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### +Greetings and Welcome +

**Beginning of Something Wonderful** – July 4, 1776, is generally recognized as our country's birthday, however, I would encourage you all to remember the events and sacrifices made by so many, just to get us to that point! Acts of taxation and suppression, blockades, political intrigue, espionage, and a 'Tea Party'... all led to the finalized approval and adoption of the text of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776 (All great topics for open programs)... With all of this in mind, July is an excellent opportunity to conduct your Commandery's Patriotic Observance!

**Leading By Example** – As we all know, 'Saying' and 'Doing' are two much different things. *Direction* and *Performance* are both necessary, but given the choice, I'll choose *Performance* every time. When I asked Sir Knight Louis Hopkins to serve this Grand Commandery as its Membership Chairman, it was because it is rare to find someone that is so excited and dedicated and knowledgeable about what they were doing... Obviously, I was not alone with this thought, because SK Hopkins has been asked to serve in this capacity several times previously, by several other Grand Bodies! But the real 'proof in the pudding' came when DeMolay Commandery #20, held its Spring Festival in May, and 8 of the 13 new Sir Knights were first line signed by none other than SK Hopkins, our MEMBERSHIP Chm.! Because of this, I will re-double my efforts to recruit new members and hope you will too... Congrats Louis and Thank you!

**June / July Opportunities** – As we all know, the months of June and July are filled with Installations of Officers for Lodges, Eastern Star Chapters, Assemblies of Rainbow, Chapters of DeMolay, and many other Masonic organizations. There are holiday parades and many other events, that you and your Commandery can participate with such as, flag presentations, scholarship presentations, service award presentations, or maybe just assisting with meal preparation & service, or set-up & tear-down. These services are not just for acknowledgement or another notch in your Cross & Crown Award application (though I highly recommend this), but to show that we are an active participant in our Masonic Fraternity and with any luck (and your offer of a petition), we may actually acquire a new member or two, just from your efforts to serve others! Most people want to belong to something that does 'GOOD', something that they can actually take part in, and when they see an impressive, high-quality flag presentation or see that your Commandery has taken the personal time to serve their organization with a meal service (or other service), it is a genuine display of fraternalism and they will want to be a part of it!

**Looking Forward** – There are many York Rite Festivals occurring around the state, as well as many special events (Service Awards, Parades, Fund Raisers, Service Projects, etc...), please, let our WebMaster know about them (just over a month in advance), so he can put them on the website for you; Also, the Grand Commandery, in conjunction with Texas DeMolay, will be hosting an all-day event in Burnet, Texas... We will witness a DeMolay Initiatory Degree and the DeMolay Degree in a full scale castle, in Burnet, Texas, retire for lunch at Burnet Commandery #113, then return to the castle, for an Order of the Temple conferral; This will be a very special event, honoring the PGMs of DeMolay International (from Texas) and PGCs of the GC, Knights Templar of Texas;

Special lapel pins /certificates will be issued for this event and only limited seating will be available, so make your plans to be there, Saturday, October 5, 2013, and **BRING CANDIDATES...** Registration will be available on the website!

**161<sup>st</sup> Grand Conclave** – PLEASE, put **April 25-28, 2014**, into your calendar and make plans to be in **Houston, Texas**, at the **Marriott Westchase**, for our next Grand Conclave; Very soon, you will be seeing and hearing several things that will be beneficial for you to be there, the Grand Lodge of Texas will again celebrate annual the San Jacinto Observance, at the hotel, following the Grand Commandery's Memorial and Divine Service, on Sunday, April 27; This will include a luncheon. Please make plans to be there!  
**District Conclaves/Schools of Instruction/Inspections** – I know that all of you are making diligent ritual preparation and plans for attending your District Conclaves and Schools of Instruction; I'm assured that your Commandery's officers are desirous of performing to the best of their abilities, and to that end, I say "Practice, Practice, Practice"... And the best way to do that is with a candidate! You accomplish two things, at the same time... you get to practice your parts while building your membership; Ask your Blue Lodge Brethren to join you. Expanding and enhancing their Masonic lives.... It's up to you!

**Mid-Year Meeting** – The Officers of the Grand Commandery will be meeting together, in early August, to discuss the various issues and opportunities occurring in all of our nine districts. If you have something that needs to be brought to the attention of these officers, please contact your Templar District Representative and let him know; I assure you, your concern will get our attention.

**Another 'Unsung Hero' Among Us** – Although he does not state his name, you might surmise that the following was written by none other than our own E.: GSW, SK Jack Harper; He also does not state that he was not only directing their portion of the disaster relief, at these two incidents, but he was there, "on-site", for an extended period of time, physically working with and for his fellow Texans, during their time of need...

*"Disasters seem to be occurring all too often lately in Texas. However, one of the bright spots to me is how gracious, caring, generous, and kind that Texans can be. While my "day to day" job is as the city manager for the City of Hillsboro, I also serve as the Incident Commander for the Hillsboro Incident Management Team. Our main goal is to provide structure, framework, coordination, and support to communities that might be affected by a disaster (hurricane, tornado, flood, wildfire, etc.). Within the last month, working in both West (the fertilizer plant explosion), and in Cleburne (tornado), it was gratifying to see Texans (especially Masons), other individuals, along with small and large companies in Texans lend a helping hand. All too often in today's society, we read or hear about negative news; oftentimes missing out on the "feel good" stories. I can say, without equivocation, that during the darkest of hours in both incidents, Texans will go to great lengths to help one another in need. So, to everyone who assisted in the recent disasters in Texas through their physical support, financial support, and prayers- I say "thank you", and the affected communities "thank you" as well!"*

I know that I speak for all of us, when I say "I am very proud of you!"

**Finally, For Now** – Remember to enjoy your Templary, get involved.... *"Let YOUR LIGHT so shine before men, that they may SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven!"*

+ H. Bart Henderson + Grand Commander + 2013-2014 +  
"Do right, and risk the consequences!" - Brother Sam Houston