



RITE NOTES

IDEAS TO IMPROVE INTEREST AND ATTENDANCE

15 November 2023

Companions and Sir Knights,

The following is a sampling of ideas that we can use to improve interest and attendance:

1. Stress the importance of fellowship. Encourage those who attend regularly to share their ideas about improving fellowship.
2. Give someone the job of greeting all members as they enter the asylum. Make sure that this person knows that it is his job to make members feel welcome when they enter.
3. NEVER allow a new member to sit alone in the asylum.
4. Make sure the High Priest, Ill. Master or Commander circulates among the members before the meeting.
5. Hold introductions to a minimum. Long introductions are a waste of time. Make all introductions with sincerity. They should be warm and personal.
6. Use the time after closing to reinforce fellowship. Thank the members for coming, and ask for feedback. How satisfied were the members and guests of the quality of fellowship that they received. Follow up with a personal note to a new member or guest thanking him for being with you.
7. Include the names of new members in your newsletter with a brief summary of their interests and the names of their wives and children.
8. Place a suggestion box in a prominent place in the asylum.
9. Give members a questionnaire they can use to evaluate the level of fellowship and activities.
10. Do not waste time. The leading cause of dissatisfaction among members is that meetings were boring and that too much time was wasted. Many of our Senior members come to our York Rite Body for relaxation, fellowship and fun. Spend less time with business and more time with fellowship. Adding some excitement and interest to the meetings will help bring members back.
11. Limit remarks at the end of the conclave. Do not allow (personal agendas) to mar an otherwise efficient meeting.

12. When planning meetings, consider the interests of the youthful and mature members equally. The older member may want things to remain unchanged; the youthful member may expect variety and excitement. Remember that newer members are determining whether they did the right thing in joining. They will evaluate your plan for the evening on their terms.

13. Focus on Quality! No matter what you do, do it well. Nothing works as well as high quality to achieve member satisfaction.

14. Make something special happen at least six times a year. Force yourself to plan in detail for the meeting; the special ideas force you to consider the desires of the members. Plan at least six months in advance and involve your members in the planning.

a. Call on individuals in your community to provide excellent programs.

b. The principal of a local school can speak about the scholarship needs of students or ways the Commandery can help improve the school.

c. A financial planner can help members discover important financial or retirement services available to them and answer their questions.

d. A travel agent can speak about trips that are available to individuals or groups and how to save money.

e. Show any number of videotapes that will interest the members. They can be educational, fraternally related or just plain entertaining.

f. Invite a strategic planning expert or futurist from a local college or consulting firm to meet with the Commandery about how the needs of men have changed and will continue to change.

g. Ask every member to be involved by accepting an assigned date to lead a discussion on a relevant topic to Templary or Masonry. The Masonic Service Association of North America publishes a monthly "Short Talk Bulletin", a great source of relevant information. Ph. (315) 735-2217

15. Constantly focus on communications up, down and across the entire organization. Dress up and spruce up your existing publications and communications to members.

16. Consider at least a quarterly publication mailed to the member and his family.

17. Develop a list of men who have been raised to Master Mason in the past three years and ask the officers or volunteers in the Commandery to contact each by phone and invite him to a special meeting, a dinner, or a "Friends Night".

18. Mail remembrances to members and their wives on behalf of the Commandery on significant holidays, birthdays or anniversaries. Remember, every time a communication comes into the home from the Commandery, it raises the awareness of the member.

19. Maintain an attractive bulletin board and keep it current with member related news and information.

20. Improve the quality of the photographs and graphic images you use. Find a member who may be a designer or graphic artist with computer desktop publishing experience and let him review all communications, then listen to his recommendations.

21. Assign every new Sir Knight a "Buddy". This can be the top line signer of his petition or a fellow Sir Knight about the same age who agrees to be at each stated and special meeting for at least six months. This "Buddy" keeps close personal tabs on his new charge and assists him with his assimilation. He also introduces this new member to other members at every opportunity.

22. Watch for any loss of interest of a member. If attendance starts to lag, get in touch with him immediately and determine the cause. Don't let more than a few meetings to pass before contacting him. Nothing works as well with members as personal contact. Try to meet face-to-face.

23. Contact all new members who have joined over the last five years, but have been absent from the Commandery. Listen to them tell you the reasons why they have lost interest. Share the exciting new things that are happening in the Commandery. Agree to assist them with the proper signs and words if they have forgotten.

24. Identify the skills, talents and interests of each of your members, especially new members. A man joins an organization with the expectation that he will somehow be involved with the members, involved in the leadership, and involved with the community. Understand that involvement means using a man's talents. Match their involvement with their gifts and talents.

25. Reward real performance and real contributions in some meaningful way.

Companions and Sir Knights, the ideas are endless, but they must be put into practice.

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

Bring them back and put them to work.

Membership and Retention is everyone's business.

EXCERPTS FROM THE GRAND CHAPTER OF FLORIDA

ARTICLE XVIII: Monthly Reports and Annual Returns

Section 1. Annual and Monthly.

All monthly reports of constituent Chapters must be in the Grand Secretary's Office on or before the 5th of each month and monthly reports must be submitted each and every month, even though there may be no change in the status of the constituent Chapter. The Capitular Year, shall end December 27th of each year, and each constituent Chapter shall make annual returns to the Grand Chapter, which must be in the Office of the Grand Secretary, with fees as the Grand Chapter shall from time to time prescribe, on or before the 1st day of February of each year. Any Chapter failing to make its Annual Return by the 15th day of February shall be considered delinquent, and not

entitled to representation in the Grand Chapter at its Annual Convocation, except by action of the Grand Chapter; if the Annual Return is not made when the Grand Convocation convenes, such delinquent Chapter shall be subject to revocation of its Charter, unless the Grand Chapter shall otherwise decide.

Section 2. Audits

A complete audit of the financial affairs of each Chapter shall be made at the close of each Chapter year, and pages, in triplicate (one perforated) shall be provided in the Annual Returns: one copy each furnished to the Grand High Priest and the Secretary showing:

- a. All assets of the Chapter.
- b. All amounts payable for dues.
- c. The amount of the dues of the Chapter.
- d. A line showing how many owe one years dues and a line showing how many owe two year’s dues.
- e. All indebtedness to the Chapter.
- f. How many meetings per year.
- g. Average attendance.

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 2024 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 2023:

DIST	LOCATION	#	DIST	LOCATION	#
1	Palm Beach	5	6	Cocoa	
	Ft Lauderdale	1		Melbourne	1
	Miami			Fort Pierce	5
2	Manatee/Bradenton/Trinity		7	Jacksonville	5
	Sarasota/Venice/Trinity	10		Fernandina	4
	Fort Myers	7		St Augustine	3
				Palatka	1
3	Tampa (Ivanhoe)	13	8	Lake City	2
	St. Petersburg (Sunshine)			Middleburg	
	Clearwater (Springtime)	6		Gainesville	2
4	Lakeland	4	9	Tallahassee	6
	Plant City	3		Marianna	1
	Sebring (Highlands)			Panama City	2

5	Daytona (Halifax)	22	10	Fort Walton Beach	3
	Lake Sumter	5		Crestview	1
	Sanford	2		Pensacola	3
	Orlando	12			

Palatka had one brother who completed Chapter and Council but due to COVID was unable to complete the Orders

REMINDER: MASONIC MEMBERSHIP SOLUTIONS (MMS) RULES STATE THAT NEW COMPANIONS AND SIR KNIGHTS NEED TO BE PLACED IN MMS WITHIN 15 DAYS. If this is not done, the magazine will not be sent automatically. The Secretary will have to contact Grand Encampment.

MMS IS NOW ON GOOGLE CHROME

New Membership by York Rite Body 2023:

DIST	DATE	LOCATION	KNIGHTED
1			
2	30 Sep 23	Tampa	
3	4 & 11 Mar 23	Tampa(4), Trinity(8), Ft Myers(2), Clearwater(4), Lakeland(4), Plant City(2), Lake Sumter(4), Orlando(10), Palatka(1), Melbourne (1)	40
	7 & 14 Oct 23	Tampa(7), Ft Myers(3), Manasota(2), Clearwater(2), Orlando(1), Plant City(1), Lake Sumter(1)	17
4			
5	15 & 16 Sep	Orlando cancelled	
6	31Mar-1Apr 23	Ft Pierce(5), Melbourne(0), WPB(5), Ft Lauderdale(1)	11
	29-30 Sep 23	Ft Pierce cancelled	
7	4 & 18 Feb 23	Palatka, Lake City(1), Sanford(1), St Augustine(3), Daytona(12), Lake Sumter(4), Fernandina(1)	21
	21 Oct 23	Palatka/Jacksonville (10), Sanford (1), Orlando (1), Lake City (1), Gainesville (2), Jacksonville (3)	18
8			
9			
10	14-15 Jul 23	Tallahassee(6), Panama City(2), Mariana(1), Crestview(1), Ft Walton Beach(3), Pensacola(3)	16
TOTAL 2023 KNIGHTINGS			126
TOTAL 2022 KNIGHTINGS			125
TOTAL ACCORDING TO ANNUAL REPORT 2023			

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, KYGCH

"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

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