

York Rite Conference Suggested Format & Planning

To: District Deputy Grand High Priests
Regional Deputy Grand Masters
Regional Grand Commanders

Following a very successful plan from previous years, the Grand York Rite Officers have suggested we follow that format for this year's regional meetings. The reasons for this are several:

(1) Rather than three regional meetings in the same area with the majority of the same leaders and members in attendance, having one well planned and organized meeting will save everyone valuable time.

(2) In the past, Chapter Forums, Council Assemblies and Commandery Workshops have been scattered throughout the year, some of which are so late they deliver untimely information. The new format will still present the current grand officers, but more importantly give the incoming grand officers a chance to present their programs prior to going into office. This provides everyone with any new initiatives and gives the regional officers and members a much better perspective of what to expect in the upcoming year and how to work to complete the goals.

(3) Finally, since so many of our unified programs are identical, this format makes for a more streamlined administrative function.

What is expected of the District/Regional Grand Officers has not changed. You will need to make your visits and communicate the programs and initiatives of your presiding grand officers. ~~2006-2007 Regional York Rite Conferences will be held in September, October, November and December, the earlier the better.~~ In preparation for the York Rite Conferences, you will need to personally visit and write each body encouraging their presence and participation, well in advance of the event. You should try to outline the requirements of the appropriate awards which require attendance at this conference, i.e., Distinguished Chapter Award, Council Merit Award, or Honor Commandery Award (see District/Regional Grand Officers Duties & Responsibilities for more information). When you write to the Chapters, Councils or Commanderies, make sure you send a copy to the presiding grand officer, the Secretary/Recorder, your regional grand line officer and the grand secretary/recorder.

In the Chapter and Council, you should work and travel with your respective Lecturer or Ritual Committeeman. The joint visit makes for a more eventful and functional meeting. When making your visits, know what it is you need to present – know what you're talking about. Keep in mind, before you make your visits, make sure you have all the necessary forms you might be asked for, all of which can be obtained from the Grand Secretary/Recorder if you don't already have them. Make yourself an outline of the topics you want to present, but don't over do it. We all have the attention span of a gnat and most of what you're saying you are saying to the people who already know. Be creative, try something different to get and keep their attention.

You really need to work with your counterparts in the other bodies – you may be able to develop joint efforts to promote York Rite education, membership, etc.

In planning for your Regional York Rite Conference, you have some ground work to do well before your meeting. Don't just show up and expect everything to work itself out. You are the responsible officer for making the conference work! Don't try to do it yourself, you have two other district/regional grand officers – get together and put a plan together. Outline your topics, decide who is going to present what. Call on your grand committeemen if you need help, they can either provide you with information or even make a presentation themselves. Give them adequate notice of your needs. Get some of your younger members involved by tasking them to help you with your programs. Don't be afraid to try new things.

You always have your grand officers and committeemen to fall back on for presentations. Set your schedule so that you have enough time to present what needs to be presented, but not so long that people lose interest. You are NOT obligated to keep a specific time schedule – take as long as you need to get the job done, even if you run over.

The conferences are set up to be an administrative tool. Think in the lines of leadership, education, and administrative functions. The Chapter and Council have separate ritual schools, you don't need to do any ritual – this is an administrative meeting. But, give your grand lecturers or regional grand lecturers/committeemen a chance to discuss necessary ritual issues. Work together as a team, don't run the show yourself, task each other. Try to keep control of the meeting, don't let things get out of hand or change from your program – keep everyone on track, you're in control.

Although this is not necessarily complete, here is a list of suggested topics for your conference:

Due Notice to all Chapters, Councils and Commanderies in your Region

The single most important item in this list!

Opening comments by Regional Grand Officers

Pledge of Allegiance

Opening prayer

Membership Initiatives

Local initiatives

What are the local bodies doing to generate membership

Grand York Rite initiatives

What are the grand bodies doing to generate membership

Educational Programs

Consult your education committees

Leadership Initiatives

Responsibilities of officers

Responsibilities of members

Responsibilities of regional grand officers

Responsibilities of grand officers

Charities - Consult the chairman and/or committee members

Royal Arch Research Assistance

Penny-a-day program

Cryptic Masons Medical Research Assistance

Grand Council Charity Endowment Fund

Penny-a-day program

Calendar Fund Raiser

Knights Templar Eye Foundation

Penny-a-day program

Life Sponsorship

Holy Land Pilgrimage (and Endowment Fund)

Knights Templar Education Foundation

Memorial contributions for deceased members

Encourage bodies to send \$10 or \$25 memorials to respective philanthropies in their honor

~~York Rite Charity Golf Tournament~~

~~————— The golf tournament is used to generate monies for the charities~~

York Rite Program Book

Used to help offset the cost of the grand session, last year raised apx. \$2000.00

Any Grand Officer fund-raiser programs

Endowed Membership

Get pamphlets from grand secretary/recorder or local secretary/recorder

Communications

To and from each organization and the Grand Secretary/Recorder

Awards

Distinguished Chapter Award

Council Merit Award

Honor Commandery Award

Lewis & Clark Awards

General Grand Council Adult Youth Leadership Award

General Grand Chapter Distinguished Royal Arch Mason

General Grand Council Cryptic Mason of the Year

Knights Templar Cross of Honor

Knight of Siloam

Veteran Membership

Chapter 25 & 50 yr

Council 25 & 50 yr

Commandery 40 & 50 yr

Ritual

Chapter Ritual Schools

Annual Grand Council Ritual School

~~Held annually, 4th Saturday in August in Columbia~~

Chapter Proficiency Program

Council Proficiency Program

Visits by Regional Lecturers/Ritual Committeemen

Drill & drill competition

Publications

Royal Arch Mason Magazine

Cryptic Mason Magazine

~~Life Subscription~~

Knights Templar Magazine

Schedule of upcoming events/grand sessions

Administrative issues from Grand Secretary/Recorder

Chapter/Council/Commandery Activity Reports

Royal Arch Magazine Subscription

Membership Accuracy

Communications between organizations

Dimits

Suspensions

Deaths

Accuracy of information

Other issues as needed

Reception of all Grand Officers

Comments by Grand King

Comments by Grand High Priest

Comments by Deputy Grand Master

Comments by Grand Master

Comments by Deputy Grand Commander

Comments by Grand Commander

Questions and answers by all grand officers

General open discussion

Dismissal with prayer

Schedule your breaks and lunch accordingly. If you need any help, assistance, or need information, contact the Grand Secretary/Recorder, your regional grand line officers, your committeemen, and don't forget your past grands; they have a wealth of knowledge and are sometimes forgotten.

Don't be afraid to try new things! Work to keep the interest and attention of your audience.