



John H. Austin
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Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Maryland

JANUARY 2023 NEWS

GREETINGS SIR KNIGHTS!

Welcome to 2023! I Hope that each of you have celebrated a wonderful Christmas with family and friends. The week of the holiday was as cold and windy as anything we have seen in Maryland in a while, so I also hope that your homes and you personally have pulled through OK.

I write to you today from sunny Wichita Kansas where Lady Kandi and I are visiting our youngest son at his new house, his first. We are here to bring personal possessions long in our custody as he lived out of the country for several years. Driving out of Maryland with a van full of stuff was challenging as the weather, starting in Cumberland, turned fierce with snow, ice and wind. So cold our windshield washer mechanism froze solid and I was forced to stop every few miles to toss defrosting liquid directly onto the windshield from a water bottle. Not fun! 3 days of driving through the highways of this nation, however, allows one the peace of traveling among the hills and valleys of the country and meeting people of different States along the way. Every time I get away from home, and especially when traveling through some of the less inhabited parts of the country, gives a change of perspective. We live in vast and varied territory of extraordinary diversity. Large areas of emptiness exist here in America and certainly humbles you when the insignificance of oneself is laid to bare. Where you do come into cities and towns and can see the citizens of this country in their day-to-day activities, churning away at life's mundane necessities, it's refreshing to know that life goes on elsewhere just as we experience at home.

Well, enough travelog and on to current affairs of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Maryland.

I want to compliment all of the Commanderies throughout the state for the Various Christmas Observances which were held before the Holiday. Lady Kandi and I attended all that were held

and I was impressed that for the first time in many years, almost every Commandery held a service or celebration. This has not been the case for many years. I congratulate the Commanders for their thoughtful and varied approaches to holding these ceremonies. Each was a little different and the setups included use of the triangle or sometimes a cross of tables at which knights were seated to receive the toasts from the Grand Master and Grand Prelate of the Grand Encampment. All ceremonies included a meal or light snack before or after the ceremonies and these were often provided by the ladies of the Beauceant or Eastern Star. We thank you each for your contributions.

The work behind the scenes by our own Grand Prelate SK Charles Beckhardt must also be recognized. One of the stated goals of the Grand Commandery under his leadership, is the increased awareness of our Christian foundation and the events during our calendar year that are to be recognized and celebrated. Charles has done a magnificent job of providing our Commanderies the calendar and tools used to bring this about. He has set up and will continue to provide guidance with the religious activities expected for Knights Templar in Maryland. Keep looking at the Events section of the York Rite Website under the Grand Commandery section for continued updates from GP Sir Knight Charles.

You will also find information for the upcoming events surrounding the next big event- George Washington Masonic National Memorial Centennial celebration of the Cornerstone dedication. All Sir Knights of Maryland are asked to check their calendars to help to celebrate this event in Alexandria Virginia in February 2023. Your Grand Commandery of Maryland has registered to participate in the Parade associated with the rededication. Both parade and rededication take place on Feb. 20 2023 in the City of Alexandria Virginia.

The Events section of the website: yorkritemaryland.org will contain specific information on activities and opportunities.

We hope to have plenty of participation from the State of Maryland Knights Templar. 100 years ago in 1923, over 10,000 Masons from around the country, took part in the Cornerstone laying of the memorial. This year we Marylanders, being some of the closest Masons in the nation, should show up in large numbers to represent Freemasonry.

Most Eminent Grand Master of The Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America, David Kussman and his officers will be on hand to celebrate and participate in the occasion. Let's give him a great turn out.

Wishing you all a very successful and Happy 2023.

In His Service
John H. Austin
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Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Maryland



Knights getting ready for the Baltimore Mayor's Parade in early December.



Christmas Observances around the State of Maryland



