



JAFFA JOURNAL

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF JAFFA SHRINERS
ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA



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Volume S, Number 1

March | April 2026



JAFFA SHRINERS

Oasis of Altoona | Desert of Pennsylvania
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JAFFA JOURNAL

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ELECTED DIVAN

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Second Ceremonial Master	Zachary L. Colyer
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Rep. Elected	Jordan W. Settle, P.P.
Rep. Elected	Randy Colyer, P.P.

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LIVING PAST POTENTATES

1986	John D. Faulds	2018	Robert P. Baranik
1993	Dale R. Woomer	2019	Jordan W. Settle
2004	Benjamin Kensinger	2021	James F. Miller
2005	William H. Penn	2022	David E. Dodson, Jr.
2010	William G. Troxell	2023	Christopher E. Ritchey
2012	H. Foster Snively	2024	Randy L. Colyer
2013	John F. Campbell	2025	Gary W Smith
2015	Paul J. Zell, Jr.		
2017	Gerald W. Lower		

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Important Contact Information	3
Potentate's Message	4-5
Potentate's Reception	6
Shriners Hospital, Jaffa Shrine, Endowment & Capital Donations	7-9
Dorcas Temple No. 129	10
Election Day 2026	11
Samsar Awards	12
CIRCUS 2026	13
Potentates' Trip 2026	14
National Night to Shine	15
AAJHS Pop Tab Challenge	16-17
Kiddie Christmas party	18
Ladies' Valentine Sweetheart Night	19
Jaffa Highlanders	20
Night at the Races	21
Questions? by Dean McKnight	24
Chicken BBQ Pit Maiden Voyage	25
Memorial for the Illustrious Sir Miles K. Costello, Jr.	26
In Remembrance of Those Visited by the Black Camel	27
Contribution Form	28

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IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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Jaffa Shrine Circus	circus@jaffashriners.org
Circus Groups	circusgroups@jaffashriners.org
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Insurance Committee	insurancecommittee@jaffashriners.org
Wiring	wiring@jaffashriners.org

SHRINERS HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN

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Shriners Children's Philadelphia	800.281.4050
Shriners Children's Dayton, OH	800.875.8580



POTENTATE'S MESSAGE



Dear Nobles, Ladies, Families, and Friends of the Jaffa Shrine,

It is with deep gratitude and heartfelt appreciation that I write to you as the newly installed Potentate of the Jaffa Shrine. January 3, 2026—Election Day—was an emotional and meaningful day for my wife, Lady Nina, our family, and myself. Standing before our Nobles, families, and friends as I accepted this honor is a moment I will never forget.

I extend sincere appreciation to Imperial Sir Mark Hartz and offer my deepest thanks to the Divan members who have demonstrated leadership, mentorship, and unwavering support throughout my journey. Lady Nina and I would also like to thank Illustrious Sir Gary Smith and Lady Jennifer for an outstanding year of dedication and service.

I warmly congratulate the newly elected Divan and extend a special welcome to David Dick, who joins us as Oriental Guide and Richard Courtot as our Recorder. I look forward to serving alongside each of you as we step into a year full of promise and purpose.

Events to Begin Our 2026 Journey

As this letter reaches you, several events have already taken place, helping us launch 2026 with momentum and camaraderie:

- Beer and Wine
- Potentate's Trip to Punta Cana
- Ladies Night Valentine's Sweetheart Event
- Ash Wednesday Fish Fry
- Indoor Mini Golf
- February 200 Club

Each of these events reflects the commitment and passion of our Noble volunteers and families.

This year we proudly introduce the Cash Bash Great American Giveaway, with only 2,000 tickets available. Tickets available. This major fundraiser supports one of the most important projects we will undertake in 2026 towards the operations of the building as we look forward to working together to support our mission, strengthen our fellowship, and continue serving the children and families who depend on our work.



Jaffa Oriental Band

**Meets 2nd Wednesday
of each month**

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POTENTATE'S MESSAGE



Revitalizing the Jaffa Shrine First Aid Center

Our vision is also to fully revamp the Jaffa Shrine First Aid Center that is underway, transforming it into a reliable, modern, and efficient station designed to:

- Provide prompt care for minor injuries
- Maintain readiness for life threatening emergencies
- Demonstrate our ongoing dedication to safety and family friendly experience

A Clear Vision for 2026: Family, Community, and Service

As Potentate, my focus for this year is simple and heartfelt: to bring families closer to our Jaffa events. Lady Nina and I are dedicated to creating:

- Moments that matter
- Experiences families will cherish
- Memories that last a lifetime

These experiences will inspire the next generation—future Nobles who will uphold and advance the mission of the Jaffa Shrine.

I believe the future success of our Shrine depends on:

- Family involvement
- Community visibility
- Financial responsibility in preserving our historic building

We want the community to see who we are and what we represent: Service, fellowship, and making a meaningful difference.

When our community truly understands the great work being done, they will want to join us... they will want to **"Be A Part of It"**.

Theme for 2026

"Be a Part of It: Connecting Families, Strengthening Community, Building a Legacy of Service."

Thank you for your dedication, your trust, and your continued support. I am honored to serve each of you and look forward to making **2026 a year to remember**.

Fraternally yours,

Eric L. Ramsey
2026 Potentate



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POTENTATE'S RECEPTION

SAVE THE DATE

POTENTATE'S RECEPTION

MARCH 21ST, 2026

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Steffy Chapel

Clearfield Shrine Club

Clearfield Shrine Club

Clearfield Shrine Club

The EADS Group Charitable Foundation Fund

The EADS Group Charitable Foundation Fund

Martin & John Ritchick

Tommy Wingard

Poormans Overhead Door

Richard & Bonita Reimer

William Bottenfield

William Bottenfield

Martin & John Ritchick

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David Zazworsky

Larry & Marjorie Baumgardner

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Richard Cooper Jr.

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Victor & Sherry Gioiosa, Jr.

Susan & Bruce Brower

Fred & Susan Khalouf

In Memory of Robin D. Harkins, P.P.

Ben & Jane Kensinger, P.P.

James & Gail Burket

Jaffa Patrol/Director Staff

Mary F. Caporuscio

Richard & Julie Henry

J. Craig & Patricia Marshall

Richard & Susan Henry, Jr.

Gerald & Sandy Lower, P.P.

Chuck & Connie Minielli

In Memory of Robert C. Nagle

Ben & Jane Kensinger, P.P.

Susan & Bruce Brower

In Memory of Harry Notestine

Ben & Jane Kensinger, P.P.

In Memory of David M. Rose

Ben & Jane Kensinger, P.P.

In Memory of Darrel Bathurst, P.P.

Crystal Himes

William & Paula Barnett

In Memory of Ed Peterson

Jaffa Motor Corps

In Memory of Bob Nagle

Sherrill Rice

In Memory of Jacob Leroy Etters

Denny Etters

In Memory of John Mallow

Jaffa Shrine Motor Corps

In Memory of those we've lost

Jaffa Greeters

In Memory of James Raupach

Donna Raupach

In Memory of John "Jack" Moyer

Barry & Darlene Weston

William & Judith Dambeck

Linda & Edward Samaha

In Memory of Jack Moyer

Robert & Nancy Huether

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Donna Raupach

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Lil' Vette Unit

In Memory of Therese Ann Bender
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In Memory of Randy Irwin Sr.
Jaffa Color Guard

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Gary & Patricia Harrity
Gary & Jill Gingrich
Daune & Patricia Mohney
Jim & Deborah Miller, P.P.
Vicki D. Faretta
The Colyers

For the Good of Jaffa
Richard Barnett
Tommy Wingard
ATU Charity & Floral Fund

In Memory of Paul R. Boyer
Cyril & Phyllis Chicirda Jr.

In Memory of Dorothy D. Dale
Ronald Porter

In Memory of John K. Reilly, P.P.
Ronald Porter

In Memory of Peggy Porter
Ronald Porter

In Memory of Ronnie Porter
Ronald Porter

In Memory of Kathy Jo Porter
Ronald Porter

In Memory of John Moyer
Jeff & Diane DeCriscio & Family
Liz Weaver
Sue & Bruce Brower

In Memory of Those We've Lost
Jaffa Greeters

In Memory of Jack Moyer
Carol King & Richard Polignone
Bill & Mary Jane Loy
Lynne D. Edwards

In Memory of Ronald L. Smith
Louis & David Smith

In Memory of Darrel Bathurst, P.P.
Rodney & Paulette Bathurst

In Memory of Bob Nagle
Lynne D. Edwards

In Memory of Arlene Weller
Barry & Sue Wright

In Memory of Randy Irwin Sr.
Jaffa Color Guard



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William & Julie Bratton

In Memory of Robin D. Harkins, P.P.

Ben & Jane Kensinger, P.P.
Past Potentates Assn

In Memory of Robert C. Nagle

Ben & Jane Kensinger, P.P.

In Memory of Harry Notestine

Ben & Jane Kensinger, P.P.

In Memory of David M. Rose

Ben & Jane Kensinger, PP.

In Memory of Past Potentates Assn

Robin D. Harkins, P.P.

In Memory of Bob Nagle

Bob & Nancy Huether
The Hunting Club ()
Bob & Sue Baranik
Dana Ramish & Ann Mooney
Richard & Julie Henry

In Memory of Rob Harkins, P.P.

Bob & Sue Baranik

For the Good of The Jaffa

Clearfield Shrine Club

In Memory of Robert Nagle

Duane & Jo Crumrine
Central P. NERA (Nolan/Bentley)
Jaffa Calliope Clowns

In Memory of Ken Costello

Robert & Susan Baranik
Past Potentates Assn

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In Memory of Robin Harkins, P.P.

Ron & Leah Wilson
William & Laverne Penn, P.P.

In Memory of Harry Notestine

William & Laverne Penn, P.P.

In Memory of Bob C Nagle

William & Laverne Penn, P.P.

For the Good of Jaffa

Clearfield Shrine Club

In Memory of Darrel Bathurst, P.P.

Jaffa Shrine Motor Corps

In Memory of Gator

Jaffa Shrine Calliope Clowns

In Memory of Lynn Robbins

Ronald Porter

In Memory of Ronnie Guy Poter

Ronald Porter

In Memory of John K. Reilly, Jr, P.P.

Ronald Porter

In Memory of John Mallow

William and Laverne Penn, P.P.
Ed & Rosie Cernic

In Memory of Jack Moyer

William and Laverne Penn, P.P.

In Memory of Manny Pena

William & Laverne Penn, P.P.

In Memory of Richard Eastep

Jaffa Shrine Calliope Clowns



DORCAS TEMPLE NO. 129

Daughters of the Nile

Daughters of the Nile: Dorcas Temple No 129

At our December Session, our Temple initiated four new members: Ashley Weaver, Kathy Echard, Nina Ramsey and Melissa Fagan. Welcome to Daughters of the Nile, an organization that works towards empowering women, enriching lives, cultivating character and fostering friendships through our service to the Shriners Hospitals for Children.

We want to thank everyone who purchased our Chocolate pretzels and candy. We had a very successful year. With the proceeds from this sale we were able to send \$10,000 to the Daughters of the Nile Foundation to be distributed throughout the Shriners Hospital System.

We are looking forward to Spring and partnering with Jaffa men to work the Curve concession stands. We hope to increase the number of games that we work at this year. So, please sign up to work a few games with us.

Congratulations Queen Rhonda on a successful Nile year!



**Jaffa Shrine
Recorder's Office**
Starting Wednesday, March 4th
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ELECTION DAY 2026



What's the best way to start a new year??? With a great day of brotherhood and fellowship at Jaffa Shrine!! On January 3, 2026, our annual business meeting and elections were held at our recently updated auditorium. We were honored to have as our special guest, Imperial Assistant Rabban Mark Hartz and his Lady Kathy. While the men gathered upstairs our ladies were hosted for a lunch in our banquet hall by First Lady Nina Ramsey. The business meeting ran smoothly upstairs with Illustrious Potentate Gary Smith guiding the process. After a brief recess all nobles returned for the annual election of officers. The changes to the Jaffa Divan and Temple are as follows.

David Dick elected as Oriental Guide
Richard Courtot elected as Recorder
Randal Colyer elected as an Imperial Representative.
Imperial Representatives Jim Miller, Jordan Settle, Dave Dodson Jr. were all retained.

With no surprises the current Divan by unanimous vote was retained to progress to the next office accordingly. A short recess was called to allow the ladies and family members to join us for the swearing in ceremony, led by Imperial Assistant Rabban Mark Hartz. Upon completion of the oaths Imperial Sir Hartz gave a rousing speech about Shrine and our wonderful hospitals. Newly elected Potentate Eric Ramsey spoke to all, expressing his thanks and shared his thoughts concerning his ideas for a successful 2026 Jaffa Shrine year. Many gifts were presented to Eric and his Lady Nina by units and clubs. A delicious meal and fellowship were shared by all afterwards in the banquet hall.

What a Great Day it was, and a wonderful way to begin 2026!!!



Jaffa Motor Corps

Monthly Meetings held the Wednesday following the 2nd Tuesday @ 7pm

New Members Welcome

Unit website www.jaffamotorcorps.webs.com

Jaffa Roadrunners

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DRIVERS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED!



SAMSAR AWARDS

Listed below are the members who earned SAMSAR awards through December 31st, 2025. The awards were presented at the Annual Meeting and Election, January 3rd, 2026 at the Jaffa Shrine Center.

Camel Lapel/Fez Pin Top line signer on first petition

- Roger M. Wiggins
- Michael R. Seidel
- Thomas E. Eckard
- Michael C. Kessling
- James R. Paul, Jr.
- Tyson M. Reid
- Tanner Rhodes

Jeweled Tassel Holder and Jeweled Numeral

Jeweled Numerals Have already received jeweled tassel holder and will receive jeweled numerals representing the number of first line signatures on petitions. Total SAMSAR points are in parentheses. This portion of the program is paused while we resupply the charms, we will provide updates in the near future.

- Scott A. Alter #7 (600)
- David J. Clawson #7 (525)
- Randall L. Colyer, PP #4 (400)
- Wm. Matthew Evans #5 (925)
- Ronald H. Fagan #3 (225)
- Richard D. Henry #6 (625)
- Stephen B. McCully #15 (1650)
- Gary W. Smith, PP #4 (500)
- William D. Wilkinson #7 (625)
- Jason A. Wilkinson #11 (1150)
- SAMSAR Award Need 500 points

Top line signer on a second petition plus a jeweled numeral for the number of petitions signed

- Roger M. Wiggins #2 (225)
- Michael R. Seidel #2 (175)
- Ricky L. Fetzer #2 (175)
- Christopher E. Ritchey, PP #2 (350)
- Herbert R. Whitfield, Jr. #2 (150)
- Jack E. Wilkes, Jr. #2 (150)
- Steven R. Yohn #2 (150)

- Scott A. Alter #7 (600)
- David J. Clawson #7 (525)
- Gary W. Smith, PP #4 (500)

Congratulations to these members on these accomplishments!

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CIRCUS 2026



SHOW TIMES

Wednesday, April 15th @ 6:30 PM

Thursday, April 16th @ 11:00 AM & 6:30 PM

Friday, April 17th @ 11:00 AM & 7:00 PM

Saturday, April 18th @ 1:00 PM & 7:00 PM

Sunday, April 19th @ 1:00 PM



POTENTATES' TRIP 2026

Potentate's trip to Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic was a truly distinguished and memorable event. Nobles and friends enjoyed a week marked by beautiful weather, exceptional hospitality, and strong fellowship. The group came together in recognition of Lady Nina and I during a private social hour celebration held at the beach. The evening featured elegant hors d'oeuvres, special drinks, music, and a beautiful seaside setting, creating a truly memorable experience.



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 Barry A. Leonard, PC Recording Adjutant
 Donald A. Wagaman Financial Adjutant
 Raymond D. Berkhimer, PC Financial Officer



DRILL TEAM: Captain - Barry A. Leonard PC, 1st Lt - Thomas L. Cook PC, 2nd Lt - Raymond D. Berkhimer PC, Equipment Officer - Harry L. Chirdon PC,

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NATIONAL NIGHT TO SHINE



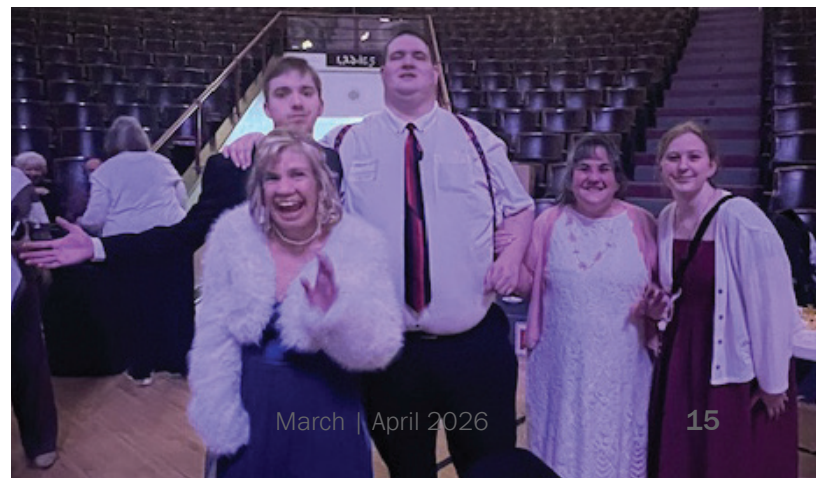
TIM TEBOW FOUNDATION

Night to Shine is a complimentary event for people with special needs hosted by local churches around the world. The event is open to anyone living with disabilities, ages 14 and older. Each event is unique to its location, but some cornerstone activities included across all of them are a red carpet entrance complete with a warm welcome from a friendly crowd and paparazzi, hair and makeup stations, shoeshines, limousine rides, karaoke, gifts, a catered dinner, a Sensory Room, a Respite Room for parents and caregivers, dancing, and a crowning ceremony where every guest is honored as a King or a Queen - the way God sees them each and every day.

"Night to Shine is my favorite night of the year! It's my favorite because we get to celebrate so many Kings and Queens and share how much they are loved by us and by the God of this universe. Our goal is to be able to get to every person with special needs around the world -until all are celebrated. No matter what city, no matter what country, no matter where you are, we want Night to Shine to be there." said Tim Tebow, founder of the Tim Tebow Foundation.

As sponsor of Night to Shine, the Tim Tebow Foundation provides each host church with the official Night to Shine Planning Manual, personalized guidance and support from a Tim Tebow Foundation staff member, the opportunity to apply for a financial grant, and access to planning resources that will assist them in creating an unforgettable experience for their honored guests. The foundation also provides access to ongoing disability ministry resources through Shine On. Shine On, a ministry of the Tim Tebow Foundation, is a faith-based community - a source of inspiration, belonging, and education for everyone impacted by disability. Shine On envisions a global community of churches and families that foster belonging and purpose for all.

Night to Shine launched in 2015 to provide a faith-based, celebratory experience. Held on the Friday before Valentine's Day, it grew from 44 churches in 2015 to over 720 churches across 56 countries by 2024, honoring over 80,000 guests annually.





AAJHS POP TAB CHALLENGE

Local Students Small Tabs Make a Big Impact

The Students at **The Altoona Area Junior High School** have proven that even the smallest items can lead to a massive difference. Following a month-long collection drive, the school is proud to announce the results of its **Pop Tab Challenge**.

The school community came together to collect thousands of aluminum pull tabs, which will be donated to **help children in Shriners Hospitals**. These tabs are recycled to help fund programs that provide housing and support for families with children receiving medical treatment.

Leading the Way

While every student contributed to the success of the drive, a few classrooms went above and beyond:

- **Pop Tab Collection Organizers:**
 - Mrs. Harold and Miss Ardrey's Leader in Me Class
- **Grade Level Winners:**
 - **8th Grade:** Ms. Cover and Ms. Giambanco's Leader in Me Class
 - **7th Grade:** Ms. Miller and Ms. Frucella's Leader in Me Class
 - **6th Grade:** Ms. Edmiston and Ms. Holton's Leader in Me Class

A Community Effort

We are incredibly proud of our students. This wasn't just about a competition; it was about our kids realizing that they have the power to help others. Seeing the bins fill up every day was a great reminder of the kindness and spirit we have here at **The Altoona Area Junior High**.

A big thank you to all the parents and community members who sent in tabs from home to support this cause.



AAJHS POP TAB CHALLENGE



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KIDDIE CHRISTMAS PARTY



The Jaffa Kiddies Christmas Party Committee invites 400 to 600 less fortunate children ages from infant to 14 years old from Altoona and surrounding areas schools and child care facilities to come to the Jaffa the second Sunday in December every year. We serve them and their parents and older children a delicious turkey dinner very generously donated by one of our members and prepared by the great kitchen staff [mostly committee members]. After dinner we try to keep them entertained for while until Santa Clause shows up and then all children infants to 14 receive a bag of toys and games to hopefully make their Christmas a little brighter. This year we gave out approximately 500 bags of toys and games and served about 800 turkey dinners. We do all of this with donations from our members, some local businesses and our only fund raiser which is our high-end purse bingo on March 8th 2026 and is always the second Sunday in march in the banquet hall of the Jaffa

Paul Frederick
Jaffa Kiddies Christmas Party Committee President

Designer Purse Bingo
Sunday, March 8, 2026
Bingo Starts 2pm * Doors Open at noon
Advanced Tickets \$30
Ticket is required for admission.
Ticket at door is \$40. Includes:
15 games regular bingo,
Grand Prize Drawing and
Lunch included
Jaffa Shrine
2200 Broad Ave, Altoona, PA
Ticket info (814) 931-9275
Or tplunket@aol.com
Proceed Benefits
Jaffa Kiddies Christmas

LADIES' VALENTINE



SWEETHEART NIGHT

Saturday, February 14th, 2026, marked our Ladies Valentine's Sweetheart Night, an evening dedicated to romance, celebration, and fellowship. The event featured a beautifully prepared dinner, live entertainment, and an atmosphere designed to capture the spirit of Valentine's Day. Guests enjoyed special themed drinks, including the Valentine's Signature Chocolate-Covered Strawberry Martini, along with chocolate-dipped strawberries, exquisite appetizers, and a fabulous meal.

The venue was adorned with stunning Valentine's décor, complete with a professional photographer offering portraits in front of an elegant Valentine arch. The night was filled with music, dancing, laughter, and unforgettable moments. Everyone arrived dressed to impress, and a wonderful time was had by all.

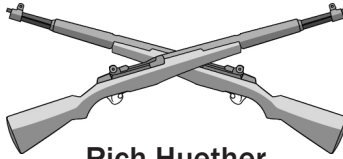
Truly,

Eric L. Ramsey
2026 Potentate



JAFFA SHRINE MOUNTED PATROL
 Meets 2nd Wednesdays
 Interested? Email:
mountedpatrol@jaffashriners.org
 Mounted Patrol Room – 7:00
Looking for Mounties & Mounts


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MEETS 3RD WEDNESDAY
7:00PM

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JAFFA HIGHLANDERS

ROBERT BURNS SUPPER

Greetings fellow Nobles,

In January the Jaffa Highlanders held our 16th annual Robert Burns Supper at the Jaffa Shrine. It was a great time and we really enjoyed having it at the Jaffa this year. Thanks to everyone that came out and I hope you had a wonderful time and we hope to see you next year. For those that unfamiliar with Robert Burns he is the national poet of Scotland and wrote Auld Lang Syne. Please follow us on Facebook at our Altoona Robert Burns Supper page. We still have some pictures from the event to upload and we will have info on next years supper.

We are looking forward to a fun and eventful 2026, especially since we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Jaffa Highlanders.

I look forward to seeing you all out at the parades and various events.

Fraternally,

Scott Alter - Clan Chief for the Jaffa Highlanders



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NIGHT AT THE RACES



SUPPORTING THE MOUNTED PATROL

We are excited to be planning our next Night at the Races, a fun and entertaining evening that brings our community together for a great cause! This unique fundraiser features prerecorded horse races that allow guests to experience all the excitement of the track — right from their seats.

Throughout the evening, guests will have the opportunity to place small bets on prerecorded races. Before each race begins, the horses' names are announced, adding to the suspense and fun. Once betting closes, the race is shown on the big screen, and everyone cheers on their picks as if they were at Churchill Downs! In addition to the races, the event typically includes horse sponsorships (where supporters can "adopt" and name a horse), raffles, and other opportunities to participate.

We look forward to a night filled with laughter, friendly competition, and community spirit — all while supporting an organization that makes a lasting difference in the lives of children and families.



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PROVOST GUARD

Meets the fourth Thursday in unit room.

Contact the officers at provost@jaffashriners.org

Altoona, PA



Help us Celebrate 100 Years



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ALL ARE WELCOME

- Current & past patients
 - Current & past staff
- Community members
- Donors, Shriners, & others

EVENT DETAILS

- Casual, family-friendly event to highlight what we do
 - Self-guided tour
 - Meet and greets
 - Activities

 **Saturday, April 18, 2026**
10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

 **Shriners Children's Philadelphia**
3551 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19140

In advance of the actual 100th Anniversary, in June, we will be hosting a special **open-house event** to celebrate this historic milestone. Visitors will be able to see presentations from members of our staff in normally restricted hospital areas, as well as hear from patients and staff members. The event will also feature a few **activities for all ages**.

This is a drop-in, open house-style event. Attendees may arrive at their convenience throughout the scheduled time, before 2 p.m. No formal program, it is a free-flowing event.

More information to come!

Contact: Stephanie Byrwa | sbyrwa@shrinenet.org | 215-430-4178



The Jaffa Divan and Improvement Association

Have launched a capital campaign to raise funds to install air conditioning in the auditorium of the Jaffa Shrine Center as well as replace the aging AC unit servicing the banquet hall. Information regarding ways to contribute will be mailed out shortly to the Nobility.

Yes, I want to help Make The Jaffa Shrine Center Usable Year Round! You can count on me to...

DONATE:

- \$150 \$1,000
 \$250 \$1,000 (two installments)
 \$500 \$1,500
 \$500 (two installments) \$2,500
 \$750 \$5,000
 Other _____

PLEDGE:

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 For The Next
 _____ Months
 (Up To 24 Months)

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Signature _____

Address _____

PAYMENT METHOD: MasterCard Visa Discover Check

Credit Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____ Security Code _____

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Jaffa Patrol/ Directors Staff



Join us on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7pm. Call 934-5555 for more info.



QUESTIONS?

BY DEAN MCKNIGHT

There are some things in life that I know for sure. I know I'm proud to say that I'm a Jaffa Shriner. I know I love my wife dearly, and I know I'm not good looking because I'm not allowed to go out on any night without a Halloween mask on. My neighbors tell me if I go without a mask, I scare the kids and make them cry. There are things in life however that I'm not sure of and maybe there is no easy answer for. I guess it started when I was about 12 years old and I asked my mother if I could ever live in a house like we were living in. Well, my mother didn't exactly answer my question. She said, "No Dean I see you living in a massive white building with big pillars out in front and an American flag flying proudly at the side". Well, I started to cry, and my mother asked me what was wrong, and I said, "I don't want to live in the Post Office".

I'm sure that's when it all started. Ever since I was 12, I find myself questioning things that happen in my life and that I don't have the answers for. This curiosity of mine was fueled when the winter issue of the national Shriner magazine came in the mail. The magazine had 15 pages! Is it possible that our Jaffa Shrine is more active than the entire Shrine? Our Jaffa Journal had 31 pages in the October/November issue, and it was packed full of news, advertisements, unit and club happenings, and a calendar of events. I wish I could be more active but since I'm not, I depend on the Journal to keep me updated and in touch with my Shriner friends. I do not want to be critical of the national magazine, but it seems to me it could be a powerful recruiting tool. Let's do more bragging about what Shriners do. Why limit it to just us? Why not more articles in that national publication that would cause young men to say, "I should look into this Shriner thing". Why not then send every Temple 50 copies so our members could place them in barbershops, doctors' offices, and any place people gather and wait? All the magazines disappeared from those places during covid, and I see people looking for something to read while they wait. Why not let them read about us? How does one become a Shriner? What is this hospital thing and how we help. If my friends say I dress like a clown now, can I join the clowns and march in the parades?

Why isn't the recruiting of new members everyone's number one priority? Our membership continues to spiral down and as our members grow older age takes a toll on our ability to just do what is needed. Those are the facts,

but then I remembered some other facts. Our members are all Masons first and that means we are builders. If we can't do things physically, we'll find a new way to do it. Do we have units or clubs whose active membership has fallen to the point that meetings are not the fun they used to be? Could the Jaffa utility bills be reduced if we heated and cooled fewer rooms? Do the groups with the most members occupy the rooms with the fewest steps? Should we hire a marketing firm to help us get the word out as to who we are and what we do for the children, the community, to maintain our home, the Jaffa Shrine building, and most of all for ourselves?

I'm proud and I love to say I'm a Shriner, and for people to know I'm a Shriner. The best part is my wife is proud of me, and thinks I look rather dashing in my Fez. I never want to think that a young person today missed the opportunity to share that same pride because they just never knew all about who we are, and what we do, and why we want them as a member.

If you do meet a potential member and they perhaps feel like they couldn't meet our standards, please just mention that Dean McKnight was welcomed as a member and they'll think, if Dean McKnight made it, they'll welcome me with open arms.

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CHICKEN BBQ PIT



MAIDEN VOYAGE

On Sunday Feb. 15, 2026, at 8am, the inaugural Chicken BBQ was conducted on the NEW Jaffa Chicken BBQ pit, with approximately 45 nobles present. Chicken BBQ dinners have always been a staple at the Jaffa, with clubs, units and community organizations working with Jaffa for their delicious chicken fundraisers.

In 2020, the Jaffa was closed due to COVID, but the bills however, kept coming. Illustrious Sir Rob Harkins and the Divan, decided to do monthly chicken BBQ's to help offset the bills to keep the Jaffa running. This decision also became a way for us to get together for fun and fellowship, and we have continued monthly BBQs ever since.

The current pit was starting to age, as we were cooking 1000 chicken halves per event and the cook time was excessive. The Divan, Improvement Association, and "The Chicken Pit Crew", planned a new pit design. Under the direction of Illustrious Sir Chris Ritchey, construction began in August 2023, and a structure was built, the concrete flat poured, and the garage framed and sided. Under the direction of Illustrious Sir Randy Colyer, in April 2024, the concrete pit walls were poured. Concrete professionals advised we wait a minimum of 90 days or longer to cure before we lit a fire. In September 2024, we lit the first fire and afterward as the concrete cooled, the interior wall surface began to pop and break away compromising the structural integrity of the pit. After tests and recommendations from industry professionals, it was determined that the pit needed to be demolished and rebuilt with different materials. Under the direction of Illustrious Sir Gary Smith, in Spring 2025, the pit was demolished and repoured, this time bigger to accommodate a fire brick lined interior. We let the concrete cure before fastening the metal mesh and mortaring the fire brick. We elected to let the mortar have plenty of time to cure. Under the direction of Illustrious Sir Eric Ramsey, on Feb. 15, 2026, the first chickens were cooked on the new Jaffa Chicken Pit.

The increased size of this pit allows us to cook three more racks (approx. 120 additional halves) at one time. Cooking approx. 400 halves per burn will significantly decrease our cook time and help ensure that we can always serve fresh, hot dinners. The addition of the dedicated garage will allow us to efficiently store and organize our supplies, purchase supplies in bulk, and reduce our costs. Phase 2 of the project, when completed, will add a larger concrete area and a roof to cover the prep tables, keeping our racks and workers out of the elements. Additionally, it will include the connection of water and the addition of electric to provide lighting for visibility and security purposes in conjunction with security cameras to protect our investment and to extend our camera system to the upper parking lot.

I am happy and proud to say that except for pouring the concrete walls we were able to complete the entire project with donated time and labor from our fellow nobles. A good portion of the funding for this project came from Jaffa Clubs, Units, and Groups. There have been too many nobles to individually name who donated their talent, time and resources, and without each of them this project would not have been possible.

We would like to thank a few companies who helped this project in special ways, whether monetarily, or by donation of materials, equipment or resources. Companies including but not limited to (and in no particular order); 84 Lumber, Freedom Metals, Grannas Brothers, New Enterprise Stone and Lime, Centre Concrete, Penn Stress, East Side Concrete, Keith Truck & Equipment Sales, Haven Ridge Excavating, Keith Electrical Services, Greenwood Pools & Spas, Kerr Landscaping, Frederick Lock & Key, Dwayne A. Smith Interior & Exterior Finishes, G&R Excavating and Demolition, United Rentals-Duncansville, and Terry Leonard's Metal Shop.

If you know the people that run these businesses, please thank them and patronize their business for their support to Jaffa. If you have never been to a BBQ to help or see how it all works, I urge you to come on out as help is always needed to cook and to help package. If you are a new member, come out on a BBQ Sunday (usually the 3rd Sunday of the month), as this is a terrific way to meet other members and get involved.





MEMORIAL

FOR THE ILLUSTRIOUS SIR MILES K. COSTELLO, JR



MEMORIAL ON THE PASSING OF

ILLUSTRIOUS SIR MILES K. COSTELLO, JR

October 6, 1935 – January 22, 2026

Whereas, on Thursday, January 22, 2026, the Supreme Architect of the Universe sent the black camel, which carried our esteemed brother, Illustrrious Sir Miles K. Costello, Jr to his eternal reward, and

Whereas, that great architect in his infinite wisdom, called our exalted Masonic brother, devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather from his Earthly labors to rest in that home on high, not made by hands, eternal in the heavens, and

Whereas, his untiring efforts, unswerving loyalty and devotion to his Fraternity earned him the esteem and admiration of his brothers and his passing will leave an everlasting void in the minds and hearts of all the Nobility, and as Potentate of Jaffa Shriners in 2016 his sound judgement and safe counsel were invaluable resources to all of the Nobles of Jaffa Shrine, and

Whereas, he was born in Windber, Pennsylvania, son of the late Miles, Sr and S. Madeline (Hillegas) Costello. Miles was married to Edith Delores Rowe for 67 years who preceded him in death. He is survived by his children: Linda (Ken)Shue; Roy (Annalee)Costello; Gary (Christine)Costello; Ruth (Steve)Boyer; Dana Costello and Dona Murtha; grandchildren: Mandy Oswalt; Sonya Keifer; Ashley Costello; Christine (Rob)Hinkley; Shane (Cassidy)Boyer; Stephen (Lindsey)Boyer, Jr and Sarah Murtha; seventeen great-grandchildren and one great granddaughter; and a sister-in-law Phyllis (Jerry) Sherle. Miles was preceded in death by his stepfather Walter "Spike" Singer and stepmother Naomi Costello, and

Whereas, Miles was a member of the Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, Fairhope, PA. He graduated from the former Adams Summerhill High School. He retired from Witco Chemical Company, and

Whereas, Miles was a member of Meyersdale and Somerset Lodges for 63 years serving as Past Master of Prospect Hamby Lodge. He was also a member of the following Masonic organizations: Jaffa Shriners, Potentate in 2016, and,

Whereas, Miles was also a member of the FOE Aerie 1801 Somerset, New Baltimore Sportsman's Club, Charter member of the Norwood Lions Club. Miles was an avid hunter, fisherman and gardener, and

Whereas, the Potentate and Elected Divan unite with the Past Potentates and Nobility in this expression of enduring grief, which has been sustained by the Fraternity of which he was a faithful and prominent member; and be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be printed in a timely issue of the Jaffa Journal and the original thereof be sent to his family.

This memorial was prepared by: Illustrrious Sir James F. Miller

IN REMEMBRANCE



OF THOSE VISITED BY THE BLACK CAMEL

“Death is a black camel that kneels unbidden at every gate.”

The Officers and Nobles of Jaffa Shrine express their sincere sympathy to the families of these departed Nobles. Please keep their families in your thoughts and prayers.

NOBLE	LOCATION	PASSED			
Fred Rutherford	Altoona, PA	2/26/2026	Brian K. Bender	Altoona, PA	11/1/2025
Brady P. Hogue	Fayetteville, PA	2/28/2025	Manuel M. Pena	Johnstown, PA	12/6/2025
Robert C. Nagle	Altoona, PA	11/19/2025	Darrel D. Cadle	Altoona, PA	12/16/2025
Robin Harkins, P.P.	Altoona, PA	11/23/2025	Robert E. Diehl	Altoona, PA	12/21/2025
John C. Kiser	Windber, PA	8/19/2025	John F. Mallow	Altoona, PA	12/22/2025
Grove A. Spearly, Jr.	State College, PA	12/23/2025	John E. "Jack" Moyer	Altoona, PA	12/18/2025
Donald C. Grenoble	Spring Mills, PA	10/23/2025	Richard A. Gates "Gator"	La Jose, PA	1/9/2026
Randy W. Irwin, Sr.	Altoona, PA	10/22/2025	Robert J. Campbell	Hollidaysburg, PA	1/26/2026
			DeWayne Floyd McGuire	Dubois, PA	8/28/2025

ATTENTION NOBLES: Have you told your Lady and family that when you pass on, to give your Shrine and Masonic effects (Fez, jewelry, uniform, etc.) to a Mason in your family, or return them to the Jaffa Shrine Center. We will give them to some deserving Noble or return them to the Masonic organization. PLEASE DO NOT let these Shrine and Masonic items get into garage sales, flea markets or the wrong hands. Thank you!



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ONLY 2,000 TICKETS WILL BE SOLD. THE WINNER WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT THE JAFFA CIRCUS ON APRIL 18, 2026 DURING THE EVENING SHOW. PROCEEDS WILL BENEFIT THE JAFFA OPERATIONS.

FOR TICKET LOCATIONS & RULES, VISIT **JAFFASHRINERS.ORG**



SMALL GAME OF CHANCE LICENSE 2025-24 PERMIT# 1398

JAFFA CALENDAR



MARCH 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Executive Meeting	3	4 Bingo - Banquet Hall @ 5	5 Daughters of the Nile Meeting	6	7
8	9	10 Meetings for: Jaffa Improvement Unit Head	11 Meetings for: Clinton County Indiana Shrine Mounted Patrol Patrol & Director String Band Unit Drum & Bugle Legion of Honor Lil' Vettes	12 Meetings for: Antique & Classic Highlanders Jobel Court Motor Corps Valley of Altoona Scottish Rite	13	14
Kiddies Christmas Bingo						
15 Greeters Meeting	16 Meetings for: Mifflin County Shrine Club	17 Chanters Meeting	18	19	20 Clowns Unit Cycle Corps Unit	21 Roadrunners Meeting
Chicken BBQ @ Jaffa		Potentate's Reception Set Up				Potentate's Reception
22	23	24 Meetings for: Cove Shrine Club Band	25	26 Meetings for: Somerset County Shrine Club Provost Guard Unit	27	28 Membership Meeting
Jobel Court Installation						Jobel Court Installation
29	30	31				

Deadline to submit content for the May | June issue of the Jaffa Journal: April 15

JAFFA USHERS

Meetings: March 19th, May 21st,
August 20th, October 15th, November 19th

New members welcome!

Help us tell people where to go!



If you are a musician who plays one of these – we want **you** in the **String Band!**

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JAFFA CALENDAR

APRIL 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Daughters of the Nile Meeting	3	4
5	6 Executive Meeting	7 Jobel School of Instruction	8 Meetings for: Clinton County Indiana Shrine Mounted Patrol Patrol & Director String Band Unit Drum & Bugle Legion of Honor Lil' Vettes Blood Drive	9 Meetings for: Antique & Classic Highlanders Jobel Court Motor Corps Valley of Altoona Scottish Rite	10	11 Scottish Rite Reunion
		Vo-Tech Floor			Circus Preparations	
12	13	14 Meetings for: Jaffa Improvement Unit Head	15	16	17 Meetings for: Clowns Unit Cycle Corps Unit	18 Roadrunners Meeting
Circus Preparations			Circus			
19 Greeters Meeting	20 Meetings for: Mifflin County Shrine Club	21 Meetings for: Business @ 6pm Chanters	22	23 Meetings for: Somerset County Provost Guard Unit	24 Shrine Club Meeting	25 Membership Meeting
Treasured Once Again Move in @ Jaffa Shrine, 2200 Broad Ave, Altoona, PA 16601, USA				Treasured Once Again @ Jaffa Shrine, 2200 Broad Ave, Altoona, PA 16601, USA		
Circus		Vo-Tech Floor				
26 Treasured Once Again @ Jaffa Shrine, 2200 Broad Ave, Altoona, PA 16601, USA Chicken BBQ @ Jaffa	27 Meetings for: Cove Shrine Club Band	28	29	30		



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JAFFA CALENDAR



MAY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 Executive Meeting	5	6 Bingo - Banquet Hall	7 Daughters of the Nile Meeting	8	9
10	11	12 Meetings for: Jaffa Improvement Unit Head	13 Meetings for: Clinton County Indiana Shrine Mounted Patrol & Director String Band Unit Drum & Bugle Legion of Honor Lil' Vettes	14 Meetings for: Antique & Classic Highlanders Motor Corps Valley of Altoona Scottish Rite	15 Meetings for: Clowns Unit Cycle Corps Unit	16 Roadrunners Meeting
17 Greeters Meeting Chicken BBQ @ Jaffa	18 Mifflin County Shrine Club Meeting	19 Chanters Meeting	20	21 Jobel Court Meeting	22	23 Membership Meeting
24 Antique & Classic Car Club Show	25 Potentates Caravan Juniata Memorial Day Parade	26 Meetings for: Cove Shrine Club Band	27	28 Meetings for: Somerset County Provost Guard Unit	29 Shrine Club Meeting	30
31						

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Sun 7am - 8pm

HELP WANTED

The Jaffa Journal is looking for two individual volunteers willing to dedicate the time and energy to develop the bi-monthly publication of our magazine. Specifically, we are seeking an Editor to replace Rich Courtot, and an Assistant Editor that is currently vacant. If you or someone you know are interested, or a bit curious of how this process works, please feel free to inquire with the front office 814-944-4043. There is help and guidance at your disposal. You will not be alone in this endeavor. We all want to see our Journal succeed, and provide communication to our membership throughout the region.

Join us!!

Meetings are 2nd Wednesday of each month 7pm
EAT 'N PARK in INDIANA, PA



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