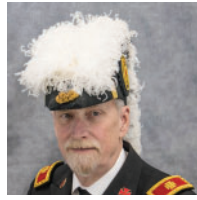




New Mexico Supplement



H. C. Sky Olsen
Grand Commander

Sir Knights,

I hope this finds you and yours in good health and happiness.

Anyone in York Rite in the Southwestern United States has likely heard Sir Knight Bill Garrard of Arizona speak about shepherding a man through the steps from a profane into the Masonic Lodge and on through the York Rite Chapter, Council and ultimately, the Commandery. This is how I was brought to the Commandery.

In 2002 a man walked into my store. He introduced himself as Daniel E. Crockett. He had just moved to the Oregon coast from Arizona. Within minutes I knew he was a retired Marine Captain. A mustang, no less, raised from the ranks and very proud of that fact. The ring-tone on his phone was the Marine Corps Hymn and he always let it play a bit longer than necessary just so he could wave his arm as though he was conducting the band before answering.

Dan took to dropping by a few times a week. One day I noticed there was a Square and Compasses on his bolo tie and commented on it. He asked, "Are you a Mason?" I told him no, but some in my family had been. I told him about playing with my great grandfather's chapeaux and sword in the attic of my grandfather's house when I was a kid and that I had always been curious about what they were used for. My grandfather said they were Masonic.

Dan told me that the Knights Templar used them and that he was one himself! He said, "You'd be a good Mason and then you can join the Knights Templar." He reached into his inside jacket pocket and pulled out a piece of folded paper that he spread on the counter. He said, "Here, fill this out and give me a check. I'll pick it up tomorrow and we'll go up to the Lodge and I'll show you around. It's just a few blocks up the hill." He waved and headed out the door.

I was wondering what had just happened. When I got home after work, I started looking things up on the internet about Masonry. Talk about mixed reviews! I had been digging into our family history and had found that many of my ancestors were Masons so I didn't think it could be too bad. And my brother in law, Jeff was a Mason and he was a great guy. So I filled out the petition and a check and the next day went to see the Lodge building, which was an impressive historic three story building.

Dan showed me around the building. A ballroom, dining room and kitchen on the ground floor, Lodge room on the second and the third floor was a Commandery dressing room filled with hanging uniforms, swords and chapeaux. I was hooked! It was like my grandfather's attic on steroids.

A few weeks later I was initiated, then Passed and raised. As I progressed, Dan was there to answer all my questions. The next year he took me to a York Rite Festival in Portland. After taking the Degrees and Orders, I joined the local Chapter, Council and Commandery.

When I retired, my wife and I decided to move to a sunnier climate where we could dry out a bit and eventually landed in New Mexico. I naturally went to the York Rite Grand Sessions and met Bill Garrard who was visiting from Arizona. When he heard where I had come from, he said, "I'll bet you ran into a refugee from Arizona named Dan Crockett who moved there to get some moisture." I told him that I had known him and told how he led me through the degrees. Bill just smiled.

Later in the session he gave his talk on shepherding a man all the way along the path and I realized that was exactly what Dan had done with me. I wondered if that was standard procedure in Arizona.

We can do the same thing in New Mexico. Don't just hand out petitions and see what happens. Lead a man all the way through.

Dan passed away not long after we left Oregon. He was a great friend and mentor.

Be a mentor.

A personal note:

I am visually impaired and have not driven in over five years. I have macular degeneration which slowly destroys the central vision. As a consequence, I have a hard time recognizing faces. So, if I run into you, and act like I don't know you, it's because I can't see you well enough to know who you are. If I'm talking to you while looking over your shoulder, it's so I can see your face with my peripheral vision. Please don't take offense, just tell me who you are.

Courteously,

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