



ARABIAN KNIGHTS

NEWSLETTER FOR ELF KHURAFEH SHRINE

JANUARY 2026

EDITION

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR NEWLY ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS FOR 2026



NEWLY ELECTED POTENTATE AND DIVAN WITH AMBASSADOR,
BOB HARDIN





Phil Gean-Potentate

810-293-0089 PFGean490@charter.net

First Lady Judy

810-515-9370 jpgean82881@gmail.com



2026



Brian Geiser-Chief Rabban

517-715-3345 briangeiser20@gmail.com

Lady Jami

517-915-8324 jami61576@gmail.com



Chuck Birch-Assistant Rabban

989-430-4889 umpdad1@yahoo.com



Greg Dostal-High Priest & Prophet

989-832-3360 n8kfe@charter.net

Lady Cheryl



Ed Parks-Oriental Guide

810-867-4073 iamhere257@yahoo.com

Lady Caprice

810-391-3048 firewriter66@yahoo.com



Jeff Downing PP-Treasurer

810-412-8369 treasurer@ekshrine.com

jdowning@ekshrine.com

Lady Laura

810-341-3490 ldowning@ekshrine.com



Phil Brack PP-Recorder

810-577-3316 recorder@ekshrine.com

PIB447@aol.com

Lady Lisa

810-210-2116 koalamama990@aol.com

APPOINTED DIVAN



Matt Berry-1st Ceremonial Master
810-938-9314



Brian Wiltfong-2nd Ceremonial Master
810-874-0178
Lady Amie 847-404-8094



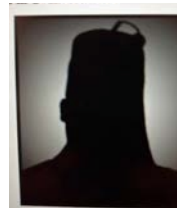
Rob Garceau-Director General
810-513-8444 rgarceau12@yahoo.com
Lady Krista



Chuck Brantley-Marshall
248-605-1322
Lady Reta 248-605-1368



Travis Schlosser-Captain of the Guard
810-577-3524 kc8dup@gmail.com
Lady Crystal



James Doan-Outer Guard
248-606-1837



Robert Swartwood-Chaplain
810-686-4425 rlswart06@aol.com
Lady Sandy
810-397-0901



Tim Corrigan-Chief Aide
989-213-2534 knobyclown@gmail.com

From your Potentate - Illustrious Sir Philip Gean

From The Potentate

First Lady Judy and I would like to thank you for all of your help and attendance at the Installation of Officers. All of the gifts and well wishes were greatly appreciated. I was not prepared for the support and generosity that the Clubs and Units gave plus the private gifts that we received. In other words, First Lady Judy and I were blown away. Thank You!

I have hit the ground running and don't plan to stop. I have already visited two Temples and as you are reading this, I will have completed the Circuses in Flint and Saginaw.

Next up is the Valentines Day party on Saturday February 14th. I have opened it up to the public so I am expecting a great turnout. Please RSVP as soon as you can to Eva Karas at 810-513-3232 or evakaraselsaid28@att.net.

If you didn't get your Superbowl squares, sorry but it is sold out. If you would like to participate in future Football square events let me know and I will put you on the list. It's fun and you support the Shrine. Squares sell for just \$10.

Members, please sell the Sportsman raffle tickets as this is one of our major events. You can get tickets at the office. There will be a lot of side raffles so use this to sell tickets and get attendance.

Next month I will unveil an event that is dear to my heart.

Your Potentate Philip F Gean



EK SHRINE'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 16-19 Flint Shrine Circus

January 23-25 Saginaw Shrine Circus

February 11 Board Meeting 5pm CP

Dinner 6pm

Business Meeting 7pm

February 14 Shrine and LOS Valentine's Party at CP

Hospitality 5pm

Dinner 6pm

Music and fun to follow

February 15-18 Poker Hall

Davison American Legion Post 267

MOSLEM SHRINE'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 27 East/West Shrine Bowl Game

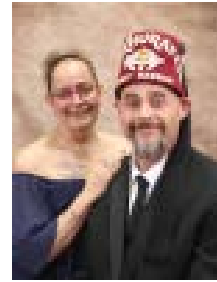
February 8 Super Bowl

February 14 Valentine's Party

February 28 Sportsman's Raffle



**From your Chief Rabban
Brian Geiser**



GREETINGS NOBLES AND LADIES

Thank you all for your ongoing support of Lady Jami and I. As we look ahead to 2026, we're excited to work with Illustrious Sir Phil and Lady Judy to make it another wonderful year and continue growing our fraternity together.

We deeply appreciate everyone who volunteered at this year's circus; your efforts make everything possible.

Again, this year, Lady Jami and I will lead the Easter party and the Trunk or Treat event. We have a dedicated core team, but if anyone wishes to join us, your help would be warmly welcomed and valued. Early in the year, we'll send out letters to clubs and units with more details about these events.

As always, I look forward to seeing you all at our scheduled events throughout the year. If you need any information, please don't hesitate to contact me—I will do my best to answer your questions or find the answers you need.

**Brian Geiser
Chief Rabban**



**From your Assistant Rabban
Chuck Birch**



**Happy 2026 to the Nobles of EK Shrine!! Hopefully the new year is going well for you and you are staying well. EKS has a new year, a new group of officers, and a set of new challenges. The Temple has some exciting events coming up and hopefully you will be able to participate in some, if not all of them. Our Flint circus is in the books, and the Saginaw Circus is coming up this weekend. We need lots of support from all of the Nobles, especially those of the northern half of our jurisdiction. Even if you can only work one performance or one day, your assistance is sorely needed. We need Nobles to help with these circuses' and join in the fun. In February the business meeting will be on the 11th at Circus Park and on the 14th, there will be a Valentines Party at Circus Park. Bring your spouse/partner/date and have a great time. Nobles, this is YOUR Temple and we need your participation and input to continue to make Elf Khurafeh the great Shrine Temple we love! Attend the functions and become an active Shriner!!!
Yours in the Faith, Chuck.**



**From your High Priest and Prophet
Greg Dostal**



Let's talk about the future, our future.

Going forward in the Elf Khurafeh Shrine, I see substantial challenges ahead—challenges that requires us to change how we do business while maintaining our core values.

First, there must be transparency in everything we do—from finances to decision-making to communication. If we want trust, we must earn it through openness.

Secondly, is the change in Circus Park ownership and the many unknowns that will come as those changes unfold. These are not all bad, look at the ease of getting the new air south handler. These decisions made now will affect us for years to come.

We must also confront the slow decline in membership.

Finding our *value proposition*—combining what the membership wants, what we offer, why it matters, and how we communicate it—must be a major focus of our leadership. In every case we must stick with our core values as those are what REALLY matter. There is no shortage of training and plans, but the reality is: *we are still struggling*. We must do better. And in parallel with efforts to attract new Nobles, we must also listen carefully to what our current membership needs and wants and deliver it in a way that is financially responsible. We cannot afford—financially or culturally—to alienate the members we already have.

I'll say it again because it matters: there must be transparency in all we do.

I do not have all the answers.

I don't even know most of the questions.

But I have spent years working, serving, leading, and most importantly listening.

What I *do* know is this:

I am committed to the future of this Shrine Temple, committed to this Nobility, and committed to working with all of you to ensure that Elf Khurafeh not only survives, but thrives in the years to come.

Thank you.

Greg Dostal

As we run headlong into 2026, we wanted to remind everyone to mark your calendars for the Annual Midland Area Shrine Club Golf Outing!

 Date: July 19, 2026

 Location: Sandy Ridge Golf Course
2750 Lauria Rd
Midland, MI 48642

We'll have all the fun and frivolity you've come to expect from past years, so be sure to plan on joining us.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Fraternally,
Midland Area Shrine Club

**From your Oriental Guide
Edward Parks**



Happy New Year Nobles. First and foremost I would like to thank the Nobility for electing me to the position of Oriental Guide. I am both excited and ready to serve with the rest of the Divan for Elf Khurafeh for the better of our nobles and our temple and most of all our Shrine Children. To all that volunteered at the Flint and Saginaw Circus, I would like to thank you for coming out in the freezing cold to give us your time. Also on March 1st we will be having a Chili cookoff at Circus Park, so make your best recipe for chili and please enter it. Watch for a flyer with all the details or call myself, Lady Caprice or Tim Corrigan if you have any questions. In closing, please stay healthy and safe during this winter season .

Yours In Faith,

Edward Parks
Oriental Guide

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From your Treasurer~~~~Jeff Downing PP



As I write this article, we are between circuses. The Flint shows are now behind us and we are looking forward to our Saginaw shows. Attendance seemed to be down a bit in Flint, but those that did show up seemed to enjoy the show and ride the rides. Hopefully that will translate into a prosperous circus for us.

Work on our taxes, reviews, and other financial obligations is ongoing. By the time you read this, we should have our review of financial statements for 2023 completed. We should also be in the middle of our 2024 review. Unfortunately, this process is taking much longer than we expected. There are many items for each year's review that need to be investigated, documented, and forwarded to our accountant. Some of these items are easily found, where others take a bit of digging through different files and are more like solving puzzles. On the bright side, this is giving us a much better picture of our financial position and will be extremely helpful as future Chief Rabbans prepare their budget for their Potentate year.

Reminder to all Clubs and Units – your 2025 Financial Statements are due. According to Shriners International, these reports are due in the office by February 1. If your club or unit has not sent that report in, please see that it gets completed and sent to the office as soon as possible.

Please remember to keep our military, first responders, sick & shut-ins, and especially our Shrine Kids in your daily prayers! Looking forward to seeing you all at one of our many events and activities this year!

**Yours in the faith,
Jeff Downing, P.P. - Treasurer**



From your Recorder

Phil Brack, P.P.



Greetings. A new year has arrived. Let's hope it's a good one.

Congratulations to Illustrious Sir Philip Gean and his Divan. I want to thank all of you for your confidence in my ability to do the job you elected me to do.

The circus is here, let's hope it is well attended. All help is needed and appreciated.

We will be scanning dues cards for every meeting and event this year. The Events Committee has come up with an award for a certain amount of attendance. The actual point system has not been worked out yet, but I will let you know as soon as we finalize it. When you get to an event, come by to where we are scanning and present your dues card. We will only scan it once a day.

Don't forget, dues are due. Call me if you need some help. We had to suspend 18 Nobles last year. We don't want to lose anymore.

Until next month.

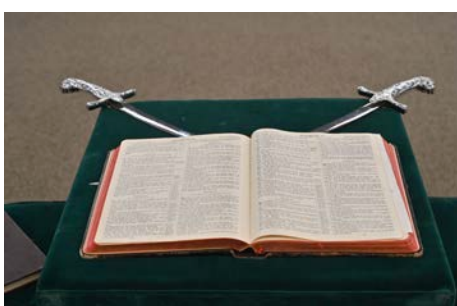
Respectfully submitted, Philip Brack P.P. Recorder



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From the Chaplain Robert Swartwood

Greetings to all Shrine brothers and sisters. As we begin a new year, we look forward to a lot of new things; a new Potentate and Divan, and a lot of exciting social events to participate in. It is also a time to reflect, refresh and adjust. At this time of reflection, please remember why we do what we do. Please remember the people who benefit from our services. And, please remember the people that have left us and the great memories we have. Life is but a journey and a rather short one at that. Maximize your experiences, enjoy one another, enjoy your contributions, respect your health and the people around you. And, always put God first in all you do. These simple things have a tremendous impact. God Bless you all. Your Chaplain.

Robert L. Swartwood

Attorney at Law

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Clio, MI 48420

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RLSWART06@aol.com



From your First Ceremonial Master

Matt Berry

Hello Nobles,

What a month! I am so grateful to be serving on the Divan this year as your 1st Ceremonial Master and am looking forward to all the adventures to come. We had a great circus this year and I want to personally thank you for all your support and efforts into making this another success.

We have some big announcements coming up regarding a new major fundraiser for the Temple with putting on an EDM festival in 2027 and I can't wait to share all of those details with the nobility.

Hope you have a wonderful month and stay safe on those icy roads.

Fraternally,

Matt Berry

1 st Ceremonial Master



Elf Khurafeh Shrine Black Camel Report

These Nobles have been reported deceased since our last meeting.

Kenneth Scott Saginaw 12-25-2025

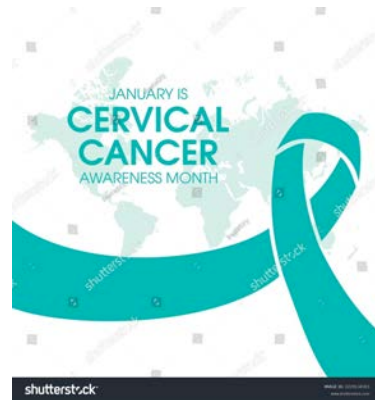
Donald Mraz St. Helen 1-11-2026

This one's for the girls

Jami Geiser–Chief Rabban's Lady

January includes the following important awarenesses that we as women need to take seriously.

****Cervical Health Awareness Month:** Focuses on education, prevention, and support related to cervical cancer.



Please read up on Cervical Cancer and early detection.

Screening tests

The HPV test and the Pap test are screening tests that can help prevent cervical cancer or find it early.

- The human papillomavirus (HPV) test looks for the virus that can cause cell changes on the cervix.
- The Pap test (or Pap smear) looks for precancers, which are cell changes on the cervix that might become cervical cancer if they are not treated appropriately.

****Mental Wellness Month**

Mental Wellness Month serves as a reminder to prioritize mental health, especially after the often stressful holiday season. It encourages individuals to adopt small, sustainable habits that support emotional well-being, such as mindfulness, self-care, and seeking social support. The month aims to raise awareness about mental health issues and reduce stigma, making it easier for people to discuss their mental health and seek help when needed.

Happy New Year nobles!

It's that time again to talk with your clubs or units and your lodges about ordering your sweet vidalia onions and sauces. Give me a call if you have any questions and with any orders.

Ryan Stanley PP

810-394-1860



Thomas Coppens, M.D., is the new Shriners Children's New England Board of Governors Chairman.

Thomas B. Coppens, M.D., of Hartford, New York, has been elected chairman of the Board of Governors for Shriners Children's New England. Dr. Coppens has been a board member since 2022, joining the executive committee in 2024 as vice chairman.

Dr. Coppens joined the Oriental Shriners soon after becoming a Mason in 2019. However, his first introduction to the fraternity and the Shriners Children's healthcare system came much earlier. "Shriners Children's first touched my life when I brought my son to Shriners Children's New England for clubfoot treatment in 1993," he said. "Since then, I

have referred my own patients to Shriners Children's. Nothing touches my heart more than meeting a child and their family who have had their lives changed by the amazing care at Shriners Children's."

A graduate of Albany Medical School, Dr. Coppens completed his residency in family practice at St. Joseph's Hospital in Liverpool, New York. He is a senior member of Irongate Family Practice in Glens Falls, New York, a group of 10 physicians and 20 advanced practice providers. Dr. Coppens is the president of Irongate Center, which owns and operates the facility.

It was through his practice that Dr. Coppens learned about the path to becoming a Shriner. "I walked into an exam room, and my patient asked me to support the Shriners," he said. "I had an application to the Masons in my pocket before that checkup was finished." First joining the fraternity to give back, Dr. Coppens is grateful for the relationships he has gained along the way. "I offered my services, hoping my background as a family physician would benefit the organization. The social opportunities and support found within the fraternity are tremendous, as we help children and each other."

Dr. Coppens enjoys being a grandparent with his wife, Elizabeth, and takes pleasure in many outdoor activities near their rural New York home. Two events he looks forward to every year are the Polar Plunge in Lake George on New Year's Day and the Adirondack Balloon Festival. The Oriental Shriners' participation in both community events supports Shriners Children's New England.

As Board of Governors chairman, Dr. Coppens looks forward to supporting efforts to expand Shriners Children's New England services in New England, New York and beyond. "I expect to see Shriners Children's New England continue its phenomenal growth, reaching more children in more places with the best care available anywhere.

