



From the Grand Master

November: The first day of November also means the first day of Movember. Men of all ages take part in what has become an annual monthly campaign to raise money and awareness for prostate cancer. Movember is about getting one more man to talk openly about his health and take action when you need it.

Brother Gordon Graffmann, is the currently the Junior Deacon at Campbell Lodge No. 603. With his permission, here is his story: “

As part of my annual physical, my Internist prescribed a colonoscopy and a PSA test. The colonoscopy was uncomfortable and showed no issues so I was confident I was in perfect condition. But I noticed that the box for “Full PSA” was checked on the test requisition not the box for “Free PSA”. My Internist insisted it was worth the extra \$30 for the Full PSA as it was more thorough, so I took his advice. It came back with a reading of 4.7 that seemed fine to me, and I didn’t think my wife should be so alarmed (she worked for my Internist for a while but that didn’t make her a doctor). When I said that I had no previous PSA scores to compare, she requested it from the doctor’s files and the previous PSA was a 2.5.

My family doctor said I should have a prostate biopsy just to be sure, and with my doctor and my wife persisting I thought the only way to end this concern was to have the biopsy done and over with, I’d prove they were all worried about nothing. The biopsy was scheduled with a highly regarded urologist and my wife accompanied me to the appointment. The probe has a small needle on it that injects anesthetic into the prostate (mild discomfort), the same probe then extracts twelve samples of cells from the prostate. Before I left the office I was told to make a follow-up appointment, which I did. We arrived at the appointed time and the waiting room was bulging with patients, standing, and sitting. This is always the case at doctor’s office, he is very popular as an urologist and takes time with each patient, and it is worth the wait. The room was mostly filled with men my age, but quite a few in there thirties, forties and decades older. A few kids with urinary problems speckled throughout the group.

When it was my turn the nurse called me in and my wife accompanied me (did I mention she is a worrier?). We took seats in the examining room, me next to the window and wifey near the door. When the doctor entered he moved a chair beside me and invited my wife to sit with me, how thoughtful. He sat down and I blithely said, “Hi there, survey says?” The doctor looked up and said “there is no easy way to say this....you have prostate cancer”. I was stunned and in my best policeman voice replied “so it’s a low reading, right?” The doctor pulled charts out of drawers and described my results to me advising me that I had a score of 7 out of 10 on the Gleason scale that indicates a moderately aggressive cancer.

I asked the doctor what would have happened had I not had the biopsy and he told me that I would probably have not noticed any symptoms or discomfort for 2 to 3 years. He then told me that if I had waited until I noticed symptoms, the cancer may very well have spread beyond my prostate and invaded my bladder and bones....a far worse scenario!! The doctor very gently told me my choices, just keep watching it and recheck the reading in 6 months or chemotherapy or radiated seeds injected into the prostate (a form of radiation) or radiation or radical surgery.

A friend of mine had had prostate surgery 10 years ago and I sat down with him and asked what his choice had been and why. Paul had chosen radical surgical removal of the prostate and the nearby lymph nodes. He informed me that if the surgeon does

radiation, the prostate become mushy and surgery is no longer an option only chemotherapy and additional radiation. If I chose surgery as a first choice and it didn’t work as well as hoped, then I could still be a candidate for radiation. Within five days of research I telephoned my surgeon for another appointment. My choice was made – radical surgery. At the meeting with the surgeon I advised him that I wished to have the lymph nodes removed as well, he advised me that was his standard practice for this type of surgery to prevent the cancer from spreading to the nodes and sending the excised nodes out for testing. If the nodes came back clear I would be out of the woods, if they came back with cancer I’d need to have radiation in addition to the surgery.

The nurse scheduled my surgery two months after this news. My friends and wife informed me I was really stressed although I can’t say I was aware of any stress. I decided to tell anyone who would listen that I had prostate cancer. Talking about it helped me come to terms with what I considered an unavoidable life challenge. I’ve been told that when I’m under pressure I go into “hyper-speed”, I think I’m efficient. After a week of the decision my wife called the doctor’s office and begged the nurse to move up the surgery to as early a date as possible. They had a spot on July 9th and moved it from November. Friends began to call, one was an Operating Room Nurse who recommended that I have an epidural injection to keep the pain at a low level for two days following surgery. It really helped and I now know it’s not just for easing the pain of childbirth.

The surgery went well although I was more out of it and certainly not as back-to-normal as I had expected. I awoke in the Recovery room and was taken to my hospital room. I had a Hemo-Vac drain near my navel to gather accumulated post-operative blood, oxygen through a nose clip, a saline and glucose IV drip in my arm, a catheter to gather urine. Post-surgery I had absolutely no control over my urination and a bag attached to my hospital bed had to be changed twice a day. It finally hit me that I had major surgery; nothing like the trip to the dentist I thought it would be.

After three days the hospital sent me home with supplies for home maintenance. After almost three weeks, I was relieved of the catheter and the Hemo-Vac. When I returned to the hospital to have the catheter removed I was informed that the cancer had not migrated to the lymph nodes – I was clear? Now my annual PSA tests should show a zero reading. Assuming they do, I am totally cancer free! It is a demanding road back to “normal” but I’ll get there soon. I have the love and support of my family, friends, colleagues and superiors. The Toronto Police Service and Toronto Police Association have been terrific and I am fortunate to work in this organization that takes the wellbeing of its members very seriously.

If I have a message it’s this: Don’t be a ‘wuss’, have the Full-test every year, follow-up with whatever tests are required. Have whatever treatment method you and your surgeon think best; there are lots of choices. Life is worth living – get the “**Full**” PSA test annually!”

Brethren, Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in Canadian men and is the second largest cause of male cancer deaths. There’s no single cause for prostate cancer but we know that the risk of developing prostate cancer increases with age, so certainly if you’re 50, you should talk to your doctor but if you have a family history of prostate cancer think about testing earlier.

Thank you Brother Graffmann for sharing your experience. I hope it will encourage other men to get the PSA test, especially those who would not have otherwise done so.

Donald A. Campbell,
Grand Master

From the Deputy

Brethren, the autumn season is upon us and temperatures are dropping as we prepare for interesting weather and holiday celebrations. We also recognize October and November are very busy Masonic months with Official Visits and Installations. Our District Deputy Grand Masters are working hard to see that the lines of communication between Grand Lodge and our membership are active and supportive of our lodges.

This month is also a time when we remember all those people before us that allowed us the freedom we enjoy today. We reflect on their efforts and sacrifices with full and thankful hearts. Canadians enjoy more freedom than most of the world, we should always remember how fortunate we are to live in this great country. We owe to those who have gone before us to carry on their legacy in respect to their efforts that allows the freedom we enjoy.

This month I want to address a couple of Grand Lodge programs that can be helpful in our respective lodges.

The **BROTHER TO BROTHER** has made many contributions over recent years. The Lodge **RESOURCE MANUAL** can provide information for most situations that may occur in your lodge. There are easy to use projects to improve attendance, to **STIMULATE** and **REVITALIZE** the membership and to improve efficiency of lodge meetings. It can provide guidance in explaining **FREEMASONRY** to non-Masons

Use the **Six Steps Membership Retention Guide "RUSTY MASON"** to bring back non attending members and to make proper presentations of long service pins etc. Brethren these guides can help your respective lodges and they are there for you to use. I encourage you to consider attempting their effectiveness. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

BROTHER TO BROTHER is a program that will be of great assistance to lodges and members in almost any situation of lodge gatherings. It is there for our use and we should take advantage of this information.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT The Leadership Development committee believes there are two means to communicate with lodge members. First we need the involvement of Past Masters and Past Grand Lodge Officers to get involved in Masonic Leadership. Secondly they need to be familiar with what the Leadership Development Committee does for the membership. Masonry will prosper and grow as long as it has good leaders. We need Past Masters to be willing to become more engaged with Grand Lodge. The Strategic goal of the Leadership development Committee

is to cultivate and utilize Masonic Leadership throughout the jurisdiction for the betterment of the craft as well as develop a program to address and train members in key areas. This committee uses many venues in their activities such as Leadership Assessment, Reference Guides and Surveys and Profiles in their efforts to assist the future leaders of our craft.

MASONIC EDUCATION: There are many aspects of Masonic Education can be enlightening, informative and helpful in our pursuit of learning as much as possible about ritual, history and logical learning of our craft. There is something of interest for every mason whether it is current or past information to improve our Masonic knowledge. The number of books written and movies made in recent times has aroused the interest in masonry both to the members and the public at large. We can never have too much information in any aspect of life and **FREEMASONRY** is no exception. We can receive this information through various means. First, there are many published writings you can acquire. Many are produced on a regular schedule such as the **REFLECTIONS NEWLETTER**, **FACILIFACTS** and the **DDGM COMMUNIQUE**, as well as the Masonic Library which has vast number of books that members would find interesting. Masonic Education will help reclaim our Masonic Identity and re-acquaint ourselves with who we are and what it can be so that we can relate to others with confidence about our craft. We often express pride of the many famous members through our PR materials and websites. Masonic Education is a continuous process as we encourage everyone to make a daily advancement. We are always challenged to live up to the teachings and philosophies. Brethren there is an abundance of information that will assist in being a better informed mason that can be derived from our History, Philosophy and Symbolism. I encourage you to consider any of these venues of information that will help us to be masons who are informed and satisfied with your situation of Masonic living.

DDGM and PAST MASTERS Course. Mentioned in the last Communique, Brethren who registered in the old course will be pleased to note that our **GRAND MASTER** has generously extended the deadline for completion and submission to **DECEMBER 31st 2013**. This will benefit you in your Masonic pursuits. Please take advantage of this great opportunity.

Please take time this month to remember those who made sacrifices that afford us the freedom we enjoy in Canada today.

John C. Green,
Deputy Grand Master