

# THE COMMUNIQUE

Published by  
Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario

Issue 2

October 2021

## *From the Grand Master ...*

An allegory, with apologies to L. Frank Baum and Gregory Maguire

*Once upon a time there was a quaint village by the sea. The people who lived there were gentle and happy, and very social. They loved getting together for banquets and festivals, and always governed themselves by all gathering in the town square to debate issues. One day they were hit with an incredible storm; it rained and rained and rained. The streets began to flood. Rubber boots were in high demand down at the local Mercantile and soon sold out. They got more in but there were some people who said "It's just a little rain. That never hurt anybody." But it wasn't just a little rain. It was a lot of rain. And in addition, due to pollution in a neighbouring area, it was acid rain. If it got in your boots it started to irritate your skin causing inflammation. It was autumn and with the cooler temperatures, wet feet led to chilblains. Most people got over these conditions by themselves or with the help of the town doctor, but it was suggested it would be better to prevent problems by keeping their feet dry. This was harder than it seemed. Mothers told their children to wear their rubber boots when out, and they did, but when they were playing and running around some invariably fell, or got their boots stuck in the mud. Even the careful occasionally got wet when their playmates ran past them and water splashed up and into their boots. Spray from passing wagons soaked those walking alongside the road. The fishers and outdoors enthusiasts had hip waders which allowed them to take over the essential work needed to feed and keep the townspeople safe.*

*On the west edge of town lived a delightful woman who had a skin condition that was severely affected by water. Even a little bit of water would cause necrosis of the skin. She dealt with this by wearing long dresses and a wide-brimmed hat whenever she went out. But since the village was by the sea, it was often*

*damp, so she mostly stayed in her castle. She was actually very nice, but her appearance and isolation led to the townspeople fearing her. Her sister had a physical disability that made it difficult to stand. For short periods she could get by with special orthotic shoes, but she often used a wheelchair. Neither of these sisters ventured out during the storm, the one for obvious reasons, the other because the wheels of her chair sprayed water up onto her when they rolled. They lived on opposite sides of the town, but kept in touch by means of crystal balls in which they could see and talk to each other. Other people in town also had this technology but they didn't use it much, and certainly not with these two marginalized persons.*

*The rain continued and the flood waters rose. The Mayor decreed that everyone who did not have hip waders must stay inside. The people did the best they could, but some had water pouring into their homes. There was much distress. Eventually the flood waters receded. And the Mercantile got in another shipment of rubber boots - enough for everybody. Hooray, everyone was protected and life could go back to normal. Alas, the rain intensified and the flood waters rose again. But the rubber boots kept everyone's feet dry. That is, until the level of the flood waters rose above the tops of the boots!*

Brethren, with high levels of COVID circulating in the community even the fully vaccinated still need to mask, physically distance and limit their social contacts. We all miss meeting in lodge but one of the things that Freemasons do is work for the betterment of society. Stay safe and keep others safe too.

*David J. Cameron  
Grand Master*

## *From the Deputy ...*

My Brethren:

As I sit here at my desk this afternoon preparing for another virtual Masonic meeting – tonight with the Grand Lodge Committee Chairmen – and considering the latest Grand Lodge communication regarding our COVID-19 protocol which you will have heard by now, I get anxious and excited about what lays ahead for us when we do open our Lodge doors. I am excited that we appear to be getting closer to getting back to our Masonry which we love so much and with eighteen months of anticipation built up behind us, it will be exciting to get back to work!

One of the changes that our Lodges will see at that time will be all the work that R.W. Bro. David Armstrong and his team have been doing with the Cornerstone Program. This program has evolved into a District-administered program through the Grand Lodge Website by the Lodges in all our Districts. The facilitator of the program going forward will be R.W. Bro. Mark Kapitan – [mwk0331@hotmail.com](mailto:mwk0331@hotmail.com) – who has a wealth of experience with the program working as a member of the Membership Pillar.

The Cornerstone Program was developed to assist Lodges with their many challenges. As with any Lodge program, it works well if all members are prepared to support and promote the program as a team. The Cornerstone Program is not a stand-alone initiative, but rather a program that should be used in conjunction with other membership programs from Grand Lodge as each program is designed to build upon one another to achieve the overall success and a sustainable future for our Lodges and ultimately Freemasonry.

Lodges that become involved will commit to a two-year period – it is not a one-time event. Cornerstone designation is an award that is valid for two years and is presented on a biennial basis. A Lodge wishing to participate will need to decide what time frame they will be participating. They need to print the Cornerstone Standards Report Card required for sign-off by the District Deputy Grand Master or the District Cornerstone Chairman as tasks are completed. As is often the case, the Lodge program may be spread out over two years involving two District Deputy Grand Masters, so it is suggested that the District Cornerstone Chairman be willing to serve more than one year for program consistency in each District.

### **Cornerstone Designation Requirements:**

- Complete: 1 of 4 Mandatory standards
- Complete: 5 of 12 Major standards
- Complete: 6 of 13 Basic standards

All to be completed in a two-year timeline.

The Cornerstone program is basically a District program with the District Deputy Grand Master or the District Chairman, now responsible for reviewing the Lodges collected material for the various standards and signing off on their “Report Cards”. They are the best person to understand fully how the Lodges in your District are working and using the Grand Lodge systems. The Lodges will be eager to show their success and possibly compete amongst themselves. Each District will grow on their own, share ideas and ultimately interest in the Lodge membership will flourish. The District Deputy Grand Master will complete a Cornerstone Program recognition certificate from the Grand Lodge website upon completion of the program and set a date for a formal presentation. Many lodges start their next two-year program right away so that they can continually be a “Cornerstone Lodge”. When a District makes the decision to participate in this program, they acknowledge their desire to increase the value of the experience to their members.

Bro. Kapitan is more than willing to assist any District or Lodge with the program requirements. To this end, they have developed a Power Point Presentation on the program that can be presented virtually as well in anticipation of our return to the quarry.

If your Lodge was involved in the program prior to the pandemic but did not complete all of the required standards to earn the Cornerstone designation in the two-year qualifying period, not to worry about all of the previous work that has been completed – just print a new Report Card from the Grand Lodge web site, have the District Deputy Grand Master sign off on those standards completed the year prior to the pandemic and see if your Lodges can obtain the balance needed in the year once we get back to work.

For Lodges and Districts that have questions or require further clarification on any aspect of the new Cornerstone Program, a Cornerstone Advisory component of the Membership Pillar of Grand Lodge is available by contacting Bro. Kapitan.

All you have to do is ask and we will help you be a success!

*Thomas W. Hogeboom  
Deputy Grand Master*

## *From the Grand Secretary ...*

Brethren,

### **Extension of Masonic lockdown:**

Brethren, a reminder of the Grand Master's letter last week that the current Masonic lockdown will continue until January 01, 2022.

With the continuance of the Masonic lockdown there are several important reminders.

### **Masonic Memorial Services:**

Please remember that, regrettably, the holding of Masonic Memorial Services is still not permitted. It is specifically noted that since 1973 outdoor (graveside) Masonic services are NOT permitted in this jurisdiction.

### **Long Service Pins:**

While we are once again processing requests for long service pins we must stress that planning to present a pin to an elderly Mason at greater risk of contracting the virus is not a good idea, especially if a visit to a retirement home or long term care facility is involved.

Serious consideration should be given to postponing these presentations or of enlisting the support of family members to make the presentation on behalf of the lodge.

Fraternally, Garry

*D. Garry Dowling  
Grand Secretary*