



The Florida Knight

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Greetings Sir Knights,

Wow, time is really flying by! Official Visitations are underway, Commanderies are starting to get back into the swing of things, those that have been dark are gearing up to start meeting and many are starting to get to that time of year that we all work toward, Fall Festivals. Some Commanderies hold Festivals individually, some as a District, some slow class, some one day. All of these are good methods.

Planning is one of the keys to holding a successful Festival. Here are a few things that may seem obvious but are important. Make sure that you have the needed regalia and it is in good condition. Many of the costumes, robes and regalia get used during a Festival then put away, only to be brought out just prior to the next one. When was the last time these were really deep cleaned? Sometimes multiple Sir Knight or Candidates wear the same robes for different parts throughout the degrees and orders. Especially with the recent occurrences of the last year in mind, Commanderies should take care to make sure they are properly cared for. Props used should be brought out well before the festival to be aired out and wiped down after a few months of not being used.

Cast lists should be set up well in advance too. Many of us perform several parts in the work and have been doing so for quite some time. There may be plenty of opportunities for new cast members to take a part. Remember that involvement helps us grow. You know those candidates that you brought in last time? Get them involved. If they would like to have a major role that's outstanding. There are a plethora of small parts or even non-speaking parts that need attention too that they can learn. When we work together things go smoother and we have more fun with the process.

Candidates. The other major role in the work. We must have candidates. Are we going to the Lodges and finding new candidates? This part is a continual factor in the work. We don't have to stop after one festival and start again a month prior. Always keep looking. Sometimes the best time to find prospective candidates is right after a festival. We just finished conferring the Degrees and Orders, we have a new influx of new Sir Knights that are impressed with the work, they can assist in one of the best ways

possible, word of mouth. Sometimes the best way to communicate to prospective membership about the work is through those that have just seen it for the first time.

Sometimes, when it comes to the Festivals, we tend to get caught up in the scheduling phase. It can seem like everyone from the many organizations within our Fraternity schedules events on top of each other. Many of us are members of several of these groups and it sometimes can become overwhelming. I'm not pointing out any single Commandery, but here is only one type of example. Let's say "Florida York Rite Bodies" holds two Festivals a year, a Spring Festival and a Fall Festival. Their District is a very active one. The Symbolic Lodges hold multiple Degrees throughout the year and other Organizations also hold their Festivals/Reunions/Degrees around the same time. Many of the members of Florida York Rite are also active members of these Organizations as well. The members decide that maybe the best course of action is to only hold one Festival per year thereby solving the problem with overlap with the other groups and making it easier to plan. Sometimes this may work and change can help.

For the purpose of this example, I will stop for a moment and give a personal opinion. If a Commandery, or a Body as a whole, already holds two Festivals a year, I personally feel it would actually be detrimental to that Body to drop back to only one. Here's why I think that. When we confer the work twice a year we are staying active in that work. We keep it fresh in our minds, we know the time frames that we usually hold them and can adjust the dates/times accordingly to make it work. Dropping down to one allows doubt to come in, procrastination on relearning parts and it overall becomes harder to fill parts effectively as a single conflict in timing can almost derail the whole Festival. Then there is the side of the candidates. We can become lax in looking for new members as the thought of having a whole year to work on it can take over. Before we know it, it's almost time to hold a festival and we have only a couple or no candidates. It does happen. If we do get candidates early on, then they may have to wait almost a whole year before they have the Degrees/Orders conferred on them. Would we be willing to wait a year after our petition is accepted? Just a thought.

Again, this is only one type of example. I don't bring this up to discourage anyone or single anyone out. Just the opposite. I hope to encourage you to keep up the good work. Our bodies are starting to grow again. Growing takes work and there are many Sir Knights willing to assist in that work. I hope to be at as many festivals as I can this year to help in any way that I can. There are many Sir Knights throughout the Jurisdiction that feel the same way and all we have to do is ask.

Yours in service to Christ,

Adam M. Bryan, KYCH
Right Eminent Grand Commander