

STATED  
COMMUNICATION

First & Third  
Tuesday  
Dinner 6:30 PM  
Meeting 7:30 PM

February 6  
February 20

# Tropical No. 56 F&AM



TRESTLE BOARD  
FEBRUARY 2024

[TropicalLodge56.org](http://TropicalLodge56.org)



10868 METRO PARKWAY  
FORT MYERS, FL 33966

PHONE: (239) 334-6074

2024

## OFFICERS

### Worshipful Master

Aaron Averhart

### Senior Warden

Brian Apfel

### Junior Warden

Robert Zimmerman

### Treasurer

Gene Sims, PDDGM

### Secretary

Randy Crone

### Senior Deacon

Shawn Hubbard

### Junior Deacon

Andy Silvia

### Chaplain

Joseph Setaro, PM

### Marshal

Tom Knafel, PM

### Senior Steward

Christopher Saxby

### Junior Steward

Nicholas Gadbois

### Tyler

John, Gavin, PM

## Greetings from the East



Greetings from the East my Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to begin by congratulating all of the

recently installed officers of Tropical Lodge No. 56. It has been an honor to serve the craft with you for many years, and I look forward to serving with you from the East now. Thank you to R.:W.: Gene Sims, R.:H.: Bruce Rivera, and W.: Joseph Setaro for agreeing to be our installing officers. You did an outstanding job, and we are all very appreciative of your assistance and participation. Thank you also to the family and friends who came to support us, as well as the appendant bodies like the Order of the Eastern Star, who honored us with their attendance. I would personally like to thank the craft for your confidence in me, your support through all these years, and for helping to make Masonry what it is to me. I look forward to many more years of growth and light with each of you.

We have initiated a food drive with the start of the new year entitled "Feeding Minds", that will benefit the food pantry at Florida Gulf Coast University. Among our future leaders, educators, caregivers, and entrepreneurs, there are students who struggle to meet their basic nutritional needs. While the myth that

only the privileged attend college has taken root in the common consciousness, it is a false narrative and doesn't accurately reflect reality. The truth is that many students are taking assistance and going into deep debt to attain a better life, achieve their dreams, and take their place in the communities of tomorrow. The struggle to meet the costs of education include expensive meal plans that many are not able to afford, creating a shocking amount of food insecurity among university students. By supporting the FGCU food pantry I am hoping to show these students what Freemasonry stands for: faith, hope, and charity. We have already taken our first load of food down, totaling 79 pounds. I would love to see us double that in February! Please help support this initiative by bringing a couple cans of food to Blue Lodge and your appendant body meetings, and let's fill the shelves in that pantry! Here is a list of the most sought items:

**[SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR MOST SOUGHT ITEMS]**

We hope you will join us on Tuesday February 20<sup>th</sup>, dinner at 6:30 and Lodge at 7:30, for a Fellowcraft Degree. That also happens to be **Tropical Lodge's Kilt Night**, in celebration of St. Patrick's Day, so we invite you to wear yours if you own one and join us for some food, fun, and Masonic fellowship!

Also in February, we will be helping Cape Coral Lodge No. 367 put on a **Lent Fish Fry**. Please join us on Friday February 16<sup>th</sup> and Friday February 23<sup>rd</sup> as we raise funds for charity by offering dinners of cod, French fries, coleslaw, and tartar sauce. Food will be served from 4:30-7:00 pm, so please bring your friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, tell your church, and come out to support our two lodges as we work hand in hand to accomplish great things!

Thank you for your support my Brothers and Sisters, and I know I speak for all of the officers of Tropical Lodge No. 56 when I say we look forward to serving you in the coming year.

Fraternally,



*Aaron A. Averhart*

Worshipful Master

(239) 995-8837

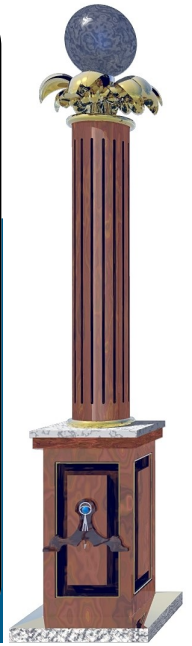
[cmndraverhart@gmail.com](mailto:cmndraverhart@gmail.com)



# Charity of the Month



Special Equestrians, Inc. is a therapeutic riding center located in the Buckingham area of Fort Myers. It is a non-profit agency that serves children and adults with disabilities in Lee, Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades Counties of Southwest Florida.



Brother Paul Charles Benstine laid down his working tools Saturday, January 20, 2024.

Brother Benstine was a 28 year Mason having Dual membership first from Lehigh Acres No. 344, then Tropical as Dual memberships. His home lodge was Eureka North Warren No. 594.

A Masonic Service will be performed Thursday Feb 1, 2024 at Fort Myers Memorial Gardens Funeral Home, 1589 Colonial Blvd., Fort Myers, FL. At 7:30 pm. We will gather and prepare at 7 PM.

## Feeding Minds



Here is a list of the most sought items:

*Canned Protein:* chicken, Vienna sausages, salmon, tuna, canned chili, beef stew, hearty soups, *Canned fruits & vegetables:* lentils, asparagus, chili beans, chickpeas, red beans, pinto beans, navy beans, fruit cups, pineapple, pears, mandarins, applesauce, peaches, cream of corn, *Pasta:* mac & cheese, pasta noodles, pasta sauces, tomato paste, *Breakfast:* cereals, granola bars, bread



## Message from the Editor & Publisher



February 2024 edition of our new Trestle Board.

I've been doing desktop publishing and creating monthly trestle boards for Labelle No. 379 and Sugarland

Brothers, we are going to make an attempt to keep the Lodge membership more informed and up-to-date, starting with this

No. 281, as well as the Spring & Fall Newsletters for the Scottish Rite of Fort Myers, for many years now. I am now looking forward to contributing my skills to Tropical No. 56 as well.

I would very much encourage any Brother that would like to submit an article for the "good of the order" to email me their submission.

With the approval from the Worshipful Master, I will make sure your content is added to a future edition.

Most Fraternally,

*Kevin Gourley, PM*

**Social Media & Web**

[KLGourley1971@gmail.com](mailto:KLGourley1971@gmail.com)

- > Tropical No. 56 F&AM
- > LaBelle No. 379 F&AM
- > Sugarland No. 281 F&AM



# From the Secretary's Desk

Hello, Brothers:

A reminder it is time to pay your 2024 dues. Dues are \$120.00 + \$7.30 for Let Your Pennies Make Good Since. Total will be \$127.30.

We have lost three brothers this month Nelson Eugene White Sr. and Paul Charles Benstine. We have also lost our revered Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful L. Evans Crary, Jr., on January 18, 2024. Please keep their families in your prayers.

Brothers, it is very important to keep Tropical Lodge No. 56 looking the best it can be. If you see something out of place, please put it back. If you see doors propped open, please close them.

Lastly, we are excited to tell you about more things happening around our lodge. We will be placing an effort in working on our library room. Very soon we will be building clothes racks to hold all the various costumes of the different appendant bodies. We will then begin the task of bringing the books down from upstairs to the library shelves on the first floor.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

*Randy Crone*

Secretary

(239) 340-2310

[secretarytropical56@gmail.com](mailto:secretarytropical56@gmail.com)



We are very saddened to notify you of the passing of our revered Past Grand Master, Most Worshipful L. Evans Crary, Jr., on January 18, 2024. The Grand Master has requested that all Particular Lodges drape their Altars for one month in memory of our beloved Past Grand Master.

Worshipful Master Averhart receives the Gavel.



***Congratulations to our 2024 Elected and Appointed Officers!***

# Greetings from the South



First, I wish to thank the Brothers for allowing me to serve as your Junior Warden in 2024.

I am still trying to wrap my mind around the needs of the building. At the first meeting in March I will have a report for you from the building committee outlining what we will be spending your money on this year for maintenance and a rough guide for the construction of the future lodge/all purpose areas of the building.

I plan to meet with vendors to determine what is needed both from a maintenance perspective, and an upgrade to commercial status for our kitchen.

Speaking of the Culinary Castle, the below is my dinner plan for February.



- **Stated Communication February 6<sup>th</sup>**  
*Lasagna, dinner rolls, salas, and a simple desert*
- **Called Communication February 20<sup>th</sup> (Fellowcraft Degree)**  
Pork roast, your choice of baked or sweet potato, mixed veggies & salad.

After the degree on Feb 20th we will have cake, Ice cream, coffee and iced tea to celebrate our Brothers being passed to the degree of Fellowcraft.

In regards to my perspective on the building upgrades: Rome wasn't built in a day, or perhaps more to the point, you can't turn around the Queen Mary in a bathtub. With help from the building committee and other interested Brothers we will be able to accomplish our goals for the next 3 to 5 years and have a building that will provide for us and last for decades.

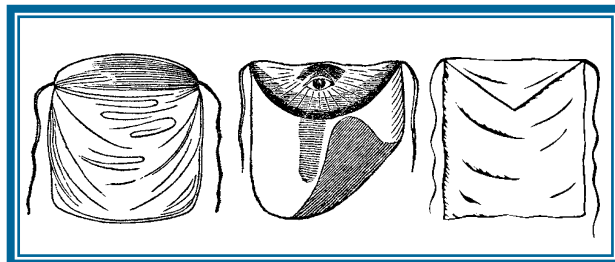
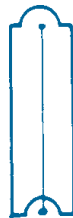
Fraternally,

*Robert Zimmerman*

Junior Warden

(480) 600-3100

[BobZimm@comcast.net](mailto:BobZimm@comcast.net)





## **Tropical Lodge No. 56**

# FOOD DRIVE

## **2024**

Tropical Lodge 56 is initiating a food drive for 2024, entitled "Feeding Minds" and we need your help! In 2021, the Florida Department of Health estimated that more than 10% of the Lee county population had inconsistent access to nutritious food. That was before the impact of Hurricane Ian and our worsening housing crisis, which have only exacerbated the problem for thousands of residents, including our local college students.

We have undertaken this initiative to help the large number of food insecure students at Florida Gulf Coast University, one of the best investments we can make in the future of Freemasonry and humanity. Please join us as we work to provide relief to our community and hope for a younger generation! Canned food collection receptacles can be found at participating Lodges in the district and may also be delivered to Tropical Lodge No. 56.

## "Feeding Minds"

Tropical Lodge No. 56

10868 Metro Pkwy  
Ft. Myers, FL 33966





**TAB'THA TEMPLE NO. 135  
DAUGHTERS OF THE NILE**

**Is Proud To Host A  
SPAGHETTI DINNER**

**Friday, February 9, 2024  
Tropical Lodge 56 F & AM  
10868 Metro Parkway, Ft. Myers, FL**

**Dinner Ticket: \$10.00**  
Tickets will be available at the door.

Dinner will be served promptly at 5:30 p.m.

All friends & family are welcome to attend.  
Please join us for great food & great company.

**PLEASE CALL Pat Epifanio (239) 540-4554 FOR RESERVATIONS  
RSVP by Monday, February 5, 2024**

