

Greetings Brothers.

As of this writing, ClampYear 6018 is coming to a close, and we find ourselves less than 6 months from the 6019 convening of the Grand Council of E. Clampus Vitus and just 1 year shy of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Corporation in California in 1915. With that in mind, I would like to present, from Directors Meeting minutes, and in the words of Carl Wheat "His Benign Austerity, Sublime Clampadre of All Clamperdom" the origins of Grand Council.

In 1954, Wheat was elevated to Sublime Noble Grand Humbug of the Grand Council of Clampatriarchs. However, GC did not exist, until, by the creation of Wheat, and vote of the Board Of Proctors, it was established at that meeting.

The following is from the May 1954 ECV Directors meeting minutes:

"On motion duly made and carried, the following decree was presented and read and ordered engrossed in the minutes, to wit:

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

By virtue of the authority vested in this Board under the law and the prophets,

IT IS HEREBY DECREED that there shall be and there is by these presents, created and erected, within the framework of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E. Clampus Vitus, none other than a Grand Council of Venerable Clampatriarchs to consist of all current and past Noble Grand Humbugs of each registered and accepted Chapter of the Revived and Resuscitated Order; and

IT IS FURTHER DECREED that the Clamper currently holding the position of President of the Corporation of E. Clampus Vitus shall be EX OFFICIO Chairman of said Council, and, as such, shall be known and accosted by all Clampers under the name, style and title of His Benign Austerity, which style and title shall adhere unto his person in perpetuity."

The following year Wheat presented a statement to the Board concerning the organization of E. Clampus Vitus and also his resignation as President. He was then named chairman of the By-Laws committee to study the ECV By-Laws and make recommended changes. The amended By-Laws with sections added establishing the Grand Council were approved by the Board in 1957.

Grand Council of Venerable Clampatriarchs
Convened at Murphy's Camp August 20, 1955

Excerpts from the Opening Statement of Carl Ignatius Wheat (in CAPS)

Wheat defined Grand Council membership as

"ALL ACTING AND PAST NOBLE GRAND HUMBUGS OF RECOGNISED AND ACCEPTED CHAPTERS OF OUR ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER" and

"SINCE THIS GRAND COUNCIL IS FUNDAMENTALLY AN ADVISORY BODY, IT'S FUNCTION IS PRIMARILY TO SUPPLEMENT WITH IT'S COMBINED WISDOM THE ACTIONS OF THE CORPORATE OFFICIALS (the Board of Proctors), TO THE END THAT THE COMBINED HORSE-SENSE OF ALL WHO ARE EXPERIENCED IN THE WAYS OF CLAMPERDOM MAY BE BROUGHT TO BEAR UPON IT'S ADMINISTRATION."

Wheat then goes on to list certain fundamental ideals

1-" THE CHIEF FUNCTION OF THE CORPORATION OF E CLAMPUS VITUS IS TO PRESERVE INVIOLEATE AND UNSULLIED THE NAME AND STYLE OF THE ORDER, PROTECTING IT FROM ALL AND SUNDRY UNAUTHORIZED, UNSUITABLE, INAPPROPRIATE, UNBECOMING, OR UNPRIVILEGED USE, WHETHER BY NON-CLAMPERS OR BY ILL-ADVISED OR IMPRUDENT BRETHERN. THE CORPORATION IS THE LEGAL HOLDER OF THE NAME E CLAMPUS VITUS AND MAY LAWFULLY PREVENT ANY UNAUTHORIZED USE OF THESE WORDS."

2- "SECONDARILY, THE CORPORATION HAS AN IMPORTANT FUNCTION TO PROTECT THE ORDER FROM IMPOLITE ACTION BY ANYONE, INCLUDING ANY SETS THAT MAY BE DEEMED INCONSISTANT WITH THE HIGH NAME AND FAME OF E CLAMPUS VITUS. THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CORPORATION IS A REPRESENTATIVE GROUP, SELCTED BECAUSE OF IT'S MEMBERS INDIVIDUAL LEARNING AND CLAMP-SENSE, AS WELL AS BECAUSE OF THEIR JOINT AND SEVERAL EXPERIENCES IN THE ORDER, AND WITH THE AID OF THIS GRAND COUNCIL, THE CLAMPROCTORS SHOULD BE ABLE TO SUSTAIN THE ORDER SECURELY AND PRESERVE IT INTACT AND UNSULLIED FOR CLAMPOSTERITY. TO THIS END, THE CORPORATION SHOULD AT ALL TIMES AFFORD TO THE INDIVIDUAL CHAPTERS SUCH SUGGESTIONS AND ADVICE AS TO IT MAY SEEM MEET IN ALL THE PROMISES. "

3- "EACH CHAPTER IS THEREFORE AN INDEPENDANT ENTITY, FULLY ENTITLED TO SELECT IT'S OWN COURSE AND TO GO IT'S OWN SWEET WAY - PROVIDED ALWAYS, THAT IT MUST NEVER DRAW THE NAME OF E CLAMPUS VITUS INTO THE LEAST DISREPUTE OR DISHONOR. TO THIS END, THE LIBERTIES ACCORDED TO THOSE WHO ARE ENTRUSTED WITH IT'S GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SEVERAL CHAPTERS, ARE TO BE DEEMED CIRCUMSCRIBED BY THE ENCOMPASSING AND OVERALL WISDOM OF THE ENTIRE BODY OF THE BRETHERN, AS REPRESENTED BY THE MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL AND BY THE CLAMPROCTORS OF THE CORPORATION."

4-"A FURTHER AND HIGHLY IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF THE CORPORATION IS THE INTEGRATION OF CLAMPER CEREMONIALS AND THE PREVENTION OF ALL CLAMPSPURIOUS ACTIONS OR COUNTERFEIT OR ILLEGITIMATE OBSERVANCES. THE RITES AND RITUALS OF THE ORDER MUST BE KEPT PRISTINE AND UNSULLIED BY HATEFUL HETERODOXY. THE CLAMPROCTORS, THEREFORE, SHOULD ESTABLISH AND PRESERVE THE FORMS AND CONFIGURATIONS OF OUR SUBLIME RITUAL, AND OF SUCH PERSONAL AND CAPITULAR EVIDENCES OF CLAMPEROSITY AS MAY BE DEEMED APPROPRIATE, INCLUDING SUCH CHARTERS AND CERTIFICATES AS THE GRAND LODGE MAY BE MOVED TO BESTOW."

5- "THESE FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTRAL BODY, OR GRAND LODGE OF E CLAMPUS VITUS, ARE VITAL AND NECESSARY TO THE GOOD OF THE ORDER AND TO IT'S CONTINUED HEALTH AND VITALITY. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE INDEPENDENCE, UNDER CLAMPER LAW, OF THE INDIVIDUAL CHAPTERS IS TO BE CHERISHED AND AT ALL TIMES SUPPORTED."

Wheat goes on to address the printing of proclamations, operating cost of the Corporation, and establishing by resolution a method by which the operations of the Grand Lodge may be appropriately funded. He then suggested a "central roster" to notify Chapters of impending functions and vital information, which has evolved into today's data base of Chapters and Grand Council members.

Wheat proved to be very insightful in 1955. Since then the number of ECV Chapters have more than doubled, and issues have been dealt with that have been challenging to the good of the Order. Any individual or group from within or outside the Order who doubts the legitimacy or authority of the Governing Board of Clamp Proctors, and the Grand Council of Clampatriarchs is misguided, misinformed, and just plain wrong.

As is stated in the 1915 Articles of Incorporation, and again in the recently amended document:

The stated purpose of this fraternal organization is to preserve and protect history and to perpetuate the knowledge of history, and to ever be alert to distortions that change the character, time, place, events or personages that have become the history of North America and especially of the areas that have become the territory of various recognized Chapters, Outposts, or other designated adjuncts to this Ancient and Honorable Order.

That this corporation is formed for social, charitable, and benevolent purposes, and especially:

- A. To cultivate social intercourse among its members and to assist in improving and ameliorating social conditions of its beneficiaries.
- B. The accumulation of a fund for the relief of sick and destitute persons and other charitable purposes connected and commensurate with the aims and objects of the order.
- C. To promote and promulgate the principles of fraternalism, brotherly love and kindness.

On Thursday, June 23, 1966, Carl I. Wheat, the last of that legendary triumvirate who revived E Clampus Vitus Redivivus, walked through the portals of that Final Hall of Comparative Ovations to join with his friends Leon O. Whitsell and George Ezra Dane, thus signaling the passing of an era in Clamperdom. Clamper Carl was a foremost citizen of the State of California, he was an eminent attorney and recognized legal expert on the problems of public utility regulation, and one of the West's truly magnificent historians. Leaving as his monument the superb five volume work "The Mapping of The Trans-Mississippi West." Wheat was both an author and co-author of many other authoritative works on the history of the Western United States.

On the founding of E Clampus Redivivus, we have in "Cast Iron Wheat's (a nickname used by his close friends) own words the fascinating tale of how this came about:

"It was on July 4, 1931, that Ezra and I, while driving down the long grade to the river, north of Columbia, determined after much weighty cogitation that the Ancient and Honorable Order should be revived. We had been spending a few days together in that region and every mountain, bar, and flat shrieked with the memories of long forgotten Clampers, and we then and there declared ourselves for a revival. After our return to Yerba Buena we enlisted the interest of that lusty brother Leon Obstreperous Whitsell, and shortly thereafter we three formally proclaimed the resuscitation of the Order. That the deed was appropriate is now apparent."

These were accomplished and respected men with whom every Brother should have felt an honor to have served. They respected other men, and better respected their sense of humor about their rather more than humble beginnings as pioneers of the West.

The above excerpted from Wheat's obituary in the August 1966 Clamper.

Wheat's Grand Idea - E Clampus Vitus Redivivus - still survives in the challenging times of CY 6018. The Board of Proctors and Grand Council's mission is clear: The preservation and protection of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus. There is nothing else like it. Talented and resourceful men have served, and are continuing to serve on the Board of Directors with that goal in mind.

May peace and harmony within the Order prevail in 6019.

Wishing all Brothers continued good health and fortune.

Frederick C. 'Suds' Ludemann
Sublime Noble Grand Humbug
C.Y. 6018