

STATED COMMUNICATION
FIRST & THIRD
Tuesday

JANUARY 6
JANUARY 20
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
JANUARY 2026



10868 METRO PARKWAY
FORT MYERS, FL

TropicalLodge56.org

PHONE:
(239) 334-6074



Dinner: 6:30 p.m. / Communication: 7:30 p.m.

Greetings from the East



I hope this finds you all healthy and happy after celebrating the holidays.

I would like to thank everyone who came out to support our 133rd Annual Officer Installation, as well as our installing officers. We enjoyed some wonderful fellowship over a great meal, our time-honored installation tradition, and followed it up with an array of desserts. We were graced by the ladies of the Order of the Eastern Star and Daughters of the Nile, as well as Brothers from across the district, and even some from outside it. I am grateful to the Craft for their confidence in me and for allowing me to serve our great Lodge for another year.

I also hope this finds you ready to tackle a new Masonic year, as we have no shortage of activities planned. On **Tuesday January 20, 2026**, Tropical Lodge will confer an Entered Apprentice Degree for three candidates. We hope you will join us.

On **Saturday February 28, 2026**, Tropical No. 56 and Cape Coral No. 367 will be collaborating once again! Tropical Lodge will be holding a district wide chili cook-off that day. Those wishing to compete may do so by making a \$30 donation to our charitable efforts, and bottomless chili will be available

to spectators for a \$10 donation to go to the same charitable cause. The day will also include Cape Coral Lodge's Master Mason Degree, with the first half populated by the sitting Worshipful Masters of the Lodges of the Tremendous 24th Masonic District! What will make this day even more special is the participation of none other than our Most Worshipful Grand Master Tali Itala! He will be serving as one of our judges in the chili cook-off and delivering the lecture for the Master Mason Degree! This promises to be quite the unique experience, and we are all very excited about what promises to be an amazing day of fun and fellowship, so mark your calendar and make plans to join us!

2026 will be an action-packed year, with planned quarterly outings to volunteer at the Midwest Food Bank, continued support of the FGCU Food Pantry, the return of our annual St. Patrick's Day Kilt Night, our Ladies Appreciation Night, our Adopt A Teacher and School initiatives, adoption of our Sheriff Explorer Post, the Scholarship Award, a Lodge family picnic, a group outing to the shooting range, our annual Awards Night, and so much more.

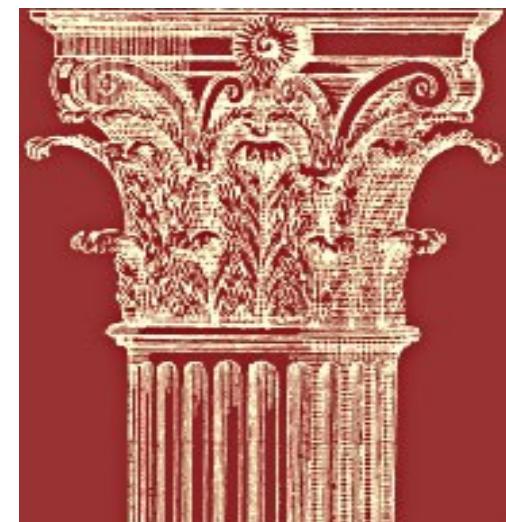
Plans are also in the works to complete the storage area. This will be the first step towards our larger goal of finishing the back of the building, with the aim of creating a multi-purpose room suitable for large rent-

als. This will help us ensure our financial solvency, and the longevity of our building and Lodge.

We hope you will join us at our regular Statued Communications as we work toward these important goals, and where we will also continue Worshipful Knafel's tradition of Masonic Education and Degree Work at our second monthly meeting. Thank you for your continued support and let's make this another year to remember!

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Aaron Averhart, PM
Worshipful Master
(239) 995-8837
cmndraverhart@gmail.com



Greetings from the West



It is the start of a new year and hope for new beginnings! We all in some way set goals for the new year. You having the confidence to advance me to Senior Warden (which I thank you all) brings new goals for the Lodge this coming year.

Over the past few years the Lodge has seen huge progress, but we cannot be happy with that—we need to keep our foot on the pedal and continue to drive forward to

make Tropical Lodge a place that others hear about and want to visit and figure out how to build their own Lodges as well. After all, we don't want to just see "us" succeed, we want to see other Lodges succeed too!

I am going to make it my goal to reach out this year and try getting all our Brothers involved in Masonry, leaving none left and out sitting on the sideline. I want to help bring relationships closer between Lodges.

Also, we will continue to improve on our ritual and degree work, as well as finding more charities & community programs for us to be involved in. I welcome input on all of this; Each of us has a vision of what we want to see in Masonry. Don't sit back and

complain; let's figure out how every Mason can be involved. Be proud of "YOUR" Lodge and help to make it better.

I wish you and your families a healthy and prosperous new year.

Shawn Hubbard
Senior Warden
(239) 823-6034
motherhubbardscc@gmail.com



From the Secretary's Desk



As we begin a new year, 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 New Year. We look forward to seeing you in Lodge!

Sincerely, and Fraternally,

Bobby Lippek, PDDGM
Secretary
(941) 677-2342
secretarytropical56@gmail.com



32nd Degree Scottish Rite Freemasonry



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.

2B1 AASK1

Culinary Greetings from the South



Greeting Brothers and welcome to 2026! I want to thank you for the confidence you have shown in me by voting me into the South. I pledge that I will work hard to fulfill my duties and continue with the amazing progress our Lodge has achieved.

We have so many dedicated Brothers who have stepped up and put the time and energy into our work. Whether it is a Brother with decades of time or only a few months, their positive attitude and desire to be involved has shown through. Let's continue to make Tropical No.56 F. & A.M. the best Masonic Lodge in Florida.

MENU

JANUARY 6

Baked Ziti, salad, garlic bread and desert.

JANUARY 20

Build your own tacos, rice, salad and desert.

National Sojourners



The local chapter of the National Sojourners, Melvin W. Byers #503, is having their 2026 Officer Installation on Saturday, January 24th at Perkins Restaurant in Lehigh Acres at 3:00 p.m. Friends and family are welcome to attend.

[National Sojourners](#) is a patriotic fraternal organization for Master Masons who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces and focusses on promoting Americanism, patriotism and good fellowship. It connects military service with Masonic principles, supporting and fostering youth leadership through activities like flag ceremonies, educational programs (ROTC/JROTC), and community engagement.

We are always looking for fellow servicemen (active or retired) to join our ranks. Email edgar.lanham@gmail.com for information about becoming a member.

District 24

District Deputy Grand Master

R.:W.: Bruce Rivera
(239) 297-9400
rbruce2025@gmail.com



District Instructor

R.:W.: Scott Peacock
(617) 271-4331
peacockddgm@gmail.com

Happenings Last Month

Master Mason Catechism

12/2: Brother Steve Lewter was presented his Bible and Apron for successfully memorizing his Master Mason Catechism.



Christmas Cheer

12/12: Lodge members from across the 24th District delivered over \$1000 worth of toys to [Golisano Children's Hospital](#) for their patients this past Christmas!

Thank you to the Lodges of the Tremendous 24th Masonic District for representing Free-masonry so well!

Newest Fellow Craft Masons

12/16: Congratulations to the newly-passed Fellow Craft Brothers Logan Bryant (Tropical), Ismael Saucedo (Tropical), Joaquin Lugones-Sabina (Cape Coral), and Dana Coston (Cape Coral).

Brother Bruce Prescott did a great job conferring the FC degree as acting Worshipful Master. We would also like to thank Worshipful Tom Boardman for attending and giving his excellent lecture.



2026 OFFICER INSTALLATION



Newly-installed Worshipful Master Aaron Averhart (center) with Musician David Wolff (left) and the other installing officers.



2026 Installation Team:

Worshipful Ben Flynn (Installing Marshall), Right Worshipful Gene Sims (Installing Officer) and Worshipful Kevin Gourley (Installing Chaplain)

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	Jefferey 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
WALTER RIDGE*	1963
GRADY RYMER*	1964
THOMAS BOSWELL*	1965
LEON HURTADO*	1966
WILLIAM BEEMAN*	1967
FRANK LYONS*	1968
THOMAS BOSWELL*	1969
CHARLES GOEHLER JR*	1970
THOMAS BOSWELL*	1971
CHARLES GOEHLER JR*	1972
PAUL MELOY	1973—1974
JAMES FOSTER	1975

ROY C. ROBERTS*	1976	JEROME MASSEE*	1998
WILBER FRENCH*	1977	WILLIAM HORSELING*	1999
PAUL WILLIAMSON*	1978	CHARLES MARTIN	2000
JAMES BURGETT*	1979	KENNETH LAVINE*	2001
RONALD TEMPLIN*	1980	HELMUT REIMER	2002
JOHN BEDNAR*	1981	JAMES ROSE*	2003
ERNEST SAMUELSON*	1982	CARL PETERSON	2004
HOWARD SPOERKE*	1983	JONATHAN HAMMETT	2005
WALTER REESE*	1984	RALPH MCDONALD*	2006
ROBERT CAMPBELL*	1985	MICHAEL CROUCHELLI	2007
PAUL GOEHLER*	1986	GUY WALTMAN*	2008
WALLACE BATEMAN*	1987	JOHN CARTER	2009
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