



Free & Accepted Masons of Indiana

Lakeville Lodge #353

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Greetings Brothers:

This Trestle Board is early and late at the same time. I was hoping to get a quick recap letter out to all of you after the last Stated Meeting, but after rewriting it many times, I could not get it out as early as I hoped. This will also be the last lengthy Trestle Board I send out for my year in the East.

Annual Dues

As you know, our June state meeting was lengthy. We had just enough members present to open and conduct business. The decisions made at this meeting are of the utmost importance, as they will dramatically impact us all. The fact that only eight (8) members of Lakeville Lodge #353 were present is a great concern to me.

As it has been for many years, and by the direction of the Grand Lodge, the June Stated Meeting is the time to discuss and set the dues and fees for the next year. After thoroughly reviewing our expenses and income from 2023 and the current year, the Brothers in attendance decided to increase the annual dues from \$100.00 to \$150.00 per dues-paying member. This decision was not taken lightly, but covering our basic Utilities and Insurance on the building is necessary, which costs around \$11,000.00 per year. The Lodge is responsible for \$5,500.00 per year. Currently, we have 64 dues-paying members, and out of the Annual Dues amount, \$63.00 goes to Grand Lodge. For the other 16 members exempt from dues (AWG / LE), the Lodge still owes \$1.75 per member to the Grand Lodge of Indiana for the Grand Lodge Insurance Program.

As I have reiterated in the past, Fundraisers play a vital role in maintaining our Dues at a reasonable level. While we did have the Chicken Noodle Dinner back in May. I have been told the numbers are good, but that doesn't mean we are in good shape. At this time, the Building Fund owes the Lodge almost \$4,000.00. In May, we agreed to transfer \$2000.00 from the General Fund to the Building Fund to help with the utility bills and other normal monthly expenses. The Lodge also covered the property taxes for 2024, which was a little over \$800.00, and some other expenses. The understanding is that once the building fund reserves return to a comfortable level, the general fund will be reimbursed.

We currently have two Fundraisers that will directly support the Building Fund. The first is the 4H Fair Lions Booth. We are working three (3) shifts this year; each is a guaranteed \$550.00. So, if you have not done so, please contact Worshipful Brother Max Feitz (contact info at the end) to sign up for a shift. The shifts are Lunch (11:00 am - 4:30 pm) and Dinner (4:00 - 10:00) on Monday, July 1, 2024, and Lunch on Wednesday, July 3, 2024. If you sign up to work a shift, you will be admitted to the 4H Fair for free for the day. Also, if you have signed up, please be there. While working at the Lakeville Lions Booth is not hard work, we have a minimum number of people who are expected to be there to work, and when you have just enough people to work, it makes the work that much harder. It is better to be able to take a break and stand around than have to cover multiple stations; take it from someone who has over eight (8) years of experience working for McDonalds'.

Our second Fundraiser is the Freezer Beef Raffle and Annual Car Show. If you want to help sell Raffle tickets, please contact me, as you will need to be added to the Gaming License before you are allowed to sell any tickets. The raffle drawing will be after the Annual Car Show. The easiest way to help out with the Car Show is to take flyers and hand them out at other area Car Shows or by putting up posters at local area businesses or wherever people who like car shows would be able to see them. In years past, we have not hung up posters around Lakeville until the American Legion show is done. This year, their show is on July 13, 2024.

Masonic Charges

The next major item addressed at the June Stated Meeting was that I, as the Worshipful Master of the Lodge, charged 3 Brothers of Lakeville Lodge #353 with UnMasonic Conduct.

Those brothers are:

Brother Colton Eads

Worshipful Brother Dean Shinneman

Worshipful Master Todd Whitteberry

Both Brother Colton and Worshipful Brother Dean plead guilty to their charges. They have been issued an official reprimand and must submit a letter of apology to the Lodge in writing. These letters are to be received by Worshipful Brother Ron Clady, Lodge Secretary, by July 4, 2024. In addition, if these Brothers are found to be committing the same offense before the end of 2024, they are to be charged again, and a full Masonic Trial is to be held.

As for the charges against Worshipful Master Todd Whitteberry, I also pled Guilty to the charges and have tasked Worshipful Brother Max Feitz to contact each of the Past Masters of Lakeville Lodge #353 to get a vote/input on what penalty should be placed on me. The penalty they decide will be binding, and I have agreed not to dispute or appeal their decision. One note: I did exclude Worshipful Brother Dean Shinneman from the Committee of Past Masters, as he was the person my actions were directed towards. I feel that the victim should not be part of the jury when deciding punishment.

Open House / Bulk Mailing

The idea of sending a bulk mailing to all the addresses in Lakeville has been suggested many times. I have looked into the costs, and through the Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) program with the USPS, we could send a flyer or postcard to all the addresses in the 46536 (Lakeville, IN) zip code. This would be to the 1524 address and would cost around \$309.37. We could get the printing for the flyer or postcard done for around \$300, so we are looking at about \$600 to send a letter to every address in Lakeville and invite them to an open house to see what Freemasonry is about. I think this is a great idea, so much so that if we decide to do it, I will personally donate \$100 towards the cost of postage and printing, but I also have some major reservations about doing this.

My first issue is whether Lakeville Lodge #353 wants to attract new members. My gut reaction is **NO**. This wouldn't be an issue if attracting new members was as important as it should be.

The second issue is what an Open House at Lakeville Lodge #353 would look like and who would organize it. This can be easily fixed but requires someone to step up and take charge.

The final issue is whether Lakeville Lodge #353 could bring in new members. I understand and fully agree that doing each degree for each candidate individually is the best way for the candidate to get the most out of them, but say we get ten (10) candidates from this open house. Will we have enough Brothers to do up to thirty (30) additional meetings just for the degrees? Let's not forget if we are doing these as individual degrees, and then I would also assume that we would want them to be familiar with the questions and answers or some form of proficiency, which would mean mentors and more nights. We could only get eight (8) Brothers to show up for a stated meeting. I find it hard to believe that enough Brothers will want to give up or can give up that much time.

One of the interesting pieces of information I picked up from Brother John Nagy during the weekend he was here was that, on average, it takes almost 300 hours of Brother's time once a petition is submitted until that man is raised to a Master Mason. This amount will go down a bit once you start doing multiple degrees. Still, not by much, as the time a Brother would be practicing for the degree is then replaced by actually doing the degree, and is more, as more Brothers are required for a degree than are required for a Brother to practice the degree.



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Our next Meeting is Thursday, July 11, 2024.

Dinner – Looking for a volunteer (on None)

Masonic Education – Looking for a volunteer (on None)

Stated Meeting - 7:30 pm in the Lodge Room.

Stated Meeting Agenda Items

Sentencing of Worshipful Master Todd Whitteberry

Transfer of WB Steve Mann to Mishawaka #130

Feast of St. John – Psalms 133 Presentation

On Saturday, June 22, 2024, it was a pleasure to have a meal and fellowship with Right Worshipful Brother Randy Seiple in honor of St. John the Baptist and hear his presentation on Psalms 133. This was scheduled to be a Table Lodge with the Festive Board, but since only four (4) Brothers besides myself attended this event, so we were unable to open the Lodge. So my hearty thank you goes to Worshipful Brothers Ron, Max, Harold, and Brother Austin for attending.

Freezer Beef Raffle Tickets

The tickets are in, and selling has started. The tickets cost \$20 per ticket, and there are only 1000 tickets for each prize pool. There will be a max of three prize pools. If you want to purchase tickets, please contact Brother Scott Ashton, Colton Eads, Sage Pryor, or myself. As a friendly reminder, Brothers of Lakeville Lodge #353 cannot win prizes. Anyone who lives with or resides with a Brother of Lakeville Lodge can win but cannot purchase tickets from that Brother of Lakeville Lodge #353. If you would like to help sell the tickets, please contact me ASAP. I will need your State Issued Driver's License Number or State Issued Identification Card number. I can get all the other information from the Lodge Portal. You must be added to the License from the State before you are allowed to sell tickets.

Monthly Calendar

28 th – 5 th	St Joseph County 4H Fair – South Bend, IN (Fairgrounds) Lion's Booth (7/1 & 7/3)
6 th	Bremen Conservation Club – Fourth of July Celebration
11 th	Stated/ Called Meeting
13 th	Free Breakfast / Family Picnic / Game Night

Psalm 133

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity?

It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

Personal Note and Questions

The last two months have been very challenging for me, and I have been asking myself the following questions, so I thought I would ask you them as well. That being said, I do not expect you to respond with your answers as I believe the answers are none of my business, but sometimes, once you ask yourself a question, it is harder not to answer or ignore it.

1. Why / What made you decide to join Freemasonry?
2. Are you getting what you thought you wanted when you became a Mason?
3. Are you getting what you want out of being a Mason? If not, Why? Can You?
4. If you have lost your zeal for Freemasonry. Why? Can you get it back? Do you need some help?

Grand Master Dave Morgan's motto for his year is "Be The Light."

So please, strive to be the kind of Mason that makes other men want to be a Mason.

I hope you have a safe and happy Fourth of July.

Fraternally Your,

Todd C Whitteberry - Worshipful Master

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