

THE COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master

Well Brethren, here we are into October and preparing for the autumn season. I am sure we all appreciate that September was a wonderful month of favourable weather, possibly as nice as any month this summer. Although we often do not think about how the weather affects our daily lives, I think we all realize that when the weather is pleasant, our mood and outlook on life is much more positive and thus we go about our tasks in life with enthusiasm and vigor.

September has been very busy in various activities in our jurisdiction with Lodge Anniversaries, presentations of regalia and an amalgamation in St. Thomas District.

I had the great honour to present R.W. Bro. Charles Alexander with his Grand Master's Meritorious Recognition in Temiskaming District and Bro. James Maxwell with a William Mercer Wilson designation in Hamilton 'C' District. These two brethren are dedicated Masons, who are respected and admired by those who know them. It is always exciting to see the pride these Masons display as gentlemen and honourable citizens of their communities.

Brethren, very early in October, I will be announcing three adhoc Committees, who will be mandated, to address specific issues that center around our Grand Lodge. One Committee will be for the 300th Anniversary of modern Freemasonry which commenced in Great Britain in 1717 at the famous pub - The Goose and the Gridiron. The Brethren of this Committee will brainstorm and recommend how our jurisdiction should recognize this Masonic milestone.

The next Committee will be a Strategic Planning collection of Brethren to instigate scenarios that will set forth a Strategic Plan to guide our Grand Jurisdiction, hopefully, for many years into the future. My thought is to set in motion a five year plan that will be an ongoing document which will always be looking ahead, so at the end 2016, this Grand Lodge Committee will add 5 more years, becoming the year 2021 and therefore, in this manner, we will have time to make any necessary amendments not only for the future direction but also have comprehensive ideology five years into the future.

The third Committee will be charged to develop the reorganization of the Board of General Purposes which will be reduced in numbers from 35 to 25 by 2017. This

direction is intended to have our Board as efficient as possible and reduce the numbers relative to our shrinking membership. The Board was increased many years ago when the membership was growing rapidly in the 1960s and now we are adjusting in accordance with membership numbers of today. We will be drawing on the advice and experience of Masons who have been exposed to this type of circumstance not only in Freemasonry but perhaps in their working careers and community involvement.

As an aside from this Committee, there will be a sub-committee to address the situation of possibly employing an Office Manager as recommended in the Audit and Finance Committee report last year as well as being included in the Grand Master's Address. These Brethren will be charged with providing an analysis of need at our Grand Lodge Office for future discussion.

Brethren we are now entering a busy time of the Masonic year with Official Visits and a number of Installations. In your travels, I ask you to attend as many of these events as your personal life will allow. When you visit I want you to be enthusiastic and energized by the experience of celebrating the occasion with other brethren, displaying that you are proud to be a member of this great fraternity. Freemasonry is often an experience that motivates you in the many other aspects of your life and how you provide leadership in your family, your employment, your spiritual involvement and your community commitment. We must always value the principles to practice tolerance and understanding while being charitable to those less fortunate than ourselves.

Brethren, as we are now in full swing of our Masonic year I ask that as individuals, Lodges and Districts to consider our Grand Lodge Charity "PROSTATE HOPE" for Prostate Cancer Research. You have heard me relate that Prostate Cancer, although a male oriented affliction, affects the entire family - children, parents and of course the spouse. Any consideration of generosity towards this effort, as your circumstance in life allow, will be greatly appreciated.

*HAPPY THANKSGIVING to you and your family,
John C. Green
Grand Master*

From the Deputy Grand Master

Brethren, fall has officially arrived according to the calendar but summer seems reluctant to leave.

Many of our Lodges have returned from their summer recess and, all over Ontario, Masonic calendars are filled with Regalia presentations.

Newly elected officers begin their terms with much enthusiasm and excitement while many appointed officers enjoy the rewards and recognition for all their hard work in the quarries of Masonry.

Best Seller for Sale: There are many Masonic books that a Mason can read and enjoy, written by well-known or lesser known Masonic scholars; however I want to take a moment to recommend a book that has been on the best seller list at your Grand Lodge for years.

A very informative book which is current and one could say a leading authority on many Masonic subjects. It is authored by well know Masons and in fact you are very familiar with the author - for the author is ***you!***

The name of this book is, of course, **The Book of Constitution** of the Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario and it was authored by the Masons of Ontario.

Recently ***you***, the Masons of Ontario, authored and then proposed seventeen amendments to this Book, fourteen of which you approved at the Annual Communication of your Grand Lodge.

I wonder if you are aware of some of the subject matters that were authored this year, such as:

- a new jewel which may be worn in Lodge
- a Candidate Information report and colour photo with nominations
- changes to qualifications to allow your name to stand for different position
- the number of Brethren to be elected to the Board of General Purposes this year and much, much more

I have reviewed the latest edition of this Book and find it very informative. Do you want to read more about all the changes that were approved? You can have the latest edition of this best seller, now available for the low price of \$8 from the Grand Lodge Office via your Lodge Secretary. Sadly, many have what could be called an "original or almost original" copy of this book. Now is the time to order your 2015 edition, before they are all gone.

Finally, if you want to author an amendment to this Book, Section 70 on page 30, will inform you of the details. Keeping with the theme found in September's Communiqué, I would like to highlight the work of the Grand Lodge

Benevolence Committee. Under the leadership of R.W. Bro. Paul Skazin, in the Operations & Finance Group, and as Committee Liaison, Paul reports to the Management Committee under the direction of R.W. Bro. Edward Standish.

R.W. Bro. Skazin leads a Committee of eight who work under establish guidelines and regulations which can be found in the 2015 Book of Constitution under Section 428 to 430 (page 165) where a grant of benevolence is explained; who can receive a grant of benevolence; and the Committee's duty of making recommendations from time to time to the Board of General Purposes.

The regulations covering grants of benevolence are found in Part VIII (page 193). These nineteen regulations cover the step by step process of the application.

An overview, (not a complete review), of these regulations will inform the reader that all benevolence ***must first be made through Lodge***. After being passed by resolution in open Lodge and recorded in the minutes, the application is then given to the District Chairman of Benevolence, who processes the application and then passes it on to the Grand Lodge Benevolence Committee.

Annual applications must be delivered before the first day of April prior to the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge.

From time to time, in social media, albeit the newspaper, Facebook, Twitter or other forums, we read of a Mason or family member desperately needing assistance. Can Grand Lodge do something? Yes, we can!!

In cases of pressing need, applications from Lodges, ***for interim grants for the purposes of temporary assistance***, may be authorized by the Chairman of Benevolence with approval of the Chairman of Audit and Finance and the Deputy Grand Master.

The income from the Memorial Fund, invested and on deposit, is available to the Benevolence Committee for grants of Benevolence and may be augmented by such amounts as Grand Lodge approve for transfer on occasion.

Be proud that your Grand Lodge continues to maintain Benevolence in its fullest excellence.

*Sincerely and Fraternally,
Paul E. Todd
Deputy Grand Master*

