



RITE NOTES
Membership and Recruiting
Grand York Rite Bodies of Florida
15 April 2020

AHow to Make New Members Active Members"

Companions and Sir Knights,

"Having 10% of your members active is considered good," commented on Grand Officer to me when we discussed lodge membership. A look at the average ratio of active members to lodge or York Rite membership shows this to be typical of most groups in the Western Hemisphere.

Now imagine having 85% of the members turnout to every lodge or York Rite meeting. Where does this type of attendance take place? Fantasyland? No, the Netherlands. While Masonry in the country (about 6,000 members), you will find more members at lodge every week.

What's the difference? Mentoring! They train their new members to become active members. Lodges invest a large amount of time in each new member and it pays off handsomely.

What is a Mentor?

What is a mentor? It is someone who teaches another person, often one on one. They become a trusted guide and friend as a man makes the transformation from new member to active member.

In the Royal Arch Degree, the Principal Sojourner is a mentor. He is one who guides the pilgrim on the journey from Babylon to Jerusalem. He intercedes, guides, explains, encourages and leads the way. He transforms the pilgrims from brothers to companions.

In other degrees of the fraternity, the Senior Deacon and Conductress are examples of mentors in the degree work. They help make the candidates feel welcome, guide their footsteps through the ritual and conduct them on the journey to full membership.

Mentoring needs to go beyond the night of the degree work. There needs to be someone actively encouraging and training the new member so they become an active member.

Why Mentor?

New members are not a dime a dozen. Every lodge and chapter, council or commandery needs active members. We need new members to replace those who die or move away. Without new members, it is only a matter of time before the most active of organizations will be forced to merge with a neighboring lodge. But just getting new members is what every lodge and chapter needs.

And only through active training of new members can a lodge or chapter have a higher percentage of retention, as well as active membership.

When a person joins they are looking for something in their life. They expect membership to fill a void in their life. Whether it's a place to make new friends or somewhere to give back to the community, each member expects to get something out of their membership. A good mentor helps to draw out those expectations, and shows ways to fulfill them while working to build a stronger lodge or chapter.

Personal Experience

When I joined the lodge nearly twenty years ago, I knew I would have to do some memory work. A catechism, or lesson, was required of each new member in order to advance to the next degree.

The framers of Masonry planned a personal mentor for each new member. Their way of making sure that this happened was to require memorizing a catechism of sorts. While this has changed and evolved over time, the basic concept is still there. The goal was to teach the new man what it meant to be a Mason.

The mentor was a coach who encouraged the new member to learn to work. He taught the new man the signs, grips, and words. Through this process, the new Entered Apprentice made his first contact and friend in the lodge.

When I joined, the old publisher of the newspaper I was working for made sure that I learned my proficiency. Although retired, he still came to the newspaper daily to chat with everyone. He would stop by my desk and invite me over to his house. He'd always say, "Verna's got some fresh nisu (a Finnish sweetbread) and coffee. Why don't you come on over for some." I knew what he meant. I brought my book, and we worked on my proficiency.

These sessions would often last three hours. We talked about a lot more than simply ritual. We looked through his collection of old newspapers (his family went back to 1846 in this community and he had his own personal archives). We talked about a lot of things, and we became good friends. While he was a lot older than I was, I became the son he never had. Five years later I helped with his Masonic funeral, and 15 years later, as a pastor I performed his wife's funeral service. All of this because of a proficiency!

Remember, equip, train and send out the troops, and they will come back with results!

Note: If any York Rite Bodies plan weekend festivals, Short of Time or Slow Classes, please let me know, with the date, time, location and contact person, for the Spring of 2020 and I will put it in the January newsletter, and on the website. Remember, Membership and Retention is everyone's business.

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

New Membership by District for 2020:

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

REGARDING THE GRAND ENCAMPMENT CONSTITUTION:

Section 38, Conduct of Conclaves and Voting Therein

Each member of the Grand Commandery present or by proxy, if proxies are lawful, shall be entitled to one vote, except that the presiding officer shall vote only in case of a tie, when he shall decide the issue.

Unless otherwise provided by Grand Encampment Law, all questions submitted shall be decided by a majority vote of those present.

DECISIONS OF THE GRAND MASTER:

A member can have but one vote in his own right. (1913, pp 45 and 47, No 9, Melish, 1988 **digest -281**)

Proxy voting in a Grand Commandery must be provided by law. Otherwise it does not exist. (1934, p. 206, No. 3, Agnew, 1988 digest - 280&406).

The statutes and regulations of a Grand Commandery cannot be revised by a majority vote at a Grand Conclave if the statutes and regulations require a resolution to lie over until the next annual. (1934, p. 207, No. 4, Agnew)

A REMINDER: GRAND ENCAMPMENT RULES STATE THAT NEW SIR KNIGHTS NEED TO BE PLACED IN MMS WITHIN 15 DAYS.

New Membership by York Rite Body 2020:

DISTRICT	DATE	LOCATION	KNIGHTED
1			
2			
3	7 & 14 Mar	Tampa(1),St Pete (2), Clearwater (1),Plant City(4), Manasota(2), Lakeland(1), Ft Myers(1)	12
4			
5	27-28 March	Cancelled until the Fall	
6	27-28 March	Ft Pierce, Postponed	
7	19-20-21 March	Jacksonville, Postponed	
8			
9			
10	4 April & 2 May	Pensacola	
TOTAL 2019 KNIGHTINGS			136
TOTAL 2020 KNIGHTINGS			12

I would like to commend the Grand Chapter of Florida, for having a net 51 in membership for 2019. By bringing in more members than we lose, we can grow.

Also, as soon as your area determines the dates for the Spring Festival, PLEASE let me know so they may be included.

Fraternally,

Henry A. Adams

HENRY A. ADAMS, PGC, KYGCH, KCT
 Chairman, Grand Chapter Membership Program
 Chairman, Grand Encampment Membership Committee

"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. " How to Make New Members Active Members". 2005, pg 89 to 93 , and from the Grand Commanders Handbook given to the Grand Line Officers. Membership Development, Grand Encampment, 2003-2006

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