

THE GRAND EAST

MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER

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Achieving Harmony In Diversity

VOLUME 2
ISSUE 5
OCT 2025

Grand Master's Message

Brethren,

Over the summer I have had the opportunity to visit other jurisdictions, and I have seen a lot of wonderful programs that are actively implemented. BC has Ashlar College, Ontario has the Cornerstone, Alberta has Weekend Without Titles, Saskatchewan has the Youth Camp. They have Lodge Excellence Awards and Lodge of Instructions. These are headed by Past Grand Masters and members of their Board.

Sadly, I don't see anything of that kind of Initiatives here in our jurisdiction actively implemented or supported by members. Instead, it seems like our efforts are more focused on trying to prove that others are wrong and we are right. We focus on blaming others while failing to recognize our own flaws and mistakes, and we try to feed our egos instead of using our reasoning. And yet we claim that as Freemasons, we are taught to use the various working tools for the more noble and glorious purpose of brotherly love and friendship. We proclaim that we are all on the level, that we are just and upright men. But are we truly living those values? If not, what does that make us?

Now, what I would like to see this year is development rather than destruction. We have to work together to create and build programs that will truly benefit our jurisdiction—not serve personal agendas.

Here's what we're working on:

- I've asked MWB Jardine and his team to review the 2024–2025 cashflow and make a report and recommendations at the Board of General Purpose meeting which he did last September BGP meeting. We have to promote transparency to put an end to fingerpointing, accusations and false information.
- RWB Jeff Chartrand is updating the counsellor's manuals, with help from the Education Committee. Together with VWB Jeff Price, they're both looking at how to bring BC's Ashlar College model here to Manitoba.
- We're bringing back the Lodge Excellence Award program.
- I'm working with RWB Tim Heisler and others to organize fundraising events. So We're launching Club 420 very soon and with the help of the brethren of Manitoba Maharlika Lodge #192, we hosted GM Golf Tournament last September 28th; proceeds will go to the Masonic Foundation and Grand Lodge Endowment fund.
- We're also aiming to increase community presence by joining parades and events, including cornerstone laying ceremony scheduled on October 10, 2025.
- We are going to consecrate Widows Son's Lodge this November and hopefully institute another lodge soon.

These are the things I would like for us to focus on—not personal attacks or negativity.

Brethren let's move forward, together!

Fraternally,

MWB Rey Galapon
Grand Master 2025–2026
Grand Lodge of Manitoba
Achieving Harmony in Diversity



Grand Lodge Officers

Officers

Grand Master	MW Bro. Rey Galapon (136)
IPGM	MW Bro. Emad Bisharat (3)
Deputy Grand Master	RW Bro. Gord Greasley (3)
Sr. Grand Warden	RW Bro. Tim Klassen (154)
Jr. Grand Warden	RW Bro. Jeff Chartrand (180/189)
Grand D of C	RW Bro. Villarico Villarin (136)

Grand Secretary	MW Bro. Kris Goodmanson (136)
Grand Librarian	RW Bro. Brian Rountree (174)
Grand Archivist	W Bro. Trevor Millar (1) <i>*GM Appointed</i>
Grand Chaplain	RW Bro. Dennis Henney (182)
Grand Historian	RW Bro. Ted Yorke (183)

Grand Lodge Education Officer	VW Bro. Jeff Price (186)
JRC Evans Lecturer	VW Bro. Michael Hall (136)
Sr. Grand Deacon	VW Bro. Carlos Alt (25)
Jr. Grand Deacon	VW Bro. Donico Estanislao (68)
Grand Organist	VW Bro. Gordon MacDonald (4)
Sr. Grand Stewart	VW Bro. Mark Mariano (168)
Jr. Grand Stewart	VW Bro. Josel Sta. Ana (154)
Gr. Sword Bearer	VW Bro. Rolan Tan (154/145/192)
Gr. Standard Bearer	VW Bro. Cocoy Borja (168)
Grand Pursuivant	VW Bro. Roland Mendez (192)
Grand Piper	VW Bro. Troy Blair (1)
Grand Tyler	VW Bro. Brian Pareja (62)
Grand Treasurer	MW Bro. Chibu Uson (189)

District Deputy Grand Masters

First Masonic District	RW Bro. John Drew (145)
Tenth Masonic District	RW Bro. David Corder (112)
Thirteenth Masonic District	RW Bro. Jose Casares (111/192)
Assiniboine Masonic District	RW Bro. Elmar Quitiong (168)
Parkland Masonic District	RW Bro. Ryan McKay (14)
Unity Masonic District	RW Bro. Victor Lopes (127)
Grand Master's Area	RW Bro. Bryan Cruda (174)

Grand Master's Itinerary 2025-2026

DATE	DAY	TIME	EVENT	LODGE/ORG	LOCATION
Oct 3, 2025	Mon	7:00 PM	Capitol Lodge #136		EKMT - 205 Kimberly
Oct 6, 2025	Mon	7:00 PM	Sturgeon Creek Lodge #145	SCL#145	Sturgeon Creek Lodge
Oct 15-17, 2025	Wed/Thur	2-4 PM	Western Canada Conference	Khartum	Banff, Alberta
Oct 18, 2025	Sat	2-4 PM	Potentate's Ball	Khartum	MMC
Oct 23 - 26, 2025	Thur/Sun		GL California - ANCOM	GL Cal	San Francisco CA
Nov 1, 2025	Sat		Hands Across the Border		Brandon MB
Nov 8, 2025	Sat	10:00 PM	Institution of Jacques DeMolay Lodge		EKMT - 205 Kimberly
Nov 22, 2025	Fri	2:00 PM	Widows Sons Lodge Consecration		MMC
Nov 28, 2025	Fri	7:00 PM	Fil-Can Cabletow Lodge #189	FCCL#189	EKMT - 205 Kimberly
Dec 6, 2025	Sat	1:00 PM	GLMB Midyear Communication		MMC
Dec 14, 2025	Sun	1-4:00 PM	GM/GLM Christmas Gathering	GLM	MMT - 420 Corydon
Jan 7, 2025	Wed	7:30 PM	Official Visit Beaver Ionic Lodge #25		MMC
Jan 28, 2025	Wed	7:30 PM	Official Visit Acacia Lodge #111		EKMT - 205 Kimberly
Feb 12 - 18, 2025			Conf. GMs & G/Sec		Chicago, USA
Apr 10 - 11, 2025	Fri/Sat		All Canada Conference	GLM	Winnipeg
Apr 12 - 24, 2025			GL Philippines - ANCOM & Visit	GL - Phils.	Philippines

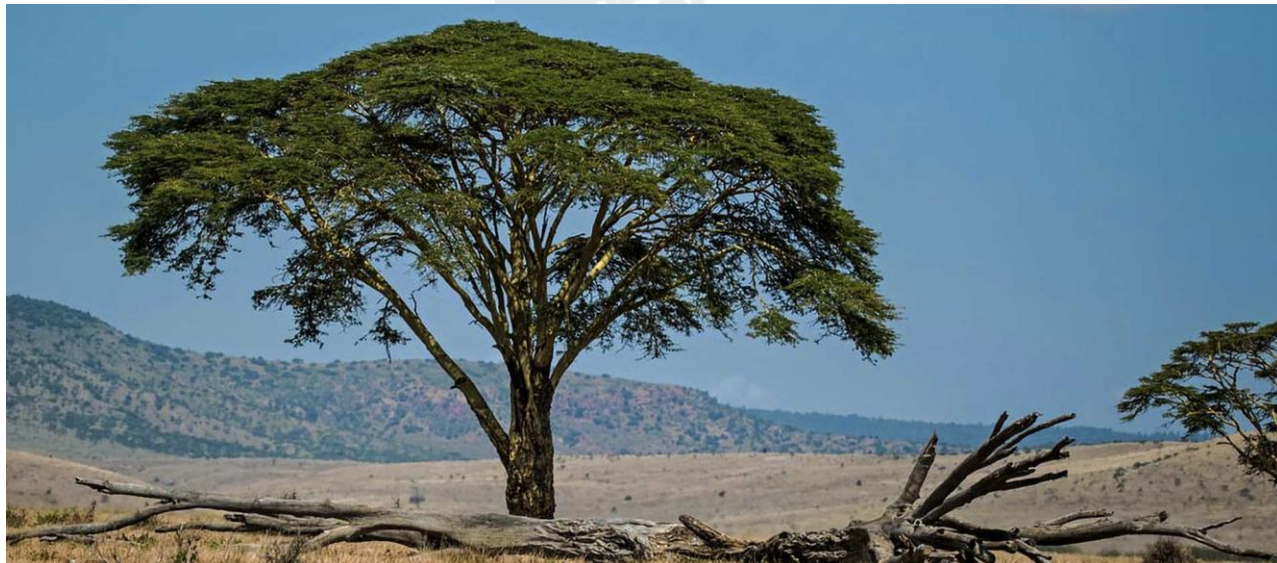
From Darkness...



Comes the Light...

Sprig of Acacia

Themasonictrowel.com



Any discussion of the Acacia, important to Freemasonry as one of its fundamental and most beautiful symbols, should begin with clearing away a little of the “rubbish of the Temple” which results from the careless writing of unlearned men. So much has been published about the Acacia which simply is not so that it is no wonder that Freemasons are frequently confused as to what the plant really is, how it came to be a symbol of immortality, and what its true place in religious history may be.

We cannot accurately denote a particular plant or tree as “the Acacia plant” or “the Acacia tree” for the same reason that we cannot accurately specify “the Rose bush” or “the pine tree.” There are too many varieties of roses, too many kinds of pine trees to distinguish one from the other merely by the definite article.

As botanists know more than four hundred and fifty varieties of Acacia, “the acacia can be only the most general of terms, meaning them all.” So perhaps it is not to be wondered at that we find one Masonic writer speaking of the “spreading leaves of the Acacia tree” and another talking of “the low thorny shrub which is the Acacia.” We have no certainty that the trees and shrubs now growing in Palestine are the same as those which flowered in Solomon’s era. So that it is not impossible that “Acacia totilis (in Arabic, Es-sant)” and “Acacia Seyal (In Arabic Sayal)” grew to greater size three thousand years ago than they do now. But authorities doubt that the Acacia which grows low, as a bush, and which in all probability must have been the plant which one of the three plucked from the ground as the “Sprig of Acacia,” ever grew large enough to supply boards three feet wide. Wynn Westcott says: “The Acacia is the only tree of any size which grows in the deserts of Palestine, but it has been doubted that even it ever grew large enough to provide planks one and one-half cubits in width.”

Masonic Education

Scholars are united in saying the “Shittah Tree” of the Old Testament is an Acacia; and that “Shittim”, the plural, refers to Acacia. In Joel (3-18), one of the poetic and beautiful prophecies of the Old Testament, we read:

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim.” Commentators place the “valley of Shittim” as possibly the Kidron of Exekiel; but certainly as some dry, thirsty valley where the Acacia, which flourished where other plants perished from lack of water, was known to grow; another reason for thinking the original Acacia which Freemasons revere was the smaller shrub, rather than the large tree. Inasmuch as Akakia” in Greek signifies “Innocence,” it was wholly natural for Hutcheson (Spriti of Masonry, 1795) to connect the Masonic plant with the Greek definition. He said:

“We Masons, describing the deplorable state of religion under the Jewish Law, speak in figures; “Her Tomb was in the rubbish and filth cast forth of the Temple, and Acacia wove its branches over her monument;” “akakia” being the Greek word for innocence, or being free from sin, implying that the sins and corruptions of the old law and devotees of the Jewish altar had hid religion from those who sought her, and she was only to be found where innocence survived under the banner of the Divine Lamb; and as to ourselves, professing that we were to be distinguished by our “Acacy,” or as true “Acacians,” in our religious faith and tenets.”

It is now well understood that Hutcheson, great as is the debt we owe him, was too anxious to read a Christian interpretation into everything Masonic to be considered as infallible. While the coincidence of the Greek word our name for the Shittah-Tree is suggestive, it hardly seems sufficient to read “innocence” into the symbol when it already has so sublime a significance.

Mackey considers the acacia also as a symbol of initiation, because sacred plants were symbolical of initiation in many of the Ancient Mysteries, from which Freemasonry derived so much. The modern Masonic scholar is rather apt to pass over this meaning, he is also thinking that a symbol already so rich needs no further meanings to make it important and beautiful.

Apparently the beginning of the association of the acacia with immortality is in the legend of Isis and Osiris, one of the oldest myths of mankind, traced back into Egypt many thousands of years before the Christian era. Its beginnings, like those of all legends which have endured, are shrouded in the mist which draws a veil between us and the days before history.

According to the legend, Osiris, who was at once both King and God of the Egyptians, and was tricked by his brother Typhon (who was very jealous of Osiris), during the King’s absence on a beneficent mission to his people. Later, at a feast provided for the King-God’s pleasure, Typhon brought a large chest, beautiful in workmanship, valuable in the extreme, and offered it as a gift to whoever possessed a body which best fitted the chest. When Osiris entered the box, Typhon caused the lid to shut and fastened; after which the whole was thrown into the Nile.

Masonic Education

Currents carried it to Byblos, Phoenicia, and cast it ashore at the foot of an acacia tree. The tree grew rapidly and soon encased the chest holding the body of Osiris.

When Isis, faithful queen, learned of the fate of her husband she set out in search of the body. Meanwhile the King of the Land where the acacia concealed the body, admiring the tree's beauty, cut it down and made of its trunk, a column. Learning this, Isis became nurse to the King's children and received the column as her pay. In the tree trunk, preserved, was the body of Osiris.

During their long captivity at the hands of the Egyptians; what more natural than that the Israelites should take for their own a symbol already old, and make of the "Shittah-Tree" a symbol of immortality, just as had been done in Egypt?

It is perhaps too much to say that Israelites were the first to plant a sprig of acacia at the head of a grave as a symbol of immortality. But that they did so in ancient times is stated by many historians. Dalcho assigns a novel reason for this practice; that as the Codens, or Priests, were forbidden to step upon or over a grave, it was necessary that spots of internment be marked, and, the acacia being common, it was elected for the purpose.

Mackey disagrees with Dalcho as to these reasons for marking a grave with a living plant. Perhaps the origin of the custom is not important; certain it is that all peoples in almost all ages have planted or laid flowers on the graves of those they love, as a symbol of the resurrection and a future life. The lily of the modern church, the rosemary which is for remembrance, the sprig of acacia of the ancient Israelites and the modern Mason, have all the same meaning upon a grave - the visual expression of the dearest hope of all mankind.

It is both curious and interesting to learn that many trees, in many climes, have been symbols of immortality. India gave to Egypt the lotus, long a sacred plant; the Greeks thought the myrtle the tree of immortal life, and the mistletoe, which survives in our lives merely as a pleasant diversion at Christmas, was held by the Scandinavians and the Druids as sacred as we consider the acacia. Association of a plant and immortality is emphasized in the New Testament - see John 12:24:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

Also familiar passages from St. Paul (First Corinthians 15:36,37) used so much in funeral services:

"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain . . ."
Finally we find in our own stately prayer in the Master's Degree, such a coupling up of a tree and life immortal; "For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branches thereof will not cease." - which of course, is taken from Job 14:7.

Masonic Education

Thus there is ample historical recognition of the connection between that which grows and dies and grows again, and the idea of immortality; we do not have to consider the undoubted fact that “shittah-trees” cut to form beams of house, often sprouted branches even when they had no roots, nor our own thought of almost any variety of pine as “the evergreen, or ever living” tree, to see that there is much background behind the symbol.

It is one of the glories of Freemasonry that so much has been made of the symbol, so dear and deep a meaning vested in it, that it has almost equaled the square as Freemasonry’s nearest and dearest. All that was mortal on Tyrian lay murdered in a grave “dug six feet due east and west.” The genius of the Temple was no more. No more designs upon the trestleboard; no more glorious architecture to come from that mighty brain; no more holding of meetings with Solomon and Hiram in the Sanctum Sanctorum - the Widow’s Son was dead! Of those who search one finds a sprig of acacia. Oh, immortal story; thrice immortal ritual makers, who coupled together a resurrection and a sprig of green! True, he whose mother was of the Tribe of Naphtali was destroyed, but his genius lived, his spirit marched on, his virtues were recorded in stone and in the hearts of those who built on Mt. Moriah’s heights.

For at least two hundred years and probably much longer the sprig of acacia has held Freemasonry’s premier teaching. The grave is not the end. Bodies die and decay, but something “which bears the nearest affinity to that which pervades all nature and which never, never, dies,” rises from the grave to become one of that vast throng which has preceded us. Error can slay, as can evil and selfish greed, but not permanently. That which is true and fair and fine cannot be destroyed. Its body may be murdered, its disappearance may be effected, the rubbish of the Temple and a temporary grave may conceal it for a time, but where is interred that which is mortal, there grows an evergreen or ever living sprig of acacia - acacia none the less that it may be a spiritual sprig, a plant not of the earth, earthly.

When he who was weary, plucked at a sprig of acacia, he had “evidence of things not seen.” When we toss the little sprig of evergreen which is our usual cemetery “sprig of acacia” into the open grave of one of our brethren who has stepped ahead upon the path we all must tread, we give evidence of belief in a “thing not seen.”

For never a man has seen the spirit of one who has gone, or visioned the land where no shadows are. If we see it in our dreams, we see by faith, not eyes. But we can see the acacia - we can look back through the dragging years to the legend of Osiris and think that even as the acacia grew about his body to protect it until Isis might find it, so does the acacia of Freemasonry bloom above the casket from which, in the solemn words of Ecclesiastes “the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”



Events & Announcements

Visit to Dryden Ontario with MWGM Jamie Ireland of GL of Canada in the
Province of Ontario – Sept 9, 2025



Events & Announcements

Visit to Northern Lodges (The Pas, Flin Flon and Thompson) Sept 12-14, 2025



Events & Announcements

Official Visit to Vermillion Lodge #68
Sept 20, 2025



Events & Announcements

Official Visit to Union Historical Lodge
Sept 26, 2025



Grand Master's Golf Tournament – Kildonan Park Golf Course
Sept 28, 2025



Events & Announcements

Prince of Wales #14 Ladies Table Lodge
Sept 27, 2025



WINNIPEG RIVER LODGE NO. 154, HOLDS FIRST MEETING AND MARKS SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE IN SOUTHEAST MANITOBA

Bro Ian Carganillo (Viking 175)

In a development with no prior parallel, Winnipeg River Lodge No. 154 held its first Regular Stated Meeting in Steinbach under dispensation, making the impossible dream of moving the lodge closer to where majority of its members reside to reality.

"This was the fruit of long discussions and consultations among the lodge's members to bring the lodge closer to home and further promote Freemasonry in Southeast Manitoba," according to WB Emmanuel Rabanera who is the immediate past master of the lodge. "In addition, this has been long overdue since the idea of establishing a masonic lodge in Steinbach was floated a couple of years ago by VW Don Carganillo," he added.



"It was not an easy decision at first as we were faced by some challenges like the what ifs but I totally share the vision of the brethren of having a lodge in Steinbach and for this I am a strong believer and supporter of this dream," interjected by RWB Tim Klassen, the Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba and who was made an MM in Winnipeg River Lodge 154.

The first meeting of the lodge in the city of Steinbach was held last September 12, 2025 and was well attended by 31 Master Masons including sojourners from the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, visiting brethren from neighboring blue lodges and the 13th Masonic District headed by its District Deputy Grand Master RWB Jose Bonifacio (JB) Casares, SW Percival King Tabing of Acacia 111 and WM Rene Santos of Sturgeon Creek Lodge 145.

After 150 long years, this first masonic meeting by Winnipeg River Lodge No. 154 in Southeast Manitoba region will go down in history of Manitoba Freemasonry being the first lodge to establish its presence in this part of the province. Furthermore, this unprecedented move by the brethren moving the lodge meeting place from Ophir Lodge in Beausejour, MB to the City of Steinbach can be likened to laying a cornerstone to establish the niche of the craft in the area. This will also attract good men who seek to become even better men and enjoy the brotherhood of freemasonry.

WE WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO THE
PHOENIX LODGE'S ANNUAL
FISH FRY

NORBERRY – GLENLEE C.C.

26 MOLGAT AVENUE

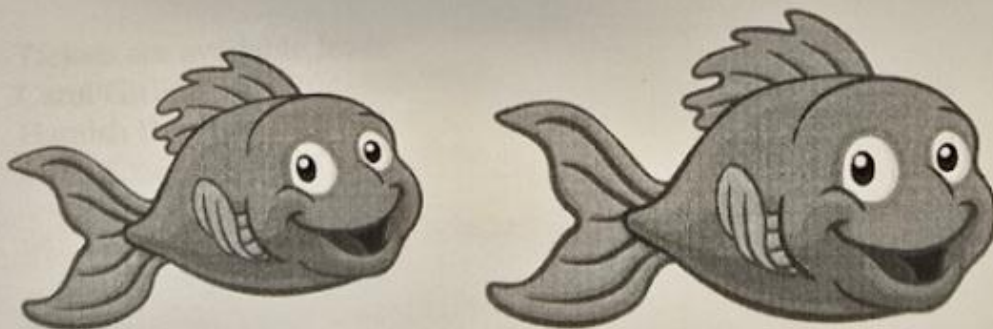
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2025

ADULTS \$30.00 CHILDREN UNDER 12-\$5.00

50/50 DRAWS, SILENT AUCTION

Meal- Pickerel, Baked Potato, Salad,

Coffee, Tea, Juice



GRAND LODGE OF MANITOBA APPAREL ORDER FORM

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custom apparel!

To order, kindly send your information and order(s)
by email at manitobamaharlika.comm@gmail.com

Order Information

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Indicate item type, size & qty



To confirm your order, kindly send Payments To:
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Please include your name in the payment notes.

For cash payments, please contact:
RW Bro. Arnold Calambacan Sr.
T: (431) 688 5181

All orders and payments must be submitted by
Nov 14, 2025

You will be contacted as soon as your order
is ready.

Thank you for supporting the Grand Lodge!

All prices include basic sizes (S–XL). For 2XL and up, add \$3 per size increment.

T-Shirt \$25

Polo Shirt \$35

Hoodie \$50



VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED!



Help cancer patients in your community



Canadian
Cancer
Society

**WHEELS
OF HOPE**

For more information

Email volunteer@cancer.ca
or call 1-888-939-3333



WHEELS OF HOPE TESTIMONIAL

I just wanted to drop you a line saying how helpful and wonderful the Wheels of Hope program is! I had seen the vans around, but it never really clicked in how essential they would be until I started going through my treatments. Especially during radiation, I noticed JUST how many people it is helping! Watching van, after vehicle picking up so many people in the loop outside the hospital, it's really overwhelming how much love people have to give.

All of the drivers are so kind, and it was really interesting learning about their stories and how they became volunteers. Cancer is so consuming, and they decided to give back. I love that. In particular, there was an absolute wonderful driver I had named Trevor. His wife had battled breast cancer twice, and was doing well. He is a gem of a human being. Super funny, always with a fun anecdote about what he had done on the weekend. Open with his wife's battle, and just so so kind.

Trevor always made my day better. Made me realize that there is hope, that if his wife could do it, so could I. That there's still no reason not to smile, and be kind toward others.

Cancer can be super lonely, and until you are in the thick of it, you don't realize what a gift just seeing a smiling face can be.

Holly Thiessen

Articles published in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinion of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba or any of its officers or members, but are solely those of the writer. Freemasonry is the world's oldest and largest fraternity. It is comprised of adult men (18+) of good character from every country, religion, race, age, income, education, and opinion. Its body of knowledge and system of ethics is based on the belief that each man has a responsibility to improve himself while being devoted to his family, his faith, his country, and his fraternity.

For submissions/requests and inquiries please contact:

TGEMonthlyNewsletter@gmail.com

Deadline of submission(s) and request(s) for the Nov issue is on Oct 31

