

Focus on the Purpose!

By

Sir Knight Philip G. Buchholz, PGC, Wyoming

Editor's Note

As some of you may know, part of my job is to read the state supplements for each of our jurisdictions each month. The content of these supplements seems to be improving all the time. From time to time, I come across an article or a series of articles in one of these supplements which just begs to be reprinted in the main magazine so all the Sir Knights can benefit from it. Past Grand Master, Past Grand Commander, and Grand High Priest of Wyoming, Phil Buchholz, has done it again and has agreed to let me reprint the following for your edification.

The Ed.

Have we as a fraternity lost sight of our primary purpose? I fear that our continued focus on the Masonic philanthropies has sent the message that our philanthropic activities are the most important part of our fraternity. I suspect, because these monetary donations are easy to track and quantify, the philanthropic activities have taken center stage. Tracking these donations provides numbers to build graphs and charts reflecting the level of our financial support, thereby furnishing a simple means to track which local, grand, or national body is raising the most money. The message we now continually send to our membership appears to be that it matters not how much you have already contributed, we need more. During my travels over the past few years, I have heard numerous conversations regarding which body has raised the most for what purpose, how many hours of community service, the number of individuals who benefitted, and how to get our name and picture in some level of me-

dia for advertisement to get our name out there in the public eye.

I do not believe we spent a small fraction of that time discussing fraternalism and Freemasonry. I submit that our most important responsibility as Freemasons is to practice Freemasonry, which is easy to say, very difficult to define, and nearly impossible to quantify. How do we measure the level of our commitment and compliance to the Masonic values and principles to which we obligated ourselves when we voluntarily entered this great fraternity? I believe this message will be more effectively communicated as a whisper than when shouted, exemplified quietly by our behavior and our actions with no expectation of recognition or reward. I believe Masonic Charity has absolutely nothing to do with monetary donations; it is in my opinion, the love for your brothers, their families, and your fellowman, the genuine concern for their well-being.

I am relatively confident that far more people in our local communities

than we realize know us to be Freemasons. Our every action is closely monitored, and every time we slip or stumble, they take note and communicate these shortfalls to their friends and family. Our continued focus on monetary donations reminds me of a statement that goes something like this, "if you think you can buy society's approval by giving them money, you are sadly mistaken." We must do our best to live up to our obligations at all times, there is no time off!

We communicate the values of this fraternity daily in our individual circle of influence. To be a role model is not a choice, it is a responsibility. Each of us

fills that role for countless individuals we never realized were watching. That choice was theirs.

I recommend that we all support our Masonic philanthropies. They do great work and benefit many. I only suggest that we keep them in proper perspective and that we remember that our primary responsibility is to be Freemasons.

Sir Knight Philip G. Buchholz is Past Grand Commander of Wyoming, Past Grand Master of Wyoming and is currently serving as Grand High Priest of Wyoming. He can be contacted at phil@pnjb.net.

Subscriptions to the *Knight Templar* magazine are available from the Grand Encampment office at a rate of \$15.00 per year. Individual issues in quantities of less than 10 can be obtained for \$1.50 each from the office of the managing editor if available. Inquire via e-mail to the managing editor for quantities in excess of 10. Some past issues are archived on our web site. <http://www.knightstemplar.org>.

Grand Encampment Membership Awards

1016-1022 Larry Carte
Williamsburg Commandery No. 50
Williamsburg, KY
1 Silver and 3 additional Bronze

1023 R. Wesley Webber
Canton Commandery No. 38
Canton, OH

1024-1025 Don N. WISE
Highland Commandery No. 31
Hillsboro, OH
4th Bronze and 1st Silver

1026 Christie Kirk Leverett
St. John's Commandery No. 9
Union, NJ

