

SUPREME CHANCELLOR'S
PROGRAM'S
2016-2018

Celebrating 152 years of Pythianism



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SUPREME CHANCELLOR

FRIENDSHIP, CHARITY, BENEVOLENCE

These are three words that are the cornerstone of our Pythian Order. We have used them numerous times over the past 152 years plus, however, I get the feeling that to many of us, that's all they are....WORDS. Empty words that do not have the feeling and meaning that they were meant to have. Times change, people change, the world changes. But regardless of the reasons, these basic principles of the Knights of Pythias must remain intact as we go forward. I believe for the Knights to survive and continue to do the outstanding work that we do, certain changes have to be made. We must remember where we came from, the promises that we made, and most importantly, the direction where we are going. The time has come for us to run this organization as a business; getting back to basics, assigning responsibilities, making commitments, and following up and reviewing the results of these assignments and commitments and making changes when necessary.

During my time on the Supreme Council I have witnessed many situations where differences between Brothers over personal issues or legal issues have resulted in charges being levied and/or judicial trials being held with incredible conclusions.

It is my feeling that, as Pythians we have gotten away from our basic principles. Had all those Brothers involved in the above issues worked a little harder, had they tried to understand a little more, and had they showed a little love, I feel some of these legal issues could have had different results. We are the Knights of Pythias and we help people. We do not hurt people. Most importantly, we should not hurt each other. This has to change and it will change. Once we start to understand and respect each other, this will be the beginning of change and a new direction. We all can't agree with each other, but we must respect each other.

Finally, I want to remind my Brothers that as in any respected organization there are rules and regulations. Here in Supreme Lodge we have The Supreme Constitution and Statutes that guide us as Pythians. True, some of this is outdated, some may be construed as ambiguous, and some may not contain the correct grammatical usage. But regardless, it is our guide and has been written with good intentions. Should you feel that a situation requires correction, you have the right as a Knight to amend, originate, or delete a Supreme Statute or to influence the Supreme Constitution. Once submitted at our Convention its outcome rests with our Voting Members.

As your Supreme Chancellor, it is my sworn duty to uphold the Supreme Constitution and Supreme Statutes and when necessary to seek interpretation from our Supreme Tribunal. This I promise to do with all my ability, understanding, and the help of G-D.

I will continue many of the same programs my predecessor offered, with several changes as outlined in the following pages.

My motto: **"IT ONLY TAKES ONE PERSON TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!"**
Are you that person?

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MEMBERSHIP

In order for us to survive we must grow. We cannot continue as we have. If we do, then membership is an exercise in futility. We must “make things happen rather than let things happen.” Stop talking and do something. Accordingly, I am assigning several Domains to each one of my officers with the understanding that they will work with the respective Domain and DSC’s to bring in a minimum amount of members within the year. This will include new members as well as reinstatements. Setting goals is very important. Various membership tools will be provided such as new flyers, membership cards, computer flash drives as well as one on one contacts which will facilitate this task.

I will also review how Lodges conduct their meetings so that they are meaningful and productive. Too many times they are boring, non-productive and only serve to turn away members. But most importantly, lodges must open in ritualistic form as prescribed by statute. We are a proud and traditional fraternal order not a social club. Adhere to the rules or risk losing your charter. I will then follow up to review the progress. Please remember, if we care, we will be successful. If we don’t care, we will continue to decline. Recently, several Domains have initiated between 35 and 137 new Knights during the year. They did it; so can you. You just have to be proud and dedicated and want to succeed.

MEMBERSHIP CHAMPIONS

As a reward for exemplary work during 2016-2018 in bringing in new members, starting a new lodge, or any other membership work, each Domain may submit the name of that person via a form submitted to the Deputy Supreme Chancellor serving the respective Domain. The Supreme Chancellor, the Supreme Membership Chairman and the Supreme Secretary will select the International Membership Champion from the forms submitted and that person will receive \$1000 towards a trip to the 2018 Supreme Lodge Convention in New York City. At the Convention he will be officially recognized.

MEMBERSHIP ACQUISITION PROGRAM INCENTIVE (M.A.P.)

As an additional incentive to subordinate lodges, districts (groups of lodges) or Grand Lodges to help defray the cost of pre-approved membership drives, contests, etc., the Supreme Lodge will pay the following amounts as long as the followings rules are followed:

- 1) The lodge or lodges seeking reimbursement will describe on a form provided by the Supreme Lodge, the membership activity, date, location, and an estimate of the amount to be spent. It must be submitted to the Supreme Secretary after verification by the Deputy Supreme Chancellor not less than 14 days prior to the start of the event.
- 2) The lodge will complete a “post activity report” on a form supplied by the Supreme Lodge and verified by the Deputy Supreme Chancellor within 30 days of the completion of the event. It shall contain the names of the prospective members who have submitted a complete application for membership to the respective lodge.

- 3) Once the applicants have received the Rank of Knight, the lodge will be eligible to receive the M.A.P. incentive of \$10 per new Knight to offset the cost of the original activity.
- 4) This program begins September 1, 2016 and ends April 30, 2018. The last day for submission of the form to receive M.A.P. reimbursement is June 30, 2018.
- 5) The maximum amount of reimbursement will be \$250 per lodge which will not exceed the cost of the M.A.P. activity.
- 6) The Supreme Lodge reserves the right to discontinue the M.A.P. Incentive Program at any time due to budgetary or activity restraints.

NEW LODGES

Besides acquiring new members, each Domain is asked to start a new lodge. Perhaps a group of ball players would feel more comfortable starting their own lodge. Or, perhaps a group of people (professional or otherwise) with similar backgrounds would be more comfortable forming a new lodge with people they know. Either way, Supreme Lodge will pay the founder of any new lodge \$250 for expenses, plus a set of office supplies from the Supreme Secretary. Upon request, a Supreme Lodge Officer will attend the installation and be available to assist its growth in the future.

As always, there are brochures available giving detailed instructions on how to start a new lodge. Please contact the Supreme Secretary.

EXISTING LODGES

Change is difficult. Especially if you are a member for a long time and are used to doing things the same way. However, seeing how things have changed and membership continues to decline, we MUST adjust too. We cannot sit back and let things happen, we have to make things happen. You say “we already tried it and it doesn’t work”. Well, that’s no longer acceptable. If we care, we will find something that does work. But only if we care and keep trying! If you don’t care, the end will come quickly. I don’t think as dedicated Pythians we want to go this route.

We cannot quit.

Here are some ideas; review how a lodge operates ritualistically. How closely does your lodge relate to this? If not, change. How interesting are your meetings? Do you pre-plan? Do you invite outside speakers? Do you greet new members? Do you include new members in your committees? Do you make new members officers? Share responsibilities with younger members? Do you call when someone is sick? Do you offer someone a ride if they can’t drive? Do you have events where you include Spouses or significant others?

Remember when we were young once and the old-timers wouldn't give us a chance? Remember how angry and frustrated we got and how many times we wanted to quit? Well, you may now be doing the same thing to the younger members. Give them a chance. Make it interesting so that there is a good reason to attend. Make them proud to be a Knight of Pythias. Show them what we have accomplished over the past 152 years. Make them a part of that. That's how we keep our members; that's how we grow, that's how we survive.

One new member can bring another and he can bring in another and another etc. Get the idea?

This can only happen if we change and adjust.

I am also going to review the Form 117's for the past 5 years. If we can convince these former members that we have made changes to the way we conduct our meetings and do business, perhaps they may consider re-joining. This will also apply to those former members who left the Order because they moved. Perhaps we can find a new lodge closer to their new home. Being a former member makes it a lot easier to recruit some of these gentlemen since they have some knowledge as to what a Pythian is.

I will also reimburse any domain up to \$100 to pay for telephone calls made to reacquire former members. Please consult with the Supreme Secretary for details.

I will also assign a Supreme Lodge Officer as well as Deputy Supreme Chancellor to assist in this effort. Between these gentlemen and the responsible brothers in your domain or province we will succeed.

RANK WORK

As was said earlier, membership is very important if we wish to grow. I encourage every lodge to develop and maintain a group of ritualistic brothers who are not only familiar with statutes, but would also consider themselves ritualists. Not only would rank work be done in a professional manner, but would offer a very valuable set of lessons to the newly installed Knights so that they could better understand Pythianism.

Should a substantial number of new members be initiated, a Grand Lodge or a subordinate lodge may request from the Supreme Secretary the use of the original Rathbone Bible to obligate these men.

AMERICAN & CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY

During my earlier years on the Supreme Council, I became aware of the passing of the father of the then Supreme Chancellor who died of Cancer. At the same time, I successfully completed my radiation treatments for prostate cancer. Thankfully, I now consider myself a cancer survivor.

However, these two events affected me so much, that I made a motion at the Supreme Council meeting that for the following 10 years, both the American & Canadian Cancer Society would be our Supreme Lodge Charity. The motion passed unanimously. I am now continuing that promise.

Remember, we help people (some of which may be your own family members) and also donate to medical research. We must be a part in the fight for early discovery of cancer within our members and/or their families as well as ultimately eliminating it. People need us. We must respond.

There are many cancer fund raising programs in your areas and your participation is greatly appreciated.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

Even though most of our troops have returned to the United States, it is appalling to hear about the many wounded soldiers and their families living at medical facilities who do not have many of the basic necessities needed to live. Tooth brushes, soaps, toilet paper, female sanitary products, etc. are just a few of the items that are not being totally provided to them by the government. We are now visiting these facilities and supplying these people with them. Your donations are making this possible. You don't have to be an ex-military person to give to this committee. These men and women have risked their lives for us. Some have lost body parts fighting for us. Let's thank them for their efforts by donating to this committee so that we can continue to help them.

POSTER/VISUAL ARTS CONTEST

One of the ways that we can get our name out to the public is through our poster contest.

Not only do we provide for monetary rewards to the various winners, we can publicize this event through public relations releases throughout the Order gaining exposure as well as recruiting new members.

Please contact the Supreme Secretary for contest details.

The theme for 2016-2018 is **“WHAT IS A FRIEND?”** We are all Pythians and we are all friends. Now let's show the world.

HONOR LODGE PROGRAM

This program is designed to honor those lodges and their Officers and members who have done an outstanding job in disseminating the virtues of the Pythian Order. Increases in membership, charitable work as well as name recognition are just some of the activities that would qualify a subordinate lodge for this honor. Once we publish the accomplishments of an honor lodge on our website as well as our newspaper, it would hopefully show other lodges that they too can accomplish many good things with just a little effort. We are a family and we must help each other reach the goals that we set.

In order to qualify for this honor, a Knight who feels that his lodge has accomplished many of these activities, should fill out a form summarizing what the lodge has done. It must be signed by either the Chancellor Commander or the Lodge Secretary and submitted to the Supreme Lodge Honor Lodge Program Committee Chairman. If the committee selects that lodge from those submitted, the lodge will receive a certificate and a letter of commendation from the Supreme Chancellor. These will be hand delivered to the respective lodge by a Supreme Lodge representative. The lodge will also be featured on our website and be officially recognized and congratulated at the Supreme Convention.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

As I said earlier, “we help people”. There is no better way to do this than to go out to the public and do things by volunteering your services and helping people. From the time I became a Pythian until today, all I continue to hear is “the Knights of Who? Why should this be? The problem appears to be that we don’t advertise all the good work that we do. If you don’t tell them, how do you expect them to know? This has to change immediately. I encourage you to volunteer and continue to help people. But, be in a position to let the public know what you do. Do this through advertising, public service messages, your local penny savers, even newly created flyers which will be supplied by Supreme etc. Also, while you are getting our name out to the public, if the readers like what you are doing, then ask them to join you so that you can continue the great work that you have done for more than 152 years. It is a great membership advertising tool. Remember, if you don’t ask you will not get.

Once you have spent 150 hours volunteering, submit the information to your lodge secretary who will forward it to the Supreme Secretary. You will then receive a certificate of appreciation from the Supreme Lodge which you can proudly display. If anyone asks you what it is for just say, “I am a Pythian, a proud Pythian, and we help people”.

PYTHIAN INTERNATIONAL

The Pythian International is the official publication of the Supreme Lodge. Its purpose is to inform the entire Pythian Order of exactly what's going on currently. It is published 3 times a year with 5 paper copies going to each subordinate lodge. Should you wish to receive an electronic computer copy, please log in to our website, PYTHIAS.ORG and view it there.

I have heard many complaints that the contents of the publication is not current. Did you ever stop to think about where material comes from? Yes, from you. If you don't send in current information, then we have to leave in the old information.

So, instead of complaining, let's do something creative. Make it a point to send in articles and pictures several times a year to our editor, who will now have current information to print.

I know that there is always something happening somewhere in the Pythian Order. So having information should not be a problem. Now, the publication will be current and fresh, informative, and have many more happy informative readers.

DEPUTY SUPREME CHANCELLORS

I have heard that being a Deputy Supreme Chancellor (DSC) is an honorary position and you don't have to do anything. Well, I must inform you that this is furthest from the truth. In this Order we have many parts that are broken that must be fixed. This is one of them. I need help and you have to help me.

I said previously that we were going to run this Supreme Lodge like a business. We will have programs in place and we will have goals which shall be reviewed periodically. Supreme Lodge Officers will be assigned to specific domains and together with the DSCs will be responsible for the success or failures within. Full, complete, and accurate reports will be required to be submitted to the Chief DSC on a timely basis. If you want the title you will have to earn it. If not, there is always someone else who does want it and is willing to earn it.

RATHBONE HERITAGE SOCIETY

The Rathbone Memorial which is the burial place of our Founder, Justus H. Rathbone is located in Utica, NY. It is a shrine to our Pythian Order.

Every Pythian should visit this beautiful monument if they have the time and availability. This memorial has been immaculately maintained and now contains the newly created Wall of Honor. You now have the opportunity to memorialize a Pythian Brother or Sister by placing their name on the Wall of Honor.

Please contact the Supreme Secretary's office for Rathbone Memorial Brochures which contains various offerings as well as all prices.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

As we have said for many decades "we must get our name out to the public". This is an absolute "MUST". I am tired and so are you of hearing "The Knights of Who?" Well, I think it's time we do something.

Participation in local events such as parades, fairs and festivals are just a few examples of what we can be involved in. Any charitable event performed by your lodge or domain is another example.

However, if the public doesn't know what we do, how do you expect to get our name out to the public? This is where Public Relations can help. Advertise in your local publications, contact your local radio & television stations, place flyers in local merchant store windows, talk to people, but do something. We have to stop being complacent.

We have to start making things happen rather than letting them happen.

Finally, I have instructed the Supreme Vice Chancellor and his committee to coordinate this public relations program with every Grand Lodge in our Order. He will assist you in advertising not only our name to the public, but each event that you promote. If people don't know what we do how do you expect them to want to join us? This is one of the most important programs that must be accomplished now, and must be treated with the utmost urgency.

BOY SCOUT/EAGLE SCOUT CONNECTION PROGRAM

The Eagle Scout/Queen's Scout patch and certificate program will continue. Even though we have not had the success in obtaining new members from the Scouts as we wished, our new Program Chairman will bring new ideas and energy to the Scouts and hopefully we will see an increase in membership. The responsibility of distributing these items remains with each domain. Information regarding reordering patches and certificates will remain with the Supreme Secretary.

JUNIOR ORDER

This could be an excellent source of new members. However, we must spend more time in recruiting these young people. It has not been as successful as we had expected. We say that we help people, but except for the efforts of a few Brothers we have not helped these young folks. We have not helped ourselves either. We need an attitude change and we have to realize the importance that these young people have to our Order. This is a membership need. Whether a person is under 18 or over 18, they can help us help people.

This is part of our change.

Start a new Junior Order in your domain. It's just as important as starting a new lodge.

As a small reward, we will give \$100 start-up money to each newly initiated Junior Order Chapter with additional information contained in brochures supplied by the Supreme Secretary.

READ & RIDE PROGRAM

This program originated in the great state of Texas and has been a big success throughout the Pythian Order. Not only does it help children, it gives us a great deal of exposure if it is done correctly.

Here's how it works: If a student reads a predetermined number of books, they will be eligible to win a bicycle. The bicycles are donated by local business in most cases. Otherwise, the lodge can purchase a bicycle from the manufacturer at a discounted price.

It's a win, win situation. The student enhances their reading skills, the local business gets a tax write-off, and the Knights of Pythias gets exposure (and hopefully new members) within the community.

This is what we are about. We are helping these young people help themselves so that they may have a greater chance at a future education, better pay, and a happy life.

Please contact the Supreme Chancellor for more information.

MEDALLION PROGRAM

Presentation of one of these medallions, either Bronze or Silver, is an excellent way to honor a local hero, police officer, fire fighter, teacher, or any other outstanding citizen for a job well done. Everyone appreciates recognition and praise even though it may be part of their job. They are happy and we are happy. It gives us recognition in the community as well as showing everyone that we care and we help people. We might even gain a few members if we ask.

And let's not forget, that we can also honor our own members as well. A good job always calls for recognition. A hand shake, a plaque, an honor night, and even a dinner is always appreciated. And yes, don't forget the Medallions.

SHAKE-A-CAN PROGRAM

Shaking a can and asking for a donation in front of a supermarket or a shopping mall on a weekend can be a very rewarding financial experience. All you have to do is say we are the Knights of Pythias and we help people. Tell the public that you are collecting money for cancer research or any charity of your choice and thank them for their donation. Lodges have reported collecting \$1500 over a weekend. Imagine doing this over 30 weekends during the year and collecting over \$45,000. This could solve a lot of problems.

However, did you also consider giving out membership flyers (supplied by Supreme Lodge) to these folks? Not only will you be telling them who the Knights of Pythias are but what we do. If they like what they see and hear, ask them to join us so that we can continue to help more people. This one on one contact is a very effective way to get new members.

In conclusion, the theme throughout these programs is membership growth. Some ideas are new, some are old, and some are the same. Only you can make a difference. If you feel that the Knights of Pythias is a worthy organization that deserves to continue its existence, then your efforts will make it so. If you don't care, then you know the end will continue to grow closer and closer.

When you joined the Knights you were happy, excited and proud to be a Pythian. Rekindle those flames and do your sincere best in making this organization as good as it once was. Always remember, "IT ONLY TAKES ONE PERSON TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE". Are you that person?