



RITE NOTES
Membership and Recruiting
Grand York Rite Bodies of Florida
15 December 2015
“Begin Planning Now”

Companions and Sir Knights,

As we begin our new period of growth within the Florida Grand York Rite, I look forward to having the best year ever. This goal is achievable if the Officers of each York Rite Body begin to plan now for developing interest in what we do and what we stand for. We cannot achieve this goal if members in all three Bodies do not participate. Yes, many Officers and Sir Knights possess good leadership and planning skills to methodically organize and coordinate the conferral of our degrees and Orders on single and 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 York Rite Body believe they may not be able to contribute to the goal then a reminder of an age-old quote might be appropriate:

*“If you keep on doing the things that you have been doing,
Then you will continue to get exactly what you’ve been getting.”*

Take Advantage of the Skills Available

We know that each YRB has Companions and Sir Knights possessing great skills and talents. Ask them to become part of this great Crusade even if they may not have 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 Knight Templars, and can always be counted on. Invite the Companions of local 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 please remember that this will be a “big event” requiring “Big Planning”.

Successful leaders experience goal attainment for a variety of reasons. One reason is that they have challenged and elevated their Officer team thinking and prepared a plan that emphasizes effectiveness more than efficiency. The following ideas, if implemented will help each Commander, High Priest and Ill. Master, ensure that his plan will increase in effectiveness.

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 and 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 for new Christian Masons. Templar membership committees should consider targeting Masons with current brochures that summarize Templary and its philanthropies.

Acquire a list of non-York Rite Masons from the Symbolic Lodge or even better (as a couple Districts have already done) Contact Grand Lodge, and in particular, MW Richard Lynn, Grand Secretary, and request a list of address labels for your Masonic District. I sent out 342 letters last week to all Masons raised in the last 3 years in our District (that were not York Rite). This will work. Ask for volunteers from the Chapters and Councils to assist, and try to include Masons that you personally know on your list.

Selling York Rite

The “One-on-One” sales technique has historically been the most effective. Prepare an updated membership roster, a description of its activities, family involvement, community projects, and the benefits of joining our Christian Masonic Order. Know something about our philanthropies. What were the benefits that inspired you to join? Share them. Also, provide recognition to the Sir Knights that are successful in gaining new members and 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 Knight 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!

There is no substitute for an all-out campaign to strengthen and build our membership.

EXCERPTS FROM THE GRAND ENCAMPMENT CONSTITUTION:

CONCLAVES

SECTION 65. The Conclaves of Commanderies shall be:

- (a) Stated; which shall be held at least Quarterly at such Place as may be specified in the Dispensation or Charter or otherwise provided for by law, and at such time as may be designated/
- (b) Special; which may be called by the Commander or set by action of the Commandery. They shall be held for the conferring of Orders or for such business as may be prescribed by law, and at the Place for Stated Conclaves, provided that the Grand Master for Subordinate Commanderies, and the Grand Commander for Constitute Commanderies, may authorize the holding of such Conclaves (for the conferring of the Orders) at a Place other than that specified in the Charter or Dispensation. The notice or summons for all Special Conclave shall specify the business to be transacted, and none other shall be considered at such Conclave.
- (c) A Commandery may, at a Stated or Special Conclaves held for the transaction of such business only, consider and transact business jointly with Chapters and Councils domiciled at the same location. At such Conclaves, members of Chapters and Councils who are not Knights Templar may be admitted; provided, that in the event of an objection by a Knights Templar to balloting on petitions for the Orders by all present, such petitions shall be considered only by members of the Commandery. At such Conclaves, following prayer, the Commander may declare the Commandery open for the transaction of business. (1970, p. 349-356 & 456)

DECISIONS FROM THE GRAND MASTER

A Commandery should meet at least quarterly but Grand Encampment law does not require a specified penalty for such failure. (1913, p60, No. 20, Melish)

It is not necessary to open the Commandery in Special Conclave for a Christmas Service and therefore families and friends of Sir Knights may be present. (1937, p25 &322, No. 5, Agnew, 1988 digest - 49)

The Grand Master has not authority to grant a Dispensation to change a date of a Stated Conclave which has be definitely fixed by the By-Laws of the Commandery. (1955, p. 107 &276, No. 28, Gordon, 1988 digest - 103)

A Commandery's by-laws could make provisions for a change in the annual conclave date when it fell on a legal holiday. Such by-law changes must be approved according to the Grand Commandery law. (1988, p. 27 & 227, No. 2, Smith)

VIDEO tape, DVD or any other form of video presentation of the Orders of Templary as depicted in the rituals of the Grand Encampment are not to be used in the conferral of said Orders. They were produced for instructional purposes only. The conferral of any Order must be done by Sir Knights, in a Commandery Asylum. (2006, p.69 & 151, No. 3, Fisher)

We are have had a great year in 2015 with 134 new Knightings. Let us continue the good works, our membership should swell. We must, however, keep our NPD's as low as possible. Bring them back and put them to work.

NEW ITEM: As an incentive to recruit new members, and as a way to honor all those who will be knighted during the Bicentennial year, the Grand Encampment will issue a new Bicentennial Order of Malta jewel to be sent to each new member knight (free of charge) between 15 August 2015 and 31 December 2016. This jewel will be issued with a membership card as soon as the knight is entered into YRIS. A duplicate jewel (slightly different) may be purchased by other knights from SK Henry Adams.

West Palm Beach	9	Cocoa	1
Fort Lauderdale	17	Melbourne	2
Miami	6	Fort Pierce	9
Florida Keys		Jacksonville	1
Sarasota/Venice/Trinity	1	Fernandina	3
Manatee/Bradenton/Trinity	2	St Augustine	
Everglades		Palatka	2
		Lake City	6
Tampa (Ivanhoe)	6	Lawtey	
St Petersburg (Sunshine)	4	Gainesville	1
Clearwater (Springtime)	4	Ocala	
Lakeland	4	Tallahassee	3
Plant City	2	Marianna	1
Sebring (Highlands)	3	Panama City	
Daytona (Halifax)		Fort Walton Beach	2
Lake Sumter	6	Crestview	8
Sanford	12	Pensacola	12
Orlando	4		

Finally, a

reminder to

each Secretary/Recorder, you must submit your changes in your MONTHLY REPORT to the Grand Secretary/Recorder, and Recorders must report all changes to YRIS.

Remember, if your new members are not in Y.R.I.S., they do not receive the Knight Templar Magazine.

First line signers should be included on all new companions on the monthly report, in line of OCCUPATION (Commandery).

As of this issue, we have 134 new knights for the membership year, 2015. But, we also have 5 York Rite Bodies that have brought in *zero* (0) members in the last year. If there is no interest in helping your Body grow, how do you expect to survive? LET US NOW BEGIN OUR PLANNING FOR OUR NEXT MEMBERSHIP YEAR. PLEASE SEND ME YOUR ANTICIPATED DATE FOR 2016.

Please send me a roster or completed Data Sheets of each new member from your festival whether they were knighted or completed Chapter/Council. This includes all members, not just those belonging to your body.

We cannot excuse our declining membership and we must be individually accountable for growing our body. Don't wait for someone else to do what you can do now.

DIS T	DATE	LOCATION	KNIGHTED
1	6-7 Mar	See Below	
	3 Oct (Orders)	Miami (Cancelled)	
2		Fort Myers (Nothing planned)	
3	7 & 14 Mar	Tampa (1), Clearwater (3), Manatee/Trinity (1), St Petersburg (1), Sarasota/Trinity(1)	7
	3 & 10 Oct	Tampa(6), Clearwater(1), St Petersburg(4), Lakeland(1), Manatee(1), Plant City(2), Ocala(1)	14
4	No date scheduled		
5	13-14 Mar	Orlando (Eola) (4), Sanford (3), Lake Sumter (3)(2)	12
	18-19 Sep	Sanford(7), Lake Sumter(1),Cocoa(1), Melbourne(2), Eola(2)	13
6	26-27 Aug, 19 Sep	Ft Pierce(3), Ft Lauderdale(5)	8
7	28 Mar	Jacksonville(1), Palatka(1),Fernandina(1)	3
	14-17 Oct	Jacksonville Cancelled	
8	7, 17, 27-28 Feb	Gainesville (1), Palatka (1)	2
		Lake City(6), Fernandina(1)	7
9	12-13 Feb	Tallahassee (3), Mariana (1)	4
	25-26 Sep	Tallahassee Cancelled	
10	11 Apr	Pensacola	9
	5 & 19 Sep	Pensacola(3), Ft Walton Beach(2) Crestview(8)	13

	6-7 Mar	STATEWIDE CLASS, BOX RANCH- Ft Pierce (6), Miami (6), Fort Lauderdale (12), Sanford (2), W Palm Beach (9), Sebring (3)	38
TOTAL 2014 KNIGHTINGS			204
TOTAL 2015 KNIGHTINGS			134

Additionally: the following have completed the Chapter/Council only:

Cocoa (1) Chap only	Miami (9)
Fernandina (1) (Chapter only)	St Petersburg (3) Chapter/Council
Ft Lauderdale (1) Chap only	Pensacola (2)
Lakeland (1) Chap Only	Tallahassee (2)
Tampa (1)	

If any of the above dates are incorrect OR if you have dates or numbers that should be changed, please let me know. Also, as soon as your area determines the dates for the Fall Festival, PLEASE let me know so they may be included.

Henry A Adams
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“Every Christian Mason Should Be A Knight Templar”

some excerpts, from Guidelines for Membership, published by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States, reprint from Aug 2009, intro. and Grand Commandery of Florida, Beaderstadt, Jon L. Making Members, also “New Life for Dying Lodges and Chapters, 2004, pg75-77, and from the Grand Commanders Handbook given to the Grand Line Officers. Membership Development, Grand Encampment, 2003-2006