



Ben Hur Shriners

The Chariot

DECEMBER 2025



VOL. 93, NO 12

TOY DANCE

Saturday, December 6, 2025
Ben Hur Shrine
Doors Open at 6:00pm
Admission is a \$15 donation
or an unwrapped Toy
Music By: Night Shift
Hors d'oeuvres and snacks provided

Donations and Toys will be provided to
Solomon Masonic Lodge in support of their
Masonic Santa program

7811 Rockwood Lane
Austin, Texas 78757

Articles due NLT 15th of the month

512-480-0812
www.benhurshrine.org

BEN HUR SHRINE
 CHARTED AUGUST 16, 1892
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 Austin, Texas 78757
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 www.benhursthrine.org
 secretary@benhursthrine.org
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BEN HUR OFFICE HOURS
 Mon - Fri 9:30am to 2:30pm
 Closed on Major Holidays

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APPOINTED STAFF (Cont)

Entertainment Committee

Chef Ernest Owney, Russell Hur, Russell Jones, Dee Davis, Brenda Willis Scholin Lana Stone, Deloris Shaw, Dave Harnden, Mike Sanders, Michele Sanders, Jeff Schlieve, Cristal Schlieve

Insurance Chairman

Gerald "Jerry" Carruth

Insurance Committee

III Sir Jim McConnell, Potentate, Charles Maddox, Chief Rabban, David Caylor, Sam Stimson, PhD , Recorder

Legal Counsel

Gerald C. "Jerry" Carruth

Masonic Relations

Open

\$100 Million Dollar Club

Charles Maddox, Assistant Rabban

Parade Marshal

Ron Speaks, Oriental Guide

Parliamentarian

Gerald C. "Jerry" Carruth

Photographer

James Heineman PP

Public Relations

Fred Maynard

Sickness & Distress

Nobility

Transportation Chairman

Vance Brown

Social Media

James Heineman PP

Membership Chairman

Fred Maynard

APPOINTED STAFF

Chief of Staff

Charlie Farnham, PP

Office Manager

Aliya Spivey

Building & Grounds Manager

Russell Hur

Chaplain

Ted Robertson

Colonel of Units

Charlie Farnham, PP

Donor Relations

Ricky Hayes, High Priest and Prophet

Master of Ceremonies

Mike Sanders

Fund Raising Chairman

Jeff Schlieve

STATED MEETING

Ben Hur Shrine meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month. The next stated meeting will be Dec 18 2025. **CURRENT DUES CARD IS REQUIRED!**

APPOINTED DIVAN

Temple Director - Chris Garner

Captain of the Guard - David Harnden

Outer Guard - Raul Scully

1st Ceremonial Master—Russell Jones

2nd Ceremonial Master - Ted Robertson

Ceremonial Asst. Rabban—

Marshal - David Martin

CHIEF RABBAN – charlesemaddox@gmail.com

Season's greetings everyone!

Thanksgiving is behind us, and the Holiday season is here! As our calendar and Shrine year speeds towards the end, don't forget we still have plenty of activity going on at Ben Hur.



Saturday, December 6, is our annual Toy Dance benefitting Solomon Lodge in support of their Masonic Santa program. Doors open at 6:00pm with snacks and hors d'oeuvres provided. Admission is open to all and requires a \$15 donation or an unwrapped toy. Live music will be provided by the Night Shift. This is a great opportunity to invite anyone interested in Masonry or Shrinedom!

On December 18 will be our Election of Officers. All nobles in good standing are encouraged to attend. Remember that the gavel will drop at 7:00pm NOT 7:30pm as is our usual time. We will also have a final vote on the proposed 2026 Budget. Make sure you are present and in good standing to ensure your voice is heard!

After the Election of Officers, Ben Hur Temple will be busy over the New Year's Holiday. On Wednesday, December 31, we will ring in the new year together. Doors will open at 9:00pm, again with snacks and hors d'oeuvres. We will provide some sparkling wine and sparkling cider to ring in the new year. Admission too is open to all, and the Night Shift will also provide live music. Attire is formal black tie.

The next day, January 1 at 12:00 noon, return to the temple for ham, cabbage, and black eyed peas. Please call the office to RSVP by Tuesday, December 30 so we can have an adequate amount of food available.

Finally, on January 3, at 11:00am, we will have our annual Installation of Officers. Nobles, families, and friends are encouraged to attend. We will have cake and light sandwiches available for the attendees.

And from Emily, Alexandra, and I, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Fraternally,

Charles E. Maddox, Chief Rabban

Ben Hur Shrine No. 58

(512) 567-6744

ORIENTAL GUIDE - poppyspeaks@msn.com

Illustrious Sirs, Nobles and Ladies,

Your Chief Rabban and acting-Potentate **Charles Maddox** has been busy **planning and preparing for 2026**, and I believe there's lots of promise for an exciting and fun-filled year. **Kudos** to all who received awards and recognition at the November Stated Meeting. **Well Done Nobles, Well Deserved!**



CLUBS & UNITS HEADS - Please turn in your **October Election** results to our Noble Recorder Sam Stimson as soon as possible. **Ben Hur's Clubs and Units** are truly the **heartbeat of our Shrine**. On behalf of the Divan, thanks for making 2025 an exceptionally good year - **Y'all Rock!**

LOOKING FOR IDEAS & SUGGESTIONS - Once more, if you are inclined to do so - I'd like to get your ideas and/or suggestions about what you think that I / we can do to make YOUR experience and time at Ben Hur better. Your **ideas and comments** will be appreciated. My email address is at the top. If you wish to remain anonymous, just say so and I promise you anonymity - or send me a letter or note addressed to: Ron Speaks, C/o Ben Hur Shrine, 7811 Rockwood Ln, Austin TX 78757.

PARADES - Only one parade to go for 2025 - the always fun **Thorndale Christmas Parade - Saturday, December 06 at 1:00**. Check In and **Line Up begins at East Michalk St at 11:00**. Let's end the year in style and have a good time welcoming Santa to Thorndale.

THANKFUL - I've talked with a lot of Veterans this past year at the Central Texas Veterans Affairs Hospital in Temple. During my doctor's visits if the opportunity presents itself, I always try to squeeze in **some bragging** about the **outstanding care of our kids** at our Shriners Children's. On a recent appointment in early November, while seated in the waiting area, I had a chance to talk with a couple of Veterans. After my usual boasting about Shriners Children's, the two of them spoke for a few minutes about the importance to them of volunteering and helping one's fellowman and community. Both of them volunteer by assisting Widows of Veterans. They also shared their love of **God, Country and Family**. That kind of discussion sounds familiar doesn't it. To me, it **parallels the views** we have in the Ben Hur Shrine Family. You never know when you will "bump into" some good people. Like me, they also were eager for the Holidays. By the time this December Chariot edition arrives in your mailbox, Thanksgiving will have come and gone. So, it's my sincerest hope that each of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Now, on to those Christmas cards and gift lists. May the Grand Architect Bless and Protect each of you.

Fraternally,

Ron Speaks, Oriental Guide

RECORDER – sstimson70@gmail

At the December Stated Meeting, the members of Ben Hur Shrine will elect those individuals who will serve on the Divan and represent them at functions, meetings and ceremonies across Texas and at the Imperial Ceremonial. It is important that those who wish to ‘throw their fez in the ring’ and run for office know the rules established by Shriners International. The extract below is taken from Shriners International Bylaws for 2025 and explains what and what is not acceptable for a candidate while on the campaign trail.



Of primary interest is the position of Oriental Guide. This is the individual who will grow into a leader of the Temple and ensure the Nobility remember their obligation while having fun and supporting our hospitals. Choose this person wisely and your Shrine will grow.

§ 325.11 Election Regulations.

(a) Electioneering. A candidate for an elected office in a Shrine temple may print, publish and circulate during the year he is seeking the elected office, a résumé consisting of his educational background, his vocational history, and his Masonic and Shrine record. Except as provided in the prior sentence, the printing, publication, circulating or distribution of resolutions, letters, telegrams, tickets, email or other devices, by a unit, club, Noble, or group of Nobles, suggesting, recommending, opposing, or containing the names of proposed candidates for office in the temple is prohibited.

(b) Expenditures Prohibited. The expenditure of money for gifts, favors, or entertainment on behalf of a candidate for elected office is prohibited.

(c) Violation. For any violation of (a) or (b), the Imperial Potentate may suspend any offending Noble, and he may declare the election of the officers void and order a new election.

(d) Notice. At least one week prior to the annual meeting or any election, the temple Recorder shall mail to each member a notice thereof containing this section.

Amend. 2011

HISTORY

Forty-Five Novices Walk the Hot Sands in Kenedy, Texas

March 5, 1914, there was excitement in the air, as a train, horseback riders and a vehicle caravan arrived in, newly incorporated, Kenedy, Texas. The Shriners of Ben Hur Temple in Austin arrived on the train at the Kenedy Depot greeted by Mayor Thames and a group of dignitaries. Mayor Thames presented Potentate Soule with the keys to the city. Kenedy, with a population of 1147 was formerly known as “Six Shooter Junction”, because of it’s rough and tumble reputation. The early trains coming into “Six Shooter Junction” were usually welcomed into town amidst volleys of pistol fire.

On March 5 forty-five novices were guided across the hot sands of the desert and made full fledged Shriners at the ceremonial session. The novices were attired in white robes since they were “Sons of the Desert”. The Ben Hur Band was decked out in white knickers, stockings and white jackets topped with white fezes. The candidates were “coerced” into carrying large signs that read “Lost”, “Stolen” and “Strayed”, which was a popular section of the personal column of rural newspapers.

Kenedy was also home to a Masonic Lodge and an Eastern Star Chapter with both organizations playing host to the Shriner event. A luncheon was held at the Episcopal Church which was followed by the Shriners Parade. The Kenedy newspaper reported that the grand parade was equal to or better than other parades witnessed in large cities like San Antonio. The Shriner Parade Costumes were reported to be extravagant to say the least and the Patrol Units on Horseback. The vehicles in the parade were a sight to behold. Once the parade was over, the novices were given a “crash” course in being a Shriner beginning at 6:00pm until about 11:00pm. The ceremonial was followed by a grand banquet served by the ladies of the Eastern Star Chapter in the J.L. Bain building while the Ben Hur Band provided musical entertainment. A host of speakers during the banquet praised the city of Kenedy for hosting the ceremonial event hoping that it might be repeated soon.

Editorial Note: The preceding account of events in 1914 in Kenedy when a news crew visited City Hall in Kenedy and saw picture on the wall of the Shrine Event in 1914. A former resident of Kenedy brought a news crew to City Hall and explained that the men in the funny hats were members of Klu Klux Klan. The former resident was quickly made aware of who the men in the picture were. The original account was published in the Kenedy Advance Newspaper. This event took place at a time when the jurisdiction of Ben Hur extended all the way to the coast.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

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 Beaukiss
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

December 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Texana 123	2 RENTAL	3 LOH RENTAL	4	5 BEN HUR TRAVEL CLUB	6 Motley Brue Toy Dance Thorndale
7 Cabiri Lunch RENTAL	8 Golf	9 Mini B Board Meet HLSC' RENTAL	10 Motorized Units Parsons	11 Provost Guard	12 LOS	13 Ruh Neb
14 Ruh Neb	15	16 Directors Staff RENTAL	17 NILE Parsons	18 BHST Stated	19 RENTAL	20
21 LOS	22	23 RENTAL	24 Christmas Eve	25 BHST Closed Christmas	26	27
28	29	30 RENTAL	31 New Years Eve Party & Dance BHST Closed			

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

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 DIVAN RETREAT
11 Movie Matinee	12 Golf	13 Mini B HLSC RENTAL	14 Parsons Motorized Units	15 BHST Stated	16 GRAND LODGE (WACO)	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 FOR
LATEST DATES AND TIMES. CALENDARS CAN CHANGE.**



Ring in the New Year at Ben Hur Shrine

Doors open at 9pm

Snacks provided

**Sparkling Wine & Cider provided for that New
Year Toast**

Dance to the Night Shift Band

Formal Black Tie & Fez Event

**Return at Noon on the 1st for Black-eyed Peas &
Ham**

RSVP to the office by December 30th.

WELCOME NEW NOBLE

Welcome to new Noble Ryan J DiVincenzo who was created at the October Stated Meeting.



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)
1995	George Auer (El Kalah)

CHARIOT BOOSTER CLUB

Brian & Carol Vance	12/36	David & Juanell Yeager	11/25
Greg & Ann Murrow	04/35		
Steve & Pat Koehn	03/35		
In Memory of Joyce & Donna King	08/29		
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		
Ron & Debbie Speaks	03/26		
Tom & Judy Schneider	02/26		
Charles & Kerry Campbell	02/26		
Charlie & Betty Farnham	02/26		
Kay & Ron Harrison PP	01/26		
John Cooper	11/25		
In Memory of			
Margaret & Bob Kelly, PP	11/25		
In Memory of Vernon Milton	11/25		

NOTICE: Did YOUR name get dropped this edition? Remember to check the date following your name. **Next edition will drop all dates to 11/25!** 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

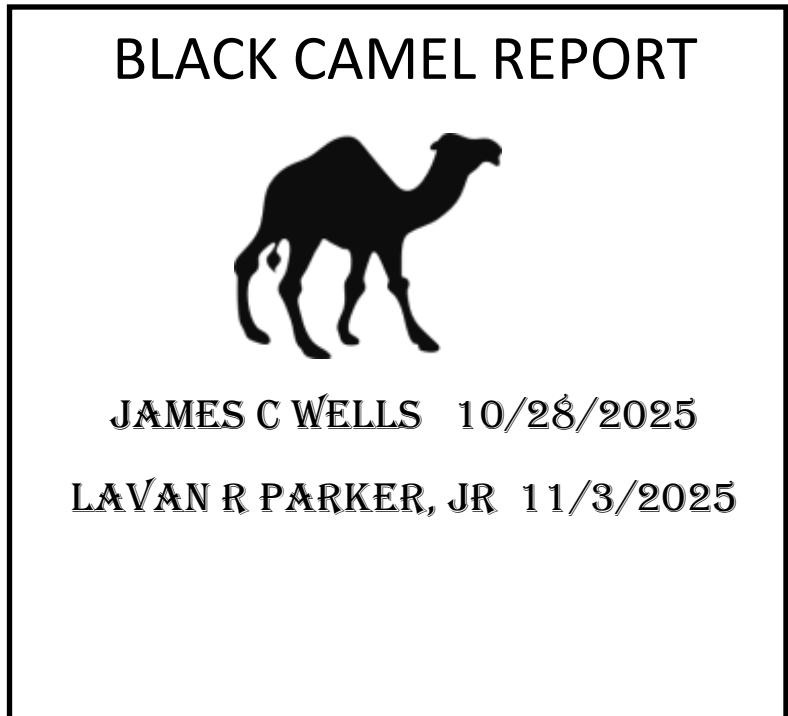
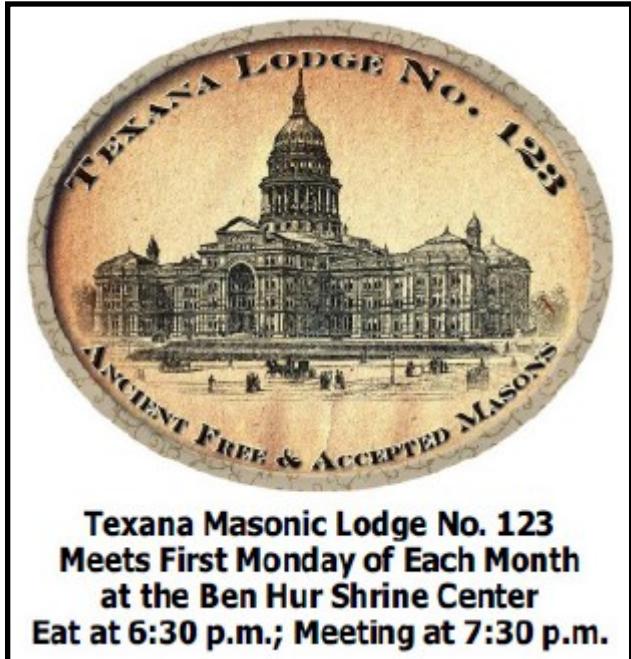
NAME(S): _____

Mail to the Temple Secretary.

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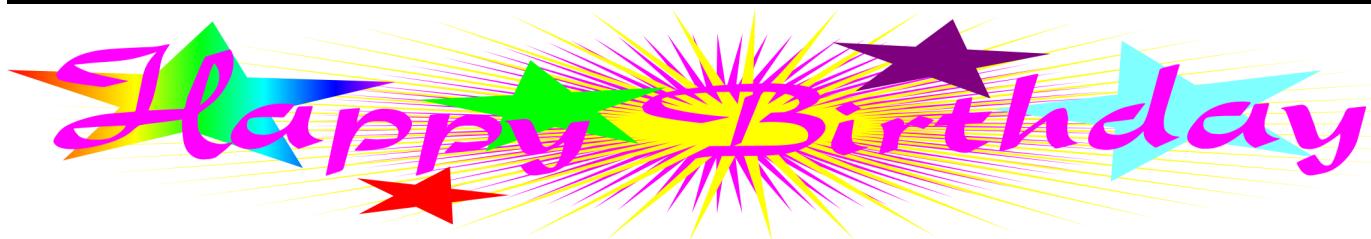
If you wish to make a donation directly to our Shriners Childrens in Texas, here is the address. Make your check payable to Shriners Hospitals for Children—Texas

**Shriners Hospitals for Children
Donation Department
815 Market Street
Galveston, Texas 77550**

Ben Hur Shriners
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Austin, TX 78757
(512) 480-0812

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BEN HUR NOBLES WITH BIRTHDAYS IN DECEMBER

12/1

Donaciano M Gonzalez

12/2

Stephen A Borrego

Scott L Lehman

Charles N Jones

12/3

Jimmie S Graybill

12/5

Richard M Smith

Lawrence Way

Fred W Maynard

12/8

Aaron Alford

12/9

Kenneth L Parker

Gary L Knackstedt

Richard P Brandwein Jr

12/10

Lawrence E Clare

12/12

Steven R Washburn

12/14

John C Reed Jr

Gerald D Marx

Ewell M Lawrence Jr

Donald R Wheeler

12/15

Robert L Doss

Thomas A Hamilton

12/16

William W Bellotte

John R Dickens

Don R Hewlett

12/17

Christian D Moore

12/18

Justin N Byers III

Chris A Moyseos

12/19

Dennis J Moore

Andrew Murray

12/20

Richard M Gilman

Jack F Buel

Adil A Lalljee

12/21

Jesse H Soliz

12/23

Thomas H Hauss PP

12/26

Craig S Reiswig

12/27

Calvin D Bourgeois

Ford A Meadows

12/28

Kenneth A Keller

12/29

Elisha R Morgan