

**GRAND LODGE A.F. & A.M. OF CANADA
IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO**

Fraternal Correspondence Committee

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Fraternal Review

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THE 86TH CONFERENCE of GRAND MASTERS of MASONS in NORTH AMERICA

Atlanta, Georgia, February 19th - 21st 2012

The Grand Masters of **60 Jurisdictions** met in Atlanta for their **86th Conference**, the theme of which was, **“Cultivating the Masonic Experience”**.

This theme was designed to seek new solutions to old problems and develop programs designed to make Masonry relevant to a new generation in a rapidly changing world. Breakout sessions topics were selected and planned to present ideas and guidance for the future leaders of the Fraternity and then posted on [Masonic Renewal Web-Site](#). This website includes the following:

On-Line Library



Browse through, read online and download texts from the largest and continuously growing digital Masonic library in your search for more Light. Here, you will find a wealth of information for personal study, education, scholarship and research. The database draws from a number of sources including;

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Grand Lodges, digital government archives, library and museum electronic services and more. The text in the library include topics like:

- Philosophy
- Esoteric Studies
- History
- Personal Development

[Enter Library](#)

Development Programs



The Development Programs section of this site provides, **for the first time ever**, a searchable database of the collective innovation of Masons from around the world as they strive to improve their lodges, grand lodges and appendant bodies. The programs offer any number of solutions to problems facing Freemasonry today so Masons can save time and energy seeing by implementing what works elsewhere, or gain insight in how to develop a program tailored for their lodge or jurisdiction, rather than "reinvent the wheel."

[Search Programs](#)

Masonic Videos



[Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America, Inc \(CGMNA\)](#)

View the presentations delivered by leaders in Freemasonry at the "largest gathering of Grand Masters in the world."

Take the time to browse the website, it has much more to offer.

"Believe in Freemasonry"

The 86th conference's **major focus** was on membership, mentorship, membership retention and the development of effective leadership in Grand Lodge, Constituent Lodges and Appendant Bodies. It also encouraged **family** involvement and **community** participation, thereby demonstrating our **social relevance** by illustrating the variety of Masonic contributions to local communities. CHIP-child find, Student Assistance Programs, have all met with positive response.

Note: Brethren, the committee's Fraternal Reviewer, R.W. Bro. Colin Heap has reviewed the Proceedings of this conference and the following are some conference excerpts that the committee believes the Brethren of the jurisdiction will find both interesting and educational.

1. In a changing and **evolving** society, Masonry has an invaluable **ally** in the **Internet** and multiple Lodge Web-Sites. It provides, **in the words of** a program developed by the **GRAND LODGE OF INDIANA**, ["Masonic Awareness at the Speed of Light."](#)

This Indiana **project** is but one of the latest to **emphasize** the importance of **leadership** and **membership development** and is designed to increase and retain Masonic membership. It consists of **44 lectures**, posted on the Internet, which to date, have been seen by over 1 million Masons in more than 150 countries (*you are encouraged to use the **WEOFM Videos link**, at the top of the above noted website page, to view the lecture series*).

Additionally, the project will in the near future record the **histories of each of the Grand Lodges within the Conference**, for the benefit of our Brothers and posterity, and make them available on the Internet using technology developed for the Masonic Awareness Program. It is a great opportunity to inform potential members what we are about, what we stand for, and the social contribution Freemasons can make in today's world.

2. The **GRAND LODGE OF MINNESOTA** offers a superb two page message sent to each candidate elected to receive the Masonic Degrees. It is titled ["An Introductory Message on Behalf of the Master of Your Lodge"](#) It was prepared by the Committee on Masonic Research and Education. The **first page** reviews the **steps taken** following receipt of the petition, and in a very welcoming tone, expresses the **desire** of the Lodge to **do everything** to ensure the **new member** will approach the Mysteries of the Fraternity in the proper frame of mind, and get the utmost from the experience and honor about to be conferred upon him. **It emphasizes** that, in every possible way, a Counselor or **Mentor will assist him** as he progresses through the Degrees.

The second page asks **"How shall I prepare myself for Masonry?"**, and economically outlines, without compromising any of the Landmarks, the history of Freemasonry, what it stands for, what it offers to the enquiring Candidate, and most importantly, the commitment the Craft expects from the individual who has been admitted into the Fraternity.

This introduction is **reinforced** by a [5 point Mentor Program](#). The **Mentor meets the Candidate** in person BEFORE Initiation, **answers any questions** he may have and offers to accompany him to his First Degree. He **introduces him** to all other Brothers in attendance, gives him a tour of the facility and following the Degree, explains the Signs, Word, Grip, the symbolism of the ceremony, the form and contents of the Lodge and the Officers stations and places. **He then prepares the new Member for his next Degree.**

This **"before and after"** procedure **is repeated** through all the Degrees. The new member **does not progress** until he is **fully informed and familiar** with the objects and symbols of

the previous Degree. He is **encouraged** to become **active** in Lodge affairs and **visit** others in the District.

The Mentor's **responsibility does not end** after the Master Mason ceremony. He must accompany the new Brother to his first stated communication, answer all questions; keep him involved in the Lodge; take him to neighbouring Lodges; discuss all Signs, Words, Grips and Obligations and explain all the Masonic resources available to him. The Mentor then informs the Master that the new Brother has completed the Mentor Program. He presents the Masonic Achievement Award to the new Brother in open Lodge. He is then obliged to meet with the candidate at or away from the Lodge for at least a year. *The Mentor Program is the most useful aid for assisting Lodges to bond with their new members.* It instills pride in being a Mason, a positive attitude and the desire to contribute directly to the Lodge's future.

3. The **GRAND LODGE OF OREGON'S** program; "**Fellow of the Craft**", has a similar structure and intention, to strengthen the Lodge and Jurisdiction by **ensuring** all new members are **well informed and aware of their duties**.

Following the **First Degree**, the candidate is given a paper titled [RESPONSIBILITES of an ENTERED APPRENTICE](#), which **explains** the Degree in **twenty detailed headings** from the Ritual Book, and **reminds** him of the **obligations** he has just taken. Before being **allowed** to proceed, he **must successfully answer** questions based on this paper before his Mentor will put his signature on a "Sign-off Sheet" permitting him to advance. This **procedure** is followed for the remaining degrees and the responsibilities are outlined in a similar manner for each. Additionally, the new member must also **learn and answer** questions from the **Standard Manual** and on the **History of Oregon Freemasonry**. *Only then* is he recognized as a fully qualified "**Fellow of the Craft.**"

4. The **secret to success**, according to the **GRAND LODGE OF MASSACHUSETTS** Membership Program; is **Planning**, Planning, Planning and more Planning. In order to be **successful in obtaining** and **holding** new members or to be successful in **converting inactive** members to active ones, there **must be a reason** for these men **to become involved**. This means having a continuing Lodge program that gives its members **a reason and desire to participate**. An overall Lodge program becomes the key to success. This one is in three parts:-

- Planning and Evaluation
- Preparation and Execution
- Follow Up

The Lodge Program **must** be one that **attracts** people. *Boring meetings, Ritual done alone or poorly, and unfulfilling activities will accomplish nothing.* The monthly meeting is the key. Masters should plan these meetings to attract members. **Innovation, recognition, quality and fun** all enter into the equation. A Lodge Calendar should **include social** and **community** service events, **visitations** and other occasions which promote Fraternity and **build sociability among the Brethren**. Have fun, **include wives and family** and be appropriately innovative in considering new ideas and putting a twist on old ones. An **active Lodge**, large or small, is a **healthy Lodge**. When the Brethren are enjoying themselves, its strength will increase.

The Lodge Calendar, as **used by Officers** or individuals, should include planning **goals** and **deadline dates** in addition to events. The Lodge Officers should be able to **glance** at the Calendar in any **given month** and know exactly **what is expected** of them. The Calendar requires at least **two years advance planning** and therefore must be **done in conjunction** with upcoming Officers and future Masters as well as the current one.

The Lodge's **standing** within the **community**, which we refer to as Awareness, is also important in **attracting good citizens** to the Fraternity. The best way to build Awareness is through community activity and presence. From CHIP to a host of other **projects**, Masons can demonstrate **who they are** and **what they stand for**. Don't be afraid to seek publicity. Well planned and implemented programs will do nothing but enhance the image of Massachusetts Freemasonry.

The next step becomes the development of a Membership Recruitment List. There should be at least three of them:-

- The active recruitment of new members.
- The active re-involvement of inactive members.
- A passive list of potential members for which the timing of recruitment is not yet right.

These lists and their proper maintenance are the key to success. Without these lists a coordinated effort is impossible.

Finally, a **Lodge** must have a **plan** by which to involve **new and re-activated** members after they have entered the Lodge. *Experience has shown a window of about six weeks to three months for a new member to become involved. If this does not happen, chances are that he will be lost from active membership of the Lodge.* All Lodges should plan specific activities to engage these members. **Match the needs of the lodge with the needs and desires of individual members.**

Membership can be promoted at any open Masonic function. Lodges should always **make** appropriate **invitations** to **prospective and inactive** members to attend a social type of event; in a home or restaurant, as institutional dinners in Lodge basements do not often provide the best type of atmosphere. It can be as **elegant and formal** as the Lodge deems necessary; most importantly, it must be **conducive** to close **personal contact**. This atmosphere should cater to wives as strongly as the prospective Mason. Individual **members** of the Lodge should be **assigned** to help the potential **candidates mix** within the group. There is room for spontaneity, but careful planning will yield the best results. Invitations should be sent out or hand delivered by specific members assigned to each prospect. The candidate should know this will be a fun party but be clear as to its intent, as they may feel ambushed and be turned off or intimidated. **Thirty invitations, properly delivered, should yield about ten positive returns.**

Potential candidates who sign up should be kept in constant contact prior to and during their Degrees. These candidates are **building a relationship**, which, if properly nurtured, will lead to them becoming a **strong, active member** of the Lodge. **The importance of personal contact through the degrees cannot be overstressed.**

One of the **most important** Masons in this process is the candidate's **Sponsor**, or Mentor. He must already have a close relationship with the candidate. The Sponsor should **make sure**

that the candidate is **informed** as to what is to be expected; that he be **present** for all Degrees; that he acts in between to offer continual **support** to the new Brother. It is also **important** that a **new member** make an **investment in the Lodge** to cement his relationship; through learning the CIPHER and active involvement in the planning of Lodge activities and programs. It is vital, through personal contact, that he be **made to feel welcome** and an important member of the Lodge. **Leave nothing to chance; plan for success and success will happen.**

It is therefore **imperative** that the **progress** these new or re-activated members be **followed closely**. Everyone's needs and interests vary. Take nothing for granted. Follow up. **A successful lodge will continue the evaluation process for each member long after Initiation is completed.**

In summary, membership is critical to the survival of Freemasonry. It is easy for those of us who love the Craft to generate enthusiasm for it; but **we have a responsibility** to focus that enthusiasm on the membership, on planning for the future and on making personal contact with other Masons. All of these are keys to our future success.

5. The re-activation of inactive members is more challenging than that of recruiting new members because the structure of the Degrees and the lure of the unknown are not present. The **GRAND LODGE OF CALIFORNIA**, addressing this situation, has said there may be at least as many displaced, visiting, or inactive Masons in the Jurisdiction as there are members. To help these Brethren find a new Masonic home, and to **revitalize** the interest of **inactive Master Masons** from California Lodges. Grand Lodge established the *Sojourner's Committee*. The benefits to a Lodge are increased membership, additional income, more participation and enthusiasm and possibly new Officers.

The ideas presented can be modified to meet a Lodge's specific needs. Each Lodge should have a Committee responsible for developing programs to re-activate Sojourners. Two to four members are recommended and their terms should be staggered to maintain continuity. The Lodge Tyler should be involved as he is usually the first member to meet visitors. The Basic Program is called "*Locating the Sojourner*". The first steps are to contact the Secretaries of other Masonic bodies for the names of members who refer to Lodges in other Jurisdictions.

Provide each Lodge member and the Secretaries of the local Concordant Bodies with a supply of "Sojourner Cards" for these visiting Brethren. There is a question on this card; "Do you know a Sojourner or an inactive Brother?" If so, provide the following information requested on the card:

Sojourner Information

His name:
Address:
Telephone Number:
Lodge Name, Number and State:

Return the card to

The Worshipful Master of your Lodge:
Your Lodge address:
Telephone number:

Following receipt of this returned card, the next three steps include; **Contact**, **Examination** and an **invitation** for a first time visit. Encourage a return visit and explain the advantages of Affiliation, explaining that California allows dual and plural membership. All of the above steps are to be done in good taste, with dignity, not coercively or in an overbearing manner.

Radio, television and newspapers are also very effective ways of contacting these individuals. Announce your meetings in the Community Service Section of your local newspaper, place a Masonic sign at the entrance to your town as is done by Rotary or Lions and consider emphasize the listing of your Lodge in the telephone directory.

6. The Grand Master of the **GRAND LODGE OF MANITOBA**, M.W. Bro. Kris Goodmanson, discussed a \$350,000,000 twenty storey project going on in Winnipeg called the **Canadian Museum of Human Rights**. Three years ago, he **established** a program called "**Just A Buck**", the intent being to urge Freemasons to raise a dollar from every Mason in Canada in support of Human Rights. The campaign has grown significantly.

"It was my vision to encourage Freemasons to support this cause, because Brethren, you and I in this room have grown up with Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth as being an important part of who we are. We have all been struggling to encourage young men to become a part of the Fraternity. Perhaps the thing we could encourage them to consider, and with which they could align themselves in our thinking, is the fact that **Freemasonry and human rights** are on the same page. Perhaps if we would like to think about encouraging these young men to consider becoming a part of our wonderful Fraternity is the fact we believe in human rights, beliefs and causes.

History **records** show that over **100,000** Freemasons died during the Holocaust. That was the driving reason behind the "Just A Buck", to urge Freemasons planet-wide to consider supporting the Human Rights Movement. Consider perhaps that when you are talking to young men, that they may have trouble getting their head around Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. However, **young men** of today do **understand** what **human rights** issues are; they understand **bullying**; about **texting inappropriate** information, as social networking is an important part of their lives. All of these can be tied back to human rights causes. So, Brethren, if I am asking you to consider anything today it would be to consider including Human Rights in your discussions with young man who are thinking about joining our Fraternity."

During the wrap-up of this 86th Conference; M.W. T. Michael Fegan, Past Grand Master of the **GRAND LODGE OF KANSAS**, encapsulated the purpose of the Conference and the value of all the initiatives presented, by asking all attendees this question:

"Where do you want to go tomorrow?" Masonry is still in a state of decline. Although the slide has diminished, **membership loss is still the greatest threat** to the viability of the Fraternity. The Masonic Renewal Committee **offers a prescription** to deal successfully with this problem. This prescription for success means we need to start thinking outside the box, coloring outside the lines and, in doing so, change the paradigms. Programs, seminars, and products are designed to complement the renewal process in the Lodge at the local level.

That is where the problem begins and that is where the problem must be solved.

We are committed to continuing the development of new products and programs. They offer, we believe, the best hope for the future of the Fraternity in North America and around the world. The seed we plant today will produce abundant fruit for us all tomorrow."

The Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Oregon
Fraternal Excellence Since 1851

RESPONSIBILITIES of an ENTERED APPRENTICE

Reference: Ritual Book

1. Owe to God

- * Never mentioning His name but with that awe and reverence which are due from the creature to his creator
- * By imploring His aid in all your lawful undertakings
- * By looking up to Him in every emergency for comfort and support

2. Owe to your neighbor

- * By acting with him on the square
- * By rendering him every kind of office which justice or mercy may require
- * By relieving his distress and soothing his afflictions

3. Owe to yourself

- * To preserve your corporeal and mental faculties in their fullest energy
- * Exert the talents wherewith God has blessed you, as well to His glory as to the welfare of your fellow creatures

4. To hold the Volume of the Sacred Law (Holy Bible)

- * As the great light
- * Hold it as the unerring standard of truth and justice
- * To regulate your actions by the divine precepts it contains

5. Be obedient to the precepts of this ancient and honorable Fraternity

6. Be exemplary in the discharge of civil duties

- * By never proposing or countenancing any act which may have a tendency to subvert the peace and good order of society
- * By paying due obedience to the laws under whose protection you live
- * By never losing sight of the allegiance due to your country

7. Practice domestic and public virtues

- * Let temperance chasten
- * Let fortitude support you
- * Let prudence direct you
- * Let justice be the guide of all your actions

8. Uphold brotherly love, relief and truth in their fullest splendor

9. **Be faithful and true to the Fraternity – bound to the Fraternity by obligation**
10. **Strictly observe the Constitution**
11. **Adhere to the ancient Landmarks**
12. **To learn to subdue your passions**
13. **To learn & understand to the best of your abilities the candidates lecture & lodge protocols**
14. **To live as a just and upright man and Mason**
15. **To fully understand your obligation**
16. **Secrecy**
 - * Different degrees – arts
 - * Ritual and lectures – parts
 - * Rules and regulations – points
 - * Only reveal to a brother known to you or within a lodge of EA
 - * That you will not write any of the secret or coded work
17. **Understand that you not only took the obligation before the lodge but before God**
18. **To learn the grip and word**
19. **How to wear your apron correctly and how to care for it**
 - * Proper – over coat – not wadded in seat or drawer
20. **To be charitable**