



## Indiana Supplement

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Ed Fodrea KCT, GC

# Fodrea re-elected Grand Commander, the first re-tread in 152 years

By SK Edward L. Sebring KCT KTCH GPE  
Editor

On April 24, members in attendance at the 2021 Grand Conclave of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Indiana voted to leave its officers in the same place for another year.

According to SK Ed Fodrea, KCT, newly installed as Grand Commander for a second term, re-electing Grand Commanders, while it hadn't been done for the prior 152 years, was not uncommon during the earliest years of the Grand Commandery of Indiana.

SK Henry C. Lawrence of Lafayette Commandery No. 3, Indiana's first Grand Commander, served three years in office, 1854-56.

SK Solomon Bayless of Fort Wayne Commandery No. 4, served four years as Grand Commander, 1860-1863.

The three Grand Commanders who followed SK Bayless each served two years in office: SK William Hacker, Baldwin Commandery No. 2, 1864-65; SK Harvey G. Hazelrigg, Lebanon Commandery No. 43, 1866-67; and finally, the last man to do so until Fodrea, SK Thomas Newby of what is today Connersville Commandery No. 6 but was then known as Cambridge City Commandery No. 6, who served 1868-69.

Having majored in history, this writer could not help but notice that all but Lawrence and Fodrea served their multiple terms during the decade of the Civil War. The war began at the start of Bayless's second term, so he served during the first three of the war's four years of fighting. Then the next three Grand Commanders served two years each, completing the 1860s decade.

Was the war the direct cause of the need for multiple terms? This writer doesn't have access to the right records to research that. But what may be a good clue arose in researching the Masonic life of SK Thomas Newby: It seems that Newby, a Cambridge City banker, joined Cambridge City Commandery No. 6 one year, started two years as Eminent Commander the next, and was elected Grand Commander coincident with his second year as EC. That sounds like it was an era during which it was difficult to find officers at both local and state levels.

### Why a double term now?

Why did Fodrea and his officers ask for a second term now? In a word, "COVID," said Fodrea. By normal scheduling, he should have been installed April 24, 2020. But government or Masonic grand body regulations made the meeting impossible. SK Michael Robbins remained as Grand Commander until Aug. 8, at which time Fodrea and his corps were elected and installed via a virtual meeting.

### Grand Conclave aftermath

"I want to thank everyone for making it a great conclave and honoring me as the first person in 152 years to be re-elected as grand commander," Fodrea said. "The Grand Conclave was finished in about three hours and fifteen minutes."

It was set on a Saturday rather than the traditional Friday because, Fodrea said, he tried "to be respectful of everyone's time under COVID," plus the Indiana Grand Council of Cryptic Masons need to hold their annual session on Friday, instead of the usual Thursday, he said. "We needed to get everything done on Saturday, and it worked perfectly.

"We had lots of things planned. Many events we were going to do got canceled because of COVID. Now we have another chance."

"I want to get commanderies back to some kind of normalcy with inspections on the Orders," Fodrea said. "They will have the choice of the Order of the Temple, Order of the Red Cross or Order of Malta, all of which must be done in full form. Bonus points on the inspection will be given for selecting Red Cross or Malta. Specifics will be available when the inspection sheets come out."

Fodrea said he is also excited about the plan for the Levant Preceptory members to perform the Order of the Temple in the old, wooden Fort Wayne, in medieval period costume, and by torchlight.

"I'm looking forward to a lot of the fellowship we missed out on last year," he said.

## Two honored nationally during Grand Conclave

**SK Tony Peterson GPE** received the honor and title of Knight Commander of the Temple. The honor is given by the College of Honors of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar of the United States of America for outstanding service to Knights Templary, Freemasonry in general, the community, or mankind.

Peterson previously received the Knight Templar Cross of Honor, a national award presented annually to one or two men from each Grand Commandery for outstanding service to the Order. The honorees are selected by the Grand Commander. Peterson is one of 12 Hoosier Sir Knights to have received both the Knight Commander of the Temple, and the Knight Templar Cross of Honor.

**SK Dale Foreman** was this year's selection for the Knight Templar Cross of Honor.

"We were aides together under GC Bobby Roberts," Fodrea said. "I went into the line and he became my DBC. He has been at my side this entire time."