

GRAND ENCAMPMENT MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE – February Report

The committee has established specific goals and realistic timelines for accomplishing them. This committee will be working in conjunction with the committees on Electronic Communications, Social Media, Public and Fraternal relations as we all labor to improve our efforts to better support our fraternity. We are confident that with the full efforts of every Sir Knight, combined with the support of the GEKT Membership Committee, we will succeed.

The intent of these monthly “newsletters” or reports on the Grand Encampment website is to provide you with the latest directives from our Grand Master, any new items that have been placed in our “tool box” that will provide you with those ideas, templates and suggestions for promoting membership. These will be broken down into four areas: Recruitment, Retention, Restoration and Public/Masonic Relations. Some may not like the term “recruitment”, but the idea is there.....that we need to increase our numbers. “Retention” is concerned with keeping the members we have by fulfilling their needs and aspirations. “Restoration” involves our efforts to bring back those Sir Knights we have lost due to a lack of interest or personal issues that may have prevented from continuing their membership at that point in their lives. Public and Masonic relations are just that, working to promote better relationships and awareness in the communities we live in and a better understanding of who we are and what we stand for among our Masonic brethren. Look for many of these “tools” to appear on this portion of the website in the coming days and weeks.

Who will carry on this work of promoting membership? Every Department Commander was tasked with providing the GEKT Membership Committee with the names and contact information for the Membership Committee Chairman in each of the Grand Commanderies within their jurisdiction. In the coming weeks and months we will be reaching out to obtain the same information for each of the separate commanderies within each Grand Commandery. This organizational chart will enable the central committee to establish more direct lines of communication to those of you who are working at the “ground level” to promote membership. You will be seeing more of us at the Department Conclaves, providing more education, advising on the use of the tools in our “tool box” and listening to you for your comments, suggestions and questions.

As we looked back over several years/decades of reporting and the stated purposes and goals of previous GEKT Membership Committees, we identified several concerns that remain today. There were numerous programs aimed at strengthening our membership numbers which are still pertinent today. Why didn't they succeed? How is it that we still face many of the same problems and that many of the same proposed steps to stem this downward trend. Why haven't those programs been put into play? The answer appears to be that once we had identified our problems and developed the programs to correct them, they were not successfully implemented. We failed to follow through from year-to-year and certainly from one Triennial to the next. MEGM Nelson made it clear that we MUST have continuity in this regard. Once we have identified those Sir Knights who have the demonstrated skill sets and the dedication to work on

our membership, we need to keep them at the job for more than just this year. We need to provide them with the necessary tools to assist them, train them on the use of those tools and bring more SKs with similar skill sets into the program. The job is huge and can be overwhelming at times, much like eating an elephant. You can liken this to turning an enormous aircraft carrier around full. It's a big effort that will require many degrees in making it happen until the new course has been achieved. We need to have our full team involved in this effort, led by ambitious leaders.

We will leave you with this thought which SK Jeff Bolstad, REGCG posted on a daily text he sends out: ***“Ambition is refusing to give up on ourselves. Leadership is refusing to quit on others.”*** Together, we can achieve great things.

SK Henry Adams, PDC Chairman
SK Carson Smith, member
SK William A. Garrard, PDC member