



# Pennsylvania Crusader

Since 1948

GRAND COMMANDERY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
[pagrandcommandery.org](http://pagrandcommandery.org)

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## July 2024

Sir Knights,

I want to express my thanks to all those who were able to attend the Testimonial Dinner. Lady Rebecca and I appreciated the show of support and fellowship we received.

As you receive this message, many people are focusing on their plans for the 4th of July celebrations. Independence Day is our Nation's Anniversary commemorating the passage of the Declaration of Independence by the unanimous declaration of the then thirteen states in July 1776. We think of this as the day to celebrate the birth of the United States as an independent nation. So, as you enjoy the picnics with family and friends enjoying all the different and wonderful venues, please remember how we came to hold this day in such reverence. Many significant sacrifices were made to birth and establish this great nation. Show your pride in America, wave your flags, and enjoy the picnics, parades, and sporting activities. And let us never forget that living in a free country came at the price of untold numbers of men and women who gave their lives for this freedom we enjoy. We should always be proud to be an American and be equally proud to be Knights Templar in this great nation.

On August 3, 2024, Sir Knights will once again be conferring all three Orders at the Rimrock Masonic Center in Stroudsburg, hosted by Samuel S. Yohe Commandery. Courtesy conferrals can be performed on candidates who have a completed Request for a Courtesy Conferral form. Start time will be 7:00 AM with registration, lunch by reservation, and conclude with the Order of the Temple conferred in Ceremonial Uniform. This is an excellent opportunity to recruit and welcome Sir Knights into our ranks. On September 21-22, 2024 we will again meet in Gettysburg for the Division 11/Central Section Reception to be held at the Wyndham Hotel on Saturday and, on Sunday, we plan to meet at the Pennsylvania Monument on the battlefield for the Memorial Service. Information on several events has been sent out and is available on the Grand Commandery website.

Upcoming Events:

July 13 Tuskegee Airmen Memorial Service, Sewickley

July 13 Rainbow Girls Grand Assembly, Altoona

July 20 DeMolay of PA Convention, Harrisburg

Aug. 03 One-Day Conferral, Stroudsburg  
Aug. 17-21 Grand Encampment Triennial, Salt Lake City, UT  
Aug. 24 Jobs Daughters, Elizabethtown  
Sept. 06-08 NEDC, Albany, NY  
Sept. 11 Flight 93 Wreath Laying Ceremony, Shanksville  
Sept. 21-22 Central Section Reception/Gettysburg Memorial Activities

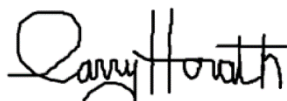
In the summer months, we spend more time outside on picnics, projects, and vacations. Studies show that long-term exposure to bright sunlight may increase the risk of cataracts and growths of the eye, including cancer. Ultraviolet rays reflected off surfaces such as sand and water can cause eyes to sunburn, potentially resulting in temporary blindness in just a few hours. As July is Ultraviolet Safety Month, the American Academy of Ophthalmology reminds us of the importance of shielding our eyes from the sun's harmful rays with 100% UV-blocking sunglasses and broad-brimmed hats.

Of note is the Battle of Gettysburg that took place on July 1-3, 1863, during the American Civil War. It is known to be the bloodiest battle of the Civil War with casualties exceeding 50,000 on both sides. The fields of Gettysburg witnessed this tragic spectacle where countless numbers of soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice in service of their respective causes. It was also this battle that inspired one of the most iconic speeches in American history, Abraham Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address".

Independence Day is an important federal holiday in the United States that commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. The day marks the historical event when the United States of America declared its independence from Great Britain. The vote on the Declaration of Independence was taken on July 2nd, formally adopted, and dated as July 4th, when the formal signing began on August 2nd. Happy 248th birthday America!

Anniversaries: St. Andrews No. 27 – July 13, 1867  
Constans No. 33 – July 24, 1868  
Mt. Calvary No. 67 – July 10, 1890

Have a safe holiday while celebrating the independence of our nation!



SK Larry D. Horath  
Grand Commander

## Associate Grand Prelate's Message

“Proclaim Liberty Throughout all the Land! Lev. 25:10b

Every July begins with a wonderful holiday in the United States, as we celebrate the anniversary of the proclamation of the Declaration of Independence. On July 4 in 1776 the Continental Congress declared that there were no longer colonies of Great Britain but free and independent states.

The state house bell which called those delegates and citizens together for the proclamation was not then known as the Liberty Bell. It acquired that moniker years later when people remembered the latter portion of the scripture verse that was also inscribed on it “Unto All the People’ Lev. 25:10c. Abolitionists coined the term, the Liberty Bell, to call out the need for the fullest sense of that scripture verse. All people were to be set free in the year of jubilee! Liberty was not to be enjoyed only by the well off, those who owned property, or those in power. Liberty was the birthright of all citizens of the land, and none should be enslaved.

In the many years since 1776 or even 1865 we continue to live into the meaning of liberty. Decade by decade, often only through immense struggle and sacrifice, our country has learned that our precious liberty is not to be hoarded but to be shared freely with all parts of our society and to the world at large. Our liberty has drawn people from around the globe for hundreds of years, who yearn for freedom from oppression. Most of us who are currently citizens are here because our ancestors yearned for liberty from want, from the oppression of their religion, from lack of freedom to choose their own government, etc.

As Christians we too are called to live into the liberty we enjoy as followers of Jesus Christ. Our Savior Jesus Christ has set us free to serve God without the binding chains of sin. (Rom. 5:1-2) Our faith and trust in Him call us to strive each day to be more and more Christlike. As we remember in our Order of the Temple, the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-12) are to be the guide for our actions.

As Knights Templar we are called to live a life that exemplifies the teachings of Jesus. May each of us be blessed by the freedom God has given to us in Christ Jesus. May we joyfully share the Good News of Jesus Christ wherever we may go.

Fraternally,

SK and Rev. David A. Eichelberger, Associate Grand Prelate  
PDC, IKT, KCT

## Liberty Tree Planting

A few weekends ago, Packer Commandery No. 23 participated in three Liberty Tree dedication ceremonies. Northampton County, Carbon County, and Lehigh County. Invitations came at the request of both Bro. James Haja, Regional Director of Masonic Education and Bro. Ray Reppert, DDGM.

The Fraters of Packer Commandery were extremely excited to participate as these were public ceremonies and they really wanted to take “their show on the road”. A practice session was held Thursday before the event and SK Mark G. Mattern, PGC, GR, was consulted on some flag protocols as the American flag, PA State flag, and the Packer banner were all requested. Contingencies were worked out and the men were ready.

We were very pleased how it went off and compliments flowed generously, including from Brother and Sir Knight Larry A. Derr, RWGM. My impressions are that having Templars present added to the color, pageantry, and order of the day. Of particular benefit were the Revolutionary and Civil War reenactors who were introduced through the honor guard and then took their proper places. This rather than just gathering under a tree until called upon to fire their volley. We also helped by announcing the Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem, and Opening Prayer.

I am proud to report what we found to be a grand day for PA Freemasonry and Templary in particular. A great show of unity.

Fraternally  
Sir Knight Ed Hawk, PDC  
Aide to the REGC

Well done Sir Knights!

