EAST CENTRAL HISTORIC & CULTURAL CONTEXT

Spokane Historic Preservation Office
1) East Central Historic Context Statement
2) Historic Timeline
3) Properties Associated with Different Eras
   - 1880-1899: Neighborhood initial development
   - 1900-1917: Period of greatest growth and Italian immigration
   - 1938-1960: Housing segregation and growth of a Black community
   - 1958-2020: Navigating the freeway and community empowerment
EAST CENTRAL HISTORIC PROPERTY SURVEY
BUILDINGS REMAINING PER DECADE OF CONSTRUCTION

NUMBER OF BUILDINGS REMAINING

DECADE OF CONSTRUCTION

1880-1889: 2
1890-1899: 17
1900-1909: 122
1910-1919: 36
1920-1929: 74
1930-1939: 96
1940-1949: 74
1950-1959: 46
1960-1969: 11
1970-1979: 48
1980-1989: 54
1990-1999: 43
2000-2009: 48
2010-2019: 30
2020-2029: 2
**Washington State 1924 General Election**

Results by County for Initiative No. 49 (Klan School Bill)

"An Act compelling children between seven (7) and sixteen (16) years of age to attend the public schools, and prescribing penalties."

Initiative No. 49 was a ballot measure to ban attendance to private elementary and secondary schools in Washington State. The measure was hotly debated with prominent supporters on both sides; however, most newspapers published editorials advocating against Initiative No. 49.

Spokane Attorney Adolph Hunter explained the intent of the initiative succinctly: "the Klan is trying to get hold of the schools. And they are trying to convey the impression that no Roman Catholic is as good a citizen as those who are of another faith, and that no foreign born American can be as good a citizen as one who is native born."

**Statewide Totals**

For Initiative No. 49: 106,922 (42.8%)
Against Initiative No. 49: 221,500 (57.2%)

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ITALIANS PLAN ANNUAL PICNIC

Plans for the annual picnic of the Marconi Colombo society, the Italian people's organization, will be worked out at the next meeting of the society, May 28, at Forrester's hall.

Date and place of the affair have not been decided upon, according to Fred Cello, secretary. Mike Sacco is president.
SPOKANE PASTOR KU KLUX HEAD
5. Clarifying Remarks

Zoned single family residential with multi-family zoning along Pacific Avenue and provision for so many business centers, principally along Fifth Avenue. Lot values $5 to $7 per front foot. This area is on the verge of being 4th grade and is assigned a very "low yellow" grade. Both
Long hours of volunteer effort by Clarence T. Freeman brought improvements to Liberty Park. Mrs. Freeman, Freeman and their daughter Sandra stroll in landscaped section of the park. Presidency of the Liberty Park Improvement Group is only one of Freeman’s civic efforts; Mrs. Freeman also is an active community worker.

How do I get in on the action?

"First, you are invited to the Neighborhood Congress Saturday, Sept. 22 at our beautiful new East Central Community Center, 5th and Stone. You’ll meet a lot of your neighbors in Spokane and guests from other cities who got started just like you—because they cared enough to get involved. The most important thing is to attend your neighborhood meeting, because that’s where the nitty-gritty action starts. It takes a lot of work and you’ve gotta be persistent, but it can really make a difference—look at our Community Center!"

LEE WADE
Chairperson, East Central Neighborhood
2307 East Fifth Avenue

Leonard and Odelia Funk Residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Dates:</th>
<th>Built in 1889</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Architect/Builder:</td>
<td>Unknown / Leonard Funk</td>
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<td>Property Type:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic Timeline:</td>
<td>Neighborhood Initial Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communities:</td>
<td>Union Household</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potentially Eligible?:</td>
<td>Yes, under SRHP categories A &amp; B</td>
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</table>

Leonard Funk built this house in 1889 soon after arriving in Spokane. He was born on a farm near Portage, Wisconsin in 1868. Funk began working as a carpenter’s apprentice when he was fifteen years old. He married Odelia Spengler on his twenty-first birthday in February of 1889 and the couple moved to Spokane Falls in March of that year. A month after arriving in Spokane, Funk purchased a lot in the Union Park Addition at 2307 East Fifth Avenue where he constructed a small house for himself and his family. He resided in the house until his death in 1933.

Funk became associated with the local carpenters union in November of 1889. He was elected president of the local union chapter many times and he was representative to the central body where he also served as president for a period. In 1900, he traveled to Atlanta, Georgia to serve as a delegate of the local union at the national convention. While there, he was appointed as national representative to the building trades department of the American Federation of Labor. Funk served in that role for ten years, including a period as national vice president.

Funk was also engaged in local politics and civic leadership. In 1901, Funk ran for city council and was elected. He won four consecutive terms up until 1911 when a new form of city government was adopted. He lost his bid for election as a city commissioner under the new system and lost again in a subsequent campaign in 1913. Undeterred, Funk threw his hat in the ring in 1915 and finally gathered enough votes to resume a position in city leadership. He was reelected again in 1919, 1923, 1928, and 1933. In 1929, the other commissioners elected him as mayor and he was serving in that role at the time of his death in 1933. He was a respected and well-liked politician who was described by his peers as a “man of the people.” At the same time, he was a fierce campaigner who did not mance words, once describing his opponent as a “gelatin-soft shrimp.”

Funk served as the Commissioner of Public Works for most of his time on the commission. In that role, he led Spokane in one of its greatest bridge building campaigns. He was adamant about modernizing Spokane’s network of bridges and his name remains emblazoned on the side of many of Spokane’s extant historic bridges including Monroe Street Bridge, the Mann Bridge, Greene Street Bridge, Mission Avenue Bridge, Post Street Bridge, Eleventh Avenue Bridge, and Freewill Street Bridge.

Leonard and Odelia had seven children and 10 grandchildren, some of whom became engaged in politics themselves.

1 “Leonard Funk Wrote History of His Life,” Spokane Chronicle, 2/4/1933
1902 East Fourth Avenue
Marian & Roger Frucci Sr. Residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Dates:</th>
<th>Built in 1921. Frucci lived here from 1946-1956</th>
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<tr>
<td>Architect-Builder:</td>
<td>Unknown / Unknown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property Type:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic Timeline:</td>
<td>Period of greatest growth and Italian immigration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communities:</td>
<td>Italian Spokanes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potentially Eligible?</td>
<td>Yes, under SRHP category A, B, and E</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Roger Frucci, Sr. was born in October of 1912 and he grew up in the East Central Neighborhood on the 3000 block of East Fifth Avenue. Roger’s father, Paolo, immigrated to the United States in 1902 from Filadelfia, Italy in the southern part of the country. Paolo had a third grade education and when he was fifty-seven years old he worked as a laborer in an asphalt manufacturing plant in Spokane. At the time the census was taken in April of 1940, he had been unemployed for three weeks and he was looking for a new job.

Roger Sr. went to elementary school at Sheridan Elementary (now Frances L.N. Scott Elementary) on East Fifth Avenue. He attended Lewis & Clark High School where he played football, drum major, and was a member of the science club. He graduated in 1931 and began attending school at the Kinman Business College in Spokane. He was proficient in math and he won a skills completion at the college. The prize for winning was an internship at one of the city’s largest law firms. Frucci made repeated attempts to arrange a start date for his internship, but he kept getting ignored or was otherwise given the run around. Eventually, Roger was able to get a conversation with one of the firm’s managing partners who told him “our clients just wouldn’t understand if we had an Italian working here.”

Roger was unable to claim his prize due to anti-Italian sentiment that was strong in the United States from 1920-1940. 1

Roger Sr. joined the Army Air Corps in the mid-1940s and spent four years in the service before returning Spokane. In 1938, he put his math skills to work opening an accounting firm known as Frucci & Associates. World War II made Roger put his upset business on hold. In October of 1942, less than a year after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, Roger enlisted in the United States Army for the duration of the war. He served for four years in the Army Finance Department mostly working on contract management for the Army. 2

Roger returned home in 1945. He got married in April of 1945 and announced that he would reopen his accounting firm in March of 1946. Over the subsequent decades, Frucci and his wife grew Frucci & Associates to be one of the largest accounting firms in the Inland Northwest. One of their primary sources of business were accounts with doctors’ offices.

Roger’s wife, Marian (Sacco) Frucci was an Italian

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1902 East Fifth Avenue
Scarpelli Residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Dates:</th>
<th>Built in 1902. Scarpelli lived here 1920s-1960s</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Architect/Builder:</td>
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<td>Property Type:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic Timeline:</td>
<td>Period of greatest growth and Italian immigration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communities:</td>
<td>Italian Spokaneites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potentially Eligible?</td>
<td>Yes: under SRHP category A and E</td>
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</table>

The Giuseppe Scarpelli House was constructed in 1902 and the multi-generational Scarpelli family moved into the house in the 1920s. Giuseppe (Joe) Edualdo Scarpelli was born in Rovito, Italy in 1888. In May of 1903, at age 16, he immigrated to the United States with his brother, Francesco. By 1910, he was working with his uncle and brothers at the Scarpelli Macaroni Factory. He submitted a Declaration of Intent to become a United States citizen in 1912. As his occupation he listed that he was the manager of a macaroni plant. In 1916 he married another Italian immigrant, Adelhe Ambrosio, with whom he had three children: Anthony, Minot, and Louise.

In 1916 a fire destroyed Scarpelli’s macaroni factory forcing them to purchase a new building on East Sprague Avenue (Ripoli-Scarpelli Building SRHP 2019). When the Scarpelli Brothers Macaroni Factory at East Sprague Avenue opened in 1917, Giuseppe was chosen to serve as president of the factory, a role he maintained until the business closed in 1945. The Scarpelli Brothers Macaroni Factory was founded and operated by Giuseppe’s uncle, Antonio Scarpelli, and his three brothers: Pasquale, Francesco, and Felicardo Scarpelli. The Scarpellis imported macaroni-making factory equipment from Italy and jobs in their factory were the catalyst for many Italian immigrants to come to Spokane. The factory was in operation in east Spokane for 36 years from 1909 to 1945.

Recent Italian immigrants in the early 1900s often lived in multi-generational households when they arrived in the United States. In 1920, there were seventeen Scarpellis, including Giuseppe and Adelhe, living at the same address on Freya. In 1930, Giuseppe, Adelhe and their kids lived at 1902 East Fifth Avenue, along with one of Giuseppe’s brothers and his mother. Giuseppe’s

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8 Ripoli-Scarpelli Building Spokane Historic Register Nomination, Spokane Historic Preservation Office, historicspokane.org.
2702 East Fourth Avenue
Tommy and Lula Mae Montgomery House

Significant Dates: Built 1923, Montgomerys lived here 1940s-2000s
Architect/Builder: Unknown / Unknown
Property Type: House
Historic Timeline: Housing segregation and growth of a Black community
Communities: Black Spokanes, Veterans
Potentially Eligible? Yes, under SRHP category E

Tommy and Lula Mae Montgomery purchased the house at 2702 East Fourth Avenue in 1968 after living in Spokane for over two decades. Lula Brundage was born in Shreveport, Louisiana on March 14, 1920. She married Tommy Montgomery in 1937 and the couple moved to Spokane in 1944. Lula Mae worked as a cook. She was a founding board member of the League of Women for Community Action. She was a foster mother to multiple children, and she was a member of the Bethel A.M.E. Church and the Eastern Star Masons.22

Tommy was born in Tennessee in 1916 and he worked in the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. He enlisted in the United States Army in 1943 and served as a Private First Class. The couple were likely stationed in Spokane, prompting their move here in 1944. At the time of his discharge from the service in 1946, he had been awarded the American Theater Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal, and World War II Victory Medal. After the war, Tommy first worked as a fireman at Fairchild Air Force Base and later as a janitor in various buildings. Tommy was also active in his community, advocating for community development funds to be used to pave streets in the project area. He pointed to the health complications that can come from living on a frequently traveled dirt road. He was successful on 4th Avenue (may be add the year that it was finally paved?). But many streets in the area remain unpaved today.23

The couple lived at the Victory Heights Public War Housing complex formerly located south of the interchange of Highway 195 and Interstate 90. The couple lived there until the housing project was closed in the early 1950s. By 1954, the Montgomerys had moved to 1801 E 4th Avenue, which is also in the project area but has been demolished. They were among the 500+ Black Spokanes.

24 1960 Polk Directory, page 412 (574); 1950 Polk Directory, 364 (721)
3017-3019 East Fifth Avenue

Larry’s Afro Barber Shop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Dates:</th>
<th>Built in 1953 (3017), and added 3019 onto the east in mid-1980s</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Unknown / Elmer Vogel</td>
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<td>Property Type:</td>
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<td>Historic Timeline:</td>
<td>Housing segregation and growth of a Black community</td>
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<td>Communities:</td>
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<td>Potentially Eligible?</td>
<td>Yes: under SRHP category E</td>
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Elmer Vogel constructed a barber shop for his own barbersing business at 3017 East Fifth Avenue in 1953. In Vogel’s October 1940 WWII draft registration card, he notes an address of 3022 E. 5th. The 1940 Census lists Elmer and his wife Hazel with their three young children residing in what appears to be a one story commercial building with “living room” according to a 1933 newspaper ad across the street from 3017. One year after building the shop at 3017, he expanded the building to add a second store front.

In the early 1970s, Larry Roseman began apprenticing with Vogel. He worked with him for years before purchasing the barber shop and taking it over in 1978. Larry was born in Memphis, Tennessee and he hailed in Spokane after spending time in the United States Air Force, a typical path for many Black Spokanites who came to city in the mid-century. Larry attended barbering school at Molera Barber College, but he had been cutting hair as a side business since he was a child.

For much of its existence, Larry’s Afro Barber Shop has been the only barber shop in Spokane owned by a Black man. It was, and still is, a gathering place for Spokane’s Black community. It is a place to connect, a place to gossip, and a place to laugh. The barber shop and Larry have an even deeper importance to many, including former Spokesman-Review reporter Issam Jordan who wrote a profile on Larry in 1996. According to Jordan, “for many young Black men, Larry is like an uncle or even a second father. For those like myself, who grew up without dads, Larry might be their first male role model.”

Rainbow Gallery specializes in ethnic art

The Rainbow Gallery, 3019 Fifth, is Spokane’s only gallery devoted exclusively to ethnic art. Rainbow Gallery has been at its present location since March after opening at a downtown location last fall.

Manager Jeri Williamson said not all the artwork is by ethnic artists, but all are of ethnic subjects. She said the gallery has given local ethnic artists a chance to have their pictures displayed where the public can see them.

A cut above
The building at 500 South Stone Street was originally constructed as the Union Park School in 1903. It was first built as a ten-brick school house. The name of the school changed to Edison School within a handful of years of opening. Named after the famous inventor Thomas Edison, the school grew to be one of the largest in Spokane School District by the first decade of the 1900s. The school was expanded in 1903-04 and continued to grow until the school was reduced from K-8 to K-6 in 1919. The school attendance shrank from over 800 students down to the 200s and by the 1940s, discussions about closing the school had begun. Through the mid-century period, the school had a significant Black student population and was socioeconomically disadvantaged. Black civil rights attorneys Carl Moxey called the school one of the poorest in Washington State in 1969.

After decades of debate about the future of the school, a failed levy by Spokane voters in 1972 was the death knell for Edison School. It, along with eight other elementary schools in the district, were closed in the wake of the levy failure. It is easy to imagine why Edison school was selected for closure versus other schools in the district (it would be interesting to map the locations of all the closed schools from that year).

After the school closed, the district leased the building to the city for a youth centre, foreshadowing the site’s future long-term use. After years of advocacy from the community, especially the League of Women for Community Action, in 1977 Edison School was demolished except for a mid-century addition that was retained. With funding from community development grants and other sources, its place as the East Central Community Centre was constructed with the mission to provide day care services, youth activities, education, and other community services that the League had provided in their previous locations.

The centre had a soft opening in June of 1979 and was fully completed by early 1980. In 1980 the city offered to lease the center on South Stone Street to the League on favorable terms of $1.00 rent per year.

Providing a resource for day care was crucial to Spokane’s working class. Much as the situation is today, it was impossible for parents (especially single parents) of children under 5 to go to work during the day and earn a paycheck to provide for their family if they did not have access to affordable childcare. Additionally, the Southeast Community Day Care Center endeavored to provide services to children including medical, dental, and education. The center also employed social workers who could connect with parents and to meet their individual needs as well.

A day care and community center continues to operate in the building the League constructed. And importantly, the League and their center inspired other neighborhoods to pursue community and day care centers throughout Spokane. The Spokane Review remarked that East Central’s “determined hard-working residents could be considered inspiring paragons for those in other parts of the city.” In 1980, West Central followed suit, and in 1982, Northeast Spokane opened a center too.

In addition to day care, the center provided a space in the neighborhood for important community meetings. The NAACP met there regularly. The meetings hosted at the center included: community workshops, lectures on Black history in Spokane, programming for Black teens, lectures that honored Black civil rights attorneys Carl Moxey, the NAACP 75th birthday celebration, and general membership meetings. The location would have been especially convenient for the NAACP members who lived in the projects area, including John K. Corpette (2101 East Harrison) who held a leadership position with the group serving as a committee chairman.

Community programming at the community center has been consistent from the programs of the present. There are over 6000 articles in the Spokane newspaper that have the phrase “East Central Community Center” between 1976 and the present. The vast majority of advertisements for community events. This illustrates how much programming and how often events were held and advertised at the center. The grand opening of the center was held on September of 1979, but the NAACP had already been meeting there for months since the soft opening. In November 1979 the center screened a film called “A Brief History of Black Americans in Spokane County.” In the 1980s, the Citizens for Fair Futures Rates met at the center. In 1989, Governor Gary Locke visited the center in an effort to boost reading proficiency amongst East Central youth. In the 2000s, the center hosted breathing restoration classes and a free youth baseball clinic. And the legacy as a community meeting space continues today with the Kiwanis Club hosting a pancake breakfast at the center in 2022. In 2020, there was some debate over the name of the center as a new operator was selected to run it. City Council voted to allow the name change to the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center after a recommendation against renaming from the Parks Commission. Then, in 2023 there was significant debate about the usage of a police substation on the site. Despite the occasional controversy and turnover in operators, the mission remains the same to serve the East Central Community. Today the community center sits on a campus with many additional community centered buildings including CHAS’s Dental Clinic, the Martin Luther King Jr. Center, the East Central Senior Center, and others.
2702 East Fifth Avenue
Prince Hall Masonic Temple

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<th>Significant Dates:</th>
<th>Built circa 1920. Masons moved in 1958</th>
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<td>Potentially Eligible:</td>
<td>Yes, under SRPB category E</td>
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The 2702 East Fifth Avenue property was originally constructed as a small drugstore sometime between 1902 and 1910. Likely in 1909, it was operating as the Union Park Pharmacy and from 1911-1916 the property was run by H.E. White. White abandoned the store in 1916 and went to Alaska without reading to the businesses at all before he departed. Over the next few decades, it would be known as Clark's Union Park Pharmacy (1917-1919), Pyleton Grocery (1919-1926), Wynn's Grocery/Confederate (1926-1933), and Hank's Store Grocery (1941-1952). The building sold in 1953 and the new owners sought to change the use from grocery to a church. In December of 1953, the East Side Gospel Center requested permission from the City Planning Commission to use the former grocery as a place of worship. They argued the property was not used for its commercial assembly nature. The Planning Commission granted the special permission because the property was not fit for assembly use. The new owner moved into the building in 1956, and a new parish named East Side House of Prayer took over the building but it appears they stayed for less than two years in the building. In February of 1958, the Pocetah Aid (sic) Mason Lodge No. 40 (a Black Masonic group) applied to Spokane Planning Commission to use the building as a fraternal lodge, a relatively similar assembly use to its previous use as a church. Despite that, the Planning Commission denied the request for the change of use.

The Masonic Lodge cited the surrounding residential uses and the abandonment of the former business district area along this portion of Fifth Avenue as the reasons for the denial. The Masons appealed the decision and an appeal was heard before the city council. Opponents of the lodge claimed the proposed use would cause parking problems and that the site was not fit for assembly use. H. L. Campbell (who did not live in the district himself but claimed to own property) said that his and another neighbor's opposition was "not a racial issue at all," he continued "we like you and hope you like us." Another opponent, George Olson (a resident of the area) said that the matter was not one of race and color, but rather that "it is not a fitting meeting place... Some people were skeptical of the opponent's motives.

The building was more as a secular fraternal lodge, it was a community gathering space. The NAACP hosted events in the building. Carl Money and other prominent Black speakers gave lectures in the building, and the Coalition of 100 Black Women hosted fundas in the building. The entrance was an accessible and open space.

In a 1993 interview with the newspaper, the president of the Masonic Lodge explained that membership was dwindling much like other fraternal organizations, although he said it was exacerbated by a relatively small youth population in Spokane. The Masons sold the building in 2005, possibly as a result of the financial crisis occurring all over the country. They only got $25,000 for the building. It has since sold twice in 2012 and 2019 for $125,000 and $232,000 respectively. Although the Masons have departed the building, the community from the 1972 renovation remains on the northeast corner and is associated with the name of former Mayor James Chase from his time as Grandmaster of the Lodge. In the Spokane Review endorsement of James Chase for Mayor in 1958, Chase was named the perfect lodge member. The Lodge is named for the Perfect Masons Lodge, recently opened.

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875x133 to 958x500

Laid by
M.W.P.H. GRAND LODGE
A.F. & A.M.
APRIL 9, 1972

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THANK YOU