



BEN HUR Shriners

The Chariot



FEBRUARY 2026

VOL. 94, NO 2

2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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Articles due NLT 15th of the month

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BEN HUR SHRINE

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CHARIOT EDITOR Sam Stimson, PhD**Webmaster/Designer..... Diane Reid****APPOINTED DIVAN****Temple Director - Chris Garner****Captain of the Guard - Robert Eschenburg****Outer Guard - Dave Harnden****1st Ceremonial Master—Russell Jones****2nd Ceremonial Master - Ted Robertson****Marshal - Raul Scully****APPOINTED STAFF****Colonel of Units**

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STATED MEETING

Ben Hur Shrine meets on the 3rd Thursday of the
 month. The next stated meeting will be Feb 19
 2026. **CURRENT DUES CARD IS REQUIRED!**

POTENTATE – charlesemaddox@gmail.com

Fellow Nobles,

February as usual will be an active month at Ben Hur Shriners. The first weekend we will host the Texas Shrine Mid-Winter Business meeting at the Doubletree Hotel by the Arboretum, our first time to host Mid-Winter in 26 years! That Sunday, we will host a Super Bowl Party to watch the big game.

Perhaps the biggest announcement: our February Stated Meeting (February 19) will be men only. Travis County will be in the middle of Early Voting for the Texas Primaries, which is expected to have a large turnout with major contests in both the Democrat and Republican Primaries. The County leased the ballroom, so we will meet in the blue room for both dinner and stated meeting.

At our recent Stated Meeting, we elected two (2) new members to the Finance Advisory Committee: Ill Sirs. Gene Freudenberg and Brad Cole. I know they will impart their vast financial expertise and knowledge to help keep our temple sound and secure. Thank you sirs for stepping up!

Finally, a number of nobles from Ben Hur and across the state attended the Grand Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Texas. Thank you to the members who were able to attend the sessions on both Friday and Saturday to have your voice heard, It was disappointing that our own Noble George Moxley was not elected Grand Junior Warden.

Fraternally,

Charles E. Maddox, Potentate

Ben Hur Shriners No. 58

President, Texas Shrine Association



CHIEF RABBAN - farnhamcf@outlook.com

The year 2026 is off and running, and now that we are one month in, I want to express my sincere appreciation to the Nobles who elected me to the office of Chief Rabban and placed their faith in me as an officer of Ben Hur.

The position you have entrusted me with is an important role, both as a member of the Divan and as a potential future leader of Ben Hur. With this role comes the responsibility to strengthen our fraternal bonds, understand the strengths and challenges of our members, and tap into the talents within our Oasis to help guide us toward a stronger future for our beloved fraternity.

As we work to strengthen those fraternal bonds, we should take more time to engage with one another and listen in order to better understand what makes each of us unique, as well as what binds us together through both our similarities and our differences. Embracing the strengths of our members, while encouraging and uplifting others as they work to overcome challenges, will lead to a stronger, more cohesive, and more understanding Ben Hur. (Cont next page)



CHIEF RABBAN - farnhamcf@outlook.com

The role of Chief Rabban also includes preparing financially and logistically for the year ahead. This means planning for 2027 and raising funds to support the fraternal expenses associated with that year. I sincerely hope that you, as a member of Ben Hur, will assist with both the planning and fundraising efforts. Your input is important to me, and I encourage you to reach out at any time with comments, ideas, suggestions, or desire to help.

A couple of items to be aware of:

1. 2027 Planning Meeting

There will be a 2027 planning meeting on March 31, 2026, at Ben Hur Shrine. As the name suggests, this meeting is geared toward setting the stage for 2027 and beyond. Your input into our future is important and will be welcomed.

2. Fraternal Fundraiser - Casino Party

The first fraternal fundraiser will be a Casino Party scheduled for May 9, 2026. Look for details in upcoming issues of The Chariot, on our various social media platforms, and on the Ben Hur website.

Yours in the Faith,
Charlie

ASSISTANT RABBAN - hayesre1.yahoocom

Ill Sirs, Nobles, and Ladies,

Lady Angie and I hope this issue finds you all well as we run full speed into 2026! We look forward to spending time with all of you in fun and fellowship during the upcoming year. I appreciate your faith in voting me in as your Assistant Rabban and I will work to further our fraternity and philanthropy to the best of my abilities.



January has been keeping us busy. First up, we had the NYE party and New Year's Day brunch. Both of which Lady Angie and I enjoyed immensely! Next was Installation on the 3rd followed by the Divan Retreat in Marble Falls the following weekend. We, as your Divan, have hit the ground running and expect to do great things in 2026!

I would like to thank our new social media guru, Noble Andy Murray, for the work he has put in so far and the great work I know he will continue to do! Please reach out to him at will so he can announce any upcoming events we will surely all wish to attend! THANKS ANDY!!

Fraternally yours,

Noble Ricky Hayes, Assistant Rabban


HIGH PRIEST & PROPHET - poppyspeaks@msn.com**Illustrious Sirs, Nobles and Ladies,**

It seems like only yesterday, that we had the Ben Hur Shrine New Year's Eve Party and now, we're preparing for the **Texas Shrine Association Mid-Winter Session** February 6-7, here in Austin. The 101st **East West Shrine Game** has been played. **Shriners Children's Mardi Gras Parade Galveston** - Sunday, February 15th at 12:00. Line Up is at 10:30 at Santa Fe Place next to the Railroad Museum. Reduced rate Lodging at Moody Gardens - group rate for Shriners during the Mardi Gras Weekend (409) 683-4410. **Parade Marshal** - Ricki Pierce, Oriental Guide will soon take over the duties as your Parade Marshal.



The **Shrine Baseball Classic** Weekends at Arlington, TX will soon be underway and promises to bring some exciting college baseball teams to Texas. On the weekend of 13-14 February - Alabama, Oklahoma, Okla St, TCU, Texas Tech & Vandy. On the next weekend of 20-21 February - Auburn, Fla St, Kan St, Louisville, Michigan & Nebraska, and on the final weekend of 27-28 February - Ariz St, Miss St, Tenn, Tex A&M, UCLA & VA Tech.

February Stated Meeting - Due to Travis County voting and crowded conditions within Ben Hur Shrine stay tuned for word from our Potentate about the February 19th Stated Meeting - Temple use and information.

March Events - Crawfish Boil March 7, maybe? More info is coming, soon, I/we hope.  **TALOH**
Mid-Winter Conference March 12-15, Townplace Suites, Houston. The **Mighty Thomas Carnival** Dell Diamond Round Rock 07-15 March and also at Pinballz 21-29 March. **Provost Guard Mid-Winter** at Sharon Shriners, Tyler TX. 27-28 March. **Potentate's Ball** on March 28.

To All, may the Grand Architect Bless You, Guide You and Protect You.

Ron Speaks

ORIENTAL GUIDE - piercerick8511@gmail.com

I thank the Nobility for the trust and confidence for electing me as Oriental Guide of Ben Hur for the ensuing year. I am truly honored.

I will give Ben Hur & the Nobility 110% in the coming year/s as long as you allow me to serve on the Divan. That said we have much to do and plan for 2026 & we will surely need the support of the Nobility. I look forward to working with the Divan & Nobility.

Please let me know your ideas to make Ben Hur grow and make the events better. I will not be silent.

Fraternally

Ricki Pierce, Oriental Guide

Ben Hur #58



BEN HUR SHRINE
DIRECTOR'S STAFF
JOIN US FOR CRAWFISH, GREAT COMPANY, & FUN



CRAWFISH BOIL

MARCH 7TH, 2026
2:00 TO 6:00 PM
7811 Rockwood Ln. Austin, TX

HISTORY

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

SOUTH CAROLINA TO GET SHRINE HOSPITAL

Contracts will be let in a short while for the unit at Greenville, S.C., of the Shriners Hospitals for Crippled Children, which will serve a territory very much in need of orthopedic surgery in reach of the poor. It will be a fifty-bed hospital to cost about \$400,000.00 fully equipped.

The new Greenville unit was made possible through the generosity of a good citizen who is not a Shriner or a Mason. Mr. W.W. Burgiss of Greenville graciously donated \$350,000.00 toward the building of the hospital and promised more if needed.

Mr. Burgiss was so impressed by the efficiency of the Shriners Hospitals for Crippled Children that he determined that one should be established in Greenville. The building will be erected by the Shrine, according to their own architects' plans, equipped under Shrine directions, and the bills will be paid by Mr. Burgiss. It will then be managed, like all the other units, by a local board of Shriners under the direction of the board of trustees.

Fast forward to September 1927, the new Shriner Hospital is dedicated with a crowd of over 4000 in attendance. The city is bedecked with flags and banners. A lavish parade through the streets of Greenville will take place honoring the benefactor W.W. Burgiss. Following the parades there will be three luncheons held simultaneously at the Poinsett and Imperial Hotels. The official dedication will take place at 2:30PM at the hospital followed by a banquet at the Textile Hall for the Shriners and their ladies at 6:00PM. A dance will follow at 9:30PM at the Poinsett Hotel.

During the dedication ceremony Mr. Burgiss delivered the deed to the hospital to Omar Shrine Potentate who then passed it to Imperial Potentate Dunbar.

In an interview with Mr. Burgiss, he gave some insight into his background. Normally a very private and modest individual he told of how he had promised God that if he prospered in life he would turn some of my profits to a good public cause. He relates how he started out as a young man with a water tank sprinkler with which he sprinkled the business streets of Greenville to keep the dust down. He then became a cotton merchant and buyer and in 1920 he bought a strip of ocean front property for \$70,000 dollars. Two years later he sold a third of the strip for \$70,000. He later sold some more of that land for over a million dollars, and I have still have enough left that will be worth a million dollars or more.

The hospital that Mr. Burgiss built is still in operation today, much larger than the original facility.

Gene Freudenberg, PP/Historian/Feb 26 Chariot

Credits: Greenville News, Greenville, SC

February 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 RENTAL	2 Texana 123	3 RENTAL	4 LOH RENTAL Sassy Ladies	5	6 TSA Counterparts diner	7 RENTAL LOS TSA
8 RENTAL Superbowl Watch Party	9	10 RENTAL Mini-B HLSC	11 Motorized Units	12 Provost Guard	13 LOS	14 LOS Spaghetti Fundraiser
					Shrine College Classic (Arlington)	
15 Galveston Parade	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Travis County Early Voting					
	Presidents Day	Directors Staff RENTAL	NILE	BHST Stated		
22 RENTAL	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Travis County Early Voting					
		RENTAL				

BE SURE AND CHECK WWW.BENHURSHRINE.ORG FOR LATEST DATES AND TIMES. CALENDARS CAN CHANGE.

March 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 RENTAL	2 Texan 123	3 ELECTION DAY	4 RENTAL	5	6	7 Motley Brue Crawfish Boil Carnival
8 MOVIE	9 Golf	10 Mini-B HLSC RENTAL	11 Parsons Lodge Motorized Units BOD	12 Provost Guard	13 LOS	14
Mighty Thomas Carnival (Dell Diamond)						
15 RENTAL Carnival	16	17 Directors Staff RENTAL	18 Nile Parsons Lodge	19 BHST Stated Meeting	20	21 LOS Carnival
22 LOS	23	24 RENTAL	25	26	27	28 Potentates Ball
Mighty Thomas Carnival (Pinballz Buda)						
29 Carnival	30	31 RENTAL				

**BE SURE AND CHECK WWW.BENHURSHRINE.ORG FOR
LATEST DATES AND TIMES. CALENDARS CAN CHANGE.**

AROUND THE DISTRICT IN OUR OASIS

STATED MEETINGS

Austin Lodge #12	3rd Monday at SRCT
Colorado 96	3rd Monday in Webberville, Texas
Texana #123	1st Monday at Ben Hur Shrine Center
Onion Creek #220	1st Thursday in South Austin
Parsons #222	2nd Wednesday at the LSCB
Hill City #456	1st Tuesday at SRCT
University #1190	1st Thursday at SRCT
T Neal Porter #1354	2nd Tuesday at Onion Creek Lodge
San Gabriel #89	2nd Thursday in Georgetown
Robert Burns #127	4th Saturday in Round Rock
Round Rock #227	3rd Tuesday in Round Rock
Post Oak Island #181	1st Thursday in Beakiss
Norton Moses #336	3rd Monday in Leander
Florence #338	Full Moon Saturday in Florence
Liberty Hill #432	2nd Tuesday in Liberty Hill
Solomon #484	2nd Thursday in Taylor
Live Oak # 304	2nd Monday in Kyle
Buda #800	1st Monday in Buda
Rambo #426	4th Thursday in Dripping Springe
Wimberly #1445	2nd Tuesday in Wimberly
Centennial #500	1st Saturday (Feb, May, Aug, Nov) SRCT
Blazing Star #413	3rd Monday in Marble Falls
Henry Thomes #278	1st Saturday in Smithwick
Bertram #583	3rd Monday in Bertram
Scottish Rite	1st Wednesday at SRCT
Colorado Commandry	2nd Monday at LSCB
Ben Hur Shrine	3rd Thursday. Dark June, July and Aug
National Sojourners	4th Wednesday at Holiday Inn Mid Town

Valentine's Spaghetti Dinner

FUNDRAISER

Join us for a delicious
afternoon of food & fun

**SATURDAY,
FEBRUARY 14, 2026**

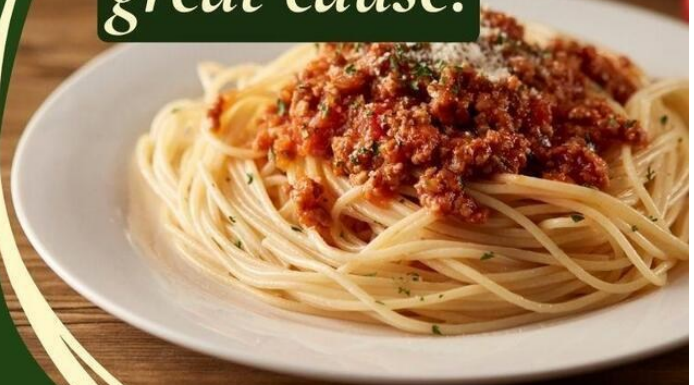
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*All proceeds help us support
Shriner's Childrens*

BEN HUR LIVING PAST POTENTATES

1991	Boyce Freitag
1995	Gene Freudenberg
1997	Ronald Harrison
2002	Ronnie Lee
2004	Ronnie Jackson
2005	Silas Powell, Jr.
2007	Robert "Fred" Park, Jr
2008	Charles Farnham
2009	James Smith (PIP)
2011	Michael Ford
2012	Edward Whitmore
2014	Thomas Hauss
2015	Edward Bromstad
2016	Earl Robertson
2017	Brad Cole
2018	Gregory Rye
2020	Romeo Denghel
2021	Romeo Denghel
2022	Dennis Motley
2023	Chuck 'Fester' Jones
2024	James Heineman

ASSOCIATED

1991	Eddie Daffern (Khiva)
1997	George Auer (El Kalah)

CHARIOT BOOSTER CLUB

Brian & Carol Vance	12/36
Greg & Ann Murrow	04/35
Steve & Pat Koehn	03/35
Aggie & George Auer PP	02/30
David & Juanell Yeager	02/30
In Memory of Joyce & Donna King	08/29
Ron & Debbie Speaks	03/29
Ron & Jamie Dewees	03/29
In memory of Gus Carlson	02/29
Fred & Traci Maynard	01/28
Jerry & Bea Hohman	07/28
Gerald "Jerry" Carruth	09/27
In memory of Gail Carruth	09/27
Charles & Emily Maddox	07/27
In memory of Byron Betncourt	04/27
Kay & Ron Harrison PP	02/27
Pat & Wanda McDavid	02/27
The Count, Lady Denghel And Girlfriend Margaret	09/26
Billy D & Alice Edmondson	08/26
In Memory of Don Lee	07/26
In Memory of Loren Orme P.P.	05/26
Glenn & Gwenn Goulet	05/26
Boyce and Jody Freitag	04/26
Bob Newlander	04/26
Jesse & Sharen Soliz	03/26
Tom & Judy Schneider	02/26
Charles & Kerry Campbell	02/26
Betty & Charlie Farnham PP	02/26

NOTICE: Did YOUR name get dropped this edition? Remember to check the date following your name. **Next edition will drop all dates to 02/26!** Send in the form below TODAY with your \$25 to become/remain a loyal booster club member.

YES! I WANT TO BE A BOOSTER

Enclosed please find my check in the amount of \$_____

☐ ONE LINE (single name) - \$25 per year

☐ ONE LINE (Mr. & Mrs. or two names) - \$25 per year

☐ TWO LINES (Yours and your Lady's name on 2 lines - \$45 per year

NAME(S): _____

Mail to the Temple Secretary.

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Texana Masonic Lodge No. 123
Meets First Monday of Each Month
at the Ben Hur Shrine Center
Eat at 6:30 p.m.; Meeting at 7:30 p.m.

BLACK CAMEL REPORT

WILLIAM A HOOVER, JR 11/3/2025

CARL W COLE 11/5/2025

CAPT. JOSEPH N DEICH 11/18/2025

VERNON D BARNES 11/21/2025

JAMES R ROBINSON II 11/26/2025

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Galveston, Texas 77550**

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Austin, TX 78757
(512) 480-0812

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2/2

Ken C Nicolas
Edward M Allen
Howard K Kimball

2/3

Stephen M Preece
Kenneth D Meek

2/4

Cory W Bluhm

2/5

Joe D Parten

2/6

Donald R Fairley

2/7

Marvin E Dabbs
John B Panthermuehl
James J Mercier
Charles E Maddox

2/8

Justin Meyer

2/9

Lewis Curatolo Jr.

2/14

James W Hollis
Carl U Christensen
Gregory S Randall
Jarat Preece

2/15

Jerry T Woehl
Thomas L Salem

2/16

Ralph R Johnson
Edward G Casey

2/18

Brandon C Rans

2/19

Philip A Bates

2/21

Randy E Anderson

2/22

James W Shaw
Shawn W Fredrick

2/24

George F Reaves
Johnny M Hudson
Mark A Winkelmann

2/26

Edward G Balagia
Chadwyck Preede