

Monthly Lodge Program – July 2008
What a Mason Should Know About Our Youth Groups
Based in part on the work of Milton E. Ammann, PM

At many of the District Tiled meetings this year, the conversation with the Grand Master has turned to projects that the Lodge might undertake to excite and energize the Brethren and bring Freemasonry back into the community. Often the Brethren spoke about how useful it would be to have a project that focused on our youth. There were many ideas – from working with the Boy Scouts or Cub Scouts, to sponsoring or coaching a Little League Team, or buying and presenting game balls to be used at football games at the local high school.

But more frequently, the discussion turned to our Masonic youth organizations, the DeMolay, Rainbow Girls, and Job's Daughters.

Why? Because these organizations provide a wholesome experience for our young people, allowing them to gain skills, have fun, and grow morally and socially. And of all of the youth activities we could sponsor, these organizations should be at the top of the list. Frankly, it should be our goal to have every Lodge, or at least every District, sponsor these youth groups.

There are so many reasons to do so. It gives our members a worthwhile activity to engage in, and we are all aware that so many our new and often younger Masons are eager for something worthwhile to do. Sponsoring a youth group is not only good for the youth in our local area, but is clearly consonant with our Masonic values and obligations. It keeps our membership “young,” not chronologically, but certainly in spirit. And it helps improve our public image in the community when we are seen to be playing an important role in the lives of our youth.

So this month, I want to tell you a bit about our youth groups and how they got started.

DeMolay was founded in 1919 in Kansas City, Missouri by a prominent Mason and businessman, Frank S. Land, in response to the needs of fatherless and otherwise needy boys. Since then, DeMolay has initiated over 3,000,000 members and today it is a Masonically sponsored international fraternal and civic organization for young men between the ages of 12 and 21.

DeMolay is organized into Chapters and there are chartered Chapters in the United States, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Aruba. The governing body of DeMolay International is the International Supreme Council with a Grand

Master and four other elected officers. Its administrative headquarters is in Kansas City, Missouri. Each jurisdiction has an Executive Officer, supported by regional deputies.

DeMolay is an organization dedicated to preparing young men to lead successful, happy, and productive lives. Basing its approach on timeless principles and practical, hands-on experience, DeMolay opens doors for young men by developing their civic awareness, personal responsibility and the leadership skills so vitally needed in society today. DeMolay combines this serious mission with a fun approach that builds important bonds of friendship among members in more than 1,000 chapters worldwide.

The organization took its name from Jacques DeMolay, the last leader of the Knights Templar, known for his loyalty and courage. There are two degrees, the Initiatory and DeMolay Degrees which were written by another prominent Mason, Brother Frank A. Marshall of Kansas City, Missouri.

The initiation involves no horseplay. It is a meaningful experience and parents are welcome to attend. DeMolay teaches as its seven Cardinal Virtues: Filial Love, Reverence for Sacred Things, Courtesy, Comradeship, Fidelity, Cleanness, and Patriotism. Its activities and teachings aid in developing

confidence, character, leadership, and speaking skills, and an appreciation of the value of service oriented efforts. Chapter activities include: sports, competitions, social events, civic service projects, fund-raisers, business meetings, travel, annual conventions, and leadership training conferences.

DeMolay members plan their own activities. While adults serve as advisors, their function is to advise and guide, not to dictate.

Prominent DeMolay have served in all walks of life. To name just a few, they include businessman and astronaut Frank Borman; Filmmaker Walt Disney; Entertainers John Wayne, Bob Cummings, Mel Blanc, and Tom and Dick Smothers; Athletes such as Fran Tarkenton, Pete Rose, and basketball star and former Senator Bill Bradley; Olympic Decathlon Champion, Bob Mathias; TV weatherman Willard Scott; retired Sen. Mark Hatfield, and author John Steinbeck.

DeMolay in Virginia achieved two unique membership goals during the past year: overall growth and initiating more members than it did in the preceding year. But more of our Lodges should be sponsoring a DeMolay Chapter not only for the intrinsic good that does but also because the DeMolay can provide a pool of potential new young members who are pre-disposed to view

Masonry favorably.

The Order of Rainbow for Girls was created in 1922 by Right Worshipful W. Mark Sexson, who had been in close contact with the Order of DeMolay when it was organized in 1919 in an effort to reach the hearts and minds of the young boys of America and to instill in them ideals of good citizenship. Brother Sexson was concerned that something should be done for the girls, who would share that citizenship.

He made a stirring appeal to the members of his Eastern Star Chapter to start a similar organization for girls. His appeal was quickly answered and he was appointed to write the ritual of the order. RW Sexson was serving as Minister of the First Christian Church in McAlester, Oklahoma and repaired to his little church study to begin writing one of the most beautiful rituals ever written.

Brother Sexson was also Secretary of the Scottish Rite Bodies in McAlester, and, in addition to his background of spiritual knowledge, was well versed in Masonic knowledge. He was aware that some of the oldest Masonic charts depicted an overarching rainbow as one of the graphic symbols used in connection with

fraternal life. It was the first visible sign that God gave his creatures after the flood as a covenant between Him and the earth, but its symbolism and colors had never been used as a basis for a ritual and the traditional journey to its end never entered as the pathway of initiation. So he selected the rainbow as the name of the new organization and used its colors to portray certain principles: Red for Love; Orange for Religion; Yellow for Nature; Green for Immortality; Blue for Fidelity; Indigo for Patriotism; and Violet for Service.

The ten outstanding principles that Rainbow teaches are: a belief in a Supreme Being; the great truths in the Holy Bible; to seek dignity of character; a completion of the higher things in life; effective leadership; church membership; patriotism; cooperation with others; love of home and family; and, above all, service to humanity. This can be boiled down into three basic teachings: faith in a Supreme Being, having hope in all that you do, and charity toward all.

Any girl between the ages of 11- 20 regardless of race or religious background can be recommended by a Master Mason, a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Order of the Amaranth, or White Shrine of Jerusalem. She does not have to be of a Masonic family to belong, and the girls

may invite their friends to join and enter into the work.

Members of the Sponsoring Bodies in good standing are permitted to view the ritual work as are parents, grandparents and/or legal guardians of the girls.

Rainbow girls are organized into numerous Assemblies around the world. Each Assembly meets twice a month. Each has its own set of officers and a Mother Advisor as well as an advisory board composed of members of the sponsoring bodies, majority Rainbow Girls and parents. There is an International or Supreme Assembly, which meets every other year. Since November of 1951, its world headquarters has been located in McAlester, Oklahoma in a magnificent building constructed and funded by Rainbow Girls. Under the Supreme Assembly are Grand Assemblies which meet every year.

The main focus of the International Order of Rainbow for Girls is on the spiritual principles of being a kind and caring person. But the girls also learn leadership skills, standard meeting protocol, and parliamentary procedure. Members also learn to memorize meaningful lectures and to be prepared for extemporaneous speeches. And the girls also work on various volunteer and community service projects each year.

Job's Daughters was founded by Mrs. Ethel Wead Mick

in Omaha, Nebraska on Oct. 20, 1920 and organized May 27, 1921.

Her husband, Dr. William H. Mick, a Master Mason, had volunteered for service with the United States forces in World War I and was shipped to France in Nov. 1917. When he arrived back in the United States in January 1919, and was reunited with his wife and two daughters, Ethel and Ruth, he told his family how proud he had been to have been elected President of the Masonic Club in Paris, and telling her about the work that the Masonic organizations had done during the war. In his view, Freemasonry had done more good for the men in the service than any other organization.

But he felt something lacking in the Masonic based organizations, because the children of Masons had no chance to learn anything about the basic principles of Masonry.

Mrs. Mick, for her part, spoke about her own mother's teachings and the strong influence she had had in the lives of her children, and suggested that it would be a good idea to start an organization for girls based on the Book of Job.

There was much conversation about starting a new

organization for girls. The Book of Job was studied very thoroughly, and Mrs. Mick was particularly taken with a passage from the 42nd chapter, 15th verse:

"And in all the land there were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren."

In no small part, the new organization was based on this verse and naturally the name chosen was Job's Daughters.

The authority to proceed with this organization was jointly granted by Most Worshipful J. B. Fradenburg, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska, the Worthy Grand Matron, Mrs. Anna J. Davis, and the Worthy Grand Patron, James E. Bednar of the Grand Chapter of Eastern Star of Nebraska. Many prominent members of the Masonic Fraternity and Eastern Star from other states not only assisted in the formative stages but were active for many years in this remarkable youth movement.

Membership in this organization was limited to young girls between the ages of 10 and 20. They have to be related to a Master Mason in good standing or to one who was in good standing at the time of his death. Thus, a daughter, an adopted daughter, sister, niece, granddaughter, great-granddaughter, first or second cousin could join the

Job's Daughters.

These same restrictions with respect to Masonic relationship apply to those who wish to serve as councilors to Job's Daughters. A man must be a Master Mason in good standing; a woman must be the wife, sister, daughter, mother, or widow of a Master Mason, and more than twenty years of age.

The ritual of the Order is designed to teach young girls that throughout their lives they will face many trials and tribulations, and will experience adversities of many kinds, but if faith prevails, the ultimate result will be the eventual restoration of all that is good and worthwhile.

They also are taught the Lord's Prayer as a daily supplication to God, taught to love the flag of their country and the government for which it stands, taught to promote love and respect for all worthy persons, especially their elders, and taught love for all the world.

The names of the three daughters of Job were chosen as the emblems of the order: Jemima — the white dove, the emblem of purity and peace; Kezia — incense (or incense burner), the emblem of prayer; and Ker-happuch —the horn of plenty, representing the rewards of those who were patient and faithful to God. With these ideals in mind, Mrs. Mick, was inspired to write the motto of the Order: "Virtue is a quality

which highly adorns womanhood."

The lily of the valley was a favorite flower of Mrs. Mick. This small fragile flower, so softly fragrant, so retired and so welcome in the early spring, after the cold mid-western winter, resembled youth at its best. It too was white, an emblem of purity, so the lily was chosen as the flower of Job's Daughters.

Job's Daughters are organized into "Bethels", meaning Holy Places. In addition there is a Supreme Guardian Council, and Grand Guardian Councils.

There are chartered Bethels in the United States, Canada, Australia, Brazil, and the Philippines. Members of a Bethel elect their own officers, decide their own activities, and plan their own events. It is not simply a social organization. While the girls do have fun activities such as swimming parties, dances, family picnics, slumber parties, miniature golf, marching in parades, and travel, they also develop leadership skills by holding various offices. And they grow morally and assume civic and charitable responsibilities. Throughout the year, they perform service projects to help their community, the less fortunate, and other charities. For example, they actively support the Hearing Impaired Kids Endowment (HIKE) Fund, which purchases hearing assistive devices for hearing impaired children.

More information about all of these youth groups can be found on the Internet, and the names of the youth group leaders can be found in our annual Masonic Directory which your Secretary has and which can be obtained from Grand Lodge. These youth group leaders will be glad to help you to set up a DeMolay Chapter, Rainbow Assembly or Jobbie Bethel in your area: