

GRAND COMMANDERY of OHIO
State News for November, 2023
Web Site: <https://ohioknightstemplar.com>
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Sir Knights and Ladies of Ohio,

Lady Debbie and I are humbled to have been selected to serve you during the coming Templar year. I appreciate your confidence in voting me to represent you as the Right Eminent Grand Commandery of Ohio, and will do my best to live up to your trust. Together we will position this greatest jurisdiction for a successful future.

As I write this, I reflect that it has been a very busy two weeks since my installation. I had several dispensations to issue, approved and signed by-law changes, and have attended several Masonic meetings including Grand Lodge of Ohio where my friend was installed as Grand Master. One of the more rewarding experiences in this brief time was presenting a 70-years of service plaque to a member of my own Commandery who is 100 years young. I also had to write a Christmas message, which was extremely difficult – hard to get into the spirit when it’s only October. And, of course, this November article.

November brings us a time of reflection. Many of you know that I retired from the USAF. When I retired, I had accumulated over 16 years of my active-duty career operating telemetry systems on EC-135 aircraft. [EC stands for Electronic Configured – a specialized aircraft configured for tracking objects and collecting data.] I was transferred to my new home in Ohio, beginning this journey, as a replacement as there were all-too-sudden critical vacancies in my career field: On May 6th, 1981, 10:30am, an EC-135 on a local training mission went down over Walkersville, Maryland, with all 21 souls on board lost. I knew some of those onboard from tech school. Veterans Day has a deep meaning to me.

“A brief history of Veterans Day: World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” – officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. In 1968 the Uniform Holiday Law, signed June 28, 1968, and was intended to ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington’s Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates.

September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veterans service organizations and the American people.

The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good. While those who died are also remembered, Veterans Day is the day set aside to thank and honor all those who served honorably in the military - in wartime or peacetime." (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, History of Veterans Day)

To all who are currently in or have served in the past in the military: Thank you for the commitment you made (or are making) to serve this country. To military families: A special thank you for the sacrifices you, too, have made. Thank you everyone for the dedication and service.

I'm going to end with a shameless plug for an organization that I am a member of, that I believe many military Masons do not know about. National Sojourners is an organization composed of Masons that are either active duty or possess a DD-214. Find a chapter in your area: If you are in southwestern Ohio contact me directly and I will let you know when our next meeting is announced.

The purposes of National Sojourners shall be to organize current and former members of the uniformed services of the United States and Honorary Members, who are Master Masons, into Chapters, for the promotion of good fellowship among its members, for assisting such as may be overtaken by adversity or affliction, for cultivating Masonic ideals, for supporting all patriotic aims and activities in Masonry, for developing true patriotism and Americanism throughout the nation, for bringing together representatives of the uniformed services of the United States (past and present) in a united effort to further the military needs of national defense, and for opposing any influence whatsoever calculated to weaken the national security. (Editor's note: Right Worshipful Brother Terry Pringle is working to establish a new Sojourner's chapter in southeast Ohio, terrypringle@hotmail.com)

Safe Travels!

Courteously,

Richard L Ganion, KCT

Right Eminent Grand Commander

Knights Templar of Ohio