

THE COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master

Brethren, as the daylight grows shorter and the temperature begins to drop we know that fall is around the corner. However, I want to begin this Communique with a look back, specifically to the Grand Lodge Annual Communication in July 2017.

It was of course a special event with the Installation of a new group of District Deputy Grand Masters, a new Deputy Grand Master and the event I remember the most, of course, is the installation of a new Grand Master.

I will never forget that day. It was made even more important with family and friends, from all over Ontario, present. I am simply truly blessed and will do my best for the Masons of Ontario. Thank you, Brethren!

There was one experience those of you who were in attendance, at Grand Lodge, will always appreciate and that is **democracy** was alive and well in Ontario Masonry.

As you are no doubt aware several amendments to the Constitution were proposed and all those declared regular were passed with the exception of one. Although it was thought to be a good idea by some, such was not the case for the Brethren on the floor of Grand Lodge.

As social media may have played a part, there was much negative talk about the amendment and when it came time to vote there was an amendment proposed to change some of the wording. In the end, the amendment to the amendment failed and the vote came back to the original amendment and the original amendment was lost. What happened last July at Grand Lodge was an example of true **democracy** in our Grand Lodge.

During the last week of July, a team consisting of the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Secretary, and led by the Custodian of the Work, conducted the Regional Travelling Road Show. When finished we had delivered our message in the following areas; London, Hamilton, Huntsville and Napanee. As always, it gave our team an opportunity to meet and inform the District Deputy Grand Masters of our Grand Jurisprudence as they began their Masonic year. Unfortunately, in some Districts, there were not enough qualified candidates for the position. Four Districts did not have a new District Deputy Grand Master. Three repeated another term and one Past District Deputy opportunity" (problem) continues to grow and we, as a Grand Lodge, need to get out in front of this issue.

There are several reasons for not having sufficiently qualified aspirants for the position of District Deputy Grand Master in forty-two Districts. One of the main reasons is our Grand Lodge membership is now under forty thousand which is less than half of what it was in our highest days of membership.

As a Deputy Grand Master and now Grand Master I have spoken in several Districts across this province about a possible change in the term of the District Deputy Grand Master. Since it would appear that we no longer have enough qualified aspirants for DDGM and discourse has begun, much more discussion and reflection is needed before a decision can be made by you and Grand Lodge via an amendment to the Constitution.

Another issue being discussed is instead of having forty-two District Deputy Grand Master change each term, perhaps we would be better served to change only half the number each year. In other words, staggering the changes.

The Immediate Past Grand Master, in his farewell speech to Grand Lodge, suggested that the Past Master Course has run its course and perhaps should be changed and combined with the DDGM Orientation Course.

Last week I, along with the Deputy Grand Master as Chairman, met with a Committee of representatives from the College of Freemasonry and the DDGM Orientation Committee to discuss and begin a dialogue on a possible solution to Past Grand Master Green's recommendation. Progress is being made!

Your Grand Lodge has begun a "constructive reflection" of our Grand Lodge & Committee structure to create a more Effective & Efficient Grand Lodge which will bring the word "Change" into our Masonic Dictionary.

Read now the words of Nathaniel Branden, a writer known for his work in the psychology of self-esteem, on how to implement Change:

CHANGE

The first step toward Change is Awareness

The second step is Acceptance.

The third step is to CHANGE.

We are, my Brothers, at the Awareness step.

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

From the Deputy

“Good seasons start with good beginnings.” - Sparky Anderson

Although the calendar year starts in January, for most of us the year really starts in September. That is the season when children return to school and many of us return to our work-a-day routine and our Lodges start up again after a summer hiatus. What an opportune time to look at our members that have not been out to Lodge for a while and see what can be done to re-activate them.

Have you ever considered running a Rusty Mason program? Brethren who have been away from Lodge for a while often are reluctant to return, thinking people will quiz them on why they haven't been out, or they fear they may not know anyone, or even that they have forgotten the signs and words and will embarrass themselves! By running a Rusty Mason program you can alleviate some of these stresses.

The Rusty Mason program is only one of the suggestions for your Lodge that the Brother-to-Brother Team has. Under the capable direction of V.W. Bro. Dan Hutt, Team Leader, they will continue to update and promote aides that will help your Lodge to function better. The Five Steps to Application document lays out a suggested process to help potential candidates learn about Masonry before they apply, and to help the brethren to get to know the candidate before they have to ballot on him. It's not mandatory but if you look at it, I think you will see that it could be very useful. It's on the website under Brother to Brother.

When faced with a request for a demit, do you send a Committee out to interview the brother to see why he has asked for a demit? Or do you just say, "Oh John hasn't been to Lodge in months. Let's just grant it?" There are many reasons why a brother may stop coming out to Lodge and many of those reasons involve the embarrassment of having to explain in a large forum. If contacted by a few friends, he may admit that he has fallen on hard times and can't afford to come. Benevolence can solve that. Or maybe he lost his driving licence. A willing brother to pick him up would maintain his interest and activity. Apart from the fact that such a Committee is mandated in the Constitution (Sec. 190b) it just makes good sense to look after the members we have.

They have also developed a resource for new Masons to work through with their mentors. The first module of this is on the public area of the website so some of the questions a new initiate has can be answered for him the very night he goes home from his first Lodge meeting. Things like, who were those guys with fancy collars? How do I enter the Lodge? There is also some philosophy to entice him. He is constantly pointed back to his Lodge mentor for further information and I would recommend it to both Entered Apprentice and long-term mentor as a starting point for discussion. It is under "About Freemasonry" on the Grand Lodge website. And there is one for Fellowcraft in the members only section under "Education". The Master Mason resource is being developed this year.

September is also the start of the season when our youth sign up for their yearly activities – hockey, ballet lessons, Scouts and Guides. Do you know about the Masonic youth organizations in your area? Rainbow for Girls and Job's Daughters are groups in the Masonic family for girls and young women. DeMolay is for boys and young men. The ages for each group differ slightly but are generally from around age 10 to 21. And one no longer must be related to a Mason to join. If you are in contact with any young people, look into whether there is a group for them in your area. R.W. Bro. Les Armstrong, Chairman of Youth Initiatives, can help you with this. And consider volunteering as a leader yourself. The energy you get from working with young people is infectious.

Get active with our youth organizations. Get active with our new members. Get our lapsed members active again. Just get active!

David J. Cameron
Deputy Grand Master

