

# Coffee With The GM

## Week 2: Social Networking and Freemasonry

### Announcements:

- Grand Lodge is coming up in Sioux City on September 17-18. Make sure you get a room reserved at the Clarion Hotel – Contact information provided on the Grand Lodge web site.
  - The Clarion Hotel & Conference Center, Sioux City, IA
    - 707 4th Street
    - Sioux City, IA 51101
    - Phone: (712) 277-4101
    - Toll Free: (800) 593-0555
    - [www.clarionsiouxcity.com](http://www.clarionsiouxcity.com)
  - September 15-18, 2010
  - Please ask for the “Grand Lodge of Iowa” room block.
  - Call no later than August 15, 2010 to receive the special group discount.
  - ROOM RATE \$79.00 plus applicable tax
- Review your progress on having your “Best Year Ever”
- License plate applications

### Recap of Last Week: “Legends of Iowa Lodges”

- Most lodges have someone in their history who made significant contributions to their lodge and/or their community. Not monetary contributions, but through his action or leadership, inspired great things for his lodge or community (or both).
- Before telling you what this program *is*, let me tell you what it is **not**:
  - It is NOT a new award program.
  - It is NOT a competition.
  - It is NOT a recognition program for an individual or lodge to strive to achieve.
- Legends of Iowa Lodges *IS* a program to recognize past brothers for their *past* contributions to your lodge, your community or even Iowa Masonry. Towards that end, we are looking for brothers who made a difference. Having a brother who served as a Grand Lodge Officer, even Grand Master, is not what I am looking for. Instead, I want you to tell the story of your lodge as regards this brother.
- At Grand Lodge in Sioux City this coming September, we will be putting up a display of Legends. What we want to include in this display are photos, stories, clippings, etc. of the Legends of Iowa Lodges. It is possible that this will become a precursor to a larger, more permanent display at the Grand Lodge building in Cedar Rapids, called “Iowa Freemasonry’s Hall of Legends,” of which 2010 would be the inaugural class.

I’ve been talking all year long, asking lodges to have their “Best Year Ever” in 2010. One good way to discover additional ideas is to look back at your past. It might be that your lodge had a specific program or project years ago that for some reason is no longer being carried out. Now might be a good time to bring it back.

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1. Select one brother to be your lodge’s representative for “Legends of Iowa Lodges”
2. Write up a 1 - 2 page report about that brother’s contributions to your lodge or your

community.

3. Submit your report to the Grand Secretary's Office at PO Box 279, Cedar Rapids, IA

**Main Topic: Social Networking ( aka Facebook and Twitter et al )**

- I want to talk to you for a few minutes this morning about Social Networking and Masonry. Unless you have managed to avoid picking up a newspaper, hearing the news on the radio, seeing the news on the television, or avoided the Internet altogether, you have heard of Facebook, Twitter, and to a lesser extent, LinkedIn. What do these terms have in common? They are all social networking sites, accessible through the Internet, and in many cases through your smart phone.
- Social networking is like a turbo-charged version of the old party line telephones of yesteryear. It is a way to keep up with the goings on of your friends and acquaintances without picking up the telephone or writing a letter, waiting perhaps weeks for a response. Whether this is an improvement or not is open to debate, but the fact remains that it is not the way of the future, it is the way of the present. To ignore the potential uses of these tools is to limit, perhaps severely, your ability to attract and retain members of today's society. What can you do with Facebook? Among other things, you can send out multiple messages to your friends / members with one click of the mouse. You can also do that with email, but in addition to that, you can post events that your lodge may be having and invite your members, as well as guests to, requesting an RSVP without sending out any mail or picking up the phone. You can post photographs of recent events, you can have discussions about various topics, but you can also keep these things just between your members or members of your Facebook Group that you have allowed to join your Group. You can also communicate with people who have become a "Fan" of your Facebook Page (which now amounts to clicking on a "Like" button above your Page).
- **Who** is doing social networking (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)?
  - The vast majority of people on the Internet today. More importantly, the majority of potential members searching for information about Masonry on the web.
- **What** is social networking?
  - A method of communication that Internet users utilize to connect with current friends and acquaintances as well as create new relationships on-line.
- **When** should our lodge get involved?
  - NOW! Your current and prospective members are using these social networking technologies this very minute. The pool of your prospective members consists primarily of men who are technically adept and connected to these social networking sites. Not long ago, we said (and still do say) that unless your business or organization has a web site, you don't exist in the eyes of this generation. That is absolutely true, but it doesn't go far enough. Unless your business or organization is connected to social networking sites, you are considered far less relevant than those who are connected.
- **Where** are these current and prospective members using Facebook, etc?
  - Everywhere. In their homes, at work, public libraries, Starbucks, Internet Café's, you name it. All they need is a computer and an Internet connection.

- **Why** should your lodge use social networking, such as Facebook?

It is one of the best and easiest tools you can use right now to appear relevant to potential members, attract them to your lodge, and retain their membership for as long as possible. It also provides an easy way to stay connected with brothers who no longer live near the lodge. How many of your members have moved out of state or spend a significant amount of time in warmer climates? How often do you contact those brothers? With Facebook, you can maintain constant contact with them, inform/invite them to future events (real and virtual) and keep them abreast of what is going on in your lodge. Plus, it's easy to do and costs NOTHING!

- **What is Twitter?** Twitter is a real-time application that allows you to send out messages containing up to 140 characters (called tweets) to people who signed up to follow your posts. A good example might be if you were driving home from work one night and ran into a traffic jam due to a 12-car pileup. You could send out a tweet that said, "traffic jam on I-480 westbound between 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> St. Avoid if possible." A better example would be to make sure your members were followers on your lodge's twitter account and tweet: "Reminder, 3<sup>rd</sup> deg at 7:30 Thurs pm."
  - It's even easier to sign up for Twitter; just go to [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com), click on "Sign Up Now" and fill in the information.
- **How** do we get started? I thought you'd never ask. Follow the simple steps listed under "Action List."

#### **Action List:**

1. Go to the Grand Masters web site ([www.iagrandmaster.org](http://www.iagrandmaster.org)), download the call and listen again. Download the Action Items and proceed!
1. Turn on your computer and open up your Internet browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, etc.).
2. Go to <http://www.facebook.com>. If you already have an account, sign in. If not, proceed to step 3.
3. Fill out the information under the words: "Sign Up – It's free and anyone can join." Then click on the "Sign Up" button.
4. Type in the funny looking letters in the Security Check box and click "Sign Up."
5. Go through their 4-Step Process of 1) Add Friends, 2) Find Friends, 3) Fill out your Profile and 4) Upload a Profile Photo. (Note: These are all optional things, so do as many or as few as you'd like.) The neat thing about Facebook is that they will suggest people you might already know for you to add as a Friend. Also, in Finding Friends, you can provide your email information and it will automatically search your contact list to see what people are already signed up on Facebook that you could add as a Friend.
6. You are now ready to add a Group. Click on "Home" in upper left corner. Click on "Applications" box in lower left corner and select "group"
7. Click on "Create a New Group" button.
8. Enter your information.