



Grand Commandery of Virginia - Attention To Orders!¹



¹ When I was at West Point, each day we had unofficial communications from the leadership at meals that began with "Attention To Orders". I stole the title for this unofficial communications channel.



*From the Apartment of the Grand Commander –
August 2025*

Sir Knights,

Warm and fraternal greetings to each of you, wheresoever dispersed. Welcome to the fourth edition of our monthly communication from me to the Sir Knights of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar in Virginia. I pray that this message is finding each of you and your families and loved ones well and blessed.

This edition of our monthly newsletter marks the fact that a full quarter of the Chivalric Year is gone! That, frankly, amazes me. Then, of course, I have to reflect on Psalm 90:12 which reads “So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” It is wise for us to consider that days are fleeting, time spills away. We must, therefore, make the most of every day, serving God and our fellow man, because each day, once spent, is gone forever.

That said, I believe that we made the absolute most we could out of the month of July. We conducted our Official Visit of the 8th District where the Sir Knights there, led by their DDGC, SK Brandon Hale, conferred The Order of The Temple upon 5 new members of our Order. This was, as I have said before, a great Templar Day! I could not have been more proud of the regional team that shepherded these new SKs through the Orders of the Red Cross, Malta, and the Temple, all done in full form with the candidates gaining the benefit of understanding completely what their new Fraternity is all about. Well done my Fraters!

The next two weekends were dedicated to the DeMolay. We had 6 uniformed SKs present when the DeMolay conducted their honors

ceremony on August 20 at the Kena Shrine Building with two of our own receiving the Legion of Merit. Congratulations to SKs Dennis Haas and Scott Fielding, both REPGCs. Thank you once again to the SKs who came with me to support this youth group with our presence and formed an honor guard with an Arch of Steel for all of the honorees. The next weekend, I went to Newport News to support the DeMolay at their Annual Grand Conclave. I was privileged to participate in the panel that selected the State Representative DeMolay, I presented the Grand Encampment DeMolay of the Year Award, and I gave some brief words to the group on the final evening. I focused on encouraging the young men that they could be anything they wanted to be, to set their minds on excellence and head for the top. I was accompanied by our Grand Captain General with more than two tables of SKs and Ladies from the Virginia Beach Commandery as well as numerous other SKs and Ladies. Again, thank you!

I want to take a few minutes this month and speak about our charities. Remember, one of the Grand Characteristics of our Order is Universal Benevolence. Our primary means of contributing to the well-being of others is through our charities. The Knights Templar Eye Foundation (KTEF) seeks to improve vision through research, education, and supporting access to care. The Holy Land Pilgrimage (HLP) sends credentialed Christian Ministers on a Biblical study and historical/cultural immersion experience to enhance their ability to preach the Gospel. The Educational Foundation supports higher education through grants and scholarships. And finally, the Baldwin Brown Fellowship program supports our internal operations which, in turn, supports everything else that we do as Knights Templar.

To support these worthy causes, I have a few fund raisers going this year. The first is a follow on from previous years wherein Lady Luz is raffling off 4 funding awards. The Grand Master's Club (GMC) for the KTEF is awarded for a donation of \$1,000, and entitles the giver to a lapel pin, an engraved wall plaque, and the Crusader's Cross. The Knight of the HLP Medal is awarded upon a \$500 donation for that charity, worn on the left breast of

the Class A Templar Uniform. The Education Foundation provides recognition for \$400 donated to that charity with a wall plaque with your name engraved. Finally, the Baldwin Brown Fellowship Program awards a pin and a diamond for contributing \$300 to that fund. The pin is a Knights Templar Maltese Cross and Crown emblem surrounded by a black and white border with "Baldwin-Brown Fellow" above and "Virginia Knights Templar" below and is worn on your Malta Jewel.

The way the raffle will work is quite simple. For a donation of \$5 for one ticket or \$20 for 5, one is entered into the raffle for all 4 of these funding awards. The first ticket drawn will have a donation of \$1,000 to the KTEF, the second a donation of \$500 to the HLP, the third a donation of \$400 to the Education Foundation, and the fourth, a donation of \$300 to the Baldwin Brown Fellowship. I will hopefully have one of my grandkids conduct the drawing and film it for your viewing at the Grand Conclave...assuming cooperation from a two year old.

In addition to these, I purchased some really nice KTEF coins that I am selling for \$20 each, all proceeds going to the KTEF. However, I decided that I would add some fun to this one. My class from West Point commissioned Jacob Bromwell to custom make a class flask. We chose the "Vermont" model. Subsequently, I had Jacob Bromwell to create a separate flask of the same model in 24K gold. Finally, to have that flask really be something special, I had it embossed with our Knights Templar emblem, the Cross and Crown along with the words "Grand Commandery Knights Templar In Virginia" and the year "2025-2026". This is special made and there will not be another one like it, ever. Well, ok. I had two made, but one is mine 😊. So, there will only ever be two of them. I've donated the second one to Lady Luz who has decreed that every KTEF coin sold will also result in an entry to a raffle to win this flask. You may see the retail of the standard flask [here](#) at the Jacob Bromwell website, realizing of course that the one on offer is a special edition 24K gold model with the emblem of our Order and the Chivalric Year embossed thereon.

As I write this, I am reminded of the words of Christ when John's disciples asked if He was the One or were they to wait for another. Jesus told John's disciples to go back and tell him that, among other things, the blind see, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. We are unable to restore sight by miraculous power, but we can contribute to those who conduct research that leads to near miraculous restoration of sight. And not all of us will preach the Gospel, but we can be a part of equipping those who do. We can help those who are studying to be successful, and that's what I think Christ would have us to do.

Take note of the events in the month of August and you will see a mix of internal and external events. I want to call your attention to August the 8th, when I and a few other members of our staff will be privileged to present a grant on behalf of the KTEF to a very worthy researcher at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. This is a tremendous honor for us, and I'm extremely excited over it. One of our own from the Fredericksburg Commandery told me not long ago that his sister was born blind. If doctors had known what researchers today have found, he told me that her sight could have been saved. This, Sir Knights, is why we contribute to our charities and especially the KTEF.

Another important event is the Drill School and Competition in Norfolk. I can't wait to see the teams compete and demonstrate their competency in our drill and ceremony process. We are a uniformed Order for a reason, and there is something special when a unit conducts drill in such a way that their attention to detail, practice, and dedication comes through in every movement. As I mentioned earlier, we had the privilege of presenting an Honor Guard for the DeMolay in July. When we finished, quite a few people in attendance complimented our drill and more than one asked about becoming a member. Drill, done well, can be a recruiting tool just as powerful as any other. We should seek to do it well and often.

Finally, I keep mentioning our YouTube video. It has recorded 628 views, but 200 of those are mine. That means that some of you still haven't seen it ☹️. So, I'll mention again, our video introduced towards the end of our Grand Conclave, "Who Are The Knights Templar – Faithful To Our Vows". I commissioned this video to highlight who we are and what we do, with the underlying theme for the year, Faithful To Our Vows. We have it on our YouTube channel now and I encourage you to take a look. You can find it here: <https://youtu.be/pGB4PBXVJLY>. How about having our brothers from the Blue Lodge or Companions of the Royal Arch take a look as well? We just might encourage some of them to join our ranks. Few things would make me happier than having to ask our Awards Committee to order more membership awards. 😊 Let me know what you think.

Yours In Christian and Knightly Courtesy,

Bill



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Grand Commander 2025-2026

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Grand Commandery of Virginia 2025 - 2026 Leadership Team



From L to R:

SK William Jonathan Sirman, DDGC, District 1
SK Brian Dean Joos, DDGC, District 2
SK Timothy Anderson Dahlman, DDGC, District 3
SK Daniel James Carter, DDGC, District 4
SK William (Bill) Searcy, REGC
SK Eric Dale Swortzel, DDGC, District 5
SK Mark Ronald Day, DDGC, District 6
SK William Arthur Crosscup, V, DDGC, District 7
SK Joseph Brandon Hale, DDGC, District 8
SK Paul William Lockhart, DDGC, District 9

Proverbs 16:9 - A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.



UPCOMING EVENTS - August 2025

- 2 – Festival of Orders, Chesapeake
- 8 – KTEF Presentation, UVA
- 15 – Grand Line Officers Meeting Online
- 16 – Drill School and Competition, Norfolk
- 23 – Official Visit, District 5 (Order of the Red Cross)
- 30 – Wreath Laying, Portsmouth