



## Military Commandery of the Western United States of America

Volume II Issue 4 December 2016

### **SITREP**

The commandery continues to evaluate suitable charities and to support charitable events. Chairs of the various committees are implementing their plans of action.

### **BILLETS**

Our roster remains at 20 Knights and one Dame.

Acting Commander: Knight Commander Bill Buchanan

Deputy Commander: Chevalier Rhett Hart

Hospitaller Chair: Chevalier JR Hastings

Chevalier Merlin Davis

Chevalier Terry Howell

Chevalier Bill Musgrave

Chevalier Bernard Vash

Almoner Chair: Chevalier Art Hurley

Chevalier James Brown (Chair of the AT&T Subcommittee)

Chevalier Art Flegel

Dame Jaime Payne

Chevalier John Sollner

HE Conventual Bailiff Bill Peacock

Membership/Recruiting Chair: Chevalier Doug Moore

Chevalier John Fitzpatrick

Chevalier Keith Kerr

Chevalier Chris L'Orange

Chevalier Don Reid

Chevalier Dean Winslow

Treasurer: Chevalier Jim Boucher. Chevalier Jim Boucher is coordinating with the Almoner regarding financial support of the chosen charities, a reasonable basic reserve, and a reserve for contingencies.

Caring Officer: Chevalier Dr. Don Bradley

Herald/Secretary: Open

### **THE THIRD CRUSADE**

On a stormy Saturday 15 October, Chevalier JR Hastings hosted the "Third Crusade" gathering of officers and members of the Commandery at his hilltop castle in San Anselmo. At the invitation of Chevalier Hurley, David Lipscomb, Annapolis graduate, submariner, and leader of Martinez Project Healing Waters, enlightened us about the scope and mission of his organization and some of the outings that have helped veterans deal with their

wounds, both physical and psychological. He pointed out that the \$5,000 gift from the Western Military Commandery will make possible fishing trips like the recent one to Wyoming that the veterans still talk about. While JR's female wolf Gabby patrolled the perimeter of the grounds for intruders, we enjoyed a superb potluck dinner augmented by Chef Hart's grilled chicken and steaks, chardonnay, sauvignon blanc, and several varieties of red. A charming accordionist with a red beret played selections reminiscent of Acting Commander Bill's boyhood in Villefranche sur Mer.



### **MARINE OF THE YEAR**



Chevalier James Brown has been selected as the Marine of the Year by the Marine Corps Coordination Council. This award is in recognition for his work in the community, specifically supporting the military and veterans. This is no small task, and certainly nothing that he does on his own. While he normally avoids any recognition or awards, he has decided to accept this one so he can thank those who work with him and make these efforts successful. He may be the guy getting the recognition, but he is fully aware of those that “pack his parachute,” especially his hard-working wife Carolina. This is as much their award as it is anybody's. The award will be presented at the Marine Day Luncheon 12

January at the Marines Memorial Club and Hotel in San Francisco where the guest speaker will be Brigadier General Paul K. Lebidine Commanding General, 4th Marine Division. All Commandery officers and Knights and Dames are invited to show support for this very appropriate recognition.

### **CARING OFFICER**

Chevalier Dr. Don Bradley reports that Chevalier Art Hurley's new knee is performing as advertised. It has a 100,000-mile warranty and probably should be included in his will. The remainder of the Commandery continues to be hale and hearty.

### **KNIGHT PROFILE:**

#### Knight of Honour: Mark Flegel

We welcomed Chevalier Mark Flegel into our ranks at Grace Cathedral on 14 March, 2015. He is a local boy, having been born in Napa. He has lived in Atherton for thirty years. His Dad founded Flegel Fine Furniture in 1954. Mark enrolled in the philosophy curriculum at University of Southern California. After school, he travelled to Europe—and had “lots of adventures” there. He returned to U.S. with no money, no job prospects, so Dad stepped up as his first employer. These days, Mark's younger son runs Flegel Fine Furniture in Menlo Park. His friendship with Bill Peacock and Bill Musgrave presented the opportunity to serve Christ and the sick and poor through the SOSJ. Mark has an interest in becoming a Commandery officer as



soon as responsibilities with Rotary, Director of SF Fleet Week, Navy League, and caring for his wife Anne, (who is seriously ill) diminish. Mark was not in the military, but served the U.S. in a “clandestine manner” in Europe during the seventies. Don’t even try to ply him with liquor; his lips are sealed. He was a Trustee of Menlo College for some years, served the city of Menlo Park, was director of CS Lewis Foundation in Southern California, and Rotary Governor for the San Francisco Bay Area District. He also ran a Rotary scholarship program for high school-age boys. These days he is involved in a high school student exchange program that counts Menlo Park Chief of Police Robert Jonsen as a supporter.

In 2014, Flegel's Home Furnishings, was named Small Business of the Year in state Senator Jerry Hill's 13th Senatorial District. The award was given in recognition of Flegel's commitment to community service and business ethics. Chevalier Flegel was recognized for giving generously of his time and energy as chair of the Rotary District's 5150 Scholarship and Youth Exchange programs, as a director of the San Francisco Fleet Week Association, and as vice president of the San Francisco Navy League Council. He has served as a Menlo College trustee, a C.S. Lewis Foundation trustee, a Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce board member, and as a member of several city of Menlo Park committees.

Mark’s involvement in community affairs, his success as a businessman, his service to the Nation, and his devotion to the principle, “Pro Fide, Pro Utilitate Hominum exemplify the qualities we seek in Knights and Dames for this Commandery.

### **WHITE CROSS BALL**

Two hundred and twenty Knights and Dames from the Priory of the Western United States attended an elegant gathering on December 3<sup>rd</sup> for an evening of celebration, history, fellowship, and outreach at the Alexandra Room in the Westin St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. Our hosts, the San Francisco Commandery, presided over a lively auction, and a very remunerative silent auction



that filled the coffers with over \$100,000.00 for future charitable contributions to George Mark Children’s House and Digging Deep. That Executive Chef Bernd Liebergesell is a veteran of providing culinary specialties for four United States Presidents was evident in the sumptuous dinner he prepared. Those so inclined danced the light fantastic to the tunes of a very proficient band of musicians.

### **Volunteering to Serve Homeless Veterans**

Last fall, the Commandery toured liberty ship Red Oak at Point Richmond, California. Afterwards, we gathered at an eclectic restaurant called Salute e Vita Ristorante. There we learned from the owner, Menbere Aklilu, that she hosts a Day of Giving Thanks for homeless veterans and disadvantaged members of the community every Thanksgiving. Chevalier J.R. Hastings volunteered to help. So, on the appointed day, decked out in white shirt, black trousers, and black bowtie (one of the spiffiest waiters there), he helped serve and buss tables for about two dozen families. It appears the Western Military Commandery could learn a lot about giving from Menbere Aklilu, an Ethiopian immigrant, who herself

once was a homeless single mother who suffered domestic abuse in her native country. We will muster the troops in force next Thanksgiving.

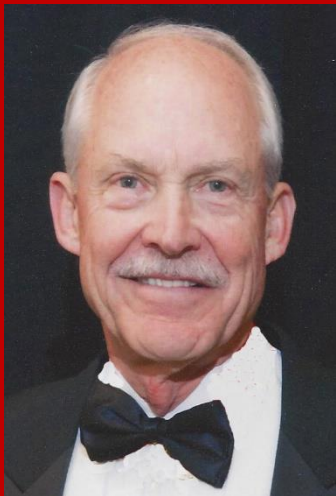
### **Upcoming Events**

Hospitaller Chevalier JR Hastings, who is touring France, (tough assignment, but somebody has to do it) will, upon his return, announce a Commandery gathering at a certain time and place on or about Friday, 10 February.

We look forward to opportunities for supporting the sick and less fortunate, enjoying conviviality, sharing activities within the Priory, and growing the organization in 2017. All the best for the New Year.

Yours in St. John

Bill



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