Greetings Fellow Nobles,

The Public Relations conference for the hospital and temple PR directors was held recently. It was an excellent meeting with many opportunities to learn from one another and share our experiences and expertise. I believe we all gained a greater understanding of the different roles and approaches to public relations, and the need to work together and “speak with one voice” to be most effective as we promote Shriners International and Shriners Hospitals for Children. I wish to thank everyone who attended, and acknowledge the excellent work of the corporate PR staff in planning and presenting the event.

During the PR seminar, we were reminded of the importance of open communication and active participation to our efforts.

Along those lines, I want to thank everyone who submitted entries and voted for the name of our new fraternal magazine. Voting closed on April 30, so we will have the official name very soon.

I also want to thank those of you who have actively contributed to the content of our new publication, either through providing ideas, responding to requests for information, or by submitting content for consideration. It is truly meant to be your magazine; please be part of it.

The Shriner of the Month program is also going well. In the four months since implementing this initiative, we have acknowledged the efforts of individual Shriners from Antioch, Zuhrah, Alee and Gizeh temples. It is the commitment and dedication of our nobles – individually and collectively through the clubs, units and temples – that makes our organization strong and vital to our communities.

The next big event coming our way is Imperial Session, which is only two months away. It is another time when Shriners gather to review recent events and make choices and decisions to guide and strengthen both our fraternity and our philanthropy. It is also a time when Shriners from around the world, and their families, gather for our unique brand of fun and fellowship. Communication and participation are also at the heart of Imperial Session - In both the meetings and the more casual activities. We have the opportunity to share ideas and expertise, create plans and strategies to take the organizations forward, and build friendships that will last a lifetime. Kem and Zuhrah Shriners, and the Midwest Shrine Association have been planning and perfecting the details of this huge and hugely important event, and look forward to welcoming you to Minneapolis, as do Lady Cheryl and I.

We greatly appreciate your commitment and dedication to Shriners International, and we invite you to become even more involved – to communicate and to participate in all the wonderful activities and opportunities available at your temple and through the national office.

Dale W. Stauss
Public Relations Committee
Chairman and Deputy Imperial Potentate
Our Philadelphia Hospital First to Perform Innovative Surgery

Shriners Hospitals for Children — Philadelphia has an extensive treatment program for scoliosis (curvature of the spine) that is designed to treat all forms of the condition, using every tool available.

The newest treatment being offered for young children with scoliosis curves too large for bracing is the MAGEC (MAGnetic Expansion Control) Spinal Bracing and Distraction System. Typically, large and potentially life-threatening scoliosis curves are treated with traditional growing rods, which require a moderate surgical procedure for implantation, then a smaller procedure every six months to lengthen the spine. Although the lengthening procedures are relatively minor, they still involve general anesthesia, anxiety and discomfort. The MAGEC rods are an alternative to the traditional growing rods, and eliminate the need for repeated lengthening surgeries. This results in significant safety, health, mental and physical benefits for the child and their family. Patients will also be able to get back to their activities of daily living sooner with this surgical option.

The spine team members at the Philadelphia Shriners Hospital are known for being pioneers in the newest cutting-edge technology for spine care, and are proud to have completed the first surgery using the MAGEC system in the United States since the FDA granted 510K clearances on Feb. 27, 2014.

The first patient to benefit from this procedure is Tianni Swint, a 4 year old with infantile scoliosis and Prader-Willi syndrome, from Brooklyn, N. Y.

Congratulations to our Chicago Hospital

Two staff members from our Chicago hospital have received grants and awards that both honor them and allow them to continue to pursue important projects.

Lawrence C. Vogel, M.D., medical director of spinal cord injury services, received a grant from the Portes Foundation to further his project, “Improving knowledge about distracted driving among college and university students.”

This project addresses the need to reduce the frequency of distracted driving behaviors among college students. Specifically, the current study has three aims: 1) To implement a low cost, interactive, public educational event on college campuses in the Chicago area, 2) To evaluate the Distracted Driving Workshop and 3) To understand whether any institution-level factors contribute to a culture of safe driving.

Dr. Vogel has participated in Shriners Hospitals for Children’s Distracted Driving Summits, which have been held in Illinois, Texas and Florida.

In addition, Physical Therapist Jennifer Schottler has been awarded the first-ever Neilsen Foundation Allied Health Professional Research Award. The $25,000 award is designed to encourage clinicians in the field of spinal cord injury (SCI) to incorporate an element of research into their professional practices. Schottler’s research project is a one-year pilot project to study the efficiency and biomechanics of wheelchair propulsion by youth with SCI. Information gained from the study will be used to identify and minimize repetitive, abnormal demands on the upper extremities. This research has the potential to reduce the high incidence of pain and degenerative joint conditions frequently associated with manual wheelchair propulsion.
Sharing Fezzy with Others

In January 2014, Ryan Hargrave, 6, went to the local hospital with breathing trouble. He was transported from there to Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Mo., for treatment of a severe asthma attack. After a week-long stay, Ryan decided that he wanted to give back to the hospital. His dad, Jared, of member of Ararat Shriners and its Mini Model T’s club, had just attended a yearly leadership seminar at the temple, where he learned about Fezzy, the teddy bear that is Shriners Hospitals’ Love to the rescue ambassador.

In March, Ryan presented two Fezzy bears to Children’s Mercy Hospital with explicit instructions that they be given to any child who enters the emergency room with a severe burn or is transported to the Shriners Hospital system. In Ryan’s words, “Kids who are burned bad or have to go to the Shrine Hospital are scared and need Fezzy to protect them.”

Missy Stover, child life specialist with Children’s Mercy, accepted the two bears. While there, Ryan was quick to let everyone know that he liked helping people and wanted to be a Shriner when he gets older. Should he hold on to his desire, Ryan will be a 4th generation Shriner and 5th generation Mason.

Ryan and his dad have pledged to provide a new Fezzy for each one that is given out as long as new bears are still available from Vermont Teddy Bears, or Children’s Mercy decides to end the program.

Thank you, Ryan, for your compassion and generosity! You’ll make a great Shriner one day!

Have You Seen Bart? Where is He Now?

You may not know it, but Fezzy wasn’t the first “official” teddy bear of Shriners Hospitals!

In early 2013, when Dennis Burkholder was helping his brother noble, Greg Heins, arrange a delivery of nearly 3,000 donated teddy bears to our St. Louis hospital, he suddenly got an inspiration for a fun PR project to help spread the word about the fraternity and the new hospital under construction.

Burkholder, a member of the Imperial PR Committee and Moolah Shriners, imagined that one of the bears – that he named Bart – fell off the delivery truck on the way to the hospital. And, much like “Flat Stanley,” he planned that Bart would have many adventures before he made his way back to the St. Louis hospital.

Dennis promptly started a Facebook page for Bart, and the next thing you know, Bart started popping up at all sorts of famous local landmarks like the Gateway Arch and the St. Louis Zoo. It wasn’t long before his travels became more extensive. Since he first “fell off the truck,” Bart has taken “selfies” all around the world – from the mountains of Alaska, to the hills of Ireland and the beaches of Mexico. He seems to find his way to many of the cities where we have Shriner temples and Shriners Hospitals.

Nearly 800 Shriners, patient ambassadors and hospital staff members are now fans of Bart’s Facebook page, following his adventures throughout the world. And, according to Dennis, who knows him very well, Bart is expected to find his way back to the St. Louis Shriners Hospital by the time the new hospital opens in 2015.

Be sure to find Bart on Facebook (search for “Bart the Bear”) and look him up at the 2014 Imperial Session in Minneapolis. Maybe he’ll even take a “selfie” with you!
Remember Shriners International Awareness Day

On June 6, 1876, the Imperial Council, the governing body of the Shriners fraternity, was founded. To celebrate and recognize this important milestone in our history, Shriners International has officially designated June 6 as Shriners International Awareness Day. On this day, nobles across the globe are encouraged to celebrate their great fraternity and generate interest and awareness of its work and importance in their communities.

“Shriners International Awareness Day is an opportunity for our nobles to celebrate their fraternity and share our rich traditions of brotherhood, fellowship and philanthropy with their community,” said Imperial Potentate John Cinotto.

**Here are several ways to honor this special day:**

- Wear your fez on Shriners International Awareness Day when appropriate (during an official Shriners function).
- Show pride in Shriners International by wearing a hat, shirt, lapel pin, or other item with the fraternal logo.
- Promote Shriners International Awareness Day on your temple website and social media pages. Announce the date at all club and unit meetings to ensure all nobles are informed.
- Distribute materials to potential new members.
- Hold an Open House at your temple.
- Host a Media Night during the week of Shriners International Awareness Day.
- Hold a reception at your temple.

Have a memorable Shriners International Awareness Day!