

A Letter From the Editor

In an effort to reduce the cost of our newsletter, the editing and layout is being done "in-house." This is saving the Lodge about \$500 a year, and also gives us more control over the content and layout.

For this August issue, it also created some crazy delays, and the blame is 100% mine. A software setting changed in the program I use to layout and produce the newsletter, and the files I was taking to the printer were simply not acceptable. It took me 2 weeks to figure out the problem.

That's why this August newsletter is incredibly late. Again, the fault was entirely mine, and I apologize. Thanks to the multiple times I had to redo the layout of the newsletter, I also managed to lose Joe Thompson's "Notes From the Secretary." I especially apologize to Joe.

Over the course of the next few weeks, I would like to form a Newsletter Committee of three other people to help edit the publication. Each Committee member would become the editor of a section of the newsletter. I would continue to edit the front page and page 5. One of the committee members would be the Editor for pages 2 and 4. Another would edit the Golf section on the back cover during the summer months, which will become a social activities section during the winter. And the final Editor would take care of the Calendar.

Nancy Henke has already offered to help, but there is obviously plenty of room for other help. All you need is a computer running at least Windows XP or Macintosh OSX. In October, I'll sit down with the committee (Editors) and discuss the cost-free software being used, how it runs, and how to layout pages.

If you'd be willing to help, please contact me: duanenorris@gmail.com, or call 402-984-5093. This should help ensure a timely and useful newsletter for all of us. Thanks, and I'm very sorry I dropped the ball this month.

Duane Norris



Learning About The History and Traditions of B.P.O.E.

The Initiation Ritual

The solemn and dignified BPOE Initiation Ritual of today is vastly different from the Initiation performed within our Lodges in those early days, with the early minutes of several Lodges, describing the now-solemn ritual in a far different vein.

Early candidates needed a physician's certificate of health as a part of the joining process, and the male prospect had to be in top condition to even be considered. were blindfolded, and instead of dimmed lights and beautiful words, he was subjected to much horseplay. The minutes of early Lodge meetings describe in detail having candidates wear shoes with lead soles designed to make the wearer walk as though intoxicated.

The old Ritual Book spells out other trickery, with members agreeing with the Exalted Ruler's declaration that the candidates should be "shaved." Once this decision was made, a "City Barber" appeared to the blindfolded candidates, with a dull file simulating a straight razor, he literally scraped the faces of the men to "shave" them.

A few other jokes, all of which were contained in the Ritual Book, described each ordeal in great detail, such as "walking on broken glass," actually egg shells, and it even mentioned how to end the "horseplay" session with real guns, loaded with blanks, being fired off behind the now-weary and very confused new members.

CALLING ALL ELKS

Published in the interest of
Hastings Elks Lodge #159 B.P.O. ELKS
A FRATERNAL ORGANIZATION
3050 EAST SOUTH STREET
HASTINGS, NEBRASKA 68901
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Lodge Meetings: Second and Fourth Tuesday of each month except July and August (fourth Tuesday only) and December (second Tuesday only.)

Lodge Meeting time: 8:00 p.m. at 3050 East South Street, Hastings, NE

House Committee meets 7:00 p.m., second Tuesday of each month.

Lodge Phone: 402-462-6113

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In 1952, candidates were no longer blindfolded prior to the Initiation, which ended much of the horseplay.

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