

2026

AUGUST

The Virginia Knight

WWW.VATEMPLARS.ORG



IN THIS EDITION

From the Grand Commander's Apartment Page 4

MAHOVA Family Day Page 5

Grand Prelate's Message Page 6

Pen behind the Sword Page 7

Investing in the Future Page 8-9

No.4 at 200 Page 10

DeMolay 200th Address Page 11-12

From the Editors Page 13

Honorary DeMolay Event Page 14

VIRGINIA KNIGHT TEAM

Daniel J. Carter Editor-In-Chief

Michael T. Huff Publisher

CALLING ALL SIR KNIGHTS IN VIRGINIA!

Do you have pictures, articles, event recaps, or announcements to share?

The Virginia Knight is your platform to reach Sir Knights across the Commonwealth. Help us tell the story of Templary in Virginia by sharing the good work, fellowship, service, and events happening in your Commandery.

Submissions may include:

- Commandery events and activities
- Photos from meetings, receptions, and special programs
- Announcements and upcoming events
- Articles of interest to Sir Knights and their families
- Charitable work and community involvement

Please submit all images, articles, and announcements to Sir Knight Carter, Editor-in-Chief, no later than the 3rd Saturday of each month to be considered for the next month's edition of The Virginia Knight. Let us share your Commandery's story with the rest of Virginia.



GRAND OFFICERS

Michael T. Huff	<i>Grand Commander</i>
Kevin J. Harvey	<i>Dep. Grand Commander</i>
Jeffrey A. Paras	<i>Grand Generalissimo</i>
Jason C. Trenary	<i>Grand Captain General</i>
Joseph M. Matthews	<i>Grand Senior Warden</i>
Jonathan A. Giles	<i>Grand Junior Warden</i>
Rev. Richard E. Saunders	<i>Grand Prelate</i>
Jason L. Taliaferro	<i>Grand Treasurer</i>
Thomas L. Varner	<i>Dep. Grand Treasurer</i>
David R. Conner	<i>Grand Recorder</i>
John R. Rawls	<i>Dep. Grand Recorder</i>
Joseph B. Hale	<i>Dep. Grand Recorder</i>
Nelson C. Trinkle, Sr.	<i>Grand Recorder Emeritus</i>
Adam C. Duncan	<i>Grand Standard Bearer</i>
William A. Crosscup	<i>Grand Sword Bearer</i>
Ariel I. Alcantara	<i>Grand Warder</i>
Frederick R. Dixon	<i>Grand Sentinel</i>
Charles G. Steele, III	<i>Grand Instructor General</i>
Jason D. Matchett	<i>Dep. Grand Instructor General</i>
Raymon W. Bacchus	<i>Grand Inspector General</i>
Dewey C. David	<i>Grand Inspector General</i>
Peter E. Terrill	<i>Grand Marshal</i>
Scott R. Lambert	<i>Grand Armorer</i>
Jeffrey C. Hedges	<i>Grand Musician</i>
Joel T. Bundy, MD.	<i>Grand Physician</i>
Kenneth L. McInnis	<i>Grand Aides-de-Camp</i>
David M. Strohsahl	<i>Grand Aides-de-Camp</i>
Daniel J. Carter	<i>Grand Aides-de-Camp</i>

DISTRICT DEPUTIES

1 ... Clifford H. Gregory	4 ... Harold A. Chadsey	7 ... William A. Crosscup, V
2 ... Roger W. Taylor	5 ... Anthony L. Daniel	8 ... Joseph B. Hale
3 ... Richard E. Saunders	6 ... Mark R. Day	9 ... Charles R. Trude

THE APARTMENT OF THE GRAND COMMANDER

As we enter the month of August, we also begin the second quarter of our Chivalric year. Our first quarter has been strong. It has been filled with energy, enthusiasm, fellowship, and several special events that have reminded us what is possible when Sir Knights are engaged, visible, and working together.

That strong beginning is worth recognizing. Across this Grand Jurisdiction, Sir Knights have shown up. They have attended District Visitations, supported their fellow Commanderies, welcomed visiting officers, shared meals together, and renewed the bonds that make our Order more than a meeting on the calendar. That spirit matters. It strengthens our Commanderies, encourages our officers, and reminds every Sir Knight that he is part of something larger than himself. Now is the time to build on that momentum.



The goals before us this year are not beyond our reach, but they will not happen by accident. They require attention, communication, and deliberate effort. The best laid plans yield the best results, and it is never too early to have a plan.

Have you found your one Companion to bring into the Orders of Knighthood and earn your place in the Signet Vanguard? Have you begun discussing a schedule for conferring the Orders with your District Deputy Grand Commander and the Commanderies in your district? Are you helping your Commandery think ahead, prepare well, and move with purpose? If not, now is the time.

One of the most effective things we can do is simply visit one another. District Visitations are not just formal occasions. They are opportunities to learn, encourage, exchange ideas, and strengthen the bonds of Templary across Virginia. If your district has a visitation scheduled, make every effort to attend. Bring a Sir Knight with you. Bring a Companion who may be interested in the Orders. Show the host Commandery that their work matters and that they are not standing alone.

The same is true for Stated Conclaves and special events. Commanderies should be planning visits between one another throughout the year. Attend a neighboring Commandery's Stated Conclave. Invite another Commandery to yours. Coordinate attendance at inspections, festivals, observances, charity events, and programs. These visits do not need to be complicated. A few Sir Knights traveling together can make a tremendous difference.

Every visit builds friendship. Every conversation opens a door. Every shared meal strengthens the legacy we have inherited and the legacy we are called to pass on.

Communicate with your district team. Talk with your officers. Reach out to your District Deputy Grand Commander. Work together on schedules, degree work, visitations, and opportunities for fellowship. And please know that your Grand Officers stand ready to help in any way we can. Whether you need guidance, support, ideas, or assistance putting a plan together, we are here for you.

Let us now double our efforts, sharpen our focus, and continue building the legacy we share.


M. T. Huff
Grand Commander



SAVE THE DATE: 250 YEARS OF HERITAGE, ONE MASONIC FAMILY SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2026

Mark your calendars for Masonic Family Day 2026 at MAHOVA—Your Masonic Community on Saturday, October 3.

Family Day is MAHOVA's largest annual campus event, bringing together residents and their families, Masons from across Virginia, members of the wider Masonic family, community guests, vendors, and friends. With an even larger crowd expected this year, it promises to be a full day of fellowship, entertainment, history, and Masonic pride.

More importantly, Family Day gives us an opportunity to celebrate the people who call MAHOVA home and to support its continuing mission of providing exceptional living, care, and assistance to eligible Virginia Masons, their wives, and widows.

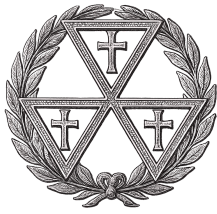
This year's celebration will take on special meaning as our nation marks the 250th anniversary of American independence. Guests will enjoy an expanded historical and patriotic experience featuring:

- The VA250 Mobile Museum
- Reenactors from Historic St. John's Church
- The George Washington Masonic Bible
- Continental Line reenactors
- Colonial Market vendors and historical demonstrators
- Shrine parade units from across the Commonwealth

The Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Virginia will once again participate in the parade around the MAHOVA grounds. All Sir Knights are encouraged to bring their full Templar uniforms and march alongside the Grand Officers. A strong turnout will allow us to support MAHOVA while proudly representing Virginia Templary before residents, families, and the larger Masonic community.

Bring your family, reconnect with friends from across the Commonwealth, and join us for one of the most anticipated gatherings of the Virginia Masonic year.





GRAND PRELATE'S MESSAGE

Rev. Richard E. Saunders *Grand Prelate*

August is known for the dog days of summer: a season when the heat seems unrelenting, the ground grows dry, and even the strongest among us long for relief. Spiritually, we all experience seasons that feel much the same. We face trials that test our endurance, circumstances that stretch our faith, and moments when the heat of life's challenges seem almost unbearable.

Yet God has never promised a life free from difficulty. Instead, He promises His presence in the midst of it. Scripture declares, "For our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29). His fire is not meant to destroy those who belong to Him but to refine them. Just as precious metals are purified in the furnace, our hearts are shaped as the Lord burns away fear, pride, self-reliance, and anything that keeps us from fully trusting Him.

On Mount Carmel, the prophet Elijah challenged the people to discover who the true God really was, saying, "The God who answers by fire, He is God" (1 Kings 18:24). When God's fire fell, it revealed His power, His faithfulness, and His glory. Sometimes we pray for God to remove the fire from our lives, but perhaps He desires to reveal Himself through it. The very trials we would choose to avoid often become the places where His presence is seen most clearly and where our faith grows strongest.

The prophet Obadiah also speaks of God's people becoming a flame: "The house of Jacob shall be a fire... and the house of Esau stubble" (Obadiah 1:18). Fire not only refines it also illuminates and transforms. As God works within us, His Spirit strengthens us to stand firm, reflect His light, and overcome the things that once held us captive. What once seemed overwhelming loses its power when we are grounded in Christ.

And where do we stand when the heat becomes too much? We stand upon the Rock. Throughout Scripture, God reveals Himself as our refuge, our fortress, and our unshakable foundation. While the world shifts like scorching sand beneath our feet, the Lord remains steadfast. When we lean upon Him instead of our own strength, we discover that His grace is sufficient and His faithfulness never wavers.

As August's heat reminds us of the refining fire of God, may we welcome His work in our lives rather than resist it. May we allow Him to strengthen our character, deepen our faith, and shape us into people who reflect His holiness. Whatever heat this season brings, we can walk forward with confidence, trusting that the One who refines us also sustains us. He is our consuming fire, our faithful Deliverer, and our everlasting Rock. In Him we find the strength to endure, the courage to remain faithful, and the assurance that every trial is being used to draw us closer to His heart and to make us more like Christ.

Always & All Ways in Christ,

Rick



Each year on August 20, Christians remember Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, one of the most influential religious voices of the twelfth century. An abbot, theologian, mystic, and preacher, Bernard advised kings, bishops, and popes, while his writings shaped Christian thought for generations. For Knights Templar, however, his place in history is especially meaningful. Bernard never wore the white mantle or rode beneath the Templar banner, yet few men did more to define what the Order was meant to become.

When Hugues de Payens and his companions first gathered in the Holy Land, they committed themselves to protecting pilgrims and defending Christian interests. Courage brought them together, but courage alone could not sustain a religious order. They needed recognition, discipline, and a rule of life capable of joining two callings that had rarely existed side by side: the devotion of the monk and the service of the knight.

The Council of Troyes gave the young Order the structure it needed, and Bernard's influence helped shape the spiritual vision behind it. The brothers surrendered personal wealth, lived in community, obeyed their superiors, and placed the mission of the Order above private ambition. Their military duties were not separate from their vows. One was meant to govern the other.

At the request of Hugues de Payens, Bernard wrote *In Praise of the New Knighthood*. Medieval Europe had no shortage of armed men, but Bernard believed the Templars represented something different. The true knight fought two battles at once: an outward struggle against danger and an inward struggle against pride, fear, anger, temptation, and selfish ambition. Bernard pictured him protected outwardly by steel and inwardly by faith.

He also contrasted the Templars with the vanity that often surrounded medieval knighthood. While others decorated their armor, weapons, and horses in pursuit of wealth or reputation, the brothers of the Temple were expected to live plainly, share what they possessed, and value discipline above display. Their strength was not supposed to rest in ornament or noble birth, but in obedience, courage, and service.

The true difference was not the cross upon the mantle, but the purpose within the man.

The historic Templars did not always live up to that ideal. No human institution does. Their growing wealth and influence eventually drew them into the political struggles of medieval Europe, while later legends of hidden treasure and secret knowledge often overshadowed their original purpose. Bernard's writings return us to the beginning, before the castles, estates, and mysteries, when the Order was simply a brotherhood bound by vows.

His world was very different from ours, and his defense of religious warfare belongs to the conflicts of the Crusading age. Still, the question beneath his message remains relevant: What governs our strength? Power without discipline becomes dangerous. Ceremony without devotion becomes empty. The outward signs of knighthood matter only when they reflect faith, integrity, humility, and service.

On August 20, we remember the monk whose pen gave voice to the New Knighthood. The sword may catch the eye, but the spirit that governs it determines whether it is worthy of the cross. That is the legacy we share, and the duty we inherit.



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF VIRGINIA YOUTH

The Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Virginia proudly congratulates our Masonic youth organizations on another successful season of annual gatherings, fellowship, and leadership.

We are especially pleased to recognize Noelle, newly elected Grand Worthy Advisor of Virginia Rainbow; Jacob, newly elected State Master Councilor of Virginia DeMolay; and Elena, installed as Grand Bethel Honored Queen of Virginia Job's Daughters. Each of them has stepped forward to accept a meaningful responsibility, and we look forward to seeing the energy, ideas, and example they bring to their organizations in the year ahead.

This season also gave Virginia Masonic youth an extraordinary reason to celebrate. Natalia was crowned Miss Job's Daughters International, becoming the first young woman from Virginia to receive that honor in more than thirty years. Her achievement reflects her own dedication and character, but it also speaks to the strength of Virginia Job's Daughters and the advisors, mentors, families, and friends who helped shape her journey.

These accomplishments remind us why Masonic youth matter so much. Through Rainbow, DeMolay, and Job's Daughters, young people are given room to grow, lead, serve, and discover what they are capable of. The lessons they learn in their meetings and projects follow them into their schools, careers, families, and communities.

The Grand Commandery is honored to continue supporting these organizations and highlighting the work of their members. We are proud to stand beside Virginia's young leaders as they pursue their goals, serve others, and strengthen the traditions entrusted to them.

To Noelle, Jacob, Elena, Natalia, and all of Virginia's Masonic youth, congratulations. Keep leading by example, supporting one another, and building a legacy worthy of those who will follow.





The future of our Masonic family has always depended upon young people who are willing to lead, serve, and inspire others.



DEMOLAY COMMANDERY NO. 4

BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

A LEGACY STILL ADVANCING

Sir Knights from several Chivalric Districts joined DeMolay Commandery No. 4 for an afternoon of fellowship and celebration marking the Commandery's 200th anniversary. Two Past Grand Commanders and several Grand Officers were also in attendance, adding to the significance of the occasion.

There was a great deal of excitement surrounding the milestone and a clear sense of pride in DeMolay No. 4's long place in Virginia Templary. The gathering offered an opportunity to reflect on the Commandery's history while celebrating the Sir Knights who continue to carry its legacy forward.



The afternoon held additional meaning for the members of DeMolay No. 4, as Very Eminent Deputy Grand Commander Kevin Harvey and Eminent Grand Junior Warden Jonathan Giles are both members of the Commandery. Their fellow Sir Knights were understandably proud to see two of their own serving in the advancing Grand Line and helping shape the future of the Grand Commandery.



ADDRESS OF THE GRAND COMMANDER

ON THE OCCASION OF DEMOLAY COMMANDERY'S ANNIVERSARY

It is a personal treat and genuine honor to join you in celebrating the two-hundredth anniversary of DeMolay Commandery No. 4.

I bring the collective congratulations of the Grand Commandery and our sincere admiration. We are proud of you reaching this milestone. Two hundred years is lofty to comprehend. We can read the dates, follow the names through the records, recognize the changes in buildings, customs, uniforms, and leadership. But the full weight of two centuries is hard to place into words.

Organizations do not simply exist for two hundred years. They are carried. Carried through periods of growth and of uncertainty. Through officer lines, weak and strong. Through prosperity, war, fire, relocation, declining membership, renewed energy, and... let's face it, more committee reports than any merciful Providence ever intended one group of men to endure.



And yet, here you are..... That.. will be the most important historical fact we acknowledge today. When the charter of the Lynchburg Encampment was approved, the Grand Commandery (then styled as Encampment) was itself still young. It had been formally organized only a few years earlier, although Virginia Templary, as we know, has roots reaching farther back. DeMolay was NOT joining a mature and settled institution. It WAS helping to form one. Your predecessors were close enough to the beginning that there were few precedents to follow, traditions to inherit, and no lengthy officer's guide explaining precisely what everyone was supposed to be doing. Some may consider that last point an advantage.

The world was in transition. John Quincy Adams was President. John Tyler was our Governor. John Marshall was still shaping the laws of our country from the Supreme Court. Thomas Jefferson had died only a few months earlier. The University of Virginia had recently opened its doors. Lynchburg was growing, the Old Dominion was changing, and the young republic was still deciding what it intended to become. Against that backdrop, a group of Masons in this community decided to establish an asylum for Templary.

They could never imagine in their wildest dreams what lay ahead. Civil War, industrialization, two world wars, economic depression, cars, electronic communication! A FUTURE in which a man could receive six reminders about a meeting and still claim he did not know it was happening. They did not need to possess the powers of foresight. They only needed to have faith that what they were building was worth passing forward. That is legacy.

We sometimes speak of legacy as though it belongs primarily to the past. Associated with charters, photographs, minute books, jewels, and the names of the distinguished who came before us. They do matter. Reminders that our work did not begin with us. But legacy is not just what previous generations left behind. Legacy is what each generation chooses to do with what it receives.

Every generation of this Commandery has inherited something unfinished. Each has received the work, protected it for a time, added something of its own, and passed it along. Some built, others preserved, many repaired, and some simply refused to let the light go out. All of them matter.



That is why today should not be viewed only as a celebration of longevity. Longevity by itself is not necessarily an accomplishment. There are objects in attics and basements that have existed for two hundred years, and no one is particularly proud of them. The achievement is that YOU, Sir Knights, have remained a living Commandery.

You have conferred the Orders, supported the wider Masonic family, practiced hospitality, and built friendships across the commonwealth. you have served your communities and preserved the bonds of Christian knighthood through circumstances the founders could never have anticipated. Buildings changed; so have meeting places, and the geographic reach of the Commandery has yo. Yes, and you have changed.

The essential work of our Order has continued. Gathering around the same principles. Binding ourselves to one another in faith and friendship. Teaching ritual, service, and leading by example. Never forgetting still the duty to care for the widow and orphan, and the knight beside us. To prepare another, to carry the banner forward, when our own part is finished.

That responsibility is particularly clear at an anniversary such as this. We stand between two groups of Sir Knights that we will never meet. Behind us, the men of 1826 and every generation that followed them. Some known by name and deed, and others who have faded into record, remembered only by a faded signature, title, or a line in the minutes. Ahead of us are the men who will gather here decades from now. Their names remain veiled beyond the horizon of time. What they inherit will depend upon what we do now.

The condition in which we leave the Commandery. The quality of the men we welcome. The standards we maintain, the friendships we strengthen and traditions we preserve. Legacy does not call us to recreate our golden age. It requires us to preserve what is essential, while refusing to confuse habit with principle. Your founders were not trying to recreate someone else's golden age. They were building for their own time, with the tools and opportunities available to them.

We honor them best by doing the same. We do not own the work; we are its temporary stewards. We carry the standard, protecting and strengthening it. Then placing it into the hands of another. DeMolay Commandery has done that for two hundred years. Your history, is the history of Chivalric Masonry in Virginia. You remind us that institutions survive not because their future is guaranteed, but because good men repeatedly decide that they are worth the effort.

Thank you for keeping faith with those who began this work. For carrying it through good years and difficult ones; and preserving, not merely a charter or a name, but a living tradition of service, fellowship, faith, and Christian knighthood. May you continue to be proud of its history, remain faithful to its traditions, and be courageous enough to meet the needs of each new generation.

May those who gather to celebrate future anniversaries look back upon this generation and say that, in our time, we did more than admire the legacy we inherited. We added to it. Strengthened it. And passed it forward.

GOD BLESS DEMOLAY COMMANDERY
GOD BLESS TEMPLARY
GOD BLESS THE LEGACY WE SHARE.





FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

GREETINGS SIR KNIGHTS!

I would like to send a request out to all of the constituent Commanderies in this great Commonwealth to share their stories and pictures of any charity work or philanthropy support in which your members have participated since the beginning of the current Chivalric year.

The submitted images and stories would be used to highlight how Commanderies of our Commonwealth are working to carry the message "outside of the box" to the local communities, by **WALKING THE WALK**, and living the obligations of our institution.

Your submission can simply be a couple of lines of text accompanying a picture or two. The point is to share with each other what has been successful for your Commandery, and could be "borrowed" by others to spread the Word and good works through charity and hospitality throughout the State.

Image submissions should be in *.JPEG format, and should highlight the membership and the target charity. The information about the event can simply be added as text in the email, and I will cut and paste to fit for sizing and layout. Please don't forget to indicate your Commandery so credit goes where it is due.

Ideally, this will be an ongoing segment of the Virginia Knight, so as your year progresses, please keep sending in your submissions.

Submissions and questions may be sent to virginiaknight.editor@gmail.com.

With Knightly Courtesy,


Daniel J. Carter, Editor-In-Chief



Become an Honorary DeMolay

The Ralph Taylor Woodrow Class

Virginia DeMolay is honored to invest the Degrees of DeMolay upon any Master Mason who did not have the opportunity when they were young.

This is also a great opportunity to support our local DeMolay chapter with their fundraising and charity goals.

This class is named in honor of Sir Knight Ralph Woodrow, a long-time supporter of Templary and DeMolay.

August 22nd | Noon



\$100

Includes:

- Lunch
- Donation to DeMolay
- Lettered & Signed Certificate

CLICK THE LINK BELOW FOR TICKETS

<https://gcovademolay.eventbrite.com>



WWW.VATEMPLARS.ORG