



# The Quill

*The Newsletter of the American Commandery, Order of Saint Joachim*

*Volume 7, Spring 2021: In the 266th Year of The Order*



H.E. Commander von Grossmann GCJ

## *Commanders Greeting*

Dear Confreres and Consœurs,

I hope this communication finds you and your families well and safe; particularly in these extraordinary times. As Thomas Paine so eloquently remarked, “THESE are the times that try men’s souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman...” In that spirit I hold each of you in high esteem and respect your compassion and steadfastness where others would fade.

I hope you will find the following content in this volume of the ‘The Quill’ of interest. Our Commandery, and our Order, have not been still during the year of the Pandemic. Although we have had to reschedule in-person events, including our 2020 Investiture in DC to 2022, we are organizing the next in-person event as soon as is possible. During 2020, we have been focused on our charitable mission and have issued several contributions on behalf of the Commandery and its membership in service to the Pandemic and to those suffering from natural disasters. The details are found in these pages. We have prayed that our members have navigated through the exceptionally rough winter weather in Texas and the mid-section of our country this past month and are pleased to have heard from several of you. As has become a new ‘norm’, The Order has had several ‘Zoom’ or other virtual media events hosted by Grand Chapter, the Canadian and the U.K. Commandery, this past year. These virtual events are generally open to all in The Order, and those of the American Commandery who have participated in some of these have provided positive feedback. I encourage you to attend any as your schedule permits. On that note, please save the date of March 20th, 2021 as the American Commandery hosts a virtual event as well. All American Commandery membership are invited as well as all international members. I expect it to be a good opportunity for fellowship and bonding with members from other States as well as from countries around the world.

Let me end this note by thanking each and every one of you for your comradeship and service to our Order and Commandery. I hope to ‘see’ you all on March 20th! Junxit, Amicus, Amor!

H.E. LtCol. (Ret.) The Chevalier Martin von Grossmann, GCJ, M.S., M.S.A.  
Commander, American Commandery  
The Order of St. Joachim



# The Equestrian, Secular and Chapterial Order of Saint Joachim

FOUNDED 1755



HE The Chevalier Stephen Lautens GCJ

Dear Confreres,

I would like to confirm that we will schedule an international Zoom event for the Order on Saturday, June 26, 2021 beginning at 12:00 noon. Our UK and Austrian Commanderies are still planning to hold their own investitures later in the year, but Canada and the US do not appear to be able to at this time.

We hope that members in all countries will join us for this Chapter General event, where we will welcome new members, provide updates and recognize some special efforts by our members. Any new or promoted members will still be encouraged to participate in future physical national investitures as this will not be an "investiture".

Please reserve the date Saturday, June 26, 2021 and plan to join our members.

With warmest fraternal regards,

H.E. The Chevalier Stephen Lautens GCJ  
Lord of the Manor of Prior's Hall, Lindsell  
Grand Master

The Order of Saint Joachim



Order cross with helmet from the beginning of the 19th century for Nobile or Royal members.



## Important Dates in 2021:

- March 20 American Commandery Spring Virtual Event
- March 31 Due date for Order Oblation and American Commandery Dues
- April 24 UK Commandery Virtual Event
- June 20 Anniversary of The Order's Founding
- June 26 Chapter General Virtual Event
- August 21 American Commandery Summer Virtual Event
- October 16 Austrian-German Commandery Commandery Investiture
- October 29-31 UK Commandery Investiture, King's Lynn, England



Prince Christian Franz  
von Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld  
First Grand Master  
The Order of Saint Joachim

Photo courtesy of  
Sammlung Herzoglicher Kunstbesitz  
Sachsen-Coburg und Gotha  
Schloss Callenberg, Coburg

**CORRECTED!**

*A Word From The Editor:*



Captain The Chevalier  
Frank S. Hooton, KJ

With such a challenging year worldwide behind, let us hope and pray for a much brighter 2021. One positive outcome of dealing with the challenges has been the discovery of ways to stay in contact virtually enabling many of our Order to get to spend time in fellowship even though separated by many miles, different continents and of course the lockdowns.

I hope you may find time to let me know great news, or successes that I can share with our Confrères and Consœurs and look forward to our times together even if virtually until we get an opportunity to be together again in person. Here's wishing all tremendous blessings and overwhelming prosperity of hope, opportunity and healing.

Humbly yours,

Frank  
Captain The Chevalier Frank S. Hooton KJ

CORRECTION: We misidentified one of our Order's leaders and offer our humble apology. The correct lineup in this picture to the right is: Chevalier Juhani Hujanen KJ with the Grand Master HE The Chevalier Stephen Lautens GCJ, and **HE The Chevalier Trevor Haynes GCJ, UK** Commander, The Order of Saint Joachim, at last year's UK Investiture.



*The Order's Signet is now available!*

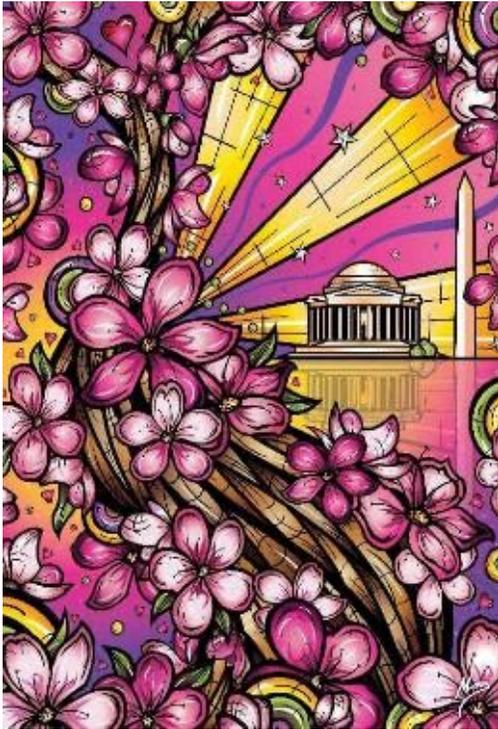


Ring:

<https://www.mypersonaljewellery.co.uk/order-of-saint-joachim-silver-or-9ct-gold-signet-ring-from/>

Pendant:

<https://www.mypersonaljewellery.co.uk/order-of-saint-joachim-sterling-silver-or-9ct-gold-pendant-from/>



# SAVE THE DATE

March 20, 2021  
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT

## VIRTUAL EVENT

# Peace, Friendship, Cooperation



Platform:  
FreeConferenceCall



Please register by March 18 by contacting Commandery's Registrar, The Chevalier Heriberto "Herb" Rivera Jr. KCJ at:  
[us.osj.registrar@gmail.com](mailto:us.osj.registrar@gmail.com)

### PROGRAM AGENDA

- 1:00 PM ET -Meeting room opens for guests
- 1:05 PM -Convocation The Most Reverend Chevalier William Myers KCJ ~ Prior, American Commandery
- Greetings H.E. The Chevalier Stephen Lautens GCJ ~ Grand Master  
H.E. LtCol the Chevalier Martin von Grossmann GCJ ~ Commander, American Commandery
- 1:20 PM -History of Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington DC  
A brief presentation by The Chevalier Antonio Wendland KCJ ~ Chancellor, American Commandery
- 1:25 PM -Moderated and open discussions: Meet the Americans !!
- 1:58 PM -Closing Words The Chevalier Mark Smyczynski KCJ ~ Military Knight, American Commandery

\*\*\* Formal wear and uniforms are NOT required. Please come as you are ~ business to business casual \*\*\*

## *About Our Members:*



### *Confrère Omar Cisneros Vásquez: Elevated to Knight*



Confrère Omar Cisneros joined The Order of Saint Joachim in 2018 and participated in the biennial American Commandery Investiture ceremony held in September of that year at the Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña in San Antonio, Texas. Cisneros completed a Bachelor of Arts from Southeastern Oklahoma State University the previous year and was living, working, and volunteering in the greater Tulsa, Oklahoma area. In the fall of 2019, he had his wife Karina moved to the outskirts of Washington D.C. where he is enrolled at the Virginia Theological Seminary. He was elevated to the rank of Knight in March 2021.

Below is a brief update from Cisneros himself:

*My dear brothers and sisters,*

*With great joy and tremendous humility, I announce that since 2019 I have been at the Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS) pursuing a Master of Divinity degree. Since I was a little boy, I have felt the calling for God to ordained ministry. At times, it has been a very challenging journey, but nevertheless, a very rewarding one.*

*While at VTS, I am formed in various and equally important ways: spiritually, academically, and liturgically. My formation consists of rigorous academic education that includes learning biblical languages like Hebrew and Greek. Last summer, I completed a canonically required internship as a chaplain at a hospital. The hospital experience stretched me, to put it lightly. Still, I found the experience a validation of my call to ordained ministry and, in the end, a blessing.*

*As a seminarian, I am in an ambiguous state; on the one hand, I am still a layperson. On the other, I am being asked to set the tone of my leadership in the Church. All the while trying to keep up with a challenging and considerable amount of coursework.*

*If you know anything about seminary, it is an odd place. Our life revolves around communal worship (before and during COVID-19). We also eat a shared meal every day and observe a "quiet day" (a day of reflection, fasting, and all classes are suspended) once a semester. Even as I wrestle with the particularities of seminary, I am thankful that my development has allowed me to grow in so many ways: as a leader, as a person, as a husband, and as a follower of Jesus Christ. God is speaking to the world, and it is up to us to listen to that voice, calling out for justice, calling out for a better, more spirit-filled world.*

*If you are the praying type, please pray for my family back home and for me. Pray for my dear wife, who uprooted herself so that I could pursue my vocation. Pray for all of those who are seeking God and have yet to find Him.*

*Omar Cisneros Vásquez KJ*

*Confrère Gary R. Wilson:  
Elevated to Knight*



Wilson, first row, farthest to the right, during WW2 Airborne Demonstration team training



Wilson with WW2 veteran Norwood Thomas

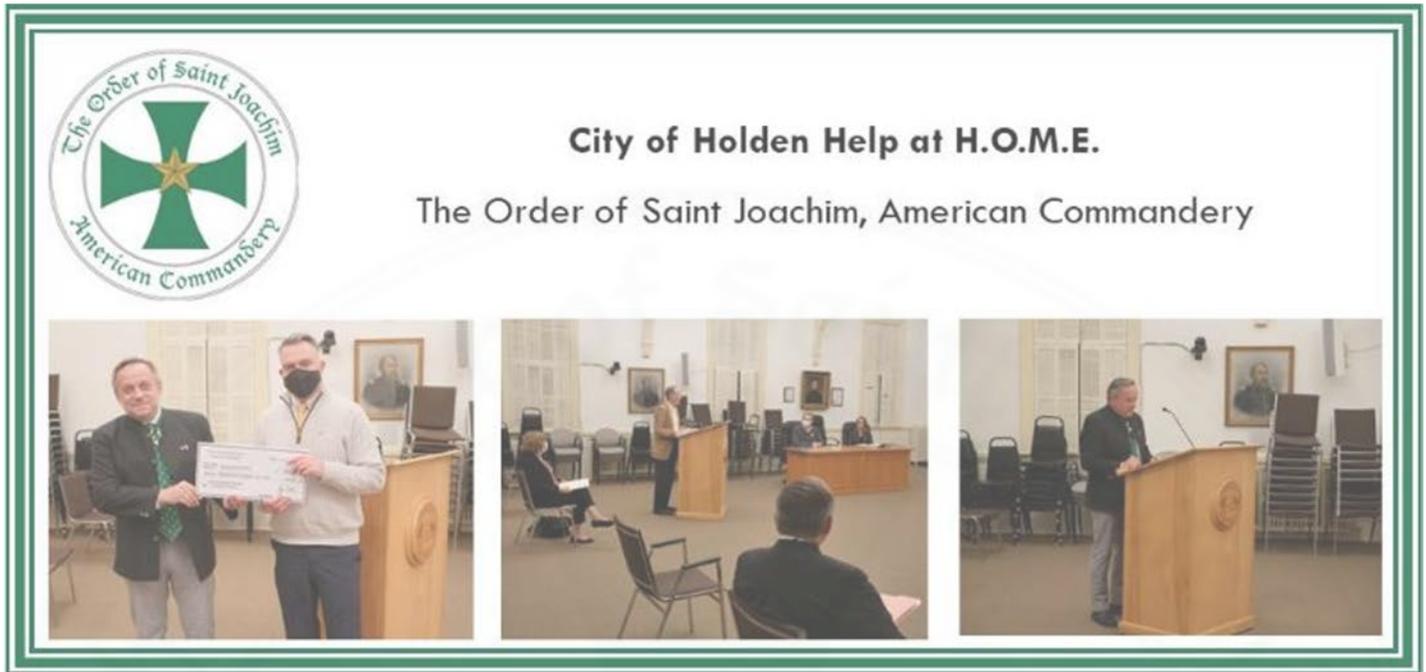
Chevalier Wilson was elevated to the rank of Knight in August 2020 and brings along a wealth of experience within numerous facets of the military and technical training industries. He currently serves as the Training Manager for the Air Force Medical Readiness Training Center (MRTC) at JBSA-Camp Bullis, Texas, with responsibilities ranging from the cradle-to-grave curricular management of five austere, expeditionary skills courses to the preparation of mission-ready officer and enlisted medical personnel from a wide variety of disciplines in support of wartime and contingency operations worldwide.

Wilson is a proud veteran of the United States Navy where he served as a Chief Master-at-Arms, Kennel Master, Military Working Dog (MWD) Handler, and Harbor Patrol specialist among other exciting duties, and has further served as a Battalion Operations Officer and Regimental Staff Senior Enlisted Advisor (SEA) in the Maritime Regiment of the Texas State Guard. In addition to having the distinct privilege of having been elevated to Knight, Confrere Wilson has been recognized as the humble recipient of several other honors and accolades, the most notable of which include previous commissions as an Admiral in the Texas Navy, Nebraska Admiral, Kentucky Colonel, Honorary Colonel in the Alabama State Militia, and Arkansas Traveler to name a select few. He also holds Lifetime Membership status in the Vietnam Dog Handler and United States War Dog Associations, as well as the Veteran's of Foreign Wars and State Guard Associations of the United States.

Wilson is also a member of the World War II Airborne Demonstration Team and was recently blessed with the immeasurable honor of having the opportunity to personally meet with—and shake the hands of—several of the constituents of the Greatest Generation, all of which were members of the 101st Airborne Division and jumped into Normandy in defense of our freedoms on June 6th, 1944. Wilson is most happily wedded to his beautiful wife Michelle, and attributes the bulk of his success to her undying love, strength, support, and devotion over the course of their 17-year marriage.

\* The WWII Veteran in the picture (above right) is the most honorable Norwood Thomas, 101st Airborne. You can read much more about his amazing exploits and the sacrifices he made for our Great Nation here: <https://stephenambrosetours.com/d-day-veteran-spotlight-norwood-thomas/>

## *Our Charitable Work:*



The Chevaliers Smyczynski and Wendland making a presentation to the Town of Holden's Board of Selectmen on behalf of the Commandery in October 2020.

### **OSJ American Commandery Donates**

#### **The American Commandery Donates to Those That Selflessly Served and Families in Need**

At the encouragement of Commander von Grossmann, the Commandery set aside \$1,500 in 2020 to support both organizations assisting others as well as individuals and families in need.

Financial assistance was given to a **New Hampshire veteran** who lost his job while convalescing after an accident and to a **family in New York** who lost their housing due to economic impacts related to the pandemic.

**Family Scholar House** in Louisville, Kentucky, whose mission is "to end the cycle of poverty & transform our community by empowering families & youth to succeed in education & achieve life long self sufficiency" received a donation to support the purchase of diapers for participants affected by COVID.

Another supported organization was **Saint Paul's House** in New York City. The mission of Saint Paul's House includes "bring[ing] the love of Christ to New York City and Around the World, through urban outreach to underserved populations..." One of the programs of Saint Paul's House is a food pantry serving those in need in New York City. The food pantry was the focus of the donation from the Commandery.

**Help at H.O.M.E.**, an initiative of the City of Holden, MA, was also a recipient of funds from the Commandery. Their mission is "to assist with the necessities of everyday living, primarily heat and electricity." The donation went to help local residents and veterans facing financial hardships.

## Charitable Work Continued:



Bruce Linton, Chief Development Officer and  
The Chevalier Antonio Wendland KCJ

## Commandery donates \$1,500 to All Hands and Hearts



The American Commandery contributed \$1,500 to All Hands and Hearts in 2020 for hurricane relief. The organization's mission is as follows:

*All Hands and Hearts effectively and efficiently addresses the immediate and long-term needs of communities impacted by natural disasters. We communicate directly with local leaders and community members and then deploy our unique model of engaging volunteers to enable direct impact, helping to build safer, more resilient schools, homes and infrastructure.*

Funds from the donation will support relief after Hurricanes Laura and Delta, two devastating hurricanes which hit Louisiana in 2020. All Hands and Hearts describes the disaster need as follows:

"Louisiana was hit by four storms this year, the two largest of which have caused significant damage. On August 27, 2020, Hurricane Laura pounded the Louisiana and Texas coasts, making landfall near Cameron, Louisiana as a Category 4 storm with 150 m.p.h. winds. Hurricane Laura tied the Last Island Hurricane (1856) for the strongest landfalling hurricane in Louisiana on record. Just six weeks later, on October 9, 2020, Hurricane Delta made landfall as a Category 2 hurricane in Creole, Louisiana. It followed a similar path to Hurricane Laura and compounded the damages already left by previous storms, as well as causing a lot more rainfall accumulation, with several places reporting up to 18" within a few hours. Flood emergencies and wind damage were reported across large areas, and many communities have significant damage to their properties."

The American Commandery was proud to support the efforts of All Hands and Hearts to bring relief after these devastating events. To learn more, visit [www.allhandsandhearts.org](http://www.allhandsandhearts.org).

## *Noble Hearts and the Work of Other Commanderies:*



Our Order's charity, **Noble Hearts Foundation**, was busy in 2020. With contributions by The Order's membership, it was able to support many causes including:

- \$5000 donation to **Food4Kids** in May, a charity in Hamilton, Canada, that provides children in need with access to food during the Covid-19 crisis.
- \$10,000 donation to **Opportunity International** in December, an international organization that supports micro-finance and financial literacy in the developing world.



The Canadian Commandery held a Bourbon Tasting fundraiser in January of this year. The proceeds, \$4000, were donated through The Order's charity to **FeedOntario** (formerly Ontario Food Banks).



*Our members' charitable works have no bounds, it seems; and it is a privilege to be among so many big-hearted people*

These photographs demonstrate the support given to veterans during the Covid-19 lockdown over Christmas and the New Year arranged on behalf of our Order together with the FK HuDM Order (associated with Chevalier Martin Wiegand) and the Forgotten Veterans UK (FVUK) charity. In total, 50 donations were made to individuals and families in the Portsmouth area who were struggling with finances. The donated food was provided by Morrison's, a UK supermarket chain, and food vouchers were financed by a generous FVUK donor in the US.



The pictures show our Chevalier Anthony Knight, MBE KJ, with colleagues from FVUK and some of the 22 food parcels that were delivered.

*Items Of Interest:*

## The Washington Medal \$60



## American Commandery Medal

The two-tone gold medal, available as a miniature only, contains a likeness of President George Washington in profile with a small enamel Order of Saint Joachim cross superimposed and "American Commandery - The Order of Saint Joachim" on the edge. The ribbon is dark blue with white stars.

The Washington Medal is available to our members at \$60.00. You can mail a check to the American Commandery-Order of St. Joachim to the following address: American Commandery, Order of St. Joachim, P.O. Box 789, Oakhurst, NJ 07755. Also, you can pay thru PayPal.

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### Did you know?

You can donate to the American Commandery by hosting a fundraiser on your social media account such as FaceBook for things like your birthday where the American Commandery can be chosen as the beneficiary. This in turn adds to the ability of the Order to do good works! Remember, the American Commandery is an IRS approved 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and donations are tax deductible!

*Attention Amazon Shoppers!*  
*Be sure to smile as you shop...*



Don't forget to [#shopwithasmile](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/81-4998408)! Visit <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/81-4998408> before shopping to support the American Commandery with each purchase--at no cost to you!

## *Dues and Oblations:*

## **CONSOLIDATION OR PAYMET OF OBLATION AND DUES**

Dear Confrères and Consœurs,

To maintain your membership in good standing, each individual must submit annual Oblations to The Order as well as dues to the American Commandery. In the past, each has been due at a different time in the first half of each year. This has proven to be taxing and confusing to our members. Therefore, starting this year, we are asking member to submit both Oblations and Commandery dues by March 31. By making a single payment, we aim to simplify the process and avoid confusion. We ask that all members submit their payment of US\$120 by PayPal (preferred and includes +5% for transaction fees) or US\$115 if making payment by check/mail.



As a reminder, annual Oblations in support of Grand Chapter are set at GBP50 (US\$65) and annual Commandery dues in support of our local chapter are US\$50. The American Commandery uses funds collected through dues for seed resources for our biennial investiture events, Commandery initiatives, and our charitable activities

Please follow the link [HERE](#) for submitting via PayPal  
(account under: INFO.OSJ.US@Gmail.com)

Please use this address if mailing in your payment:

Order of St Joachim  
American Commandery  
P O Box 782  
Oakhurst, NJ 07755

For more information, please contact the American Commandery at:  
INFO.OSJ.US@GMAIL.COM

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