Grand Commander’s Program Objectives
03 May 2014 to 02 May 2015
(Revision 1.1)

Purpose: Improve the operation and management of Templary in the Commonwealth of Virginia

This plan incorporates and builds on the actions and initiatives of preceding years. The areas of emphasis are described in the following elements. Progress in these areas will increase the prestige of being a Knight Templar. District Deputy Grand Commanders should encourage, support, and monitor the efforts being made within their respective Chivalric Districts on these areas.

Templar Knowledge: Every member should be familiar with the content, and make periodic checks for new information, on the Grand Encampment (http://www.knightstemplar.org/) and Grand Commandery (http://www.knightstemplar.org/gckt/va/) web sites. There is a link on the Grand Encampment site to the Constitution, Statutes, Disciplinary Rules, Standing Resolutions, Ceremonies, Forms and Approved Decisions of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America in a searchable PDF document. There is a link on the Grand Commandery site to the Constitution and Statutes of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Virginia in a searchable PDF document. Every member should know that the Templar Uniform for Virginia is described in detail in Section 32.

Charitable Activities: Every member should be familiar with our three main charitable activities; how they operate and how they are funded. The Grand Encampment web site home page has a wealth of detailed information about each under the following labels: Eye Foundation, Educational Foundation, and Holy Land Pilgrimage. The latter two provide direct personal benefit to people in Virginia. Each Commandery should plan ways to make a contribution to all three.

Corporate Data Management: It is mandatory for Commanderies to use the York Rite Information System (YRIS) to maintain their member records and dues payments. This information is used by both the Grand Commandery and Grand Encampment. Each Eminent Commander is responsible for making at least a semi-annual review of YRIS membership reports obtained from their Recorder or the Recorder’s computer savvy assistant. At least one a year, every member should personally, or seek help to, check their YRIS record and make any needed changes to accessible content. Help for Recorders is available from the Special Assistant to the Grand Commander, Sir Knight Jay Cotner, REPGC.

Communication and Participation: Encourage all members to read the Virginia Supplement to the Knight Templar magazine every month. At a minimum, every elected officer should be a member of the Virginia Knights Templar yahoo group in order to post and receive notes about Knights Templar activity in Virginia. Commanderies are expected to keep their members informed about local and state events. When information is provided by the Grand Commandery about an activity, it must be widely disseminated at the local level to be effective. If it is only read at Conclaves, only a fraction of our members will ever know about it. Let’s be optimistic, not pessimistic about participation by our brother Templars.
Religious Observances and Monthly Devotion Messages: Commanderies are expected to adhere to the Religious Observance Section of the Constitution and Statutes of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Virginia. There will be short monthly devotional messages from the Office of the Eminent Grand Prelate. They are to be read at Constituent Commandery Conclaves. They will also be archived on the Grand Commandery web site so that those who miss attending will also be able to read them.

Drill Team: Every Commandery should form at least one Virginia Class “E” five man Drill Team. Please refer to the Drill Team Information on the Grand Commandery web site. Although competition at the Stated Conclave of the Grand Commandery is not necessary, doing this will increase basic skills used in the Full Form Opening of Constituent Commandery Conclaves. It will also provide potential members for one or more Virginia Drill Teams to compete at the Grand Encampment in Buffalo, NY, in August 2015.

Ritual and Tactics: Know that the Eminent Grand Instructor General will be producing a comprehensive Errata to the current (2007 Digest) Manual of Tactics and Asylum Ceremonies. This is being done to distribute the large number of corrections, additions, and explanations for use and comment prior to producing a new version of the manual. My intent is to have the new manual available as a PDF document. It will need to conform to Grand Encampment Ritual and Section 3 of the Constitution of the Grand Encampment which states “It has supreme legislative, judicial and executive power and jurisdiction over the Orders of Red Cross, Knight of Malta and Knight Templar within the United States of America and geographical regions over which the United States exercises jurisdiction. The Grand Encampment has sole and exclusive power and authority to formulate and promulgate the Rituals covering the Rites, ceremonies and secret work pertaining to the several Orders, to be used within its Jurisdiction.”

Leadership and Education: Sir Knights in leadership positions in the Grand Commandery (Grand Line Officers, District Deputy Grand Commanders, and District Instructors) and the Constituent Commanderies (Commanders, Generalissimos, Captains General) are expected to have attended leadership training and complete the Knights Templar Leadership Correspondence course. Better late than never applies here. All leaders, past and present, are expected to mentor high potential Sir Knights and recommend them to the Grand Commander for an invitation to attend the multi-year Rising Star Leadership course held at the annual Mid-Atlantic Department Conference each year. The next one will be held on Saturday, 04 October 2014, in Alexandria, VA.

Support the Symbolic Lodge and Royal Arch Chapter: Every member must know the importance of supporting the York Rite from the bottom up. If our Lodges and Chapters fail, we will fail. Local creativity on ways to do this is encouraged. District Deputy Grand Commanders are expected to share success stories with each other and the Grand Line Officers. The number of young men interested in and seeking Masonry seems to be growing. The York Rite needs to be visible to them. Personal creativity and leadership by local members to do this is encouraged. We must build from the ground up locally. Every member should know about the Virginia Membership Award Cordons and the Grand Encampment Membership Award.

Remember to put on the Armor of God every day!

Courteously,

William F. “Bill” Reinhold
Grand Commander