

Grand Lodge Messenger - GM Edition 4th Quarter

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Grand Lodge Messenger Grand Master's Special Edition 4th Quarter



YOU HAVE A JOB TO DO

Our Annual Communication is just around the corner. This will be your opportunity to exercise your responsibility to set the future direction of our Craft.



We have three Resolutions that have been carried over from last year's Annual Communication. Lodges have put forth seven Resolutions for your consideration, two of which have been deemed out of order. In addition, I am making six recommendations.

Grand Master's Recommendation No. 1 (2017-8): To eliminate the usage of the Masonic Retirement Center auditorium for any purpose.

As the facility is presently on the market for sale, this precludes the availability of the auditorium.

Grand Master's Recommendation No. 2 (2017-9): To permit the use of video recording during a Grand Lodge Trial.

Video recording would result in instant availability of the record of trial proceedings and would be a valuable tool, in conjunction with the written transcripts and audio records, to permit rapid response to appeals.

Grand Master's Recommendation No. 3 (2017-10): To clarify the Grand Lodge Trial Committee's duties and to eliminate a conflict regarding who imposes the penalty after a verdict of guilty in a Masonic Trial.

It needs to be clear that the job of the Trial Committee is to investigate, consider, conduct, report, and make a recommendation to the Grand Master. It is then the Grand Master's duty to take the appropriate action.

Grand Master's Recommendation No. 4 (2017-11): To redefine the name and purpose of the Military Recognition Committee.

The general idea behind this Resolution is to shift this committee from one that doles out plaques to one that works with Washington Masonic Charities to provide assistance and support to our veterans. I think it was best put by VW Jim Tourillotte: We need to make sure that we don't forget the kid who went to Iraq, came back messed up, and disappeared to the family farm in Washtucna never to be seen again.

Grand Master's Recommendation No. 5 (2017-12): To bring uniformity in the Cornerstone Ceremony.

When the Alternate Cornerstone Ceremony was developed, the part of the Master Architect was eliminated. I believe that this part is vital to the ceremony, and should be reintroduced.

Grand Master's Recommendation No. 6 (2017-13): To provide the Grand Master the option of

appointing a Deputy of the Grand Master for a third consecutive term.

When I joined the Fraternity some 20 years ago, there were more than 30,000 members. Today, there are around 12,000. Over the years it has become increasingly difficult to find Brethren willing and able to serve as Deputy of the Grand Master. The demands of this job have become numerous and extremely weighty, and we must not get into the habit of appointing a man just because it is “his turn”. This recommendation will allow present Deputies the ability to identify and train those Brethren who are not quite ready, but may benefit from a year of training vs. being thrown into the fray. Several Jurisdictions already place no term limit on the position of Deputy (or its equivalent). This resolution is about giving our Grand Lodge the ability to develop future leaders.

Ask questions. Listen carefully to the answers. Look well to your ballot, and vote for the good of Masonry

CAN YOU WIN THE GAME IN THE 4TH QUARTER?

It may be human nature to ease up as one approaches the end of a journey, but the old track athlete in me needs to just plow forward, lower my head, and push my hardest through the finish line. I was coached to run through the tape, so I have and so I shall.



One of the great highlights of this 4th Quarter was being received as Grand Master at the recent DeMolay Conclave. It was an overwhelming and emotional experience. As I stood at the altar being presented and introduced to the young men of DeMolay and their advisors, I found myself flooded with memories of my time as a DeMolay.

I remembered falling in love with the idea of being part of an organization that had a goal of making me a better son, a better brother, a better friend. I recalled with great fondness the camaraderie that DeMolay offered. I harkened back to the ritualistic ceremonies and the lessons they imparted. I married a Job's Daughter, consider a Rainbow Girl to be my oldest and dearest friend, and am a charter initiate of a Masonic Lodge named after the founder of DeMolay. The Masonic Youth experience in many ways defines who I am.

This is why the “One More” initiative was introduced. Each of us has a responsibility to “Be the

"Difference" in the lives of our Masonic Youth. It is well to remember that our youth may someday be the future leaders of not only our Fraternity but potentially of our corporate or government sectors. We owe it to them and ourselves to provide the mentorship and guiding example that will allow them to reach their fullest potential so that they can Be the Difference in their little corner of the world. Just ask MW Carl Smith if it was worth his time to be a DeMolay advisor.



Every Grand Master will tell you that he looks forward to his District's Meeting during his term of office. The Brethren are particularly excited to welcome one of their own, and the Grand Master is filled with the entire gamut of emotions. Such was the case at the District No. 13 Meeting.

At the District No. 13 Meeting I found myself in the presence of one of my DeMolay advisors, the Past Grand Master who signed my high school diploma and gave me the gift of Masonic curiosity, the founding father of my home Lodge, and the Past Grand Master who has always been there with guidance & counsel. I am proud to call District No. 13 home. We may be loud, but that's how we proudly roll.



I had occasion to speak with the folks at Puget Sound Honor Flight to see if they might carve out some time at an upcoming arrival so that I might present another check from the sale of my lapel pins. They were very accommodating, but little did I know that I was being set up.

To be sure, a check presentation was made, but only after they presented our Grand Lodge with a plaque recognizing not only our contributions of money but also of our time. Over this year, I have asked for your money, but I have also asked for your time. I've asked you to attend the flight departures and flight arrivals. You have done so, and have hopefully felt the same life-affirming experience that I have. I've heard it said that our support of the Honor Flight program has been one of the best things our Grand Lodge has done. I am hard pressed to disagree.

While I'm on the subject of doing great things, I have a question. Have you ever wondered what motivates your Brethren? How about an invitation to change their little corner world, to "Be the Difference". When you give your Brethren the opportunity to "Be the Difference", their lives and membership in the Fraternity take on deeper meaning and significance.

For the past few years, the Brethren of District No. 19 have been a primary sponsor of the Cystic Fibrosis (CF) Great Strides Event. The inspiration behind their sponsorship is Levi Johnson, son of our Grand Standard Bearer WB Gordon Johnson. Levi has struggled and lived with CF, and is a shining example of what happens when one does not let the disease define who they are.

The Brethren of District No. 19 proudly call themselves "Levi's Uncles". They host a charity dinner in support of the fight against CF and are the number one fundraising team at the annual Great Strides Event – not to mention that they grill up some tasty hot dogs for the run/walk participants. To the Brethren of District No. 19, CF is not just another charity. It is more of a noble cause, a rallying point that brings them together to improve their little corner of the world – to "Be the Difference".

In 1980, the Brethren of Thornton F. McElroy Lodge, No. 302 thought enough of my scholarship and community service to award me one of their scholarships. My tenure as an elected Grand Lodge officer has granted me the opportunity to attend several presentations to deserving students throughout our Jurisdiction.

At one such presentation, as part of the application process the students were presented with this query: Name a Mason who has inspired or influenced you. There were predictable responses like George

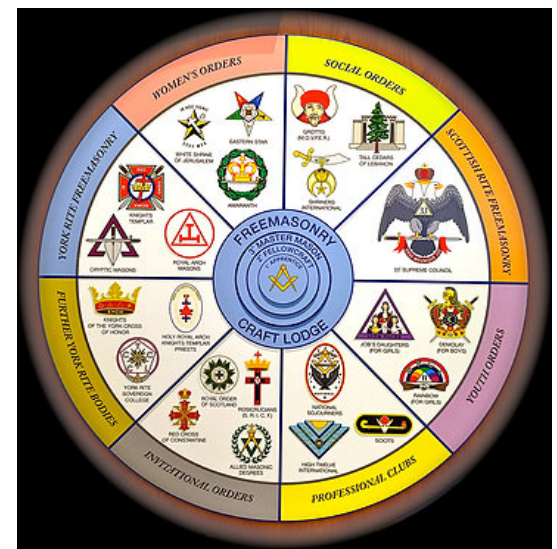
Washington and Ben Franklin, as well as outside the box responses like Joseph Smith and Prince Hall. There was also an unexpected response of Jim Mendoza. The young student who put forth my name got a hold of my biography and stated that she was impressed with my efforts in the fight against breast cancer and with my support of the Honor Flight Network.

As I listened to this young lady, I found myself thinking “folks are paying attention”. Brethren, it is well to remember that when we hold ourselves out as Masons that brings with it Great Expectations to Walk the Talk Every Day in Every Way. I get it. It’s not easy. You stumble along the way, but you



persevere. Maybe that’s why we often refer to Freemasonry as work.

Freemasonry is an incredible smorgasbord, filled with numerous avenues of finding the light which we all seek. It has been a great



delight to be part of the events hosted by our Concordant and Appendant bodies. Each event was memorable and left a lasting impression upon my heart. One such event was the Reception of the Grand Master hosted by the Seattle Valley of the Scottish Rite.

The Sovereign Grand Inspector General (SGIG) of the Orient of Washington is Ill. and Most Worshipful Brother Al Jorgensen. The Personal Representative of the SGIG in Valley of Seattle is Ill. and Most Worshipful Sat Tashiro. As I sat between these distinguished Brothers, I couldn’t help but think that in many ways they got me started on this journey. I served as Deputy of the Grand Master in District No. 13 under both of these Past Grand Masters. MW Sat has a personal story that inspires one and all to higher thoughts, nobler deeds, and greater achievements. As MW Al was himself a Deputy of the Grand Master in District No. 13 as well as a member of my home Lodge, the idea of holding one’s self to “Great Expectations” takes on a whole new meaning. Most Worshipful Sirs, it is an honor to share in your legacy.

FINAL THOUGHTS



It all started when I was accepted into membership in Frank S Land Lodge, No. 313. To the Brethren of my home Lodge – especially WB Drew Baker and VW Jeffery Brunson – THANK YOU. WB Drew, your vision of creating a Lodge that spoke directly to the younger Mason remains extraordinary. I am so glad to see you going through the line one more time, and it will be my privilege to be in your service. VW Jeff, as the first Worshipful Master of our Lodge you bore the brunt of some unfair criticism from those who may not have understood what we were trying to do, but remained steadfast in your belief that the Masonic experience we were trying to create was the right experience for our membership. I have appreciated your guidance and counsel over the years – particularly these most recent ones. I cherish our friendship, and I am at your call whenever you need me. Drew and Jeff, there is no doubt in my mind that I would not be a Mason today, let alone serve in this office, if it were not for the two of you.

As I close this final Grand Master's Communicator, I share these words from WB George Washington:

“In reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope, that you, My Brethren, will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that, after these years of my life dedicated to your service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion.”

As the clock winds down on this 4th Quarter I have been often asked how I wish to be remembered. That is a question of legacy. My Brothers, it is well to remember legacy is about planting seeds that you may never see produce fruit; it is about writing songs that may be sung by someone else; it is about plans that may take a different direction than what was originally envisioned. Whatever manner I am remembered, as I stated at the beginning, I hope that my time as your Grand Master has inspired you to nobler deeds, to higher thoughts, and greater achievements that allowed you the opportunity to “Be the Difference”.

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