



## Grand Commander



**Elbert L. "Sparkie" Travis**

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### **We Need Your Help!**

Please send event news from your local commanderies to us for inclusion in the State News!

- ✘ Submissions must be received by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the upcoming edition. Submissions may be altered to fit.
- ✘ Please send emails with subject line "KT State News" to the editor.

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## Grand Commander's Message

Greetings Sir Knights,

I hope this finds you well and happy. Our Lord was most gracious this year to allow the Grand Commandery of N.C. to do the Christmas program for the children at our home in Oxford. It was well attended. I wish to personally thank all the Knight Templars who were there to participate in this event.



*Children at MHCO enjoying the luncheon*

The children had a great time at their luncheon on Saturday December 10 and got to spend time with ol' St. Nick himself. They had a great luncheon prepared, which was enjoyed by all. I get a little emotional every time I get around "our" kids.



*Star Wars characters are a hit!*

They are so well behaved, and well mannered. It does the heart good just to know that we are the ones responsible for their wellbeing and happiness.

Next year we will be celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our home. Let's do all we can this year in our fundraisers to make it a memorable year for them. God has been watching over them and keeping them safe, the least we can do is to make sure they are provided for.

Great news, the Grand Commandery of N.C. has been asked to do the Christ-

mas program once again for them next December 9<sup>th</sup>. I'll be working closely with Kevin on a special 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary program. Please keep this date in mind and please try to not only attend, but also be a part of it.

Remember, these are our children, let's do all we can to make sure they know the meaning of love, and that we Masons care about them. In the words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:

*"Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God."*

### **Mark 10:14**

I'll leave you with this since our children refer to us as "Daddy Masons". This verse comes from the Old Testament:

*"Children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers."*

### **Proverbs 17:4**

Thank you, Jesus.

Fraternally in Christ,

Sparkie Travis  
Grand Commander

## From the Editor

Greetings, Sir Knights,

Happy New Year! Hopefully you have all had an enjoyable holiday season and you're now ready to kick off 2023 in your local bodies. January is typically a slow month, which means fewer distractions and also opportunities to plan the year ahead with your new officers.

A lot of this work is unfortunately often heaved upon the already-too-full shoulders of the secretaries to communicate and coordinate with everyone while also keeping up with the minutes, books, and every other task dropped on their desks. This is work that needs to be shared by all of the dais officers in all three bodies. That's ten strong shoulders to carry the

burden instead of just one!

With that, here are some points to ponder for the ensuing year:

New presiding officers, specifically the newly elected High Priest, Illustrious Master, and Commander, should take the time, seize this opportunity, and meet with their supporting dais officers to lay out goals, events, and meetings for the year. Take this time to coordinate, communicate, and delegate with your supporting officers, to plan out what you need to accomplish this year. Make sure everyone knows what their roles are and how to achieve this year's goals. Don't forget to include your new members, too - everyone has a part to play.

Supporting dais officers, especially the newly elected King, Deputy Master, and Generalissimo, need to be intimately involved in these plans. Next year, it will be your turn and you will be in charge of these for your term of office. Remember, you are also responsible for presiding over your respective Chapter, Council, or Commandery when the High Priest, Illustrious Master, or Commander is unavailable. This is where a unified plan is so important. This is also why it is important for you to know how to open your respective bodies in proper form, giving our Rites the dignity and respect they deserve.

For 2023, take the time to plan out what you intend to accomplish – fundraisers, public events, as well as meeting nights. For fundraisers, public events, degree work/festivals, and Christmas Observances, remember that even though these are typically recurring every year, not everyone knows the plan, especially your new members who are most likely chomping at the bit to get involved. Get them involved and have a plan in place that you can communicate to everyone, so they know what to do (and who's doing it) and when to get it done. Now is the best time to ensure coverage for all degree parts and get it on everyone's calendar so no one forgets or over-commits to other roles. Spread the work out instead of only having the same overworked veteran members shouldering all of the heavy lifting.

For meeting nights, give your members something to look forward to: dinner, special presentations, anything to incentivize them to come out and participate. Again, this take planning so speakers can be invited on days they are not already booked, and notices can be sent out detailing what members can expect for the

upcoming meeting. It's all about communication, coordination, and cooperation. I'm a project manager in my "usual avocations," and I always remind people that "plan" is not a dirty 4-letter word!

Even though we are in the post-COVID era, I have personally seen and talked to many leaders across the state who have the same lamentation: that our members have "gotten out of the habit" of coming to lodge and participating in our appendant bodies. Let's give them a good reason to return and get involved!

Congratulations to all our newly elected officers in all our York Rite bodies across the state. I hope your year will be memorable and successful!

All the best for the New Year,

Larry Aydlett  
Editor, NC Knightly News

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### **The Last Templar** **(...of 2022 ...in NC)**

**North Wilkesboro** – Wilkes #40 is proud to welcome one last Sir Knight to wrap up a busy year up in North Wilkesboro. Frank Byrd was knighted on December 29.



*Newly knighted Frank Byrd with the Wilkes Commandery #40 degree team.*

Grand Standard Bearer Mark Alexander conferred the Order, and Grand Sword Bearer Sam Henline served as Senior Warden.

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### **Grand Commandery Plans Trip to Easter** **Service in Alexandria, VA**

**Raleigh** – The Grand Commandery of NC is making plans for this year's Easter Sunrise Service in Alexandria, VA for the weekend of April 7-9, 2023. In the past, Sir Knights who wished to participate have driven up separately, booked their own lodging, and

met up with other travelers to do sightseeing, dinners, and other get-together activities. The idea this year is to have a central meeting and staging place at one hotel, where we can either stay one night or the whole weekend, meet up with others to go as a group for activities, and have a place to park and ride together.

Anyone who would like to book a room at a group discount, we are planning on staying at the Holiday Inn Alexandria at Carlyle, located at 2460 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA. The group code is **GTK** for rooms at \$129/night and can be reserved at the following website:

[www.holidayinn.com/carlyleva](http://www.holidayinn.com/carlyleva)

Book soon in case rooms run out and we'll see you there! Also, please remember that even if you choose to only stay for a day and not the weekend, or to stay elsewhere, this can serve as a central meeting point to coordinate group activities throughout the weekend.

### **New NC Tactics Manual Available in Electronic Format for Commanderies**

**Raleigh** – SK Mark Alexander, the Chief Instructor-Inspector of the Grand Commandery of NC is making the new Tactics Manual available to all Sir Knights to download and print. The new manual was approved at the 2022 Grand Conclave.

SK Alexander says, “At every Commandery where I have taught a School of the Knight this Fall multiple attendees inquired from me about how to acquire this booklet. I am now sending the file so local Commanderies can print copies to fit their demand. I recommend 15 copies per Commandery. I printed the books that I used for my Schools of the Knight at Staples for an estimated \$150. It is my hope that Commanderies will use this booklet to educate their Sir Knights in the proper formalities of our order.”

SK Mark further requests that District Instructors please make sure that each subordinate Commandery in their District ensures that local Secretaries have received this file so they can order their own copies and to send to their local members on request to print individually if desired.

### **Charlotte Commandery #2 Participates in Wreaths Across America**

**Charlotte** – On December 17, 2022, the Companions and Sir Knights of Charlotte #2 gathered together

outside the Sylvan Abbey Mausoleum at Forest Lawn East Memorial Park to participate on the annual Wreaths Across America event.



*Sir Knights and family gathered to place wreaths on veterans' graves on December 17 (photo courtesy of Judy Trest)*

The event was sponsored by the national organization (<https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org>) which coordinated events at over 3,700 locations with 28,000 volunteers placing 2.7 million wreaths on the headstones of our fallen soldiers and veterans across the country in this year's nationwide event, according to the follow-up news article on their website.

### **Plantagenet Commandery #1 Participates in Wilmington Christmas Parade**

**Wilmington** – On December 11, 2022, Plantagenet Commandery # 1 led the 2022 Wilmington NC Christmas Parade, carrying our National Ensign and Commandery Banners.



*Plantagenet Commandery #2 and Demolay members marched in the Wilmington Parade*

Sir Knights participating were Mid-Atlantic Department Commander & PGC James Steele, PGC

Ludwik Wodka, Past Commander & Past District Commander Douglas Collins, Treasurer Patrick Terry, Generalissimo James Franklin, Captain General Binh Nguyen, Prelate & PMIGM Isaac Eddins, and Demolay Briely Nguyen.

All had a great Time greeting our neighbors, spreading Christmas Joy, and Representing the Knights Templar.

**Raleigh #4 Hosts Christmas Observance, Officers Installation, and Awards**

**Raleigh** – On December 10, 2022, Raleigh Commandery #4 held its annual Templar Observance at the J.J. Crowder #745 Masonic Temple. Eminent Commander Calvin Rogers welcomed the guests and introduced Ms. Heather Hills who delivered a beautiful performance of traditional Christmas music on a harp. The traditional toasts and Christmas message were delivered by Dr. Donald B. Street.



Ms. Heather Hills delivered a beautiful performance of traditional Christmas harp music.



Awards were presented to PGHP Will Chriscoe, PGIM Jeffrey York, and PGC Ludwik Wodka for their service as Grand York Rite officers.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, recognition awards were presented to PGHP Will Chriscoe, PGIM Jeffrey York, and PGC Ludwik Wodka for their service as presiding Grand York Rite officers for 2021-2022. The evening concluded with the installation of officers for the ensuing year. The new

presiding officers in the Raleigh bodies are High Priest for Raleigh Chapter #10 Calvin Rogers, Illustrious Master of Enoch Council #5 Matt Parker, and Commander of Raleigh Commandery #4 Charles Talley. The event was well attended and enjoyed by all.

*This article was contributed by PGC Ludwik Wodka*

**Mt. Lebanon #7 Hosts Christmas Observance**

**Wilson** – Mount Lebanon Commandery #7 held their Knight Templar Christmas Observance at the Wilson Masonic Temple on Monday, December 12. Eminent Commander Andrew Horton presided and led the ceremonies.



Sir Knights of Mt. Lebanon Commandery #7 with PGC Ludwik Wodka

Visitors included PGHP Tom Jackson, PGHP and Ray Casey, Grand Junior Warden of the Grand Commandery, who came in from Goldsboro. PGC Ludwik Wodka from the Raleigh and Durham bodies also attended. Finally, Past Grand Master Billy Dill Knights gathered around the triangle for the traditional toasts, led by Commander Andrew Horton.

The event concluded with refreshments and fellowship. Congratulations to the Sir Knights of Mount Lebanon for upholding this tradition!

*This article was contributed by PGC Ludwik Wodka*

**Important Reminders:**

**January 17:** Cyrene #5 hosting the District School of the Knight, 7:00PM at the Asheville Masonic Temple.

### Pictures from Christmas Observances Across North Carolina



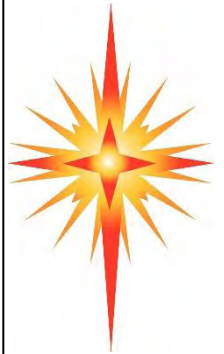
PGC Mike Daniels was the guest speaker at Asheville's Christmas Observance



Members and families gather for Charlotte's Christmas Observance on December 18 (photo courtesy of Judy Trest)



Officers and Sir Knights of Charlotte #2 Toasting the Season (photo courtesy of Judy Trest)



Durham #3 is the only Cap-and-Mantle Commandery in NC; their Christmas Observance was held on December 1 at University Lodge in Chapel Hill



Officers and Sir Knights of Ivanhoe #8 perform the traditional toasts at the Greensboro Masonic Temple, December 7

Member of the Page High School choir in Greensboro joined Ivanhoe #8 to sing Christmas carols





Grand Prelate Alex Ellis delivered the Christmas message on behalf of the North Carolina Grand Commandery in the beautiful York Rite Chapel on the campus of the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford



SK Rev. Mark Stephens, Prelate at Durham Commandery #3 delivers this year's Christmas Message



Looks like Wilkes Commandery #40 has gone to the dogs! Good boy, Sir Knight! Good boy, indeed!

The rest of Wilkes Commandery #40 are also good boys!



Families and guests of Durham #3 enjoy homemade refreshments after the Christmas Observance

