

# THE TRESTLEBOARD



## FROM THE EAST

BY WORSHIPFUL MASTER ROBERT SPILLER

As you know, the first six months of this year have quickly passed us by and the Lodge is now dark until September. But your Lodge was quite active during those first six months. Here's a brief sampling:

We raised one brother, who also was our annual inspection candidate in the Entered Apprentice degree. If you were not in attendance, anyone who was will certainly tell you that you missed a very fine inspection. In fact, Franklin Lodge was given awards for outstanding achievement (something new for the district this year). The district's "Best Lecture" award was presented to our Senior Warden, Brother Timothy Ray at the district awards banquet, held in the spring. The district's "Best Charge" award was presented to Junior Deacon, Brother David Leytze. Needless to say, we're very proud of their fine accomplishments.

Also this year, we've had some fundraisers. The annual Spaghetti supper was a huge success, with \$1500 going to Grand Lodge for Ohio Special Olympics and \$1900 donated to Riverside School to assist them in their Special Olympics. The Lodge presented two \$500 college scholarships to two deserving Troy High School seniors. These were made possible by the selling of Masonic ball caps, a generous \$600 donation from the Coke fund, and \$200-plus from "Frankie", the traveling inspection piggy bank.

We've been active in community events. At this year's "Relay For Life", brothers volunteered their time on a Saturday to assist in the cleanup after the relay was completed.

Once again this year, we participated in the state Adopt-a-Highway program. Lead by our trusty Tyler, we ventured out onto State Route 41 and began picking up trash from both sides of the highway.

Next up was the Ohio Reads Program. We currently have four brothers and two wives actively donating their time to assist grade-school children in the improvement of their reading skills. It is heart-warming to hear that the kids often ask their teachers where their Ohio Reads person is because they have become so accustomed to spending that one half-hour with them. So little time for such a worthwhile cause. Brothers, these kids need more of us to help out. And I can personally vouch for the personal satisfaction gained from knowing that you helped a youngster improve their reading skills, or just being there when they needed someone to lis-

ten or talk to. So again, I ask you to give just one half-hour of your week to assist one of these aspiring young readers. Contact a Lodge brother for more information and they will put you in contact with an Ohio Reads representative at a school near you. And remember, Ohio Reads isn't only in Troy. It's state-wide!

Now, for your calendar, here are some important dates for you to remember: Our annual cookout at the Troy City Park, Thursday 19 August at 6:00pm. (You'll read more about it below.) Autumn degree work will include an Entered Apprentice degree on 21 September, a Fellow Craft degree (step-up night) on 19 October, and a Master Mason Degree on 3 November. And, we've planned a special night for the widows, with dinner and entertainment. That date is soon to be determined.

That's the half-year wrap-up. Remember, there are seven stated meetings left in the year, with potluck dinners for the family and friends on every third Tuesday at 6:30pm. I'll hope to see you there!

## ANNUAL SUMMER COOKOUT COMING

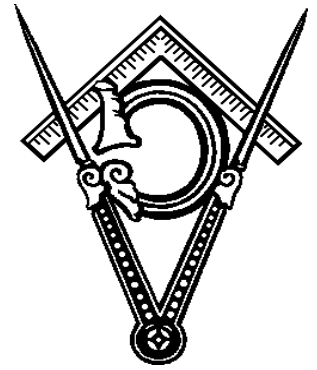
*BRING YOUR APPETITE TO THE CITY PARK FOR AN EVENING OF FELLOWSHIP AND GREAT FOOD*

BY BROTHER JOHN CHANG

It's summertime, and that means it's time to get together for our annual cookout. This year, our dinner will be held on Thursday, 19 August at 6:00pm. We will meet at the Troy City Park, Shelter #7. Dinner will include char-grilled steak burgers, franks, grilled sausages, summer side dishes, and all of the trimmings. Once again, dinner is free to all members and prospective members. So bring a prospective Mason and join us for a summertime feast and a chance to get together for an evening.



If you plan to attend or have any questions, please RSVP John Chang at 339-5547 no later than Thursday, 12 August. *Please note: This announcement will be this year's only written notice.*



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SUMMER 2004

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## THE LODGE EDUCATION FLAME

WITH A MESSAGE FROM THE FILES OF WORSHIPFUL BROTHER PAUL SLUITER

Undoubtedly you have heard about the infamous Hindu fakir's rope trick. There are even people that claim to have seen this feat performed in front of their very eyes!

Science has never been able to explain the remarkable feat of "white magic" know as the Hindu rope trick. Since the time of Marco Polo, Western travelers have marveled at this uncanny and inexplicable performance. There are many variations, but the trick in its complete and classic form is described as follows: The fakir takes a large ball of rope, fastens one end to a sack, and tosses the other into the air. Instead of falling, the ropes keeps ascending until its upper end is lost to sight, while its lower end becomes taut. The fakir's Hindu boy helper climbs lightly up the rope until he too disappears. When he is ordered down, his voice is heard, refusing. Angered, the man climbs after him with a knife between his teeth. Soon, to the horror of the crowd, blood and pieces of the boy's body shower down. The magician returns and throws a sheet over the dismembered corpse. In a moment, he removes the sheet and reveals the boy smiling and well. Though some photographs show parts of the performance, photographers usually get nowhere. For instance, some British soldiers once slipped into the audience of a magician with a camera and stop watch. The watch functioned and showed their time perception to be accurate, but their negatives were entirely blank. The jealously guarded secret of the fa-

kirs is still safe from prying curiosity.

Originating in the dim past, the rope trick has been known in India for at least twenty centuries. In the references to this trick in the Vedas, it was the fakir who climbed to his death and was later restored to life. In the early seventeenth century, Ibn Batutu, an Arab traveler, saw the performance as done today. He was so astonished that he fainted. In 1630, Pu Sing Ling, a Chinese writer, wrote of a variation in which a juggler sent a boy to gather peaches from heaven. When the gods caught him thieving, they threw the boy down piecemeal. The pitying crowd donated the money for his funeral, whereupon the boy revived to thank them. As the Hindu Emperor Jehangire described the trick, a chain was thrown into the air, and a dog, a hog, a panther, and a tiger in turn ascended into oblivion.

There are some who believe the ladder of Masonry is to be climbed in much of the same manner: "Your ambitious feet may tread round after round of the ladder that leads to fame in our mystic circle." In fact, some climb to the top, after which we see no more of them. Apparently, they have gone to join the little Hindu boy in the traditional version of the trick. Indeed, Freemasonry is a progressive science. But Masons should stay away from these rope tricks or they might find their support dropping from beneath them, leaving them suspended in the atmosphere. Or worse, falling piecemeal to the ground.