

# THE COMMUNIQUE

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## ***From the Grand Master ...***

Here it is February and our winter is progressing in a rather unorthodox manner. We first get record amount of snow fall before the Holiday Season. Then we have more than a thaw with a very mild January that sees a great amount of our snow disappear, even on the North Shore or so an informant tells me.

Now that the large number of January Installations are completed and most of the Robbie Burns dinners are over we can look forward to the continuance of Official Visits through to May. These next months are usually filled with many opportunities to visit other Lodges and enjoy the hospitality of your fellow Masons in other locations. These occasions afford us to better know and understand fellow Masons. Those Brethren will demonstrate their abilities to perform ritual and in doing so they will display self-assurance and pride as they progress in their respective path in Freemasonry. Please consider visiting as a way to strengthen our Fraternity. Brethren, we are entering the busy season of Official Visits and of course the L Forms that go along with, what was once known as, the annual inspection. We recently held our annual Mid-Term meeting with the District Deputy Grand Masters and we were very pleased with the efficiency these Brethren are performing their duties. I personally want to thank them for the effort they are demonstrating on behalf of their respective Districts. On behalf of Grand Lodge I want to take a moment to remind you the L Forms offer a great amount of beneficial information that provide indicators of Lodge operations.

We, at Grand Lodge, sometimes hear how bold we are for requiring the information requested on the L forms and what Grand Lodge will do with this information. There are some who discuss with others we are attempting to get as much information as possible to better control the Lodges. Let me tell you that is far from the truth. The reports are gathered by a Committee who compile the information provided. That information is then returned to the Lodge with an opinion and rating. The real value of those reports are to indicate areas here

Lodges might improve. In other words the L forms should be used as a tool for Lodges to recognize areas that may require attention.

I have also heard, from time to time, another reason is so Grand Lodge can find out the financial status of Lodges in order they may find a manner to take over Lodge funds to the benefit of Grand Lodge. Brethren, I find that falsehood an irritant to Masonry in Ontario. First of all, it is far from the truth. Secondly, if you take a moment and recognize that Grand Lodge operations are handled by some of the brightest Masons we have, serving on Committees to see that finances are managed in a proper manner. You should also know when we, at Grand Lodge, produce long range financial planning very conservatively thus we have been able to delay any future dues increase for three years. This is after considering the continued loss of membership that we are experiencing in recent years. So, I ask you to look more positively upon the financial situation of Grand Lodge and understand those L form reports will benefit the Lodges a lot more than our Grand Jurisdiction.

My Brethren, as we progress into the second half of our Masonic term, I want you to thank the District Deputy Grand Master in your respective District for his effort and the efficient manner he is performing his duties. The DDGM is the official representative of the Grand Master but he also offers assistance and instruction to Lodges because of his respected position. So we have a situation where the DDGM is, in many circumstances, answering to more than one entity which can be somewhat uncomfortable. Don't challenge an individual who is serving our Grand Lodge with dedication and dignity.

Brethren, as I have said many times we are all fortunate to have Masonry in our lives. We practice in life to be better Masons and citizens and by the teachings and experiences we can be proud of our status in the community that gains respect from those around you.

Have a happy Groundhog Day.

***John C. Green  
Grand Master***

## ***From the Deputy Grand Master ...***

Brethren, as I write this month's Communique, the sun has finally come out after almost three weeks of clouds. Unfortunately, the temperature has gone below normal. We all smile with the knowledge that the sun has begun its trip north, days grow longer and soon the sun will cross the Celestial equator in March for the start of Spring.

### **Information & Communication**

Any Brother who has a two year old child or grandchild has heard the following word many times; the question which begins with the word "**Why**"? You know – "Why do I have to have a bath?" "Why do I have to go to bed now?" And of course, when told not to do something, "Why are you so mean?"

I, also, have a few questions which begin with the word "**Why**?" which never seem to get answered ...

The Grand Master and the Deputy Grand Master write a Communiqué each month. The Grand Master giving his thoughts and direction as it relates to Masonry in Ontario and the Deputy updating the Brethren on the work of the Committees and Teams of Grand Lodge. However, the lines of communication are sometimes broken when a District Deputy does not send it out to the Lodges in his District and in turn some Lodge Secretaries do not send it out to all their members.

***Why is that?***

The Condition of Masonry Team reviews all the District Deputy Grand Masters' reports regarding each Lodge. If warranted, they send a Green coloured report card to the Lodge with Congratulations on a Job Well Done but they also take the time to report Areas of Concern which, if not addressed, may later become an issue. Some Lodges takes offense! ***Why is that?***

A Lodge that receives a Yellow coloured report card indicating several major areas of concern in a Lodge. The CoM Team ***suggests*** names of Team Leaders of Grand Lodge who have the expertise to help. Some Lodges take offense. ***Why is that?***

A Lodge that receives a Red coloured report card strongly ***recommends*** the Lodge seek immediate help from Team Leaders of Grand who have the expertise to assist. Instead of seeking help, some Lodges proclaim Grand Lodge just wants to close the Lodge.

***Why is that?***

Lodges with major money issues defined in a CoM report card often will not ask for free assistance from Lodge Finance Committee which is made up of Brethren with experience and background in professional financial management. ***Why is that?***

Brethren who have a desire to write educational papers appear reluctant to share them with the Education Committee, Reflections, or the Ontario Mason Magazine. ***Why is that?***

Lodges with decreasing membership may have Brethren who have not been to a meeting in years or new members who join and then never return. These Lodges appear reluctant to use proven Grand Lodge Programs like Friend to Friend/Mentor, Brother to Brother and Mentorship or hold an Open House. ***Why is that?***

Perhaps all these "***Why***" questions sound like a Rick Mercer Rant. The facts remain, my Brethren, your Grand Lodge has some twenty eight Committees and Teams, with over two hundred Masons using Programs that have a proven record of success. ***Why*** are they not being used by some Lodges or Districts?

In closing I leave you with the following quotation from American Journalist Sydney J. Harris:

*"The two words Information and Communication are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; Communication is getting through"*

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