



RITE NOTES
Membership and Recruiting
Grand York Rite Bodies of Florida
15 February 2017

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IS IMPORTANT

Companions and Sir Knights,

We had a good year in 2016 with 85 new knightings. Let us continue the good works, and in the next three months, our membership should swell. We must, however, keep our NPD=s as low as possible. Bring them back and put them to work.

Many Sir Knights through our jurisdiction are experiencing an “adrenaline rush” associated with the enthusiasm of the recent membership Crusade. What a thrill it is to be part of such a magnanimous order and to participate in such a noble cause.

New suggestions for membership. Our Grand Lodge has sent out to each Lodge and York Rite Body a series of short videos. There will be four of them (Blue Lodge, York Rite, Scottish Rite and Shrine) and can be used by the Blue Lodge to familiarize the newly raised Masons with other Bodies associated with Masonry. These were developed by SK Richard Wolfe of Brevard York Rite Bodies. These CD’s should be of great assistance in growing our membership. To go along with the CD’s, there should be a lodge representative for each lodge that feeds into your Bodies. **At the time a newly raised Master Mason completes his degree, a York Rite Representative should be present to present him with information pertaining to our York Rite. I have a package used in District 6, for the use of any Commandery that could use it. Just ask.** Finally, dates of your District festivals should be established so it could be included in your package.

This is Not your Father’s Commandery Anymore. This is because new members are joining of all ages, new programs are being added to include family activities, guest speakers, and community involvement. New members bring new ideas, and this results in a healthy growth for the Order. Become a part of this new energy transformation.

Membership Value is Critically Important. Non-York Rite Masons are busy people, and need to be convinced that committing time and talent to a new Masonic Organization has value. Be sure to tell the total attributes of your Commandery. Be sure to emphasize the new activities and involvement in your Commandery, and promote the positive. Increases in our membership base are critical to sustaining both our future, and our glorious heritage. You can do it!

Migrating To A “Dot.Com” Fraternity. We continue to be impressed with the many Knights Templar that are connected to the Internet. Many Commanderies are now getting connected to the “net”, and building impressive Web Sites to promote their Commandery activities such as festivals, membership programs and activities. The Internet improves communications, and saves postage cost among other things. Being a “dot.com” fraternity might be a differentiating factor in selling this great fraternity to Non-York Rite Masons.

Green Carrots. Many Commanderies have instituted incentives to reward “Top-Line Signers”. Membership development is hard work, and those that contribute more than their fair share should be rewarded. Examples of incentives include: **Dues reimbursement, cash, gift certificates, Knight Templar Eye Foundation Life Memberships, and Templar Uniform credits** are incentive programs that have value, and are worth testing in all jurisdictions. Give it a try for both restorations and new members.

Happier Troops. A Crusade is both an event, and a renewed emphasis on membership development. It is an opportunity for all Sir Knights regardless of rank to become engaged in a program that assures success if each Sir Knight contributes. The excitement of Crusade participation continues to grow. Please get involved. Ask a Masonic friend to join, and do it now.

Promote Your Good Works. Write articles, take pictures, and publish your Crusade program activities. Promote your activities. No one can purchase a product they are unaware of.

We cannot wish away our declining membership; we must be individually accountable for growing our business. Don't wait for somebody else to do what you can do **now**.

In my travels to various Commanderies throughout the South East, I find that by advertising the degree festivals outside of our district, it becomes easier for a candidate to receive the degrees. We cannot hope to build our membership if we cannot provide weekend degree programs within a reasonable time period and distance.

One or two Sir Knights should visit the other Commanderies within your District and discuss ways in which this can be accomplished. Each Commandery should provide the teams for two or three different degrees. If this cannot be accomplished within the district, pursue an neighboring district, until all degrees are filled. No candidate should have to drive 100 miles to attend the degrees. This is how we lose candidates. Finally, a set date and location each year should be established well in advance so candidates can properly plan. If Scottish Rite and the Shrine can do it, and they are successful, we should also.

**There is no substitute for an all-out campaign to strengthen and build our membership.
New Membership by District 2017:**

| DIST | LOCATION | # | DIST | LOCATION | # |
|-------------|---------------------------|----------|-------------|-------------------|----------|
| 1 | West Palm Beach | | 6 | Cocoa | |
| | Fort Lauderdale | | | Melbourne | |
| | Miami | | | Fort Pierce | |
| | Florida Keys | | 7 | Jacksonville | |
| 2 | Manatee/Bradenton/Trinity | | | Duval | |
| | Sarasota/Venice/Trinity | | | Fernandina | |
| | Everglades | | | St. Augustine | |
| | Fort Myers | | Palatka | | |
| 3 | Tampa (Ivanhoe) | | 8 | Lake City | |
| | St. Petersburg (Sunshine) | | | Lawtey | |
| | Clearwater (Springtime) | | | Gainesville | |
| 4 | Lakeland | | | Inverness (Ocala) | |
| | Plant City | | 9 | Tallahassee | |
| | Sebring (Highlands) | | | Marianna | |
| 5 | Daytona (Halifax) | | | Panama City | |
| | Lake Sumter | | 10 | Fort Walton Beach | |
| | Sanford | | | Crestview | |
| | Orlando | | | Pensacola | |

EXCERPTS FROM THE GRAND ENCAMPMENT CONSTITUTION:

SECTION 175: Commanderies - Surrender of Charter, Part 111

A member of a Commandery which has ceased to exist from any cause other than having been consolidated with another Commandery is not liable for dues to such Commandery after the same has ceased to exist.

The Grand Encampment as to Subordinate Commanderies and the Grand Commandery as to Constituent Commanderies has the right to collect from the members of such extinct Commandery all dues chargeable against them at the time it became extinct, and to discipline those who refuse or neglect to pay the same.

When such Commandery ceases to exist, its members may join another Commandery upon Petition and Certificates from the Grand Recorder of the Grand Encampment if the extinct Commandery was a Subordinate Commandery, or of the Grand Commandery if the extinct Commandery was a Constituent Commandery, that his standing was good when said Commandery ceased to exist.

The funds and other property of such extinct Commandery became the property of the Grand Encampment if it was a Subordinate Commandery, or the Grand Commandery if it was a Constituent Commandery.

DECISIONS FROM THE GRAND MASTER:

When the Charter of a Commandery has been surrendered or arrested, a former member who has been suspended for non-payment of dues may apply for reinstatement or condition of good standing to the Grand Commandery having jurisdiction. (1919, p. 59 & 303, No. 29, Smith)

In regard to the restoration or granting of a Charter where a previous Charter had been lifted and property taken by the Grand Commandery a question was asked about returning property obtained from the previous Commandery. The disposition of property which was acquired by the Grand Commandery from a Commandery whose Charter had been arrested is entirely within the discretion of the Grand Commandery

As to granting a Charter with the previous number, numbers assigned to Commanderies indicate seniority and justly so. After a lapse of eight years or more, during which former members have been scattered or affiliated elsewhere, restorations of the old Charter and of the old Commandery Number would not seem to be proper or equitable procedure. (1955, p. 114 & 280, No. 33, Gordon, 1988 digest - 46)

New Membership by York Rite Body 2017:

| DIST | DATE | LOCATION | KNIGHTED |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | |
| 1 | Slow class | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | 4-11 Mar | Tampa | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | Slow class | | |
| 6 | 3-4 Mar 17 | Box Ranch | |
| 7 | 21-24 Mar 17 | Jacksonville | |
| 8 | 7,11,21 Feb, 3-4 Mar | Gainesville | |
| 9 | 28 Jan, 5 or 11 Feb | Tallahassee | |
| 10 | 25 Mar, 8 Apr | Pensacola | |
| TOTAL 2017 KNIGHTINGS | | | |
| TOTAL 2016 KNIGHTINGS (May 2015-May 2016) | | | 85 |

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 will not receive the Knight Templar Magazine.

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

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.

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.

Fraternally,

Henry A Adams

**HENRY A. ADAMS, PGC, KYGCH, KCT
Chairman, Grand York Rite Membership Program**

“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, Baderstadt, Jon L. Making Members, also A 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

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