



The Florida Knight

S.K. Brett A. Gordon

Right Eminent Grand Commander 2020
1201 NW 193rd Ave - Pembroke Pines, Fl. 33029
Email: gordonphd@gmail.com
Phone: (954) 802-8147



State Supplement Editor

Gary R. Roane - 3632 6th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33713 - grrroane123@gmail.com

Greetings Sir Knights,

I hope all of you are like me and are looking forward to the 26th of this month. Thanksgiving has always been a special holiday for me and my family. While our current holiday celebration can be traced back to 1621 when colonist held a harvest feast with the local natives, it was President Abraham Lincoln in 1861 that declared an official day of Thanksgiving in late November. Over the past four hundred years many traditions have developed, and I am sure many of you participated in the same tradition my family did. I started out at the “kids” table and had to work my way up to the “adult table.” I can still remember when I finally made it to the “adult” table and my Father poured me a small glass of red wine for the traditional Family Toast (prior to which I was relegated to drinking grape juice). I even remember coming home from the University of Kansas during my senior year and having my Father ask me to carve the Turkey! I know there are many Rites of Passage in a young man’s life, but having my Father allow me to take over his duty in determining who got the best slice was a big deal to me at the time. Thanksgiving is certainly unique American experience – or is it? While many of us believe the celebration of Thanksgiving is uniquely American there are quite a few other countries that celebrate this holiday.

Canada celebrates Thanksgiving and most of its traditions are similar to those found here in the States. Liberia, founded by freed American slaves, also celebrates this holiday tradition much as we do in the U.S., while Japan celebrates a with a tradition akin to a combined Labor Day and Thanksgiving. Even Germany celebrates with a harvest festival during the first Sunday in October, but rather than the tradition turkey served in the United States, Germans are more likely to eat chickens, hens, roosters, or geese. Grenada celebrates this holiday, but only since 1983 when locals put together a Thanksgiving feast for American troops after the mission to rescue 800 medical students during the military coup. Since then October 25 was named Thanksgiving Day and it is a national holiday of gratitude and remembrance. Norfolk Island, off the coast of Australia, with a population of just over 2,00 inhabitants has celebrated Thanksgiving since the late 1800s, after an America trader (Issac Robinson) visited the island and celebrated the tradition at a local church. However, they differ slightly in their choice of food, choosing to eat pork, chicken, and bananas. Even China celebrates a form of Thanksgiving in the form of a mid-autumn festival. This festival can trace its roots back more that 2,500 years. Rather than enjoying the pumpkin pie which graces almost all Thanksgiving tables in the United States, the Chinese dessert is a moon cake, which is a concoction filled with sesame seeds, ground lotus seeds, and duck eggs! Personally, I think I will stick with the pumpkin pie and whipped cream.

I thought it might be fun to share this interesting bit of information with you for two reasons. First, I am always fascinated with the various traditions people use to celebrate

events throughout the year, and “harvest festivals” are some of the oldest traditions we have across all cultures. Our ancestors developed from hunter gatherers into an agrarian society where farming techniques and knowledge of the seasons did not always guarantee a plentiful harvest. Obviously when things went right, they wanted to celebrate. Secondly, while all these traditions have their differences, they all have one thing in common. All of these celebrations involve the family or local community coming together to give thanks. To take a brief moment away from the labor of the day to think about all that is good and right in their lives.

As many of you might know, this is my first Thanksgiving married to my wonderful Lady Monica. It will be the first time since we met over seven years ago to sit down with all our children as a true family and celebrate the Thanksgiving Holiday. While we have certainly celebrated Thanksgiving together over these past few years of dating, this will be a very special holiday for me and I have spent some time thinking of all the things that I am so thankful for in my life. It is certainly easy to get caught up with all the worldwide problems that the media presents to us on a daily basis. Even our own personal issues with family, friends, and workplace concerns can cause us to feel that there is more negative in our lives than positive. However, we all know that this is not reality. We all have so much to be thankful for and the challenges that we face daily only makes those positive aspects of our lives all the more special and precious. I know that COVID19 has put a damper on many of the fun things we all did in the past. It has stopped us from spending quality time with our family and friends. Many of you missed attending the graduation ceremonies of your children who worked so hard and who we are all so proud because of their individual achievements. It has event kept us out of our Masonic Lodges and appendant organizations, which has prevented us from enjoying the fellowship of our Brothers.

I ask you, however, to approach this from a different perspective. While we have not been able to go to dinner with extended family or friends, we have been given the chance to spend more time at home with our immediate family. While we missed graduation ceremonies, we were able to celebrate in a more intimate manner to really express how proud we are of our children and their accomplishments; and while we have been kept out of our Lodges, we have found new ways to interact with our brethren. Rather than only networking with the Masons from our local lodges or districts, we have had the chance to attend virtual meetings and events with Brothers from around the world. During this past year I have expanded my masonic circle of friends from a mere handful living outside Florida, to well over a hundred from around the world that I regular chat with or contact monthly. I have been exposed to practices and traditions of Masonry that prior to COVID19 I did not know even existed.

I realize that these are just a few examples and there are certainly hardships that have long lasting affects that cannot so effortlessly be resolved. However, there are always positive things within our lives that we too easily push aside and forget to be thankful for daily. I therefore encourage you to take a few minutes, after reading through this latest issue of the Knight Templar Magazine and reflect upon this past year for all the wonderful things you can be thankful for in your life. I believe you will be very surprised how many you can envision. Happy Thanksgiving and I wish all of you Good Cheer as we move into the Holiday Season.

Donec Totem Impleat Orbem,

Brett A. Gordon, KYCH
Right Eminent Grand Commander