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Robert's rules

Masonic lodges are not—or should not—be run according to *Robert's Rules of Order*. *Robert's* and most other guidelines for parliamentary procedure assume that the presiding officer is subject to the will of the majority. Not so in a masonic forum. The Master is responsible for the peace and harmony of the lodge and may at his discretion take any action that he deems necessary for the good of the lodge and the Craft. This includes suspending debate on any subject, tabling a motion, refusing to accept a motion and so forth. Certain actions that are normally done in parliamentary procedures are not done in a masonic meeting: Calling the question, which is properly a demand from the floor calling for an immediate vote; motions to adjourn; and the like; are not proper masonic procedures.

For example, according to *Robert's*, a motion to adjourn is a privileged motion, always in

order, and not subject to debate. There cannot be any such thing as a motion to adjourn in a masonic lodge—the lodge meets at the will and pleasure of the Worshipful Master only.

It is a curiosity of masonic usage—not restricted to this jurisdiction—that before a vote the Master will ask the members, "What is the lodge's pleasure?" with the members responding in ragged chorus: "Question." This is a courtesy on the Master's part and not a requirement. It is not unknown for the Master in some lodges to call the question himself, although this is something of a redundancy as he will immediately after call the brethren to vote, "in the usual masonic fashion."

And in Grand Lodge, also, it's entirely up to the Grand Master to decide whether to put the question. He can ignore the call if he so desires.

A wise Master uses

From our Grand Master's desk....

In my acceptance speech, given at the conclusion of our last Grand Lodge Annual Communication, I directed our attention towards the following priorities:

- Raising the standard of lodge work.
- Continuing to restrict the performing of masonic work in public.
- Addressing our declining membership.
- Reviewing a perceived need for change to ritual, *Constitutions* or *Regulations*.
- Revitalizing lodge meetings by increasing attendance.
- Planning the future of your lodge.
- Increasing the profile of Freemasonry and the masonic family. Perhaps we should consider what we achieved.



MW Bro. William Ord Walls
Grand Master for 2002-2003

Raising the standard of lodge work

With relatively few exceptions, I have heard only laudatory comments from each of the District Deputy Grand Masters. It would appear that we are conscious of the image we portray to our candidates and, for this, I commend your efforts.

Restricting the public performance of masonic work

The Grand Secretary reports that a healthy respect and level of consciousness is being demonstrated by the lodges with regard to any intended public performance or display of ritual before unauthorized bodies. This I consider to be prudent, thoughtful and conscientious behavior on the part of the lodges and reflects positively on each of us.

Addressing our declining membership

The Grand Secretary's report, with regard to membership, will speak for itself. The suggestion that I made, with reference to a

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whatever tools are at hand to run the lodge in a fraternal and effective manner, but keeps in mind that he cannot surrender his rights and responsibilities to an outside authority other than his Grand Master and Grand Lodge.

The Master—and *only* the Master—determines when a question is put, just as he determines when to close the lodge. He may inquire if the lodge is *ready*, but the decision is his alone.

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Robert's rules from page one

You should be familiar with *Robert's Rules of Order*, but be aware that no Master is bound by them. ■

Kids helping

The BC Job's Daughters Philanthropic or Special Project is the HIKE Fund (Canada), created in 1990 by the International Order of Job's Daughters to provide hearing and/or assistive listening devices to children or institutions in need.

HIKE is short for "Hearing Impaired Kids Equipment." They are kids helping kids. Children under the age of twenty who have been identified as having a need for a hearing or assistive listening device can benefit from the HIKE Fund (Canada).

Applicants with a documented hearing loss are considered without regard to gender, race, religion, ethnicity or need. Considerations include family income, size of household, burdensome medical expenses for the applicant and the cost of the hearing technology requested. Funds raised are collected almost entirely by the members—there are no salaried fund raisers.

With the guidance of adult workers, members seek pledges for "hikes", sell baked goods,

participate in wake-a-thons, sponsor dinners and develop other creative fund raising ideas to support the work of the HIKE Fund (Canada). This year the Grand Guardian has given each of the Daughters a HIKE bank to fill up with donations and bring back to Grand Session 2004 in Richmond. There will be prizes for the Daughter who collects the most money for HIKE and also for the Bethel that collects the most money for HIKE.

Some Bethels have a collection container at the porch book station for those who are able to support this project. If you can help the "Kids Help Kids" please contribute your support. Also if you know of a child in need of a hearing device, bring it to the attention of your local Bethel Guardian or contact Bro. Jack Pritchard at 604-944-0014. ■

Charity

The Association of Benevolent Craftsmen, organised in 1968 and registered under the BC Societies Act in 1971, is a group of community minded freemasons who have, quietly, gone about the practice of charity.

Originally organized by members of **Progress Lodge No. 87**, the association once had members from practically every lodge in the Lower Mainland but now continues through the efforts of about twenty members.

Since 1998 the association has ceased fund-raising and recruiting new members, but simply meets annually to chose a worthy non-profit society to make a donation to.

In 1998 they donated \$10,000 to the BC Masonic Charities Fund to be forwarded to the Manitoba Flood Relief project. The following year they donated \$10,000 to the Royal Arch Seniors Home, and an additional \$7,000 in 2000. In 2001 they donated \$10,000 to

the Abbyfield House, Saint Margaret of Scotland Seniors Society in Burnaby. Again, in 2002, they donated \$10,000 to the Royal Arch Seniors Home.

In the practice of charity, it is gratifying to know that, where they see a need, freemasons will come forward. ■

Thanks are extended to RW Bro. Donald T. Brown, ABC president, for providing this thumbnail history.

Thank you

from Jackie Walls

During this past year, your Grand Master, MW Bro. William Ord Walls, and I have traveled extensively throughout this jurisdiction and others. In doing so, we have enjoyed the travelling very much. It has afforded us the pleasure of visiting areas in 'Beautiful British Columbia and Yukon' that previously were just places on the map, and we have become acquainted with many wonderful people, making many new friends. For the most part, the weather was very kind to us.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the brethren and ladies for all the kindness and hospitality shown to us over the past few years and especially this year. You have made this a most memorable time for us. I appreciate all the ladies programmes that were arranged, enjoyed meeting all the ladies and had a great time with you. You are very special people.

We are very grateful to the lodges that donated to the Eastern Star Cancer Dressings in lieu of a gift to the Grand Master. You have helped tremendously in assisting the purchase of supplies that our Cancer Dressing Stations require to make the dressings. We thank you very, very much.

Thank you all for a wonderful and unforgettable year. It has been a pleasure to meet all of you. ■

Masonic notes

The Grand Lodge of Virginia recently initiated a programme of fraternal coöperation with the Grand Lodge of Russia to support a growing need for masonic literature. As well as providing masonic leadership training in Virginia for Russian lodge officers, the programme incorporates a library project of book donations coördinated by the secretary of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. ■

Bulletin is online

The Grand Lodge *Masonic Bulletin* is now online and available at freemasonry.bcy.ca/masonic_bulletin/. Access is restricted to members of this jurisdiction: when prompted, enter the username: user, and the password: Ezra. Note the lower-case "u" and the capitalized "E".

Brethren who have registered with our online membership directory are asked to be patient. Your webmaster is looking for a volunteer to maintain the directory database: contact him at trevor@freemasonry.bcy.ca if you have a few free hours. ■

Masonic family

The Annual Grand Session of **Job's Daughters** for BC was held in Kelowna, this past March 20-22 2003, when Meghan Lorentsen of Bethel No. 7, New Westminster, was crowned Miss BC Job's Daughter by the outgoing Miss BCJD Lyndsey Delorme of Bethel No. 11, Nanaimo.

The **Lodge of Perfection** of the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite Vancouver Valley



W Bro. Palmer Cox

plans a social and information evening for Master Masons and their ladies to at 1495 West 8th Avenue on June 13 2003. The evening will start at 7.30 p.m. with a short talk for the brethren in the lodge and entertainment for the ladies on the fourth floor. The brethren will then join the ladies for a short film on the charitable work of the Scottish Rite, followed by refreshments. For details contact RW Bro. Gordon Phillips at 604-736-3936

The **Gizeh Shrine** membership committee has discovered that there is great interest in their presentation and would like to have it given in many more of the lodges. If you would like to see the Shrine presentation, please contact W Bro. Wally Turko (604-465-9238), RW Bro. Jordie Bowcott (604-936-2402), or W Bro. Steve Whiteside (604-876-8600)

Lodge notes

Evergreen Lodge No. 148 has amalgamated with **Dunbar Lodge No. 118**, leaving Marpole Masonic Hall with the fourth Tuesday available for rental. Contact W Bro. John Dunham at 604-266-0626 for details.

The second annual Gospel Show featuring Miss. Barbara Jean Tayler, with special guests Ms. Sibel Thrasher, Mr. Checo Tohomaso & The VOC Soul Gospel Choir will be held on June 14 at the Unitarian Church, 949 W 49 at Oak St., Vancouver—curtain at 7:00 pm. This is a charity fund raiser for **True Resolution Lodge No. 16** MW PHGL F&AM Washington & Jurisdiction, and **Grandview Lodge No. 96**. Call W Bro. Wally Turko (604-465-9238) or RW Bro. George Jolly (604-325-3761) for tickets and details.

The brethren of **St. Andrews Lodge No. 49**, Victoria, will be sorely missed

by their Immediate Past Master, W Bro. Donald M. Scandrett, who, as an active member of the Canadian Armed Forces, finds himself transferred to Ontario. He hopes to return some day to renew the friendships he has found within the Craft and concordant bodies.

The **Mentorship Program** is now ready for shipping in both the Ancient and Canadian Works. It is available on CD at a cost of \$10.00, or by email in a zipped word format. The file is quite large and on a modem might take some time to download. For details contact VW Bro. Jim Boyle, at <jboyle@anatechinc.com> or call 604-948-5280. ■

Order of DeMolay

The Order of DeMolay is an international youth organization, founded on March 18, 1919, in Kansas City, Missouri, by Frank S. Land and nine teenage boys.

The organization was named for Jacques DeMolay, the last Grand Master of the Knights Templar, who was burned to death on March 18, 1314, rather than betray his brethren.

The heroic martyrdom of DeMolay and many of his fellow knights is an example of loyalty and toleration reaching across the centuries.

Today, members of DeMolay strive to carry on the fine ideals for which he gave his life—loyalty, toleration, service to God and to our fellow man. Over three million young men have passed through the portals of more than 2,300 DeMolay Chapters in seven countries.

Membership in DeMolay is open to any young man of good character who is between the ages of 12 and 21. Chapters are sponsored by masonic bodies or individual freemasons, but it is not necessary to be a relative of a

freemason to belong to the Order of DeMolay.

DeMolay is a non-profit organization whose International Supreme Council Headquarters are in Kansas City Missouri. Written in 1919 by Frank Marshall, a prominent freemason and newspaperman in Kansas City, the ritual sets them apart from other youth organizations teaching life skills and truths which have been termed ageless.

As officers and members of a Chapter, the young men are taught responsibility and given the opportunity to express themselves before a group of their peers. While the meetings are intended to be serious and reverent, the order does not advocate any particular creed or religion. DeMolay has a three-way programme designed to benefit the individual member, the chapter, and the community.

Chapters are also required to observe certain days annually to recognize the public schools, the less fortunate, patriots of the country, parents, one's religious faith, the government, and the founder of the order.

Each Chapter has a Council made up of fathers, freemasons and senior DeMolays. Mothers are encouraged to become involved in the Chapter's Mothers Club and to support the activities of their Chapter.

In summary, the Order of DeMolay does not attempt to take the place of the home, or the church, but rather to strengthen and support them. The organization's purpose is to offer young men of today:

1. a wholesome occupation for their spare time;
2. worthwhile associates;
3. the best of environments;
4. an interesting and complete programme of all-round personal development.

For more information, contact MW Bro. Douglas W. Hargrove, Executive Officer for DeMolay for BC and the Yukon, 101 - 5875 Imperial Street, Burnaby, BC, V5H 3W8. ■

<http://freemasonry-bcy.ca>

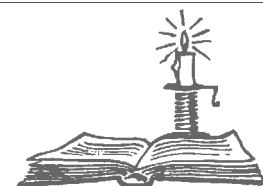
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Our Grand Master from page one

brother making the initial overture to a prospective member, is still acceptable masonic behavior. Only time will tell whether you have exercised your prerogative in this regard. If not, please consider doing so at some time in the very near future. Our Craft still needs to replenish its membership.

Reviewing a perceived need for change to our ritual, Constitutions or Regulations.

For three years we have tirelessly researched and canvassed the membership of this jurisdiction, presenting conclusions which supposedly reflected the will of the membership at large. We have even gone so far as to summon all members of Grand Lodge to an Emergent Communication for the purpose of developing, discussing, reviewing and disseminating the findings of this review.

As a result of the opinions expressed, the general membership was surveyed and the data tabulated to reflect the opinion of the membership. It is necessary to point out that the data and information that was accrued, as a result of this survey, was tabulated and presented to the members without input, review, editing, sanitizing or manipulation by any officer of Grand Lodge. In my acceptance speech at our last Annual Communication, I directed each member of our jurisdiction to review the data, subject commentaries and statistical information, all of which was available on the website or through the Grand Secretary's office. In turn, I requested any member to prepare a notice of motion or a resolution for any amendment that they felt ought to be placed before Grand Lodge. It was my hope and intention that by this method, we could address, reflect and achieve the

perceived changes required to our rituals, *Constitutions* and *Regulations*. You did not submit a single notice of motion for constitutional amendment.

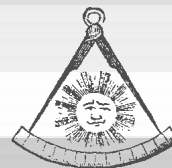
I must therefore conclude that your silence is acquiescence. In other words, inaction is positive action. The brethren have not demonstrated or requested a radical need for amendment or constitutional change, whether perceived or otherwise. It is my fervent hope that we have put to rest what I consider to be an on-going, disquieting and disruptive influence. We ought now to accept the solid opinion expressed by our silence and desist from the behavior of agitating for change. By doing so we will permit the Craft to continue with the implementation of more positive action which is of benefit to the society in which we live. This, in my opinion, was and is the purpose of Freemasonry, not self-inspection, self-analysis, introspective reflection or navel gazing. Might I respectfully suggest that you follow my mother's advice which was to "Stop picking at that scab... you'll make it bleed!"

Revitalizing lodge meetings by increasing attendance

The reports of our District Deputy Grand Masters indicate a demonstrated willingness, on the part of lodges, to combine their efforts for conferral of degrees, buddy nights, social events etc. If this should be continued, I am confident that we will see a slow but steady resurgence of interest in Freemasonry.

Planning the future of your lodge

Again, the reports of the District Deputy Grand Masters indicate that most lodges did spend time analyzing and planning for the future. This is very positive and is recommended as an annual practice. Too many lodges have been avoiding the recognition of problems that are looming



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY JUNE, 2003

6-8	Fri-Sun	District No. 11 -Centennial Celebration	Whitehorse
9	Mon	Outdoor meeting	Prince Charles No. 153 Kelowna
12	Thu	Grand Lodge of Washington	Tacoma
19-21	Thu-Sat	Grand Lodge Annual Communication	Dawson Creek

on the horizon. Unfortunately, ignoring these problems is not going to make them go away. By spending time planning for the future, it is to be hoped that some remedial action will be initiated.

Increasing the profile of Freemasonry and the masonic family

In an attempt to increase the recognition of Freemasonry within the masonic family, I initiated an opportunity for the masonic family to participate with us in raising our collective profile.

1. I offered each concordant body the opportunity to meet the brethren who are attending Grand Lodge; this was simply done by providing space for each concordant body to set up an information table or a booth, thus affording them access to reach out to over five hundred freemasons.
2. I asked each of the concordant bodies to provide an introductory article for publication in our monthly *Masonic Bulletin*, thus again affording each concordant body the opportunity to access the homes of the thirteen thousand freemasons of this jurisdiction.
3. I afforded each group the opportunity to link up to the Grand Lodge website. This gave them access to over a thousand visitors a day.

These actions did not cost Grand Lodge one cent. The appreciation and participation of the 'family' has been tremendous. Indeed, it proves

again that "masonic actions speak louder than words." I have attempted to attend, on your behalf, every senior level meeting of each concordant body to which your Grand Master was invited. I must tell you that, without exception, the consideration and respect afforded your Grand Master is a sure indication of the high regard in which your Grand Lodge is held. I recommend to my successors that the concordant bodies meetings and the interaction we have established, should be continued. I am firmly convinced that this will prove to be to our long-term mutual benefit.

Did we manage to improve the profile of the masonic order to the non-mason? I am convinced that we did. This year, whenever possible, I have encouraged the lodges to award service pins, jewels and certificates in the presence of wives and families, either at the festive boards or within our lodge room, when the lodge is at recess. I received numerous very appreciative and favourable comments from spouses of long serving brethren. Some of these partners were being permitted to sit inside a lodge room for the first time. I was also impressed by the reaction of several wives of our newer members who were delighted, and in some cases relieved, to find out that they had no reason to be concerned by our activities within a tyled lodge. ■