



Crystal City, MO **Shekinah Lodge #256** A. F. A. M

December 2018

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LODGE OFFICERS 2018-2019

Worshipful Master	W.B. Zachary K. Hardesty
Senior Warden	W.B.. Scott Wynn
Junior Warden	Bro. William Kohout
Treasurer	R.W.B. A. Elmo Blum
Secretary	W.B. Donald E. Ponzar
Chaplain	W.B. William Nausley Jr
Marshal	R.W.B. Ron Wilkins
Senior Deacon	W.B. James Robert Gyngard
Junior Deacon	Bro. John G Sansoucie
Senior Steward	W.B. John T. Becker
Junior Steward	W.B. Roger D. Oliver
Tyler	Bro. Richard Flotron Jr.

Important Dates:

- **December 4th** - Family Night At Lodge
Dinner at 6:00pm. No business meeting.
- **December 18th** - Stated Business Meeting
- **December 22nd** - Fruit Basket assembly
& delivery/pickup.
Volunteers Needed!!!
- **January 1st** - Stated Business Meeting

Please Remember To Pay Your Dues!!!

Family Night At The Lodge

For the past several years, Shekinah Lodge has hosted a family dinner on the first meeting night of December. We typically forgo our business meeting and instead, focus on celebrating the holidays with our Brothers and families over dinner. We will be continuing this tradition this year. On December 4th, we will **NOT** be having our regularly scheduled business meeting. However, we **WILL** be having a dinner at our lodge, that all lodge Brothers and their families are invited to. In the past, we have done a **potluck**, which seems to go over very well. **Shekinah Lodge will provide the main meat (fried chicken). It's encouraged that each Brother/family bring a covered dish or casserole.** My wife already volunteered to make her famous corn casserole, which always gets great reviews. I'll also bring a dessert. **It would help me tremendously if I could get an idea of who all is coming, and what they are bringing. Please call or text me on my cellphone (636-208-0117), or send me an email at banjozach@yahoo.com.**

Dining room will open at 5:30pm. We will eat around 6:15pm.

Shekinah also received a communication from the Jefferson County Children's Foster Fund, requesting donations for their annual Foster Children's Holiday Party. I have included a flyer for their requests with this edition of the Trestle Board. If you would like to make a donation to this cause, please bring it to our *Family Night At The Lodge* event, and I will deliver the donations on behalf of Shekinah Lodge, to the Jefferson County Children's Foster Fund office on the following day (Wednesday, December 5th).

Fruit Basket Fundraiser

Brethren, we are in **desperate need** of Fruit Basket sales. We have 250 fruit baskets to sell in by December 22nd. I have included a flyer with this edition of the Trestle Board. Feel free to make copies and distribute. These fruit baskets make excellent gifts for family and coworkers. Each basket contains a 26-piece variety of red & yellow apples, oranges, Anjou pears, and clementines. Baskets will be assembled on December 22nd, at 8:00am at the lodge. **We will need help assembling baskets!** Basket orders can be picked up at the lodge between Noon and 4:00pm.

If you would like to purchase fruit baskets, please contact Zach Hardesty (636-208-0117) or John Becker (573-210-4298)

If you want to sell fruit baskets, please contact Zach Hardesty (636-208-0117 or banjozach@yahoo.com) for a booklet of tickets



Report on Shekinah Lodge's 150th Celebration

On November 17th, 2018, Shekinah Lodge had a 150th Anniversary Celebration and Building Rededication Ceremony. The event was well attended, with an estimated 90-100 people present. Attendees included Grand Lodge of Missouri Officers, Shekinah members, visiting Freemasons, families, and other invited guests from the community (Jefferson County Historical Society; Leader Publications). Upon arrival, Missouri Grand Lodge Officers were directed to a hospitality room set up in our lodge library, which gave them a place to put their belongings, as well as a place to rest and refresh themselves with bottled water, coffee, and snacks that were set up within. At 4:00pm, Missouri Grand Lodge Officers opened Lodge on the 3rd Degree of Freemasonry (as the Grand Lodge of Missouri). After lodge was at labor, the Master of Ceremonies explained the Rededication Ceremony and what was involved. After a brief tutorial, the lodge was put at-ease, and the outer doors were opened to allow families and guests to enter. At 5:00pm, the Rededication Ceremony started. A detailed model of the lodge was unveiled and rededicated with corn, oil, and wine. A history of Shekinah Lodge was presented by RWB Elmo Blum. At the closing of the ceremony, RWB Blum delivered a benediction for the lodge. Everyone was then directed downstairs to the dining room, where dinner was served. **TBC Venue** (Pevely, MO) did an outstanding job with catering the event. The entire evening seemed to be very successful and will not be soon forgotten. We received numerous compliments from the Grand Master of Missouri, Most Worshipful Brother Robert Thomas, regarding his experience. He was very impressed with the reception of his officers and himself, our beautiful lodge, and the amount of work that was put into the event.



A large event such as this costs money, especially to be successful. It was decided (at a previous business meeting), that the Lodge would not bear the entire cost of the event on its own. **Thank You** to all who contributed to the donation bucket during the dinner. A huge, **Special Thank You** goes out to **Zach Hardesty, Ron Wilkins, Don Ponzar, Elmo Blum, John Becker, and Scott Wynn** for their monetary donations, as well as their time.

Report on November Food Drive

During the later part of November, Shekinah Lodge and Joachim Shrine Club collected canned and non-perishable food items to donate to charity. **Jefferson County Hunger Task Force** was chosen as the charity. **JCHTF** provides food and personal care items to over 2000 families each month in our county.

Thanks to **your** generosity, WM Zach Hardesty and JW Bill Kohout was able to deliver a pickup truck bed full of food to the Task Force office. We also presented a check for \$194 to Director Nancy Pope, for the purchase of food items. This money was donated by members as we "passed the hat" at the business meeting the night before.



Hunger is a terrible thing. During the holiday season, as we give thanks to what we have, its always important to remember those who are less fortunate. Unfortunately, hunger never takes a holiday. It is a problem that some families face year-round. Hopefully we were able to help out some folks with our donations.

A Few Words From the Master

Brethren,

One of the questions I frequently get asked is "what do you guys [Freemasons] do"? Sometimes that can be a difficult question to answer. How would you answer? Usually, my response is something such as "We are the world's oldest Fraternity. And while our Fraternity is not a charity, it was founded on (and operates on) charitable principles." My question to ourselves is "when we are not doing degree work, what do we do?"

We are in a very important point in time with our lodge (and Freemasonry as a whole) right now. We have the recently created **Master's Fund**, which is a bank account entirely separate from the other lodge accounts, and is used solely for charitable purposes. To donate to charities, we have to have the funding. Funding relies on donations or fundraisers. Fundraiser events gives us something to do... *a purpose*. Now, I'm not advocating that fundraising consumes our entire lodge work. But events throughout the year gives us tangible benefits, such as being able to make donations to various causes. The Holiday Fruit Basket fundraiser will raise around \$2,500 for our Master's Fund. This is money that will eventually be given back to the community. Having that amount of money in the Fund is a great start. However, we will need to have future events to sustain that account funding. When we are able to give back to our community, our fraternity has a purpose that everyone, including the community and even the Freemason himself, can see. **(We need members to help with sales and assembly of these baskets, by the way!!!)**

Freemasonry membership numbers have been in decline for years. It's a hard truth. Lodges are merging or closing all across the county, due to poor attendance and membership. Things are different than they were 100 years ago. Families often rely on both spouses working, and/or taking care of children/grandchildren. It's just the way life is now. People cannot commit to Freemasonry like they did 100 years ago. Potential members may wonder "what am I going to get out of my membership if I join"? That's another difficult question to give an answer to, as the benefits are not always easily tangible. However, it is my personal opinion that an active member will be given a sense of fulfillment, pride, accomplishment, and a sense of belonging to something.

I guess my point to all this rambling, is that to be successful, we need members who are active, as well as new members. When was the last time **you** were at a lodge meeting? Has it been in the last 6 months? Stop by sometime... we still meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. **Also, I challenge every Master Mason who reads this to invite at least one person to join our Fraternity. It is no longer a Masonic offense to do this!!! Surely you know at least 1 person who would make a good Freemason. Let's keep our lodge and our Fraternity alive!**