

The Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas
Office of the Grand Commander
Amarillo, Texas
June 19, 2020

GENERAL ORDER NO. 1, SERIES 2020-2021

Subject: District Appointments, District Conclaves, Schools of Instruction, Annual Visitation, Blanket Dispensations, Grand Commandery Committee Meetings, Drill and Ritual Competition and the Annual Grand Conclave.

To: The Grand Officers, Past Grand Commanders, Officers and Members of the Constituent Commanderies of Texas.

Greetings, Sir Knights:

In accordance with the provisions of the Statutes and Regulations of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas, the following conditions will be observed during the 2020-2021 Templar year. **These conditions are subject to change contingent on the state of the COVID pandemic and its effects on public safety.**

TEMPLAR DISTRICTS:

In order to better facilitate annual visitations, in accordance with Article 108, of the Statues and Regulations of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas, the Templar Districts in Texas shall be reassigned as follows:

DISTRICT 1	DISTRICT 2	DISTRICT 3	DISTRICT 4
Dallas #6	Palestine #3	San Felipe de Austin #1	San Antonio #7
Indivisible Friends #13	Bertrand de Guesclin #14	Ruthven #2	Brownwood #22
DeMolay #20	Ascension #25	Beaumont #38	San Marcos #56
McKinney #32	Piney Woods #88	Kenedy #61	Corpus Christi #57
Tancred #82	East Texas #104	Port Arthur #73	Hidalgo #94
A.C. Garrett #103	SouthEast Texas #112	Fort Bend #74	St. John #101
Terrell #115		Houston #95	
		Park Place #106	
		Melrose #109	
DISTRICT 5	DISTRICT 6	DISTRICT 7	DISTRICT 8
Colorado #4	Cleburne #12	El Paso #18	Vernon #33
Ivanhoe #8	Worth #19	San Angelo #28	Amarillo #48
Waco #10	Denton #45	Llano #54	High Plains #53
Brenham #15	Weatherford #51	Stamford #75	Wichita Falls #59
Temple #41	Southside #83	Midland #84	Lubbock# 60
Lone Star #114	Stephenville #100	Burnet #113	Borger #96
Mexia UD #116	Arlington #107		
DISTRICT 9			
Texas Holding UD #200			

DISTRICT APPOINTMENTS:

I am proud to present the following Grand Officers, who will serve as the Personal Representatives of the Grand Commander in the following Districts:

District No. 1: Jason L. Lesikar, Eminent Grand Junior Warden
District No. 2: Tommy F. Chapman, Eminent Grand Sentinel
District No. 3: Ricky D. Cox, Eminent Grand Warder
District No. 4: T. Chance Chapman, Eminent Grand Captain General
District No. 5: Justin C. Bauer, Eminent Grand Senior Warden
District No. 6: Richard R. Jernigan, Eminent Grand Generalissimo
District No. 7: Gary E. Rock, Eminent Grand Standard Bearer
District No. 8: Ralph Royall, Eminent Grand Sword Bearer
District No. 9: Ronnie W. Wilson, Very Eminent Deputy Grand Commander

***COVID-19 NOTE:**

Until such time that the Grand Master of the Grand Encampment supersedes his edict as outlined in General Order #12, stating that in-person meetings of all commanderies are prohibited until further notice, and concurred with by the Grand Commander, District Conclaves and Schools of Instruction, as well as Annual Inspections and Official Visitations shall be allowed only in an online or telephonic format, if practicable. This may be accomplished by using any available means of teleconferencing, such as Skype, GoToMeeting, Zoom, etc., or simply by Conference Call if no other option is feasible.

General Order #12 also prohibits the performance of ritual or conferral of Orders during any such telephonic or webcast Conclave. Upon the rescinding or superseding of the Grand Master's edict, and with the concurrence of the Grand Commander, District Conclaves, Schools of Instruction, and Annual Inspections and Visitations may be held in-person, provided such gatherings are not prohibited by any law, regulation or edict, and that current social distancing guidelines and safety procedures are strictly adhered to. The wearing of face masks or other appropriate coverings is highly encouraged, and while contrary to our usual customs of fellowship, that acts of hand-shaking, hugging, and other close-contact social decorum are not condoned and highly discouraged until such time as they are once again deemed safe by reputable public health authorities, and affirmed by Grand Encampment and the Grand Commander.

DISTRICT CONCLAVES AND SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION:

The District Schools of Instruction will be held during the months of June, July, and August, 2020, on a date and time agreed upon by the Grand Officer assigned to the District and the host Commandery. The Grand Officers are to be respectful of Blue Lodge and Eastern Star installations when setting a date and time for the School. A formal or informal District Conclave should be held to discuss any upcoming events in the District, and to disseminate the most current information on our operations during pandemic restrictions. ***As per the COVID-19 NOTE, while no ritual may be performed or orders conferred during a telephonic or webcast meeting, it is appropriate to discuss grading, and to answer any questions regarding inspections.**

The Grand Officer assigned to the District will notify the Commander and the Recorder of each Commandery in the District of the format, time and place of the School. Each Commandery, in the announcement of the School, will be reminded of **Article 113 of the Statutes and Regulations** that reads: ***“At such Schools of Instruction it shall be the duty of all the officers of each Commandery situated in such District to attend at the time and place designated, and to participate in the work of such School.”***

ANNUAL INSPECTION AND OFFICIAL VISITATION:

***Annual Inspections and Visitations are subject to the restrictions outlined in the COVID-19 NOTE above. In the event that these restrictions have not been rescinded or relaxed by the time Inspections and Visitations are due, while performance of the ritual and orders will not be allowed, it is expected that all constituent commanderies be prepared to provide the Inspecting Officer with the means to review all books and financials as required by Grand Commandery law, and to provide the required forms and audits to the appropriate Grand Commandery officers in a timely manner following such visitation.**

The District Grand Officers will schedule the dates of the Official Visitations to be made in September, October, and November of 2020. Commanderies are reminded that our **Statutes and Regulations require them**, as a condition of being a Commandery, not only to be able to **Open and Close the Commandery in full ritualistic form or the alternate nine man opening ritual as adopted at the 165th Annual Grand Conclave (April 28th, 2014)**, but also to confer the Order of the Temple in accordance with the **1979 Ritual of The Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America, as amended by Knight Templar Drill Regulations and Manual of Asylum Ceremonies of The Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas (1987)**. Although authorized by **Article 110 of the Statutes and Regulations**, while inspections may be held in the same location on the same day, joint conclaves for the purpose of inspection will not be permitted, as each commandery is required to perform its own inspection.

All Commanderies are subject to the following regulations. No penalty points will be assessed at this year’s Annual Inspection.

Bonus points will be awarded as follows:

Opening and Closing:

- By Statute, currently only those commanderies in a district who perform the Full Form (18 man) Opening during inspection are eligible to compete for the J.C. Kidd Plaque, excepting if every commandery in a district performs the Alternate Nine Man Opening at their inspection, then every district commandery competes for the J.C. Kidd Plaque. In order to meet this requirement, **ALL 18 Sir Knights must be members of the inspected commandery, to be confirmed by the Inspecting Officer at roll call.**
- A Ten (10) point bonus will be awarded for each officer filling his installed station at the Annual Inspection of the commandery.
- Commanderies will receive a Fifty (50) point bonus if ALL installed officers are in attendance and filling their installed stations in the Opening and Closing Rituals.
- Commanderies performing the Full Form (18 man) Opening and Closing ritual will receive a Fifty (50) point bonus **only if ALL 18 Sir Knights are members of said Commandery.**

Order of the Temple:

- A Ten (**10**) point bonus will be awarded for each officer filling his installed station at the Annual Inspection of the commandery.
- Commanderies will receive a Fifty (**50**) point bonus if ALL installed officers are in attendance and filling their installed stations in the Order of the Temple.
- Commanderies will receive a Twenty (**20**) point bonus for having an actual candidate at the Annual Inspection of the Commandery.
- Any member of the Commandery being inspected may give the Remaining Attributes; however, if the installed Commander or Generalissimo of the Commandery being inspected gives the Remaining Attributes, a twenty (**20**) point bonus will be awarded.

At the next Stated Conclave following receipt of this General Order, each Commander shall read aloud or cause to be read aloud **Chapter 56, Article 344, 345, and 346 of the Statutes and Regulations**, regarding Merit Awards and Service Medals, and the Recorder shall note this event in the minutes.

Commanders are reminded that **Article 111 of the Statutes and Regulations** requires that the Commander of each Commandery “...*cause the members of his Commandery to be notified to attend the visitation of the Grand Officer. All Sir Knights are strongly encouraged to visit other Commanderies, especially during the Official Visitation of the Grand Officer.*”

SALUTE TO THE TEXAS FLAG:

Each Commandery shall give the Salute to the Texas Flag immediately following the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag at all stated and called Conclaves, as required in **Article 350 of the Statutes and Regulations**.

BLANKET DISPENSATIONS:

Where not prohibited by law, regulation or edict, and provided current social distancing and public safety guidelines are strictly adhered to, a Blanket Dispensation is granted for Sir Knights to appear in public in uniform at:

I. Community events such as parades, dedications, leveling cornerstones, and ceremonies in connection with Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Veterans Day and any dignified public function where Templar Masonry will be promoted.

II. Church services as a Commandery.

III. Flag presentation ceremonies for any Masonic-related organization or for public events to promote Masonry, the Eye Foundation, the Holy Land Pilgrimage, or the Educational Foundation.

168TH ANNUAL CONCLAVE:

Assuming that the COVID-19 pandemic is contained and all restrictions have been lifted, the 168th Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas will be held in Amarillo, Texas, April 15 - 18, 2021, at the Amarillo-Downtown Embassy Suites. Information regarding the 168th Annual Conclave will be made available on our website.

Registration will open at Noon on Thursday, April 15, 2021, at the Embassy Suites. The business session of the Grand Commandery of Texas will be held on Friday, April 16, 2021, beginning at 8:30 am.

Field Drill Competition will be held across the street at the Amarillo Civic Center on the morning of Saturday, April 17, 2021, using the 2021 revised drill schedule for Class A, B, C, and D teams, which are available on the Grand Encampment website. Entries should be sent to the Chairman of the Field Drill Committee (see Bulletin #1) ahead of time; however, entries will be accepted for the competition up to the Drill Captains meeting time on Thursday, April 15, 2021.

Ritualistic Competition will be held on the afternoon of Saturday, April 17, 2021, in the Order of Malta. The parts for the competition will be: Prior, Chaplain, Marshal, 3rd Banner, 5th Banner, and candidate. The exact portion of the Order for competition will be presented and demonstrated to the Sir Knights by the Templar Instruction Committee on Thursday evening, April 15, 2021, following the committee meeting. Entries should be sent to the Chairman of the Templar Instruction Committee (See Bulletin #1) ahead of time; however, entries will be accepted for the competition up to the meeting time on Thursday, April 15, 2021.

The Annual Banquet will be held on the evening of Saturday, April 17, 2021. The Annual Conclave will conclude on Sunday, April 18, 2021, with the Divine/Memorial Service at 8:30 am, followed by the Installation of the 2021-2022 Grand Commandery officers.

COMMITTEES:

The Chairman of each Committee shall notify the Grand Officers of all meetings of their Committee as soon as they are scheduled, at least two weeks in advance. If possible, it is requested that any such meetings be held on a Saturday or Sunday, to facilitate the attendance of the Grand Officers at the Committee's meeting. Committees will submit their preliminary reports in writing to the Grand Recorder by March 1, 2021.

The address, telephone numbers and email address of the Grand Recorder are:

Jerry N. Kirby
445 Saguaro Dr.
Haslet, Texas 76052-1405
Home and Cell: (817) 517-3000
Office Phone: (682) 708-7735
Office Fax: (682) 708-7666
email: tx4star@gmail.com
email: tx3star@att.net

The address, telephone numbers and email address of the Grand Commander are:

Gary H. Freedman
8611 Tule Dr.
Amarillo, TX 79108-6936
Cell: (806) 584-1418
Email: gary.freedman@hotmail.com

This General Order is to be read aloud at the next Stated Conclave following its receipt, and the action noted by the Recorder in the minutes with a copy attached thereto.

Fraternally,

Gary H. Freedman

Gary H. Freedman
Grand Commander

Attest:

Jerry N. Kirby

Jerry N. Kirby
Grand Recorder

