



Ideas That Work



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Family Activities Tie Members Closer to Your Lodge

We're getting closer to warmer days and now is the time to prepare for lodge activities that can get your members outside and involve their families. Families are important when planning lodge activities.

Surveys show that after fellowship and involvement in the community, men interested in joining organizations such as Freemasonry insist that the organization be involved with the family. In fact, research of men between the ages of 35-55 indicates that if an organization is not actively involved with the family, the decision to join becomes much more difficult.

Most importantly, bear in mind that every Mason is told in our degree work that the fraternity will never come before his family.

Including the family in lodge activities may mean as few as five activities a year where the lodge hosts a meaningful and relevant program centered on the needs and expectations of the family. Additional research found that the most appealing activities to wives were special events where children were the center of the activity, while dinners, especially if the wife must prepare a dish, and ladies-night programs were not.

Here are some family-related activities that are included in the lodge Leadership Manual, which you can download at:

<http://www.glna.org/pdf/lodgeleadership.pdf>.

Barbeque

Day at the State or County Fair

Ladies at the Table Ceremony (call the Grand Lodge office for a copy)

Ice Cream Social

Hold a camping trip

Mother-child bake-off (& dessert party)

Family Day-Long Field Trip

Family Day/Night with nearby lodge (park or other outside location)

Father-child dinner or cookout

Father-child softball/football/basketball

Grandparents Night (consider holding it on Grandparents Day whether they are Masons or not)

Holiday party for kids (Halloween, other holidays with games & activities)

Host a meeting of wives within the first few months of the year, and the wives of new members within two months from the date their husbands join lodge.

Inform them of the activities you have planned, point out activities you would like them to attend and explain Masonry.

Inform wives about Masonry using a page in your lodge newsletter, or an entire newsletter. Tell her who can belong, what we do, what we support, what happens in lodge and answer their difficult questions. Be sure they also receive a calendar of events for the year.

Invite wives to lodge to hear a speaker on a topic of interest while you're meeting
Picnic (inside or outside)

Progressive dinner with wives (serve the courses at different member's homes)

Sports Day (at local playground, park)

Weekend out-of-town with wives shopping, historic sites, lake parties, etc.

Widow's Night or other activity honoring them.

From the Field . . .

The following ideas are from the Grand Lodge officers.

Youth Sports Tournaments

Osceola Lodge No. 65 hosts a softball tournament for girls ages 12 & younger, and a basketball tournament for kids. The events each raise about \$3,000, which is used to fund community projects. Osceola Lodge has purchased and built a backstop, and they've purchased uniforms and made donations to several local projects. In addition, the money raised pays for scholastic and Masonic All-Star Marching Band scholarships. Best of all, the two tournaments involve members in activities outside the lodge. Older members take the tickets and operate the concession stands, while younger members take care of the field or umpire, which increases their commitment and involvement in lodge.

Fellowship Over Coffee

To promote fellowship among your members, serve coffee and donuts at your lodge on Saturday mornings, or meet where donuts are served.

Fellowship After Meetings

Tabula Rasa Lodge No. 332 in Lincoln follows the English tradition of holding a Festive Board, or fine dinner, after meetings. Pick a location for your lodge to go out together and have a good meal after a meeting. Eat in a separate room, if possible, and keep the discussion on Masonic topics.

Consider holding Festive Boards once a year, once a quarter or after every meeting.

Expediting Meetings

A number of lodges around the state print their lodge's minutes, bills and treasurer's report and make them available for members to pick up as they enter the lodge room. This gives members time to review the information before the meeting starts, thus saving time by eliminating the need to have them read during the meeting. Your members will appreciate the time saved in the meeting.

Recruiting Members

North Bend Lodge No. 119 holds a steak fry and invites members of the Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, Chamber, etc. These organizations are a good source for new members. Make it a fun gathering without pitching membership. Get to know them and later invite them to join.

Bikes for Books

Cotner Lodge No. 297 worked with an elementary school to encourage students to read more. Teachers selected books for students to read at each grade level. Every week, students and their parents filled out slips of paper with the amount of time they read at home. At the end of the reading program, four names were drawn to receive a gift certificate for a bicycle provided by Cotner Lodge. The school saw a 26 percent increase in reading improvement.

Ideas from the Lodge Leadership Manual . . .

The following are just a few of the more than 400 ideas in the Lodge Leadership Manual. To review the manual and to start planning the year you'll serve as Master, or for ideas this year, go to:
<http://gln.org/fileDownload.aspx>.

Activity ideas are suggested in these areas of lodge performance.

- **Meetings** – Lodges that have a good year usually prepare a 12-month calendar of planned events and functions. A calendar needs to be made and followed, and frequently communicated to the members.

- **Ritual Work** – Hold ritual practices before you are installed Master for the officers who will serve during that year. Also, allow time later in the year for the next incoming officers to prepare for proficiency examinations conducted by your Deputy Grand Custodian.
- **Grand Lodge Programs** – Participate in the Grand Lodge Scholarship program. The Nebraska Grand Lodge contributes \$75 a year to lodges participating in its scholarship program. The Grand Lodge also provides scholarships to members of Masonic youth groups through the Glenn O. and Evelyn F. Emick Memorial Scholarship and Grand Lodge Youth Committee Scholarships. Contact the Grand Lodge office for more information.
- **Fellowship** – Send a Masonic anniversary card to brothers on the date they became Master Masons. Cards are available from the Grand Lodge office.
- **Community Service** – Sponsor local youth to attend the Masonic All-Star Marching Band Camp. Host members of DeMolay, Job’s Daughters or Rainbow for Girls at a Masonic Youth Recognition Night.
- **Membership** – Hold a “Who Are the Masons?” meeting for prospective members. Invite them and prepare a meal, make a presentation on Masonry and provide a tour of your lodge. See Section 7 in the Lodge Leadership Manual for more detailed information.
- **Communication** – Effective vehicles of communication with your members include a lodge newsletter, e-mails, a calling committee, lodge Web site, postcards, handouts, invitations, bulletin boards and community calendars on local television and radio stations. Be sure to use these methods of communication to constantly remind members of upcoming activities. Research shows a person must see a message 11 times before it makes an impression.
- **Finances** – One form of internal fundraising that is popular in some lodges is to write a letter to the members and ask them to make a pledge of several specific amounts for a given number of months. For example, you might ask them to give \$30, or \$20, or \$10 each month for three months or more. The names of brothers participating could be placed on a plaque in the lodge. Some lodges raise considerable funds each year this way. Let the members know the progress as the fund accumulates, and be sure to make more than one appeal.

Will Your Lodge Celebrate an Anniversary Soon?

June is nearing, and most Nebraska lodges were chartered in that month. As you look ahead to the year you’ll serve as Master, or even this year, check your charter to see when it was issued. Begin planning activities in your lodge and community now to heighten your lodge’s visibility on its anniversary.

In increments of 25 years, the following lodges will celebrate anniversaries the next

three years. If your lodge isn’t listed here, consider observing your its anniversary in a shorter annual increment.

2008

Omadi No. 5, South Sioux City (150)
 Plattsmouth No. 6, Plattsmouth (150)
 Oakland No. 91, Oakland (125)
 Bennett No. 94, Lincoln (125)
 Garfield No. 95, O’Neill (125)

Utica No. 96, Utica (125)
Euclid No. 97, Weeping Water (125)
Waterloo No. 102, Elkhorn (125)
Ord No. 103, Ord (125)
Wymore No. 104, Wymore (125)
Porter No. 106, Loup City (125)
Table Rock No. 108, Table Rock (125)
Pomegranate No. 110, Ashland (125)
DeWitt No. 111, DeWitt (125)
Springfield No. 112, Springfield (125)
Franklin No. 264, Franklin (100)
Robert W. Furnas No. 265, Scottsbluff
(100)
George Lininger No. 268, Omaha (100)

2009

Wisner No. 114, Wisner (125)
North Bend No. 119, North Bend (125)
Wayne No. 120, Wayne (125)
Superior No. 121, Superior (125)
Stromsburg No. 126, Stromsburg (125)
Guide Rock No. 128, Guide Rock (125)

2010

Scribner No. 132, Scribner (125)
Solar No. 134, Clarks (125)
McCook No. 135, McCook (125)
Long Pine No. 136, Long Pine (125)

Grand Master's Goals for Lodges in 2008

M.W. Grand Master Reg Kuhn has encouraged all Nebraska lodges to participate in the following programs this year:

- **Who Are You?** Each lodge is to develop a mission statement which answers the question, "Who are you?" by considering its core values, and putting those values in words. Lodges will soon receive information to help in this process. At Annual Communication next year, the mission statements will be displayed about the lodge room.
- **Building Maintenance.** Four, \$1,000 grants will be presented

to lodges to make improvements on their lodge buildings. To be eligible, a lodge must raise at least \$750 of new funds to support either Masonic youth programs, such as CHIP, our youth groups, the band camp, or a youth program in the local community. Recipients of the grants will be selected from the applicants.

- **Ritual Work.** The Grand Master challenges each lodge to ensure its ritual is done in the best possible manner. He urges everyone to double their efforts to maintain and improve the quality of the ritual.

What's Going On in Your Lodge?

Ideas That Work provides activity ideas for your lodge's annual calendar of events.

Its success also is dependent on you to send activity ideas to share with other lodges. What may seem commonplace to you, because your lodge has held an event for many years, may be new to someone else. If it's working for your lodge, please send it to us. Write a one paragraph

summary and send it to: michelle@gln.org or mail it to the Grand Lodge Office at: 1240 No. 10th St., Lincoln, NE 68501-1852. If additional information is needed, we'll call.

This newsletter will be sent to you as often as we have ideas. It will take you only a few minutes, but it could help our fraternity across the state. Thanks for your help.

Past *Ideas That Work* Are on Grand Lodge Web Site

To ensure the information in *Ideas That Work* is available in the future, the tips and issues of this publication can be found on the Grand Lodge Web site at: <http://www.gln.org/Ideas.aspx>.