

GRAND COMMANDERY OF HAWAII

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Aloha Companions,

I hope that this month's letter finds you COVID-19 free, sane, and still happily married! We had quite a busy month with all of the Zoom meetings. On Saturday, September 26th, our very own Sir Knight Monty Glover, Right Eminent Past Grand Commander, was elected and installed as the Grandmaster of the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons. The first time in the History of Hawaii York Rite Bodies that one of our own has ascended to as high a position.

It was good seeing everyone attending the meeting. We had quite the representation from Hawaii. The meeting was very well organized and ran and this was the second major Zoom that I have attended in as many months. The first being our Grand Lodge's Annual Communication. By the time this letter hits the press, we would have had another major Zoom meeting, our Southwestern Department Conference, which will be held on October 31st, at 0700 Hawaii Time. We can also look forward to Zoom installations and, if the Grandmaster of Masons in Hawaii can work it out, virtual degrees for our Knockers-in-Waiting.

Technology has definitely played its part in keeping us together during this pandemic. I have heard several numbers kicked around, but the one that I have heard most often is that this pandemic accelerated our use of technology by a minimum of five years. Zoom appears to be the big winner in the virtual meeting space followed by Google Meet, Teams, and Skype.

While a lot of us have grown comfortable with these technologies, I was surprised to read of technologies that are beyond Zoom that are being used by large conferences and corporations. The next generation of virtual meetings will be virtual reality based, requiring folks to wear Virtual Reality ("VR") or Alternative Reality ("AR") headsets to get the best benefit from this technology.

If this is new to you as well and you are interested in learning more about it, please check out <https://spatial.io/>. Using their technology, it would be possible to have virtual Lodge Room established, each member would be represented by an avatar bearing their likeness (customized in Commandery uniform) restrict access, hold more collaborative meetings, and possibly confer degrees and orders, than the 2D that we have become accustomed to with Zoom. Of course, the barrier to entry is cost and while there are free VR user accounts, the cost of a VR/AR headset ranges from \$200 to \$1,000s per person.

It is definitely an exciting time and while we all miss our in-person meetings, it is good to see everyone making the best of it and embracing technology.

Until next month...

Yours in chivalry,

Dustin Verity

Dustin Verity
Grand Commander of Knights Templar in Hawaii

P.S. ~ Maui York Rite Bodies continues their weekly Food Bank. For those interested in contributing, please contact Sir Knight Chris Williams at evictionsrus@msn.com.

