

GRAND COMMANDERY OF WYOMING
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Sir Knights February is almost the midway point of my Templar year. I have enjoyed visiting the various asylums and I have a few more to go before visiting all of them. Our numbers are down statewide, but I have observed a core of dedicated Sir Knights that are keeping things going. It was good to see six new Companions at the Casper York Rite Festival. Hopefully we will soon have six new Sir Knights. I was encouraged by the enthusiasm that these men displayed upon joining the York Rite and look forward to them completing the journey soon. The degree work in Casper was very well done with Sir Knights from Casper, Cheyenne, Douglas, Gillette, Laramie, Shoshoni, Thermopolis and Wheatland doing the work. One of the best parts was getting to socialize a little bit over an excellent lunch prepared by the ladies of the Beauceant. All the money collected goes to the Knight Templar Eye Foundation. The ladies donate all the food. My wife, Charlyn is the head of the Casper group this year. As far as we can tell this is the first time that a Grand Commander and his wife have held office at the same time in Wyoming. Casper Beauceant is growing, and the ladies do a good job. If you have a wife or significant other who might want more information on becoming a member, please contact me. We have a chapter in Sheridan as well.

There will be the Orders of the Temple conferred in Riverton on February 26th. There is also the Western Wyoming York Rite festival for all three degrees on that same date in Marbleton. Hopefully we can add to our numbers. Sheridan York Rite will be conferring the Chapter and Council degrees on March 5th and the Chivalric degrees on March 19th. They do very good work in Sheridan and it will be a good time to get some candidates headed that way.

February is a time to practice our work and get ready for the two festivals coming up. It would be great if each York Rite body could send a few candidates to the festivals. It would be great if we could do the work in our own local commanderies, but sadly few can anymore.

Ritual is defined as a proscribed procedure established for religious or other rites. Our Masonic and Templar rituals are more than that. They appeal to our senses of hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting and

even smelling. We hear the words of the officers on the degree team. We see the floor work. We feel the various objects given to us to explain the lessons. We taste the contents of the cup. We smell the burning tapers. All enhance the beauty of the work and impress the work upon our mind. What is the purpose of ritual one might ask? It conveys certain spiritual and moral lessons that are meant to impress the candidate. Done properly it conveys lasting memories to the candidate. Done well, it conveys great satisfaction to the person performing the rituals. Ritual is important as it ties us to the past. It is the language that time cannot alter no matter how many generations have passed. It is immortal. To be effective it must be clear in presentation and delivered with certain perfection. The delivery must be smooth and the voice must be clear and easily understood and heard. Not everyone is a good ritualist. It is something that must be practiced and critiqued. So why this discussion of ritual? Simply put it shows the need for the Grand Encampment. The Grand Encampment was established to preserve and convey the ritual to all the Grand Commanderies and see that the ritual is performed the same in Wyoming as it is in Tennessee. Each Grand Lodge has its own ritual, and they differentiate from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. However, in the York Rite, our General Grand Chapter and General Grand Council and our Grand Encampment exist to provide us a uniform ritual from one state or republic to another.

Our Grand Encampment has experienced its share of turmoil through the years and different Grand Masters have made decisions from time to time that might have caused some feathers to be ruffled. In the long run, Knight Templars will prevail. We are Christian Masons and have a faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that a lot of fraternal orders do not. We have been summoned to a Call to Conclave in March in Indiana. There will be a delegation from Wyoming attending the Call. I ask each Sir Knight to weigh all the evidence as presented and make up his own mind as to how best to proceed. This issue will be settled I hope at the Call to Conclave and hopefully we can move on in promoting Templarism. Do not let the doings there drag you down or get you in a bad mood. Proceed in your Commanderies doing what we do best: Practicing Templar Masonry.