

# THE COMMUNIQUE

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

The final summer weather has come and gone, the fall colours are beginning to appear along the highways of Ontario. Last night, here in the Ottawa Valley, we had our first frost warning.

Sometime today I will, as I do most days, sit down and do some Masonic reading. No, not some well-known Masonic author but documents written by Ontario Masons. I am referring to the many Lodge Summons that I receive each month from the over five hundred Lodges in our Grand Jurisdiction.

They come in various shapes and sizes and it would appear that much effort is put into most Summonses. I have a particular plan on reading each Summons. First, I give a quick glance at the front page and there I usually find pictures of the Lodge or sometimes a neat graphic.

I then move on to the Lodge Secretary portion of the Summons, there I read about the work being planned in the Quarries of the Lodge for the next month. Is it a regular meeting with no work planned or is it, as I am finding more often, a Summons with one or sometimes two Emergent Meetings to complete the Lodges work?

Next, the Master's message which reveals a lot about the vitality of the Lodge, if it is congratulatory about work performed last month and outlining the upcoming social events, one gets very positive impression of the Lodge. A message which scolds the Brethren for low Lodge attendance and other negative issues, leaves the reader with a less than positive impression of the Lodge.

I finish my reading of the Summons, by looking at the lineup of the Lodge Officers and this usually completes my evaluation of the Lodge.

If I find Bro's names in the Senior and Junior Deacon positions, along with Senior and Junior Warden, then my impression is very positive, however I acknowledge that some Lodges in an effort to allow a Brother to hold all Lodge positions will have officers with rank occupying a Lodge Chair.

From time to time I read outstanding messages in the Summons and I will send a letter or e-mail congratulation the writer and occasionally I read a comment that needs further follow up.

The Summonses of our Ontario Lodges are a great means for your Grand Master to judge the strength of our Craft in our Grand Jurisdiction.

Yes, your Lodge Summonses are read!

Social media in the form of Facebook, Tweeter etc. is a great form of communication and the Masons of Ontario truly enjoy transmitting Lodge information. However, from time to time I read writings that are not consistent with the lessons of Freemasonry.

We cannot control the forces outside our Tiled Lodge, who speak half-truths based on hearsay, little facts or sometimes gossip, but we must always remember the lessons taught inside the Lodge before we write or respond on social media.

To paraphrase one, the first lesson of Masonry we know, is that if you entertain a feeling of animosity about a Brother or what a Brother wrote, you should endeavour to settle your differences so that harmony may prevail.

M.W. Bro Donald A. Campbell, Past Grand Master, was fond of saying in his speeches that "social media is a good place to meet like-minded Masons but it is not a good place to hold a meeting". I would like to add to that comment by saying "it is not a good place to air our differences".

Brethren, we all must remember that we promised to uphold a Brother's good name and to repel others who would slander his good name. This is the first and perhaps the great lesson of Freemasonry and I implore you as a Man and as a Mason to always remember and practice this lesson.

*"Social media is reducing social barriers. It connects people on the strength of human values, not identities"*  
~ Narendra Modi

In closing, I have had a request from the 1980's Past Masters of Hamilton, who are known province wide for their beautiful Mosaic Pavement. They would like to compile a list of all the Pavements they have created, please contact Bro. Edward Green at [tedgreen@bell.net](mailto:tedgreen@bell.net) if you have such a work of art in you Lodge.

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

## ***From the Deputy ...***

Brethren,

Our Strategic Plan holds a vision of where we want to go and a solid plan to get there – for both Grand Lodge and individual Lodges. Last month I reviewed the themes of our plan. This month I will start to examine the Strategic Initiatives and Goals. This year we have aligned the Committees of the Board of General Purposes with the pillars of the Strategic Plan. Your Board members have outlined how they will work toward these goals.

The Craft Stewardship Committee is headed up by R.W. Bro. Iain Wates. Under his purview are three Committees: Masonic Education, Leadership Development and DDGM Preparation. Iain has already highlighted the work of the DDGM Preparation Committee in the Craft Stewardship News last month. They run an excellent program that now qualifies a Brother to run for the offices of District Deputy Grand Master and Grand Registrar.

But that is not the only path to obtaining a qualifying certificate. For those who cannot get to one of the eleven sessions, we have retained the Past Masters Course of the College of Freemasonry as a way to qualify and those who have been pro-active and taken the course, with a view of running in the future, are still eligible. Of course, we think both are valuable and encourage candidates to do both. The better prepared you are, the more comfortable you will feel.

These two programs help achieve our Strategic Goal 2: “Cultivate and utilize mature Masonic leadership throughout the jurisdiction for the betterment of the Craft as a whole.”

The Leadership Development Committee works under that mandate, as well as Strategic Goal 4. “Enable succession planning by identifying the skills and talent required for positions of Grand Lodge leadership by attracting qualified Brethren.” They have gathered more excellent material from the business world and academia, as well as from our and other Grand Lodges, and are working on creating a comprehensive resource for presentation and also is a resource for Lodges and Districts. They would be happy to give you a presentation on a number of topics, such as Emotional Intelligence or Conflict Resolution. Just ask.

The Committee on Masonic Education focuses on Strategic Goals 1 and 3: “Achieve high quality in the delivery, comprehension and insight of the lessons communicated on the floor of the Lodge.” and “Create high quality educational programs and training courses for all Brethren in the jurisdiction.” They are made up of a number of teams that focus on different areas.

The Book Sales Team not only arranges for the Book Table at the Annual Communication but travels with the DDGM Preparation Committee with books the participants may want. The Grand Lodge Office also stocks some of the major titles.

There is a group of Brethren tasked with collecting education pieces for the use of our various publications. Although the Ontario Mason Magazine, the Grand Lodge Website and Facebook are supervised by another pillar, these Brethren who are keen visitors with an interest in education, keep their eyes open for good educational pieces given in Lodge, or in District or Lodge newsletters. But please don't wait for a visit. If you have something worthy, send it in now.

The College of Freemasonry has more courses than just that for potential DDGMs. They have one for aspiring Worshipful Masters (not obligatory, but well worth doing), District Secretaries (ditto) and the full blown Masonic Arts and Sciences course that leads to the designation of Fellow of the College of Freemasonry. Or you can just take the modules that interest you. They even have a new one on Esoteric Masonry. See the Grand Lodge Website for how to sign up.

The Masonic Education Committee as a whole is more than its teams. It looks at the bigger picture of education in our Districts and is considering a series of education conferences across the province. And of course, it would be more than happy to send a speaker to your Lodge if you wish. Just ask.

That is the Craft Stewardship Pillar, working hard on their Strategic Initiative: We will embrace Craft Stewardship (in the Lodge Room) as a responsibility to future generations of Freemasons in Ontario as well as a critical component in the conveyance of Masonic excellence to our current membership.

***David J. Cameron***  
***Deputy Grand Master***

