

VIRGINIA SUPPLEMENT

Visit the Virginia Grand Commandery Official Website at:
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FROM THE APARTMENT OF THE GRAND COMMANDER

Greetings, Sir Knights!

By the time you read this, the Official Visits to the Districts will be concluded and the Fall will be approaching! I hope each of you had a safe and restful Summer and that you are ready to resume your labors for the benefit of Christian Freemasonry!

A number of important developments have occurred since my last message:

Leadership Correspondence Course: The Courses are now up and running, and your participation is earnestly solicited! There are two Courses available and details can be obtained from the Grand Commandery website or from the General Order that has been provided to your Recorder. The cost is nominal but the benefits are substantial. Not only will the you be challenged and educated, but the Grand Commandery will realize income needed to offset future capitation increases. It is my most ardent desire that we generate enough capital from this and other programs, to ensure the Commanderies will not be asked to bear the cost of Grand Encampment capitation of our life members. And as noted in previous messages, those Sir Knights who successfully complete the Course will be recognized by a Certificate of Achievement to memorialize their accomplishment!

Don't wait - Go to the website to enroll or contact SK James W. Golladay, Jr., chairman of the Leadership and Education Committee at P.O. Box 159, Stephens City, VA 22655.

Ritual Award: The Grand Commander Ritual Award is rapidly coming to fruition. Those Sir Knights who are deemed proficient in the conferral of one or more of the Orders from the East will soon be offered the opportunity to purchase a ribbon in recognition of their accomplishments. Three ribbons will be offered, one for each Order, and a device will be offered for those who demonstrate their proficiency in the full form conferral of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross and Order of Malta. Additionally, we are considering recognition for those who are proficient in some of the other ritualistic roles, such as the role of the Prelate in the Order of the Temple. I have drafted a General Order that sets forth all the particulars and details, and I hope to formally issue it by my next message, so stay tuned!

Festival of the Rites: Sir Knights, we are ready to proceed with the Festival of the Rites. Commandery conferrals will take place at Richmond, Roanoke, and Norfolk on Saturday, January 24, 2009. In order to be successful, I will need the active participation and support of EVERY Knight Templar! A unified Petition is available at the Grand Commandery website, and hard copies will soon be provided to every Recorder. The cost to the candidate is

\$300.00, so start promoting the festival at every opportunity. Emphasize that the candidates will have the opportunity to witness expert presentations of the York and Scottish Rite degrees at a bargain cost while expanding their Masonic vistas! Remember that the Royal Arch Degree represents the culmination and completion of the Master Mason's Degree, and the Commandery Orders and Scottish Rite Degrees expand upon and compliment the lessons taught in the Symbolic Lodge! A General Order is on the way providing all additional details, however, DO NOT DELAY in soliciting our Blue Lodge Brethren! I have set a goal of 200 new Knights Templar, and firmly believe this can be accomplished! And remember, Sir Knights, your efforts will be rewarded by the presentation of shoulder cords at Grand Commandery to top-line signers!

Baldwin-Brown Fellowship: Sir Knight Roland Gauthier has asked this program be promoted at every opportunity. Sir Knights, if you haven't done so, please consider purchasing a Baldwin-Brown Fellowship pin. The cost is \$150.00 for the pin and \$150.00 for each diamond chip. The monies generated are deposited to an interest-earning trust account. To date, only 3% of all Virginia Templars have participated in this program. If we can double that figure, many of our financial concerns will vanish! And if you are so inclined, you may purchase a pin for your Lady! Sir Knights John Wigglesworth and Mark Underwood bought pins for Mary and Sheila, each bearing some 32 diamond chips! I would love to see other Sir Knights do likewise!

Holy Land Pilgrimage: Sir Knight Warren Schmid reminds me to ask your support for this most worthwhile charitable endeavor. The goal is \$2.00 per Sir Knight, and the funds will enable us to sponsor Christian

ministers on an all-expense paid sojourn to the Holy Land. Sir Knights, this is what we are all about! Please "pass the chapeau," host a fundraiser, or do whatever is necessary to promote this endeavor. Our participation has lagged in recent years, and I cannot over emphasize the good that the Pilgrimage accomplishes. And if there is a minister in your neighborhood who is young in his ministry, why not propose him for consideration? Just ask our dear friend and Frater, Art Dechent, who will happily relate his experiences in evidence of the good works realized from this program.

Mid-Atlantic Department Conference: Please plan to attend the Conference, scheduled October 3-4, 2008 at the Holiday Inn Tanglewood in Roanoke. Your Grand Officers, the Grands from other jurisdictions comprising the Department, and the Grand Master and his Officers will attend. EVERY Sir Knight is welcome and invited to attend, so come to Roanoke, plan to be educated, and have fun!

Lastly, Sir Knights, I had to pleasure of attending the 51st General Assembly of the York Rite Sovereign College of North America held July 31-August 2 in Reston, and was formally appointed to succeed Sir Knight Jackie Lee Harrison as Grand Governor for Virginia. Sir Knights Frederick Garrison Martin, III and Baldwin Gerard (Gerry) Locher, Jr. were appointed as Deputy Grand Governors. Please extend your congratulations and best wishes to each of them when you see them!

Sir Knights, if I or any of our Grand Officers can be of assistance to you, remember that we are but a phone call or email away!

In His Service, and yours,

Jeffrey G. Burcham
Grand Commander