

## STATED COMMUNICATION

FIRST & THIRD  
Tuesday

AUGUST 5  
AUGUST 19

DINNER 6:30PM / MEETING 7:30PM

# Tropical No. 56 F&AM



TRESTLE BOARD  
AUGUST 2025



10868 METRO PARKWAY  
FORT MYERS, FL

TropicalLodge56.org

PHONE:  
(239) 334-6074

## 2025 OFFICERS

### Worshipful Master

Thomas Knafel, PM

### Senior Warden

Aaron Averhart, PM

### Junior Warden

Shawn Hubbard

### Treasurer

Gene Sims, PDDGM

### Secretary

Randy Crone

### Senior Deacon

Andrew Silvia

### Junior Deacon

Christopher Saxby

### Chaplain

Joseph Setaro, PM

### Marshal

Jerry Hamm

### Senior Steward

Nicholas B. Gadbois

### Junior Steward

Bruce Prescott

### Tyler

John, Gavin, PM

## Greetings from the East



Brothers of Tropical Lodge:

As those that attended already know, Tropical held our first ever Lodge of Discussion at the second meeting in July. For those that did not attend, and may not have read the communication that went out prior to the meeting, Tropical was the first Lodge in our District to host this event and I will offer some background and takeaways below.

Hosting a Lodge of Discussion is a Grand Lodge program, embraced by our District Officers and headed by our own Brother Bob Zimmerman. The idea behind the program is to allow the Craft a forum to bring forward ideas to better the Lodge experience for all. Suggestions for the future direction of the Lodge as well as Lodge initiatives were also welcome. Brother Bob started the program during dinner by explaining the goals and passing out cards on which a series of questions/thoughts were recorded. Brothers were also encouraged to submit questions to Right Worshipful Rivera and me. All submissions were anonymous. Once the Lodge was opened, in EA, the cards were read, results were tabulated for top answers and a discussion was held.

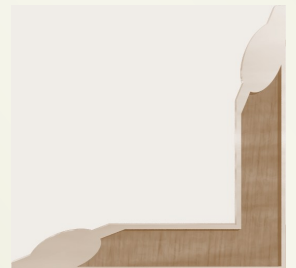
In my opinion, the program was very well presented by Brother Bob and well received by those in attendance. The majority of comments were positive, but we also identified some areas that should be addressed during the remainder of the year. Additionally, some misconceptions were cleared up, some great new ideas were suggested and an excellent discussion was had.

Finally, although we may host more of these meetings in the future, I encourage every Brother to always feel free to voice their opinions. If you feel left out in anyway, please approach an officer and ask for their help. Always remember that the Lodge belongs to the Craft and every member has a voice.

Fraternally,

*Thomas Knafel, PM*

Worshipful Master / (317) 379-6923  
tknafel@gmail.com



# Greetings from the West



Tropical Lodge is alive with activity, including new members; hard-working and committed degree practices; proficiency card work and planned events. We want to thank you all for being such an integral part of our Lodge's success. We currently have a class of nine Entered Apprentice Masons that are working on their catechism; it is a wonderful sight to see! Our Lodge is steadily growing and we look forward to watching these new Brothers flourish in our great fraternity. Please be sure to greet them warmly when you see them next and let them know how excited you are to have them in our Tropical family.

We have filled out a cast list for a Master Mason Degree planned for later in the year and look forward to presenting you with something we have not seen in an untold number of years—our Lodge putting on our very own Master Mason Degree, with all the roles filled by just our own members! That is the definition of engaged membership, and as your Lodge Instructor, I could not be more excited to see us achieve such a wonderful feat! We meet for official practices on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month from 6-7 pm and also hold numerous impromptu practices during the week. If you are interested in taking a part in our ritual work, please reach out to me. We also have several Brothers working on ritual proficiency cards and encourage you to join us if you are interested.

We hope you will attend Lodge on **Tuesday, August 5th** for what promises to be another wonderful night of fellowship. We will welcome Right Worshipful District Deputy Grand Master Bruce Rivera and his party for his official visit. We will also receive our adopted teacher Laura Godsea, her family and administrators from Tice Elementary School to present her with a certificate recognizing our appreciation of the new career she is embarking upon. We have some other surprises planned as well, such as the reception of a foreign guest.

Also, mark your calendars and join us on **Saturday, September 20th** from 9-11 am as we return to the Midwest Food Bank in our continued fight against food insecurity. This charitable endeavor was started last year by Brother Brian Apfel and we plan to make this a recurring event in the coming years. To take part, [click this link to sign up](#).

Thank you for your continued support and remember that we get out of Freemasonry what we put into it! As always, I look forward to meeting you on the level.

Sincerely & Fraternaly,

*Aaron A. Averhart, PM*

Senior Warden / (239) 995-8837  
[cmndraverhart@gmail.com](mailto:cmndraverhart@gmail.com)



## MASTER MASON ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Greetings from the Tremendous 24<sup>th</sup> Masonic District—the Master Mason Association of Southwest Florida! We have created a District 24 Google calendar to help you keep up with all the latest happenings in our district, from regular communications, degrees, Open Books, and district provided education, to special events. [Click this link to sync up to our calendar](#) and keep up with everything in real time.

We hope you will also become a member of your MMA of SWFL and join us on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7 pm for our regular meetings. Our inexpensive \$20 annual dues will help fund our district's fraternal and charitable initiatives and contribute to a stronger Tremendous 24<sup>th</sup> Masonic District! Thank you!

*Aaron A. Averhart, PM*

Secretary—Master Mason Association of Southwest Florida



## From the Secretary's Desk



We are halfway through the year and many of you have still not paid your 2025 dues. You should be receiving your second dues notice in the mail very soon. Please do not let your dues lapse.

If you haven't done so already, remember that you can pay your dues with a credit card by using the **Amity** phone app. If you cannot pay for a reason, call me at the number below so we can discuss and work something out. Also let me know of any updates to your phone number or mailing address.

*Randy Crone*

Secretary / (239) 340-2310  
[secretarytropical56@gmail.com](mailto:secretarytropical56@gmail.com)



## Message from the Senior Deacon



The August 2025 Charity of the Month is the **Operation: Cigars for Warriors**. Many of our nation's heroes serving overseas request cigars be sent to them. You can also bring cigars to the lodge and they will be sent to the nonprofit. Please remember to donate at least \$1 in the donation box on the Tyler's desk.

*Andy Silvia*

Senior Deacon / (508) 728-7491  
[Asilvia64@aol.com](mailto:Asilvia64@aol.com)



## Culinary Greetings from the South



August 5th we have the pleasure of hosting the visit for Right Worshipful District Deputy Grand Master Bruce Rivera.

Also that night we will be adopting a teacher from Tice Elementary and presenting her with a check to help her in her year. She is a brand new graduate and it is a great feeling to be able to help her.

We are also adopting Tice Elementary, the school itself, and will soon begin to raise money for turkeys for the kids that are in need there (which is all of them).

We are starting a very cool charity, in my opinion. It is called the **Operation: Cigars for Warriors**. It is for when our troops across the world fight and protecting us need a little break in life from reality. They request cigars that are sent to them all over the world. You can help in two ways: Either by giving a monetary donation or by buying and donating cigars. If you have any questions call my number below or ask me at lodge.

Great things are happening at the lodge and if you are looking to get involved reach out. Believe me, we could use your help.

*Shawn Hubbard*

Junior Warden / (239) 823-6034  
[motherhubbardsc@gmail.com](mailto:motherhubbardsc@gmail.com)



## MENU:

**AUGUST 5:**

**Jerry's Famous Jambalaya**

**AUGUST 19:**

**To Be Determined**



## 32nd Degree Scottish Rite Freemasonry

For Master Masons looking to further their Freemasonry journey, the **Scottish Rite Valley of Fort Myers** is looking for candidates for the 2025 Fall Reunion Class on October 4 & 5. If you would like to be considered for the upcoming class, Email:

- Bro. Andy Silvia, 32° / [Asilvia64@aol.com](mailto:Asilvia64@aol.com)
- Hon. Kevin Gourley, 32° KCCH / [KLGourley1971@gmail.com](mailto:KLGourley1971@gmail.com)

There is an **online petition** that you can print out 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 meanings behind it, the Scottish Rite may be for you.



# District 24

## District Deputy Grand Master

R.:W.: Bruce Rivera

(239) 297-9400

[rwbruce2025@gmail.com](mailto:rwbruce2025@gmail.com)

## District Instructor

R.:W.: Scott Peacock

(617) 271-4331

[peacockddgm@gmail.com](mailto:peacockddgm@gmail.com)



## Open Books

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9

9am—12noon



## Happenings Last Month

On July 15th, Worshipful Master Tom Knafel and Senior Deacon Andy Silvia presented Mr. Dale Spain from [Hearts & Homes For Veterans](#) a check for our monthly charity donation.

## Famous Freemason



### Norman Vincent Peale

Born May 31, 1898

Died December 24, 1993

Norman Vincent Peale was an American minister and author, best known for his book "*The Power of Positive Thinking*." He was a prominent figure in the development of the self-help movement and was known for his optimistic and motivational writings.

He belonged to Midwood Lodge No. 1062 in Brooklyn, New York. He has

held a number of significant positions within the Masonic community, including Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of New York., 33rd Degree Scottish Rite Mason, Imperial Chaplain of Shriners International and Grand Prelate of the Grand Encampment, Knights Templar, U.S.A.

*"Freemasonry has no dogma or theology. It offers no sacraments. It teaches that it is important for every man to have a religion of his own choice and to be faithful to it in thought and action. As a result, men of different religions meet in fellowship and brotherhood under the fatherhood of God. I think that a good Mason is made even more faithful to the tenets of his faith by his membership in the Lodge."*

— Bro & Reverend Dr. Norman Vincent Peale



# Return to Midwest Food Bank

Tropical Lodge No. 56 will be returning to the [Midwest Food Bank](#), and you are invited to take part. This is open to you and your families, and like the last time it promises to be a wonderful group experience.

- **Date:** Saturday, September 20, 2025
- **Time:** 9 a.m.—11 a.m.
- **Where:** Midwest Food Bank, 5601 Division Drive, Fort Myers 33905

Click the following link to sign their waiver and mark your calendars for a fun morning of service and fellowship: [Sign the Waiver](#).





# PAST MASTERS Tropical No. 56 F&AM

Established 1882

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

\*Indicates Deceased

# 1962 - 2021

This section is dedicated to the Past Masters of the former Lehigh Acres No. 344 FS&M. 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 GOEHLE JR* | 1970      |
| THOMAS BOSWELL*    | 1971      |
| CHARLES GOEHLE JR* | 1972      |
| PAUL MELOY         | 1973—1974 |
| JAMES FOSTER       | 1975      |

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| ROY C. ROBERTS*   | 1976 |
| WILBER FRENCH*    | 1977 |
| PAUL WILLIAMSON*  | 1978 |
| JAMES BURGETT*    | 1979 |
| RONALD TEMPLIN*   | 1980 |
| JOHN BEDNAR*      | 1981 |
| ERNEST SAMUELSON* | 1982 |
| HOWARD SPOERKE*   | 1983 |
| WALTER REESE*     | 1984 |
| ROBERT CAMPBELL*  | 1985 |
| PAUL GOEHLE*      | 1986 |
| WALLACE BATEMAN*  | 1987 |
| LEWIS FISH        | 1988 |
| TED BLOCK         | 1989 |
| ROBERT HOEPPNER*  | 1990 |
| ALBERT SAMUELSON* | 1991 |
| ANDREW STANFORTH* | 1992 |
| J. DOUGLAS WRIGHT | 1993 |
| HOWARD SPOERKE*   | 1994 |
| HARRY HOPKINS*    | 1995 |
| CLIFF AYERS       | 1996 |
| KENNETH LAVINE*   | 1997 |

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| JEROME MASSEE*       | 1998      |
| WILLIAM HORSELING*   | 1999      |
| CHARLES MARTIN       | 2000      |
| KENNETH LAVINE*      | 2001      |
| HELMUT REIMER        | 2002      |
| JAMES ROSE*          | 2003      |
| CARL PETERSON        | 2004      |
| JONATHAN HAMMETT     | 2005      |
| RALPH MCDONALD*      | 2006      |
| MICHAEL CROUCHELLI   | 2007      |
| GUY WALTMAN*         | 2008      |
| JOHN CARTER          | 2009      |
| JASON HOLLINGER      | 2010      |
| WILLIAM HORACIO JR.* | 2011      |
| PAUL GOEHLE *        | 2012-2013 |
| G. RICHARD CURETON   | 2014      |
| DANIEL AKARD         | 2015      |
| ROBERT LIPPEK        | 2016      |
| KEVIN GOURLEY        | 2017      |
| JAMES BOLLA, SR.     | 2018      |
| FRED NATOLI          | 2019      |
| KEVIN GOURLEY        | 2020      |
| LUIS TULIER          | 2021      |

\*Indicates Deceased

## Local Appendant Bodies in Freemasonry



Scottish Rite



York Rite



Shriners



Eastern Star



Grotto



Sojourners

# TROPICALLODGE56.ORG