



BEN HUR Shriners

The Chariot



AUGUST 2026

VOL. 94, NO 8

SHAKESPEARE TEXAS STYLE



A GOOD OL' MURDER MYSTERY

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH, 2026

DOORS OPEN 6:30 PM - SHOOTIN' STARTS 7 PM

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recorder@benhurshrine.org

BEN HUR OFFICE HOURS

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

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ILLUSTRIOUS SIR**CHARLES MADDOX****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**

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Ricki Pierce

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STATED MEETING

Ben Hur Shrine meets on the 3rd Thursday of the
 month. The next stated meeting will be Sept 17
 2026. **CURRENT DUES CARD IS REQUIRED!**

POTENTATE - charlesemaddox@gmail.com

Imperial Sir, Illustrious Sirs, Nobles, and Ladies,

Your 2026 Divan returned from the Imperial Session in Tampa, and let me just say, the humidity is BETTER here in Central Texas than in Tampa. You could feel the wall of heat and humidity hit you the moment you stepped outside.

A few brief updates from Imperial Session.

Most of you are aware that Imp. Sir Marty Bartlett, then-Imperial Outer Guard, was suspended by the then-Imperial Potentate under Special Order No. 3, for, in the opinion of the then-Imperial Potentate, Conduct Unbecoming a Noble. Imp. Bartlett appealed to the Grievances and Appeals Committee, which sustained some of the accusations (i.e. (1) improperly billing Shriners International in general, (2) using a Shrine Vehicle for non-Shrine business, (3) solicitation of a vendor for a personal hotel suite, and (4) charged meals to hospital when not on hospital business) and dismissed others (i.e. (1) harassment of and creating environment of intimidation, and (2) solicitation of funds from shrine hospital for fraternal fundraiser). The Grievances and Appeals Committee recommended that Imp. Bartlett's appeal be denied. The committee report was rejected 269-315 (46.06%-53.94%), and Imp. Bartlett was reinstated in office.

During the elections, Imp. Bartlett was challenged from the floor by Ill. Ricky Arrocha of Panama for Imperial High Priest and Prophet and narrowly won 294-269 (52.22%-47.78%). Imp. Jim Cain, the incumbent Imperial Recorder, lost reelection to Imp. Richard Burke 228-338 (40.29%-59.71%). Ill. Richard Loomes won on the second ballot for Imperial Outer Guard over Ill. David Dodson 291-266 (52.24%-47.76%).

The voting delegates at the Imperial Session, rejected a resolution to abolish the reimbursement for spouses, but approved the abolishment of the per diem for representatives to Imperial Session, in addition to an increase in per capita tied to the consumer price index – which passed by a mere 11 votes out of 502 cast.

On behalf of the Assistant Rabban and myself, thank you to the nobles for electing us as your representatives to this year's session. We stayed from beginning to end casting votes on all issues, making sure Ben Hur's voice was heard and recorded. Further, the High Priest and Prophet and Oriental Guide attended, when they did not need to. I applaud them for their tenacity and eagerness. Of note, during the per diem votes, approximately 90 or so representatives did not cast a vote and did not represent their temples, which is unfortunately that those temple were deprived of their voice, given the narrowness of the passage.

Fraternally,

Ill. Charles E. Maddox, Potentate

Ben Hur Shriners No. 58



CHIEF RABBAN - farnhamcf@outlook.com

Betty and I recently returned from the Imperial Session of Shriners International in Tampa, Florida, with a renewed sense of brotherhood and fraternity. We were reminded to look beyond egos and disagreements and instead take joy in connecting—and reconnecting—with Nobles and their Ladies. Those relationships strengthen our faith in the future of our fraternity and our philanthropy. During the Session, representatives participated in two and a half days of reports and legislative discussions that will help shape the future of Shriners Children's, enabling our healthcare system to provide care to more children in more places, and the operations of Shriners International and our local Shrine Temples. Here is a summary of the results of the fraternal legislation:



1. The per-capita paid by members to Shriners International can now change each year based on the Consumer Price Index and membership numbers. This change is capped at a \$5.00 per year increase.
2. The representatives' \$20 per day per-diem was eliminated.
3. A certificate of completion of a Shrine Leadership training is a new qualification needed to run for Potentate of a Temple.
4. A change of location for two Temples was approved.
5. Three Temples were granted dispensation:
6. Nubia Shriners in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
7. Ainsijam Shriners in Quito, Ecuador
8. Alasia Shriners in Nicosia, Cyprus
6. Ñemity Shriners in Asunción, Paraguay received their Charter
7. Various Temples received approval to align with different Shrine Associations.
8. A Noble must now serve at least one year as an Imperial Officer in order to be eligible for Imperial Potentate.
9. Shrine Temples will now be notified if any Imperial Officer or member of the Board of Trustees is suspended.
10. Treasurer is now added to the list of titles that may be embroidered on the Fez.
11. The requirement limiting the embroidered text on a fez to one line has been removed.
12. Anezeh Shriners now has exclusive jurisdiction in the country of Belize.
13. The exception allowing Arkansas Temples to accept petitions from non-Masons has been removed.

On a local note we have two exciting fraternal fundraising events on the horizon: the Ben Hur Rodeo and the Dine and Draw Dinner. Planning for the inaugural Ben Hur Rodeo is well underway, with the kickoff meeting scheduled for 6:30pm on August 4, 2026. We will be asking each of you to use your personal and professional connections to help secure sponsorships and support this new fundraising effort. Making the rodeo a success will require the dedication and participation of our entire membership, both in the months leading up to the event and throughout rodeo weekend.

Continued next page

Tickets are now on sale for the Dine and Draw fundraiser on Saturday, December 19, 2026. This evening of great food, fellowship, and exciting door prizes promises to be another memorable Ben Hur event. Additional information about both fundraisers can be found on the Events page of the Ben Hur website at www.benhurshrine.org/events and in upcoming email announcements. Your participation and support will play an important role in the success of these events and demonstrate your commitment to the future of Ben Hur Shrine.

In closing, I leave you with one word: **Integrity**.

Integrity is the foundation of our fraternity. While our traditions and philanthropy define what we do, it is the character of our members that defines who we are. Integrity means doing what is right, acting with honesty, accountability, and respect, and remaining faithful to the principles we have pledged to uphold. Every action we take reflects not only on ourselves but on Ben Hur Shrine and the Shrine fraternity as a whole.

Integrity is especially important in leadership, where decisions must always serve our mission and the greater good rather than personal interests. Titles may recognize service, but character defines legacy. By treating one another with dignity, respecting differing opinions, and working together in a spirit of brotherhood, we strengthen our fraternity and preserve it for future generations.

As we move forward together, let integrity guide how we live, lead, and serve. If we remain true to our principles and united in purpose, Ben Hur Shrine will continue to grow stronger as we fulfill our mission of supporting Shriners Children's and improving the lives of the children and families we are privileged to serve.

Ben Hur Rodeo Kickoff Meeting

Tuesday, August 4, 2026
Blue Room - 6:30pm Start
Hamburgers and Hotdogs served



Do not sit idly by—we need you to be part
of building this legend!

Rodeo Date
October 24, 2026

HIGH PRIEST AND PROPHET- piercerick8511@gmail.com

Nobles and Ladies,

Let me first say thank you to the Nobility for entrusting me to be you're High Priest & Prophet, I am truly honored by your confidence, and I will continue to work for the benefit of all Ben Hur Nobles while providing leadership in all of our endeavors.

Parade season has begun, and we already have a few parades under our belts. These events allow Ben Hur to showcase the fun, fellowship, and philanthropy that make our fraternity so special to the communities we serve. Some who watch us may one day become Nobles, others may choose to support our philanthropy, and many simply enjoy seeing Ben Hur participate in their hometown parades.

At the Luling Watermelon Thump Parade on June 27, we heard many spectators asking where our little cars, trikes, and clowns were. They enjoy seeing our units, and they want to see you! With that in mind, I encourage every Noble to make every effort to participate in as many Temple-approved parades as possible. Your presence makes a difference.

If a unit or club would like to participate in a parade that the Temple is not officially attending, the unit or club head must submit a request to the Potentate for approval before participating.

In addition to our parade schedule, we have our inaugural Ben Hur Rodeo coming up on October 24, 2026. We will need as many Nobles as possible to help make this event a success. Opportunities include selling sponsorships and advertising, cooking and serving concessions, directing parking, staffing admission gates, and many other essential tasks. If you are willing to help, please let us know. It will take all of us working together to make this event successful.

These events are what bring us together and help our Temple thrive. I firmly believe that if we build exciting, meaningful activities, people will come. More importantly, these events provide opportunities to introduce others to our fraternity and grow our membership. People are looking for a reason to belong to an organization that makes a difference. Let's give them that reason. Let's give them something to remember.

Again, thank you to each Noble for allowing me to advance to my current position on the Divan and continue serving Ben Hur Shrine. I look forward to working alongside each of you as we continue building a stronger Temple together.

Remaining Parades with tentative line up times. More information to come.

08/01	Bastrop	Homecoming Rodeo	8:00	10:00
08/15	Johnson City	Blanco County Fair	8:00	10:00
08/28	Fredricksberg	Gillespie County Fair	8:00	10:00
09/26	Bertram	Oatmeal Festival	TBA	TBA
12/05	Thorndale	Christmas	10:00	1:00

In Brotherly Love,
Ricki Pierce
High Priest & Prophet
Parade Marshal

ORIENTAL GUIDE- s.m.preece1954@gmail.com

Just wanted to let everyone know that the Divan has been attending parades. Every parade we have attended the people are asking where the little cars and motorcycles are. Not just kids either, lots of adults too. I know the parade Marshal is trying to get as many of the motorized units to attend as he can get,, there is a large demand by the people, and let's face it a parade is not a real parade without ya'll. Please come if within length of your cable tow.

Fraternally
Mike Preece
Oriental Guide



" Thank You Ben Hur Shrine"

On July 11, 2026; Hill City Lodge no. 456 celebrated their 150th Birthday Party at the Temple. It was a wonderful and well attended event thanks to the Masonic organizations who pitched in for the Lodge birthday party.

Hill City would like to recognize the following:

Thank you Sam, Aliya, and James from the Temple staff.

Thank you to the Directors Staff for preparing the wonderful Fajitas and Trimmings. Point men: Jaret Preece, Chris Braziel, Jimmy Preece. Carl Winters. Mike Preece, Ricki Pierce. Glen Goulet. Danny Adrian John Cooper and Brad Cole.

Thank you to the Ben Hera Court # 91 and Ruh Neb #64 for making the Birthday cakes and the sides, Janet Heineman and all the did a remarkable job.

Thank you to the Austin Chapter No. 304 Order of Eastern Star for the beautiful table center pieces, decorations, and jaw dropping photo arch. Monica Corley and the members of the Austin Chapter 304.

Thank you to Cynthia Miller! Cynthia and her crew handled all of the set-up and breakdown and clean up of the Temple.

And a big thank you to Buddy Funderburgh, Worshipful Master of Texana Lodge and his Nightshift Band for our live music and the festive finale to the event.

And thank you Illustrious Sir, Charles Maddox for the heartwarming speech to the lodge! Great memories and history was made on July 11, 2026 at the Ben Hur Shrine Temple!



August 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 Motley Brue
2 RENTAL	3 Texana 123	4 RENTAL	5 LOH RENTAL	6	7	8
9	10	11 RENTAL Mini-Bs	12 Parsons Motorized	13 HLSC	14	15
16 LOS	17	18 Directors Staff Provost RENTAL	19 NILE Parsons	20	21	22 WM Appreciation dinner
23	24	25 RENTAL	26	27	28 Rental	29 Rental
30	31					

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

September 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 RENTAL	2 LOH RENTAL	3	4 RENTAL	5 Motley Brue
6 RENTAL	7 Texana 123 BHST Closed	8 Mini B's RENTAL	9 Parsons Lodge Motorized Units	10 HLSC Provost Guard	11 Murder Mystery	12 Full Form Ceremonial
13	14 Golf Unit	15 Directors Staff RENTAL PG Practice	16 NILE Parsons Lodge	17 BHST Stated	18	19 Bingo RENTAL
20 LOS RENTAL	21	22 RENTAL	23	24	25	26 RENTAL Grotto Stated (offsite)
27	28	29 RENTAL	30			

**BE SURE AND CHECK WWW.BENHURSHRINE.ORG FOR
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PICTURES FROM 2026 IMPERIAL SESSION





HISTORY

MASONIC GRAND LODGE OF TEXAS DESTINED TO BE BUILT IN AUSTIN ?

The local Masonic fraternities will hold a meeting in the parlors of the Driskill Hotel to hear the reports of the committees appointed some days ago to look into the matter of perfecting the plans for securing the erection of the Grand Lodge Masonic Temple in Austin. The appointed committee's purpose to prepare a presentation demonstrating the advantages possessed by Austin for the placing of the temple in this city. The program also seeks to determine how much money the citizens of Austin would provide to assist in the procurement of the facility. The committee is using their best efforts to get the support of the citizens of Austin. Even though the building will be the property of the Masonic Order this should not deter the citizens from working for the temple. Several other cities are working just as hard to get the temple in their city. Those prominent in the pursuit are Dallas, Fort Worth and Waco.

In the recent past, the Texas legislature granted the Grand Lodge of Mason of Texas the right to purchase the lot at Congress Avenue and Eleventh Street for the purpose of erecting a Masonic Temple on it. A.P. Woolridge, a member of the finance committee authorized a statement that the work of the committee was satisfactory every way, but that more work was needed before it would be ascertained if Austin is going to get the Temple. Based on the meetings with the citizens of Austin it is readily apparent that much work needs to be done to secure the Temple here. The cost of the proposed building is projected to be less than \$200,000. The committee reports that the chances of getting the Temple in Austin are uncommonly bright.

While the type of architecture is yet to be determined will be one of the largest and handsomest in the state. The building will be at least eight stories tall and the lot upon which it is to be built is several thousand square feet in excess of the requirement demanded by Grand Lodge.

Mr. Woolridge said there is no reason that the structure should not be located in Austin. The locating committee appointed by Grand Lodge will visit Austin for the purpose of inspecting the proposed site and here terms offered by the local masons.

Editors Note: The location of the Temple was to be the lot at the southwest corner of Congress Avenue and Eleventh St. This was the site of the old Texas Capitol that burned in 1881..

Gene Freudenberg PP/Historian/Aug Chariot 2026

Credits: Austin American Statesman September 1906

CHARIOT BOOSTER CLUB

Brian & Carol Vance	12/36
Greg & Ann Murrow	04/35
Steve & Pat Koehn	03/35
Bobby Tiner	05/30
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
In memory of Loren Orme PP	05/28
Fred & Traci Maynard	01/28
Jerry & Bea Hohman	07/28
Gerald "Jerry" Carruth	09/27
In memory of Gail Carruth	09/27
In memory of Don Lee	07/27
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

NOTICE: Did YOUR name get dropped this edition? Remember to check the date following your name. **Next edition will drop all dates to 07/26!** 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

EWELL M LAWRENCE 11/6/2022

DON JOHNSON 2/9/2025



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8/1

Vernon C Scott

8/2

Edward E Berriman III

8/5

John B Landolt Jr.

Allen D Dugger

8/6

Jerry C Comegys

Benjamin J Pierson

8/7

David M Harnden

Robert R Schier III

8/8

Gary H Kramer

Ronald K Speaks

Ray Foster

Darren K Lewis

8/9

Ronald D Fortenberry Jr

8/11

Raymond C Mathews Jr

Dewey D Wells

Jay Ashton

8/13

Reuben D Wallace

8/14

James F Crawford

James R LaFosse

8/16

Shane A Rawlings

8/19

Sean M Haines

8/20

Jimmy L Barho

8/22

Robert A Newlander

Bobby D Clakley

8/25

Ramon M Reyes

8/26

John A Barclay IV

8/27

Thomas D Blackwell

Raul J Scully

8/30

Joe D Smith

Luis M Diaz

8/31

Charles K Davidson