

EL PASO SCOTTISH RITE BULLETIN



NO. 650

COVID-19 EDITION

2ND QUARTER 2020

Message from the General Secretary



Brethren:

As you read this, the World is coping with the COVID-19 Pandemic. We have become familiar with social distancing, self-quarantining, unemployment and job furloughs, essential personnel, essential businesses, front line responders, first responders, scarcity of personal protection equipment, the wearing of face masks in public andthe disappearance of toilet paper and disinfectant products in the stores.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find Proclamations and Directives from the Grand Master of Texas and the Sovereign Grand Inspector General of Texas. Our Lodge Meetings have been suspended and our Reunions have been canceled until the crisis has passed. We applaud the leadership of our Grand Master and SGIG in making the decision to place the health and safety of our membership the utmost priority. While we are all anxious to return to normal, let us continue to do our part so we can return to labor safely.

Have we ever faced a situation like this? YES, though we didn't experience it. Our parents or grandparents did. The Spanish Flu Influenza epidemic of 1918-1919 infected as much as 40 percent of the global population and more people perished from the influenza than casualties incurred in WWI. I looked back at our Scottish Rite minutes in 1918 and discovered that our 1918 Fall Reunion was canceled due to the epidemic, as were several meetings. In 1919 we resumed our work, membership thrived and serious fund raising began on the construction plans for a new Temple, the Temple building you now own.

Rest assured that the daily operation of the El Paso Scottish Rite has continued and we are in constant contact with our SGIG, our Chairman, our Treasurer and the Supreme Council. We continue to stay in touch with our known members who are house-bound or have underlying medical issues and ask you to please contact us if you know of any member we have inadvertently overlooked.

In 1859, Abraham Lincoln gave an address in which he quoted and popularized a phrase attributed to a 13th Century Persian Sufi poet..... **"AND THIS, TOO, SHALL PASS."**

Stay safe, Happy Trails to You.

Larry V. Kane, 33°
General Secretary

Message from the Sage Maitre de la Rose Croix



"It was a time for men and peoples to come together and with clarifying unity do what needed to be done."

- Bro. Barry Boetto, speaking to his high school Fencing Club members before their non-ending Spring Break in 2020 about how he was going to remember this time in history.

Not against an oppressing nation or coalition of nations as had been done before; not against a tyrant or demagogue; not against the oppressors of human rights or beliefs but against a virulent enemy that cared not for race, color, borders, lands, power, riches or religious or political beliefs. And whether you sheltered in place or did as little as possible to maintain social distance or were engaged in essential labor in health care, food production, distribution and delivery, first responders, clergy, the armed forces and other areas deemed essential to society's continuance, if you are reading this now, you are persevering in your survival of the Pandemic of 2020. As Brother Theodore Roosevelt would say, "Bully for you!"

Masonically, this has been the most radical of times as stated communications of Blue Lodges as well as all the Appended Bodies were put on hold until a more favorable time for holding such meetings would arrive. And that time will come! Fear not and have faith in the way the Great Architect of the Universe is unfolding our current enterprises! I wish to apologize, although through no fault of my own, to all Scottish Rite Brothers and their families that due to current events, Remembrance and Renewal was postponed indefinitely. There may have been Wise Masters who missed that event during their tenure but only possibly one or two for reasons like mine. They who were specifically denied the opportunity to host that event, that time to call to memory those who have passed as was probably done during the last great pandemic. I pray that our current situation will pass quickly and add no more to our list of departed brothers. But again, that time will pass!

I am humbled to sit as Sage Maitre de la Rose Croix as it is spelled in its' mother French or Wise Master of the Rose Croix as we say in plain Texas English. Like you all, I too miss the camaraderie of our meetings and dinners, our time before our events and just being able to get together with my brothers to share time and good company. I have no new brothers to welcome to the Scottish Rite but look forward to our next Reunion, whether it be this Fall, next Spring or even should worse times befall us, next Fall. As always, I am most thankful for the work that our General Secretary, Illustrious Brother Larry Kane 33° and our incredibly efficient and highly knowledgeable Officer Manager, Nicole Moran, are continuing to do to see that our Temple continues to function and be a viable entity in these trying times. And my hat, be it a Scottish Rite Prayer Cap or Knights of St. Andrew Glengarry, goes off to all the brothers especially in the last few years who have contributed their time and toil to the upkeep and running of our stupendous edifice.

I wonder what our brothers, during the planning for the building of our magnificent Temple, were thinking in 1918 when the last great pandemic washed across our great nation. It took the country two years to go through all the relapses of that plague and when it had finally run its' course, this construction of stone and spirit became a reality. What will we accomplish during this time, our time of trial and tribulation?

We are only a quarter of the way thru this year but let us look forward to the times to come! Our next Blue Lodge meeting, our next Scottish Rite meeting, our next Reunion...whatever it may be. Our predecessors built our Temple. Let us build a future for our Fraternity in it.

I close hoping you, one and all, and your families are hale and healthy.
Be well and be safe -

Barry Boetto, 32°
Sage Maitre

The Grand Lodge of Texas
ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

Message from the Grand Master

Wednesday, April 29, 2020

Grand Master's Proclamation

On April 27, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott issued new orders to open the State of Texas through the "Open Texas" plan. The Governor's Report to Open Texas can be found at:

<https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Report.pdf>

This plan is both a road map and guidelines as to how various businesses and entities are to re-open. In light of this action, Texas Masonic Lodges are authorized to resume some activities by closely adhering to the following directives:

1. Commencing May 25, 2020, Lodges may hold stated meetings for the primary purpose of election of Lodge officers for the ensuing year. In addition, Lodges can conduct regular business appropriate to a stated meeting.
2. Lodges may not have called meetings until further proclamation from the Grand Master, other than one Lodge of Sorrow, or a called meeting for the purpose of installing officers.
3. No degrees will be conducted until further proclamation from the Grand Master.
4. No meals will be cooked or consumed at stated or called meetings at this time.
5. Strict social distancing rules as established in Governors Abbott's "Open Texas" will be followed, including the following:
 - All Masons MUST keep a six-foot distance from other Masons
 - Masons are strongly urged, but are not required, to wear face masks
 - Lodges are encouraged to have hand sanitizer available at numerous places in the Lodge building
 - To maintain proper social distancing, Masons should not shake hands
 - Masons are encouraged to only attend their own Lodges, and not to visit other Lodges at this time
6. Lodges that meet quarterly may hold a stated meeting on or after May 25, 2020, and prior to June 24, 2020, for the purpose of electing Lodge officer and other business appropriate to a stated meeting.
7. Most importantly, all Texas Masons are strongly encouraged NOT to attend Lodge if they have any signs of illness or do not feel comfortable in attending. Masons must self-screen for any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 before attending any Lodge meeting. Those individuals considered to be "at-risk", including those who are 65 or older, and especially those with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; liver disease; weakened immune system or other risk factors are encouraged not to attend Lodge. You are the sole decision-maker as to whether you should attend Lodge. There is nothing more important at this time than the health and well-being of our Texas Masons.

Further Proclamations will be issued when it is deemed both safe and prudent to do so while, at the same time, adhering to the directives of the State of Texas on re-opening.

Paul D. Underwood
 Grand Master, 2020

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We have been notified by the Supreme Council of changes being implemented in billing invoices for 2021 dues. The Valley of El Paso will no longer be sending invoices for your dues. Dues notices will be sent from the Supreme Council, as will the dues cards. This mandate is being implemented for the entire Southern Jurisdiction. Our understanding is that your 2021 dues card will be sent, along with the invoice. Payments can be made directly to the Valley of El Paso or online via our website or the Supreme Council website.

PLEASE....it is extremely important that you realize that just because you receive your new dues card, it does not mean you are in good standing until your dues are paid.

The Valley of El Paso will be informed of members who have paid and members who remain in arrears. We will be charged locally with verifying a member is in good standing to attend Scottish Rite Meetings or events. If you have a change in address, phone number or email, please contact our Office at your earliest opportunity. If you need to make payment arrangements or would like to be placed on a payment plan, please contact our Office Manager, Nicole Moran at Nicole@elpasoscottishrite.org

We still have a number of members that have not paid their 2020 dues. Please check and see if you have your 2020 dues card, if you aren't sure if you are up-to-date on your dues, please contact the Office at 915-533-4409.

Thank you.

The Supreme Council
MOTHER COUNCIL OF THE WORLD
 OF THE
 THIRTY-THIRD AND LAST DEGREE
Michael L. Wiggins, 33°
 Sovereign Grand Inspector General
 In Texas
 ORIENT OF TEXAS

Emergency Directives For Distribution

UPDATED - 19 MAY 2020

As the Governor started the Open Texas program on May 1, much has changed regarding businesses that are allowed to operate and the types of activities that can be undertaken since COVID-19 restrictions began in March; however, social gatherings are highly discouraged or prohibited. In addition, health recommendations concerning COVID-19 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), directives from the State of Texas, various counties across the State, and the Grand Master of Masons in Texas have also been changing. In response, I am extending or modifying the current COVID-19 directives as follows.

Scottish Rite Stated Meetings:

In an abundance of caution and in the best interest of our members' health and safety, I am extending the directive to cancel all in-person Scottish Rite meetings of any kind through June 30, 2020. This directive applies to all Scottish Rite activities including Clubs, Degree Teams, Committees, Social Groups, etc. This information should be communicated to your membership immediately.

Reunions Postponed or Canceled:

All Reunions and reunion-related activities to be held in the Orient of Texas are postponed or canceled through July 30, 2020. This includes group recruitment activities, degree practices, and degree conferrals.

Scottish Rite Buildings:

Our Scottish Rite Buildings may remain open subject to any local, county, state, or federal emergency declarations regarding COVID-19 public gatherings or activities related to Scottish Rite business; however, our buildings are to remain closed to the general public in response to recommendations of the CDC for public gatherings through June 30, 2020. Each Valley should closely monitor local directives from the State and County in which you operate as the governmental orders are varied with different expiration dates across the State.

- **Masonic Related Organizations:** Scottish Rite buildings may be opened for limited use by appendant bodies subject to proclamations or directives by the Grand Master or Presiding State Officer for that body AND governmental orders. All activities are limited to one general meeting/gathering area (lodge room for example) and restroom facilities. Catering or meal service is prohibited. Each visiting body is subject to governmental directives; is responsible for any citations or fines issued by a governmental authority; has the duty to see that all required and suggested health screening, sanitary, and social distancing measures are appropriately taken; and accepts all liability for the health and safety of its attendees.
- **Third Parties:** Actions by the Governor allow certain limited venue-type activities such as weddings and wedding receptions under various restrictions including facility limitations up to 25 percent of the meeting space occupancy. At this time, I am reluctant to allow this type of use prior to June 30, 2020; however, there may be certain situations where appropriate, subject to the Governor's orders and the associated restrictions. Each Valley or building owner (through the Personal Representative and General Secretary) is allowed to determine if these activities are appropriate for their facility. If so, they may resume third-party events as of June 1, 2020 at their discretion. Each third-party event must satisfy all the health and safety guidance issued by the State and the CDC and accept all liability for its event including any citations or fines issued by a governmental authority. Each building owner should closely monitor local directives from the State and County in which you operate as the governmental orders are varied with different expiration dates across the State.

Social Media - Virtual Meetings:

While web-based platforms like Zoom, Skype, MS Teams, WebEx, and other such virtual meeting programs are useful for social gatherings, they are not appropriate for holding stated meetings, conducting business activities, or discuss esoteric topics due to the difficulty in providing internet security and preventing the rebroadcasting, recording, or posting of such meetings. Therefore, all "virtual" gatherings hosted by your Valley, committees, Clubs, or groups are prohibited except for social gatherings or educational programs where no esoteric work is used or discussed consistent with Grand Master's Decision No. 2 that limits esoteric discussions. Further, educational meetings should be limited to verified active Texas Freemasons with participation through restricted access that must be monitored by a moderator with no record of the proceedings. Such meetings, if held, must have the written permission of the Valley's Personal Representative.



The Valley of El Paso received a congratulation letter from Sovereign Grand Commander, Ill. James D. Cole, 33° on the successful completion of the 2019 Valley Membership Achievement Project. This program was initiated in 2015 and the Valley of El Paso has received this Award five (5) consecutive times.

Knights of St. Andrew

Greetings brothers and those others who read these words!

The Knights of St. Andrew were dismayed when the official word came from the Valley of Nashville, Orient of Tennessee, that the Biennial Gathering of the Knights, scheduled for June of 2020, was postponed until June of 2021. We had planned to unveil the special token we had made to present to our brother knights of the Order during the Gathering when we returned later this year. The tokens which did not get bestowed on our brethren there were to be used, among other things, as thank you gifts for those Scottish Rite brothers who attend our meetings.

Our tokens are made of pewter, not fine metals as being in an austere Order of knighthood that is not about the finery of ourselves and our brothers, our trappings and tokens are plain and of simple design. They are also not as large as many masons are used to for lodge coins, commemorative coins or specialty coins for specific events, which are usually between the size of a Kennedy half dollar and Eisenhower dollar. Ours are a bit larger than a U.S. quarter... but oh so much more! Our design is "heater" shaped or the shape of a medieval knights shield. It is easy to keep in your pocket and able to be shown to others while they look on in amazement and awe...

Are you lucky enough to carry this piece of history in your pocket? Are you worthy enough to be bestowed one of these keepsakes? The answer to both of these questions is "yes", but only if you attend a Knights of St. Andrew meeting (held the Saturday before every Scottish Rite meeting at 11AM at the Scottish Rite) and see what the Knights are about...

Knight Brother Barry Boetto
Seneschal and Exchequer (Secretary & Treasurer)
Knights of St. Andrew
Valley of El Paso
Orient of Texas



*Our most sincere
sympathies and condolences
to all the families of our members
who have passed on to a better life*



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|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Billy Bob Auburg, 32° KCCH | 12/24/1928-03/08/2020 | Robert B. Holder, 32° | 01/20/1937-08/22/2019 |
| Jerry W. Dickens, 32° | 08/09/1924-03/24/2020 | Monill L. Johnson, 32° | 10/21/1926-01/13/2020 |
| Donald F. Ferris, 32° | 01/12/1939-01/24/2020 | Johnny C. Myrick, 32° | 10/18/1923-07/22/2019 |
| Julius S. Heins, 32° | 10/25/1939-09/29/2019 | Mickey Nunley, 32° | 01/21/1948-01/14/2020 |

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**Illustrious
Tom L. Higgins, 33°**
Personal Representative of the S.G.I.G.
And
Chairman of the Executive Committee
In the Valley of El Paso

ALLEGIANCE
The Bodies of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite
of Freemasonry sitting in the Valley of El Paso,
Orient of Texas, acknowledge and yield allegiance to
the Supreme Council (Mother Council of the World)
of the Inspectors General, Knights Commander of the
House of the Temple of Solomon, of the Thirty-third
and last Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish
Rite of Freemasonry for the Southern Jurisdiction of
the United States of America, whose See is at the
Grand Orient of South Carolina, now sitting at
Washington, D.C. of which
ILL. James D. Cole, 33°
is Sovereign Grand Commander
ILL. Michael L. Wiggins, 33°
is Sovereign Grand Inspector General in Texas,
and
ILL. Tom L. Higgins, 33°
is Personal Representative of SGIG
And Chairman of the Executive Committee
Valley of El Paso