

A CHAT WITH GOVERNOR HEINEMAN ON FREEMASONRY
By Frater James Marples, VII°

It isn't every day that a person gets to talk to a sitting U.S. Governor. Furthermore, it is even more rare to discuss the topic of Freemasonry with a current Governor today. However, on September 15th, 2014, I had a nice chat with the incumbent Nebraska Governor ---Governor Dave Heineman on his monthly radio show --- just hours before he delivered remarks to other Brethren at the Omaha Scottish Rite Center that evening.

Before my chat with Governor Heineman, the Governor noted the heavy responsibilities incumbent on ANY Governor of ANY U.S. State. We can be grateful for the guiding hand of our elected leaders. Freemasons {as individual people} played an important role in drafting the U.S. Constitution. And, modern American Masons believe in championing respect for that precious legal document.

I told Governor Heineman that I enjoyed watching his internet-streamed video press conference of "Pet Emergency Awareness" during this month of September, which is overall styled "EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MONTH." The Governor's wife, Sally was present, as was "The First Puppy" named 'Snickers.' I noted that soon after his radio-show ended, he was scheduled to deliver 'remarks' at the Omaha Scottish Rite Center.

I asked the Governor if he could tell me a brief overview of planned topics that he intended to speak to the Omaha Brethren about. I also had a sub-question as to whether Governor Heineman had any ancestors or relatives who were or are Masons? He answered my questions in reverse-order. The Governor said that he wasn't aware of any of his relatives who were Masons {but, given any family...anything is possible}. Next, he said he planned to address the following at Omaha's Scottish Rite:

- Nebraska having the largest cash-reserve ever.
- Nebraska has the 2nd-lowest unemployment-rate.
- Nebraska has become that largest cattle feeding State in the Union.
- Nebraska operates under a balanced budget.
- Nebraska puts a high priority on Education...and the University of Nebraska.

Governor Heineman said all these issues are inter-related and he used the phrase: "Making kids prepared" for adult success. As he spoke, I thought many of these same fine principles could be applied to our Lodges, Chapters, Councils, Commanderies, Consistories, and Shrine Centers ---- such as prudent 'Saving'; wise Spending; Engaging Interest and Masonic Education among our Membership.

Although we, as Masons, never talk politics nor religion in a Tyled Lodge, there are certain issues that we can all AGREE-ON....such as making a better world for ourselves and others. The Judicial, Legislative, and Executive Branches of Government are dependent on Fairness and Equality amongst the Branches. One man who shared this attitude was M.: W.: Brother Robert Wilkinson Furnas who was the 4th Grand Master of The Grand Lodge of Nebraska Masons --- and the 2nd Governor of Nebraska. He helped create "Arbor Day". Like Governor Dave Heineman, he served in the military and believed wholeheartedly in showcasing the Agricultural importance of Nebraska to meeting the food-supply needs of America and the world at-large.

Brother and Sir Knight Albert G. Mackey, M.D., 33° and a Knight Templar quoted the Book of Masonic Constitutions of 1723, which has an opening clause: "A Mason is a peaceable Subject of the Civil Powers".

I salute and "thank" Governor Heineman for his Service to this Nation in so many ways ---with his Military Service being a Captain in the U.S. Army and a graduate of the U.S. Army Ranger program; and his Governmental Service in various elective Offices. He has been an exceptional Governor of Nebraska. His gubernatorial term of Office is nearing its completion. At that time, he



will have served ten (10) years, which is extraordinary. Gov. Heineman has served the National Governor's Association as its Chairman. He has helped with international Trade, which has put Nebraska on the global map...economically. And, I thank him for paying attention to Masonry. Even though he is not yet a member of Masonry: His friendliness and cooperative spirit has benefited the Fraternity.

Sources / References / Acknowledgements / Recommended Readings:

- "Governor's Radio Call-In Show". Courtesy of Radio Station KFOR and the Nebraska Broadcasters Association. September 15, 2014 Broadcast 2:00 to 3:00 P.M. Special thanks to Rick Alloway, host of the program.
- Courtesy and acknowledgement to the Valley of Omaha of the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry.
- Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry by Dr. Albert G. Mackey, M.D., 33^o and a Knight Templar.
- Archives of The Masonic Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon, Canada.
- Archives of The Supreme Council, 33^o Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite Southern Jurisdiction, Washington, D.C.
- Macoy's Masonic Manual by Robert Macoy, 33^o and a Knight Templar. Fifteenth Edition. New York. Published in New York, Year 1861 by Clark, Austin, Maynard & Company located at 3 Park Row & 3 Ann Street, New York, New York. "A Pocket Companion for the Initiated".

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