

**ROCKY RIVER LODGE NO. 703 F. & A. M.  
20149 LAKE ROAD  
ROCKY RIVER OHIO 44116**

October 2018

***UPCOMING EVENTS***

**Upcoming Dates:**

- 09/27/18 Stated Meeting
- 10/04/18 Special Meeting - FC Degree
- 10/11/18 Stated Meeting
- 10/18/18 Dark - Grand Lodge
- 11/08/18 Annual Meeting and fish fry
- 11/29/18 Installation of Officers

**Please join us for dinner on  
meeting nights at 6:30 P.M.**

*Volume 76 - Issue 06*

***More Light in Masonry***

- [www.rockyriver703.org](http://www.rockyriver703.org)
- [www.freemason.com](http://www.freemason.com)
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### 2018 Officers

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### Take A Look

A strict study of Astronomy provides us with facts and figures about the vast universe that surrounds us.

These facts and figures do not tell all, however. If we close our eyes and use our imagination, we can see the planets, the stars, and the galaxies rolling through limitless space; all governed by the harmonious law of nature. Think of the immensity of that which the Great Architect has provided for us to contemplate. If we simply attempt to expand our comprehension to surround the heavens, we must begin to realize our humble place in the vast scheme of things. Our egocentric world view begins to disappear. We begin to look beyond what is right in front of noses.

Freemasonry speaks of the origin of structure and order; that structure, order, and beauty arose from a study of nature. Although we seem to have forgotten how to learn from nature, a thoughtful study of the arts and sciences opens paths to wonders new and inspiring. As we begin to appreciate the life and beauty in our world, we also begin to live in harmony with ourselves and with others. We walk the path to the East with our eyes open and with our spirits soaring; reaching for the spiritual awakening promised by our ritual and by the Book of Holy Scripture.

By Thomas W. Olzak

### ANNUAL MEETING!

Brethren we will have our annual meeting on November 8, 2018. As you know, we have the election of our officers following supper. This is an important meeting and you should attend, and it would be wonderful to see all of your smiling faces again!

The Past Masters have always cooked a wonderful meal of Lake Erie Perch, spuds, salad and whatever else they can clean out of the fridge. Not wild about fish? We can make a burger with the fixin's if you prefer. Just let us know ahead of time. Plan to attend now and mark your calendar for that date.

Also, please remember to pay your dues by the annual meeting. Did I say that you need to **pay your dues by November 8th?** Please call the Lodge if you know of any Brother that may have difficulty in paying his dues.

PLEASE call me (440)530-0600 if you need assistance from your lodge as you could risk being suspended for non-payment of dues. Delinquent dues notices will be sent out the following day and any dues not paid by December 31st will be suspended for non payment of dues.

Russ Kilpatrick, Secretary  
 Rocky River Lodge # 703

### From the desk of your Secretary

Over the last several years I have observed the slow decline of attendance to our meetings. Now, I know that we could have more interesting programs, etc. We have asked for input, suggestions, ideas and we have not received any. The same goes for help for events that we do have. As your *Trestleboard* editor I know I need to do a better job of getting the information to you in a timely manner.

Why? This is a question that you need to ask yourselves. The officers of this lodge are working HARD to sustain Rocky River Lodge. YOUR Lodge!!!

I have heard grumbings of "I don't like this Brother, or that officer"! We hear it and we feel it, but we can't do it all. Most of us entered into this great fraternity as result of the influences of one or more men. Fathers, brothers, uncles, grandfathers, and other friends or relationships. I still have the pride in me to say "I'm a Mason of Rocky River Lodge #703!"

As you all know, we meet every Thursday at 7:30 pm with stated meetings the 2nd and 4th Thursdays. We're not asking you to attend every meeting, but 1 or 2 each month. Please support your lodge and officers when we confer degrees. It's impressive to our candidates to see more than just the officers on the side lines. Remember when you were Initiated, Passed, and Raised? Remember that feeling when you were brought to light? Remember when all the Brethren shook your hand and congratulated you? I do, and it's sad to not see all the familiar faces here at lodge for our new candidates.

We need your help. It gets harder and harder to confer a Master Mason Degree and muster up the Fellowcraft team. Answer the call for the Fellowcraft team and stay for the lecture after the allegory. A candidate sees the entire team after the performance and everyone disappears before the lecture. How disappointing. This is MY Lodge! This is YOUR Lodge! This is OUR Lodge. Without the support of it's members any organization will fold.

These days many lodges or merging or just surrendering their charter and assets. Please don't let your Lodge suffer this fate! Come and support your Brethren and officers. We need you!

Russ Kilpatrick, P.M.  
 Secretary

## From the Treasurer

What is new this year with dues notices? This year the Lodge has moved to emailed based notices for all members who have an email address. This gives a few new options for payments which include credit cards and ACH (check).

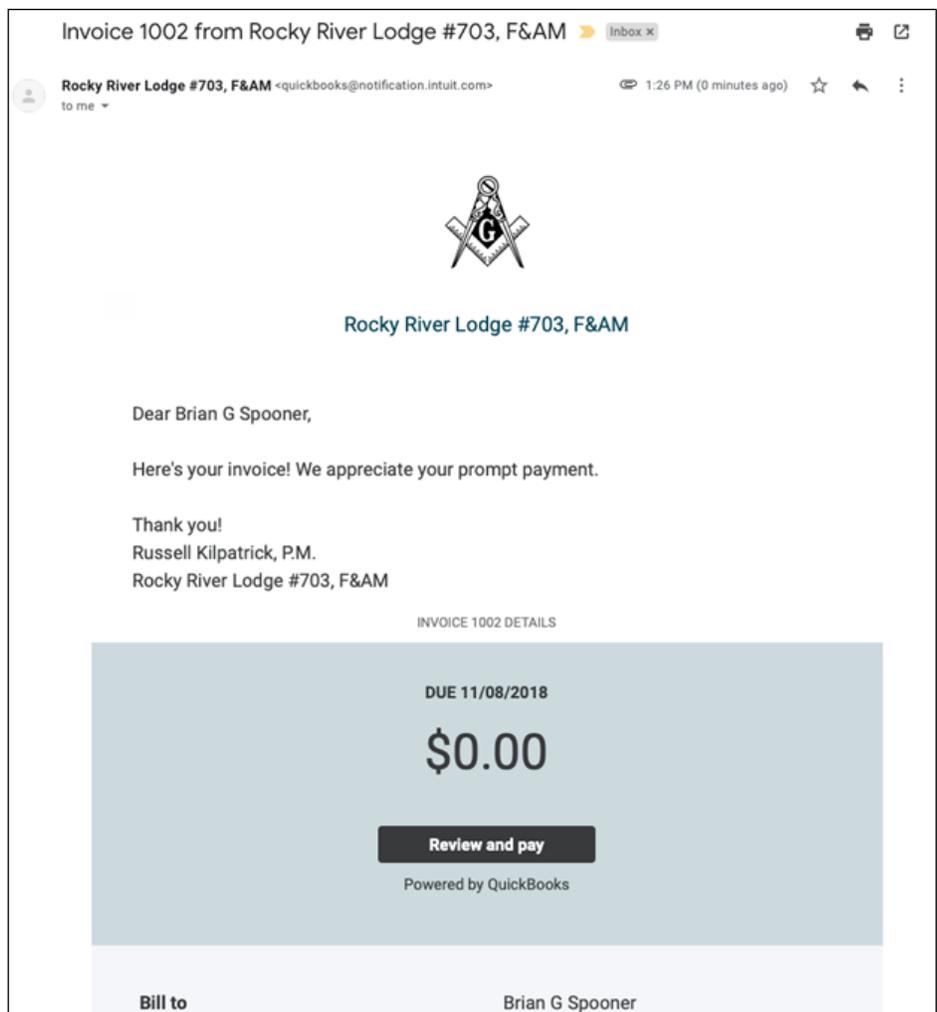
To help offset the cost of credit card and ACH payments we are adding a \$2.00 fee. This covers part of the fee we get charged as a Lodge.

If you wish to avoid the fee you can still mail your check to us, but you will need to provide your own envelope and stamp.

To the right is a sample of what the email will contain, there will also be a .pdf invoice and your standard notice you get from the secretary. If you like to add a donation or have questions you can email us at [books@rr703.com](mailto:books@rr703.com).

Brian Spooner, P.M.  
Treasurer

Note: In banking, ACH stands for *Automated Clearing House*, which is a network that coordinates electronic payments and automated money transfers. ACH is a way to move money between banks without using paper checks, wire transfers, credit card networks, or cash.



## Order Of Eastern Stars Chapter 517

One of the Grand Worthy Advisors projects for Ohio Rainbow this year is to support the military. Sandstone Assembly has found that *Blue Star Mom's in Lorain County* will take donations and then they send packages to the men and women overseas. This is something Sandstone Assembly is going to take on as a Service Project so the items we bring in will be given to the girls. The following is a list of items that can be sent. We hope you will bring items to Temple.

Individually wrapped snack items such as nuts, sunflower seeds, trail mix, peanut butter, cookies, pop tarts, hot cereal, snack crackers, popcorn, rice krispie treats etc.

Protein Items such as protein bars, jerky, tuna or chicken packets, slim jims, nuts etc.

Personal and entertainment items such as eye drops, chapstick/ unscented wipes, travel size hygiene items, black crew socks, black beanie or stocking hats, DVD's, puzzle books

They are also looking for drink packets where you just add water, coffee, tea, hot chocolate or fruit flavored single serve mixes which is a powder drink mix that can be added to bottled water.

Items such as perishable foods, pork, religious material, firearms, aerosol cans or pornographic material cannot be shipped.

*Blue Star Moms* would be happy to accept monetary donations as well.

For our October 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting Kelly Hunt will be our speaker for the evening. Kelly collects used magazines and books and she sends them to our troops stationed near Afghanistan! The Southeast USO distributes them throughout that area to our men and women serving proudly. So why not start now and put aside your magazines and books and bring them to Chapter starting in September.

Kelly gladly accepts any donations to help with shipping the Magazines and Books

Thank you for your support

## Has Freemasonry Lost its Luster?

As a Freemason who has had more than one run-in with Grand Masters, I have become a lightning rod for others who are no longer satisfied with the institution, both in and outside of my jurisdiction. I am not sure I can help other than to listen to their problems and offer some sympathy. Recently, I heard from two Brothers in my jurisdiction who called to complain about what was going on in their Lodge, or more specifically, what wasn't happening. One was in his early 30's, the other in his mid-70's. Remarkably, their complaints were similar. Both fervently believe in Freemasonry as a concept, but have difficulty accepting how it is physically practiced in their jurisdiction.

They both love the concept of brotherhood, its heritage, the practice of morality, and working together to make communities better. However, they find attending Lodge meetings to be repetitive and boring with little effort to make it interesting and worthwhile. It almost seems like it is designed to fail. Both Brothers said to me, as well as many others, "This is not what I signed up for," and are in the process of demitting.

Instead of Lodges embracing the concept of Brotherhood, Freemasons have grown weary of the petty political struggles where people feverishly work to earn an inane object such as a fancy apron or a new Masonic title, e.g., Worshipful, Right Worshipful, Most Worshipful. I am often asked, "What is wrong with the plain white apron and simply being called 'Brother'?" Instead, they lament Freemasonry is practiced as a Good Old Boy Club whereby, "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours." This suggests an individualistic approach based on favoritism, not one based on collective teamwork.

One of the Brothers noted, of all the people who were raised with him during his year, only one has returned to Lodge. Most simply disappear, move on to other endeavors, and drop out. This suggests the Lodge is not offering anything of value to its members, such as stimulating discussions and meaningful social interaction.

Like many other jurisdictions, we have watched membership here erode over the past fifteen years, losing over 1,500 on an annual basis. This is perplexing to the Brothers I talked with who commented while membership dwindles, the aprons and titles never abate. I tend to refer to this type of phenomenon as "Rearranging the Deck Chairs on the Titanic" – in other words, people tend to worry about the wrong things.

The Brothers had hoped to find a place for the free expression of ideas and debate, of stimulating discussion and mental gymnastics, to be curious and learn, but this is typically frowned upon by both the Lodge officers and Grand Lodge who are quick to squash such discussions. Consequently, Lodge is no longer "a place of enlightenment," and people quickly exit it at the conclusion of a meeting. They further note sub-par floor work by apathetic officers during the conferring of degrees, some simply laughing off their performance. This distracts from impressing on the candidates the importance of the lessons embodied in the degrees.

They admit to having met some fine people along the way, true believers in the Craft, but also a lot of petty people who become jealous over the success of others and undermines them. Such backstabbing tends to make people paranoid and not comfortable in their own Lodge. As one of the Brothers explained to me, "A Masonic Lodge is a place where people prefer to speak behind your back, as opposed to your face."

The Brothers also sought further light in Masonry from other institutions, such as the Scottish Rite and York Rite. Again, they didn't find it stimulating, just "this is the way we've always done it."

Maybe this problem is unique to their jurisdiction, but I doubt it.

I find it difficult to console such Brothers as I have always contended Freemasonry requires a major overhaul (see my "Masonic Manifesto" written years ago). Having fought the immovable object though for so long, all I can advise them is, "You cannot fight city hall." This inability to adapt to change is the single biggest reason why the Craft is losing members, by frustrating good Masons and causing them to abandon the fraternity.

It is not my intention here to appear too negative, but we can no longer afford to cover up our blemishes and hope they will go away on their own. If we truly believe in the concept of Freemasonry, we can ill-afford to be reactive and become pro-active instead. This all begins by admitting we have a problem. It has long been an axiom of ours, "You cannot treat a patient if he doesn't know he is sick" (Bryce's Law).

*Keep the Faith!*

*Tim Bryce is a writer and the Managing Director of M&JB Investment Company(M&JB) of Palm Harbor, Florida and has over 40 years of experience in the management consulting field. He can be reached at [timb001@phmainstreet.com](mailto:timb001@phmainstreet.com)*