

Rite Notes
Membership and Recruiting
Grand York Rite Bodies of Florida
15 October 2009

“Begin Planning Now”

As we come to a close of our festivals for this year, I congratulate each of you for your efforts in bringing the “Light” to your brother masons, and bring them into York Rite. This has been a good year for Knightings. We still have one or two districts that will complete their festivals after this mailing, but to this point we have far surpassed last year in new members. Congratulations and keep up the good work. We now need to look at February-March-April time frame when our next festivals will occur. Is a twelve month effort. No letting down.

Each year we try to do better than we did last year. Each of you are learning new ways in which we can spread the “Light of Christian Masonry”, and we can continue to use these methods as they become easier and the team concept of recruiting becomes more organized. The goal is achievable if the Officers of each Commandery begin to plan for this event now. No, we cannot achieve this goal if all Commanderies do not participate. Yes, many Officers, Sir Knights and Companions possess good leadership and planning skills to methodically organize and coordinate the conferral of the Orders on single or multiple candidates. What can we learn from them and how do they effectively organize their activities?

A Positive Attitude

Many are in agreement that the success of any project begins with a positive attitude. Some refer to this as a “can do” spirit. Leaders in any organization possess this trait, and display it frequently. It is a contagious spirit, and usually becomes a virtue of the entire leadership team

If the Officers or members of a Commandery believe they may not be able to contribute to the goal then a reminder of an old age quote might be appropriate:

*“If you keep on doing the things that you have been doing,
then you’ll continue to get exactly what you’ve been getting!”*

Take Advantage of the Skills Available

We know that each Commandery has Sir Knights possessing great skills and talents. Ask them to become part of this great Crusade even if they may not attended a Stated Conclave recently. The use of their talents will make a significant difference. Don’t forget to include the ladies in the event planning, as they too will contribute to the overall success. In particular, the Chapters of

the Social Order of the Beauceant have always supported the Knights Templars, and can always be counted on. Invite the Companions of other Chapters and Councils as the entire York Rite benefits from the effort.

An Effective Implementation Plan

Develop a new list of all the activities that will be needed to make the event a success. Start with reserving the Asylum for the event. A suggested “check list” is included as a reminder, but remember that this will be a “premier event” requiring premier planning.

Have you considered any of these things?

1. Send a letter on your Commandery stationary to each Officer expressing your support for the membership Crusade, and enlist his support. Tell him you are proud of him. Add a sense of urgency to your request.
2. During your next Officers Meeting secure a commitment from each of your elected and appointed Officers to get at least one petition. This sets a good example for other members. Encourage them to do the same. It also displays commitment to a common purpose among the leadership.
3. Write regular personal endorsements of the Crusade in your monthly newsletter. Request the chapter and council leaders do the same.
4. Consider establishing a unique Award for the Crusade, i.e., Most Knightings in Home Commandery, Highest Membership Gain, Most Restorations, etc. Offer special incentives, like free meals for two. Be creative.
5. Get more Committees involved! Review your Committee list, and get some inactive committees active. This spreads the leadership around and offers a chance for other Officers to show what they are made of.
6. Consider writing a letter to all of your Past Commanders. Share your plans with them, and enlist their support, and participation. They will assist you.
7. Meet regularly with your Chapter and Council leadership. Working together within the “Family of Masonry” increases cooperation exponentially.
8. Call or meet with the Deputy or Actives of the Scottish Rite, and seek their support. They might be willing to support a direct mail campaign for the Crusade, and encourage “Non-York Rite” Scottish Rite Masons to join. Perhaps you could arrange a York Rite conferral at their next Convocation in their auditorium?
9. Call or meet with the leadership of the Shrine Temples in your state. Request consideration for a joint “Cold Sands” event with your York Rite Crusade Festivals. Request the Shrine help to sell the benefits of York Rite just as the York Rite should sell the benefits of Shrine membership.

10. Consider a York Rite Festival to honor the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge. Perhaps his junior Officers would join too if they were Non-York Rite Masons.

11. Assign each of your elected and appointed Officers of the Commandery, to become a “Crusade Speakers Bureau”. Request that they arrange invitations to Blue Lodges to present “York Rite Overview Programs” to promote our Christian Masonry heritage. Suggest three programs per month each.

Begin to Target New Members and Restorations

The “Crusade” targets both new members and restorations. We know that the Symbolic Lodges provide us with the primary source of new Christian Masons. Templar membership Committees should consider targeting Masons with current brochures that summarize York Rite and its philanthropies.

Acquire a list of non-York Rite Masons from your Symbolic Lodge, and divide the names into a smaller list. Ask for volunteers from the Chapters and Council to assist, and try to include Masons that you personally know on your list.

Selling Templary

The one-on-one sales technique has historically been the most effective. Prepare an updated Commandery roster, a description of its activities, family involvement, community involvement, and the benefits that inspired you to join? Share them. Also, provide recognition to the Sir Knights that are successful in gaining new members or restorations.

Today's Relevance

A nationally known religious leader once said that if you put God first, everything else falls into place. How simple, and yet how profound. This is the spirit of the Knights Templars today! There are many Masons that will enjoy and appreciate membership in this great Order. All you have to do is tell them what we stand for and ask them to join. Let's show everyone that we are as good as we say we are.

As of the 9 October, we have Knighted 123 new Companions and Sir Knights. Six districts will have festivals in September and October and November. Let's continue our work during this period and began the process of bringing new brothers into our bodies. I commend District 5 and their DDGC Harry Eisenberg, for Knighting 33 Sir Knights in September, and DDGHP John Paniccia in Dist 6 for Knighting 35 on Oct 2-3. However, of more importance, we must keep those members that we currently have. As we begin to pay our per capita to Grand Commandery, make every effort to bring those lost companions and Sir Knights back into the fold so NPD's cease to exist.

Note: If any York Rite Bodies plan weekend festivals, please let me know, with the date, time, location and contact person, and I will put it in the next newsletter, and on the

website. Remember, Membership and Retention is everyone's business.

Dist 1			
Dist 2	Slow Class		23
Dist 3	3&10 October March	Tampa Tampa	17
Dist 4	Slow Class		17
Dist 5	4,11,18 Feb. 6,27 Mar 2010 September	Eola, Orlando Eola, Orlando	5 33
Dist 6	March 12-13, 2010 October 2-3, 2009	Box Ranch, Stuart (Outdoor degree) Melbourne YRB, Harbor City Lodge	20 35
Dist 7	October 29-30-31	Jax York Rite Temple	
Dist 8	Feb 09 March Sep/Oct/Nov 09	Gainesville Ocala Ocala	7 6
Dist 9	postponed	Tallahassee	
Dist 10	3 & 10 October 09 March	Pensacola Pensacola/Mariana	21

If any of the above dates or numbers knighted are incorrect or if there are any additional dates please let me know, I will include them next time.

HENRY A. ADAMS
Eminent Grand Senior Warden
Chairman, Membership Committee

*some excerpts , from Guidelines for Membership, published by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States, p.9 and Grand Commandery of Florida,, And from the Grand Commanders Handbook given to the Grand Line Officers. Membership Development, Grand Encampment, 2003-2006

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