- **Inaugural Speech 2024-20**

Be the example…

MEC James Carwell, Grand Chapter Officers, and Companions all, first and foremost I would like to acknowledge and thank the folks behind the scenes who were instrumental in convincing my dear wife to let me run for the Grand Line (2) years ago…MEC Keng Wei Chiew and MEC Don Gillies for having the conviction and belief in me.

These Companions are very well-known to me as meet and confer with them regularly.

But what I did not know was several MECs who are from outside the Calgary area and are also well-known in Capitular Masonry were also instrumental in my decision to run…they called me and said it's an easy and enjoyable job and it goes by very quickly…I can certainly attest that time does fly by when you are busy even as Grand ‘’H”.

To my surprise when I finally agreed to run, I won the election!

Two years later, here I stand as your Grand First Principal of this wonderful Jurisdiction that is chock full of dedicated Masons and in particular my predecessors who have proven themselves honorably through their respective terms.

A huge Thank you to all the MECs who encouraged and set an example for me to follow…you must understand that my original plan was to retire from my work and travel with my dear wife…my mistake was announcing my retirement.

I was happy just following the many past Grand First Principals' travels throughout our Grand Jurisdiction. It was enjoyable, to see and observe how they all made their mark upon completion of their term as G1P.

Of special note, I must thank MEC James Carwell for inviting me to accompany him on most of his Official visits this past year…what a joy it was to meet many Companions of this Grand Jurisdiction where Chapters welcomed the G1P with open arms.

Many thanks to MEC Keng Wei Chiew for Installing me today, for the words of wisdom, and to MEC Don Gillies for assembling a top-notch Installation team…I am ever **so** grateful to my Companions who made this day so memorable for me.

One more big Thank you is owed to REC Robert Cantwell and MEC Jerry Kopp for having the foresight to secure the next (2) Grand Convocations ahead of time…our Grand Scribe Ezra in particular is always working on behalf of all Royal Arch Masons and for that, I am very grateful to him!

My theme this year is, ‘’ Be the example’’ By that I mean to say, that Royal Arch Masonry is friendly, welcoming, and wonderful but it needs to be continually exercised and infused with new ideas to improve the interest of those who are established members and more importantly to attract new ones too.

What I am proposing is not a new idea but is an established effective methodology of having the Chapters adopt the frame of mind that doing the same old ways will bring new results.

No, on the contrary, we as leaders of our chapters must be an example to our Companions by demonstrating proficiency in the Work when exemplifying a Degree…the Candidates must be left with the impression that they have joined a worthwhile organization that they can at some future period make their mark in it.

Secondly, at every meeting, there has to be some form of Education whether it is Masonic or Not it does not matter but, it must be interesting to invoke conversation or questions.

Further, as an example, why it is that we do certain signs in Capitular Masonry as opposed to Craft Masonry is interesting enough for the unseasoned member but likely will remind the seasoned veteran why we do what we do in all of our meetings in hopes of revitalizing the Chapter with sharp memory work.

The Grand Chapter website is a wealth of information on whatever topics you choose from.

This is why, we have a Grand Lecturer in the North of the Province REC Bob Lemmens, and in the South, we have MEC Jerry Kopp. Both of these knowledgeable Companions are eager and ready to assist you and your Chapter in providing Masonic Education but you must ask them ahead of time so they may prepare an informative and interesting presentation for your Chapter.

Thirdly, there has to be a planned Festive Board that is affordable but must be tasty to attract them to attend the Festive Board. In other words, some thought ought to be given as to preparation or having it catered by the Order of the Eastern Star so your members will remember that attending the Festive Board at your Chapter is special and worthwhile…peanut butter and jam, or ham and cheese sandwiches just doesn’t cut it anymore.

Lastly, impress upon your members that the visitation of sister Chapters ought to be part of their Masonic journey…you visit them and bring news, and they in turn will likely reciprocate by visiting your Chapter in kind.

The leaders of your respective Chapters should make it a personal task to always invite newer members and older ones also to travel or visit other Chapters…in this manner, they will hopefully adopt regular visits as part of their Masonic journey.

Furthermore, visitation outside of our Districts is highly rewarding when you see how other Chapters deal with keeping their members engaged and asking for more information…when this happens you know that these members are seeking more than what is presented to them.

Then it is incumbent upon you the Principals of your Chapters to call your Grand Lecturer of your area or GDS to help formulate a more substantial piece of Education to satisfy the hunger of new members seeking more light!

Finally, I would like to congratulate the incoming Officers of this Grand Chapter and wish everyone a satisfying journey this upcoming Masonic year, be the example for others to follow in your Districts and your Chapters.

I like to think that everyone who joins our great Fraternity joins with the best intentions of not only educating themselves but to helping others less knowledgeable attain and understand the myriad of information that is often time given but not fully explained.

As Grand First Principal, I plan to pay an official visit to all the Chapters in this very large Grand Jurisdiction, and after this task is completed, I would like to visit fraternal Chapters in Alberta and outside of Alberta.

My goal is, to motivate this Grand Chapter and all Chapters in this Grand Jurisdiction that ‘’Good enough’’ is simply not acceptable. By that, I mean that we must make every effort to make exemplification of our Ritual ‘’Special’’ and memorable to our candidates to create an impression that the Chapters that they joined went through a lot of work to welcome them into Capitular **Masonry!**

Once again, I thank you for bestowing me the honor of being your representative of this Grand Chapter, I am deeply honored and remain your faithful and humble servant!

MEC Jaime Wong

Grand First Principal

Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Alberta

2024-2025