

**GRAND LODGE A.F. & A.M. OF CANADA  
IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO  
Ottawa District 2**

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June 30, 2011

**DDGM's Message for July 2011**

**My Brethren:**

And so farewell! This will be my last monthly letter. All that's really left to say is "Thanks for the memory".

It has been a wonderful year and I've enjoyed every minute of it. Thank you all for allowing me the high privilege of being the representative of the Grand Master in Ottawa 2 and for all the kindness you have bestowed upon me in that role.

The big event this month is Grand Lodge. I hope to see many of you there. I can promise you that you will enjoy it.

Our District project has been an enormous success. We raised almost \$10,000 and the project will now swing into action. A series of programs are to be initiated using our donation as a springboard. I will be participating in their implementation. I have copied below the letter I have recently received regarding our project. It has been very worthwhile.

***Families living with breast cancer***

*The Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation invests millions of dollars each year in cancer research, equipment and patient care – every penny staying right here in our community, from Pembroke to Cornwall to Hawkesbury. In 2011 we are addressing the emotional, physical, social, practical, spiritual, informational and psychological needs of cancer survivors and their families with the opening of the region's FIRST centre for cancer survivorship at the Maplesoft Centre.*

*Breast cancer affects more women than any other cancer. Fortunately, survival rates have been increasing dramatically over the past several decades, which means there are thousands of local breast cancer survivors in our community. These are our mothers, wives, daughters, sisters and friends. The Cancer Foundation, with the help of Ottawa District 2, wants to ensure these women and their families are supported.*

***How together, we can help***

*Cancer Survivorship Care will be offered in a series of programs and workshops to assist the breast cancer patient, and those closest to them, through every step of the cancer journey from pre-diagnosis, through the process of diagnosis and treatment, to post-treatment recovery.*

*Cancer Survivorship Care programming will be offered free of charge and without a medical referral. Certified cancer care professionals and volunteers will offer tailored individual and group services at the new Maplesoft Centre and at partner-satellite sites across Eastern Ontario and online.*

*We would be honoured to work with you Dr. Forster to develop, expand and implement these programs in our community with the help of funding from Ottawa District 2.*

*Through affiliations with organizations like the Lance Armstrong Foundation and others, the Cancer Foundation will bring world-renowned programs to our region. Through partnerships with local health care institutions, community groups like Breast Cancer Action Ottawa, and with the expertise of wellness practitioners, we will develop additional innovative services. Here in Eastern Ontario, 80% of survivors have reported encountering difficulties interpreting information, navigating services, coping with the disease and accessing holistic care<sup>1</sup>. The impact is not only on the patient and her family, but also on our medical system as a whole.*

*Here are examples of some of the programs that funds could be directed to, and we would be happy to discuss and explore these ideas with you:*

**Cancer Coaching**

*The first point of contact for survivors will be with a professional navigator—a cancer coach. This will ensure personal attention is given to each individual. Coaches will help survivors identify their needs and interests and facilitate access to appropriate resources. Survivors will have access to ten hours of support from a professional health coach. The coach will help each individual establish quality of life objectives, identify barriers and challenges and develop an action plan best suited to their situation. The role of the coach will be to help empower survivors.*

**Wonders and worries:**

*When a parent or grandparent is diagnosed with cancer the impact on children is profound. It can affect their mental health, family functioning, school performance, friendships, growth and development, and overall adjustment. Typically, children in these situations experience behavioural changes, physical complaints, anxiety, decreased use of coping skills, and changes in sleeping and eating patterns. Through the Wonders & Worries Program children are taught coping strategies – and given tools they can use to help understand and handle difficult situations and potential negative effects. Parents are also given the resources they need to support their family during a crisis. Breast cancer not only affects the woman diagnosed, but her family.*

*These are but two of the dozens of programs we will be developing, with breast cancer patients making up the majority of users... programs like Eating Right, Vitality (Exercise program), Gentle Yoga... all designed to improve the quality of life of cancer patients and their families.*

I am delighted with how this project has succeeded. However true success will only occur with the implementation of these programs. I will work on them with the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation as a volunteer. If anyone is interested in participating please contact me. This invitation is extended to your family as well as yourself.

Yours fraternally

*John*

John Forster, DDGM