

Grand Secretary's Newsletter

September 6, 2011

Enclosed Documents

Several items are enclosed in the same envelope with this newsletter. They will be discussed in a little more detail later, but they include:

1. Review of proposed legislation to be considered at Grand Lodge.
2. Proxies for the Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Wardens.
3. Program for Grand Lodge.
4. Copies of the Inspection Reports for next year's Lodge Secretary and Treasurer.

Program For Grand Lodge

A copy of the Program for Grand Lodge is enclosed with this mailing too. It should go to the Worshipful Master or his proxy. The specific schedule, list of officers, special events, and various procedures and rules are all detailed in the program. A few highlights which should be emphasized to delegates:

- Bring your apron. No aprons will be available at the Grand Lodge session.
- Bring your dues card. To enter the Annual Communication, a current dues card must be shown.
- Once registered, voting delegates will receive a lapel pin. When worn, this pin will help expedite entering the tiled Lodge Room by not having to show your dues card.

Proxies For Delegates

If the Worshipful Master, Senior or Junior Warden of any Lodge is unable to attend Grand Lodge, he should sign the proxy for his station. These proxies are enclosed with this mailing. Give the proxy to another elected officer or Past Master of the Lodge to serve as his substitute, with voting rights.

With the possibility of Plural Members, the use of proxies changed a few years ago. By Code, no member can exercise more than three proxies from his "primary" Lodge. If an Ohio Mason holds an elected office as a Plural Member in one or more other Lodges, he may carry an additional proxy — but only one proxy from each "plural" Lodge. If a Plural Member is serving as WM, SW, or JW of a "plural" Lodge, he can be a delegate for that position, and carry just one additional proxy for the "plural" Lodge.

It is possible, for example, that a Mason, who is an elected officer in his "primary" Lodge and is one of the top three officers in two additional "plural" Lodges, could vote seven proxies at Grand Lodge. (The Code prohibits anyone serving as Worshipful Master in more than one Lodge at the same time.)

If you have any questions, please check with the Credentials Committee when you register at Grand Lodge.

Inspection Reports

Three copies of the Lodge Secretary and Treasurer Inspection Reports are now in your possession to prepare for your Lodge's inspection in 2012. One copy of each can serve as a draft copy, and the other two can be final copies, one for your District Deputy Grand Master and the other for your file.

Be sure to use these new copies — and not copies from previous years. Only forms with "2012" at the top will be accepted. The reports will also be available on the Grand Lodge webpage.

Proposed Legislation

In compliance with the Grand Lodge Code, the enclosed booklet contains the text of proposed legislation, which has been received by the Grand Lodge for consideration at the Annual Communication in October.

There are 7 pieces of legislation printed in the booklet. Items designated with numerals (2011-1 through 2011-4) have laid over the required one year and will be voted on at this annual session. One item has been found not to be in proper form (2011-3)

The items designated with letters (2011-A through 2011-C) were received after last year's Grand Lodge and are seeking "immediate consideration" from Grand Lodge.

The goal of this booklet is to allow Lodges to discuss these various items in advance. Delegates should take this book to Grand Lodge to assist them during the deliberations.

Remember, delegates should retain the right to vote by their own conscience, after listening to debate. They are not to be bound by directions from the Lodge or other brethren, given to them before Grand Lodge.

36 Lodges Failed to Request Their Annual Return to be Produced

Despite informative notices and even a "broadcast" email message sent to all Secretaries regarding how to request your Annual Return, there were still 36 Lodges that did not notify us to run their Annual Report.

Back in the "Green Sheet" days, when finished with all membership activity, you checked the Annual Return box to get your report. Today, a simple email or telephone call to the Grand Lodge Office requesting your Annual Return will initiate the creation of your report. Please file this away for next year!

MORI Training Videos

All Lodges are now using the MORI membership management program.

There are 9 tutorial videos to help you in mastering the MORI program. They are 2 to 5 minutes in length.

The videos can be accessed by logging into MORI as you normally do. Then look at the right column and you will see "MORI Users Guide," and "MORI Training Videos." A click of your mouse will connect you to the videos.

They are great aids in learning, among other things, how to prepare your program for reporting and computing dues received.

202nd Grand Lodge Session Planned

The 202nd Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ohio will be held in Cleveland on October 14-15, 2010.

Full information on hotel, meal, and special event reservations was sent to each Lodge in May. The deadline for advance reservations is September 16.

Full details are on the Grand Lodge Web page, www.freemason.com.

Tax Exempt Status Explained

There continues to be a misunderstanding about the tax status of Lodges in Ohio.

All Lodges are “non profit” organizations, according to the IRS. They are NOT “charitable” organizations. Lodges are classified as 501 (c) (10) groups, while a “charitable” group is listed as a 501 (c) (3).

A “non profit” organization, such as a Lodge, is not charged income taxes, but it must pay sales and property taxes. If an individual gives a cash gift to a “non profit,” that donation CANNOT be deducted from the individual’s personal income taxes.

A “charitable” organization, such as the Ohio Masonic Home, the Grand Lodge Charitable Foundation, or the Grand Lodge Scholarship Foundation, can be exempt from income, sales and property taxes.

An individual making a cash donation to a “charitable” group can deduct that gift from his income taxes.

All Lodges and Temple Companies MUST file an annual IRS 990 form to retain their non-profit status.

Emphasis on MMSAP in 2012

Ohio Lodges will be highly encouraged to contribute to and become involved with the Masonic Model Student Assistance Program (MMSAP) in 2012.

Were you aware the MMSAP is a gift from Ohio Freemasons to schools throughout Ohio? This program consists of a 3-day intensive training seminar that enables core teams of school faculty and staff members to effectively identify and refer youth who are at-risk. At-risk of what? At-risk of substance abuse, depression, suicide or violence, to name a few of the behaviors.

The professional trainers, manuals, overnight accommodations, and meals are all provided, at no cost, to the participating school districts. The Grand Lodge of Ohio offers on average 3 training sessions per school year.

In a nutshell, this program is responsible for potentially saving young people’s lives.

You will be hearing much more about this program in the upcoming months.

Deaths Since our Last Issue

- Denward L. “Red” Pepper, Stow #768; PDDGM 21st District, Passed 7/17/11
- Jay E. Smith, National #568; PDDGM 21st District, Passed 7/24/11
- Charles W. Black, Queen City #559; DDGM 1st District, Passed 8/3/11
- William A. Gay, Rocky River #703, Secretary, Passed 8/13/11

Reminder Re: Checks to Grand Lodge

Checks for donations to Grand Lodge charities need to be written for specific purposes.

For example, don’t write one check and instruct us to divide it among several charities. A separate check must be written for each because they must be deposited into separate bank accounts.

For example, separate checks should be written for:

- Grand Lodge Charitable Foundation
- Grand Lodge Scholarship Foundation
- Royal Scofield Fund, or Grand Lodge Masonic Model Fund.
- Ohio Masonic Home — these checks should be sent directly to the Home.

If the checks are written improperly the staff will have to return the checks to you to be written again.

Smallest Lodge in North America

The Grand Lodge of Virginia is posing this question: Does their Lodge—Wynn Lodge #521—have the smallest lodge room dimensions in North America? Wynn Lodge’s meeting room measures 20’ wide by

30' long. The anteroom and preparation rooms are 18'4" wide and 5'7" long. The main lodge room is 22'6" long. The distance from the Master's station to the altar is 5'6" and from the Senior Warden's station to the altar 8'1".

Is there any lodge room in Ohio with smaller dimensions?!! I doubt so, but if there is, please let me know.

Senior Membership Awards

Please work with the Worshipful Master to ensure there is a Lodge Awards Night planned for the year. Only those Brethren listed on the current year's Award List, which you received with your dues cards, are eligible to receive veteran membership awards.

All veteran membership awards that are due during the 2012 Masonic year may be presented any time AFTER the Lodge's Annual Meeting in November. No 2012 awards are to be presented prior to the Annual Meeting.

Grand Lodge Building Completes Major Exterior Work

The building which houses the Grand Lodge Museum and the original Lodge Room of New England Lodge #4 was built in 1820. In the mid-1950's a second structure was built and joined to the 1820 building. These structures comprise the Grand Lodge headquarters facilities in Worthington.

Damage to the interior walls of the administrative office area of Grand Lodge was traced to the exterior of the facility. Throughout much of the Spring and Summer months the entire exterior of the facility was tuck pointed and resealed.

The contractors were able to use mortar which appears to match the original color of the 1820 building. The work was quite costly, but indeed needed. The work should last 8—10 years. The exterior of our Grand Lodge home looks great!

Long Time Grand Lodge Employee Retires

A retirement luncheon was held on July 29th for Ms. Sally Riebel. Sally retired after 23 years of service to the Grand Lodge of Ohio. Over forty of her friends, family and associates were present for her farewell.

Among her responsibilities was the overseeing of service awards sent to our Lodges. She probably was in communication with every one of our Lodge Secretaries at some time over her years of employment. We wish her well as she enjoys her well-deserved years of retirement.

Grand Lodge Staff

Including the Grand Secretary, the Grand Lodge employs a staff of five. Chad Simpson oversees Grand Lodge programs. Julia Williams is the Bookkeeper/Financial Specialist. Jeanne Boyd has taken over order fulfillment tasks from Sally Riebel. And, Gayle Kozak oversees the membership management database.

There are countless more tasks performed by these hard-working staff members. You might consider offering an "attaboy" or "attagirl" the next time you are in communication with any one of them.

Word of the Day:

Vouchsafe—To promise or agree, to bestow a special favor (Middle English word first used in the 14th Century).

Quote of the Day:

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." Ghandi

Fraternally,
C. Michael Watson

