

## Grand Commandery of New Mexico State News for February 2023



**SK James Overfelt, REGC**

[www.nmyorkrite.org](http://www.nmyorkrite.org)

Editor: SK L Roughgarden [lenrough@gmail.com](mailto:lenrough@gmail.com)

Sir Knights,

One of the duties of a New Mexico Grand Commander is to visit every Commandery in his jurisdiction. For New Mexico there are not many Commanderies (six) but the Commanderies are quite far apart. The visit is both for the hospitality and for an inspection. I do not put much emphasis on the inspection part. I think of a visit from the Grand Commander, or any of the Grand York Rite heads of bodies, as an opportunity for the Grand Commander to meet the members of the local Commandery and to get acquainted. New Mexico is such a big state, it is hard to visit all of the local York Rite bodies on a regular basis. The duty to visit the constituent Commanderies encourages the Grand Commander to get out and get to know the heads and membership of the local bodies, see how they are doing and get feedback on what the Grand Commandery can do to help. From the local Commandery perspective, it is a good excuse to encourage the attendance at a meeting, to polish the opening ritual, to practice the correct reception ceremony and to get to know the Grand Commander.

I have completed all of my Commandery visits and all of the New Mexico York Rite bodies have moved on to meeting in Chapter. Everywhere I went I found dedicated Sir Knights doing their best to make their local Commanderies better. It has been difficult for most of the Commanderies to recover from the years of not meeting in person during Covid. With attendance at a low point in the blue lodges, it is hard to recruit new members into York Rite. The good news is that every Commandery has a group of Sir Knights who have not given up. For instance, at Baldwyn Commandery in Gallop SK Robert Keene has some innovative ideas, like a community live music night, to draw the community to the lodge building and raise the profile of the Masonic bodies. I should also give kudos to Commander Clayton Kuehn at Las Cruces Commandery which is doing very well indeed with quite a few Sir Knights last year and I

hear they already have a list to attend the Land of Enchantment degree festival in 2023. Even with most of the Sir Knights in Las Cruces seeing the ritual for the reception of the Grand Commander for the first time, Las Cruces had one of the best openings and Grand Commander's receptions I saw while traveling the state. Each visit to each Commandery was special in its own way and I thank all of the Commanderies and Commanders for the warm hospitality. I also thank the Sir Knights who accompanied me on my travels. It is always better to travel with someone on those long drives. Thanks to SK Jim Davis who attended every one of my official visits to all the Commanderies throughout the state.