

# **Grand Commander's Message**



**Greetings Sir Knights:**

**It is now September and time to be back at labor in our Commanderies. I am starting my official visits of Commanderies with five planned for September and three more scheduled for October. These are listed elsewhere in the Focus.**

**Our candidates have been kept in waiting for some time now, and the three York Rite Grand Bodies are taking action which will help clean up this backlog. The Festival is scheduled for October 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> in Wenatchee, and we encourage Commanderies with candidates in waiting to bring them to Wenatchee. The Chapter and Council degrees will be conferred on October 29<sup>th</sup>, with the Commandery Orders exemplified on October 30<sup>th</sup>.**

**Please note that we are doing the Festival because of the pandemic which has not allowed us to confer degrees and orders for more than 18 months, and we wish to bring in candidates who have been patiently, hopefully, waiting for an opportunity to receive the degrees and orders. This does not replace the necessity of each Commandery to confer the Orders in the future. Please remember that first impressions are lasting, and well-delivered work can have a lasting impression on the candidates and inspire them to seek further light. To this end I encourage each Commandery to practice their work, and also to be sure to have an experienced Sir Knight available to answer the questions of the new Sir Knights.**

**Again, I wish to emphasize to the Sir Knights the importance of education. The symbols employed in our Degrees and Orders are very old and have many layers of meanings. Conferral of the Degrees and Orders can be very impressive, but sometimes the explanations of the philosophy and symbols is superficial. I encourage all to extend their knowledge of the history, philosophy and symbolism of Freemasonry. In this regard, the Companion Adept of the Temple program offered by the York Rite Sovereign Collage of North America is very helpful, and I encourage all of our Sir Knights to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity.**

**Communication is a key part of any organization. Although electronics have helped some during the restrictions of the pandemic, I fear we have left behind a number of members who are not savvy to electronics and are not electronically connected. We need to make a concerted effort to keep all members informed of our plans and activities by whatever means of communication are needed. This includes not only electronic media, but also snail mail, telephone, and whatever other means we can come up with.**

**Not sending regular newsletters to all members by whatever means possible has resulted in loss of contact with many of our Companions and Sir Knights. This has regrettably resulted in loss of members suspended by NPD. They may not be able to attend for whatever reason, but that does not mean they don't care. However, if they don't receive information on our activities, after a while they will drift away. Experience shows that keeping our membership**

informed and involved will go a long way toward accomplishing our goal of membership retention.

The history of our wonderful Fraternity goes back not only to the Craft Guilds, but also to the Knights Templar of the Crusades. With the suppression of the Order, the Knights who fled France looked for a safe haven. It is also of interest to note that although the Pope demanded the arrest of all Knights Templar, the suppression of the order was only carried out in France, the Kingdom of Naples and the Papal States. They survived elsewhere, although under other names. The Knights continued to exist in Scotland, Portugal, Spain, Germany and Scandinavia.

There is evidence that the Knights Templar and the Cistercians were present in what is now Canada and the United States as early as the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century. Early explorers of the New World were surprised to find Indian tribes that were white skinned, blond with blue eyes. Regrettably, some early clues are ignored by the writers of our history books.

I hope you have found these tidbits of interest.

I wish all the best for our Sir Knights and their families.

SK Alan T. Spreen, REGC  
Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Washington

## **Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of Washington**

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