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Editor

Final REGC's Column for the Colorado Section of the KT Magazine!

Sir Knights,

As this is the last column I will write for the Colorado Section of the Knight Templar Magazine as your Grand Commander I wanted to take a moment to thank you all for the privilege and honor it has been to serve you in this capacity.

Taking a leadership role in our beloved Fraternity has been one of the most life-changing decisions I've ever made – I've learned so much from so many of you. It hasn't been easy; lessons have been learned, and sometimes learned (as well as taught) as an example of what not to do!

Leadership is difficult – it's never what you expect. If it is, then chances are you're not leading. Leadership forces you to reach outside of yourself, to redefine your own conceptions of who you are and what you are there to do. Circumstances come to try you; circumstances beyond your control but circumstances for which you will nonetheless be liable, and you want to do your best, we all want to do our best. Yet leadership requires of you things you ordinarily would not do things you might otherwise avoid, and, no matter what perhaps the hardest part, you will never make everyone happy, and so people change, they look at you differently, sometimes positively, sometimes negatively, some come to resent you, some curry favor. Worse even here in the midst of Freemasonry sometimes envy appears.

In leadership you change, quite simply because you have to change. If you don't change, you'll never be the same in the world's eyes anyway. Either you change or the world changes you.

This is all good experience and it's entirely worthwhile.

When I was appointed to the Grand Commandery Line almost eight years ago I was still living in Norwood, was single, and enjoyed a flexible position ghostwriting at a patent firm. It's remarkable how much has changed! As one moves up the line, so life seems to magnify I moved to Denver, met a girl, got married, started my own business, bought a beagle, had a daughter, and – just to make things really interesting somehow thought it would be a good idea to attend law school as well...

On top of all that, the last two years were consumed by a massive lawsuit that one of my corporate clients is still fighting against and my firm was retained to assist in all matters of intellectual property, a large, diverse, worldwide portfolio that was demanding, far-flung, disparate, and complex. Many late night hours piled up alongside the paperwork.

My point is, when one accepts an appointment to a line, one can't be aware of the future, or how things will fall out. You optimistically assent and look forward to working with great men you admire. Isn't that why we do everything, but fate has a certain way of making things happen unexpectedly. Someone quits, someone isn't reappointed, things get shuffled, things change, politics emerge it was always there lurking out of sight, but suddenly it becomes visible, life happens, and before you know it it's all happening at once!

But would it be better any other way? I think not. The Craft avails itself of its membership, and puts us to its good use. All we need do is open ourselves up to the opportunity.

Sir Knights, every blade is tempered by fire. And, to borrow a phrase, men sharpen men as steel sharpens steel. So it is that our great Fraternity inculcates the great moral lessons, not just in ritual, in allegory and symbol as we come to expect, but in practice in the day to day community of disparate interests that Freemasonry unites.

And this is right, this is good, this is as it should be.

I look forward to seeing you all down the trail. Thank you for your help, your support, your encouragement, your patience, your tolerance, and all the lessons you've afforded this curious student.

Until we meet again, Godspeed,

Ben Williams

REGC