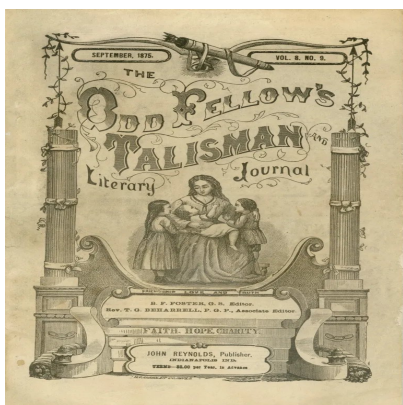




Communication as the Lifeblood of Our Order: The Case of Pan American No. 47

Description

By Yerismel Fern  ndez P  rez

(Inspired by and adapted from the national debate regarding the funding of the Sovereign Grand Lodge  s printed bulletins)

This week, many of us received the latest issue of the Sovereign Grand Lodge magazine. Upon flipping it over, I noticed a brief announcement on the back cover urging us to renew our subscription. I was deeply surprised that our own fraternity would ask us for an additional payment to subscribe to its official newsletter.

Let  s be realistic: institutional communication is neither a commercial product nor a   superfluous expense   to be cut during tough times. It is the glue that holds us together. If an organization is facing difficulties  such as declining membership or tight budgets  the worst thing it can do is stop communicating. On the contrary, that is precisely when we must redouble our efforts to connect with the rank and file. If the only thing a member gets out of their membership is a payment card and tedious business meetings, why would they keep coming back?

An Example Close to Home: Pan American No. 47 and the Digital Age

I must commend our own Pan American Lodge No. 47. While the debate over extra fees plays out at other levels, our lodge has done an admirable job with the resources at its disposal. We have a high-quality digital platform where Brothers can view and pay their dues, vote for the   Odd Fellow of the Year,   participate in auctions, and make donations.

Furthermore, we have digitized our records, created databases to streamline administrative tasks, and constantly keep our WhatsApp and Facebook groups up to date. This initiative has been so well received that lodges around the world are following our activities. However, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. As a member of nearly 30 fraternal organizations, I have observed a clear correlation: the successful orders are those that communicate actively across multiple channels, respecting each Brother  s preferences. We cannot follow a vision we do not know, nor can we love a fraternity from which we feel disconnected.

REPRESENTATIVE Ave.
Membership of ISO 000,
 Most of whom are heads of
 Families. Our Jurisdic-
 tion covers—The United
 States, Canada, The West
 Indies, Central and South
 America, and Africa.

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no. 1 of affiliated Wellington Lodge. K.

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To break out of isolation and attract â??new facesâ??non-Masons passing by our doorsâ??we must take our fraternity beyond the temple walls. If the community doesnâ??t know what we do, we donâ??t exist to them.

Here are some key activities to raise our profile and involve the Brethren:

- Engage with noble causes that have a public impact: We should boost high-visibility projects, such as our fundraising for the League Against Cancer and establishing partnerships with foundations that benefit both the community and the lodgeâ??s funds.
- Leverage our physical presence: We already have signage (both the interior and exterior illuminated displays) to help passersby recognize our name. Letâ??s use this space to invite the community to open events.
- Fraternal activities with external visibility: Letâ??s organize more group outingsâ??to museums, beaches, or sporting eventsâ??while wearing our Masonic insignia. Non-Masons need to see that we are a united, active, and modern community.
- Telethons and media: We should maintain and strengthen our presence at major mass-appeal events, such as the Telemundo 51 telethon, with the support of our Grand Lodge Officers.
- Integration and district visits: Letâ??s continue strengthening ties with the Grand Lodge of Florida, the Sovereign Lodge, and the lodges of District 14 (such as RenÃ© W. GarcÃa, Elio Estrada, Fort Dallas 44, and Manuel Bosakewich). Inviting Brethren from other lodges to our anniversaries and gala dinners injects new energy into our lodge activities.
- Modernizing meetings (Hybrid Format): We should promote hybrid meetings (via Zoom) for Brethren who are far away or traveling. A Brother who can connect remotely is a Brother who does not drift away from the Order.

Brothers and sisters, it is our shared responsibility to keep the flame alive. I invite you to read our digital newsletter, participate in activities, and, above all, propose new ideas so that Pan American No. 47 continues to be a beacon of Friendship, Love, and Truth in our community.

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