

Moose Legion Conferral Ritual

Moose Legion President:

My Brothers, it is an honor and privilege to welcome you to the Moose Legion, and to this conferral of the Degree of Service. An invitation to take this next step in fraternalism was extended to you because you met the requirements necessary for elevation to this Degree, and because you have demonstrated your dedication to three great principles of the Loyal Order of Moose: Purity of mind, body and heart; Aid to our fellow members and our fellow man; and Progress that ensures fraternal growth and prosperity for years to come. Congratulations on attaining this level of fraternal achievement. Through your loyalty and dedication to our cause, you have risen above others and have established yourself as a most important member of your Lodge. Because of this, you will now advance into the higher degrees of our Order.

When you applied for membership in the Loyal Order of Moose, you signed an obligation promising to give of your energy and substance in support of Mooseheart and Moosehaven, and to increase the strength of our Order by proposing qualified individuals for membership. Your presence here today indicates that you have fulfilled that initial obligation. As you become a proud Moose Legionnaire, you will take your rightful place in the history of the Moose Legion and its many accomplishments. In return, we ask for a lifetime commitment to the noble endeavor of doing some good thing for someone each day.

Listen carefully as the Orator relates the mission of the Moose fraternity.

Orator:

Moose - an international organization of men and women, dedicated to caring for young and old, bringing communities closer together and celebrating life. This statement not only describes the mission of our Order – it is the very essence of who we are, what we believe and what we do.

Our caring for kids begins at Mooseheart, a one thousand-acre community located 40 miles west of Chicago. This magnificent educational and residential facility for children in need is one of the crowning achievements of the Moose fraternity. It is a complete community, with modern family-style homes; its own school; health care and recreational facilities; and the magnificent House of God, where our foster sons and

daughters worship in the faith in which they were raised. Throughout Mooseheart's existence, students have excelled in our athletic, musical and vocational programs, and countless numbers of our graduates have become leaders in all walks of life.

Caring for senior members of our Order begins at Moosehaven, our City of Contentment, located on the banks of the St. Johns River in Orange Park, Florida. Moosehaven is a state-of-the art retirement community where our senior members and their spouses live together free from the care and burden that age sometimes brings.

Moosehaven is not just a retirement community; it is home – a home of comfort, convenience and security with residents who are active and independent. The atmosphere that we have created is adding life to their years and years to their lives.

One of the cornerstones of our fraternal operation is Community Service. It breathes life into our motto of 'doing some good thing for someone each day'. Our fraternal units contribute tens of millions of dollars in community service annually. We strive to reach even greater heights in our charitable efforts, which will strengthen our reputation of caring for those in need. We believe that the greater our deeds, the stronger our fraternity.

When we talk about celebrating life, we are referring to much more than social activities. You will form lifelong friendships with Moose Legionnaires throughout the fraternity, creating lasting memories and treasuring them forever. We celebrate life by remembering our past, enjoying our present and ensuring our future.

Moose Legionnaires give added force and meaning to the celebration of life by advancing the principles of Faith, Hope and Charity; faith in our cause, hope for continued success and an increased obligation to charity that comes with advancement within our ranks.

Hear now the inspiring message of Faith.

Faith:

The emblem of our Order is unique in all the animal kingdom. The moose is strong and majestic. He takes only what he needs, nothing more. By nature, he is a protector and defender. Forming a defending circle with his brethren in their prime, he becomes a guardian for his family - a family that includes every member of the herd,

especially the very young and very old; those who are most vulnerable. The strength created by this action illustrates our belief in the old saying 'one for all and all for one'.

New members are vital to the continued strength of the Loyal Order of Moose and the Moose Legion. You are within our Defending Circle. As a component of this Circle, you are counted upon to look after other members and assist those in need. The form of the Circle communicates the message that we stand ready to help one another. At meetings of our Lodge, whenever a member has gone to his final reward, we break the Defending Circle to acknowledge that he is absent and will forever be missed.

We have faith in our members and believe strongly that 'a burden heavy to one is borne lightly by many'. The *Legend of the Locked Horns* is a long-standing parable about two moose in deadly combat, fighting one another - rather than fighting together for the common good. In that fight, the horns of the two moose lock together. Neither can break free. Both are lost forever, and the herd is diminished. This story demonstrates that we must work together in a harmonious way to increase the achievements of our Order and the communities we are privileged to serve.

Here stands the reality of the mission of James J Davis, our first Director General and the creator of the Moose Legion. His vision was to band together the men and women of the Moose to serve first the entire family, and then to reach out to those outside our Defending Circle through unselfish acts of kindness. This great vision continues today!

Now hear the message of Hope.

Hope:

The year 1913 was momentous in the history of our fraternity. In addition to the formation of the Women of the Moose, we saw the opening and dedication of our Child City, Mooseheart. This community was a most ambitious undertaking for our young organization, and it presented a new urgency to provide an avenue for those members who wished to make even greater contributions. As a result, the Moose Legion was born that same year.

Initially, the sole purpose of the Moose Legion was to create a one million dollar endowment fund that would meet the financial needs of the fledgling Mooseheart campus. As the fraternity continued to grow, so too did the role of the Moose Legion.

When our fraternal leaders sought to establish a retirement community for our senior members, it was the Moose Legion that helped to finance the purchase and development of the land that would become our City of Contentment, Moosehaven. Today, our campuses are filled with structures and landmarks that have been constructed thanks to the generosity of Moose Legionnaires throughout the fraternity.

In addition, the Moose Legion provides financial support to maintain two important resources. Since 1959, our Mooseheart children have enjoyed year-round recreation at Camp Ross, a one hundred fifty-acre facility located 60 miles west of Mooseheart. Funds from each member's annual dues are designated for the operation of Camp Ross, and are used to maintain and expand the facility. This rolling, beautifully wooded retreat, combined with modern amenities and a secure location, has given our students a getaway that they continue to enjoy throughout the year.

Members of the Moose Legion also ensure top-notch medical care for our Moosehaven residents by maintaining the Moosehaven Seniors' Medical Fund. As with Camp Ross, a portion of each Moose Legionnaire's dues is used exclusively to help defray the increasing costs of medical services for our seniors. By assuming these added responsibilities, it is easy to see why the Moose Legion is identified as the "Degree of Service".

Gentlemen, we are the men who make things happen, the men who get things done! Our instant response, whenever an essential need has been presented at Mooseheart or Moosehaven, has become legendary within this Order, and indeed expected as the norm. We are extremely proud that we have earned this reputation – and we have no doubt that you will do your part in helping to maintain it.

You have heard the messages of Faith and Hope. Listen further as you are enlightened with words from Charity.

Charity:

When we were children, we learned about receiving. We received gifts on special occasions and it brought us joy. As we grew older, we began to realize that it is more rewarding to give than to receive. Your advancement into the Moose Legion provides even more opportunities to experience the joy of giving - the greatest joy of all.

In the spirit of charity, Moose Legionnaires initiated a “Penny Fund” in 1913 to address any emergency that may befall our beloved Child City. Since that time, the “Penny Fund” has evolved into the Mooseheart/Moosehaven Endowment Fund, and tens of millions of dollars have been contributed by our members to ensure significant financial assistance for both our Child City and our City of Contentment. Our members continue to give today, and the interest earned on our investment provides support to the essential needs of both communities.

In addition, our fraternal units support projects that serve local communities. Wherever and whatever the need, Moose Legionnaires are there, and they are actively involved. It is not just a matter of giving of your money; it is also giving of your time. Membership in the Moose Legion will provide you with proof that commitment and service go hand in hand with fun and fellowship. By providing outstanding service to our communities, we draw others to our Order, more for what we do than for what we say.

Your elevation into the Moose Legion unlocks the door to further advancement in our Order, and provides you with the pride of knowing that you do, in fact, make a difference in the lives of others.

Prepare now to receive your obligation of membership in the Moose Legion and acknowledge your commitment as a Moose Legionnaire.

Moose Legion President:

My Brothers, you have responded to a call to let your light shine brighter than ever before, in service to those in need. Please stand and join me in reciting the Oath of Allegiance to the Moose Legion.

Please raise your right hand, place your left hand over your heart, and repeat after me, using your name where I use mine:

I _____ - in the presence of those here assembled - do solemnly promise - that I will faithfully - and to the best of my ability - exemplify the principles and precepts of the Moose Legion. - I will be steadfast in my commitment - and tireless in my efforts - in support of the Degree of Service. - To all of this - I pledge my sacred oath - so help me God.

You may lower your hands.

It is with honor and humility that I confer upon you the title of Moose Legionnaire. May you wear your regalia proudly as a symbol of the recognition that has been provided you in return for your continued loyalty and dedication.

You may be seated. Pay heed to the lessons of Loyalty and remember them from this day forth.

Loyalty:

Moose Legionnaires, we congratulate you on the honor this day bestowed upon you. You have taken the next step in fraternalism, and with that step comes expectations. You will be held to a higher standard, and your words and actions will carry greater volume and meaning. You have been asked to increase your service to children and senior members by contributing more of your time, energy and substance to the causes we represent. Since our inception, thousands of Moose Legionnaires have proudly stepped forward and accepted the challenges that have been placed before them, and they have always come through.

Moose Legionnaires are leaders. They are the fuel that feeds the fire; the engine that drives the car; but most of all, they are loyal fraternalists who roll up their sleeves and make things happen. They recognize that there are no greater responsibilities in this fraternity than strengthening its membership and providing financial support to Mooseheart and Moosehaven.

In addition to loyalty, another defining trait of a Moose Legionnaire is pride. We are proud of our accomplishments. We show our pride by wearing the official regalia of our degree - a maroon blazer featuring the Moose Legion logo, with coordinating tie, white shirt and black trousers and accessories. Moose Legionnaires who have been elevated to honorary degrees of our Order wear blazers of different colors – French Blue for those who have received the Fellowship Degree of Honor and Gold for those who have been bestowed with the highest degree of our Order, the Pilgrim Degree of Merit. While the colors may be different, all three blazers represent similar qualities – commitment to this fraternity, to its honored past and to its strong and bright future.

Everyone please rise as Faith offers prayer.

Faith:

Let us fold our arms and bow our heads.

Almighty God, we give thanks for these new Moose Legionnaires. We pray that our experience here today will provide a positive and lasting influence. May the words we have heard be an inspiration unto our hearts; may we go forth with a better understanding of the good we do, and more dedicated to our cause than ever before.

Bind us together and instill in our hearts the caring and devotion to our cause and help us to see that cause carried out through the fulfillment of the pledge we have freely taken.

May we truly enjoy the warmth and goodness of making a positive difference in the lives of others. We ask that a special blessing be bestowed upon all the men and women of the Moose, and each member of their families, and may that same divine blessing touch every part of this great fraternity itself.

Amen.

Moose Legion President:

Everyone please be seated.

Moose Legionnaires, you have accepted our invitation and joined with us in our worthwhile endeavor. You deserve the gratitude and admiration of Moose members everywhere. You are now a part of a higher degree of our Order, and are eligible to become a member of the Council of Higher Degrees and support their fraternal efforts. Be ever mindful of the promises made today. Never pass up an opportunity to demonstrate, in word and deed, the characteristics of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Loyalty, the cornerstones of our Degree.

As the staff retires from the floor our conferral will come to a close.

(revised 11/26/2008)