meal that is provided. While meal planning might be a portion of the duties, the real lesson is in learning the logistics of how to be a good host and to take note of the type of care the Brethren may need. The comfort and care for the Craft is an integral part in maintaining the health, peace and harmony of the Lodge.