



RITE NOTES

Membership and Recruiting

15 February 2022

How to make New Members Active Members

Companions and Sir Knights,

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

"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!

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EXCERPTS FROM THE GRAND ENCAMPMENT CONSTITUTION:

Section 144-Before the Installing Officer administers the Vow of Office in a Constituent or Subordinate Commandery he shall see that the Constitution and Statutes of the Grand Encampment, the Constitution, Laws and Regulations of the Grand Commandery, if the same be a Constituent Commandery, the Rituals of the Red Cross, and the Orders of Malta and Knights Templar are in possession of the incoming Commander or properly accounted for.

Section 145- A Constituent or Subordinate Commandery may hold a public installation in its own Asylum, but not elsewhere without a dispensation from the Grand Commander or the Grand Master, respectively

DECISIONS FROM THE GRAND MASTER:

The installation of an officer of the Grand Commandery must take place in the jurisdiction of the Grand Commandery of which the officer is a member. (1913, p.39, No. 2, Melish)

Finally, again we have completed our Fall Festivals. There is now time to receive petitions for membership for the Spring. Go to the Blue Lodges and speak to existing Masons about “further light” and greet newly raised Masons with information about what we are all about. Currently, we only have three Districts that have committed to a Spring Festival. Please advise if you are planning to conduct one.

Remember, equipment, 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 and Fall of 2022 and I will put it in the next 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.

Membership by District for 2021:

DISTRICT	LOCATION	#	DISTRICT	LOCATION	#
1	Palm Beach		6	Cocoa	
	Ft Lauderdale			Melbourne	
	Miami			Fort Pierce	
2	Manatee/Bradenton/Trinity		7	Jacksonville	
	Sarasota/Venice/Trinity			Fernandina	
	Everglades			St Augustine	
	Fort Myers			Palatka	
3	Tampa (Ivanhoe)		8	Lake City	
	St. Petersburg (Sunshine)			Middleburg	
	Clearwater (Springtime)			Gainesville	

4	Lakeland		9	Tallahassee	
	Plant City			Marianna	
	Sebring (Highlands)			Panama City	
5	Daytona (Halifax)		10	Fort Walton Beach	
	Lake Sumter			Crestview	
	Sanford			Pensacola	
	Orlando				

REMINDER: MASONIC MEMBERSHIP SOLUTIONS (MMS) RULES STATE THAT NEW COMPANIONS AND SIR KNIGHTS NEED TO BE PLACED IN MMS WITHIN 15 DAYS.

MMS IS NOW ON GOOGLE CHROME

New Membership by York Rite Body 2021:

DISTRICT	DATE	LOCATION	KNIGHTED
1			
2			
3	5 & 12 Mar	Tampa	
4			
5			
6	1-2 April	Ft Pierce	
7	19 & 26 Mar	Palatka	
8			
9			
10	FALL		
TOTAL 2022 KNIGHTINGS			
TOTAL 2021 KNIGHTINGS			170

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

"Every Christian Mason Should Be A Knight Templar"

Some excerpts, from the Grand Commanders Handbook, 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" pp 73-75, and from the Grand Commanders Handbook given to the Grand Line Officers. Membership Development, Grand Encampment, 2003-2006

Hm Ph: 321 726-6971

Cell: 321-795-8316

Fax: 321-951-9680

Email: hadams1@aol.com