

THE COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master ...

Brethren:

With the last snow and ice storm in our rear view mirrors, spring I believe has finally arrived in the Ottawa Valley.

Deputy Grand Master David J. Cameron; Grand Secretary Terence Shand and I recently attended this year's thirty sixth annual All Canada Conference of Grand and District Grand Lodges A.F. & A.M. which was held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, April 27th & 28th.

All Provincial Grand Lodges were represented at this year's Conference including the Grand Lodge of Prince Edward Island with their Grand Master, Kevin Crozier. This Grand Lodge, for monetary reasons, had stood down over the last several years however, with Prince Edward Island in attendance this Conference was truly an All Canada Conference.

Among those in the Observers Galley were Simon LaPlace, Executive of the Masonic Service Association of North America and Robert Brethour, Grand Secretary General A.A.S.R. of Canada along with PDDGM of Manitoba, Senior Wardens and Junior Warden of member Grand Lodges.

President of the Conference Andre Bovin, Grand Lodge of Quebec and his Team put together a progressive agenda which included the following reports, which were received and discussed at length by all attendees: the Conference of Grand Masters of North America; the Conference of Grand Secretaries of North America; the Commission on Information for Recognition; the XV World Conference of regular Grand Lodges in Madagascar.

The several Grand Masters gave reports on their Grand Lodge under a common theme of what works for them and what doesn't work for them. This stimulated much questions & answers after each presentation.

The Grand Master of Nova Scotia made a presentation on Widows Sons - policies which stimulated much discussion by each Grand Lodge on their policies regarding the Widows Sons.

The Grand Masters, Deputy Grand Masters and Grand Secretaries each participated in their own breakout groups with following subjects:

Grand Masters: Incorporation & Voluntary Disclosure of Grand Lodge and Lodges; Deputy Grand Masters: Discord in Lodges and influential control by senior Brethren; Grand

Secretaries: Automation of the Grand Lodge and Lodges (systems, reports and resistance). Each group, by way of a spokesman, presented their conclusions and then participated in a question and answer session. In my opinion, the breakout groups at this conference is one of the main ways to exchange information on a variety of subjects. The other way information is exchanged, is at the informal social gathering which took place each evening.

The two speakers of the Conference were Chibu Uson of the Masonic Renewal Committee of North America, who gave a very informative talk on the many initiatives and ways that his committee could help individual Grand Lodges on the subject of Membership renewal. The second speaker was Robert Conley PGM and Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Michigan who spoke on shared services, the different types of services which are developed by a Grand Lodge i.e. data bases and in this case Michigan which can be shared by other Grand Lodges, a very topical subject for our Grand Lodge and well received by all Grand Lodges.

The two-day Conference concluded with the Installation of the Officers for 2019: President Don Ford, Saskatchewan; Vice President Jim Luddington, Nova Scotia; Secretary Steve Kane, Manitoba and Treasurer Richard Brown, Saskatchewan.

Before handing over the gavel to the new President, Andrea Boivin made note of the accomplishments of the outgoing Treasurer, Terence Shand, asking him to give a history of his association with the All Canada Conference. In conclusion, Terry received a rousing applause and standing ovation. A very touching response that was well deserved and much appreciated by Terry.

The All Canada Conference of Grand and District Grand Lodge is a very informative, educational vehicle for our Grand Lodge in general and our senior Grand Lodge officers in particular.

Something to Think About: a subject, although not Masonic, but is having an effect on Masonry today in Ontario. ***Gossip*** (n) - a person and or persons who habitually reveal personal or sensational facts about others whether true or not true. Now ***Think About This:*** People will ***question*** all the ***good things*** they hear about someone but ***believe*** all the ***bad things*** they hear or read about you. Do I need to mention Social Media?

Paul E. Todd
Grand Master

From the Deputy ...

Brethren:

The Cornerstone Project is a great tool to energize your Lodge. It touches on elements of virtually every Committee of Grand Lodge. While not being the same as a proper long range strategic plan, it does get you starting to plan out activities for your Lodge for the short term. This should be invaluable for a new Worshipful Master, or in the spirit of planning ahead: for the Wardens!

You pick items to complete from lists of standards. The Mandatory ones are Friend to Friend, Mentoring and Officer Mentoring. The resources for these activities are available in the programs put out by the Friend to Friend, Mentoring and Leadership Development / Officer Progression committees. Pick an item and start to work on it. You will see results very quickly.

If you already do one of these regularly (for instance if you already have done the Cornerstone Project in a previous year) why not pick another one to try?

Likewise for the Major and Basic Standards: pick and choose to create some variety in your Lodge events.

Give blood and save a life. Even if we aren't going to continue to collect those statistics, blood is still needed. Run a clinic or donate blood or plasma yourself if you can. While you're at it, sign your organ donor card as well.

Volunteer at a community event: park cars, put a float in a parade, lay a wreath. Maybe you could hold a Masonic Foundation of Ontario program at the fair. Wait, you can't count one event for two standards, so do them both!

Have an Open House and invite your community in to meet you. We were very successful last year on June 3, 2017. Should we do this annually?

Arrange for regular education in your Lodge, or run a Lodge of discussion. What topic would you like to hear about or discuss?

Have a full festive board after Lodge, or before. Do the toasts and speeches. Sing if you dare. It is said that if you don't have a festive board you are missing half the Masonic experience.

Contact your Brethren you haven't seen in a while. Run a Rusty Masons night. Take your widows out for dinner. Help them at home. Honour an aged member, or a new member.

Visit, visit, visit (that counts for several standards).

Go as a group to church, or shul, or jumu'ah... It'll do you good.

Do all the ritual which is the very core of our order.

Draw up a budget and you'll make both Condition of Masonry and the Lodge Finances Committees happy.

Get involved with a youth group, Masonic or otherwise. Visit a DeMolay, Rainbow Girls or Job's Daughters meeting. Or invite them to your event. Sponsor a sports team or Scout group. Donate a scholarship.

Come to the Annual Communication. So much goes on there including Masonic workshops, but more about that next month

David J. Cameron
Deputy Grand Master