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JULY 2023 NEWS

Greetings Sir Knights

The month of June 2023 is not likely to leave my memory- Ever.

I have spent the past few months engaged in my son Patrick's health issues. On June 10<sup>th</sup> he drew his last breath. This past weekend his family and I said our goodbyes with a Celebration of life attended by many.

Some of you reading this are aware of the struggles my son was engaged in, some will know it has been years in the coming, others know that in February a catastrophic health event put his life in jeopardy and doctors in his town of residence, York Pennsylvania, heroically saved him so he could pursue further measures to extend his time with us. We had prayed and prayed and hoped for different outcome. Alas however, it was not to be. Several more stays in the hospital under the care of devoted and skilled Nurses and Doctors with procedures that were painful to observe and courageous of him to endure, resulted in ongoing chances for him.

During this time a great number of people engaged with us in communal prayer. This was powerful and welcome beyond description. Patrick knew you were out there, and I believe it lent him strength. It certainly gave me the belief that if God was listening, there were plenty of Sir Knights, Masons and their ladies offering up their devotions on behalf of my son, myself, my family. I thank you now for that effort and for the many cards, calls and emails of support and of grief following the announcement of his passing.

For those of you still reading, I have a connected message here to convey as we celebrate our country's annual Patriotic remembrance of the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. This is July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. What does that mean to us and what connection might I draw to the loss of a son.

Here is what I have been thinking about this morning- But for providence and fate, my son Patrick could have perished years ago. After the tragedy of 9/11/2001 many young men were

inspired to enter the armed forces in a belief that an identifiable foreign government had crossed a line and attacked the sovereign soil of the United States of America, and that it was their Patriotic Duty. My son was similarly moved. We had discussions on his thoughts about serving his country. I was telling one of his young cousins this past weekend about that time and those philosophical discussions. It was my view at the time of the attack that we did not know enough about it to launch a proper response. To whom or what would we be responding?

I urged my son to hold off, read, listen, research, allow investigations to be pursued and to follow his instincts only after due regard for the Truth. He did so. He stayed out of the fray. He survived to marry a wonderful woman who is his wife and sire two beautiful children which he now has regrettably left.

Some of you may think I was ill advised to attempt to dissuade my son, you may wonder why I put this here now. Personally, I think that the results of the actions following the attacks on this country and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the politics surrounding these issues speak for themselves.

This column is not about that longest war of our nation's history. But about the war that began this nation. There have been several wars that have united this country, that have changed and protected the entire world and made this country a shining light, a beacon to individuals now and through the centuries since the inception of the Greatest plan ever devised for human co-habitation. A Republic run by Democratic methods of governing in which each individual has rights and cannot be subjugated into work on behalf of the Government but rather is responsible to help the government work for us.

A look back at those individuals that signed the Declaration of Independence and had the vision which lasts through to today will show, not a ragtag group of fighters or complainants, but rather a gathering of intelligent and forward-thinking men of wealth and prosperity. Being such, they wanted to be heard by a Monarch that was out of reach and using the Colonies as a pocketbook to enrich his people in an Island country weeks away by ship. They were willing to, and did, put their own lives and holdings in jeopardy by acting on behalf of a population on this soil, not always agreeable to, or knowledgeable of the tactics that would be employed. In forming a new nation in defiance of a potentate, none were safe from retribution.

Most of my readers will know the name Paul Harvey. Paul was a journalist and radio/television pioneer and spent many hours explaining history and where we come from. One of his brief messages contained the profound effects the uprising had upon the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Do yourselves a favor and tune in to listen to his 7-minute description of the fate of the 56 signers of the Declaration. These men pledged to one another- Their Lives, Fortunes, and Sacred Honor. God Bless America

In Knightly courtesy and In His Service

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