



Grand Commandery of Michigan

"Together, for a Better Tomorrow"

Gary L. Paquet, Right Eminent Grand Commander

Greetings Sir Knights and Ladies:

Now that the April elections and installations have taken place, let me be among the first to congratulate you on your continued service to the Sir Knights and ladies of your commandery. Whether you have been elected to your new position for the first time or whoever knows how many, let me say thank you! Your commitment and dedication to the craft is appreciated.

In my travels throughout the state, be it for blue lodge, council or commandery, I have sadly heard, "We don't do anything" or "This is not what I expected." While this is not from everyone, I still hear it. Why is that? What are we doing wrong?

First, are we asking perspective candidates what is it they are looking for? If not, why? Men of all ages are looking for more. They do wish to belong to organizations or at least to something bigger than themselves. Is our product worthy of their time?



Grand Captain General's Workshop

5/14 Pontiac Commandery No. 2
6/11 Battle Creek Commandery No. 33
6/25 Lansing Commandery No. 25

- 8:00 a.m. Doughnuts and Coffee
- 9:00 – Noon Workshop: Focus on the opening, reception of Grand Officers, sword timing, forming triangle, and general tactics.
- Noon Luncheon

If we do ask the question, "what are you looking for," are we listening? Is our product what they are looking for? If not, be honest and let them know. It will save time and money for both. If on the other hand our product is what they are looking for, are we delivering it?

Sir Knights, I believe we have a wonderful product; not just in the commandery, but all of Masonry. Our Christian ideals, our masonic values and lessons are worthy of anyone's time. So why are men not joining?

Why, when they do, are they not staying? These questions have far reaching ramifications. Its analysis involves a depth far beyond the scope of a single article in this magazine, or quite frankly the ramblings of this Grand Commander. However, if I may, turn the analysis inward. What does your commandery do? Who are you? What do you stand for? What do you offer?

Remember how you felt when first brought to light? Remember all the lessons, the impact these had on you as an individual and the journey you've taken that has led to your where you are now? It must have given you something, otherwise, why did you keep coming back? Can you identify what it was? Now translate this to what you and your Sir Knights are offering candidates. Are you and your Sir Knights offering this to your new Sir Knights? Are you implementing programs or doing events that keep your Sir Knights and ladies engaged?

Eminent Commanders, I believe the answer to these questions start with you. You set the tone and direction for your commandery. I know it cannot be just the vision of one. Ask your Sir Knights and ladies

what they want. Based on their input, create a long-term plan to bring their desires to fruition. There may be some fits and starts, but don't give up. If the program or event is worthy, make it happen.

Sir Knights, since we are discussing inward thinking, how is your commandery doing with its ritual work, opening/closing, tactics? Are you able to do it? Are you able to do it well? Again, I will refer to my travels. Many commanderies just flat out can't do their work. There are many reasons for this and again, far beyond the scope of one article. However, what are you doing about it?

The Grand Commandery has noticed and because of it has implanted changes as to how we go about assessing commanderies. No longer are we using the top-down approach and assigning what you are to be evaluated on. That model wasn't working. It wasn't meeting your needs. We now have you deciding what areas to improve. Eminent Commanders, take this opportunity with the beginning of the new chivalric year to discuss with your Sir Knights what you as a commandery wish to improve and be inspected on. Define what you want to accomplish. Once you do, communicate this to your instructor and ultimately to your inspecting officer.

To bring this about, use a portion of your stated conclaves to work toward your plan or goal(s). If you do a little each conclave, you will see improvements and you will move toward, if not, reach your goals. I understand improvement doesn't happen overnight. It will take time and effort on everyone's part. However, when you put effort into your product, everyone will benefit from it. You will recruit more men, you will retain them, and you may even be able to bring some back.

May Birthdays: The happiest of birthdays to all.

5/3 S.K. David W. Dossette-Grand Prelate
5/5 Lady Gail Winn
5/10 S.K. Al McGuire-Grand Sentinel
5/18 S.K. Al Johnson-PGC
5/24 Lady Amy Hicks
5/25 S.K. John Porritt-PGC
5/31 Lady Jalene McGuire

Until our paths cross again, safe travels to wherever the journey takes you.

Gary L. Paquet, Grand Commander



Reminder - Membership Day:

Traverse City

will be hosting a Membership Day on Saturday, May 7, 2022.

All candidates are welcome.



The Chapter Degree's will start at 8:00 a.m. and the Orders will begin at 1:00 p.m.

The Order of the Red Cross and Malta will be in short form.

Contact E.C. Mark Drake for details

mandrake@aol.com or 231-633-9200 for registration and luncheon.

I'm looking forward to it and hope to see you there.



Memorial Day:

Sir Knights and ladies, it's hard to turn on the television and not hear the tragic stories or see the horrific images of the war in Ukraine. It should be a reminder to each of us of all that our brave men and women of the Armed Forces have and continue to give in defending our liberties and freedom.

I can't help but reflect. Several Sir Knights and ladies just celebrated Easter Sunrise services at our National Cemeteries, Fort Custer over near Battle Creek and Great Lakes in Holly. As we approach this Memorial Day, let us take a moment to pause, offer thanks and say a prayer to those who served in our Armed Forces and gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Let us collectively extend a prayer to all the families of these individuals. May this prayer include our brothers and sisters in Ukraine who are defending their land, homes, nation, and existence. And finally, say a prayer for our soldiers wheresoever dispersed that they may all come home safely to family, friends, and a grateful nation.



Sir Knights and Ladies from Central Michigan Battalion and other Commanderies gather on a cold and windy Easter Morning at Great Lakes National Cemetery outside of Holly Michigan to celebrate the Resurrection of Our Blessed Savior Jesus Christ



'The end of the musical version of "A Visit from St Nicholas" goes like this: "Twas the night after Christmas and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. The toys were all scattered and broken I fear, and St Nicholas won't come again for a year...." Our holidays come and go and anticipation leads to the celebration, and dwindles to common-place and arguable disappointment.

We can only imagine the emotions of the disciples of Christ as they lived the passion of Christ, witnessed the crucifixion and the resurrection. Then came the day after and we know they met behind locked doors, perhaps in fear, considering all that they had seen. We know that some returned to their former vocation (fishing). Indeed, we can't walk through their minds or emotions, we can only imagine ourselves in their place.

Our celebration of Easter is now past. We have moved onto other responsibilities and other events, yet a certain reality lingers, Christ has defeated death; He is risen! Risen indeed! Putting away the decor of our Easter events and relegating the celebration to memories doesn't change the truth of the resurrection.

Let us be faithful to that risen redeemer, remembering his suffering and treasuring his victory - The Lord lives and so shall we.

Sir Knight David Dossette, PC, KYGCH
Eminent Grand Prelate