

Since Las Palmas Lodge is actually closed for the first time in its history due to the COVID-19 flu, I thought I would mention several other flu epidemics that have occurred during my lifetime and which did not result in business closures, or stay at home orders. In 1976, there was a flu epidemic that was not widespread enough to qualify as a pandemic; however, fearing that it might spread and be as bad as the 1918 flu, on the advice of scientists, President Ford ordered a nationwide vaccination effort. This was a descendant of the 1918 Flu (H1N1) and was a swine flu, so it was called Swine Flu. It started to spread at Fort Dix in New Jersey (pig farmers hated the name and said it should be called the New Jersey flu). That fall, Therese and I went to the Fresno Fair and there we got vaccinated with a gun that injected the vaccine without a needle. As I remember, the Swine Flu never amounted to much. That same year, there was a mild flu called A/Victoria because it started in Victoria, Australia. In 1997, an avian flu again began in Hong Kong and spread through China; it was a H5N1 strain of Influenza flu. Enough about the flu, let us all practice social distancing and stay well.

In January of 1975, Brother Green Young was installed as our Master. Brother Green had been doing the ritual for all of the officer stations for many years. I am sure that he would have been our Master several years earlier, but for his job as a Greyhound Bus Driver and being out of town frequently.

In our January, 1975 Trestleboard, our Secretary, Bob Paden, informed us that Las Palmas Lodge had 966 members. WM Young informed us that he calculated that only 2½% of our members showed up at our meetings. That would be about 25 sideliners. With today's membership, that would be between 10 and 12 sideliners which is just about what we have at meetings. When Lodge re-opens, let us see if we can't increase the number of sideliners so that the candidates for degrees will know that we really care about them joining Las Palmas-Ponderosa and starting a life in Masonry.

We had been asked by Livingston Lodge No. 658 to confer courtesy degrees upon Bro. George Chisolm. We coached Bro. Chisolm and after he passed his 2nd degree proficiency in Las Palmas Lodge, we arranged for a visitation and took Bro. Chisolm to get his 3rd degree in Madera Lodge on April 1, 1975 so that Livingston Lodge could also visit Madera Lodge at the same time.

On Saturday May 17, 1975, Burbank Lodge chartered a bus and brought a candidate to Las Palmas Lodge so that they could confer the 3rd degree upon their candidate.