

On November 11th, Las Palmas initiated Benny Contreras. What was pleasing about his first degree was the number of brethren present. In total there were 25 Masons present, three of whom were Entered Apprentice Masons. Because of Covid, the brothers spaced themselves in the seats so it looked as if there were even more than 25 present. What a pleasant sight it was. Now that we are able to resume lodge meetings to a level of pre-pandemic normalcy, we can start making up for lost time. If you have not attended Lodge since before the shutdown, now is time to return. It is so great to get a chance to talk our brothers. The wearing of masks is optional.

Last night was our November Stated Meeting and Election of officers. In advance of the meeting was a dinner for Masons only. The officers wanted to start back the dinners slowly so that all of the problems of the pandemic, and resulting shut down, can be worked out before we invite out Dates back to our Valentine dinner in February.

From the inception of Las Palmas Lodge in 1905 through 1991, the annual election of officers took place at the December Stated Meeting. Starting in 1992 the annual election of officers took place at the November Stated meeting.

Earlier this month, I visited Vista Lodge in Salem, Oregon. Being their Stated Meeting for the month of November, it was also their election officers. What a difference in procedure from what we do in California. All officers are elected by written ballot even when there is only one person being nominated for that particular position. Blank ballots for every position are individually handed to the members eligible to vote. The members must write in the name and then the Deacons collect the ballots so the Secretary and Deacons can count the ballots. Once counted, the Secretary announces the results for that particular office being voted on.

The last ballot was quite different from what we do. The Master announced that each voting member can write the name of a member who they think should receive the Hiram Award on their blank ballot. There are no nominations for the Hiram Award. If 50% plus 1 of the votes cast go to a member, that member will receive the Hiram Award. In the case when I was there, the Secretary did announce that one member did receive the necessary votes, but his name was withheld until later. As you can see this is a time consuming process so even though Lodge opened at 7:30, it was just a little after 10:00 pm before Lodge Closed.

I was well received as a visitor and in open Lodge the Master presented me with a Lodge coffee cup and Lodge lapel pin. If any of you get a chance to visit a Lodge in another jurisdiction, I strongly encourage you to visit.

Our Grand Lodge has its annual communication every October in San Francisco. As far as I know, it has always been in San Francisco since at least the turn of the century (1900). Not all Grand Lodges hold their annual communications in the same city every year. If they move the annual communication from major city to major city within their state, they will make it easier for many brethren to attend Grand Lodge. In 1981, there was a proposition before our Grand Lodge to hold the 1982 annual communication in Fresno. This proposition was not submitted by anyone in Fresno, but by out of area brothers who wanted to have Grand Lodge meet in some town other than San Francisco. Those of us in Fresno did not know it was coming until we got the written propositions in the mail. We had a relative new convention center down town and it would be an ideal place for the five day event. Unfortunately, the proposition did not

pass so us Fresno Masons never got a chance to have our Grand Lodge annual communication in our home town.