

Texas Grand Commander's Message

Grand Commander's Message — February 2005

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York Rite Festivals: El Paso: Chap/Coun/Cdry on Sat. **Feb TBA** -Contact Ed Lindke ((915) 585-1509); **San Antonio:** Chap/Coun/Cdry on Sat. **Feb 26** (8 AM) - Contact Gerald Nowotny ((210) 573-3829). **Lubbock:** Chap/Coun/Cdry on Sat. **Mar 12** (7 AM) - Contact David Melear ((806) 655-3821) or Skip Dees ((432) 697-6175). **Courtesy candidates welcome.**

Sesquicentennial Celebration in San Antonio on March 5, 2005. The festivities begin at the Scottish Rite Cathedral, Ave. E & 4th St., with cocktails (donations benefiting the South Texas SR Learning Center (6PM) and dinner (NY Strip with stuffed baked potato and other delicious condiments) (7PM), followed by entertainment for the occasion, all for **\$30.00**. Your personal invitation has been mailed to your Recorder and is also available on the following websites: www.texasYorkrite.org/grcommandery.htm or www.yorkrite.albertpikedemolay.org. This is and will be a very memorable and momentous event in the life and history of our Grand Commandery. Come and celebrate it with us.

Choir at Grand Conclave: Worship is enhanced with music; it is even more enhanced with choral music. This year, we'll augment our worship experience at our Grand Conclave Worship Service on April 17 with choral music. Phyllis Rogers (PSWP, SOOB) has agreed to serve as our Choir Director on this occasion and all we lack are folks like you to fill our choir. We will sing 2-3 numbers that will be easy for all with a church choir background to learn and perform--easy because I know that we will not have much time to practice. I am confident that with your voices, we can fill the hall with great music. If you and/or your family members would like to help be part of this historical first, send your name, address, phone number and email address (if you have one) to **Mrs. Harry S. Rogers, 14416 Aldine-Westfield, Houston, Texas 77039** or call her at **(281) 449-5660** or send the information to me. The selected music will be sent to you in advance to "warm up on." **I look forward to our Grand Commandery Choir's joyful noise!**

Sesquicentennial Grand Conclave: We are only two months from the conclusion this Grand Chivalric Year. April 15 is Tax Day, but, more pleasantly, it is the commencement of our Sesquicentennial Grand Conclave. Your Recorder was issued at least five Hotel Registration Forms and five Conclave Registration and Credentials Forms in the packet of annual forms delivered by the District Grand Officer at the time of his Inspection visit, so, you should be able to get each registration form from your Recorder. If not, or if you have not received any information on the Grand Conclave or how to register, please visit these web pages: www.texasYorkrite.org/grcommandery.htm or www.yorkrite.albertpikedemolay.org, where you can find all of the forms and download the ones you need.

Please pre-register regardless of whether you're attending only a part of the Grand Conclave. **Our Registration and Credentials Committee is handling all room reservations and assignments, so be certain to mail the Hotel Reservation Form to the address indicated at the bottom of the form.** You can also find a letter from our General Chairman, Sir Knight Harry J. "Moose" Moosegian, on the website that details all of the events that will occur during your *Fiesta San Antonio* stay. I encourage you to register for the Fiesta Brunch on Sunday following our worship services. You will have a great time and thoroughly regret having missed it if you don't attend.

Of course, since San Antonio begins celebrating our *Fiesta* while you are in town, you may want to stay over and take in some of the dozens of opportunities to experience this unique city-wide celebration. Our famous River Parade will occur on Monday night following Installation, with *NIOSA* (Night in Old San Antonio) at La Villita (the original San Antonio village area) commencing on Tuesday evening and running through Friday night. The Hotel will honor our room rate for as long as you want to stay following the conclusion of our Sesquicentennial event, so take advantage!

To the Sir Knights of Texas:

Well, for those of you who haven't heard, my surgery went very well; a small amount of cancer, but wholly contained in the prostate, now completely removed with a great pathology report. I can relate to the psalmist when he said: "Clap your hands all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy. How awesome is the Lord Most High, the great King over all the earth!" Psalm 47:1-2. I truly know that "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore [I] will not fear, though the earth give way . . ." Psalm 46:1-2. Sir Knights, it was your wonderful prayers from all over this State that gave me comfort in my situation. Thank you for all of your many emails, cards and other inquiries about my emotional and physical circumstances. I am very grateful for the part you played in my surgery and its very favorable outcome.

Moving on, as we must, we are rapidly closing in on our Sesquicentennial Grand Conclave and the thought occurred to me-actually to Barbara to give credit where properly due-that if we know of some of the lineal descendents of the founders of our Grand Commandery, they should be invited to our Sesquicentennial celebrations. With that thought in mind, do any of you know any of the descendants of our founding fathers or any of the very early Grand Commanders or other Grand Commandery officers/leaders? If so, I would like for you to pass that information along so that we can contact them regarding any history that they may still have of their forefathers who helped get us to where we are today.

We are moving right along on our knightings and recoupment of demits and suspensions, but we can still make more improvement. As of November 30, our "official" membership numbers are 198 new knightings, 45 affiliations and 45 reinstatements for a plus of 288. That is offset by 82 demits, 171 suspensions, and 270 of our fraters who have earned their eternal reward. Not counting our deaths, we have a "positive cash flow" of 35. Of course, we may lose some to suspension with the December report, but we are in a position to end this Grand Templar year with an increase in membership, excluding deaths. If it is to be, it is up to each one of us to redouble our membership efforts between now and March 31. As Baylor University under Sir Knight Grant Taeff often chanted, "I Believe," I do believe that we, collectively, can accomplish what has not been accomplished in a long time; a positive end of the year membership, not counting deaths. I Believe! Do you?

OUR UTMOST FOR HIS HIGHEST,

James N. (Jim) Higdon
Grand Commander

Visit your website at www.texasorkrite.org/grcommandery.

P.S. Please contact me this year at one of the following: 10122 N. Manton Lane, San Antonio, Texas 78213-1948; O: (210) 349-9933; H: (210) 344-4309; F: (210) 349-9988