

STATED COMMUNICATION
FIRST & THIRD
Tuesday

FEBRUARY 3
FEBRUARY 17
DINNER 6:30PM MEETING 7:30PM

2026 OFFICERS

Worshipful Master
Aaron Averhart, PM

Senior Warden
Shawn Hubbard

Junior Warden
Andrew Silvia

Treasurer
Bruce Prescott

Secretary
Robert Lippek, PDDGM

Senior Deacon
Christopher Saxby

Junior Deacon
Nicholas Gadbois

Chaplain
Joseph Setaro, PM

Marshal
Thomas Knafel, PM

Senior Steward
Jerry Hamm, Jr.

Junior Steward
Robert Bennett

Tyler
John, Gavin, PM

Tropical No. 56 F&AM

TRESTLE BOARD
FEBRUARY 2026



10868 METRO PARKWAY
FORT MYERS, FL

TropicalLodge56.org

PHONE:
(239) 334-6074



Entered Apprentice Degree
Tuesday, February 17th
7:30 p.m.

Master Mason Degree & Chili Cook-off

Saturday, February 28th

- ◊ First Section
9:00 a.m.
- ◊ Chili Cookoff
11:00 a.m.
- ◊ Second Section
12:00 noon

*Most Worshipful Grand Master Taleb Atala is expected to attend
to provide the MM lecture and help judge the chili!*

** Hosted by Cape Coral No. 367
and Tropical No. 56 F&AM*



Greetings from the East



Tropical Lodge started off the new year right, welcoming Nick Patino, Ron Plannells, and Ed Castro into the fraternity on Tuesday January 20th. I would like to commend the degree team for their hard work and dedication.

Within a month's time we held Fellow Craft Degree, an Entered Apprentice Degree with Brothers learning new parts, our installation where Brothers opened and closed in different seats in the same night, welcomed new officers to the team for their first degree, had new conductors, and as usual with almost degree had guys step up last minute to fill vacancies. It was a great show of teamwork and support, very capably led by Brother Jay Champion in the East. I would like to offer special thanks to Brother Chris Tilman for the fantastic lecture and Worshipful Dave Wolffe for the wonderful music. Our degree team is not limited to the Lodge of officers and If you are interested taking part, please let me know, as all are welcome!

Brothers, please mark your calendars for two dates of importance. On **Tuesday February 17th**, Tropical Lodge will welcome another group of men into the fraternity as we confer an Entered Apprentice Degree. This will be followed on **Saturday February 28th** with a joint day of fun and festivity between Tropical and Cape Coral Lodges as we hold a district wide Chili Cook-Off and Master Mason Degree! Cape Coral Lodge will hold a Master Mason Degree beginning at 9 am, we will break before the second half at approximately 11 am to hold Tropical Lodge's district wide Chili Cook-Off, then we will return for the second half of the degree at approximately 12 pm.

It is a \$30 dollar donation to compete in the Cook-Off, and a \$10 donation for bottomless bowls of chili to eat, with all the proceeds going to the Grand Master's charity. We encourage each Lodge to have at least one competitor in the Cook-Off but hope to see far more than 6! We will also have a number of special guest judges to determine the winner, who will take bragging rights back to his Lodge! All those wishing to participate in the Cook-Off please reach out to me at cmndraverhart@gmail.com. Let's show the Grand Master how we do things down in the Tremendous 24th Masonic District and "WOW" him with our support!



Welcome to our new Entered Apprentice Masons, Brothers Edwin Castro, Nicholas Patino and Ronald Planells - shown here with WM Aaron Averhart (left) and Brother J. Champion (right) who did a fabulous job conferring the degree as acting WM).

The degree will be a truly unique and special experience as the first half will be populated with sitting Worshipful Masters from across the 24th Masonic District, the second half will be performed by past and present District Deputy Grand Masters and District Instructors from across the state, and the lecture will be delivered by none other than Most Worshipful Tali Atala, Grand Master of Masons of Florida. Brothers, this promises to be an amazing day of fun and fellowship and we hope you come support this combined Tropical and Cape Coral Lodge event!

There is no shortage of activity to be involved in at Tropical Lodge No. 56 and in the Tremendous 24th Masonic District this coming year, and you can keep up with it all on our district calendar here:

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/3?cid=bW1hb3NmQGdtYWlsLmNvbQ>

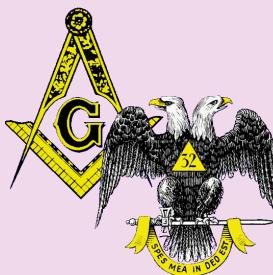
We look forward to seeing you all on the level in 2026 and thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Aaron Averhart, PM

Worshipful Master
(239) 995-8837

cmndraverhart@gmail.com



The Scottish Rite Valley of Fort Myers is looking to enroll candidates for the 2026 Spring Reunion class on March 14th & 15th. There is an online petition on the Valley of Fort Myers website. Here you can learn about and become active in the 4th thru 32nd degrees of Freemasonry. If you enjoy ritual or the meaning behind it, the Scottish Rite may be for you.

Email Brother Andy Silvia at Asilvia64@aol.com.



From the Secretary's Desk



This is a friendly reminder that if you have not yet paid your dues, now is a great time to do so. If you are experiencing any difficulty or have concerns about payment, please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly at **941-677-2342**. I'm always happy to talk and work with you. No Brother should feel uncomfortable reaching out.

As mentioned in previous Trestle Boards, dues may be paid by credit card, through the Amity phone app, or by contacting Grand Lodge directly.

If you have had any changes to your phone number, mailing address, or email address, please let me know by sending an email to secretarytropical56@gmail.com

so we can keep our records up to date.

Our 2026 dues remain \$127.30, the same as last year.

Wishing you and your family a happy, healthy, and wonderful year. We look forward to seeing you in Lodge!

Bobby Lippek, PDDGM

Secretary

(941) 677-2342

secretarytropical56@gmail.com



District 24



District Deputy Grand Master

R.:W.: Bruce Rivera

(239) 297-9400

rwbrcue2025@gmail.com

District Instructor

R.:W.: Scott Peacock

(617) 271-4331

peacockddgm@gmail.com

Greetings from the West



January is gone. It's amazing how fast it came and went. That first month was a learning curve to hone in on our new positions! Plus, getting ready to do an EA degree and getting the building back in compliance just made it a blur.

I would also like to thank all the brothers that stepped up on a Saturday morning and went to get the new wardrobes for the library. They're a little bulky, but nothing that many hands couldn't handle. It was good to have some camaraderie and laughs while doing it. I noticed as of yesterday the painters were there, staining them. It will shape up the library, as well as more room for the changing for degrees. I am looking forward to all that we're going to accomplish this year and hope that it doesn't go as fast as January just did.

A newer brother approached me the other night and said he was worried about being able to learn and give his give back. I could

see in his face that this was sincerely the case. I assured him that he was fine. I told him that I or any other brother that he approached would be willing to help him and that he shouldn't be shy. I'm reaching out to my fellow Brothers to take an active approach with our new brothers and offer to take them aside and go over it with them and assure them that we all have the same apprehension at one time or another, and we are a bunch of brothers that are working together to drive home the point that we're not looking for perfection, but proficiency.

We are going to have another EA degree this month. If you have not participated and are interested in being involved in any way don't hesitate to ask any one of the officers and we will be glad to get you involved. Have a great month brothers!

Shawn Hubbard

Senior Warden

(239) 823-6034

motherhubbardscc@gmail.com



Culinary Greetings from the South



Greeting Brothers: Tropical Lodge No. 56 is full of life. Last month, we welcomed new Brothers in an EA Degree, and we will be doing another one this month. Projects and repairs of the lodge have been accomplished and there are many more currently underway.

I could not be prouder of our dedicated Brothers who are actively impacting the positivity of our lodge. We need every one of you to get involved and carry out good work. Never forget Faith, Hope and Charity.

Andy Silvia

Junior Warden

(508) 728-7491

Asilvia64@aol.com



MENU

FEBRUARY 3

Anne's homemade meatloaf, mashed potatoes, gravy, green bean casserole, rolls, tossed salad and dessert.

FEBRUARY 17

Italian sausage with peppers & onions on a roll, antipasto salad and dessert.



The Chili Cook-Off is back and the Lodges of the Tremendous 24th Masonic District are invited to compete and eat! Claim the glory for your Lodge!

With special guest judge Most Worshipful Tali Atala, Grand Master of Masons of Florida!!!

\$30 Entrance Fee

\$10 Bottomless Chili

When: February 28, 2026, approximately 11 am

Between the first and second half of the Master Mason Degree

Where: Tropical Lodge No. 56

10868 Metro Pkwy, Ft. Myers, FL 33966

All proceeds to benefit charity!

Come have a good time!!



OES FORT MYERS CHAPTER #31

ANNUAL

“BLINGO BINGO”

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2026

Southwest Florida Masonic Center

10868 Metro Parkway

Fort Myers, FL 33966

Famous Chicken Salad Lunch at 11:30am

Followed by

“Blingo Bingo”

Tickets - \$10.00

For tickets contact Patricia Benedict: 239-939-5363 or 239-810-0474

Or send her a SASE to: 2248 Sunrise Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33907

Or call Worthy Matron, Laurel Raulerson at 239-410-1446

An approximate headcount is needed for the lunch.

PAST MASTERS Tropical No. 56 F&AM

Established 1882

L.C. Washburn* 1892-1896, 1899-1900 & 1902	Charles Varner* 1935	Berwyn Clifton* 1960	Francis D. Swaringen 1984	Barry P. Thrasher* (PDDGM) 2008
L.C. Stewart* 1897-1898	Ray Kissinger* 1936	C.J. Leffers* 1961	Maynard W. Matz* 1985	Samual Bissell 2009
Charles O. Swanson* 1901	Robert R. Gresham* 1937	James I. Whitaker* 1962	H. Curt Hardin* 1986	Ernest R. Spradling 2010
L.M. Stroup* (PDDGM) 1903 & 1909	Charles R. Smith* 1938	Earl. C. Lewis* 1963	Edward J. Jackman* 1987	Richard T. Nelson* 2011
Frank C. Alderman* 1904	Fred J. Lahor* 1939	George E. Blust* 1964	E.W. Landrum 1988	Edward McCullers 2012
N.G. Stout* (PDDGM) 1905 & 1914-1915	Guy M. Strayhorn* 1940	Robert A. Reedy* 1965	E. Wade Sandahl 1989	John Cavada 2013
George H. Ireland* 1906, 1908, 1912-1913 & 1918	Joe Shofner* 1941-1942 & 1944	Lewis R. Long* 1966	Rodney D. Irvin (PDDGM) 1990	Mark Smith 2014
Frank Kellow* 1907	L.E. Steward* 1943	Irvin I Edenfield* 1967	Wayne A. McConley 1991	Michael P. Lewis 2015
G.F. Funch* 1910	Edgar M. Boyette* 1945	Richard G. Simpson, Jr.* 1968	Gordon A. Fore* (PDDGM & GLO) 1992	John Gavin 2016
T.J. Evans* 1911	John W. Shultz* 1946	Richard T. Edelblut, Sr. 1969	Mark T. Goodman 1993	Gene F. Sims (PDDGM & PDI) 2017-2018
David N. Ireland* 1916	Leslie N. Russel* 1947	Andrew L. Chandler* (PDDGM) 1970	Edward D. Johns 1994	Joseph Setaro 2019
DeWitt T. Farabee* 1917	M.M. Tillis* 1948	Alva R. Jones, Jr.* (PDDGM) 1971	Joe D. Lewis (PDDGM & PDI) 1995	Alexander Guilday 2020
John L. Morris* 1919-1923	J.T. Harper* 1949	William E. Hart* 1972	Charles A. Williford* (PDI) 1996	Jeffery Zimmerman 2021
W.O. Sheppard* 1924-1925	J.D. Holland* 1950	Tom H. Youngblood* 1973	Thomas P. Gordon* 1997	Victor Fiore 2022
R.V. Lee* 1926	Wilson Starnes* 1951	James A. Hamby 1974	Albert H. Andrews 1998	Thomas Knaefel 2023 & 2025
C.M. Storter* 1927	Roland O. Palmer* 1952	Ronald G. Frieden (PDI) 1975-1976	Bernard L. Flynn 1999 & 2001	Aaron A. Averhart 2024
Robert T. Branham* 1928	Dana L. Brechtel* 1953	James P. Stephens* 1977	James L. Record (PDDGM) 2000	
T.P. Bartleson* 1929	W. Stanley Hansen, Jr.* 1954	Charles M. McWilliams* 1978	Samuel N. Summerall 2002	
J.H. Ingram* 1930	Eugene V. Washburn* 1955	Richard G. Simpson, Jr.* 1979	T. H. Bodenhamer (PDDGM) 2003	
William R. Anderson* 1931	Foy C. Adams* 1956	Tom H. Youngblood* 1980	Roger G. Shields 2004	
John M. Trolan* 1932	Charles A. Powell, Jr.* 1957	Arlan N. Roan 1981	Jason J. Ott (PDI) 2005	
E.L. Daniel* 1933	W.W. Watson* 1958	Vernon E. Lynch 1982	E.W. Lott 2006	
Leslie G. Sheets* 1934	Marshall E. Wilkens* 1959	Earl P. Williams* 1983	Bry G. Parsons* 2007	



*Indicates Deceased

1962-2021

This section is dedicated to the Past Masters of the former Lehigh Acres No. 344 F&AM. Although their Lodge merged with Tropical No. 56 in August 2021, they are our Brothers and will continue to be honored here for their past service & dedication to Freemasonry.



PAST MASTERS

Lehigh Acres No. 344 F&AM



ROBERT BERNSTEIN*	1962	ROY C. ROBERTS*	1976	JEROME MASSEE*	1998
WALTER RIDGE*	1963	WILBER FRENCH*	1977	WILLIAM HORSELING*	1999
GRADY RYMER*	1964	PAUL WILLIAMSON*	1978	CHARLES MARTIN	2000
THOMAS BOSWELL*	1965	JAMES BURGETT*	1979	KENNETH LAVINE*	2001
LEON HURTADO*	1966	RONALD TEMPLIN*	1980	HELMUT REIMER	2002
WILLIAM BEEMAN*	1967	JOHN BEDNAR*	1981	JAMES ROSE*	2003
FRANK LYONS*	1968	ERNEST SAMUELSON*	1982	CARL PETERSON	2004
THOMAS BOSWELL*	1969	HOWARD SPOERKE*	1983	JONATHAN HAMMETT	2005
CHARLES GOEHLER JR*	1970	WALTER REESE*	1984	RALPH MCDONALD*	2006
THOMAS BOSWELL*	1971	ROBERT CAMPBELL*	1985	MICHAEL CROUCHELLI	2007
CHARLES GOEHLER JR*	1972	PAUL GOEHLER*	1986	GUY WALTMAN*	2008
PAUL MELOY	1973—1974	WALLACE BATEMAN*	1987	JOHN CARTER	2009
JAMES FOSTER	1975	LEWIS FISH	1988	JASON HOLLINGER	2010
		TED BLOCK	1989	WILLIAM HORACIO JR.*	2011
		ROBERT HOEPPNER*	1990	PAUL GOEHLER *	2012-2013
		ALBERT SAMUELSON*	1991	G. RICHARD CURETON	2014
		ANDREW STANFORTH*	1992	DANIEL AKARD	2015
		J. DOUGLAS WRIGHT	1993	ROBERT LIPPEK	2016
		HOWARD SPOERKE*	1994	KEVIN GOURLEY	2017
		HARRY HOPKINS*	1995	JAMES BOLLA, SR.	2018
		CLIFF AYERS	1996	FRED NATOLI	2019
		KENNETH LAVINE*	1997	KEVIN GOURLEY	2020
				LUIS TULIER	2021

*Indicates Deceased

Local Appendant Bodies in Freemasonry



Scottish Rite



York Rite



Shriners



Eastern Star



Grotto



SoJourners

TROPICALLODGE56.ORG