

PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS — SUPPLEMENT

of the
One Hundred Sixty-Second
Annual Conclave
of the
Grand Commandery of Knights
— Templar of the State of Missouri
held

June 1, 2023
University Plaza Hotel
Springfield, Missouri



**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GRAND COMMANDER
2022-2023**

To the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the State of Missouri:

Sir Knights,

First, I would like to thank God for the blessings he has bestowed upon me and the Sir Knights of the State of Missouri. I am and was humbled to have had the opportunity to serve as your Grand Commander.

In addition, I would like to thank my wife Nancy for her patience and support during my year. Sir Knights, I have an elderly parent at home and when I am on the road my wife steps up to make sure we can support his needs. This is why you rarely see us in the same location at the same time. There were a few close calls this year that required admission to the ICU and life supporting measures, but we were able to work through it with the help of family and the Sir Knights who were able to step up and support events when I had to be at the hospital. The medical challenges we faced really made me grateful for both my literal "family" and family in Templary. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you all!

A wise Past Grand Commander and my duly (finally) installed Aide de Camp, Sir Knight Harold Franklin Coots, once told me that no one should be a Grand Commander until he has been a Past Grand Commander first. I can assure you that truer words have never been spoken. By the time you have visibility of what needs to be accomplished, your year is nearly over.

NECROLOGY

Our memorial service will be led by Sir Knight Russell A. Bradshaw, Eminent Grand Prelate.

The Masonic Funeral Service is a beautiful tribute to our departed Fraters. It is a comfort to those who mourn the passing of our Brethren.

It starts with these words, "One by one they pass away, the Brothers of our adoption, the Companions of our choice. Brethren and Companions whose hand we have clasped in the bonds of fraternal fellowship have now passed from our sight. We shall meet them on Earth no more."

One of the hardest tasks our Creator asks each of us to do is to give back to Him our loved ones until we meet them again in His Eternal Kingdom. That we must

spend the rest of our days without them is the greatest sorrow we can experience in these our days on Earth.

We mourn the passing of our fellow Sir Knights across this great State whom our Lord has called to their Eternal Home. We offer our prayers for the comfort of their families - the comfort that only our God can provide. In our meetings we will keep our memory of them alive. We give thanks to our God for their friendship, their fellowship, their companionship, and their brotherhood with us.

In the year since our last Annual Conclave, we have lost 85 Sir Knights across the State. All of these Sir Knights deserve our heartfelt tribute. In noting the passing of the following leaders, we also honor all of them.

Right Eminent Grand Commander, during your time of leadership, we have lost one of those who have served immediately before you as Grand Commander. Sir Knight Harry Lee Tripp, Jr. led this Grand Commandery from 2021 to 2022. He was our Junior Past Grand Commander.

It is appropriate that we pause and remember these Sir Knights who were so dear to us, to honor them, and to thank our Lord and our Eternal Father for the gift of their friendship. The measure of our lives on this Earth is how we love and how we serve others. It is loving and caring service that makes us leave the world a better place. Those Sir Knights who we honor by name today and those across this great State for which time does not allow us to honor by name have made this world and our communities better places to live. They were what Templary is all about. We honor them today, the brothers of our adoption, the companions of our choice.

Sir Knights, please assume an attitude of reverence for prayer. Let us unite our hearts together before our Lord as we pray.

Dear Lord, we can only begin to measure Your greatness by the vastness of Your creation. We can merely stand before you in reverent awe of Your Supreme Being and all that you have created. When we see the infinite detail of the universe, we know Your care for all that You have called into being. We know that You care for each and every one of us. We know that we exist because of Your boundless love. You created us and want us to be Yours forever. We know that You give us a purpose here on Earth; and that we will have a place and a purpose in Your Eternal Kingdom. We also realize from the brief time that we live this mortal life, how much we need You every moment as our Sustainer. Every breath we take and every beat of our heart is Your gift of love.

Across the State of Missouri those 85 Sir Knights who have passed from our Earthly presence to Your Eternal Kingdom brought their lives to share with us as our friends. We remember them and honor them, and we thank You, Lord, for them.

As we remember these dear Sir Knights who are now with You, we thank You for their time among us. We thank You, Dear Father, even more for the sureness of Your promise that when we see them again, time will not be a factor, and we will never part from them again. We thank You that it will be in the glory of Your loving presence that we will meet them.

We offer a special prayer for those Sir Knights who need Your healing touch and Your comfort.

We love you, Lord, with all our being. We love you with our heart, our mind, and our soul. We trust always in Your perfect love. We are grateful for the love that created us and sustains us. When You finally call us, we yearn to be with You eternally.

This we pray in Your Most Holy Name. Amen.

In closing, I extend my special thanks to Reverend Sir Knight Roy Gilkey, for letting me borrow from his Memorial Service text. Thank you, Roy.

[A Necrology Report appears at the end of the Preliminary Proceedings.]

THE "OFFICE"

To the "Office" (Sir Knight Roger D. Fleer, PGC; Sir Knight Donald L. Trabue, PGC; Sir Knight Russell S. Hanson, PGC; and Lady Debbie Hanson), our organization would grind to a halt without the tireless efforts that each of you contribute. The amount of work that this team takes on is truly daunting. The challenges faced and overcome are extraordinary.

In addition to their daily workload, the "Office" is also on the cusp of transition. After more than two decades of service to the fraternity, our current Grand Treasurer has decided to not stand for election in the coming year. Having received due notice, I have taken this issue as my top (unplanned) priority. This was truly a team effort, and I would like to personally thank the Grand Treasurer for his cooperation and for helping us understand his processes and practices. Together with a small army of Sir Knights we have established open communication and I have assigned "SWAT" teams to aggregate and examine all

the records of the office of the Grand Treasurer from 2019-to the present. Team One - the Special Examiner Committee (2019 to current year) consists of three Past Grand Commanders. As I write this report, this team is working diligently to update our records. Team Two consists of my Examination Committee (formerly known as Audit Committee) and is handling evaluation of the previous year's records.

To the SWAT Teams, Thank you!

- Team One: Sir Knight Harold F. Coots, PGC; Sir Knight Robert W. Schlichter, PGC; and Sir Knight Richard L. Mansfield, PGC.
- Team Two: Sir Knight Kevin B. Sample, Deputy Grand Commander; Sir Knight Bobbie E. White, Grand Generalissimo; Sir Knight Ronald L. Skiles, Grand Captain General; Sir Knight Terry D. Coppotelli, Grand Senior Warden; Sir Knight Roger D. Fleer, PGC, Grand Recorder; Sir Knight Donald L. Trabue, PGC, Grand Tressurer; and Sir Knight Russell S. Hanson, PGC, Assistant Grand Recorder.

GENERAL ORDERS

I did not find it necessary to issue any General Orders during the 2022-2023 term.

DISPENSATIONS GRANTED

For the 2022-2023 term, the following special dispensations were granted.

- **St. John's Commandery No. 20**, approved .June 30, 2022.
- **DeSoto Commandery No. 56**, approved February 9, 2023.
- **DeMolay Commandery No. 3**, approved February 28, 2023.
- **Oriental Commandery No. 35**, approved May 1, 2023.

DISPENSATIONS REJECTED

For the 2022-2023 term, there were no rejected requests for special dispensations.

BY-LAW AMENDMENTS

For the 2022-2023 term, the following Commandery by-laws amendments were approved.

- **Hugh De Payens Commandery No. 4**, approved November 1, 2022.
- **Ivanhoe Commandery No. 8**, approved April 27, 2022.

DECISIONS

For the 2022-2023 term, the following decisions were made.

On December 21, 2022, I granted dispensation for Brother Randy Spurlock and Brother Royce Wheller, from Squires and Ava, Missouri, both Master Masons of Robert Burns Lodge No. 496, A.F.&A.M., in Gainesville, Missouri, to join Chivalry Commandery No. 34 in Mountain Home, Arkansas, after acquiring the required prerequisite Chapter and Council degrees.

On May 13, 2023, I granted dispensation that day for Companion Al Pearson of Kansas to receive the Templar Orders during the Grand Commander's Templar Crusade hosted by Palestine Commandery No. 17.

CHARTERS

For the 2022-2023 term, no new Charters were approved and no Charters were surrendered due to consolidation, closure, or arrest.

TIME CAPSULE

On June 26, 2022, I visited the time capsule monument in Branson, Missouri.

REGIONAL CONCLAVES

I attended the Regional Conclaves that were held around the State (see Visitations and Meetings).

GRAND OFFICERS MEETINGS

In an effort to keep the Grand Commandery Grand Line Officers and the Regional Grand Commanders informed about issues within the Grand Commandery, Grand Officer/RGC virtual WebEx meetings were held monthly during the 2022-2023 term.

VISITATIONS AND MEETINGS

Visit

2022

Rolla 59	06-22
Jobs Daughters Annual Meeting.....	06-23
York Rite Time Capsule Visit	06-26
International Order of Rainbow Girls Annual Meeting	06-26
Grand Master's Breakfast	07-17
Templar Feast Kansas	07-23
Ivanhoe 8 Installation of Officers	08-11
Region 5 York Rite Conference	08-20
Region 7 York Rite Conference	09-10
South Central Department Conference in Louisiana	09-16
Region 2 & 3 York Rite Conference	09-24
Grand Lodge of Missouri	10-03 to 10-04
Region 1 & 4 York Rite Conference	10-15
Independence York Rite Festival	10-22
St John's 20 150th Anniversary.....	10-24
Ivanhoe 8 Table Commandery	11-08
Region 6 York Rite Conference	11-19
Templar Funeral SK Harry L. Tripp, Jr, PGC.....	11-20

2023

Ely 12 Installation of Officers.....	01-22
Rolla 59 Award Presentation.....	02-20
Grand Commanders Breakfast	03-18
Ascension 39 stated conclave	04-04
The Order of the Amaranth	04-13
Reception for MIC Mike Smith, GM.....	04-15
Grand Master's Breakfast	04-16
2023 Drill Competition Event	04-22
155th Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery of Kansas.....	05-03
Grand Commander's Templar Crusade.....	05-13
Rolla 59 Installation of Officers.....	05-20
162nd Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery of Missouri	06-01

LEWIS AND CLRCK AWARDS

Sir Knights, I am pleased to announce that the following deserving Sir Knights have been awarded the Grand Commandery Lewis and Clark Award.

Region 1

- Sir Knight Barry Vincil Cundiff (posthumously) of Ely Commandery No. 22

Region 3

- Sir Knight Mark R. Franklin of Kansas City Commandery No. 10
- Sir Knight Donald Eugene Gilkerson of Liberty Commandery No. 6
- Sir Knight Lloyd Glenn Lyon of DeMolay Commandery No. 3
- Sir Knight John David Toynton of Palestine Commandery No. 17

Region 4

- Sir Knight Wayne Brian Fryer of Rolla Commandery No. 59
- Sir Knight Donald Leonard Trabue of Prince of Peace Commandery No. 29
- Sir Knight Stuart William Inglish of Prince of Peace Commandery No. 29

Region 5

- Sir Knight Jacob William Thompson of Ivanhoe Commandery No. 8
- Sir Knight Keith George Tomazi of Ivanhoe Commandery No. 8

Region 7

- Sir Knight Christopher Leroy Story of St. John's Commandery No. 20
- Sir Knight Matthew David Ruth of Neosho Commandery No. 57

RECCOMENDATIONS

Sir Knights, the back-office operations presented me with unexpected challenges, that stretched my skill set. I have not experienced the need to sharpen the proverbial saw in a long time. These issues necessitated that I do exactly that. Without getting too deep into how the sausage is made I would like to offer some advice to my advancing line.

1. Read and internalize the Constitution Statutes and Decisions of the Grand Encampment, and Laws and Regulations of the Grand Commandery of Missouri before you need to, and you will need to.
2. Regarding the management of interpersonal relationships, I have a reading list to share that helped me navigate these challenges. You will find yourself in roles ranging from The Boss, The Negotiator, The Servant, The Administrator, The Coach, and many more.

3. You will face your greatest adversary, and his name is Hubris. Personal Hubris, and Institutional Hubris. In the words of the Sir Knight Kevin B. Sample, sometimes it's difficult to get the toothpaste back in the tube once emotions are ignited.
4. Lastly, you will need to handle difficult personalities. Bearing in mind that the difficult personality maybe yourself depending upon the issue being worked.

Having seen the operations of the Grand Commandery as the Grand Commander for the first time, I would like to offer an opinion or two on what I feel could be opportunities for improvement.

- **Business Continuity** - The challenges that faced the office of the Grand Treasurer have made it clear to me that having any Grand Commandery records on paper at only one location creates a single point of failure for loss (fire damage, water damage, passing of an officer, etc) and represents an unacceptable risk to our business continuity (ability to operate).
- **Visibility/Organizational Agility** - Your Grand Officers and Committees decision-making abilities are significantly impeded without visibility of records. Paper in a box in a storage facility is not readily visible.
- **Disaster Recovery** - This element eliminates the single point of failure from bullet point one and addresses the hacked laptop challenges that have plagued us for years. If we are adequately backed up hardware failure is irrelevant.
- **Governance/Transparency** - When information is compartmentalized in silos, proper governance can be obscured. All monies, financial instruments, and financial obligations that have an association to the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the State of Missouri should be managed in accordance with both the Constitution Statutes and Decisions of the Grand Encampment and the Laws and Regulations of the Grand Commandery of Missouri, **OR** the Laws and Regulations of the Grand Commandery of Missouri should be revised to reflect how we operate. Monies should not be disbursed to proxy organizations unless it is in accordance with the Laws and Regulations that govern the process.

Regarding my opinions for improvement, it is easy to infer that these are "Grand Problems," and that is neither the case, nor is it the intent to slight any person past, present, or serving. It is however the intent to call out processes that could lead us into harm's way in the future. Sir Knights, we have been and are very fortunate to have the officers that we do. We may not always be this lucky and I would like to see protections that safeguard us if we were to hit an unexpected human resources issue. Stepping off my soapbox for a moment, I coach my employees to offer solutions to any problem that they elevate. In the same manner I would like to propose the following ideas for your consideration intended to address the concerns expressed.

1. **Document Management** - Development of a comprehensive document management strategy that defines our records requirements, back up capabilities, retention schedules, and digital protections. We are currently about 50% digital but do not have an official document management strategy that addresses business continuity requirements and disaster recovery needs.
2. **Investment Strategy** - We are making strides on this point as we have proposed legislation intended to address this. Successful execution of this strategy will depend on the visibility of our financial positions so that your officers and committees can access the data points needed to make informed decisions. (One of the reasons for my SWAT Teams.)
3. **Governance/Transparency** - There were a couple of instances this year when I was engaged in financial obligations. Maintaining images of these contracts in a digital repository would have greatly improved the efficiency of the problem resolution process.

CONCLUSION

Sir Knights, 2022-2023 was a year of notable transition and transformation. I am pleased to report that we have managed through some very significant work efforts. We have a new venue for our Annual Conclave. We have worked to ensure continuity in the duties and records of a Grand Officer transition. The financials for the preceding years have been aggregated and reported on the floor. All three represent major work efforts.

I have had the pleasure of renewing support for our Youth groups after a brief absence. The heads of the York Rite Bodies have travelled the State together promoting York Rite Masonry. Including, but not limited to, getting lost while

trying to find the York Rite Memorial which just so happens to be in a gas station parking lot. I am also humbled to have served under the guidance of a great line within the Grand Lodge of Missouri.

I would also like to thank my Aide de Camp, Sir Knight Harold F. Coots, and his lovely Lady Lisa for putting up with me and for providing invaluable feedback such as, "You do realize its Super Bowl Sunday don't you" or "What do you mean that you left your check book in your car and need me to pay for your dinner." Also, for the response to my 2 am weeknight text messages when I needed advice. On a serious note, Sir Knight Coots tireless support for Templary is truly unsurpassed.

Sir Knights, your efforts supporting the Holy Land Pilgrimage are truly appreciated and should bear fruit in the very near future! I can't think of a better way to honor the One we serve than to send eligible chaplains to walk in His footsteps.

Fraternally submitted,
SK Michael C. Rohman, Grand Commander

REPORT OF THE GRAND TREASURER

Preliminary Report

The Report of the Grand Treasurer was not complete at the time of the printing of the Preliminary Proceedings Supplement. A verbal Report may be given during the 20223 Annual Conclave.

SK Donald L. Trabue, PGC, Grand Treasurer

REPORT OF SPECIAL EXAMINER COMMITTEE

The Report of the Special Examiner committee was not complete at the time of the printing of the Preliminary Proceedings. A verbal Report may be given during the 20223 Annual Conclave.

Fraternally submitted,
SK Harold F. Coots,PGC, Chairman SK Richard L. Mansfield, PGC
SK Robert W. Schlichter, PGC

