



Legion of Honor News

By JOHN BOHLING

ANOTHER Shrine year is under way following the swearing in of Illustrious Potentate **Jeffrey Arnold**. It was special for the Legion of Honor because Jeff's father, Noble **Edward Arnold**, has been a member of our Unit for some time. We all know that Ed is very proud of his son, but will he call him Illustrious around the house?

As I write this I am still holding my snow shovel at port-arms following the "all-clear" from the supposed blizzard of February 10th. The CEO of Toyota Motors had to make a lengthy apology for their errors. I wonder why our many weather forecasters aren't forced to do the same when their "space-age" computerized forecasts fall flat, resulting in unneeded school cancellations and panicking thousands of people needlessly. Let's go back to the days of the wooly worm, divining sticks and moss on the north side of the trees!

Sermon over.

Sick call! SGM **Russell Wright** will be on the medics list for a while, but is expected to make a full recovery. I personally missed the re-enlistment banquet due to medical procedures the next day. All turned out well. It takes many spears to down an old elephant!

We are all looking forward to the circus. Let's all try to take a hand in mak-



**Don't Forget To:
"Chuck-A-Buck"**



ing it a great success. Remember Veteran's Night on February 21, which is also opening night. Need as many hands as possible. Before we close a few sports anecdotes to amaze and amuse you.

1. **Lou Gehrig** hit 23 grand-slams in 1938. But did you know that it was in Detroit on May 2, 1939 that he told **Joe McCarthy** to put **Babe Dahlgren** on first base, thus ending his 2,130 consecutive game record!

2. **Babe Ruth** was traded from Boston to New York as a pitcher. After a great career as a hitter, he approached the twilight of his career with the Yankees in 1933, he pitched a 6-5 complete victory over those same Red Sox. It was only his second appearance on the mound in 12 years. Following the game the fans mobbed him as he left the stadium. Would you ever see that now?? Better chance of Halley's Comet landing at Logan!!

Thanks for listening! 'Til next issue.

Blue Lodge Happenings

...from page 26

ent colleges. We think this is a perfect opportunity to use this money to present another scholarship. How that cliché go, "when one door closes, another one opens?" I'll keep you updated on her progress.

Wait, I got another long involved story. You'll love this one. The second week of January, seven of us were travelling to Dorchester to a worst Yankee Swap party at Noble Jeff Fowler's house. We were all in my station wagon. We were low riding that day. Wor. **Doug Hanks** of Pentucket Lodge told us that he was bringing a young girl and her physical therapist to Lodge of Instruction next week. They were going to ask the Masons for help. The girl, **Aidia**, is suffering from Multiple Sclerosis and had her house broken into. Everything was stolen, her laptop that she uses to communicate with, her handicapped van that had her electric wheelchair in it, everything. They were going to ask for some money to buy a new laptop. Did I tell you that Aidia is a junior in High School, doing above average work, and is an intern with children that have worse handicaps than hers?

I thought, "Wouldn't it be more fun, that when they ask for help, we could give a laptop instead?" A couple of calls to **Barry "Boo-Too" Patterson** and **Archie Campbell** of Ancient York, and I got permission to buy a computer to present. Spent the day at work, cleaning off the junk software. Thank you Brother **Gunner Reslow** for allowing me the time to do that. Brought it to LOI, of course people wanted to know what it was for. Told the story, Wor. **Wayne Standley Jr.** of Pentucket Lodge asked what they could do to help. They pitched in a chunk of change. Wor **Joe Roux**, master of William North Lodge said their Angel fund would pitch in. This is getting better all the time. **Doug Hanks** spoke a bit about how Masons are always helping, **Deb** the Therapist got up, started her speech about Aida. About half way through, we stopped her and presented the laptop in LOI. I'm a firm believer that charity is best locally and where the good can be seen. This was one of those times, not a dry eye in the house. I didn't know it at the time, but Aida walked into the lodge building using a cane, because her crutches were also stolen. The Masonic Hospital Equipment program in the building provided a new pair of crutches.

Wor. John VanKuilenburg works for the company that makes Dragon 10, the great speech to text software. He and his Product Manager not only donat-

ed the much needed software, they also donated a new headset that works perfectly with the new laptop. The next day, I got emails from every other lodge in the district asking how they could help. Many were interested in helping to replace the special wheelchair that was stolen. When I told Deb, she said those chairs cost over thirty-five thousand dollars each. That's more than the cost of every car I've ever bought.

The lodges received a couple of very touching thank you letters. I won't repeat Deb's entire letter, just share some of the highlights:

- "I don't usually eat that much but I wanted to keep food in my mouth because I was too afraid to talk." – Aida

- Aida was quite nervous about being among a group of adults she didn't know and yet she mustered the courage to attend the meeting because she felt it was important to ask for help in person.

- "I bet they will never forget the look of shock on my face when they gave me the Laptop"

- She was indeed shocked. The next day in school her teacher emailed me to say that she had to take time at the start of the class to let Aida tell her fellow students about the experience because she was so excited.

- "My grandmother is never going to believe this" – Aida

Aida has learned more than one lesson from her experiences the past few weeks. Some have been in the school of hard knocks and others have been about the generosity and caring of the people in her community. It has been a rich experience for both of us.

Kindest regards

Deb W.

Physical Therapist, Lowell Public schools

Here is Aida's letter in its entirety:

Dear Masons,

I am glad there are nice people in the world. I am glad that you were able to help me and the world isn't such a hard place. It was a nice surprise and I hope that I can live up to everyone's expectations with this. I promise to use the laptop wisely. It was interesting to learn something about the Masons. I hadn't heard of you before this. I hope you can help

many more people.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Aida



I am so proud to be a part of this organization. You guys rock. I would like to thank **Rick Watson, Kevin Waterhouse, Bill Rawnsley, Gail Reed, Mike Taylor** and **Jim Burke** for our latest fundraising effort. They helped sell bottled water at the Lowell Winterfest. A special thanks to Bro. **Steve Genakas**, he sold things, cleaned up and generally helped in a full on way. The money went to Ancient York's new scholarship fund. Well, most of it did, some went to buying some gym equipment for the special needs class at the Robinson School of Lowell. I made a fortuitous discovery. I had a couple of bucks left over, so I bought the kids one of those blow-up balls. It looks like a basketball, but has a soft cloth covering over the plastic. We found that children with tactile issues can handle this ball; also children that have limited hand strength can grip the ball. Deb is going to recommend this ball to the other therapists in the area.

Don't forget to invite me to your next event. Maybe I can pretend to be the Senior Warden at your table lodge. I had that opportunity on President's Day at Wamesit Lodge SW **Bob Hinckley** was having issues with his new meds and needed to sit down. Thank you **Jay Cheney** and RW **Dana McAllister** for allowing me to sit in as Senior Warden. I like being loud, I can make myself be heard. Table Lodges are fun.

Support your local business. Come to a Shrine event. Donate to a LOCAL charity. Come out to a blue lodge meeting. Kiss your family for no apparent reason. Send me a bottle of scotch, Ralph Reed c/o Aleppo Shrine.

Ok, that is probably it for me this issue. My fingers are tired. Your eyes must be tired of "listening" to me chatter. Please take care of yourself, care for others if you can. Remember Charity lives on through the grave.

See ya soon,

Ralph J. Reed III

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