



Grand Commander



Scottie W. Cox

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We Need Your Help!

Please send event news from your local commanderies to us for inclusion in the State News!

- ✦ Submissions must be received by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the upcoming edition. Submissions may be altered to fit.
- ✦ Please send emails with subject line "KT State News" to the editor.

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Grand Commander's Message

Greetings Sir Knights,

Here it is July and time to celebrate our Nation's Independence. It is the day we celebrate the Declaration of Independence, which was ratified by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, establishing the United States of America. Whether you celebrate the Fourth by hosting or attending a picnic or barbeque, traveling to your favorite vacation spot or staying home with family, please remember our forefathers who fought so valiantly for our country and proudly fly the flag of the United States of America.

June was a busy month for your Grand Officers. We held district meetings in Lenior (District 8) on June 4, in Southern Pines (District 5) on June 12, and in Winston-Salem (District 6) on June 17. The Lenior and Winston-Salem bodies both opened the Council in form. Southern Pines only have a Commandery, and they opened in the most impressive manner. They executed the floor work and speaking parts with extreme accuracy. I was very impressed and proud that our newest Commandery, Nazareth #41, has found their passion for the fraternity.

I had two other special occasions representing the Grand Commandery of North Carolina in June.

First, on June 21, I had the distinct honor and privilege of knighting Clifton Truman Daniel, the oldest grandson of President Harry S. Truman, in a special conferral of the Order of the Temple held in Monroe. Sir Knight Daniel is a graduate of the University of North Carolina and lived in North Carolina for fifteen years. He and his family still have ties here and travel back for the sweet tea. He is an amazing individual, and it was truly an honor to meet him and create him

a member of the Valiant and Magnanimous Order of the Temple.

Secondly, I was invited to represent the Grand Commandery at the 87th Grand Session of the Grand Assembly of North Carolina, International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, on June 24. I was thoroughly impressed with their forms and ceremonies. The ritual work performed by those young Ladies was second to none. You could tell they have spent many hours practicing and perfecting their work, and it showed. A few of them told me how much they like my 'hat'. They impressed me so much, I had to take my 'hat' off to them. They have definitely found a passion for their sorority.

The 87th Anniversary of the Great Smokies Summer Assembly of York Rite Masons will be held in Maggie Valley, NC from July 14 – 16. Please make your plans now to attend. For more information and to download your registration form, please visit the NC Grand York Rite website <https://ncgyorkrite.org> or go to the Summer Assembly website directly at <https://mwsite.org/sites/ncgssa>.

Fraternally yours,

Scottie W. Cox

Grand Commander

Salisbury Table Council Relocated to Winston-Salem Due to Popular Demand

Salisbury – There will be a Table Council on Monday, August 5, at the Winston-Salem Masonic Center starting at 6:00PM. Attendees should be prepared to have a lot of fun, and bring both a roll of quarters (for fines) and folding money for the live auction. All proceeds will benefit our York Rite Charities.

There is no cost for attending other than the roll of quarters, and the dinner will be Prime Rib with all the trimmings. Those

wishing to attend should notify REPGC [Kirby Matthews](#) of the Salisbury York Rite before July 25.

Dates for York Rite District Meetings

Salisbury – There are three remaining district meetings on the Grand York Rite calendar. Two will be in August, and one was rescheduled to October.

Dist. No.	Date	District Meeting Location & Times
2	12-AUG	1415 S 17th St., Wilmington , NC 28401 6:00 PM King Solomon’s Feast, 7:00 PM meeting
9	16-AUG	435 E Marshall St., Waynesville , NC 28786 (Rescheduled after GYR, times TBD)
1	21-OCT	1104 Charles St., Greenville , NC 27858 No dinner, 7:30 PM meeting

NC Grand York Rite Confers Degrees on Clifton Truman Daniel in Special Session

Monroe – The Grand Officers of the Grand York Rite Bodies of North Carolina, in a special session organized in conjunction with the Grand York Rite Bodies of Missouri and Illinois, conferred the several Chapter, Council, and Commandery degrees and orders on Brother Clifton Truman Daniel. Brother Daniel is an actor, author, honorary chairman of the board of the Truman Library Institute, board secretary of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation, and the eldest grandson of President and Past Grand Master Harry S. Truman.

For 30 years, Daniel was the feature writer and editor of the Morning Star and the Sunday Star-News in Wilmington. His children were all born in the Tarheel State, and he still maintains close ties to North Carolina. Last year, he joined us at the Summer Assembly in Maggie Valley as our keynote speaker.



The Degree Team for the Royal Arch Degree.

Joining us for this historic occasion from Independence, Missouri, was Most Puissant William G. Snyder, General Grand Master of the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International, who personally conferred all three Cryptic degrees – including the Super-Excellent Master degree. REGC Scottie Cox was on hand as well,

personally knighting SK Daniel in the Order of the Temple.



The Degree team and guests for the Order of the Temple.



PMIGM Russel Bridges, who helped to organize the event and coordinate the degree teams, presented the newly knighted SK Daniel with a commemorative statue of his grandfather in his masonic regalia as Grand Master of Missouri. SK Daniel and the degree team then adjourned to enjoy a delicious seafood dinner at the Hilltop Fish Fare and Steakhouse, a local institution for good food and fellowship.

Greensboro York Rite Hosting Banquet to Honor Present and Past Grand Officers and Raise Money for York Rite Charities

Greensboro – The Greensboro York Rite Bodies are hosting a celebratory banquet in honor of MEGHP Hugh McLaurin, MIPGM Jeff York and Kevin Wood, and REPGC Michael Daniels on Wednesday, July 10, at the Greensboro Masonic Temple located at 426 West Market Street in downtown Greensboro.

Social hour will begin at 6:30PM and dinner will be served at 7:00PM. Our keynote speaker will be MW Grand Master Don Kehler.

Reservations are required and the cost is \$50 per person.

All proceeds from this charity banquet will support our three York Rite charities:

- ✘ **Royal Arch Research Assistance**
- ✘ **Cryptic Masons Medical Research**
- ✘ **Knights Templar Eye Foundation**

To reserve your seat, please click on the following Eventbrite URL:

<https://tinyurl.com/4hd7zvfj>

NC York Rite Masonic Marker Vandalized

Blue Ridge Parkway – The Masonic Marker that has for decades stood peacefully in a small park off the Heintooga Road section of the Blue Ridge Parkway was severely damaged recently by lawless vandals. One or more criminals took hammers and broke pieces off of the steps leading up to the marker, then forced the steel gates open and damaged many of the stones on the marker itself.



The steps on the staircase leading up the hill to the marker were also damaged. The repairs to the marker and surrounding structures will be very expensive and will take months to complete.



Once more, the idle and ruthless hands of ignorance and hate are employed for destruction instead of for more noble, constructive purposes.



Damage was done to the stones on the marker inside the steel fence, which was forced open. Some of these stones are irreplaceable.

Law enforcement rangers from the National Park Service have been onsite to collect evidence and have open an investigation. This is just the latest incident of vandalism targeting lodges and churches throughout the area, and comes on the heels of the damage suffered by the Charlotte temple in March.

The Blue Ridge Parkway office says anyone with information should contact authorities at 1-800-727-5928.

REDC James B. Steele Completes Term as Mid-Atlantic Department Commander

Castle Hayne – REPGC James B. Steele has proudly served as our Department Command for the Mid-Atlantic Department of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, USA since his appointment in 2021. Now that North Carolina has been moved into the Southeastern Department, SK Steele is stepping down from his role and bids farewell as he looks forward to continued service to Templary in the future.



Right Eminent Department Commander James B. Steele, KCT

From his report to the Most Eminent Grand Master, Officers, and Members of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America:

“It has been an honor and privilege to serve as your Department Commander of the Mid-Atlantic Department for this Triennium. I would like to express my gratitude to Grand Master David Kussman for allowing me to serve in this most prestigious position.”

I began my tenure as Department Commander post COVID pandemic. We were blessed to hold the Mid-Atlantic Department Conference in person once again. Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia, all a part of the Mid-Atlantic, hit the ground running. All Grand Conclaves opened in-person and allowed Sir Knights to once again meet, eat and fellowship together. Due to virtual meetings over the previous year, membership declined mostly because of the inability to confer the orders; we lost our momentum. Going forward, things turned around quickly.

The Mid-Atlantic Department Conference was held in Alexandria, VA, a common location for everyone, which offered easy access to the airport and surrounding places of interest. Department Conferences were well attended by the Sir Knights, and it was a pleasure to have Grand Encampment Officers in attendance as well. The 2023 Mid-Atlantic Department Conference was said to have been the highest attended conference that anyone could remember. This was the first time the Commissioned Templar Chaplain Program was offered at the Department Conference. This program gives Sir Knights the opportunity to become leaders who instill in us and hold us to the norms that are the bedrock of our organization.”

Some highlights from RE Steele’s term of office include:

- ✘ Serving as escort to the Grand Master and Grand Encampment Officers in the wreath laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery as one of his first actions as Dept Com.

- ✘ The 200th Celebration of Plantagenet Commandery #1 in Wilmington in coordination with Palestine Commandery #20 who also held a Christmas Observance. It is worth noting that Plantagenet #1 was formed prior to the formation of the Grand Encampment.
- ✘ Conferring of the Order of the Temple at Castle McCullough in Jamestown on multiple occasions.
- ✘ Attending several Christmas Observances around the state, and marching with Sir Knights in the Wilmington Christmas parade.
- ✘ Presenting North Carolina with the 100% Sponsorship award for the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.
- ✘ Presenting the Sword of Merit, to EC Trent Carter, of Nazareth #41 for his steadfast leadership and support.
- ✘ Attending all three of the Easter Sunrise Services at the George Washington Masonic Memorial, and leading the Sir Knights and visitors in the Nicene Creed.
- ✘ Marching with the Grand Master of NC and Grand Officers in the Cornerstone Centennial event, with record attendance for this momentous occasion.

SK Steele closes, *“I thoroughly enjoyed my tenure as Mid-Atlantic Department Commander, and it has been an honor to serve the Grand Encampment and Sir Knights. This has been the pinnacle of my Masonic journey. My hope is to continue to serve in some capacity with my fellow Sir Knights. I would like to thank my wife, Lady Shirley, for her support of my Masonic career and especially the last three years as Department Commander. When her work schedule allowed, she traveled with me and always supported me near or afar.”*

The Grand Commandery of North Carolina offers its sincere thanks to REDC Steele for his dedication and service, and wishes him all the best in his future endeavors.

Important Reminders:

- July 10:** Greensboro York Rite Charity and Honor Banquet, starting at 7:00PM, at the Greensboro Masonic Temple.
- July 14 – 16:** The 87th Annual Great Smokies Summer Assembly of York Rite Masons, Maggie Valley.
- July 20:** Public Knighting Ceremony, Phoenix #2, starting at 10:00AM, at the Fayetteville Temple.

Coming Soon in September: Order of the Temple at Castle McCullough in Jamestown. Please plan for any of your local candidates who may be interested in participating. Stay tuned for info!