

From the Grand Master ...

Those 15 Questions: At installation, we hear during the charge to the Worshipful Master; ***“Practice outside the lodge those excellent precepts which are ever inculcated within it.”*** When I listen to those words, I think of some great Masons, men of action, whose actions speak louder than words. Each of us know a few of these men. The Mason who inspired us!

Many of us had the privilege to be elected as the Master-Elect of our Lodge. Each is asked 15 questions by the Secretary which point out the duties of a Master of a Lodge. Remember those questions? Have you ever heard anyone respond “NO” to any one of those questions? Questions, like, being a peaceful subject, obey the laws, avoid private piques and quarrels, respect true brethren. I encourage you at the next installation you attend, just don’t hear the words being spoken, but listen to them!

Background Checks on Candidates: By the summons I receive, visitors and perspective candidates are visiting lodge buildings and lodge rooms in an increasing number. Most active lodges, after several years of declining membership, are experiencing younger and better educated men joining Freemasonry.

Of concern, is the lack of proper background checks conducted on new applicants. I caution all lodges and members: Just because you received information on a potential applicant from the Grand Lodge office or from the Communications Committee, it doesn’t mean a background check had been completed by them. That is your responsibility.

Prior to the submission of a Form 6 petition, it is the responsibility of the two sponsors of the potential, but as yet unknown, applicant, to satisfy themselves that he is an upright citizen worthy of their sponsorship. Upon receipt of a petition, the single most important event in the life of a Masonic Lodge is the function performed by the ***Committee of Inquiry***. It is highly unlikely for every member of a Lodge to personally know all potential petitioners. In these days of declining membership, the Brothers who sign the petition of a prospective member may be blinded by a concern for shrinking membership in their Lodge, or simply, not have sufficient concern to

see beyond the surface of the potential initiate whose petition they are signing.

The committee must seek the truth about the depth of the character of whom they investigate. Just as importantly, they must consider the financial circumstances of the petitioner, the organizations he is already involved in, the kind of company he keeps, the reputation he has in the community, in his work place, and with the general public he comes in contact with every day. Another very important factor is the support of the candidate’s partner and/or family.

Happy Holidays: The holiday season is almost here. Children and their parents are beginning the hustle and bustle of their traditions that accompany the feeling of being together. Each of the holidays meant family and friends to me. We would be together for the enjoyment of being together. There would be parties and decorations, school vacations and home cooked meals to eat. The anticipation was always the best part. It afforded me the opportunity to look ahead and feel happy and secure with my life. Each year we thought of those less fortunate and were taught to give part of our allowance or our time to those in need. It was in observing the plight of so many that somehow I always felt empowered and lucky with just what I had. My family was never financially affluent, but I always felt the love around me made me the wealthiest of all. The greatest achievements aren’t about individual recognition or accomplishments, but of helping others. Giving does not have to break the bank, if you only have a little to give, just give a little; if all you can afford is a portion of your time then give that time. The ***Season of Giving*** can start at home, with your extended family and in your community. December, of course, is the big holiday ***Season of Giving***. Your generosity can make a difference in the lives of so many and make their future brighter.

On behalf of my family, I wish you all the pleasures of the holidays and look forward to another exciting year of Freemasonry in Ontario.

Donald A. Campbell
Grand Master

From the Deputy

Well brethren here we are gearing up for the Holiday Season. This is of course a time when family and friends gather to enjoy the festive season and cherish the opportunity to celebrate this holy time in our respective way. It is also a time to think of others less fortunate than us to support the wants and needs of those who may not be in a situation to provide the necessities of food and warmth. We as masons should be always mindful of the needs of others and practice Brotherly Love, relief and truth when informed. There is no better feeling than having someone thank you or seeing a smile on a child's face. Please be generous when the opportunity is presented.

In November I had the opportunity to attend the MASONIC EDUCATION Seminar in London. This was a very informative day addressing a variety of topics to enlighten those in attendance. The various presentations included Blood Donors, Website, Landmarks and other engaging subjects. Lt. Joe Curry also gave a great keynote address speaking of the value of companionship and Freemasonry while stationed in Afghanistan. This was a very worthwhile experience for all those who attended. I know that plans are already under discussion for a similar exercise next year. Education day occasions such as these present debate and discussion that we often don't take time to offer at our regular lodge meetings. I would certainly encourage all masons to consider visiting such an event should it happen in your geographical area of the province. My congratulations and thanks to the committee for their untiring effort organizing this significant event.

Brethren, COMMUNICATIONS is possibly the most valuable tool available to us to provide information throughout our fraternity to benefit the craft and members by giving various venues to access items of interest about Freemasonry. There are a number workshops and seminars such as Lodges of Instruction and Protocol and Etiquette sessions to name just a couple. There are a number of ways to access information such as Facilifacts and the Masonic Newsletter that are regularly written and distributed to those who are eager to discover ongoing aspects of Freemasonry that may be new to their Masonic learning. The Masonic Website is becoming more popular each day as a manner in which to acquire Masonic information as we strive to become more knowledgeable about fraternity. The first on-line Ontario Magazine will be available in December. I have reviewed the draft copy and I must say how pleased and proud I am about our first effort. I encourage all of you to take advantage of this new effort to keep masons in Ontario informed of various masonic articles, happenings and celebrations.

Brethren, communication allow us to be better informed masons so that we don't live silos in our lodges and our districts.

The magazine has two effects; first, it gives you and your lodge the opportunity to learn of celebrations and events of lodges all over Ontario, as well as share significant items about your own lodge or district. The more we know and learn about each other the stronger we will grow as fraternity.

Brethren I spoke earlier about the time of year and charity. Let me remind you that our fraternity serves charity in three distinct programs Masonichip, Blood Donors and the Grand Master's Project to support Prostate Cancer Research that is in partnership with the Masonic Foundation's 50th Anniversary.

MASONICHIP is a well-known program to protect our children should they get lost or go missing. It enables the family to have personal information transmitted to the police within minutes. We have had more than fifty thousand children through our clinics and the committee continues to be active in several communities. It is interesting to note that some lodges and districts provided funds to buy new computer stations for this program in order to have them close at hand in their respective geographical areas. Your continued support with both finances and manpower will ensure it continues well into the future.

BLOOD DONORS: We all hear advertisements during the holiday season on various media that there is a blood shortage. We as masons have been involved with Canadian Blood Services for many years and our fraternity can be proud of our roll of operating clinics and having our friends and relatives enrolled in the Partners for Life program. It is said that a" blood donation can save many lives". "There can be no greater gift than the gift of life". I invite all of you who are eligible to give blood to seriously consider donating. This is a contribution one can make that the only cost is time.

PROSTATE CANCER RESEARCH: As you are already aware this is the Grand Master's charity of choice that partners with the Masonic Foundation in celebration of their 50th Anniversary. Three research individuals have been chosen to research various aspects of this dreaded illness. It is hoped that we could collectively raise one million dollars to support research for at least ten years. I am not in a position to judge your circumstance, however, tax-deductible receipts will be issued for all donations made before the end of 2013.

Remember **GIVING IS LIVING** especially at this time of year. In the words of Winston Churchill:
"WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET, BUT WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE"
HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL

John Green
Deputy Grand Master

From the desk of the Grand Secretary



On behalf of your office staff; Gail Nickerson, Stacey Birks, Rosalyn Siegel, Kathy White and myself, we thank those having Masonic business dealings throughout the year, for your cooperation. We extend our best wishes to all for a very happy, healthy and safe holiday season.

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