



KANSAS FREEMASONS
ON THE LEVEL

Vision 2020 Update to the Craft

For presentation at the Annual Communication, March 18, 2011

Introduction

At the last Annual Communication (2010), the Council of Administration unveiled Vision 2020, a ten year strategic plan intended to guide Kansas Masonry toward a four-part vision: A resurgence of interest in the institution of Freemasonry, a premier Grand Lodge facility, growth in membership, and, local lodges as the center piece of community Masonic activities and the core of harmony across all Masonic bodies.

To reach this vision, the Strategic Planning committee identified nine action areas. Governance, Financial Stability, and, Unity and Alignment were three areas with the longest planning horizon. Philanthropy had a medium planning horizon before it became critical. Leadership, Membership, Image, Masonic Experience, and Communication, however, were deemed the most critical areas and needed to be addressed immediately. The strategic planning committee considered Membership to be a measure rather than a tactic leaving four urgent strategic areas. These areas, each with aggressive goals, was assigned a Grand Lodge officer in the progressive line to lead the execution and drive results.

Leadership

The Leadership goal was for each lodge to have a sound strategic plan to guide them toward long-term growth, sound financial footing, capital improvement, fresh faces in positions of leadership, and solid reputation in their communities. In order to establish intermediate objectives, a Leadership Resource Team was formed. The team consists of Past Grand Masters and brothers across Kansas with proven leadership and planning skills. The break-out session presented today on Strategic Planning for Lodges was one of the products of this team. Their primary push is to provide tools, templates, and other resources, including human resources, to assist lodges with the development of their strategic plans. The team hopes to collect these plans so lodges can see them, share ideas that work, develop synergies where plans have commonalities, and provide starter templates for lodges that have never planned before. Lodge plans will clearly indicate top lodge priorities and strategic direction. Although Grand Lodge gets regular reports from District Deputy Grand Masters as to how lodges are doing at present, the plans produced by lodges will indicate where they want to go in the future. Grand Lodge will then be in a better position to understand what it can best do to help lodges in their endeavors for future success.



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Image

We have developed a Grand Lodge logo creating a positive, 21st century identification that currently ranks as one of the best Masonic logos in existence. This logo, with the words “Kansas Freemasons – On the Level”, is being incorporated onto all Grand Lodge correspondence and materials and combined with our new web presence. It will serve to distinguish Kansas Masonry as a leader in innovation worldwide. Going forward, you’ll see this mark on all communication coming from the Grand Lodge or its representatives.

Communication

The most welcome changes have been the much improved web site and Kansas Mason magazine. These two outlets now work in conjunction with each other and provide a much richer resource than we’ve ever had at our fingertips. We have redesigned the Kansas Mason to be a lower cost, yet more comprehensive newsletter devoted to reporting national and international Masonic news, regular book reviews, statewide events, and Grand Lodge programs, along with the traditional function of official newsletter of the Grand Lodge and a record of emblems and awards. The editorial staff have not missed a deadline and have worked tirelessly, bringing all their talents to bear on producing a first rate newsletter on a limited budget. According to an on-line survey on the Kansas Mason website, 88% of respondents rate the new Kansas Mason as either good or excellent.

We have designed and implemented a new website, to provide expanded content, news, member-only content, and are currently laying the groundwork for expanded e-commerce and e-registration features. According to Masonic commentator Chris Hodapp, “The Grand Lodge of Kansas has made a robust investment in quality design services for the website, and it shows.” Additionally, Grand Lodge uses the new web site as a channel to provide the most-up-to-date information, forms, news articles, and postings.

We established easier-to-remember email addresses based on position for Grand Lodge officers including the Area and District Deputy Grand Masters. There is now a Google Calendar that contains the upcoming events of the Grand Lodge which is assessable via the Grand Lodge web site and can update calendars in Google-enable phones. The calendar is constantly being updated to provide the latest information for participants.



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Masonic Experience

Our needs and desires change as we journey through life. Our Masonic journey is no different. The Masonic Experience, also known as the Masonic Life Cycle, looks at the entire spectrum of the Masonic journey from the time prior to becoming aware of the fraternity until the brother passes to the “Celestial Lodge” above. The primary effort in this strategic area has been to look at gaps between the time a brother is raised a Master Mason and the time he becomes self-actualized and has adopted the fraternity as a way of life worthy of his regular participation. The primary emphasis has been to look at new Masonic education methods and offerings that engage both the brother and his mentor, coach, and lodge officers. One example is the adaption of a course created by Brent Morris 33° and author of Idiot’s Guide to Freemasonry for use in Kansas. This exciting course has been well received in trials and should be available for everyone shortly.

Conclusion

When the lodges succeed, Grand Lodge succeeds and so does everything dependent on the lodge including the Mason’s family, the community, appendant bodies, and the fraternity at large. We have made giant strides in the first year of execution in all four Vision 2020 areas we engaged. It is the recommendation of the Council of Administration to continue to concentrate all effort on the four strategic goals through the next nine months. At the end of the 2011, we will re-assess our progress and decide whether we can begin to engage on some or all of the other of the remaining four strategic areas. I am proud to be part of this multiple-year effort that keeps Kansas Masonry on a target for growth, excitement, and long-term viability.

Respectfully Submitted,

With the Council

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R.: W.: Tracy L. Bloom

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Grand Junior Warden 2010-2011

Leadership Lead – Vision 2020