



# BEN HUR Shriners

## *The Chariot*



JANUARY 2026

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Happy New Year

2026

**BEN HUR SHRINE**

CHARTED AUGUST 16, 1892

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**BEN HUR OFFICE HOURS**

Mon - Fri 9:30am to 2:30pm

Closed on Major Holidays

**ILLUSTRIOUS SIR****CHARLES MADDOX****2025 POTENTATE**

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Gerald "Jerry" Carruth

**Insurance Committee**

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Ricki Pierce

**Parliamentarian**

Gerald C. "Jerry" Carruth

**Photographer**

James Heineman PP

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Nobility

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Vance Brown

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**Membership Chairman**

Ricky Hayes, Asst. Rabban Chairman

Chuck Jones PP

Andy Murray

Christian Moore

Jeff Schlieve

**STATED MEETING**Ben Hur Shrine meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month. The next stated meeting will be Jan 15 2026. **CURRENT DUES CARD IS REQUIRED!****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****Ceremonial Asst. Rabban— Dave 'Tide' Williams****Marshal - Raul Scully**

**POTENTATE** – charlesemaddox@gmail.com

Imperial Sir, Illustrious Sirs, Nobles All,

Words cannot express the appreciation I have with your vote and electing me as Potentate of Ben Hur Temple for the 2026 Year. On behalf of Emily and Alexandra, we thank you for this trust! I will work to the best of my abilities in service of our temple and its nobility. I hope to carry on in the long tradition established at Ben Hur, beginning with our first Potentates of Charles Morse, David Doom, and W.H. Bell, through men like A.C. Bull, Walter Seaholm, A.N. McCallum, Jr., Homer Thornberry, T.O. Lang, and J. Carroll Hinsley, continuing into the present with all our living Past Potentates. May we never disagree, but if we do, we must never be disagreeable.



The 2026 year will be active and while we hope you make all the events, if you happen to miss one there will be another just as quickly. With our new multimedia set up in the blue room and the auditorium, the Divan wants to watch a lot of football games this year and other events. Rather than going downtown to tailgate, come down to Ben Hur to watch football and enjoy some fellowship with your fellow nobles, and bring a Master Mason or two to introduce to the Shrine over hotdogs and football!

I love movies, and grew up on the movies. Going to the cinema or renting videos from Vulcan and Blockbuster are indelible memories with my parents. This year, I want to share this love of movies with my fellow nobles and host Sunday Matinees at the temple, watching favorites like Raiders of the Lost Ark, National Treasure, Miracle, and others (before you ask, Blazing Saddles is one of them!). I encourage you and your families (and potential Shrines) to join us on these Sundays and enjoy some movie magic.

Finally, you may have picked up on a theme for this year: Stronger Together. That theme permeated in previous articles I have written and on social media posts. We must remember that we are a part of a larger Masonic family. When we work together, we help each other. It all begins in the Symbolic (Blue) Lodge. There, Master Masons are made, and thus eligible for creation as Nobles in our Temple. I encourage you to get active in your lodges! If you already are, I thank you for remaining active and advertising the Shrine. As the year progresses, always invite Master Masons to Temple events, including Stated Business Meetings. The more they visit, the greater the change they will join!

Again, thank you for the trust and honor you reposed in me. I will work every day throughout the 2026 year to vindicate and validate your vote!

Sincerely and fraternally,

Ill. Charles E. Maddox, Potentate  
Ben Hur Shriners No. 58  
(512) 567-6744

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**HIGH PRIEST & PROPHET** - poppyspeaks@msn.com

**Illustrious Sirs, Nobles and Ladies,**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR** - I'm writing this about a week before the December elections. So, I won't know until then if I will be your former Oriental Guide, who's been sent to the sidelines or retained for another year on Ben Hur's Divan as your High Priest & Prophet (elect). Hopefully, I've earned your trust, and on January 3rd, along with our new Potentate Charles Maddox, the Elected and Appointed Divan, the Officers of the Units and Clubs, we the "hopefuls" will all be installed to lead our Temple during 2026.



**PLANNING** - Your 2025 Chief Rabban (acting-Potentate) Charles Maddox and Divan have spent the last several months planning and preparing for 2026. Noble Ricky Hayes will be the Lead Noble for membership in 2026. Let's all get behind him and do our part to increase Ben Hur's Membership numbers. I believe that with your help, there's lots of promise for an exciting and fun-filled year. However, we're always in need of your help. Your Divan cannot make any of the good things happen without YOU! For it's you - the Nobles - your Ladies and Families - who are the very Heart & Soul of Ben Hur Shrine!

**PARADES** - The last for 2025, the Thorndale Christmas Parade was "plain and simple" a good time with fabulous people and excellent weather. We found ourselves welcomed by the Thorndale community with applause and cheers. If you aren't in a Parade Unit, you're missin' out on some fun! **NEXT UP** - Galveston, Sunday, February 15, 2026 -

**Shriners Children's Texas Mardi Gras.** For those who plan on attending and you wish to stay a night or two, you may want to look into accommodations, soon. The Mardi Gras there is always a good time. Moody Gardens is offering a **Shriners Group Rate** for the Mardi Gras weekend: Fri & Sat Rate \$185 and Sun Rate is \$123. Call Brandi (409) 683-4410

**FLOAT TOW DRIVER** - Ben Hur needs a Tow Driver for the Potentate's Float for the 2026 Parade Year. Ben Hur provides for your Fuel and Lodging expenses. Please contact Ron Speaks at (813) 365-0101 or the Shrine Office at (512) 480-0812.

**TREASURER** - After many years of being a great friend, an unselfish, caring man and Brother Mason with unmatched dedication and faithful service as the Treasurer for Ben Hur Shriners - **Billy Jack "Bill" James** has decided to step down. **Bill James**, thank you and God bless you for your untiring service to us all.

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

**Ron Speaks, Oriental Guide**

**RECORDER** – sstimson70@gmail.com

For those of you that were not able to attend our December Stated Meeting Thursday, you missed a super meal. Lady Emily's parents worked for two days preparing and cooking an outstanding Cajun feast. The shrimp and chicken gumbo was spot on. **Laissez Les Bon Temps Roulez.** Hopefully this will set the stage for the year to come.



Now to what happened at the business meeting. The Elections for your Divan Officers went with pistols being drawn your officers for 2026 are:

POTENTATE: Charles Maddox

CHIEF RABBAN: Ill Sir Charles Farnham (2nd time around)

ASSISTANT RABBAN: Ricky Hayes

HIGH PRIEST AND PROPHET: Ron Speaks

ORIENTAL GUIDE: Ricki Pierce

TREASURE: Ill Sir James Heineman

RECORDER: Sam Stimson

Now that the Elections are over you Divan is preparing to hit the ground running after Installation on the 3rd of January. Our Potentate will guide the vision and inspire us all to keep Ben Hur growing for the future.

As I write this, Jeannette and I are packing for our trip to England where she can practice on her accent and meet relatives we have not seen for a few years. I hope to find a few Pubs I have never been in. We might even see some snow.

As we ring in the New Year, I will end my 10th year as your Recorder, and yes, I have ordered my new Fez with the longer title. Hopefully it will arrive before TSA.

I end this little editorial with a request of the Nobility. As you ring in the New Year and make those resolutions, why not include Ben Hur. Make a few more Stated Meetings, attend a few more activities, support the High Priest as he raises money for our Hospitals, give a petition to a friend you would like to see join our ranks. I can remember an old slogan from years ago that rings as true today as it did back then. Everyone should bring JUST ONE new member. If only half of us did that could reverse the trend of our diminishing numbers.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. See y'all in 2026.

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## HISTORY

**GOLD !      GOLD !      GOLD !**

### BEN HUR SHRINE GOLDEN JUBILEE NOV 7-8, 1941

Nineteen forty one found the Ben Hur Shrine of Austin, Texas making plans for the Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Temple on November 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Temple Potentates and Records from Wichita Falls, Amarillo, El Paso, Galveston, Houston, San Antonio, Fort Worth, Dallas and Waco along with their ladies have already acknowledged their intentions to be in attendance.

The activities on Friday night will commence with an "electrical parade" of the uniformed bodies and decorated automobiles of the temple officers. After the parade the Austin Symphony Orchestra will compliment Ben Hur Temple with a concert at the Austin High School Auditorium at 9:00PM.

The business session of the Temple will be held on Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:00AM. Upon conclusion of the business session, the nobles and ladies will be entertained with a "Womanless Wedding" with member of the caste from the Swedish Lutheran Church. At 3:00PM Herman Yerger, the Hindu magi from Burma India will perform feats of magic followed by the Hindu snake mystery.

At 4:30PM the first section of the ceremonial will begin with the traditional banquet at 5:30PM. The second section of the ceremonial will commence at 6:30PM. During this session, twelve new nobles were initiated into the mysteries of the Ancient Order. Following the second section ceremonial the nobles and ladies will be entertained with a dance at the Driskill Hotel Crystal Ballroom.

***Excerpt from the message of Ben Hur Illustrious Potentate Charles Petet:***

***While we are an organization whose primary purpose is having a good time, let us not overlook the splendid opportunity to help in the all-important work with the institutions which have for their purpose rendering aid to those not so fortunate as we are. It is my firm conviction that our greatest joy comes from doing favors for others and not receiving favors. A man who expects more from his government than he puts into it is not a good citizen, and a man who expects the Shrine membership, which he carries, and sometimes boasts of, to bring him joy and happiness, will be sadly disappointed if he fails to aid in the activities of his Temple. There is great work to be done by the Shrine, and it needs active cooperation of every member. Therefore, I call upon the entire Nobility of Ben Hur Temple to take part in the entertainment, the joy ride, the pleasures and profit inherent to an active membership.***

*Gene Freudenberg PP/Historian/Jan Chariot 2026*

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# AROUND THE DISTRICT

## STATED MEETINGS

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

# January 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 BHST Closed	2	3 Motley Brue BHST Installation
4 RENTAL	5 TEXANA 123	6 RENTAL	7 Board Meet LOH RENTAL	8 Provost Guard	9 LOS	10 <b>DIVAN RETREAT</b>
11 Movie Matinee	12 Golf	13 Mini B HLSC RENTAL	14 Parsons Motorized Units	15 BHST Stated	16 <b>GRAND LODGE (WACO)</b>	17 PPP
18	19 MLK Day BHST Closed	20 Directors Staff RENTAL	21 NILE Parsons	22	23	24 RENTAL Travel Club
25 NILE Bunco	26	27 RENTAL	28 Board Meet GOLF	29	30	31

**BE SURE AND CHECK [WWW.BENHURSHRINE.ORG](http://WWW.BENHURSHRINE.ORG) FOR  
LATEST DATES AND TIMES. CALENDARS CAN CHANGE.**

# 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 Golf Unit	10 RENTAL Mini-B HLSC	11 Motorized Units	12 Provost Guard	13 LOS	14 LOS
					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](http://WWW.BENHURSHRINE.ORG) FOR LATEST DATES AND TIMES. CALENDARS CAN CHANGE.**

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Congratulations to our Gary Brown, 25 Years Service and John Dickens, 50 Years Service. Your labors have been recognized and the Nobility salute you.

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## CLOWNS

Dear Nobles,

Another year has passed, and 2026 is upon us. A few of you may be wondering what it would be like to parade in front of people dressed as silly as possible. Talk with them, clown with them, and if you're lucky, scare a few adults. Well, I am here to tell you that your dreams can come true. A Shriner Clown is a universally loved character, and kids clamor to talk with you. Our ranks have dwindled, and I am looking for anyone who wants to give it a whirl. It is true that the trikes are loud and draw attention, but Clowns are STILL the face of a Shriner. (After, of course, the Silent Warrior) Please meet up with me before the December stated meeting if you have ever thought about clowning around. I guarantee you will come away with a smile as big as the kids.

Clowning in Shrinedom,

Anthony "Macaroni" DeFrancis

## TOY DANCE 2025

The 2025 Toy Dance, supporting Solomon Lodge and their Masonic Santa project, was a success. Lots of toys and cash donations will insure kind in the area represented by Solomon lodge will have a visit from Santa this year. The Toy Dance is an annual event at Ben Hur and should be supported by all the Nobility. Food Fun and Dancing for just the cost of a Toy per person. Why not put the next one, Toy Dance 2026, on your calendar now. See ya there next year.



**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**

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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
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
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
Charlie & Betty Farnham	02/26
Kay & Ron Harrison PP	01/26

NOTICE: Did YOUR name get dropped this edition? Remember to check the date following your name. **Next edition will drop all dates to 01/26!** 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.

**BROWN, LACALLADE & LANGE, P.C.****CHARLES L. LACALLADE**

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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****Brenda W. Scholin,**  
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Galveston, Texas 77550**

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Austin, TX 78757  
(512) 480-0812

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### BEN HUR NOBLES WITH BIRTHDAYS IN JANUARY

**1/1**

Carl W Winters Jr.

**1/2**

Brian A Vance  
Thomas J Iadanza

**1/3**

Kenneth M Lamb

**1/4**

Alfred E Blaschke  
Donald R Adkins  
Frank D Allard

**1/6**

Marty R Akins

**1/7**

Anthony D Graziano

**1/8**

Stephen D Willett, PP  
Kevin D Woehl

**1/9**

Ed Cleere

**1/11**

Robeert F Park Jr. PP

**1/13**

Ernest Owney  
Andrew Ferris

**1/16**

Norman C Tolpo

**1/17**

David W Reed

**1/18**

Henry R Tindell  
Aaron K Robertson

**1/21**

Sean L Hamilton

**1/22**

Cecil L Anderson  
Ricky E Hayes  
Byron G Webster

**1/24**

Vernon H Emken  
Stanley W Kozik

**1/25**

David E Yeager

**1/26**

Michael K Livingston  
James W Maines

**1/27**

Orville C Robbins

**1/28**

Robert L Eschenburg Jr

**1/29**

Sidney P McDavid

**1/31**

Garrett J Cooper  
Michael D Hollingsworth