



Piedmont Commandery #26

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GENERAL ORDER #1 June 2005

Sir Knights, we are fortunate to have had the wonderful direction of Eminent Past Commander Edwin P. Elliott, Jr., this past chivalric year. Under his leadership, Piedmont Commandery has conferred all three Orders for the first time in many years. It is my intention to continue an emphasis on conferring the orders throughout the upcoming year.

It is by conferring the orders that we better understand their meaning and symbolism. It is by taking responsibility to learn a part that helps the candidates along their path to attain further light. The result is a strong Commandery with educated and dedicated members.

There is one absolutely essential element before orders can be conferred and that is candidates. We can borrow help for parts we cannot perform. We can borrow or improvise paraphernalia we do not possess. But, we cannot perform the work without candidates.

By the nature of our order, candidates must come from the Royal Arch. Royal Arch has been struggling, as have most other Masonic organizations, with declining membership. For this reason, I am presenting a long-range, strategic plan to increase our membership and that is by working diligently to help the Royal Arch increase its membership.

Over the past several years, I have seen that the best recruitment tool for Royal Arch (and for the Commandery) is a good knowledge of the degrees (and orders). When you speak to a prospect and simply invite him to join, the reaction is usually that they do not have the time or interest to devote to another organization. However, when you start speaking about the degrees, what they are about, you can pique their curiosity and interest. Next thing you know, they will ask for a petition.

In order to speak with knowledge and authority about the degrees and orders, you must first have a good understanding of their content. It is my number one goal this chivalric year to put forward an educational program to help all Sir Knights have a more extensive and a more clear understanding of our degrees and orders.

If our educational program is successful, we will have a membership better equipped to speak with authority to prospects. We will do a much better job this coming year of converting prospects into candidates. We will be able to increase our membership instead of suffering declines due to death and demits which plague our fraternity.

Sir Knights, I challenge each one of you to renew your commitment to Knights Templar, the Christian expression of Freemasonry. To take responsibility to help increase our membership. To learn a part in one or more of the orders and help us become independent in their conferral.

You can start by attending our regular conclaves. We will continue to have an excellent meal before each meeting beginning at 6:30 PM. Although our meeting will not be long, I will work to make them interesting and informative, worthy of your time in that quest for further light. Our next stated is on Thursday, June 24, 2004. This is a very special day for Knights Templar the feast of St. John the Baptist. Our program will be a very special religious observance. Be sure to join us for dinner at 6:30 pm.

At a called communication on Saturday, May 22, 2004, we voted on two new petitions. These Companions were given the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross at Old Dominion Commandery in full form at their stated on Wednesday, May 26, 2004. At our last stated, we voted on another petition. Two other Companions have indicated to me that they will be submitting petitions. It is my desire to confer the Order of the Red Cross by the middle of July. Our costumes and paraphernalia are in poor condition. Sir Knights Chuck McNoldy, Dallas Brumback, and Bob Mayer have been appointed as a committee to complete an inventory and compose a list of needed items for our next Conclave. We will also need Sir Knights to step up and learn a part for this order. Old Dominion has offered to assist us, but I would like to see our members fill as many parts as possible.

These are truly exciting times. Things are happening and Piedmont Commandery is growing. But we cannot relax, we must keep up the momentum, keep moving forward. This will only happen when each Sir Knight carries his small portion of the load. Please take a measurement of your cable-tow and lend all the support you can.

I want to thank all Sir Knights for electing me to serve as your Commander. To have a successful year I will be looking to each member for your support and contributions in growing our membership. Properly armed and equipped, and with the zeal of our Knight Templar forebears, we can accomplish much.

In His Name I ask your support,