



IOWA SUPPLEMENT

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Greetings Sir Knights:

Well, as I write this article in late March there is one topic that none of us can avoid. From an unprecedented “extended adjournment” in the middle of the Legislative Session to daily updates from various governmental entities. Absolutely no parts of our lives have been free from this pandemic.

Hopefully by the time you are reading this article - some normalcy will have returned to our lives. Unfortunately, I doubt it. It has gotten to the place where I have asked people in my life to talk about some other topic than COVID-19. They consistently fail to be able to do so. Such is the nature of this particular beast.

In that vein, I contemplated writing this article about ANYTHING other than the pandemic. However, to do so seems trivial. Yet I am not going to let this current situation overwhelm me. I am going to fight the urge to lament the current state of our society. I am going to resist writing about the potentially devastating effects this disease will have on the future of Masonry. Rather, I am going to put a particularly different spin on COVID-19.

I am going to write about the absolutely eloquent message that the Grand Master of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters Shane Harshbarger sent out on March 18 commemorating Jacques de Molay. In that message, our MIGM discussed the profound effect reading ritual was having as he was sitting in a quiet building with rain falling. It made me appreciate how transforming our ritual can be when we read or recite it for content and meaning as opposed to just burning into our memory for performance purposes. I had lost that perspective.

I am going to write about the greatness of Masonry when Past North Central Department Commander David Dryer who is a few

years older than me wants to get together to drink wine and eat steak. That same day, our Grand Third Guard Brian Truex who is probably 13 years younger than me calls to see when we can get together and hang out. I challenge the existence of any other social institution that can bring men together of such different ages, backgrounds, and outside influences to have the common friendships that Masonry does.

I am going to write about Past Grand Commander Wade Sheeler sending me a text simply to check in and make sure I am doing ok with everything. The weekly text making fun of the government that I get every Friday from Past Grand Commander Gene Hatfield that invariably brings a smile to my face.

I write this while I am thinking about all of the laughs, accomplishments, and shared experiences that we have all had in Masonry (and hopefully will continue to have in the future, albeit under much different circumstance I am afraid). This is the exact type of situation in our society when the teachings of our Fraternity will help us persevere. I would encourage all of us to retreat inward and remind ourselves of the teachings and principles of Masonry. Trust me, it will help provide comfort.

As of March 25, 2020, Grand Commandery will be meeting on June 5 and June 6. Note that there will be NO Thursday activities. The session will actually commence on the afternoon of June 5. There will be a dinner that night and we will conclude business on June 6. The new officers will be installed that day as well. If this changes - we will provide as much notice as possible. In any event, govern yourselves accordingly.

God bless each of you.