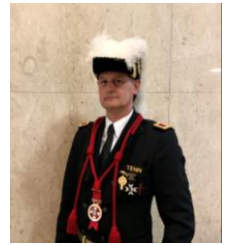




# Tennessee Knight Templar News

Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee – Robert B. Beam, Grand Commander

October 2022, A.O. 904



## Grand Commander's Message

Sir Knights,

Inspections are completed and I would like to thank all the Knights for their hospitality to myself, First Lady Sharon, and to my Officers and their Ladies as we have traveled across this great State. I very much enjoyed getting to see old friends and make new ones during our travels. The Inspections to me are a time when the Grand Officers meet the Knights and their Ladies, and allow them to meet us, as well as a time when we formally inspect the Commanderies and their records, and ensure compliance with adopted ritual and tactics.

There are several things I think make these Inspections meaningful and celebratory. One is to have a meal and invite our Ladies to attend. Those ladies who have attended these past several weeks have gotten to know each other, and this creates more of a family atmosphere. Another thing I personally like to see, and that truly enhances the Inspection, is to have an active candidate if at all possible. In those few cases where a Commandery does not have an active candidate, it would be good to allow one from another Commandery to take the Order of the Temple during that Inspection. As a last resort, if there is no candidate available, find a newly-made Knight and allow him to witness again the Order of the Temple as the exemplar. This will more fully impress upon him the beauty of our Orders and encourage him to take an active part in the Commandery.

An observation I would like to share: I realize that not every Commandery is where it would like to be in terms of ritual excellence. It is easy to blame Covid, and that certainly did not help us, however I did see that we have a number of young or at least new Knights participating; because of this, it may take time for them to be fully proficient. In this regard, practice and training are very important. The Battalion structure we are implementing, at least on a trial basis, will be helpful in this regard. These young Knights are eager to learn and want to do ritual "the right way." It is very important that we not only encourage them to continue, but we instruct them in how our Orders should be conferred. Let us not become discouraged at this point but press forward with fortitude.

Regarding scoring, our Grand Instructor has informed me that our scores are below what they have been in years past, and this is across the board. I look at this as an opportunity for each Commandery to take an honest look at where they are and where they want to be, then take steps to get there. Your Grand Officers are ready to help you, and the ideas we have been promoting over these past 5-6 months are intended to help all of us grow and improve.

Finally, I would like to address some concerns I have heard about the Modernization and Revitalization efforts being made by your Grand Dias Officers. It is important to remember two things about this. First, these decisions are being made by your Dias Officers as a group, meeting periodically and discussing – and agreeing on – these new ideas. This will provide continuity over the next few years and allow time for these ideas and concepts to reach maturity and bear fruit. It does us little good to implement a new idea if we do not allow enough time to see if it works. Second, ideas such as Knight School, family nights, and uniform options, are being presented as options for your Commandery. They are intended to give you flexibility to do what is needed to promote engagement and interest in your Commandery. Most of these ideas have been positively received, however to those who are apprehensive I would ask that you at least be open to trying these ideas. As Grand Commander, my responsibility is to do what is in the best interest of Templary as I see it. I believe that by creating an environment in which growth and learning may take place, we will be even stronger than we already are.

Finally, I again want to thank the Knights for their hard work and commitment to Templary. As we enter this last quarter of the year and begin laying plans for 2023, let us remember that the Scripture enjoins us to "cast our bread upon the waters," having faith in God that he will never fail nor forsake us.

Courteously, Robert B. Beam, Grand Commander

### Grand Commandery Revitalization Update – Battalions

In keeping with our mission to provide resources and opportunities for development and engagement, the Dias Officers have begun implementing on a trial basis a system of Battalions. A Battalion is a small, local group of Commanderies, usually 3-5, who are assigned to a Battalion Commander. This Battalion Commander works with a Battalion Instructor to assist the Commanderies in such areas as membership, member engagement, and ritual. Although this is a new concept in Tennessee, other jurisdictions have been using this structure for some time now.

The first Battalion which was formed recently is the Upper East Battalion; it consists of five Commanderies: St. Omer 19, Watauga 25, Kingsport 33, Carter 37, and Greeneville 43. Battalion Officers are SK Doyle Skinner as Battalion Commander, SK Gary Coates as Battalion Instructor, and SK Chuck Thames PGC as Battalion Team Lead. These Officers have been installed by REGC Robert Beam and ECGC Tim Sutton and are ready to begin working. Other Battalions are expected to be formed within the next few weeks. Pictured are Sir Knights Tim Sutton ECGC; Gary Coates Bt Instructor; Chuck Thames PGC, Bt Team Lead; and Robbie Beam REGC.



### Knights Form Degree Team



A group of Knights in East Tennessee have formed the *East Tennessee Knights Templar Degree Team*, and have begun conferring the Entered Apprentice Degree on candidates at the request of area Lodges. The inaugural conferral was at Evening Star Lodge No. 180 in New Tazewell, upon candidate Anthony Welch. Participating were SK Robert Beam REGC, Michael Weems PGC, Kevin Boles EGSW, Seth Frost, Lucas McAfee, Michael Tesoro, and Dusty Parsons. Seven Lodges were represented as were five Blue Lodge Districts and three Commanderies. Participants wore full uniform, minus Sword and Chapeau (except acting WM), and wearing Templar Aprons. Congratulations to this Brother and we hope this made a lasting and positive impression upon him. Pictured are those present along with Bro. Welch (center).

### Inspections

Inspections during September were well attended. Four Commanderies in West Tennessee – Lexington 36, Jackson 13, Union City 29, and Paris 16 – held a joint Inspection. There were two active candidates during this inspection, which saw all four York Rite bodies represented by at least one elected Grand Officer or Past Presiding Officer, SK Hunter Pigue and SK Eric Shephard. Park Avenue and Rosemark Inspection saw the knighting of SK Sean Haywood, upon whom the Order of the Temple was conferred by Sir Knight John Simmons, VE Deputy Grand Commander.

Nashville No. 1 observed their 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Wednesday, September 14, having received their charter on that date in 1847. Previous to Inspection a short history of that Commandery was read, along with a resolution by the Tennessee General Assembly recognizing Nashville Commandery for their contributions to the community over the past one- and three-quarter centuries. During the Inspection, SK Jim Arnhart, RWDGM, was made a Knight Templar Priest at sight by Most Eminent Grand Preceptor Terry L. Plemons PGC; also, SK Robbie Beam REGC was made an honorary member of the Commandery. The candidate for the evening was SK Daniel Mendoza. Congratulations to the Knights of Nashville No. 1 on their example of a strong and active Commandery.

Lookout No. 14 held a joint inspection with Athens No. 34, at which time SK Joey Bowman was knighted by his longtime friend, SK Justin Huggins, with the REGC receiving him afterward. This inspection was attended by many family members and friends of the Knights of Nos. 14 and 34. It should be noted that this Inspection also was attended by a number of the leadership of Chattanooga Valley Scottish Rite.

Photographs are on the next page; congratulations to these Knights and to their Commanderies as well!





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See future *Knight Templar News* for more Inspection photographs.