

# D.D.G.M. COMMUNIQUE

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## *From the Grand Master . . .*

### **Another year, another beginning...**

For those of you who rang in the New Year with some resolutions, we wish you the determination to keep them. For those of you who rang in the New Year without the need of making any resolutions, we congratulate you on your self discipline. Then there are those of us who couldn't stay up long enough to ring in the New Year – we of course are well rested and clear headed and will welcome any challenges that come our way.

From all of your Grand Lodge Officers, we wish you all the best for 2013.

### **Looking ahead...**

As we look ahead, we might ask what we see for Freemasonry in our great jurisdiction for 2013 and beyond? Our Deputy Grand Master, in his message, has spelled out the initiatives that your Grand Lodge Chairmen are undertaking this year based on our Tactical plan. These initiatives all contribute to the attainment of the goals set out in our Strategic plan and lay out the foundation for the years ahead.

Therefore, allow me to paint a vision of the future of Freemasonry in Ontario. We have spoken often about the resurgence in interest and the increase in new members over the past few years. I see this trend continuing and we must be prepared to manage it and benefit from it. Those joining today seem inspired by the core principles we espouse, just as we once were. They are looking for something they are not finding in the world around them – solid ethics, high moral standards, truth, honesty, accepting people at face value and so on. Freemasonry is capable of providing that environment and holding it up as a way of life.

In order to do that, we must continue to re-establish the vitality, the 'joi de vie' that once filled our Lodge rooms and captured our emotions. We have started to see this enthusiasm return to our Lodges and we must see it continue. Our new members want to know what keeps us coming back and we must respond to those questions by conveying that sense of 'fraternity', that fraternal spirit that lies deep within us, yet is so hard to describe in words.

Communication will continue to play a key role in our resurgence. With so much emphasis on electronic media today, it is said that we don't know how to communicate face-to-face anymore. That is exactly the beauty of the Lodge room experience – the opportunity to engage one another face-to-face – to learn about our Brethren without electronic interference; to enjoy our Freemasonry; to be among true friends. Of course, we must utilize the tools at our disposal but we must bring back the 'brother-to-brother' aspect of who we are and what we do.

Masonic Education is making a comeback. We have passed through an era where 'Masonic education' was given a bad rap – there is no denying that it had become dull and boring. It is said that, because of the internet, our new Masons know more about Freemasonry than we ever did. But all that data must be tempered by the experience and knowledge of our existing members. We have been working hard at re-establishing education as a fundamental part of the Masonic experience and if we continue to do that, we will retain these new members and re-educate ourselves in the process. The more knowledgeable we are as Masons, the better Ambassadors for the craft we will be. How can interaction between new and experienced members not fail to retain those new members and decrease dimits among long standing members.

Performance of good ritual is a cornerstone of this great fraternity. More emphasis is being placed on raising the bar once again in the performance of our rites and ceremonies, realizing how far we have let our standards slip. The infusion of new members demands that we provide them the instruction and guidance they need, such that the value they place on good work will be as significant as any other aspect of their fraternal experience. Good work translates to satisfaction and enjoyment of the Masonic journey.

Brethren, the future is bright in this Masonic jurisdiction. I believe we have turned a significant corner in our history. We are beginning to write the next chapter and in that chapter, I see Freemasonry flourishing once more. We have re-learned a lot in the last couple of decades about who we are and what we do, about our role in society today, and about the how significant a role that upholding our Masonic values can play in our lives and the lives of those we touch. We are now putting into practice what we have learned and we are seeing the results.

**Believe it – it's a great time to be a Mason in Ontario!**

### **Happy New Year:**

All the best to each and every one of you and your families for a Happy and prosperous 2013. May your Masonic experiences serve to make you better men in all you do.

M.W. Bro. D. Garry Dowling  
Grand Master

Grand Master's full itinerary at – [www.grandlodge.on.ca](http://www.grandlodge.on.ca)  
UNDER EVENTS CALENDAR

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

Welcoming the New Year can be an exciting time, filled with high anticipation and expectations for the months to come. Whether you slide into a New Year easily; or go kicking and screaming, 2013 is here and we have a responsibility to enhance Masonry to every member.

I'm sure you've heard it before: "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail!" Many Masons may feel as if they're adrift; they work hard, but they don't seem to get anywhere worthwhile. A key reason that they feel this way is they haven't spent much time thinking about what they want from Masonry, and haven't set themselves formal goals. After all, would you set out on a major journey with no real idea of your destination? Probably not! Goal setting is a powerful tool. In fact, goal setting can make the critical difference between success and failure. The process of setting goals helps us choose where we want to go. By knowing precisely what we want to achieve, we know where we have to concentrate our efforts. Planning is about preparing for the immediate, near, or distant future. Because planning is about the future, it necessarily involves some unknowns or 'what-if' situations and describes responses to maintain the intended outcomes.

R.W. Bro Steven Warren, chairman of Long Range Planning and his committee members recommended 14 goals that we should concentrate our efforts on this year. It is called the Yearly Tactical Plan. At our last Annual Communications of Grand Lodge, the brethren directed the Board to focus its attention to the 2012-2013 Tactical Plan. All committee work, mandates, roles and responsibilities are important and we are obligated to ensure we address those issues. The Yearly Tactical Plan prioritizes our work for the coming year. We have identified important projects that will be implemented during the year. We consider all to be important, therefore there is not priority established:

### **Yearly Tactical Plan 2012-2013**

1. Develop and implement leadership training for the Members of the Board of General Purposes. The members of the Board of General Purposes already have a wide range of skills from their personal and business experience. In order to ensure we have strong leadership within the Craft we need to identify a set of Key Competencies and ensure that training is available in these critical areas.
2. Develop degree specific education for new members. From our Grand Lodge survey, there is a need to educate our new members.
3. Develop College of Freemasonry Masonic Symbolism Educational material.
4. Reassess Lodges of Instruction effectiveness.

## ***From the Desk of the Grand Secretary...***

Several D.D.G.M.'S have observed irregularities in the election process at lodges and are requesting clarification from Grand Lodge.

Our Constitution; established in 1855, has been added to by our membership over these many years. It is for the benefit of all, and must be adhered to. It is not a Grand Lodge dictate.

Sections 217 to 229 B. of C. refers to the election process Nobody in essence "Runs for, or is Nominated to Office".

5. Provide Pre-Degree education for candidates – not ritual.
6. Reassess Lodge Resources programs. Do they need to be improved or modified to meet the needs of today's Masons?
7. Add Members only section to the Grand Lodge Website.
8. Provide personal profile updating capability to members only section of the Grand Lodge Website.
9. Distribution and explanation of the Grand Lodge Communication Strategy.
10. Introduce on-line access to the Ontario Mason Magazine.
11. Create jurisdiction-wide report on the Condition of Masonry.
12. Sponsor and promote Sankey Lecture on Sunday, March 24, 2013 – Brock University, and continue planning for the International Conference on the History of Freemasonry 2015, hosted by our Grand Lodge.
13. Creation of the 2013-2014 Tactical Plan.
14. Implement Key Performance Indicators for Strategic Plan. The success of Grand Lodge programs and each of the six columns of our strategic plan must be determined through quantitative and qualitative measures.

Working on a strategic initiative without the means of measurement, is not a goal. It's just a wish. A good goal has a definable endpoint that can be easily measured. Identify measures that indicate when the goal has been achieved (e.g., increase membership attendance by 10% in 2013). Depending on the goal, there might be several measures that can be used to evaluate achievement—select those that are most appropriate. Having measurable goals is important because it is easier to gauge when the goal has been reached, and it provides a yardstick to measure progress toward the goal. By being measurable, it is easy to see if you are falling behind and to make adjustment early enough to still meet the goal. Not only is it motivating to see progress toward the accomplishment of the goal, it is also important to know when to stop working on it.

### **Lodge Long Range Planning Toolkit:**

It is also important for each Lodge to have their own Long Range Plan. Each Lodge has its own strengths and weakness, the plan has to be as individual as the Lodge itself. The Long Range Planning Committee prepared a guide to assist Lodges through a five step process; Building a Vision; Establishing a Baseline; Setting Priorities; Establishing a Plan of Action; and Action Plan follow up. A copy of the full report was sent to every DDGM last October. It can also be found on our Grand Lodge Website in the Members Section/document Repository/Craft Stewardship/Long Range Planning/Files. This is an excellent document and guide for the brethren to use. I would highly recommend using it when preparing a "plan" when Lodge Building Inspections is implemented.

Donald A Campbell

Those mandatory to be elected are referred to in Section 223.

Section 224 permits a lodge by-law to add officers to election status.

Section 225 is a direct prohibition to "Cast a Single Ballot" to elect its Officers.

Properly run, the constitutional process should take 20 minutes and must not be deviated from.

Terence Shand