



The Informer

Volume 3, Issue 4

December 2003

Special Points

• NEXT MEETING

MONDAY December 8th 7:00 p.m.

- **Chaplain Election**
- Awards Ceremony
- Payroll deduction
- Last meeting highlights
- How to vote
- 4th Annual Law Enforcement Appreciation Night
- Editorial



Have a safe and Merry Christmas !

Christmas Party

The lodge Christmas party will be held on Dec. 20th, 7:00p.m. at the lodge.

The tickets are \$5 each and will be available through the e-board or by calling 744-7255.

The ticket fee is nominal and is used to help gauge attendance. Hope to see you and your spouse/significant other there.

Lodge Officer Nominations - Election

In accordance with our by-laws, lodge officer positions are held for a period of two years. The nominations are given in November of the election year, followed by the elections in December, with the winners being installed for their term in January. At our November meeting, the following were nominated for officer positions:

Dan Isgett (Charleston Co. Sheriff) - President *unopposed {second term}
John Blackmon (Hanahan Police Dept.) - Vice President *unopposed
R.E. Sharpe (Charleston Co. Sheriff) - Secretary *unopposed {third term}
Cathy Bowers (Trident Tech. Public Safety [retired.]) Treasurer *unopposed {second term}
Matthew Woodall (Hanahan Police) Sgt. At Arms *unopposed
Doug Wright (Summerville Police) 2nd Vice President *unopposed
Mike Fowler (Hanahan Police) Chaplain
Bill Kofron (Lincolnvillle Police [retired]) Chaplain
David Lee (S.C. Highway Patrol) Chaplain

As is procedure, those positions that were unopposed were read in and elected by affirmation (by those in attendance) as new officers - to begin in January.

The office of Chaplain has three candidates seeking your vote. It is important that every member cast his/her ballot for this unique position. Aside from opening and closing our ceremony in prayer, the lodge Chaplain is charged with the duty of visiting distressed officers, corresponding with those sick or distressed and is the ambassador of good will that those needing help will come to know. The Chaplain's position is one of great importance. All candidates seeking this position are wished good luck!

Annual Awards Ceremony set for February



Our annual awards night will be held in February 2004. We are asking all members to nominate any person or group of Law Enforcement Officers that they feel are worthy of recognition. Nominations may be based on a single noteworthy event or may be based on general attributes that are recognized as top notch.

We feel that recognition by one's peers is the best compliment that can be bestowed. Please let us know if you have a nomination, and a brief synopsis on the merits.



Highlights - Last Meeting

The evening meal was our Thanksgiving feast - with turkey, ham and a multitude of culinary delights provided by attending members. The fact little was left over is testament to how good it was. Thanks to all who contributed.

9 names read for new membership. 3 new associate members read.

Visiting our lodge : Brother Bob Carr - S.C. State FOP Sgt. At Arms
Brother Todd Cox - Vice President Coastal Carolina Lodge # 12

Brothers David Lee and Doug Wright won the prizes in the recruitment drawing.

Lodge keychains and calendars were given to all who attended.

Motion made/passed to contribute \$101 to assist with sending Christmas boxes to 101st Airborne deployed in Iraq.

Motion made/passed to send letter of support to both Chiefs - N. Charleston Police and Goose Creek Police.

Plans tabled to next year for lodge participation in Christmas parades.

Prayers out to Steve Haug (son involved in hunting accident) , Pat O'Hara (shot roadside I-95, recovering after multiple surgeries) and Tony Smith (broken hand.) Godspeed to our injured brethren.

Payroll deduction for membership dues & legal defense



The diligent efforts of our legal defense liaisons has finally culminated into the reality of our members being able to pay both annual lodge membership dues and legal defense premiums via payroll deduction. Currently we have three departments on board and we are still working on

the others. For now, Charleston Co. Sheriff's Office, Hanahan Police Department and Summerville Police Department have signed on.

Shortly, we will have available a sign up form for those who choose to participate. The deduction will be roughly \$6 per pay period. This will include both your annual membership dues and legal defense costs.

In light of recent events, we cannot emphasize the need for individual legal defense enough. Our plan is comprehensive and we have many well recognized attorneys in our program. Most people understand the need for insurance on their homes and cars. In today's world and in our profession, you need insurance for your livelihood. Don't wait until you need it to wish you had it. One consultation with an attorney would exceed what you would pay for this coverage. It has never been easier.

4th Annual Law Enforcement Appreciation Night



On February 1st, we will host our 4th Annual Law Enforcement Appreciation Night. The Superbowl will be shown on our big screen TV for all to enjoy. In the past, we have had numerous door prizes to offer those who came. So that we may

continue this tradition, we are asking that everyone possible, use their resources to solicit door prizes early. If you need a letter to validate your purpose, please let us know.

We use this event to show our appreciation to all law enforcement personnel and their families. All badged policemen/women are encouraged to attend. It is free and they need not be members to come. Help pass the word, this particular event has evolved as a lodge trademark. We attempt to improve each year, but we do need assistance with the prizes. If you can help or have questions call the lodge at 744-7255.

Voting in the lodge election

Included with this edition of the *Informer* is a paper ballot. You can vote at the December 8th meeting if you attend, or you can send in the paper (absentee) ballot. Every active card carrying member is eligible to cast a vote.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, you may mail in your election form to: Fraternal Order of Police, Tri-County Lodge 3 PO Box 62469 North Charleston, SC 29419.

Election forms must be received at the PO Box by 4 pm December 8, 2003 to be counted. Members may also send their election form by another member who attends the meeting. Please make plans to attend this most important meeting. This is your chance to help decide the direction of your lodge.

S.C. FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE TRI-COUNTY LODGE # 3
"SERVING THE LAWMEN OF THE LOWCOUNTRY"

The Informer

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Tri - County Lodge # 3

"Serving the Lawmen of the Lowcountry"

We are on the web!
www.scfop3.org



The Tri-County Lodge (founded in 1976) is chartered to serve those law enforcement officers working in Charleston, Dorchester and Colleton Counties. Currently we have 350 active members and we are steadily growing. Our mission - both local as well as national, is to better our profession through fraternalism and legally by way of legislation. We work from the bottom to the top and value the ideas and opinions of all our members.

The "Informer" is an evolving lodge endeavor. Any comments, criticisms or ideas for improvement are welcomed. ****Disclaimer**** This publication does not necessarily represent the views of any or all of our members or affiliated lodges. Editorial comment solely that of the editor.

Editorial - Brothers in Blue Must Stick Together

Recently, lowcountry police have come under intense public scrutiny. Several events, as well as several badged/ex-badged persons have also been singled out for the media spotlight. As we all quite literally depend on each other for our lives, we must not allow ourselves to be divided and caught up in the fray.

When we go through the academy, we are taught things to do and things to avoid. Most lessons we are taught were previously learned the hard way through loss of life, limb or lawsuits. Such is the machinery of our system. There were others before us as well as others that will follow. Aside from the occasional "bad egg", all cops have their heart in their work (God knows we don't do it for the money) - with the mindset to do a good job.

We are to some, the hackneyed "necessary evil." Ever had anyone tell you that that they wouldn't do your job for a million bucks? The average citizen could not or would not do our jobs. In that, we are "above average" in most respects. We risk our lives to protect the very same folks who now heap the criticisms on our shoulders. Along with the vests, the leather gear and all the tools we carry, we must also carry the weight of negative publicity. A heavy burden, no doubt unbearable by those who are so quick to give it. Carry it we must and we will grow stronger as a result.

Now the iron is hot, and the armchair quarterbacks are out in force. The media thrives on conflict and will most likely ride this horse for sometime. See how quickly we go from "hero" to "villain." Watch the criminals change from "menace" to "martyr." None is accountable for their actions, except for the police, who are held accountable for their own and everyone else's. Not unlike the paradox of "flies causing the garbage."

We have seen our brothers get killed changing tires, responding to domestics or doing license checks - and we were there to continue. When this smoke clears, we will still be here. Do not allow yourself to be distracted from your duty or your calling. We are an easy target because **we are in front**. We must not lower our standards to cast unnecessary judgments upon each other. When the public needs help they call the police, when we need help we can only call upon ourselves. This we can never forget.

- R.E. Sharpe