

The District Light

The information bulletin
of Niagara B District

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Good News

Many masons support the concept of blood collection, but do not give blood. Some reasons given are 'age' or 'medical condition' or even 'I'm afraid of needles'.

Canadian Blood Services has heard the excuses and has changed the rules.

Now . . .

- Some cancer survivors are now allowed to donate after 5 years from full recovery.
- Diabetics can also now donate depending on what insulin they are on.
- The lower age limit is 17 but there is no longer an upper age limit as long as you are healthy.
- First time donors can be any age as long as they are healthy. (Wouldn't it be exciting to see elderly masons streaming into the clinic?)
- If men (and women) want to donate as a group, a taxi will come for you (and take you home again).

Some new sights will be seen at the sites. For example, electronic devices will replace the paper questionnaires and records.



Take Action

Appointments to donate can be made from home. Call 1-888-2-donate (36-6283), or go to the web site at www.blood.ca. It's a user-friendly place.

When you donate, use the group code **Maso008778** to register the donation as a masonic action.

Bad News

The world, right now, is a terrifying place. We see enemies lurking in every bush, hiding around every corner, and in the faces of strangers who look different than us.

Reactions

You have been hearing political rhetoric coming from all quarters, asserting that France should use the recent attacks as a justification to invade Middle-Eastern countries, seeking out the terrorists who choose to give their lives to create chaos.

Many people think that seeking peace is a path of cowardice, of appeasement, and of taking the easiest solution, but I tell you that there is nothing more difficult than to rail against your natural inclination to meet violence with violence.

Still, some will say, we cannot let an attack go unanswered, since it would be a sign of our weakness, but that we must make a show of our strength, by the sheer power of our military forces, so that none will dare attack us again.

How do we Respond?

To fight against our own nature requires us to not only be aware of our reactions and prejudices, but to actively seek to overcome them.

Violence doesn't end violence, it extends it.

Dr. King said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that."

As Freemasons, we are called to be the light in the world, by our very presence to improve our surroundings, and to leave the world a better place than it was when we came into it.

As Freemasons, we are called to shine our light in every place, even when we're afraid, and to greet the stranger on the level.

WB Adam Thayer



All You Need . . .

My time in Masonry has taught me that hate is never the answer to any question worth asking. If I am committed to Masonry, love has to be my only response to everything, both large and small, because if I hate, I become what I hate. I have to see the fundamental humanity, the image of God, in everyone I encounter. Otherwise, I'm not practicing Masonry to the best of my ability.

My sister, an Episcopal priest and Air Force Chaplain, has said that she has to recognize that everyone is equally deserving of God's love, which is to say, not at all; so acting high and mighty has no place in the world.

We must remember to meet on the level and acknowledge one another as fully human, and just love one another.

So now I pray that I will be enabled to act as if all people are my Brothers and Sisters.

For the simple truth is, they are. I don't have to like them, and if they mean harm to others, I certainly have to stop them, but I can't hate them without losing the best part of myself.

Love, I would argue, is the answer to every question, both in Masonry and in the profane world.

Every day I am presented with the choice of whether to act with love or not, but I find that if I pay attention to Masonry's teachings, I make the right choice more often than not.

RWB Michael H. Shirley
Grand Lodge of Illinois



Free to Choose

While Freemasonry inculcates in each of its members the duties of loyalty and citizenship, it reserves to the individual the right to hold his own opinion with regard to public affairs.

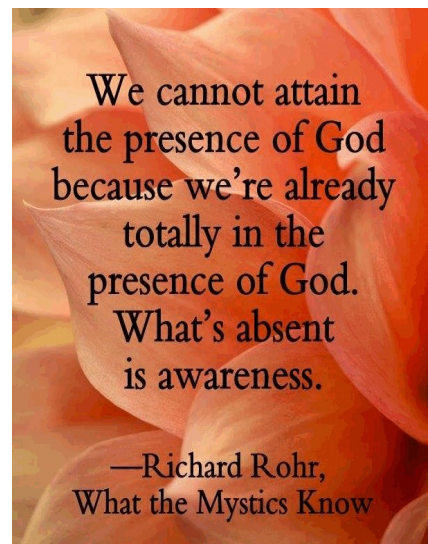
But neither in any Lodge, nor at any time in his capacity as a Freemason, is he permitted to discuss or to advance his views on theological or political questions.

Choices

When you focus on problems,
you will have more problems.
When you focus on possibilities,
you will have more opportunities.

The most difficult thing is the decision to act;
the rest is merely tenacity. Amelia Earhart

Nothing is impossible –
the word itself is, "I'm possible!"



A person told Buddah, "I want happiness."
Buddah said,

"First remove 'I'; that is ego.
Then remove 'want'; that is desire.
Now you are left with 'happiness'."

Good News

December is a good month for visiting other lodges. The usual attraction is official visits, but consider the lodge installations as well.

From among the brethren one is chosen to sit in the east and lead.



The evening can be quite enjoyable.

There is a nice energy in the lodge as officers are placed into their new chairs. The quality of the work is more polished. The role descriptions given to the officers are good reminders of the importance of each chair. The Final Charge is an excellent review of the qualities we try to inculcate.

The opportunity to visit other lodges is always available to us and should be taken. Seeing others do the work and hearing others speak their lines is masonic education.

We get better at our tasks with practice, but we also get better by observing how others interpret and perform their duties.

Pick a lodge installation to witness this month:

- Wed. Dec. 2: King Edward VII in Chippawa
- Tues. Dec. 8: St. Mark's at Van alstyne Place
- Wed. Dec. 9: Clifton at Van Alstyne Place
- Thurs. Dec 10: Copestone in Fonhill
- Mon. Dec. 14: Merritt in Port Colborne
- Tues. Dec. 15: Myrtle in Port Robinson.



You will be welcomed, entertained, and fed.

Another Choice

There is an excellent blended Scotch whisky available from Lombard Distilleries called Old Masters Freemasons Whisky.

Ask your LCBO for availability.



Farmers' Market

Every Monday until December 21, the Shrine Club will be hosting a Farmers' Market in their building at 5621 North Street from 11:00 to 4:00.



Select from vegetables, meats, perogies, bread, cakes, kettle corn.

As a bonus, the Oasis will be open from 11:30 for you to sit, socialize, and recharge.

In Case You were Wondering . . .

What does the "Hoodwink" symbolize?

The symbolism of the Hoodwink is the darkness of ignorance until the light of Masonry is made known to the Candidate.

The hoodwink is used to ensure that in case a Candidate refuses to undergo the ceremony, he may be led out of the Lodge without discovering its form.

If the penalties are not intended to be carried out, what is their purpose?

The penalties are traditional, based on 15th century Admiralty penalties for treason.

Nobody has ever suffered those penalties and their contents have been a source of worry to Masons and Grand Lodges in many parts of the world.

In 1964, The English Grand Lodge resolved to approve "permissive changes" in the Obligations (plural) and in the relevant passages in the ritual relating to the Obligations by which the Candidate undertakes now to "bear in mind" the "traditional penalty, that of having the . . .".

Therefore, the Candidate does not undertake to suffer the penalty, or to inflict it; he promises only to bear it in mind.

