

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Tuesday is the National primary election when we go to the polls to select who will lead the political parties to the general election in November. It is our right and duty to vote for those we feel will represent our ideals and best interest. So, go to the poles and cast your ballot or others will select who will represent us.

This leads us to the subject of my message today. As Worthy Grand Patron, it falls on me to lead the Grand Chapter in the election of officers and legislation. Your Worthy Grand Matron Pam, and I are currently weighing the options of holding Grand Chapter in October within the guidelines as set forth by the CDC and state. These are currently in flux as our state reopens and our plans hinge on other decisions.

One option put forth is to have a virtual Grand Chapter such as the Grand Lodge just had. I was involved with some of the discussion leading up to Grand Lodge, mainly, secrecy of the ballot and how many would be necessary to open Grand Lodge. Secrecy of the ballot was accomplished by mailing out what amounted to absentee ballots to the voting delegates. Each Lodge has 3: The Master, Senior and Junior Wardens, the grand officers, then, there are the Grand Masters. The mailing contained a cover letter with instructions, a return envelope, the ballot and an unmarked envelope for the completed ballot to be sealed inside, then placed in the return envelope. Upon receipt at the Grand Lodge, the Grand Secretary noted the receipt and recorded the lodges responding, thus establishing quorum and verified credentials. The sealed ballots were then opened on Friday evening after Grand Lodge was opened and the ballots counted. Grand Lodge went into recess until 9 a.m. Saturday morning and the tellers reported the results. Rewards were presented and the raffle drawn. No other Grand Lodge business was conducted until the Grand Lodge officers were installed Saturday afternoon. This business will hold over till the next regular session of Grand Lodge unless sooner convened by order.

As you can see, this was rather involved, but, not nearly so, as our own must be. Number one, to send out absentee ballots to all our members who have a vote at Grand Chapter would be a large and expensive task to ask of our Grand Secretary. It takes more of our Grand Chapter officers to open Grand Chapter and we have no idea, at this time, how many will be able to gather in one place. The Grand Lodge is considering procedures to open our Lodges as the CDC and state allows.

Taking all of this into account, I personally can't see us doing justice to our members with a virtual Grand Chapter.

Worthy Grande Matron Pam and I are planning to meet with the hotel management soon to discuss holding Grand Chapter. We will then know the answer to some of our questions, one of which is cut-off date, so we don't lose our down payment.



Worthy Grand Matron Pam is asking the worthy matrons for a poll of their chapter members to see how many of our members will be willing to attend Grand Chapter this year. We need your input. It is your Grand Chapter. If not enough are willing to attend safely, then we will make other plans. Your safety is paramount in our considerations.

We will not be able to have OES campout as we know it. The campground is open and some of us who have pre-registered are still planning to go, but, may have to cancel if the campground cannot accommodate us. Our campout committee is working on this.

How we finish our official visits are still up in the air. We are working on several scenarios at this time, but, so much depends on the directives from Grand Lodge, the CDC and the state. We will keep you informed by email, facebook, and our website. Also, we are working on an all member Zoom meeting in the near future.

In the meantime, stay safe, follow the guidelines when in public, wash your hands often, stay in touch with your sisters and brothers, forget not your Brothers in your Lodges, and lastly, continue the great work of caring in your communities.

Until we meet again, and can come together in a more traditional fashion,

Via con Dios  
Don Sultemeier WGP