



# THE WORKMAN



Phil Hardiman, Grand High Priest

Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of California

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## THE SWAN SONG

Well, this is my last message to you as Grand High Priest. I am much gratified to have had the opportunity to serve you and to serve with you these last 12 months. Nancy and I have been much impressed with your generosity and hospitality, up and down and across the State. The meaning of “Companion” has come into deeper focus for us, and I praise you for your friendship, unity and zeal.

I praise you also for your enthusiasm about implementing our membership growth campaign centered around the Mark Master Degree. Many of you got **EXCITED ABOUT MAKING YOUR MARK**, and contributed in important ways to our noteworthy gains this year – 30% increase in exaltations: First, by getting candidates for our Grand Lodge Conferral; second, by getting candidates for your local conferrals as well; third, by following up with these prospects to get them through the remaining degrees. You did not rest on your laurels – and I urge everyone to continue with this attitude in this new Capitular Year.

In addition to all the Receptions and Visits, Nancy and I had a great time at Ridgecrest, at Comptche, at Grand Lodge, and on the Cruise to Catalina and Ensenada. Nancy did a wonderful job, with the help of many of your ladies, to host refreshments after the Grand Lodge conferral – so many thanks to you and your ladies for that

support. Many thanks also to the Grand Officers and the Ritual Staff for the work they did to make the Degree come off so flawlessly, and all the great things they have done during the year.

I do have a few recommendations, which I hope you will consider carefully and decide to implement in your Chapter and your own personal practices:

1. **Continue to work on building Degree teams.**  
This is the best way to get new members active. The goal for each Chapter should be to become self-sufficient in conferring all four Degrees.
2. **Schedule Degrees far enough in advance** to allow for effective marketing at the Blue Lodges, and to have sufficient practices. One practice, at least, is a *necessity*, no matter how proficient your team is. Quality ritual, as JPGHP Sean Foran pointed out, is a must. It doesn't have to be perfect, but it must be heard and understood.
3. **Visit Blue Lodges**, with petitions in hand. Stay active in your Blue Lodge and make an effort to greet each newly raised brother and inform him about the York Rite. This is where you should concentrate your efforts on “Marketing the Mark Master Degree,” as the prospective candidates can get introduced to the Chapter *at no cost* to them.
4. **Distribute my booklet (The Royal Arch Path)** at Blue Lodges to prospective candidates and at Royal Arch Degree conferrals to help new members understand why Chapter Degrees are so important to complete the initial stage of an initiate's Masonic journey. *These will be on sale at Grand Chapter, to raise much needed money for our Scholarship Program.*
5. **Encourage Dais Officers to learn a significant part** and thereby broaden their skill set and deepen their understanding of our ritual. Nothing compares to memory work when it comes to developing understanding. The satisfaction and growth that comes from *challenging yourself* is incalculable. Key parts are the Master's work in the first three of our Degrees, and the High Priest, the Principal Sojourner and Captain of the Host in the Royal Arch.

6. **Do whatever you can to save Chapters.** There are enough potential candidates in any community to go around – both current Blue Lodge brethren and new initiates. Each Chapter represents 14 opportunities for your Companions to be occupied in learning some aspect of our ritual. Every lost or consolidated Chapter subtracts that many opportunities. Plan now to save your Chapter by getting new members and, if they are interested, installing them into an officer position.
7. **Remember the Meritorious Service Award** program and consider whom, each year, you may find worthy for this special recognition. Also, by the end of December each year, you should be sure that worthy nominations for Secretary and High Priest of the Year in your Department, filter up to your Department Grand Officer. And your Secretary should inform the Grand Secretary about any companion who has signed five or more petitions during the Calendar Year. If those five were exalted, then that companion is entitled to a membership award.

And finally, I have spent a lot of time in the last 2 month analyzing our statewide Life Membership program, and have concluded that it is no longer sound. Hence, **I will recommend at Grand Chapter that no further life memberships be sold** until it is put on a sound footing. See the accompanying article below for further details.

### **ORATE FRATRES**

William Jefferies, Grand Orator

When I served a parish over in Colusa County on the western side of the Sacramento Valley, it was once my duty to bury a stockman who had for many years raised cattle in the pastures along the eastern slope of the Coast Range. In the last years of his life, this hardy rancher had felt somewhat betrayed by his body. The physical constitution which had enabled him to work so hard and ride so long in his youth and younger manhood had begun to wear down. He had developed heart trouble and his physician had told him that, while he could continue to ride, someone else would have to saddle his horse. He was forbidden to lift the heavy saddle on to the back of the animal.

And so he stopped riding altogether. He would not mount an animal unless the horse could know that the same careful hands that held the reins had also placed the saddle and tightened the cinch.

We often wonder what it will be like to be free of our limited, earth-bound bodies – so often beset by ill-health or other physical limitations – and to possess that spiritual

body which the Scriptures promise us will be ours in God’s heavenly kingdom (cf. I Corinthians 15:44).

The English writer, C. S. Lewis, uses a beautiful simile to explain that the body which dies is only a temporary part of God’s plan for us. Our bodies, he says, are like ponies given to young boys by caring parents so that they might learn the skills of horsemanship. Lewis writes: “These small and perishable bodies we now have were given to us as ponies are given to school boys. We must learn to manage [them]: not that we may some day be free of horses altogether but that some day we may ride bareback, confident and rejoicing, those greater mounts, those winged, shining, and world-shaking horses which perhaps even now expect us with impatience, pawing and snorting in the King’s stables.”

As the inevitable passage of time wreaks its gloomy toll on our physiques and our morale, perhaps we can find comfort in Lewis’ analogy. In the economy of God, there will come a time when the sway-backed and spavined nags of our earthly existence will be put to pasture, and we shall be freely riding over fields of light horses belonging to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to Whom be glory for ever and ever.

### **GRAND CHAPTER SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Our deBarrows portfolio earned very little last year – not quite enough to fund one scholarship. We are able to supplement this with \$700 contributed from the York Rite Cruise. And I will be donating \$1,000. But we need much more, as we have 20 applicants this year. If you have the resources, please consider making a significant donation on behalf of our Masonic Youth. Send any excess cash (!) to the Grand Chapter Scholarship Program at 801 Elm Ave, Long Beach, CA, 90813.**

**Remember that all donations to the Scholarship Program are Tax Deductible, so keep this in mind as you plan your annual giving and when you pay your dues.**

### **LIFE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM**

The Life Membership program defined at Section 175a of the Constitution no longer operates on a sound, actuarial basis. It obviously should, given the sliding scale of multiples tied to the age of a member – in other words, the older he is the less the life membership costs him, as his life expectancy is less than a younger member. A sound program would pay his chapter the full amount of his dues each year. Now, some members will outlive their life expectancy – but this will be offset by others who don’t.

Hence, once a member dies, any remainder of his contribution should go into the general Life Membership fund, and should no longer be used as a basis for interest payments to his Chapter.

The major issue at hand is that the current program generates very little income for our local chapters. This would be true even if the stock market had not tanked. For 2009, the average life member generated a payment to his chapter of \$3.38 – **not even enough to pay his per capita of \$9.25.**

This situation has been brought about by a number of factors: 1) increases in life expectancy; 2) a life membership schedule (table of factors) which has not been updated in recent memory; and 3) increases in per capita. I will be presenting an Emergent Resolution to correct this situation by replacing the current program with a new program that 1) sets the age factors to correspond to current life expectancy; 2) explicitly allows the Grand Office to use principal as well as interest to make payments to the local Chapters; 3) standardizes the payment to Chapters for each member at the level of dues when he purchased his life membership; 4) transfers current members into the new program; 5) establishes new multipliers in the program that make the program self-adjusting. These latter multipliers will allow the program to remain sound in perpetuity by adjusting payments to local chapters based on 1) the ratio of the latest 3-year experience in portfolio yield as compared to 4%; and 2) changes in life expectancy. Payments could go either up or down depending on the success rate of our portfolio and the longevity of our members.

I will try to get copies of the Emergent Resolution to you before Grand Chapter.

### **REGISTER FOR GRAND SESSIONS**

You can find the registration information in the January edition of the Encompasser (see below), or you can go directly to the Grand Sessions website at: [www.ca-gyrs.org](http://www.ca-gyrs.org). You can still register if you haven't done so already. Rooms may no longer be available at the York Rite rate, so act quickly if you need one. But even if you don't, you should register, especially if you want a name-tag or any of the meals. **In addition, Dais Officers should make suitable plans now for proxies, if any other Dais Officers cannot attend.**

### **ORDER OF HIGH PRIESTHOOD**

Plan also to register for the Order of High Priesthood at 2:00 pm on Monday, the 26<sup>th</sup>. Past High Priests and

sitting High Priests are eligible for this important Degree. The petition is available at:

<http://www.ca-gyrs.org/OHP.pdf>,

and should be sent to our Grand Secretary at the address shown below. Please send it in advance, if at all possible, even if you don't meet the April 1st deadline shown on the form.

### **COMING HOME**

As you know, Most Worshipful, Ken Nagel has implemented a theme for his year as Grand Master – COMING HOME. Briefly, he has noted that only about 15% of Blue Lodge members attend their Lodges regularly, and he wants to re-engage them with their Lodge. **At a recent Leadership Summit convened by Most Worshipful Nagel, he remarked that the Coming Home program brought 2,500 Masons back to their Blue Lodges – as a consequence of the simple process of contacting Lodge brothers, informing them of upcoming events, and inviting them back to their Lodge.**

This is a noble and worthy endeavor and I ask each of you, personally, to continue to attend your Blue Lodge's events and meetings. Encourage your Companions to do so also, and take a fistful of petitions along with you! Ask the Master if you may address the brethren, either at dinner, refreshment, or during the meeting, and extol the virtues of our Mark Master program. Be ready to tell them when the Degree is scheduled to be conferred, and that they can attend at no cost. You know the terms of this program.

Finally, urge your members to attend their Blue Lodge at least once every quarter. By doing so, you broadcast to our brethren and prospective candidates that York Rite Masons are committed to Masonry and its strength, durability and growth.

### **WORKING TOOLS OF A ROYAL ARCH MASON**

Why would such pedestrian items as the Crow, Pick-Axe and Spade be the working tools for this glorious degree? And why is no description of their meaning given? Is this intentional or an oversight? I suggest for your consideration that they are tools that enable us to go underground, and are meant to be suggestive of the profound sub-conscious work we are tasked to undertake in this Degree – to plumb the depths of our own psyche and learn about ourselves and our relationship to the Almighty.

## THE CLOTHES LINE

We now have access to a new line of Jackets for our York Rite bodies. I have seen the red and blue, and have purchased a new red one. I believe purple will also be available. The price is great -- \$75.00 plus tax and shipping, for sizes 34 to 49 in short, regular and tall; and \$86.25 plus tax and shipping for sizes 50 to 60, also in short, regular, and tall. Contact Patsy Baker Luy at her office: 1(510) 527-5728, or cell: 1(510) 502-3224.

## GOLDEN STATE RESEARCH CHAPTER

Until we are able to plan another convocation, please visit the excellent website at:

<http://www.goldenstatechapter.org/>

For information about membership, contact  
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## GRAND HIGH PRIEST ITINERARY

4/2/2010	Sacramento	Rising Star Chapter Stated
4/7/2010	Plymouth	Berriman Memorial Drytown Lodge Stated
4/10/2010	Nevada City	Red Cross of Constantine Semi-annual Conclave
4/14/2010	Oroville	Franklin Chapter(20) Visit
4/16/2010	Sacramento	Rising Star Chapter Stated
4/17/2010	Sacramento	NorCal Research Lodge
4/17/2010	Roseville	Council Degrees
4/19/2010	Sacramento	Temple Board Meeting, MTA of Sacramento
4/22/2010	Sacramento	Washington Lodge Past Masters' Night
4/24/2010	Bakersfield	AMD In-gathering
4/24/2010	Bakersfield	Grand Chapter Family Dinner
4/25/2010	Bakersfield	Order of High Priesthood (OHP) Practice
4/25/2010	Bakersfield	Grand York Rite Banquet
4/26/2010	Bakersfield	Grand Chapter Convocation; OHP Conferral

## ENCOMPASSER

The January 2010 edition of the Encompasser is now available on the website as follows: <http://www.yorkriteofcalifornia.org> and click on The Encompasser on the left hand toolbar. **This is a source for Grand Sessions Registration material, if you need it.**

## PETITIONS

New petitions and brochures about the Chapter are available on the website at:

<http://www.yorkriteofcalifornia.org/royalarch/royalarch.htm>

Simply scroll down to the lower half of the page.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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