

“KNOW THYSELF” - “TENEQ THY EGO”
February 15, 2008
MT. OLYMPUS CHAPTER #23, MIDVALE, UTAH

Most of my remarks this year have their origin in the photographs, reading, reminiscing that Mom and I shared the last six months of her life. Tonight; however, I am deviating a little. At the public opening of Grand Lodge, I had the honor of bringing remarks. Several people have asked me to repeat those remarks at one of our visitations. I thought it appropriate to incorporate those remarks into my remarks tonight which I have titled - “KNOW THYSELF”.

On one of those days when Mom was talking about her life, she started talking about High School and I asked her if her school had a Motto. If it did, she couldn't remember. My High School Motto was “KNOW THYSELF”.

Mom and I both agreed that that is a pretty tall order - no matter what your age. When you are two, you are Mom's little girl. At four, you might be Daddy's little helper and the recipient of much spoiling from your Grandparents. By Grade School, both you and I could look in the mirror and know that the blue eyes are just like Dad's; the big ears come from Grandpa's side of the family; that you are going to be tall like Grannie Gage; or short and pear shaped just like Aunt Betty. Relatives make comments like, “You look so much like your Mom”, “Your Dad had that same hair line when he was young - I wonder if you'll go bald too”, “You've got the Stabback nose”, “You have the same spirit of adventure as Uncle Russ - God give your parents strength”. Strange how everyone wants you to be like someone else in the family when you are probably content to be Barbara's little brother or Bobby's big sister - or Daddy's little girl. Do you end up being like everybody else in the family????

By the time you are in High School you know there is so much more to knowing who you are than just family resemblances and character. You are thoroughly enjoying the church Youth Group. You love to read. Boy Scouts & camping is great. Playing the sax - wow. Debate Club, Drama Club, school dances, Candy Striper, Job's Daughters, DeMolay, Bell Ringer, peers; all of these experiences are changing who you are. You are developing your own likes and dislikes, your own identity. You are not just Dolores and Roys' daughter anymore.

And then on to college, career, marriage and family. You are someone's nurse, an engineer, a teacher, a military man, a law enforcement officer, a telephone company employee; a wife, husband - a Mom or a Dad. And now “FAMILY” has a different meaning; however, it still defines a big part of who you are.

Somewhere in all of this changing, developing, searching for validation and fulfillment, you and I, became members of yet another “FAMILY” - the Masonic Family, and our identity changed again.

Utah's Masonic family is small and the opportunities are there for us to be active. How quickly do we want to get involved? Mom always said “DO” when you can and then you won't feel guilty when you no longer can. Utah's Masonic Family works together, plays together, and then we work together some more. A few weeks ago, then Grand Master, Dean Rein, was wearing his TOP HAT and presiding over Grand Lodge communication. Next week I could see him with his shirt

sleeves rolled up, helping set up for an Eastern Star meeting and I would be addressing him as Brother Dean, an officer of Silver Reef Chapter. I can look around any Masonic room in Utah and find presiding Masters, Past Masters, Past Grand Masters who have served, and continue to serve, other branches of our Family. I can walk in to the Salt Lake Masonic Temple that we all love and see a distinguished Brother climbing a ladder to string lights for the Honored Queens Ball. Another Brother heading off to a Trustees meeting, or a Council meeting. I might see that Brother put on yet another APRON to cook or serve a meal, or set up for an outside barbeque; or even have his head shaved at a fund raiser. I can also look around and see distinguished Sisters who put in hours, & hours serving on Bethel Councils, Demolay Parents Clubs, hemming robes, chaperoning, being mentors, planning charity events - and on, and on, and on. I see this "dig in - hands on" attitude all the time in our small Utah Masonic Family. We honor one another when we help one another.

Over the years, all of us have been asked questions about this thing called Masonry - or this thing called "Masonic Family". Friends, neighbors, acquaintances can be confused and are often amazed at our commitment to this family. Just how did we become this proud of this relationship when we are so diverse.

In November I was reminded of just how. I was able to attend a Lodge Installation in Provo. It certainly wasn't my first Lodge Installation, and I know it won't be my last. For a couple of reasons this time was a little different. Sitting directly in front of me was a young Mason and his bride. Across the room sat about a dozen college age young men, prospective members. Beside me sat my friend Heather, visiting from Australia. Heather was born in to a Masonic home. For over fifty years she has been an active member and supporter of Job's Daughters, Demolay, Eastern Star & Amaranth, yet this was Heather's first opportunity to be at a Lodge Installation, and she was very excited. The young men were so-o attentive and listened to every word. Heather would turn and look at me, or just reach over and touch me, every time she heard a familiar word or phrase.

It was a rejuvenating, regenerating experience for me. The obligation, the charges, the duties, the goals that were set in place that day, for those men, are the same obligations, the same charges, the same duties and goals - although phrased in a different fashion - that the members of Eastern Star and other branches of our family all strive for. We are family because Masonry's influence; through Rob Morris, Dad Land or Mother Mick, is in our Landmarks, is in our ritual, is in our Constitution and Bylaws. We hear similar words and phrases in our Initiations, in our Installations. It is easy to understand why our souls are so like minded.

Mom gave me an autograph book as I headed off to camp. In the front she wrote, "Give to the world the best you have, and the best will come back to you". As an 8 year old, or was it 10; I thought, how can someone from Van Wagoners Beach possibly "give to the world"????? I didn't get it. Well, I get it now ----- and so do each of you. By being part of a world wide Masonic Family, you can, and do make a difference. Masonry is the cornerstone of the family and has given us the foundation upon which we can build, grow and make a contribution. That is how "the best will come back to you".

At the end of the day, when I reflect on that High School motto - "Know Thyself", I know that I am more than the DNA that gives me hands just like Mom's, or the Dalgleish Irish temper. I'm more than the religious values that ground me. I'm more than the education, the extra curricular activities, the moves, that gave me confidence.

“Know Thyself”. We know who we are: Sisters and Brothers by choice.

One last thought, Sisters and Brothers, to leave you with --- from Mother Teresa:
“Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand.”

THANK YOU