



Larry Brown, GC

Indiana Templary must take long view: GC Larry Brown

By Edward L. Sebring
editor

Grand Commander Larry Brown wants to establish a legacy of long-range planning, training and mentoring in the Grand Commandery of Indiana.

But his first priority is to try to firmly establish Hoosier Templary's place in the history of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America.

"The first thing I want to do is to get Duane Vaught elected Grand Captain General at the Triennial of the Grand Encampment," Brown said.

Vaught, Bloomington, a Past Grand Commander of Indiana and Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Indiana, was appointed to that position more than a year ago following the resignation of Knight Templar Grand Master Richard Baldwin. However, to retain it and hopefully eventually become the third KT Grand Master from Indiana, he must be elected to the office during the Triennial in August in Roanoke, Va. The last Hoosier Grand Master was SK Willard M. Avery, who held that office more than 30 years ago. The voters are all Past Grand Commanders, plus the current grand dais officers, Brown said.

"I think Duane Vaught is the right man for the job, and I think it is my job and the job of all Past Grand Commanders to get him elected," Brown said. "He's here for Indiana and for all Sir Knights. It's a feather in Indiana's cap to have another Grand Master of the Grand Encampment. What greater honor could Indiana have?"

Brown's hopes for the Grand Commandery of Indiana and its constituent Commanderies include:

Get new members and bring back those lost

"I can't do it. It has to come from constituent commanderies and from individual knights," Brown said. "But we will go out and try to present some programs they can use. Templary has so much to offer Masons, and we need to get out there and let them know about it."

Brown is planning to appoint regional Grand Crusaders to teach and lead the recruitment effort. But he wants the recruiting done in a businesslike manner, because it works better.

"If Larry Brown gives out a petition and doesn't follow up on it, then Larry

Brown has failed," Brown said. "Contact the man who received the petition and ask, 'What do we need to do to get you to join this organization?' We're going to find out that we'll get more members that way."

Preparing our grand officers for the future

"We want to prepare our corps of Grand Officers not just from year to year but to look far into the future to make plans for Grand Commandery," Brown said. "If you look at only one year at a time, when your year (as Grand Commander) comes, you're behind the eight ball. You need to know how to make things happen. We can't just move from function to function, we must think down the road, think outside the box."

Helping constituent Commanderies

"We're going to serve our local commanderies," Brown said. "I know we do that now, but we want to do it even more. That's why we put Commanderies into battalions and have deputy battalion commanders. We want to serve them, to help them with whatever they need."

Budgeting

"I want to work on our general fund for the future," Brown said. "We need to look down the road, not at today. We need to plan ahead."

Communications

"We're going to improve communications, so everybody will be on the same page and we're all headed down the same road."

Training at all levels

"My job is to prepare the guys under me to be a better grand commander than what I want to be," Brown said.

"We're providing training to battalion and deputy battalion commanders. We re-did the battalion and deputy battalion commander handbooks. I have researched and researched the laws, rules and regulations, and to the best of my knowledge these handbooks are up to date. And we've created a uniform method for scoring inspections, all in book form.

"We're going to provide an Indiana Templar Academy school this year. In the past two years we have had Crusader (new member recruiting) training. This ITA will be a return to the previous model where we will teach Sir Knights how to run a commandery."

Mentoring

"If you don't mentor people you have somebody who doesn't know what he's doing," Brown said. "We're establishing mentoring programs for Grand Officers, with the mentoring done by either Past Grand Commanders or elected Grand Officers. I have picked four Past Grand Commanders to mentor me this whole year, to follow me, be with me, to guide me.

"We want constituent commanderies to mentor within themselves. We want Past Commanders to mentor new people, we want existing Sir Knights to grab new knights by the arm and bring them back."

Only the beginning

"It absolutely feels great to be the grand commander," Brown said. "It is rewarding, it is a pleasure, it is an honor. But it's not the completion, it is still a journey which I haven't completed yet."