

Look to the West

Greetings

What good is a message if it is never delivered? What good is a light if it is never seen? How useful is a tool if you never use it? Over the years, many have contributed to this wonderful fraternity of ours. They shared their messages; they shined their light and gave us the tools to have an organization we are proud of. The intent of this newsletter is to share the news and events of Crittenden Dry Ridge 694. We will also highlight events and Brothers from across Masonry, as we can.

GOING FORWARD

We have a philosophy, never know until you try. Will starting discourse with Brothers across the state, help us improve? Will sharing our news, ideas, and opinions help others? Will highlighting current members who are making a difference, inspire others to do the same? I guess we are about to find out.



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Commitment vs Contribution

In this country we have been conditioned to contribute. “Would you like to donate a dollar to XYZ Charity?” Would you like to round your total to the next dollar to help fight a particular cause?” “Donate to this disaster relief” Everywhere you turn people are asking for a contribution.

In Masonry, many contribute to many wonderful causes. We even contribute yearly in our dues and assessments. We also ask the public at large to contribute and hold fundraisers.

As much as we need contributions, just asking people to contribute is part of why our Fraternity is dying. It's easy to drop a dollar, or some spare change. It's easy to pay your dues. It's easy to give some small part to a cause.

We excel at contributing. But do we commit? A great story to show the difference is shared by Eddie Pinero. A child asks his dad, “What is the difference between commitment and contribution. The father told his son to examine his breakfast of sausage and eggs. Son, the chicken contributed to your breakfast, the pig committed.

The chicken can lay a new egg every day, so the cost to it was minimal, but the pig gave up everything.

When you look at the men who built this Fraternity, many of them committed. Countless stories of Masons being persecuted, imprisoned, and even killed. Men who donated their considerable wealth, knowledge, and time to make sure the Light of Freemasonry carried into the future. They are the sausage of this fraternity.

We've been conditioned to be the chicken. While we must contribute, and for some it is harder than others, if we are ever to rebuild this temple, we have to commit.

If Freemasonry has added value to your life, fervently share that with others. We don't recruit, but we should be telling the world how blessed we are to be Masons. Be there. You cannot commit unless you are there. Life happens, we know you can't attend every meeting, but you equally by chance can't miss every meeting. Read a book. Share with others what you have learned. Above all else commit to being a brother. Be the pig. I myself am guilty at times of not seeing just how much room my cable tow actually has. May we all, commit to our lodges, our brothers, and the greatest fraternity ever constructed.

Lessons Learned

Masonry is Brotherhood, pure and simple.

All of our rituals, stories, and practices mean nothing if they do not promote unity through brotherhood.

When Masonry is done right, you can feel it.

Get out, travel. You will be surprised by what you find!

Times change, people change, places change, but humanity's need for authentic relationships is timeless.

We are all in this together.

We need to show the world, to grow our world. Show the world the meaning of Masonry, is our only path to grow. If your Masonry ends at the lodge door, it will do you no good.

The brothers at Taylor Lodge have something we all could use to emulate.



Nestled quietly along the banks of the Licking River, in Harrison County Kentucky, sits the quaint town of Berry. Located on land donated to the Covington and Louisville Railroad by George W. Berry, it was originally incorporated as Berry's Station in 1869. Being a railroad stop for the local farmers; it soon grew into a proper town.

In its heyday, Berry, would host everything needed in small town America. From a gas station to hardware and general stores, restaurants, and even a jail. Unfortunately, as time wore on, these establishments would fade into just memories of times gone by. However, two things remain. The post office, originally opened in 1856, and across the street, Taylor Lodge, chartered in 1848.

A rather nondescript building, Taylor Lodge has been making good men better for over a century. Many of the Citizens of Berry have been members, as the lodge rode the ups and downs of Berry's population

A recent visit, and it is easy to see how this lodge has persisted all these years. You cannot visit Taylor Lodge without seeing a great display of the bedrock of Masonry's foundation, Brotherhood.

“Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the Law of Christ” Galatians 6:2

When you open the door the first thing you will notice is that many of the brothers each bring a part of the meal. In many of our lodges, this task is relegated to the secretary or one or two poor souls. At Taylor they all help. Here, you will also find some of the best green beans in the state!

You immediately get hit with the sense that these men, truly are their brother's keepers. You will see men helping one another with their food. Don't walk so good, someone will get you a plate. Hearing aid too low, someone will help.

The point to be made is simple, the brothers at Taylor Lodge, exude a sense of brotherly love towards one

Where all in this together. Or, How one small lodge teaches mighty lessons.

A look at Taylor Lodge 164

Another, and their visitors that needs to be witnessed. Any lodge that displays such a strong sense of Brotherhood and affection certainly is doing Masonry right.

Taylor lodge, like so many others though, has seen its fortunes rise and fall along with the city in which it is located. As the railroad station and businesses left, the town has fallen on hard times. With no industry aside from agriculture many generations have left to start their lives, never to return.

The story of Berry, and Taylor Lodge is the same story affecting many small towns and small lodges across our state. With the waves of time washing away the people and institutions that once held us all together. However, these brothers fight on, united.

The camaraderie, and affection these brothers have for one another is something every Mason should witness. Every man should witness. If more people were to witness the brotherly love this fraternity inculcates, like the brothers of Taylor exhibit so well, we could once again change the world.



The Need for Concordant Bodies

In our current condition in Blue Lodge, it is easy to forget, that Masonry has many other organizations that depend on us all the same. Most notably, the Scottish and York Rites.

As our numbers and participation drop in Blue Lodge, the effect on these bodies has been even worse. As always since one must be a Mason to join these Rites, as our numbers decline, the pool from which they draw becomes increasingly shallow. As well, since they have only ever attracted a percentage of our members, the numbers are

increasingly unfavorable. Add to this the misguided notion that some Masons have, that concordant bodies are unnecessary, and things look bleaker still.

So, why are bodies like these two Rites needed, and why should we care? Why is the notion we don't need these bodies misguided? It is really simple.

First, we forget that the first three degrees are actually a part of these bodies. The Blue Lodge degrees in the United States are the first three degrees of the York Rite.

In Louisiana, you can still find red lodges. Here the first three degrees of the Scottish Rite were used. Due to the Grand Lodge system that grew in America, the rites agreed to not confer the first 3 degrees, to gain acceptance from the Grand Lodges.

These bodies are the mere continuance of the Masonic Story. You don't read half a book or watch half of a movie. To truly learn and understand, one must learn the whole story.

In the end, we are all in this together, if we truly seek light, our journey should never end.

Up Next at CDR Regular Communication

The weather impacted us like most in the state and we went dark for January.

Our next Meeting is February 8th, 9am. We hope to see you there!

If you need directions, please visit www.cdr694.com.

District Meeting District 19

District 19 annual meeting will be March 21st, 2025, at Trinity Lodge in Newport.

This will be a combined meeting of Districts 18 and 19. Meal will commence at 6:30pm, meeting will be at 7:30pm.

Any questions please reach out to District Deputy Grand Master Jake Fields.

This Month's Masonic Spotlight

Chuck Black Bradford 123

Chuck has been a member of Bradford Lodge, since 1990. He is also a dual member of Good Faith, and a member of the Scottish Rite Valley of Covington. He served as DDGM in 2022.

Each year Chuck is instrumental in the assembly and distribution of many bikes to deserving kids in Northern Kentucky. Chuck also plays a large role in organizing and promoting Bradford's outdoor degree.

Chuck has always been there to lend a helping hand.





Suggestions

We are always looking to improve. If you would like to make a suggestion, please reach out to us, in person, via text, or on the web! We're pretty easy to find!

Upcoming Events

- **February 8th**

Regular Stated Communication, Education is open to everyone, Meeting is Master Mason Only. 9 Am

- **March 21st**

District 19 annual meeting at Trinity Lodge in Newport. 6:30pm meal 7:30pm meeting