Iowa Supplement

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Greetings Sir Knights:

It is with mixed emotions that I write this article. This will be the final article that I write as Grand Commander for this magazine. I enjoy writing these articles so I will miss that. It also means the conclusion of my terms in office for the three Grand York Rite bodies. I look forward to whatever life brings me next.

I first want to thank Greg Kenkel for his work as Editor of the Iowa Supplement. Greg, you do this task as well as the work at the registration desk with quiet dignity (except when you tease me for some of my behavior from the previous evening). We could use more guys like you who simply show up and do the work. So thank you.

I want to thank all of the Sir Knights who served as officers and on committees this year. It was not as active of a year as sometimes happens. Between my personal challenges of last fall along with this pandemic, it has been a strange time in life. We all need some cheer. Thank you to the Sir Knights who covered me at cornerstones. It seemed that every one of those fell on a day I was needed in the Capitol or had something else going on. So thank you to those who stepped up.

I will miss REPGC Gene Hatfield. We were very different people. However, we bonded over Masonry. I would never even have met him, let alone roomed with him, if not for our Fraternity. He was a valuable member and a good friend. It will take a while to replace him. We all, especially me, need to do a better job of cherishing each other and cutting each other slack.

In looking to the future, we need to figure out how we are going to perform York Rite ritual. Fewer and fewer local bodies are performing ritual. We need to determine how best to set up degree dates, locations, and logistics in order to perform the best quality ritual for our new candidates. At the Templar level, inspections and the Ritual Competition are rapidly becoming things of the past. Whether this is good or bad is a separate conversation.

I am not going to discuss membership and the things we need to do in order to get our members active. The articles and discussions on those topics exist *ad nauseum* frankly. We all know there is no "magic bullet." Elect and appoint the right people. Work at making meetings interesting. Give people a reason to show up and be active. Rinse and repeat on all the platitudes. We just have to start doing the work.

We have some challenges ahead of us Sir Knights. We simply do. Nothing that cannot be overcome, but we have to make some changes. To paraphrase Sir Winston Churchill: you cannot have improvement without change. Obviously there are some traditions and other landmarks that should not be changed or amended. However….

I want to congratulate Berdette Bryngelson on being this year's recipient of the Knight York Cross of Honor. There have been very few individuals who have given as much as Sir Knight Bryngelson. The only thing that bothered me when I received his nomination paperwork was that he had not previously received this honor. You deserve this award my friend.

In closing, thank you Sir Knights all for what you do. While I can be very challenging to work with, I do not suffer mistakes well, and can be very demanding when it comes to ritual work perfection - at my core I appreciate all of you so much. Our Fraternity and its members have impacted my life, and done so to the positive in so many ways. I do not tell you that enough.

God bless each of you and I hope that our paths in life meet again.