



WA WA Shriners

OFFICE OF THE POTENTATE

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March 19, 2020

To All Nobles.... Once again, it is with a heavy heart that the current world circumstances have caused me to have to give formal notice of the cancellation of the 2020 Mid-West Shrine Association Summer Session that was planned for August 12-15, 2020 in Regina.

At the Divan meeting this past Monday night, we were faced with not only the costs that we have already incurred in preparing to host the MSA Summer Session, but the bitter reality of the substantial additional costs we faced if we delayed a decision to cancel the event. To minimize these costs and protect the interest of WA WA Shriners and our patients, I felt that we had no alternative but to take this immediate and decisive action.

Rest assured that this decision was not taken lightly. The current crisis regarding the COVID-19 virus has put us in an untenable situation as there are too many factors stacked against the event. The requirement to practice social distancing and the uncertainty over the length of the restrictions on gathering size and cross border travel were key considerations that make it impossible to hold the Summer Session. We also note that the majority of our Nobles and Ladies fall in age range that is most vulnerable to having serious complications and that there could be significant economic impacts to many of our nobles. All these factors combined left us with no option but to cancel the event to protect the best interests of WA WA Shriners.

We understand the importance of the Summer Session to the Nobles and Shrine Centres of the MSA. It is a chance to come together and promote the Shriners and our Philanthropy to the public. However, the safety of our Nobles and the reality of the world today must take priority. We hope that the MSA can return to a normal schedule in 2021.

I know there is growing and continued concern around COVID-19 as the events over the past couple of weeks have been unprecedented. Many of us are feeling uneasy, especially as we face more changes to our daily routines, future plans and social interactions.

The cancellation of highly anticipated events, fundraisers and Temple functions, many of which have been planned for months or years, is probably the hardest of all decisions to make.

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I would like to thank MSA President Ill Sir John Clarke, Director General Noble Stu Larson and the rest of the committee for their work in preparing for the Summer Session. It is undoubtedly especially frustrating for them to see all their work end up being for nothing. Unfortunately, circumstances beyond our control forced this cancellation.

I have confidence that with continued vigilance the situation will improve, and we will be able to once again be active Shriners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Keep". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first letters of "Robert" and "Keep" being capitalized and prominent.

ILL Sir Robert (Bob) Keep
Potentate 2020