

THE COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master ...

In parts of our Grand Jurisdiction, it is the time of Installations at the Lodge level, as well as at the Grand Jurisdiction level in July.

Elections, in most Districts, have taken place and the time has come for a new Master and Officers in the Lodge. The outgoing Master, soon to be the junior Past Master, has spent a year in charge and he knows what works well in his Lodge and what doesn't work well and he probably has ideas on how to fix what doesn't work well and so, with a little diplomacy, he can make this information known to the new Master.

At the District level, we also begin the process of ending the year of service(s) of the District Deputy Grand Masters. He has seen the good, the bad and perhaps the ugly in his District. He has written reports, summarizing the work of his District, and has tried to help Lodges needing help and praised Lodges who have done outstanding work.

As I have written about the outgoing Lodge Masters, the worst thing that can happen to our Grand Lodge is for the current District Deputy Grand Masters to disappear with all their knowledge. District Deputy Grand Masters, may I suggest that information you have obtained would be very useful to several of the Grand Lodge Committees and you will have an opportunity to speak to the Chairman in July.

Your Grand Lodge is also preparing to hold its Annual Communication soon. It is an opportunity for those Brethren, who are eligible to vote, to exercise their democratic right. However, such is not always the case. "My vote means nothing", says a Brother. My response, as a Brother who has faced many elections in Masonry, for close to twenty years, to Master of the Lodge, District Deputy Grand Master of the District, Deputy Grand Master and then Grand Master. I am well aware that all **votes DO count!**

As we do every two years, the position of Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master are up for election. Please make yourself acquainted with those Brethren who have allowed their name to stand for all the different positions. Go to the Grand Lodge Website, where these Brothers have written their bio for you to read; who they are and what they will do to make our Grand Lodge better. It is your chance to shape Masonry in Ontario at all levels.

I urge you to exercise your responsibility and vote!

Remember the words of German-American poet, Charles Bukowski: "*The difference between democracy and dictatorship is that in democracy you vote first then take orders, in a dictatorship you skip the vote*".

As the words of the Frank Sinatra song go, "*and now the end is near and so I face the final curtain*", the end of my term as Grand Master is only a month away and this is my last Communique. I would be remiss not to say a few thank you.

I will begin with my home Lodge of St. John's Lodge No. 63 in the thriving metropolis of Carleton Place where, only a few years ago, we had our first stop light. At the Lodge level, in my opinion, is where true Masonry is practised and St. John's Lodge is no exception. I thank you for your support for all my years of Masonry and, yes, I'm finally coming home.

To the Districts of Ottawa 1&2, I thank you for all those five hour car rides; District sponsored bus rides to Grand Lodge and especially in the final two elections, your outstanding support has been second to none. I have always been proud to say in general, that I am from Eastern Ontario but more specifically the Ottawa Districts.

To our Grand Lodge, I thank the several District Deputy Grand Masters for all your hard work and will always remember you made a difference.

To the staff of Grand Lodge including but not limited to the Grand Secretary, Office Manager and the Ladies of the Office, thank you for your patience and guidance.

Finally to the Masons of Ontario, I thank you for all your support, especially to Lady Gloria and I, as we travelled throughout this wonderful Grand Jurisdiction.

In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years. ~ Abraham Lincoln

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES!

***Paul E. Todd
Grand Master***

From the Deputy ...

Brethren,

This year the Youth Initiatives Committee sponsored an essay contest: "What is the most inspiring thing you've ever been told?" This seemed like a good lead-off to highlighting some SUCCESS STORIES of our Committees.

The Board's Committee structure was modified to better reflect the Strategic Plan and the Committees mandated to use the plan to guide their work.

A former student of the Freemasonry and Fraternalism course at Brock University has been accepted into their MA Program as a result of our Scholarship. She will continue to study Freemasonry and its impact.

The Public Awareness Committee has examined all facets of their mandate and made important recommendations to other teams such as the website.

The new fire doors installed at the Weston Temple saved the building, allowing it to be rebuilt into a gorgeous facility.

Automated External Defibrillators installed in many Lodges have already saved several lives.

The Lodge Finances Committee notes that, it is the lack of understanding, budgeting and financial planning as it relates to the health of a Lodge and the implementation of a program to address these issues, is the greatest challenge. They have found that the Directors of Temples are often unaware of their legal and tax obligations. This results in numerous legal, tax and liability issues. They have focused on those which indicate financial problems or responded to direct requests for assistance. They have even provided marketing and property management advice, which has enabled Temples to achieve a positive cash flow and become profitable.

The Benevolence Committee reported that income from investments exceeded payouts by approximately \$5,000 this year. While this is fiscally good, they would rather have been able to assist Brethren in need, if only the relative applications had been received.

The Strategic Planning Committee developed the Strategic Action approach to planning for our Lodges. This guides the Lodge through the process of evaluating their strengths and weaknesses, and then prioritizing action.

Facebook and LinkedIn pages for our Grand Lodge were launched, to much success.

The E-mail Distribution Team implemented two initiatives to further improve the effectiveness of our messages in reaching the brethren - consistent monthly publication deadlines for each of our Events and Resources Digests; and the addition of a Lodge Secretary Email Distribution list.

Thanks to the work of our Grand Archivist, two documents on the preservation of Masonic assets are now available: "Guidelines for the Preservation of our Masonic Heritage" and "Going Into Darkness: The Preservation of Lodge Assets."

Written presentations of all kinds were submitted to the Publishing Review team for recommendations for improvement in terms of grammar, spelling, font sizes, format and consistency. They returned them to the authors in 4.4 days on average.

Due to the new DDGM Preparation Course as well as the long-standing College of Freemasonry course, we have qualified candidates in all Districts. The College's Masonic Arts and Sciences Course had 47 new registrants and 16 new graduates.

The Leadership Development Committee has particularly targeted Wardens at that very teachable moment of their Masonic careers.

The Masonic Education Committee worked across Committee lines to seek out and supply articles for the Ontario Mason Magazine, Facebook, the website and e-mail distribution.

This is the third year of the "CoM Lodge Report" which is sent to all Lodges to encourage discussion within the Lodge and to assist in the development of long-range plans for the Lodges. For the second consecutive year, the number of Lodges receiving an overall "Healthy" rating has increased. This year 55.1% compared to 53.4% last year and 52% the previous year.

"The Worshipful Master has asked me to express the view that working towards our Cornerstone Designation has been a very worthwhile exercise for our Lodge. It has inspired us to do some new things, but more importantly, it has forced us to reflect on and take pride in things we have already done." "Unfortunately, with our Installation in December, we missed the deadline for filing our intention. Is it still possible for us to participate? We have in previous years, and while not quite attaining certification, found it to be of great value."

Seminars and Workshops are all set up for Tuesday at the Annual Communication, and there is an addition of a guest speaker on Wednesday afternoon – Bro. Sam Friedman of New York, author of "Millennial Apprentices: The Next Revolution in Freemasonry."

I thank all the Brethren who participated in making this year a great one for Freemasonry in Ontario.

David J. Cameron
Deputy Grand Master

From the Grand Secretary ...

Brethren, please take note that included in the Lodge April mailing there is an announcement of two events to take place on Wednesday afternoon at the Annual Communication.

First, a presentation from 1:30 – 2:30 PM by Bro. Sam Friedman. Sam is a young energetic, enthusiastic Mason who has written a book titled “Millennial Apprentices: The Next Revolution In Freemasonry”. This book is meant to inspire thought provoking discussion on what this new breed of Mason desires, and what it truly means to be a Mason in the twenty-first century.

Second, from 2:30 – 3:30 PM a Town Hall session with our Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Bro. David J. Cameron.

Last year many Brethren were disappointed that there were no activities on Wednesday Afternoon. Please take advantage of the above opportunities.

Sincerely and fraternally,

***D. Garry Dowling
Grand Secretary***