

# The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio

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## Grand Secretary's Newsletter

March 15, 2016

### Endowed Membership Update

The following is from the Grand Treasurer, Right Worshipful Brother Ronald L. Connelly.

As you probably already know, the investment markets since the beginning of 2016 have been highly volatile. Declining oil prices, disruption in the Asian markets, lackluster 4th quarter earnings and actions taken by the Federal Reserve have influenced market values. Since the beginning of the year, the Dow Jones Industrials, S&P 500 and the Nasdaq have experienced devaluation in excess of 10%. The market conditions have subsequently affected the Grand Lodge Investments including the Endowed Membership Funds. The Endowed Membership performance is currently -7.1% with a 5 year average return of 4.23%. The investment allocation is 58% equity, 27% fixed income and 15% cash. The allocation is within the prescribed parameters as stated in the Investment Policy. The Grand Lodge Investment Committee is bound by the Grand Lodge of Ohio Code to maintain the Endowed Membership Fund at the endowed amounts. If current market conditions continue, the Endowed Membership distribution for this year may be affected which may result in a significant reduction in the annual payout in November. Lodges should keep this in mind when planning their budgets for the coming year.

### Deadline for Entering Suspensions for Non Payment of Dues (SNPD)

You have until March 31, 2016 in which to enter a member as SNPD. This is a MORI system restriction. The computer system will lock you out from entering SNPD any time **after March 31st**. This means the person who is delinquent will be kept on your membership roster in good standing and the Lodge will pay per capita.

In the event you forget, nothing can be done this year except to carry them.

The suspension date will always be December 31st. According to Code, a member who fails to pay his dues by the last day of December shall have Non-payment of Dues entered against his record as of that date. Secretaries have, for many years, been given until March 31 in which to either collect the dues or suspend the person.

### Mark Your Calendars

- Ohio Masonic Home Day is Sunday, June 12, 2016, in Springfield. Has your Lodge considered a special outing of members and families to the OMH that day?
- The opening ceremonies for the Summer Games of the Ohio Special Olympics will be Friday, June 24, 2016, at The Jesse Owens Sports Complex on the Ohio State University campus in Columbus. Masons in aprons will lead off the parade at the ceremonies.

### **Called From Labor**

The scythe of time has cut down a number of our Brethren over the past months where they will be gathered into that land where our fathers have gone before us.

- Brian M. Ball, Sr., Master; Acadia #306; passed 11/23/2015
- R. Gene Dosson, PDDGM 23rd Dist.; Friendship #89; passed 12/17/2015
- Eric Forney; Secretary, Perry #185; passed 12/21/2015
- Gordon W. Kahle, PDDGM 1st Dist.; Norwood #576; passed 12/25/2015
- Ivan N. Potter, PDDGM 12th Dist.; Portland #366; passed 1/17/2016
- Walter E. Ellenberger, Assoc. Grand Chaplain; Robinson Locke #659; passed 2/1/2016
- James T. Hamby, PDDGM 19th Dist.; New Home #338; passed 2/15/2016
- John S. Harrison, PDDGM 12th Dist.; Middleport #363; passed 2/22/2016
- Richard J. Davis, PDDGM 22nd Dist.; Acadia #651; passed 3/7/2016

They lived respected and died regretted.

### **State Association Meeting Successful**

Joseph H. Rothbrust, Secretary of Golden Gate Lodge #245, was elected and installed as President of the State Secretaries Association of Ohio, at its annual meeting on March 12th in Columbus.

Other new officers include Edward W. Badger, 1st Vice President; James C. Feist, 2nd Vice President; Charles A. Wentz, 3rd Vice President; Jeffrey J. Root, 4th Vice President; Ronald Schmidt, 5th Vice President; Robert H. Coster, Secretary; David L. Holmes, Assistant Secretary; and, Jeffrey A. Garringer, Chaplain.

The meeting was very successful, as planned by President Kenneth D. Chamberlain.

Subjects presented included Ohio Masonic Home update, MORI training, use of PayPal and Guidelines for Lodge Investments.

Every Lodge Secretary should participate in your State Secretaries Association.

### **Notify G. L. Office When Changing Your Address**

Brother Secretary, please notify our office if your mailing address changes! Our mailing system is not tied to MORI. So, simply updating MORI with the new address will not update your mass mailing address.

### **New MM as a Member?**

The question has been presented, "When does a new Master Mason become a full-fledged voting member of the Lodge?"

The answer is, as soon as he has received his Master Mason Degree.

He can, however, lose this privilege if he does not return his proficiency examination within two months of receiving his Degree unless, for just cause, the Master grants an extension. Upon entering his MM Degree in MORI, his membership card will be mailed. This card should not be presented to him until he has been found proficient in his Master Mason proficiency.

### **Each Lodge Accountable For 9 Rituals**

During recent consolidations, some Lodges expressed surprise that they were accountable for returning to Grand Lodge 9 Officer's Rituals. Resolution #5 of our Grand Lodge Code specifically identifies the 9 Lodge Officers assigned a complete cypher ritual.

During the Inspection process, the DDGM should be examining the 9 Officer's Rituals for the Lodge. Rituals under disrepair due to normal usage will be replaced at no cost. Lost, missing or worn rituals due to carelessness, are to be replaced at a cost of \$50.00 each.

### **Plastic “Permanent” Dues Cards Coming!**

As indicated last year, The Grand Lodge Advisory Committee has approved the use of a more permanent, plastic membership card. The card will be identical in size and shape to the traditional credit card. Ohio will be joining other Grand Lodge Jurisdictions and appendant orders in this practical, more efficient measure.

The face of the card will be colorful with several Masonic emblems. Information will include the member’s name, lodge number and location, membership status and whether or not he is an Endowed Member. A bar code will also be imprinted. The bar code can be utilized for future applications such as a more streamlined registration process for the Annual Communication. The back side of the card will appear the same as today’s card.

The long-term goal for this switch is to save on printing time and cost. Now instead of reprinting the 85,000+ paper cards annually, the plastic cards will better withstand the test of time, needing only to be replaced occasionally.

We will eventually make available a member “look up” application. This will be a web-based app available on any smart device that will allow you or any designated officer to enter an Ohio visitor’s member number. The app will return the member’s name, his Lodge and his current membership standing.

This implementation should save you time, effort and postage by not having to process an annual paper membership card for your member’s dues handling.

We will inform the membership in the Beacon, but you might consider giving your members a “head’s up” as what to expect in your Lodge newsletter to them.

### **MWB George O. Braatz, PGM Retires**

Most Worshipful Brother George O. Braatz, Past Grand Master and Past Grand Secretary Emeritus has announced his pending retirement from the Masonic Service Association of North America.

At the recent Annual Meeting of the MSA of NA, Executive Secretary, MWB George O. Braatz, announced his intention to retire during this year. MWB Braatz has served the MSA as its Executive Secretary for five years.

Ohio Masons are proud of MWB Braatz’s accomplishments and wish him and Lady Marilyn the best in his well-deserved retirement.

I have a copy of the Job Description of the position of MSA Executive Secretary for anyone interested. Those interested should submit their applications by the deadline of June 1, 2016 to the MSA office in Burtonsville, MD (NOT to the Grand Lodge of Ohio!).

Applications should include a full resume, date when available to start, and compensation requirements. The successful applicant will reside near the MSA office in Burtonsville, Maryland. The MSA office is located at 3905 National Drive—STE #280, Burtonsville, MD 20866.

The newly appointed Chairman of the MSA Commissioners is our own MWB Thomas H. Galyen, Past Grand Master! Congratulations, Most Worshipful Brother Galyen.

### **Increased Use of Technology**

We will continue to make use of technology especially in light of today’s ever increasing costs. This means more use of email. Please make sure MORI has your current email address. Also, please “unblock” the Grand Secretary’s email address from your SPAM filter!

### **Secretary's Manual Available from G.L. Website**

Please remember that the Lodge Secretary's Manual is an online document available for your reference and download printing from our [www.freemason.com](http://www.freemason.com) website.

From the bottom of the home page under "Resources", select "Document Library". You will see displayed almost all the forms needed for Lodge operation. The *Lodge Secretary's Manual* is located here.

This manual will guide you through the administrative processes and will step you through the associated applicable MORI entries.

### **2016 Grand Lodge Directory Available**

The *2016 Grand Lodge Directory* is available either for sale from the Grand Lodge Office or free for your downloading & printing from the G.L. website under "Document Library". It is password protected (light2016).

This directory lists each Ohio Lodge, the Master and Secretary, plus a host of additional information. This directory formerly was sent at a large cost to each Lodge every year. We were informed that a number of Secretaries didn't want, or couldn't use this publication.

### **MORI "MME" Entry**

Should you find it necessary to suspend a member for failing to return his Master Mason Examination (MME), please send the Grand Lodge Office a communication, email or a note via USPS, to this effect. Please state the member's name, membership number and date of suspension. The Grand Lodge Office will make the "MME" entry to MORI for you. This MORI event entry was removed from the MORI application.

### **Throw Away Old Supply Order Forms!**

With most mailings to the Lodges, we include a Lodge Supply Order Form. Please discard all older, outdated forms and use the most current Order Form when ordering your Lodge supplies. Additional forms are available on the G.L. website.

The Grand Lodge Office is now set up to accept your credit card for administrative purchases.

### **Electing a Foreign Affiliate to Membership**

Any "non-Ohio" Mason is considered a Foreign Affiliate when joining an Ohio Lodge. Our Ohio Lodges **can not** take any action on a Foreign Affiliate becoming a member of our Lodge unless he presents a current dimit from his Grand Jurisdiction or you have a certificate of Good Standing from his Grand Jurisdiction.

### **2016 Annual Communication**

The Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ohio will be October 14 & 15 in Sandusky, Ohio at the Kalahari Resort. This is just a reminder as more detailed information will be distributed in the coming months.

This venue has free parking, hotel lodging, retail shops, restaurants and a large indoor pool. The meeting room will have seating for several thousand attendees. Everything under one roof. Mark your calendars and make certain your lodge is represented.

### **Unpaid Invoices**

We presently have a number of Lodges who have open invoices from the Grand Lodge Office. These invoices range from 30 days past due to over 90 days past due.

If you are one of these Lodges, please check your open invoice and remit your payment as soon as possible.

### **Regarding Gambling Activities**

At the 205th Annual Communication delegates voted in favor of permitting gambling by Lodges and dependent orders.

The Ohio Revised Code has many restrictions pertaining to gambling and IRS designated fraternal organizations. All Ohio Lodges are designated as 501(c)10 organizations. We are tax exempt fraternal organizations and not charitable foundations, i.e. 501(c)3.

Since we are all new at this, and wanting to protect all Lodges and the Grand Lodge from any wrong doing, the Grand Master issued an edict. All Lodges or groups holding allegiance to the Grand Lodge of Ohio must obtain a written opinion from an attorney relative to the proposed gambling activity. The event must also be supported by the members of the Lodge. A copy of the meeting minutes indicating the support of the Lodge accompanied by the attorney's opinion must be sent to the Grand Lodge Office for retention prior to the event being held.

### **We Salute RWB Frederick W. Palmer!**

Right Worshipful Brother Frederick W. Palmer is 90 years old, a 67-year Mason, and the longest surviving Past District Deputy Grand Master in the 19th Masonic District. He is currently serving as Worshipful Master of Center Star Lodge #11 in Heath. He first served as Master in 1956, 60 years ago, and presided again in 1992. Grand Master Rill paid Center Star Lodge a visit in January to observe RWB Palmer preside over his Lodge at his Annual Inspection.

Thank you, RWB Palmer, for your zeal for the institution!

### **Congratulations to WB Merlyn E. Meredith!**

Honor is extended to Worshipful Brother Merlyn E. Meredith, who as the Master of the new East Gate Lodge #796 in Lyndhurst, accepted the Charter from MWB Cokonougher at the most recent Annual Communication. Brother Meredith is 92 years young and a 70-year Mason.

Leadership in the fraternity has been constant during his entire membership. He began as a DeMolay and served as Master Councilor, District Governor, Executive Officer and a member of DeMolay Supreme Council. He has presided over two bodies in Scottish Rite and is a 33rd Degree Mason.

He is a York Rite Knight of the York Grand Cross of Honour, Past Illustrious Grand Master of the Grand Council of Ohio and was the Grand Secretary of the Grand Council for 25 years.

He is a Past Master of Heights Lodge and a Past District Deputy Grand Master. Now, at 92 years of age, Right Worshipful Brother Meredith is back in the Oriental Chair as Master of his Lodge!

### **Closing Thoughts**

"Masonic labor is purely a labor of love. He who seeks to draw Masonic wages in gold and silver will be disappointed. The wages of a Mason are earned and paid in their dealings with one another; sympathy that begets sympathy, kindness begets kindness, helpfulness begets helpfulness, and these are the wages of a Mason." - Benjamin Franklin