

The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio

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Grand Secretary's Newsletter

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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. Copy 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.

Mileage and Per Diem

In order to receive per diem for attending Grand Lodge, the Worshipful Master, or his proxy, **MUST** deposit a pay slip in the box on Friday and a different colored slip in the box on Saturday. No pay slip; no per diem check.

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 **elect**-**ed** 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

Copies of the 2014 Lodge Secretary and Treasurer Inspection Reports are now in your possession to prepare for your Lodge's inspection in 2014. Make copies as necessary. Be sure to use these new copies — and **NOT** copies from previous years. Only forms with "2014" at the top will be accepted. The reports are also available on the Grand Lodge webpage, **www.freemason.com**.

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 13 pieces of legislation printed in the booklet. Items designated with numerals (2013-1 through 2013-9) have laid over the required one year and will be voted on at this annual session. (2013-5 was withdrawn.)

The items designated with letters (2013-A through 2013-E) were received after last year's Grand Lodge and with the exception of 2013-B, 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.

Endowed Membership Disbursement for the Year—\$33.00 and \$44.00

According to our Grand Lodge Code, Sec. 29.06, the Grand Lodge Investment Committee recommends the annual distribution to the Lodges having endowed memberships. The distribution cannot exceed 5% of the fund's earnings.

The Investment Committee determined last year that the distribution amounts needed to be communicated to the Lodges well before the annual payout of early November. This is so the Lodges will know what this revenue will be in planning their annual budget.

Based upon a 5% return on the fund's investment, this year's distribution will be \$33.00 for each \$600.00 endowed member, and \$44.00 for each endowed member at the \$800.00 level.

Tax Exemption for Lodges Approved

The Governor of Ohio signed a new law into effect early July that grants a property exemption to our Masonic buildings under defined circumstances.

Details about how a Lodge must apply for this exemption and how some of the rules apply are still being worked out.

The law reads in part, "The following property shall be exempted from taxation: ... Real estate held or occupied by a fraternal organization as a domestic fraternal society, order, or association operating under the lodge, council, or grange system that qualifies for exemption from taxation under cited IRS rules, supports charitable purposes ... and has been operating in this state with a state governing body for at least 100 years.

The Grand Lodge Office is working with the Statehouse to identify the specific forms and procedures for completing the forms and their submission. Once the application process has been defined and authorized, all Lodge Secretaries will be notified.

All Lodges MUST file an IRS 990 Return

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

Beginning in 2007, all non-profit organizations must file a tax return, regardless of how small they are. The smallest, in terms of revenue, does not need to file the full form

990, but does have to file at least the form 990-N, e-postcard.

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 2014 Masonic year may be presented any time AFTER the Lodge's Annual Meeting in November. No 2014 awards are to be presented prior to the Annual Meeting.

Deaths Since our Last Issue

- William W. Grater, John W. Barkley #621; PDDGM 22nd District; passed 6/4/2013
- James D. Bartoo, Sr., Addoniram-Joppa #517; Secretary; passed 6/27/2013

Did You Know...

Most of the Grand Lodge Forms can be found on the Grand Lodge of Ohio's website, www.freemason.com under the "Grand Lodge Forms" selection. Among the available forms can be found the 2014 Inspection Forms. You might consider accessing those forms now in preparation for not only the Annual Inspection, but the Lodge Audit and preparing an annual budget.

The first item available under "Grand Lodge Forms" is an updated Secretary's Manual. This "how to" document not only will walk you through the procedures dealing with Lodge membership, such as dimitts, dual, and plural membership, but also provides step-by-step procedures for performing that process within MORI. This document can be viewed online or downloaded to your computer for printing.

Did you know that back issues of this Grand Secretary's Newsletter are being archived under the selection, "Grand Secretary News"? I'm certain that your personal mailed copy of this newsletter is read so much it probably gets worn and dog eared. Now, you can read, download and print as many copies of this publication as you would like. They might make good gifts for your friends too!

MORI-Related Helpful Tips

Reminder about entering Suspensions for Non Payment of Dues— You have from December 31, 2013 until March 31, 2014 in which to enter a member as Suspended NPD. This is a 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.

The suspension date will be December 31st. According to our Code, a member who fails to pay his dues by the last day of December shall have Non-payment of Dues (NPD) entered against his record as of that date. For many years, the Grand Lodge has given Secretaries until the end of March in which to either collect the delinquent dues or suspend the member.

If you forget about the March 31st cutoff, do not attempt to enter a group of your members as "Suspended—for failing to pass their MM Exam". Or, do not enter a group of members who "requested" a dimit. The system will tell us of those types of actions and they will be reinstated by the Office.

When entering a new member into MORI: If you enter a "preferred name", make certain you enter a First Name and a Last Name. This field is used for label printing and dues cards and overrides what is in the full name field. Use proper case when entering the full name.

On-Site Emergencies: Consider a Defibrillator at Your Location

You may have noticed the presence of automated external defibrillators (AED) in your church, workplace, airports, or fitness centers. In the event of cardiac arrest, the first 5 minutes are crucial. Here are some myths and facts regarding AEDs.

Deploying an AED increases legal liability. The opposite is true. AEDs are becoming so commonplace that courts have ruled that they are now the “standard of care.” A venue choosing not to have AEDs available actually increases the legal risk should an untreated episode of cardiac arrest occur. Good Samaritan laws protect AED users from legal liability.

An AED is not necessary because you can save a sudden cardiac arrest victim with CPR alone. False. Only an AED can revive a sudden cardiac arrest victim, because only an AED can correct an abnormal heart rhythm by delivering defibrillating shocks. CPR alone cannot save a sudden cardiac arrest victim; at best, it buys the victim time.

The Grand Lodge of Ohio has talked to a provider of AEDs. We can point you to a reputable supplier of an AED in the \$1,000 price range. The unit is self-instructional and easy to operate.

Your Lodge or Temple Company may want to look into providing an AED at your meeting facility.

For more information, contact WB Chad Simpson, Grand Lodge Director of Programs.

Lodge Membership Roster

Your membership roster was again not mailed to you this year as part of the Annual Return. Each Lodge has the ability to simply and easily print their own roster thereby helping to reduce Grand Lodge costs.

In MORI, select “Membership”, then select “Roster”. This will produce an up-to-the-minute listing of your Lodge membership, including those who have gone inactive during the year.

Report of Annual Election

Immediately following your annual election, **2014** Lodge Officer’s information **must** be entered into MORI. It is more important than ever that this information be entered correctly and maintained as current by the Lodge Secretary. This represents the source of information used by the Grand Lodge Office throughout the year. If a Lodge Officer changes his information sometime during the year, PLEASE update MORI as soon as possible. This information includes address, phone number and email address.

Refer to page #7 of the *Secretary’s Manual* for instructions on how to enter this information into MORI. Only the role of Secretary can perform this, not the “Assistant Secretary” role.

Don’t forget; if you elect a new Lodge Secretary, he must set up an account in MORI.

State Secretary’s Association

The officers of the State Secretary’s Association recently met and set the agenda for the Annual Meeting. The next Annual Meeting of the Association will be March 7 & 8, 2014 at the Doubletree Hotel in Worthington. This meeting presents an excellent opportunity for you to network among your peers and pick up some tips, tricks and techniques as a Lodge Secretary.

If you are not presently a member of this excellent association, you should seriously give it some consideration.

For more information, contact RWB Robert Coster, Association Secretary and Secretary of Kilwinning Lodge #356. His email address is: bcoster@nolteprecise.com.

Verizon Member Program

As I prepare this newsletter, the Grand Lodge of Ohio and Verizon Wireless are renegotiating the contract for the member discount program.

Unrelated to this effort, Verizon has sent emails and postcards to individuals enrolled in “employee discount programs.” this was not limited to just the Grand Lodge Program.

The Grand Lodge program is unique in that it is the only one to offer the “employee discount” to members of a fraternal order/civic association. The Grand Lodge will contact subscribers, who provide their contact information, as soon as the final details are worked out. Final resolution will be communicated via an automatic phone call. Information will also be posted on our web site. If you are a subscriber in this discount program and would like to be notified of this contract resolution, please send an email or phone Chad Simpson in the Grand Lodge Office.

Mainstream Scottish Rite Recognizes Prince Hall Scottish Rite in All States

From Federalist Lodge #1, Washington D.C. Posted August 27, 2013.

“Exciting news today from Washington D.C.! The Supreme Council, 33⁰, of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States, in session this week, announced that it is formally recognizing the Prince Hall Scottish Rite Supreme Council. Further, Sovereign Grand Commander for the Northern Jurisdiction said that if the Southern Jurisdiction recognizes the Prince Hall Supreme Council, they would do it also.”

(Grand Secretary’s opinion) This announcement may have ramifications to those several deep south Grand Lodge Jurisdictions that still refuse to recognize the legitimacy of Prince Hall Masonry. If the AASR in these states recognize each other, how can the Symbolic Lodges not do the same?

A quick quiz

1. How do you put a giraffe into a refrigerator?
A. Open the refrigerator put in the giraffe and close the door.
2. How do you put an elephant into a refrigerator?
A. Open the refrigerator, take out the giraffe, put in the elephant and close the door.
3. The Lion King is hosting an Animal Conference. All the animals attend except one. Which animal does not attend?
A. The Elephant - it's still in the fridge.
4. There is a river you must cross. But it is inhabited by crocodiles. How do you manage it?
A. You swim across. All the crocodiles are attending the Animal Conference.

Word of the Day:

Bourn (born) — A term used in the Fellow Craft degree. The word is taken from Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Act III, scene I. The term refers to a boundary or a geographical line.

Quote of the Day:

“Perfection is the aim of operative Masonry. Happiness is the aim of speculative Masonry.” - William Preston

See you in Akron!

*C. Michael Watson, PGM
Grand Secretary*