

FOURTH DEGREE “STATE OF THE STATE” FOR THE FLORIDA DISTRICT

During the Columbian year of 2006-2007, there were a total of 794 new Sir Knights brought into the Florida District. The goal of new members set by Supreme was 985. We fell short of that goal by 191 new members.

In looking over the Supreme Council Report on membership, it shows 26 Assemblies met their goal of a 10% increase in membership. Of special note is Juan Pablo II Assembly #2985, Miami, with the highest percentage of new membership at 566%. The second highest goes to Father Hugon Assembly #0170, Tallahassee, with a percentage of 409%. However, on the sad side of this Report, we had four Assemblies, #1706 Dunedin, #1727 Lehigh Acres, #2586 Sharpes and #2741 Land O’Lakes, that showed 0% in new membership for the year. These Assemblies need to do a self audit of what they are doing or not doing. An Assembly that does not show any increase in membership is certainly an Assembly in trouble.

The Florida District has a total of four inactive Assemblies, #0163 Clearwater, #1726 New Smyrna Beach, #1931 Tampa and #2036 North Miami. Efforts are being taken to reactivate the Assemblies in Tampa and North Miami.

The Florida District held a total of four Exemplifications during this Columbian year in Coral Springs, Orlando, Tallahassee and Tampa.

Eight new Assemblies were instituted in the Florida District. Ave Maria Assembly #3008, St. Johns, was the first Assembly of the year. This is also the home of our Faithful Friar. This was followed by St. William Assembly #3020, Naples, St. Francis Xavier Cabrini Assembly #3022, Springhill, Blessed Sacrament Assembly #3025, Clermont, St. Michael the Archangel Assembly #3026, Tampa, Holy Family Assembly #3035, Chipley, SSgt. Joseph F. Fuerst III Assembly #3036, Tampa, and Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy Assembly #3054, Western Broward County. I have every confidence that these new Assemblies will grow to be viable Assemblies in the District. These Assemblies were formed to provide growth and prosperity for our Order. I thank all who spearheaded the effort.

The Fourth Degree is actively looking for volunteers to assist in our Veteran Hospitals throughout the Florida District. We not only have Federal VA Hospitals but there are also State retirement homes for our veterans. We need to show our support to all these facilities and to **ALL** our veterans. Travel to the nearest VA Hospital or State retirement home and fill out the form to assist. The need is great for people who care whether it is assisting in the parking lot, visiting and talking with the patients, driving patients to other locations, or whatever is asked of you as a volunteer.

Patients are not provided with personal hygiene products, i.e. toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, skin lotion, underwear, socks, t-shirts, lap blankets. All these items are wanted and needed. However, please note, the hospitals will not accept mouthwash with alcohol or used clothing. Books, soft and hard cover, videos, puzzles, etc., are also welcomed.

We now have a fund under the KC Charities umbrella that is tax exempt and audited by our CPA each year. Donations by check or money order should be made payable to **KC Charities/VAVS and sent to Gary L. McLain, Master, 36 Currant Avenue, Middleburg, FL 32068**. 100% of the donations go to assisting our veterans. No funds are spent for administrative costs. They have served us, now let's serve them.

The VAVS Volunteers for the Columbian year in the Florida District were Robert and Carlotta Miller with Carlotta going on to win the Provincial level also. They reside in Pinellas Park and volunteer at the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa.

The "To Be a Patriot Award" for the Florida District went to Charles Carroll of Carrollton Assembly #1500 in Winter Haven. I look forward to an increase in the number of Assemblies that participate in the "To Be a Patriot Award" and the Civic Award. I know that our Assemblies are doing patriotic activities, but many are not completing the paperwork necessary to compete for the District award.

My thanks to our Degree Team and the Marshalls for their support and who always do an outstanding job. A special thank you to each and everyone who has shown various courtesies to me and Joan as we have traveled throughout the District. I am very proud to serve you as Master of the Florida District.

Gary L. McLain, PSD
Master, Florida District