

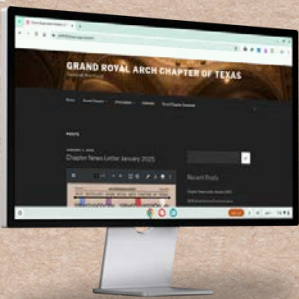
MOST EXCELLENT GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER OF TEXAS

THROUGH THE VEILS



LUBBOCK CHAPTER'S FULL-DRESS MARK MASTER DEGREE TEAM. MORE ON PAGE 5.

WELCOME TO "THROUGH THE VEILS" MONTHLY NEWSLETTER!



Don't forget to frequently check the Grand Chapter's [Website!](#) Content such as newsletter editions, updates, decisions, & more are uploaded by our very quick & talented webmasters!

Greetings Companions! I want to know your thoughts on this newsletter. It is FOR you, BY you! If you will, please answer this three question survey using this QR Code. You can [click here](#), click the code, or scan the code.



CONTACT / SUBMISSIONS



Companion
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MOST EXCELLENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Companions,

As we move through another month, I want to take a moment to emphasize the importance of staying active and engaged within our York Rite community. Our fraternity is not just about the degrees we have received; it is about the bonds we build and the collective knowledge we share. By actively participating in our meetings, events, and activities, we can fully embrace these teachings and support one another in our growth.

Each degree we receive is not just a ritual, but a lesson that guides us in our personal and moral development. Whether it's attending a Chapter meeting, participating in a Council assembly, or joining in on a Commandery event, your involvement makes a difference.

I am pleased to report that our recent "Convivium" in Beaumont was an incredible success, demonstrating the enduring strength of our fellowship and commitment to one another. The positive energy and meaningful discussions shared during this gathering set a powerful precedent for the future, and we are now looking ahead to upcoming Conviviums in Turkey in March, Tyler in May, and Fort Worth in September. More Conviviums are being arranged so stay tuned! The example set in Beaumont, with approximately 70 Companions in attendance at the events throughout the weekend, will undoubtedly help ensure these future gatherings are just as successful, fostering even greater unity and participation among us all.

As we continue to grow as a fraternity, both in numbers and morale, let us always remember the importance of unity and fellowship. These values are the bedrock of our shared mission, and it is through our collective efforts that we achieve the greatness we seek. Together, we are building something lasting, and every step we take in this journey strengthens the bond that ties us all together.

In closing, I wish to extend my deepest gratitude to the Grand Officers and to each Companion who contribute to our collective success, and to those who continue to support our missions with unwavering dedication. Your participation is invaluable, and it is because of your commitment that we are able to advance our mission with such strength and unity.

Thank you all for your high support, and I look forward to what lies ahead.

Don Paul Payton
Grand High Priest





FROM THE GRAND ORATOR'S SCROLL

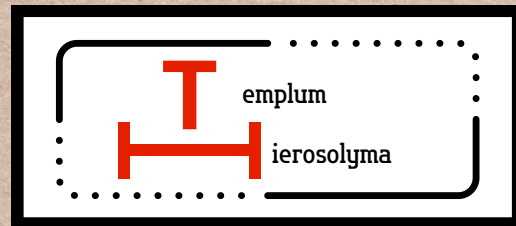
"I AM THAT I AM" is what God told Moses at the Burning Bush. Moses had just received instructions to go back to Egypt to rescue the Israelites from Pharaoh. He followed up with another sentence for further instruction: "I AM hath sent me unto you." God communicated his name, I AM, to Moses with specific instructions. Isn't it amazing that the Creator would do something like this? He gave divine authority to Moses to do His will. Yet, it was also reassurance to Moses at the same time and gave him the strength to continue his journey. May we all find the strength through God to do His will in all that we do.

GRAND HIGH PRIEST'S FUND



The Grand High Priest's Fund Jewels were commissioned for Capitular Masons in Texas and elsewhere to support the effort of the "No Mason Left Behind" program. By donating **\$150.00** (plus an online fee and shipping) to this program, you will receive a jewel in a beautiful red presentation case. The jewels can be purchased [online](#) and shipped to you! To date, we have raised over \$13,000 from this single project!

ROYAL ARCH RESEARCH



TRIPLE TAU TALK

We are familiar in knowing that Tau is a Greek letter. Christians might even identify the Tau Cross as being aligned with the Franciscan Order. But, where does the Triple Tau come from in Capitular Masonry and why is it so commonly seen?

One explanation is that the three Taus come together in different rotations to form a representation to the attributes of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience. Another triple reference is to the Holy Trinity. The triples go one and on, as Masons identify well with the number three. Yet, in a different view outside symbolic numerology, one can view the Roman letter T above an oblong Roman letter H. According to a [published](#) research paper, the letters T & H stand for *Templum Hierosolyma*, which is Latin for "Temple of Jerusalem."

Capitular Masons are taught in all four degrees about the Temple of Jerusalem. Its purpose, construction, decoration, traditions, destruction, exploration, etc are all mentioned. The temple is the one common topic and setting in all four degrees. Seeing the emblem we all wear in the form of an initialism poses an interesting view of something truly being hidden in plain sight.

PARTICIPATION GIFT

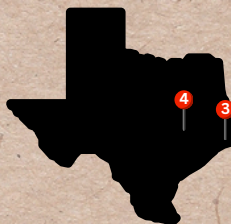
For attending any of the Conviviums, you will be gifted a special keepsake from the hands of the Grand High Priest himself!



DISTRICT BREAKDOWN

DISTRICT 3

- Beaumont
- Rio Vista
- Port Neches
- Southeast Texas



DISTRICT 4

- Jerusalem
- Brenham
- San Jacinto
- Zerubbabel
- W. T. Austin
- Wes Irvine



UPCOMING CONVIVIUMS

REGIONAL WEEKENDS FOR UNITED FELLOWSHIP & QUARRY WORK!

WEST TEXAS
YORK RITE
CONVIVIUM

TURKEY, TEX

March 28 & 29, 2025
"THE ROUND-UP"

Come join us for a two-day Convivium in quite possibly the most "Texas Town" - Turkey, TX! Headquartered at Hotel Turkey, we will celebrate in the home region of our Grand High Priest with an evening of Companionship together, with likely some "Bob Wills Music." The following day (March 29), we will join the quarry work of Floydada Chapter and Council at their lodge 45 minutes southwest, with registration opening at 8am. For further inquiries, please contact the event coordinator, Chris Bates at (806) 300-2870.

MARCH 28 - 29

Friday night, the 28th, we will assemble at Hotel Turkey for fellowship in the most western town in Texas! You can make a hotel reservation [here!](#)

On Saturday, we will assist in a festival hosted by Floydada. You can sign-up and register [here!](#)

MAY 9-10

Friday Night, we will assemble at "Country Tavern" in Kilgore, TX for an authentic Texas BBQ meal! On Saturday, we will assist in a festival hosted by the Companions in Tyler, TX. Registration for the festival will open at 8am with the degrees following soon after.

EAST TEXAS
YORK RITE
CONVIVIUM

TYLER, TEX

May 9 & 10, 2025
"THE MIDTERM"

Come join us for a two-day Convivium in the Piney Woods. We will gather Friday evening (May 9) at "The Country Tavern" in Kilgore, TX. The next day (May 10), we will join the East Texas Companions in Tyler, just 30 minutes west, for their annual festival with registration opening at 8am. For further inquiries, please contact the event coordinator, Richard Gaiser at (903) 571-3841.

TEXAS SHEKELS

- ONLINE ORDERING AVAILABLE -



Online purchases for the Texas Shekels are now available! [CLICK HERE](#) or scan/click the QR code to order. Minimum quantity for online purchases are five shekels and prices are automatically calculated for you based on quantity. This is a great way for Companions, Chapters, and districts to order in bulk. These custom brazen shekels bear the seal of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas, with an ornate keystone suitable for engraving on the reverse. Don't wait!



COUNTERPART CORNER



Congratulations to Most Worshipful Raborn L. Reader on his election and installation as the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Texas!

COMMITTEE COLUMN

- GET TO KNOW YOUR COMMITTEES -



FINANCE

This Committee has many duties. The most known task is auditing the books, accounts, and reports of the Grand Treasurer and the Grand Secretary, approve their bonds if found satisfactory, and "count the money in their hands." Their annual report shall be submitted on the last day of the Grand Convocation and shall show the condition of all accounts and funds; the collections and indebtedness from the Chapters of Texas, and a budget covering appropriations for the ensuing year. Likewise at each Grand Convocation, the Committee shall audit the report and calculate the fees for services as well as the expenses of the Committee on Work. The Committee on Finance may, with the approval of the Grand High Priest, employ a competent CPA to audit the books and accounts of the Grand Trustees. This termed committee has five seats with one that rolls off every year. The Chairman now is V. E. Joe Schriever, Past Grand High Priest.

DRESSING UP DEGREES

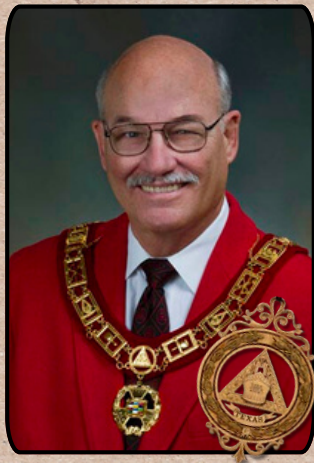


(Continued from cover)

Lubbock Chapter No. 248 performed the honorary degree of Mark Masters on five worthy candidates in full costume on January 25! Comp. Jeremy Hogan conferred it with a fully staffed degree team with an impeccable memorized performance. What a unique spin for degrees!

“ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE; TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH.”

- HELEN KELLER -



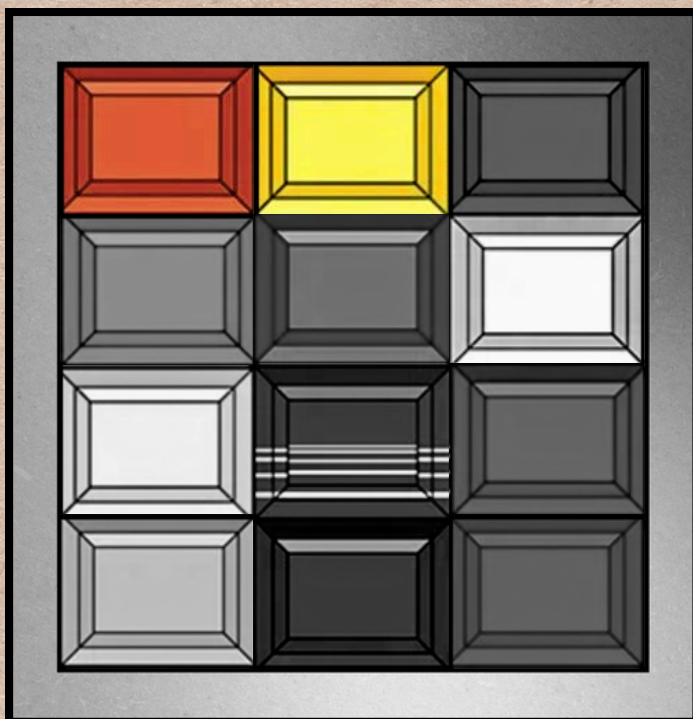
PRESERVING OUR PASTS

V.: E.: DOUGLAS COLLINS, PGHP

Douglas Collins (1944 - 2018) served as the **157th** Most Excellent Grand High Priest of Texas in 2009. Doug served in the United States Air Force and later was employed in the Brownwood Police Department before transferring to Dallas. As a kid, his interests in Boy Scouts and DeMolay launched his Masonic career where he was raised in East Dallas Lodge No. 1200 in 1982. The same year, he was exalted in Dallas Chapter No. 47. He served 12 years as the Excellent Grand Photographer where he was passionate about promoting newsletters and capturing memories. V.: E.: Collins coined the name *"Through The Veils"* years ago. This newsletter has been resurrected in his memory and in remembrance to his life of service to others.

EXPLORING EXODUS IDENTIFYING THE TWELVE STONES

In the Book of Exodus, we are introduced to Aaron's Breastplate, which is also known as the Breastplate of Judgement. Aaron wore this breastplate which had twelve stones on it representing the twelve tribes of Israel. It was meant to remind him of his obligations not only to God, but also to the people. This breastplate is the symbol used for Past High Priests, and it bears 12 precious stones that are not explained esoterically. Nearly every translation is different and some stones have since been renamed. The **Masonic Heirloom Bible** will be the version used for the remainder of this segment!



TOPAZ

Topaz is the second stone of the first row of the Breastplate and comes from the Greek name *Τοπάζιον* (Topázios). This was the ancient name of Zabargad Island, located in the Red Sea, where various other minerals were mined. Alternatively, the word topaz may be related to the Sanskrit word *tapas*, meaning "heat" or "fire." When the Sun's rays shine through the translucent rock, the shimmer can mistakenly viewed as sparks or embers from a distance.

AN EYE ON AI



With the rising cultural influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), this artistic digital image was generated after entering certain keywords in order to form a visualization of our ancient craft. The words used were:

- Ancient**
- Three Workman**
- Red Material**
- Israel**
- Pickaxes**
- Engraved Golden Box**
- Desert**
- Ruins**
- Discovery**
- Archeology**

The generated AI caption of the photo reads, "Three ancient workmen wearing red garments and carrying pickaxes walk away from temple ruins after finding an inscribed golden box in the desert."

GRAND PHOTOGRAPHER'S PORTFOLIO

- "KICK-OFF" CONVIVIUM PHOTOS COURTESY FROM I.: TYLER ROWE -



Texas Grand Chapter
Photo Gallery



TEXAS MASONIC RETIREMENT COMMUNITY UPDATES!



Live the Good Life at Texas Masonic Retirement Community

Enjoy breakfast, lunch, and dinner with friends! Play dominoes, cards, or other games with the gang! Join the bunch to watch the Cowboys, Rangers, or your favorite team!

You deserve a good life with like-minded friends at Texas Masonic Retirement Community. NO DEPOSIT! Choose from our luxury high-rise apartments, convenient efficiency units, or cottage duplexes. Enjoy all meals with friends, weekly housekeeping, onsite security, and lots of activities. [Watch a video tour](#) or schedule a personal tour by contacting us at 817-275-2893 or Info@YourTMRC.org. We look forward to hearing from you!



UPCOMING GHP TRAVELS



FEBRUARY

5 // Official Visit to Tarrant Chapter w/ Degrees (Richland Hills, TX)

21-22 // Annual Central & South Texas York Rite Festival (San Antonio, TX)

MARCH

28 // West Texas Convivium (Turkey, TX)

29 // Floydada Festival (Floydada, TX)



EDITOR'S NOTE

COMPANION MICHAEL COTE II
ASSISTANT STATE COORDINATOR & E.: GRAND ORGANIST

Companions,

Your praises over the last month have been so inspiring, to which I am very humbled and grateful. The 2025 team is filled with talented and united Companions who are here to showcase the fellowship of the vibrant Texas York Rite. In particular, I wish to thank Excellent Companions Chapman, Winch, & Perrin for their contributions to the publication!

You will find on Page 1 a QR code and a [link](#). These will take you to an anonymous three question questionnaire on how this newsletter can better you and your fellow Companions. I urge you to help me by telling me your thoughts. Progress and advancement can not happen alone without the input of one's peers. **This newsletter is for you!**

