

Brothers:

I wish to thank SC Sir Mark Mead for appointing me as the supreme lodge Membership Chairman. I will do my best to grow the membership.

I contacted the Supreme Secretary and got the membership numbers for the last 10 years. I was shocked at how fast the numbers are dropping.

Membership Loss over the last 10 years

YEAR	MEMBERSHIP
2012	17,134
2013	16,897
2014	16,039
2015	15,562
2016	15,461
2017	14,188
2018	14,076
2019	12,684
2020	12,194
2021	11,650

That is a **32 percent loss in 10 years, Almost 5000 members**. We have gone from 17,134 to 11,650 members. We don't have much time.

I am not the most eloquent writer so let me get to the point.

To make it worse the average age of the members is higher and many members have additional membership, which makes the numbers seem higher, therefore the attrition will be even faster in the coming years.

What we have been doing has not been working. **The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.**

We have to Change!

I know there is a lot of resistance to women joining the order. We could at least double our numbers by simply looking at our families and bring in your wife or daughter or granddaughter into your lodge. They could bring in their spouse and kids also. As a member of the Oddfellows, I have seen how the admission of women has made the order better.

I know you love this order or you would not take the time and dedication to be a member. If you are willing to change then you will ensure the future of this order.

We also need to recruit younger members. I was at my lodge meeting and at 68 I was one of the younger members there. It won't take too many years until they won't have enough members to have a quorum. Next time you are at a meeting look around and think about this.

Recruiting younger members means using social media to attract them. **Younger people live and die by their cell phones.** Change the way you communicate so they are included. One way to get the ball rolling is to ask a younger member of your household (child or grandchild) and ask them to assist you in getting your lodge info and good deeds onto social media. By the way, Facebook is free. A lodge I belonged to in Maryland did not want to be on Facebook. I did it anyway and a month later someone found us on Facebook and rented our lodge hall for \$500.00. If we don't adapt we will fade away.

When you get a new member you need to create a welcoming environment so they can contribute.

Every lodge has the "naysayer". They need to be stopped. We need a "**CAN DO**" environment vs a "can't do".

Typical excuses are:

It will never work.

We have always done it this way we aren't going to do it differently.

We have never done it this way.

Get behind them and be part of the team. Give them something to do. Put them in line or on a committee. Take advantage of their talent, energy, and enthusiasm.

The worst thing you can do is get a new member and squash them at every turn. Eventually, they will stop trying to help the lodge and you will lose that member.

One of the problems is nobody knows who the Pythians are. An easy way to get a favorable reputation for your lodge is anytime you donate money or time, get pictures of the donation or volunteer work. Doesn't matter if it is \$5.00 or \$50,000. Present the check in person (not just a check in the mail). Write up a press release and send it to the local newspaper, social media, and Pythian International. Let people know about our good deeds. If you send lodge members to Habitat for Humanity to help with a house get pictures and put them on your social media as well as a press release.

Keep your website up to date. New pictures and correct current officer information that can be easily accessed shows an active lodge. If the latest pictures and contact info on your website are more than 1 year old, your social media is stale.

Does your town or city have a parade or other opportunities to highlight the KOP? Take advantage of **Free publicity.** Pile in a vehicle, a couple of bags of candy, an American flag as well as the Pythian flag, wave and smile and let people know you exist.

If you have a Pythian Sister Temple associated with your lodge support and include them. They will support you. We are all working together to grow the order.

Choosing members for your lodge should be based on character alone. Will this person be an asset to GROW our lodge and the Pythian order?

SC Sir Mark Mead also wants to encourage lodges to hold membership events. There is money available from the Supreme Lodge to assist in these events. There will be a form to submit to get funds available.

I know change is difficult. It is uncomfortable. But the potential rewards and longevity of this order are at stake. **It is time to think outside the box.**

I am here to help. Enclosed is all my contact info. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, ideas, or need my help.

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