



The Informer

Volume 3, Issue 7

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

March 2004

Special Points

- **NEXT MEETING**
MONDAY March
8th 7:00 p.m.



- **Report from Nashville**
- Distressed Officer Fund
- Congrats to Award recipients
- Lodge Renovations Started
- Last meeting highlights
- Miscellaneous
- Legislative Update
- Cops and Lobsters

Response to dues payment this year have been good. Currently 2/3 in good standing and 1/3 in arrears. If you do not hold a 2004 active membership card - you are due.

**PAY
YOUR
DUES**

Our Lodge Doing Well (report from Nashville)

In February I was fortunate enough to be able to attend a training seminar in Nashville, Tennessee. The seminar was sponsored by the Grand Lodge, with attendees representing lodges throughout our nation. I am proud to report that our lodge was among the best in many respects.

The seminar included high level law enforcement speakers from positions and agencies that spanned the stretch of our country. The FOP President Chuck Canterbury (a lowcountry brother) spoke about his endeavors with President Bush and his recent visit to Iraq with U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao. He was called in to evaluate and assist with the American effort to help put in place an Iraqi Police force. Further, he added that the opportunity exists to send American police there to help train the Iraqis. He hinted that if plans coalesce, American policeman may be offered assignments to teach basics as well as specialties such as gangs, K-9, jail operations, SWAT and others. He believes if implemented, the assignments would be for three week intervals. It will be reported if and when it develops.

In speaking with officers from various lodges nationwide, I was pleased to discover that we are doing well in recruiting and retention, tax issues, member benefits, communication as well as community involvement. I was also surprised to learn that others had viewed our website as well as this newsletter. While we are not as heavy in labor issues as lodges in other states, overall we are headed in the right direction. My thanks to the lodge for sending me to this seminar. - R.E. Sharpe

Distressed Officer Fund



What is it? The "Distressed Officer Fund" was created by the sitting members of the lodge some four years ago. It is as a lodge savings account separate from the general operating fund. From this account, we give monetary benevolence to Police Officers, Deputy Sheriff's, Detention Officers, Highway Patrolman etc. and/or their families in time of grief or as the name implies "distressed."

The "Distressed Officer Fund" has been used since its inception to give thousands of dollars, flowers and cards to stricken officers and their families around the state. Quite often we will mention this fund in this newsletter and activities geared to produce money for it. We urge all our members to participate when this fund is mentioned. We have always received letters of appreciation from those affected when we tap this fund.

*We wish to extend special thanks to Deborah Bell (wife of deceased Brother William Bell) for her recent heartfelt donation to this fund. It is our pledge that we will utilize her donation to the benefit of law enforcement officers throughout the state.



The evening meal was provided by Carol Smith with assistance from Cathy Bowers and Phil Cahoon. Special thanks for their great work on this special evening**

Awards Ceremony - 17 awards bestowed.

11 names read for new membership.

V. Pres. Blackmon reports that our lodge website had 6,500 "hits" the previous month.

Brothers Rick Dean and Dan Isgett won the prizes in the recruitment drawing.

Motion passed to contribute \$100 to the Michael O'Laughlin cancer fund - (upstate motor officer recently given terminal diagnosis)

Brothers Tim Handy and Tom Botchie to chair Azalea Festival fundraiser.

Motion passed to sponsor Sister Joyce Kephart (\$150) for March of Dimes.

Motion passed to sponsor (\$150) Police BBQ team "Hog Tied" in the annual cook-off contest to be held on March 12th & 13th at the Exchange Park in Ladson.

Prayers out to Brother Joel Gamble (bladder cancer), Sister Eugenia Smalls (out of coma, but still serious condition) Brother Lester Eckert (is home and doing well) and Brother "Buck" Gossett. May they all have speedy and whole recoveries. Keep them in your prayers.

North Charleston Police Dept. Looking for Certified Officers



The North Charleston Police Dept. is accepting applications for certified police officers.

They offer a competitive pay package and benefits. For further information contact Ed Ott at -
vott@northcharleston.org

Miscellaneous Info

Belated "thanks" to the *Barbershop at Northbridge*, *Sportz Café*, and *Jersey Mike's Subs*.... Who were contributors to our Law Enforcement Officer Appreciation Night. We appreciate your support!

Our sponsored little league girls basketball team (9 & 10 yr. olds) the *Hanahan Hawks* just finished their season undefeated. They were coached by Kevin Cox, Special Agent (criminal) IRS. We are proud of their accomplishments !

Lodge Renovations Underway

With our mortgage finally paid, we have freed up some funds for much needed building repairs and upgrades. The men's restroom upgrade should be complete by the March meeting date. The women's restroom will follow shortly afterward.

If labor and funds hold out, we will see improvements later in the main hall and kitchen before years end. *Thanks Jim Riley & Bruce Klimecki !

Congratulations to 2003 Award Recipients

We wish to congratulate again all the recipients of our 2003 Awards. For those who missed the ceremony, the following awards were presented:

The Judge Margie F. Cannon Award for Judicial Excellence -
Judge Margie F. Cannon (ret.)

Special Recognition -

V.E. Ott , North Charleston Police Dept.
The Dorchester County Cold Case Squad :
Deputy Vic Nico
Deputy Bill Lang
Deputy John Nelson
Attorney Jerry Finkel

Lodge Service Awards -

Donald Dulin - Charleston County Sheriff's Office, Vice President 2001-2003
Timothy Glover - Summerville Police Dept., 2nd Vice President 2001-2003
Russell Fickett - North Charleston Police Dept., Chaplain 2001-2003
Robert Grimsley - Charleston County Sheriff's Office, Sgt. At Arms 2001-2003

FOP Member of The Year -
John C. Blackmon

Awards of Valor -

Tim Handy - North Charleston Police Dept.
Harry Long - Charleston County Sheriff's Office
Samuel Chapman - Hanahan Police Dept.
Debra Cattell - Hanahan Police Dept.
Jason Barbare - Hanahan Police Dept.
Chris Veazy - Hanahan Police Dept.

Iron Chef -
Phil Cahoon

The complete merits on which these awards are based are listed in the "awards" section of our website.

Legislative Update

by Tony Rahaim



Since this is my first submission as a member of the legislative committee for the lodge, I will keep this edition reasonably generic. Each month, I will cover two aspects of pending legislation, the first at the federal level since it is the broader of the two; and the second at the state level. Within each article, there will be contact information for both the federal and state level elected officials.

I can tell you from personal experience, that if you write, call or e-mail your elected representatives; the overwhelming majority of them will respond to you, even if they disagree with your position on an issue. Remember, they work for us.

The first step in any legislative process is to find out what bills are being considered this session of the legislature:

- At the federal level, go to <http://www.senate.gov> for the U.S. Senate and <http://www.house.gov> for the U.S. House of Representatives. Through these sites, you can also find out who your specific members of Congress are. The White House may be contacted at <http://www.whitehouse.gov>
- At the South Carolina state level, you can go to <http://www.scstatehouse.net/index.html> for both houses of the state legislature, and <http://www.scgovernor.com> for the Governor's office. The main web site for the state is at <http://www.mysc.gov>

The second step in this process is to locate the FOP's legislative priorities. At the federal level, they can be located at <http://www.grandlodgefop.org/legislation/index.html> and at the state level, are at <http://www.scfop.org/legislation.asp> Please take a few minutes to look at these sites before the next lodge meeting.

If you do not have a personal computer with internet access, please go to the nearest public library or ask to borrow a friend's. Due to federal and state guidelines, political activity using work related equipment may be prohibited by your agency.

In closing, public safety personnel have a notorious history for moaning and groaning about policies enacted by both the federal or state governments. With the advent of the internet and e-mail, political apathy *is no longer acceptable*. There is *no excuse* for not being an active citizen.

I find it personally detestable that people will not take 30 minutes to review an issue, find the contact information for the affected branch(es) of government, and make their views known. However, they will utilize those same 30 minutes and watch some mind numbing show on television.

Thousands of public safety personnel and millions more American military members have given the ultimate sacrifice. We owe them more than 30 minutes. Stay Safe.

Tony is a Senior Inspector with U.S. Customs and Border Protection in Charleston, SC. He has been in law enforcement since 1984 and has served as a military, local and now federal officer. He has had assignments including: patrol, training officer, tactical team member, negotiator, intelligence, shift supervisor and several staff positions. He also serves on the legal defense and legislative teams for his FOP lodge, is a union steward at his office, and is working on his Masters degree. He may be reached at arahaim@leo.gov The views expressed are the authors alone, and are not the official views of any U.S. Government official or agency



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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 376 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, ideas for improvement or member submissions 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.

Cops & Lobsters to be held March 24



On March 24th, 2004, we will be participating with Red Lobster for the annual "Cops and Lobsters" fund raiser that benefits the Special Olympics. During this event, uniformed law enforcement personnel assist Red Lobster employees waiting on tables. At the end of the meal, patrons are offered an opportunity to donate a "tip" in an envelope marked for Special Olympics. Last year we raised a record breaking \$2,200.

For those of you who don't know, Special Olympics is the State FOP lodge's designated charity as well as our lodge's designated charity. The beauty of the "Cops and Lobsters" fund raiser is that all the money raised stays in the Tri-county area. I want all of you to know that the folks at Special Olympics really appreciate all we do for their organization. I have worked with Special Olympics for several years, however, this year will impact me personally. I have a four year old son with down syndrome and he has started ice skating with Special Olympics this past January. Although he cannot compete in an official event for another four years, it is fantastic that programs (at no cost to the parents) exist for these very special kids.

If you wish to participate in this year's "Cops and Lobsters," we will have the following shifts: Lunch 10:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and dinner 4:00 p.m. till 9:30 p.m.. We need all the help we can get, we are flexible with the hours for those of you with tight schedules. I can be contacted at 740-3109 (office), 296-1171 (cell) or 728-3109 pager.

- Harold Phillips

** all participants will be rewarded with fun and of course - great food**