

IOWA SUPPLEMENT

David M. Dryer, Grand Commander
1521 West Boston, Indianola, Iowa 50125-2120

GREGORY L. KENKEL, Editor
329 36th St. Place, Sioux City IA 51104-2001



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This is the last article I will write as Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Iowa. I now take this opportunity to say thank you Sir Knights of Iowa for granting me the high honor and great privilege to serve in this position of responsibility. I also take this opportunity to say thank you to the 2008-09 staff for your support.

In this last opportunity to use this space, I am going to address an issue which is, in my judgment, of paramount importance. It goes beyond the cynical question, “What is in it for me?” or (more delicately expressed), “Why should I join this Order?”

It is perhaps the most difficult question that will ever be asked by a prospective Brother, Companion or Sir Knight, and very likely must be followed by an answer which bears the most profound consequences.

How will Masonry make me a better man?

Isn't this our pledge? Isn't this what we claim to be able to do? Let us take the question a step further. When Mrs. Prospective Member wants to know: **How will this Order make him a better spouse and parent? How will writing checks for another initiation fee and 50 years of dues help this family?**

Certainly, you can throw the obvious question back to her. You can ask, “Where would you prefer to have him spend his time and money when he is away from home?”

Choice # 1: Playing cribbage, chess or checkers/ watching a big screen TV/ shooting pool/ performing ritual with a bunch of men at the lodge (Where gambling is prohibited). Choice # 2: At the bars, exotic dance halls, river boats and casinos.

Certainly, you can talk about the fraternal bond that ties so many of us together.

However, I suggest that you respond by telling them the answer is to be found in the fundamental tenants, the principals, the teachings and the lessons which are presented in the Masonic Degrees and Orders.

Replete throughout the ritual of the Masonic Bodies are the themes which can be the salvation of this country and of the human race. Commitment – Honor – Integrity – Truth – Morals – Ethics – High Standards – Fidelity!

Tell your inquisitors some of the lessons and teaching points. Share with them some of the stories that highlight the admonitions, rewards and reprimands therein contained. Stress the significance of **light and knowledge**. Point out that the light presented by the Masonic Ceremonies leads to the rewards of a well spent life and the knowledge of Devine Truth which the Grand Master of the Universe will bestow on upon all who have faithfully performed their tasks. Further, that anyone who pays attention to the lessons and aspires to measure up to the teachings cannot help but become a better man, better spouse, better parent and better citizen of this great nation.

Brethren, Companions and Sir Knights, when addressing the basic question presented here, you must seize the opportunities that are spread before you. To use one of my favorite analogies,

you need to go after that kind of a question like I go after a piece of medium rare prime rib! You must realize that we have the opportunity NOT ONLY to make ourselves better men. We have an opportunity to lure people away from the path of the libertine and the road that led to the destruction, to the deaths and to the hardships of the Babylonian Captivity. We have an opportunity to take our fellow citizens by the hand and lead them on a path of friendship, morality and brotherly love. We have an opportunity to help our neighbors, business associates and fellow men to experience the fraternal bond that ties so many of us together and that in my judgment makes each of us better men, better spouses, better parents & better citizens of this great nation.

Ultimately, we have the opportunity to appreciate and to assist others to appreciate and understand that Freemasonry is not just a cold and antiquated affair speaking in parables and allegories. Rather, it contains the vital lessons necessary to be learned in preparation for the life that we are going to live.

Clearly, we have the opportunity to make them “better men”!

Remember that Grand Conclave is scheduled for 6/4-6/09, in Cedar Rapids. On Thursday, the 4th we have planned for: 1) Retreat Ceremony where the Sir Knights will pass in review with Beauceants flying to the song “Onward Christian Soldiers”. 2) Vespers Service. 3) Opening Competition between commanderies. Make plans to attend and bring your Beauceant! The luncheon on Friday, the 5th will feature a magician.

In 2009, Sioux City will host a Festival October 10 & 17. (Point of contact is Gregory L. Kenkel, 712 251 7935). Waterloo will host a Festival November 14. (Point of contact is Jons C. Olsson 319 232 7306). Des Moines will host a Festival November 21. (Point of contact is David M. Dryer 515 961 3279).

These York Rite Bodies will Exalt, Greet and Knight Brothers if they will come to the Festival! The candidates for the York Rite Degrees and Orders can pay their fees to your York Rite Body. Bring them to the Festival and the Companions and Sir Knights of the host York Rite Body will do the work. You need only let the host know that you are coming and get your candidates there.

You may also bring new members into your York Rite Body by contacting the Iowa York Rite College. There are two colleges in Iowa. They exist to support Symbolic Lodges, Chapters, Councils and Commanderies. They will assist the local bodies with the work. (Points of contact are Pre-Eminent Governor George J. Harrison, Iowa College # 37, 712 258 7511 or Pre-Eminent Governor Richard W. Martin, Lewis & Clark College # 199, 712 212 0351). Again, I say thank you.

I extend my best wishes to the 2009-10 staff and the Grand Commandery staffs that will follow. Especially, I bid you all an affectionate farewell.

Fraternally
David M. Dryer
Grand Commander