



BEN HUR Shriners

The Chariot



MAY 2026

VOL. 94, NO 5

Dinner and Casino!

When: Saturday, May 9, 2026

Where: Ben Hur Shrine Center

Doors open @ 6:00 p.m.

Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m.



Cinco de Mayo Menu

(Enchilada casserole, rice, beans, and fixings)

Casino Games from 7:00 p.m. to 9:45 p.m.

Silent Auction and Door Prizes

Cost: \$50.00 per person



Your friends and neighbors are welcome!

Tickets On Sale Now!

In person, online at www.benhurshrine.org, or Venmo @paycjfarnham

Proceeds Benefit Ben Hur Shriners

Payments not deductible as a charitable contribution

**IMPORTANT STATED
MEETING MESSAGE PAGE 3**

BEN HUR SHRINE

CHARTED AUGUST 16, 1892
7811 Rockwood Lane
Austin, Texas 78757
Phone 512-480-0812
www.benhurshrine.org
secretary@benhurshrine.org
recorder@benhurshrine.org

BEN HUR OFFICE HOURS
Mon - Fri 9:30am to 2:30pm
Closed on Major Holidays

**ILLUSTRIOUS SIR
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2026 POTENTATE**

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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
Danny Adrian
Donor Relations
Ronald Speaks, High Priest and Prophet
Master of Ceremonies
Mike Sanders
Fund Raising Chairman
Jonathan Felger

APPOINTED STAFF (CONT)

Chief of Staff
Earl Robertson, PP
Office Manager
Aliya Spivey
Building & Grounds Manager
James Heineman PP
Chaplain
Ryan Divincenzo
Entertainment Committee
Chef Ernest Owney, Jim Kinley, Debbie Kinley,
Russell Hur, Russell Jones, Brenda Willis Scholin
Lana Stone, Dave Harnden, Mike Sanders, Michele
Sanders, Jeff Schlieve, Cristal Schlieve
Insurance Chairman
Gerald "Jerry" Carruth
Insurance Committee
Ill Sir Charles Maddox, Potentate, Charles
Farnham, PP, Andy Barclay
Sam Stimson, PhD , Recorder
Legal Counsel
Gerald C. "Jerry" Carruth
Masonic Relations
Christian Moore
\$100 Million Dollar Club
Ricki Pierce
Parade Marshal
Ricki Pierce
Parliamentarian
Gerald C. "Jerry" Carruth
Photographer
James Heineman PP
Public Relations
Andy Murray
Sickness & Distress
Nobility
Transportation Chairman
Vance Brown
Social Media
Andy Murray
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 May 21 2026. **CURRENT DUES CARD IS REQUIRED!**

There will be a Special Election at the Ben Hur May stated meeting on the 21st, The vacancy of the High Priest & Prophet office needs to be filled. Imperial Bylaw 325.14 allows for a special election is the vacancy is prior to July 1st.

Further, Travis County will hold early voting in the BLUE room during that week as well. This means we will not have access to the BLUE room for Stated Meeting. As we have done at previous stated meetings, round tables will be set up in the Auditorium for the meal, and after the meal, the ladies can adjourn to the middle room for their program and the men will hold the May stated meeting in the Auditorium.

Please keep the garage and parking area by the garage open for handicap voting.

CHIEF RABBAN - farnhamcf@outlook.com

I hope this message finds you well as we move into May and prepare for our first fraternal fundraiser of the year—the **Dinner and Casino Party** on Saturday, May 9, 2026, at Ben Hur Shrine.

Admission is \$50.00 per person and includes dinner (enchiladas, beans, rice, and all the fixings) and casino games. The bar will be open, and we will also have a silent auction and door prizes. If you have not yet purchased your ticket, please do so soon at www.benhurshrine.org or via Venmo (@paycjfarnham).

Looking ahead, we have a **Dinner and Draw** currently scheduled for August 15 at Ben Hur Shrine and a **Rodeo** on October 10 in Liberty Hill. The Dinner and Draw is a modern take on the former “Lottery Party,” and the Rodeo is a new event inspired by the Ben Hur Circus. We are finalizing the rodeo contract and will announce a kickoff meeting soon. Your help will be needed, so please reach out if you would like to get involved.



The **Texas Shrine Association (TSA) Ceremonial Session** is right around the corner. Ben Hur will host Shriners from across the great state of Texas from Thursday, June 11, 2026, through Sunday, June 14, 2026, in Austin. Registration information is available on the TSA website (<http://www.texasshrine.com>). Please complete the registration form and submit it to the Ben Hur office at recorder@benhurshrine.org.

If you have not yet reserved your room at the Austin Southpark Hotel, you should do so soon, as our room block will be released on May 15. To make a reservation, contact Jenna Sitter at Jenna.Sitter@hilton.com or 512-383-2625 and tell her you are with Ben Hur Shriners. Our planning team has been working diligently to organize the events and Unit competitions that make up the TSA Ceremonial Session—please refer to the schedule of events elsewhere in this issue of the *Chariot*.

Our **2027 Planning Meeting** on March 31 generated great discussion on membership and explored ideas to help guide Ben Hur's future. If you missed it, join us for the next meeting on June 30 at Onion Creek Lodge (706 N. Bluff Drive, Austin). We will meet at 6:30 PM, share a light meal, and continue the conversation. Additional meetings will be held throughout our Oasis.

I leave you to contemplate the word “support” and its use related to our fraternity. In a fraternal organization, *support* goes far beyond simply showing up—it reflects a shared commitment to the success of both events and fellow members.

Support means giving your time, whether that's helping plan, set up, or put on an event. It means contributing resources, promoting activities, and encouraging participation so that events are meaningful and well-attended. Support is also personal—it's checking in on a fellow Noble, offering wise counsel, and celebrating each other's achievements.

Strong support builds stronger events, but more importantly, it strengthens the bonds of brotherhood. When members actively support one another, the fraternity thrives, participation grows, and the sense of purpose that defines us becomes more visible and impactful.

HIGH PRIEST & PROPHET

Illustrious Sirs, Nobles and Ladies of Ben Hur Shrine,

I submitted my resignation as your High Priest and Prophet to our Potentate, Illustrious Sir Charles Maddox, who graciously accepted it, effective April 2, 2026. I have no words to describe how painful or stressful it was to make that decision. During the past few years, I've been living with a number of chronic health concerns. However, something I didn't expect, during the past seven to eight months, my medical issues have taken a turn for the worse. In the first three months of 2026, I've had a number of exams and consultations. The good news: none of my problems are considered life threatening. The same as in my letter sent to you, via the Ben Hur email mid-April, I won't bore you in this Chariot article with all of the medical details. But allow me to say, without my wonderful Lady Debbie and her tremendous support, I would probably be telling a much different story. As a side note: we have to make a few trips, get a few more things taken care of, then we hope to see you, as often as we can - for we truly value your friendship.

My most recent prognosis, which came the week before the Nobility Ball, wasn't very promising. For a couple of my ailments, the progressive effects are becoming more and more noticeable. Without immediate continuous and personal time-consuming attention, I've been advised that my situation will most likely continue to decline over the next 24-36 months before it stabilizes. (Again, none of these problems are life threatening, just very aggravating... which I'm gotten used to.) But the latest news brought me to the immediate realization that I will be frequently absent and often unable to satisfactorily perform my Divan duties and service to the Nobility. After about ten days of countless discussions with Debbie and lots of deep and painful thought to our situation, I realized that for mine and Lady Debbie's sake my resignation from the Divan was not only necessary, but it was also in the best interest of Ben Hur Shrine.

I am well aware that many of you, who are in the Units, Clubs, Past Potentates and those of you in other areas of support and Ladies too are working to make Ben Hur Shrine a success, and I know that you unselfishly give your support to Illustrious Sirs Charles & Lady Emily, Charlie & Lady Betty, James & Lady Janet, and Nobles Sam, our Emeritus Recorder & Lady Jeannette, Ricky & Lady Angie, Ricki & Lady Donna, and for the "Next Noble Up and his Lady". Debbie and I truly appreciate the support you've given us. All of you are the "heart and soul" of our great Shriner organization. By supporting each other and working together, you will make Ben Hur better and stronger. May the Grand Architect bless each and every one of you.

Fraternally, and with Love to ALL Y'ALL

Noble Ron and Lady Debbie Speaks



2026 TSA Ceremonial Session

Preliminary Schedule (4/2/2026)

Thursday, June 11, 2026

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. | TSGA (Golf) Competition – Day 1 | Jimmy Clay Golf Course

8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. | Marketplace Setup | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (A-B)

2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. | Marketplace | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (A-B)

2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | Registration | Austin Southpark Hotel - Lobby

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | Counterparts/Cabiri Reception | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom Foyer

7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. | Counterparts Dinner | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (C-D)

Friday, June 12, 2026

8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. | Registration | Austin Southpark Hotel - Lobby

8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. | Marketplace | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (A-B)

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. | TSSSA (Shotgun) Competition | Capital City Clays

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. | TSA Business Meeting | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (D-F)

10:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. | TSGA (Golf) Competition – Day 2 | Roy Kiser Golf Course

10:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. | VIP Ladies Luncheon | Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum (Bus Provided)

1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Registration | Austin Southpark Hotel - Lobby

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. | TSHBA (Brew Units) “People’s Choice” tasting and cornhole competition | Austin Southpark Hotel – Magnolia Room

Saturday, June 13, 2026

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. | Registration | Austin Southpark Hotel - Lobby

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. | TSMMPA (Motorized) | Circuit of The Americas (COTA) Lot E

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. | TSPGA (Provost Guard) | Austin Rifle Club

8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. | Marketplace | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (A-B)

9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. | Bands | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (D-F)

10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. | TALOH (Legion of Honor) | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (D-F)

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. | TSCA (Clowns) | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (D-F)

1:00 p.m. – 1:45 a.m. | TSDA (Directors Staff) | Austin Southpark Hotel – Magnolia Room

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | TASOB (Oriental Bands) | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (D-F)

6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. | Dinner and Awards Reception | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom Foyer

6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. | Dinner and Awards with entertainment provided by the Hill Country Ramblers | Austin Southpark Hotel – Longhorn Ballroom (C-F)

Sunday, June 14, 2026

6:00 a.m. – Noon | Marketplace Move-out

Breakfast on your own – Safe travels home

HISTORY

TURKISH ADMIRAL SPOOFED

Turkish Admiral Ahmed Pasha traveled to Washington D.C. for the purpose of purchasing a war ship for his government. His mission was both technical and diplomatic. He had arrived amidst much speculation as to the purpose of his visit. He had already toured the National Armory works at Springfield, Mass. and the Engineering Works at Hartford, Conn.

As he rode up Pennsylvania Avenue, he observed flashing lights in store windows depicting the sword and crescent, men in Turkish fezes and baggy trousers such as would be seen on the streets of Constantinople. The Sultan proclaimed, "**By Allah, these Christians do me a great honor**". He rose in his carriage and bowed profoundly thinking all the fanfare was in his honor.

No one had the nerve as yet to reveal to the Turkish envoy that the display was not arranged to his honor but was the culmination of the elite members of the Mystic Shriners Imperial Session. No mention was made as to his reaction to being spoofed.

Washington was taken over by the shiners who took in all the tourist sites, restaurants and historic locations.

A minor riot was the result of Noble Val Woodruff tossing a silver dollar from his hotel room to a group of newspaper boys. The resulting scramble caused such a ruckus that he emptied his pockets coins and continued to throw them to the street. Noble Woodruff and some of the members of Kismet Temple continued to throw nickels and pennies from the windows for up to three hours. Each handful of coins was greeted with a round of cheers from the newsboys and others.

Gene Freudenberg/PP/Historian

Chariot May 2026/Credits Washington Post May 1900

May 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2 Motley Brue RENTAL
3 RENTAL RENTAL	4 Texana 123	5 RENTAL Cinco de Mayo	6 LOH RENTAL	7 RENTAL	8	9 Dinner & Casino Games
10 Mothers Day	11 Golf Unit	12 Mini B's HLSC RENTAL	13 Parsons Motorized Units	14 Provost Guard	15	16
17 LOS	18	19 Directors Staff RENTAL	20 Nile Parsons	21 BHST	22	23
Travis County Early Voting (Run Off)						
24	25 BHST Closed Memorial Day	26 RENTAL RUNOFF ELECTION	27	28	29	30
31						

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

June 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Texana 123	2 RENTAL	3 LOH RENTAL	4	5 RENTAL	6 RENTAL Motley Brue
7 RENTAL	8	9 Mini B RENTAL	10 Parsons Motorized	11 HLSC	12 13 TSA CEREMONIAL	
14 Flag Day	15	16 Directors Staff RENTAL	17 NILE Parsons	18 BHST Stated	19 Juneteenth	20 TSA Victory Party
21 LOS Fathers Day	22	23 RENTAL	24	25	26 27 Mahjong Tournament	
28	29	30 RENTAL				

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CLOWNS

Perspective from a Noble Clown,

Dear Nobles of Ben Hur Shrine. If you did not attend the Nobility Ball you missed out. The bar was elevated to a high standard. The food was excellent, the service and attentiveness were outstanding, and the drinks were on par with what we have come to expect. And let us not forget the young college man who sang us into the night with the likes of Frank, Dean, and the rest. He will be a star someday. All of this to say how disappointed I am with such a low turnout. All the usual suspects were there, but what about the rest of the Nobility? Whether you agree with the Divan or not, attend meetings or not, like or not like someone, it should not matter. We are supposed to be supportive Brothers who partake in fellowship and fun. I liken this to not voting and then voicing an opinion on the results. How are we to increase our membership if we don't even support what we have?

As for the Clown's point of view, I will speak of the parades. Abysmal participation. I ain't gonna sugarcoat it. This week was the Bluebonnet Festival in Burnet, and it was jam-packed. The downside was that we had a GRAND TOTAL of 12 participants. 12. What is going on? I understand some plans are made in advance, but I will not accept this for every parade. The people love the Shriners, the Clowns, Charioteers, Honey Badgers, Mini B's, etc. All of us. If getting to a parade is an issue, we can look into using our van, or another vehicle, (even if we have to spend a few dollars and rent one) and meet halfway to the venue so everyone doesn't have to drive. (Not a bad idea) Take the time to look inward and ask why you are not participating. Remember, you don't participate, you don't have a voice.

Thank you

Macaroni

Texas Shrine Association Ceremonial Session

A weekend of fraternity, fun,
and friendly competition.



June 11-14, 2026
Austin Southpark Hotel

We are still seeking Shriners who are willing
and able to help with on-site logistics and
hospitality room support.

Contact Charlie Farnham, Director General
(farnhamcf@outlook.com), if you are
interested and have time to help!

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

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
Greg & Vinna Rye PP	04/30
Aggie & George Auer PP	02/30
David & Juanell Yeager	02/30
In Memory of Joyce & Donna King	08/29
Betty & Charlie Farnham PP	05/29
John Eric Cooper	05/29
In memory of James McConnell PP	03/29
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
Ricki Hayes & Angie Shaffer	04/27
Boyce and Jody Freitag	04/27
In memory of Byron Betncourt	04/27
Brenda W. Scholin, Realtor	03/27
In memory of Stan Anderson	03/27
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

NOTICE: Did YOUR name get dropped this edition? Remember to check the date following your name. **Next edition will drop all dates to 05/26!** 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
ATTORNEY AT LAW

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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



JOHN L ALLEN 3/11/2025
BRUCE E BROWN 8/19/2025
ALLEN HOLMES 3/27/2026



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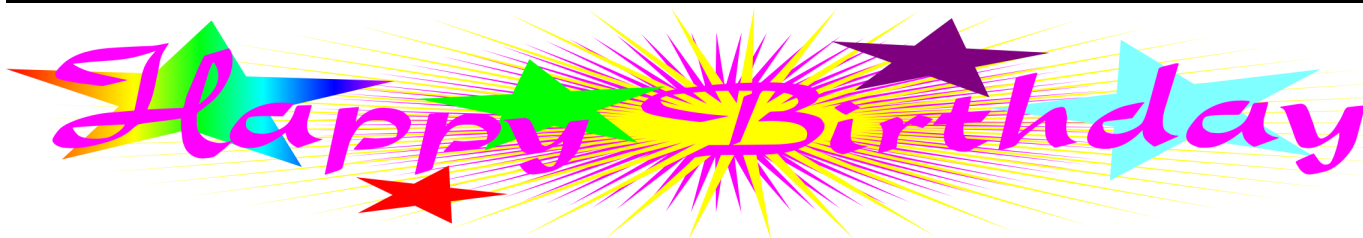
If you wish to make a donation directly to our Shriners Childrens in Texas, here is the address. Make your check payable to Shriners Hospitals for Children—Texas

**Shriners Hospitals for Children
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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 MAY

5/1

Danut Prisacaru

5/5

Harry W Elliott

5/8

Gary F Wawak
Abram Wallace

5/9

Ronnie G Jackson PP

5/10

Ted L Robertson

5/13

Jesse N Love

5/16

John D Holmes

5/17

Silas A Powell Jr, PP
Jason B Greve

5/18

Jerome K Hohman

5/19

Randall W Lake

5/22

Thomas H Arbuckle

5/23

David W Desormeau
Edward A Balusek Sr.

5/28

Harold W Harton Jr
Russell L Jones

5/29

Daniel G Crisostomo

5/30

Ayodele Osisanya

5/31

Robert R Schier
Dana M Graham