

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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Why Look to the West?

During our open installation, on St. Johns Night, as I sat in the East for the first time, I saw all the newly appointed Lodge Officers and had a thought. In most Lodges, once a brother starts through the chairs, it is usually a journey of many years before they finally arise in the Oriental Chair. In every meeting they attend they are reminded to Look to the East. As a newly appointed Worshipful Master, I was now, and for the next year, going to be looking towards the West.

Taking stock of my new situation, a thought occurred to me, every other position of the Lodge was now in my past. Each chair was a reminder of where I had been, what I learned, and each brought about memories of time spent in the Craft.

However, I feel as if I have stumbled on the Master's secret. Looking at the Senior Warden, The Junior Warden and so on, I started to understand, that Looking West, I was now staring directly at the future of this Lodge and Masonry as a whole. In due time, these are the men that will replace me, as I have replaced another myself.

In Masonry we spend a lot of time reflecting on things, some from times long ago. Maybe, our attention has been too focused there? When we do ritual or Lodge functions, we pay homage to those who long ago set about building our Fraternity. As we should. During our Lectures, we talk about men who lived in times long ago, and we should honor those who came before, But, somehow for too long, we have failed to use the same zeal to protect the future of our Brotherhood.

Oddly enough, the same brothers from ages gone by, were looking to the future. To them Masonry was something to spread, and in the words of George Washington, bring Happiness to all of Humanity. They envisioned a world, where mankind, guided by our lessons on morality, civility, equality, and respect, would guide the world into a much better place. Our fraternity has for too long looked at their examples, even praised them, but has failed to live up to them.

As I sit here now, I feel it is my place, not to lead a lodge, or even to dictate it's path, but to Look to the West and every other direction, and do my best, not for my benefit, but to instead help my brothers prepare for their future, our Lodge's future, and the Future of Freemasonry.

Dennis Roberts WM CDR 694

Lessons Learned

Life Happens

People must cancel, get sick, or otherwise can't attend. Don't worry about it.

Whatever food you plan to serve, double it, then be prepared to only serve half of it!

This Fraternity isn't just about the brothers, we need to include their families as much as we can!

Don't worry, you will worry! Do we have enough food? Will enough show? Did we get the last spider out of the women's bathroom? How do you cook 6 things in one oven? And at the end of it, it will all work out anyway!

Your Brothers will show up and bring delicious food and deserts!

Just when you are worried you will have to stumble through some parts, you will find others willing to help.

The word brethren is used at least 19 times in the installation ceremony.



Back in September, while talking to a dear friend, I was asked who was doing our installation. We are doing it ourselves was my reply. CDR has traditionally installed its own officers on St. Johns night, and I naturally assumed we would do the same. The voice on the other end of the line said, Hey I'll do it. That was the how this whole idea started.

The Lodge agreed it would be an interesting idea, so we started planning. The hardest part of any masonic endeavor is getting an idea how many will attend, but we mentioned it in our following meetings hoping all would be able to come.

As time went on our plans were solidified. People started stating their intention to attend and asked with what they could help.

Unfortunately, as with most things, a few weeks before the event, our plans had to be altered. The Brother that offered to install had to back out, others could not make it due to family obligations from the Holidays, and

Now we were starting to worry! We decided we would just fall back on installing our own, and hope to have a decent crowd. When you try to start a new tradition, most times it does not go to plan anyway.

“A lodge is not held together with steel bands, but by the silken ties of brotherhood.”

A few days before, another brother, who had agreed to be the Marshall, asked if his friend could come along, and we gladly agreed.

Anyway, to keep this story short enough, we will skip ahead to the day of the event. It was a day spent cooking, worrying, and hoping, right up until the event. Other brothers had to cancel; you know the little curveballs life throws at you!

So, with all the details behind us, Crittenden Dry Ridge 694 held their first Open Installation, (as far as we know), and it was quite a success. Most of the officers-elect were able to attend as well as many of their wives!

Our first open installation. A lesson that became a blessing!

The best of plans are never foolproof.

Brother James Eddington (Park City 934) served as the Installing Officer and did a very fine job. Brother Travis Short (Madison 183) did a wonderful job as Marshall! Both men are a testament to the craft, and credit to their Lodges! After a fine meal, everyone, joined in on the installation. As Brothers Eddington and Short obligated and announced the newly minted officers, their respective spouses, and one daughter, presented them with their jewels of office,

Seeing everyone and their family, is a reminder of the important things in life. None of us, Mason young or old, can do what we do, without the support of those who love us. For a Lodge to thrive, it is imperative to include its families. St. Johns Night gives us the opportunity to not only include them, but to honor them for their support, as well as to give them a glimpse into this wonderful fraternity of ours!

It is our hope to continue this tradition going forward. It is a truly humbling experience to see a Lodge work together, then share in their success



The Need for Technology in Freemasonry

One of the biggest changes to Kentucky Freemasonry in many years, is our new permanent dues cards. Listening to them being introduced at Grand Lodge, however, was like watching 1893 World's Fair, when electricity was introduced to the masses.

Some stared in awe at these new-fangled wonders, others immediately expressing reticence, even resistance. "Well, my lodge doesn't have internet", "what if no one has a phone", every conceivable objection was made. All a reminder that we as a fraternity have fallen behind.

At its very core, Masonry, is a message. A message that we all should strive to be better. A message of Brotherly love, peace, tolerance, and of hope. And, like all messages if it isn't delivered, it will soon be lost.

Technology is how we share that message to new generations. In fact, it is the only way. Our brothers in the past adopted technology. They adopted printing to spread their messages to others. They readily used the postal system when it was introduced, to share communication far and wide. At one time, even the personal check was a technological

marvel. From candle lit lodges, to lanterns, and all the way to full blown electricity. They adopted many things. Then somewhere we stopped. Our numbers and statistics show this powerfully. 40 somethings, me included, were the last generation to come in numbers, and still at a trickle.

The reason for this isn't the irrelevance of Masonry, it is merely that we did not send our message in a form the newest generations understand. My generation is the last to rely on books, mail, and checks. If we do not change how we send our message, it will be lost.

Up Next at CDR

District Education

January 25th is our District Education. It starts at noon and is planned for 3 hours.

We will be live casting it for all to see. One Representative from each lodge must attend.

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

Bryan Slaughter CDR 694

Bryan is a member of CDR 694 and is our current past Master for 2024. The last couple of years have seen many changes in our Lodge, almost none of which, would have happened without him.

Brother Slaughter has been instrumental in engaging the brothers of CDR in many activities outside the lodge as well.

The amount of time, energy, and selflessness Brother Slaughter has invested in our Lodge is truly the act of a Proper Mason.





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

- **January 11th**
Regular Stated Communication, Education is open to everyone, Meeting is Master Mason Only. 9 Am
- **January 25th**
District Education 1200 Noon
- **March 21st**
District 19 annual meeting at Trinity Lodge in Newport. 6:30pm meal 7:30pm meeting