



Mark Twain Service Award

Rising Sun Lodge #29 - Leveraging Our Energy

RISING SUN LODGE #29 F. & A. M.
1 Walnut Street N.E.
Decatur, Alabama 35601
Chartered 1827

Archie Hampton, Worshipful Master

James D. Glenn PM, Secretary

Rising Sun Lodge #29
1 Walnut Street NE
P.O. Box 1421
Decatur, AL 35601
(256) 353-5491
risingsun29@att.net

December 1st 2011 - December 1st 2012

In 2012, Rising Sun Lodge was able to leverage our energy and increase Masonic Awareness outside the lodge to a greater degree than last year. This was accomplished by partnering with the Wounded Warrior Project, increasing our Internet presence and implementing the Child ID program. The Lodge believes that our activities in 2012 were successful in expanding Masonic Awareness and promoting our Masonic values.

A publication of our 2012 Mark Twain Award entry is viewable in .pdf form on our website: (<http://www.risingsun29.org/uploads/2012MTSA.pdf>)

Planning

In 2012, Rising Sun Lodge #29 aspired to build on last year's success. The Lodge again formed a committee to register and compete for the Mark Twain Award. The 'two new Master Masons' who assisted with last year's competition were re-enlisted along with our Webmaster and a Past Master.

Last year we realized; "...events or activities that take 1 to 2 brothers to organize were the most successful...We hope to leverage more successful and independent work like this next year. We also believe the charity golf tournament failed to materialize because it required many more to coordinate and organize. We will need to build up to larger events."

Our goal in 2012 was to use the Mark Twain Award competition to challenge ourselves and expand Masonic Awareness through larger public events.

Implementation

A complete list of all our events this year follows. Events initiated or enhanced this year are followed with an asterisk. They are also updated on the EVENTS tab of our webpage. (<http://www.risingsun29.org/EVENTS.html>) Further details can be found in Appendix I, II, and III. Also included is a DVD of pictures from the Hooked on Decatur Fishing Tournament as well as a data disk with the Trestle Boards, Historical Research on the Web (w/links) and additional pictures.

APPENDIX I

- Mark Twain Award Winner 2011* (A1 /pg 9)
- Hooked On Decatur Fishing Tournament* (A1 /pg 9-11)
- Child ID Program* (A1 /pg 11-12)
- Website Awards* (A1 /pg 12-13)
- Mobile Web Browsing* (A1 /pg 13)
- Monday Night Meetings (A1 /pg 13-14)
- Pre-meeting Dinners (A1 /pg 14)
- Practice Meetings (A1 /pg 14)
- Breakfasts (A1 /pg 14)
- Fifth Monday Night Dinners (A1 /pg 14)
- Grand Masters Dinner (A1 /pg 14-15)
- Widows Basket (A1 /pg 15)
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- Funerals (A1 /pg 15)
- Birthday Cakes (A1 /pg 15)
- Past Masters Night (A1 /pg 15)
- Grand Lodge (A1 /pg 15-16)
- Trestle Board* (A1 /pg 16)
- Website Development*(A1 /pg 16)
- Boston Butt Sale (A1 /pg 16-17)
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- Eastern Star/Shrine (A1 /pg 17)
- Notable Donations* (A1 /pg 17)
- T. L. Collins Scholarship* (A1 /pg 17-18)
- Masonic Shirts (A1 /pg 18)
- Christmas Parade (A1 /pg 18)
- Archive Donations* (A1 /pg 18)
- Special Guests/Speakers* (A1 /pg 18)
- T.V. Interviews* (A1 /pg 18-19)
- Adopt-An-Area* (A1 /pg 19-20)
- Masonic Pride Concert Tour Planning* (A1 /pg 20)
- Favicon Issued* (A1 /pg 20)
- Google Places* (A1 /pg 21)
- Mapquest* (A1 /pg 21)
- Paypal* (A1 /pg 21)
- e-M@sons* (A1 /pg 21)
- QR Code* (A1 /pg 21)
- Wikipedia Article* (A1 /pg 21-22)
- Find A Grave* (A1 /pg 22)
- Officer Down Memorial Page* (A1 /pg 22-23)
- Chairman of GL Education & PR Committee* (A1 /pg 23)
- Pennies Program* (A1 /pg 23)

APPENDIX II

- Hooked On Decatur Promotionals* (A2 /pg 24-26)

APPENDIX III

- Historical Research on the Web* (A3 /pg 27-62)

Evaluation

By partnering with established charities and programs, Rising Sun Lodge was able to leverage our Masonic energy. This enabled us to take on larger activities, spread Masonic Awareness and increase our impact on our local community.

Reflections on 2012:

First, Rising Sun Lodge was able to successfully host its first large public event in 2012; The Hooked on Decatur Team Bass Fishing Tournament. This event was made possible by partnering with the Wounded Warrior Project, the tournament's beneficiary. A separate website was created and promoted. Flyers were spread around at North Alabama boat ramps, restaurants and bait shops. Donations were solicited from the business community. Veterans groups across North Alabama, fishing websites, and the Visitors Bureau all assisted in the advertising. TV interviews were conducted. Clearly, many people were impacted positively through this charitable endeavor.

We followed the fishing tournament with the Child ID Program. By breathing new life into an existing Grand Lodge program, we were able to provide a service to hundreds of families at multiple elementary schools.

Both of these activities have positively impacted our local community. Lodge members have also gained confidence and satisfaction from being a part of these larger events. We hope to continue them, as well as look for other opportunities to partner, in 2013.

Second, Rising Sun Lodge was also able to breakthrough to the local media in 2012. An interview describing our fishing tournament was the first time a member of Rising Sun Lodge had been on television describing a lodge activity. This was followed up with a TV interview and report on the day of the tournament. Media coverage continued with an article in the Decatur Daily and another local news report both on the Child ID program. In addition, RWSGW John R. Strickling went on a local cable talk show and explained the Child ID program as well as our lodge's scholarship. These media appearances clearly spread awareness of our activities to the public. We hope to have more to report in 2013.

Third, we realized the importance of our web presence. Our website provides our members, prospective candidates and the local community with information about our activities. With over 25,000 website hits, we cannot say enough about the positive impact our Webmaster has made on his own accord. He is also the author of the Trestleboard and the Historical Research on the Web. Last year's "hope to leverage more successful and independent work" was

realized in his efforts.

Finally, the Mark Twain Award committee would still like to encourage Rising Sun Lodge to set strategic goals for 2018. While some opportunities for Masonic Awareness are spontaneous (like the great work of our Webmaster), we would like to see Rising Sun visualize its future. This would hopefully spur a deep investigation of successes at other lodges and further the transformation we have begun.

APPENDIX GLOSSARY
(Internal & External Events for 2012)
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