



International Ship Masters Association

Toledo Lodge No. 9

P.O. Box 5218 ☼ Toledo, OH 43611

For Additional Information Contact

Matt Zaleski / VP – Marketing, Hubbub Marketing, LLC
Mobile: 419-345-5206 / E-mail: matt@hubbubmarketing.com

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Paul LaMarre III / Member, Toledo Lodge No. 9
Office: 734-241-6480 / E-Mail: plamarre@portofmonroe.com

**Toledo to Host 128th Annual International Ship
Masters' Association Convention in 2018**

(Toledo, OH) --- The International Ship Masters' Association, along with the National Museum of the Great Lakes and Destination Toledo, Inc., announced today that one of the most prestigious maritime conventions will return to Toledo in February 2018 when the city hosts the 128th Annual International Ship Masters' Association's Grand Lodge Convention.

The announcement was made at the National Museum of the Great Lakes aboard the Col. James M. Schoonmaker Museum Ship on National Maritime Day --- A day created by Congress in 1933 to recognize the maritime industry.

Paul LaMarre, board member of both ISMA Lodge 9 Toledo and the National Museum of the Great Lakes, says the ISMA convention will take place February 2 – 4, 2018 with the ISMA Lodge 9 Toledo and the National Museum of the Great Lakes sponsoring the event.

“This is only the 12th time that the Toledo Lodge has hosted the annual Grand Lodge convention,” said Mr. LaMarre.

“This is a bona fide convention that will bring some 250 maritime professionals to Toledo putting us at the forefront of the maritime community, said Richard Nachazel, CHA, President, Destination Toledo, Inc. The convention allows us to showcase in part Toledo's rich maritime tradition, our newly renovated downtown, and of course, the Great Lakes Museum.”

The Toledo Lodge hosted its first convention in 1899 at the Boody House, and the last one was in 2008 at the Holiday Inn French Quarter in Perrysburg.

A kick-off reception will be held Thursday, February 2, at the National Museum of the Great Lakes. Lodge representatives will caucus to discuss numerous maritime issues. Meanwhile on Friday and Saturday other members will have several meetings to discuss environment issues, safety concerns, and working conditions. On Friday there will be a dinner at the Renaissance Toledo Downtown Hotel.

“Many people throughout Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan made their living on the Great Lakes,” said Rick Brown, Event Chairman, ISMA Lodge 9 Toledo. “Our membership not only includes licensed maritime professionals, but also memberships for retired maritime workers, as well as associate members for those who have other ties to the maritime industry.”

The International Ship Masters’ Association (ISMA) can trace its roots back to 1886 when it was established to provide financial assistance to the survivors of those lost at sea. While ISMA no longer has a benevolent fund, its purpose is still to unite shipmasters and promote safety of navigation.

Lodge 9 Toledo of ISMA was established on February 24, 1892 with 27 founding members. Meetings were first held in the basement of the Waldorf Hotel. Other venues over the years included the Wine Cellar Restaurant, Bay View Yacht Club, the Toledo Lucas County Port Authority Offices, and most recently, Conference Room A at One Maritime Plaza.

The Toledo Lodge has actively supported many local charities and nonprofit organizations over the years. Most recently we have directed our philanthropic efforts towards the restoration and operation of our local museum ship Col. James M. Schoonmaker and the Great Lakes Historical Society. Four members were involved with the 2012 relocation tow of the Schoonmaker to her new home at the National Great Lakes Museum at the Skyway Marina in Toledo. Also, the Toledo Lodge has donated money to the Future Mariner Fund and otherwise supported The Maritime Academy of Toledo, a charter school with a nautical theme which provides prep courses for students interested in a maritime career.

Over the next eight months the Toledo Lodge will be looking for additional sponsorships for the event as well as recruit members both nationally and locally.

“This is such an incredible event for Toledo and our Lodge to host. Last time we were in Perrysburg and never made it to downtown Toledo. This time our members are staying in a renovated hotel in our revitalized downtown Toledo. We hope the community will step forward with support so we can make these maritime professionals feel welcomed and we offer a first-class presentation for everyone,” said Mr. Brown.

Those interested in becoming members of the International Ship Masters’ Association can e-mail Jim Byrne, Secretary / Treasurer, ISMA Lodge 9 Toledo, at ISMALodge9@gmail.com.

Those interested in more information on the ISMA Grand Lodge Convention can logon to www.shipmaster.org/Lodges/toledo/Default.htm or contact Rick Brown, Event Chairman, at 419-944-6999 or e-mail: rickncms@aol.com.

Those interested in sponsorship opportunities should contact Matt Zaleski, Hubbub Marketing LLC, 419-345-5206 or e-mail matt@hubbubmarketing.com