

MARYLAND SUPPLEMENT



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Grand Commander's Message – October 2007

Sir Knights,

It is our hope this finds you enjoying life as much as possible. Take a moment before reading further and reflect on your current status and that of your family, whether at home or dispersed across this beautiful world. To quote parts of a message received over the weekend, you need to count your blessings if you wake up with more health than illness, if you never experience the danger of battle or the loneliness of imprisonment, if you attend a church service without fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death, if you have money in the bank, in your wallet and spare change in a dish.

Knights Templar Eye Foundation 40th Campaign

The 40th Annual Campaign for the Knights Templar Eye Foundation began on October 1, 2007 and continues until April 30, 2008. This is our opportunity to excel, to show the world what the Templar philanthropy is about. We want to help the less fortunate, we want to help humanity, we want to extend the "gift of sight" to those less fortunate than we. We can meet these noble challenges by offering the Campaign our full support. The Eye Foundation provides in excess of \$3.5 million annually for eye care to needy recipients and funds research grants of approximately \$600,000 each year to the fields of pediatric ophthalmology and ophthalmic genetics. Each of us must do our part to assure the continued success of our Eye Foundation.

My ardent hope is all of us will consider giving generously this year. Three years ago, we averaged \$9.96 for each Sir Knight in Maryland. Last year, we averaged about \$7 *per capita*. I would like to see us dramatically increase that amount this year. My goal is \$10 per member (\$15 would be even better). This may look imposing, but it should be very easy. For \$10, set aside two quarters a week between now and the end of the Campaign. For \$15, set aside three quarters a week. Skip that daily soda or cup of coffee and you will easily exceed that amount.

Fraters, it is through the KTEF we have the opportunity to present grants to the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins University. I have just been informed by the Foundation that we will have one to present this year. I am disappointed there are not more, but I take great satisfaction in knowing the amount of these grants far exceeds the amount we donate each year. Further details on this year's presentation will be included in next month's supplement.

Contributing Commanderies will be recognized as follows:

1. Constituent Commanderies contributing at least \$10 per member will receive a plaque and a seal as presently established. If your Commandery already has a plaque, it will receive an additional seal for this year;
2. Constituent Commanderies contributing at least \$5 per member (but less than \$10) will receive a Certificate of Recognition;

In addition, the Campaign chairman of each Grand Commandery having 100 percent participation by their Constituent Commanderies receives a personal plaque of recognition. I would be most pleased to see S.K. Fred Spicer, our chairman for this year, receive such a plaque.

Knigh Templar Eye Foundation Contributions

The Grand Encampment requires each of us to contribute at least \$1 each year to the KTEF campaign unless one is a life member. For those unfamiliar with life membership, this means a Sir Knight has made at least one \$30 donation to the Foundation in the past, thereby becoming a life member. While such membership exempts you from having to make that \$1 donation in the future, most life members do. I know many of us have done so. All I ask is that you remember every dollar given helps someone less fortunate receive the gift of sight.

Endowment Fund

In my August message, I informed you about the amount of dues you will be responsible for paying to the Grand Commandery this coming April. Although not dues *per se*, I call your attention to the fact the Grand Commandery voted at its Grand Conclave in 2001 to establish an Endowment Fund of \$1,000,000. Each Sir Knight in Maryland was assessed \$50, payable over the next 10 years (\$5 a year), or a one-time \$40 payment in the initial year. Some of you took advantage of that stipulation. Unfortunately, many did not. For your information, we presently are a little beyond the half-way point in time to attaining that million dollar figure.

Your recorder should have a record of what you have paid and how much you may still owe. You may contact him and find out what needs to be paid to become current. If you are current when dues are collected at the end of this year, you will have paid \$30 toward the assessment. Sir Knights, each of us as we received the Order of the Temple was admonished always to remember that there is nothing more sacred than our vows of Knighthood. Part of this vow was to abide by any summons from one's Commandery. I am of the opinion that assessment is equivalent to a summons.

Veterans' Day, November 11

The Grand Commandery will hold a Veterans Day Celebration at Fort McHenry. After a wreath-laying ceremony at the grave of S.K. James McHenry, there will be a dinner at the Fort. Also included will be a short presentation on the Fort and the U. S. flag by S.K. Steve Ponzillo. Cost, \$35 per person. Make your reservations with S.K. Lou Bandell, the Chairman of the Civic and Patriotic Committee, 211 E. Ridgely Road, Lutherville, MD 21093. Please act soon – space is limited.

Fraternally Yours in Christ,
Patrick A. Curtis, REGC of Maryland