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### **Community Programs**

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## **COMMUNITY AWARENESS**

Anyone who turns on a television set, picks up a magazine or reads a newspaper these days cannot help but be immediately struck by the overwhelming number of social ills that inflict our society. Here is but a very brief list:

### **Hunger**

Nearly 2 million Americans are malnourished; an alarming number of our fellow citizens (many of them children) are dependent on emergency food just to survive.

### **Homelessness:**

According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, approximately 3 million Americans spend their nights in shelters or on the streets; sadly 25% of all homeless are children.

### **Illiteracy:**

Basic illiteracy is growing in America. The Literacy Volunteers of New York estimate that there are currently 27 million English-illiterate Americans over the age of 17.

### **Drugs:**

According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse, nearly one in eight Americans (nearly 30 million people) used drugs in the past 30 days. Over \$10 billion a month is spent on illegal drugs; drug-related crime is now responsible for well over 50% of all crimes committed in America.

You would think that when confronted with these seemingly insurmountable social ills, Americans would throw up their hands in despair. Instead, a growing number of citizens are raising their hands and volunteering to reduce or eliminate these ills.

We realize that these problems do not just belong to the government; they are everybody's problems. And, if we are to survive as a free and civilized society, then every individual and institution must play a role in combating them.

## **WHAT PART DO YOU INTEND TO PLAY?**

### **Selecting a Project:**

**IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GET INVOLVED!** You have a good understanding of the critical issues which our nation faces. You're acquainted with the many organizations and volunteer groups that are actively involved in our communities. Now that you've decided to make a Lodge commitment to do

volunteer work, what do you do?

The first thing you should do is find an issue that interests you ... one that you really care about. It doesn't have to be an issue of major international significance, like solving world hunger or eradicating drug abuse. It can be something on a far smaller scale; something as simple as tutoring a student from a local school; calling on an elderly, sick, or lonely individual in your hometown, or holding a garage sale and donating the proceeds to charity.

But whatever project you choose, you should be mindful of one thing: You are volunteering because YOU want to, not just because everyone else is doing it.

Here is a brief checklist of questions you might ask yourself during the decision-making process.

How much time can I put aside for volunteer work?

Where would like to work?

Little or no time

A few hours a day

By myself, on a one-to-one basis

Weekends only

In an established organization

A few hours a week

A few hours a month

What skills can I bring to volunteer work?

What problem areas would I like to concentrate on?

Athletic ability

Musical ability

Teaching skills

Legal skills

Medical skills

Clerical skills

Artistic ability

Counseling skills

Homelessness

Hunger

Illiteracy

AIDS

Child abuse

Teenage pregnancy

The environment

Aging citizens

### **Ten Easy Steps to Community Service:**

If we were to provide a single piece of advice, more important than any other, it would be: Please don't try to convince your members to work for any Lodge-supported voluntary organization, no matter how lofty its goals, unless they're totally convinced that its right for them.

1. Familiarize yourself with the most pressing social issues facing our nation (your local community) today.

2. Determine the volunteer work currently being done by others in your community.
3. Find an issue that really interests you.
4. Ask yourself a few questions: How much time do you have to give? What are your skills? Why are you volunteering?
5. Next, contact a Volunteer Center or United Way Chapter for more information.
6. Discuss your community service skills and requirements with these volunteer experts.
7. Next, call the community service organization in your area. Set up an interview, see what these experts recommend.
8. Read about the organization ahead of time. At the interview ask as many questions as necessary.
9. Do not make a snap decision; go home and think about it. If you feel comfortable with the organization... volunteer!
10. If you prefer to do “free-lance” community service rather than work within an established organization, do it.

### **Volunteering on a “Free-lance” Basis:**

Maybe the volunteer organizations in your neighborhood don't match your particular needs or interests. Or maybe you're just the kind of person who likes to go his own way, without being tied down to any one voluntary group or organization.

If that's the case, you can still play a vital and direct role in community problem solving. How? By striking out on your own! But before you do, make sure you have an attainable set of goals in mind.

Be imaginative but realistic; don't tackle a problem that's too big or complex for you to handle. Pick an area where you are sure you can make a definite difference. That way you'll be more apt to stick with it.

The number of areas upon which you can focus your efforts are virtually limitless. Here are just a few ideas to help you get started on your way.

- Collect old clothes within your neighborhood and help distribute them

to the poor and homeless.

- Help an illiterate child or adult discover the joys of reading.
- Go grocery shopping for a sick or physically or mentally challenged neighbor.
- Visit the local nursing home on a regular basis to cheer up the patients.
- Shovel snow or rake leaves for an elderly/infirm neighbor.
- Contribute fresh vegetables from your garden to the hungry in your hometown, or clip coupons and give them to poor families.
- Get actively involved in your community's recycling program.
- Buy toys for poor children with the money you get from deposits on cans and bottles.

NOTE: Whatever you do, the effort will be appreciated. Be sure to "report" your efforts to the Lodge Community Service Programs Committee Chairman so that the information can be consolidated and passed on to the District Deputy Grand Master (DDGM) and the District Masonic Awareness Chairman.

### **Planning for Success:**

The purpose of this section is to walk you through the basic steps of planning a community-oriented event. This event can be one of your Lodge's forthcoming programs or a district-wide project such as a Child ID Clinic or a testimonial dinner to honor a civic leader.

The rewards of good planning and team building are an eminently successful event. You'll find that the amount of written detail required during the planning process is directly related to the complexity of the event and the resources (both human and hardware) required for the event itself.

The completed plan must be constantly reviewed during execution to determine if satisfactory progress is being made and to ensure that problems are identified early. Allowing a planned activity to "drag-out" beyond its original estimated completion time can often jeopardize the overall strategy.

### **A Recipe for Effective Planning:**

- a. Describe the event verbally to your committee during the team

building process in sufficient detail that they can clearly understand the scope of the proposed effort. If you don't clarify it for them, they will not be able to help you attain your goals.

- b. Together, select a date and time for the event. Take into consideration other potential conflicting Masonic/non-Masonic events planned for the same time frame.
- c. Brainstorm and list at least 1 thing to do which must be accomplished to prepare for the event.

Examples: Establish the date; determine the meeting place; engage a speaker; contract the caterer; print tickets; mail invitations to dignitaries; determine the master of ceremonies; prepare a notice for your members; develop and print the program; invite other Lodges and Masonic affiliated organizations; commit (and brief) the minister or member who will give the invocation.

- d. Decide which of these listed activities depend upon the completion of another activity.

Examples: Can you print the program before you select the speaker? Can you develop a seating chart for the dinner before you receive acceptances from your dignitaries?

- e. Estimate how long each activity should take, and work backwards from the date of the event to establish starting and completion dates for each one.
- f. Prepare a written plan. Review your draft; check each step to ensure things "fit-together." Adjust as necessary.
- g. Identify "critical areas;" that is-items which must happen or be in place in a timely fashion. Determine those key factors which will present themselves that will alert you to consider an alternative route to get to your destination.
- h. Now to the tough parts:
  - 1. Identify individual members who are able, or more importantly willing, to perform each of the activities you have listed above.
  - 2. Review the activity with each participant and get his reaction to your time estimates. Adjust as necessary to be sure the plan will work.

3. Finally impress upon your volunteers the importance of keeping everything on schedule.
4. You now have a comprehensive plan. It remains for you to “conduct” the operation like a band leader, getting input from each member of the team as to their progress, in order to ensure that nothing “falls through the cracks.”

**Follow-Through Requirements:**

This exercise is tried-and-true; it applies equally to every community service project or any other program undertaken by you for your Lodge. Please, review it periodically; go over the steps of procedure in your mind. The smallest details are vital. Contingency plans must be available for implementation, just in case something goes wrong. Finally, do a “postmortem” review for every program. Prepare a lessons learned notebook. It will be invaluable for the next chairman, whenever that particular project is tried again.

Lodge programs should be carefully selected for their perceived usefulness and value to the community in which we live.

The lessons learned or creative methods developed through your local experimentation could serve as a valuable resource to others. Please send a description of your innovations or implementation strategies to the editor of the *Blue Pages* or leave them on the web page at [www.glmasons-mass.org](http://www.glmasons-mass.org).

## COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

### Establish a Masonic Angel Fund™ Program

#### Concept

The Masonic Angel Fund™ provides modest assistance to needy children who do not fit the criteria for usual social-service programs.

#### Overview

The Masonic Angel Fund is a Masonic charity that is becoming very popular with Lodges throughout the state. Founded in 1998 by Universal Lodge of Orleans, MA, it is becoming licensed by Lodges in many communities. In July, 2000, it achieved “foundation” status with the incorporation as the Masonic Angel Fund, Inc., and is a federal 501(c)(3) charitable entity.

Specific local funding generally comes from Brethren themselves. A “typical” donor does not normally attend Lodge but wishes to support this child-oriented community program. Additional local fund-raising is permitted and national grant funding opportunities are available.

The Angel Fund's primary mission is to provide modest assistance to needy children who do not fit the criteria for the usual social service programs. Such assistance might be to provide a pair of glasses, a coat, shoes, field trip fees, or minor health services. Applications for assistance are fulfilled via confidential requests from local elementary school principals and school nurses.

The cornerstone of this program is that all screening of potential recipients is done at the local school level by school personnel. A licensed Angel Foundation chapter is deliberately removed from the face-to-face contact with the client population. Not only does this keep the Brethren away from any potential exposure that is attendant with such personal contact, it empowers the local school personnel to do their jobs more effectively because they know the Masons are totally behind them.

What sets this endeavor apart from most others is the ability to respond to these special emergencies in a very timely manner of receiving a request. This further enhances the Masonic reputation as a “can-do” organization.

The primary benefit to Lodges is an increase in community awareness as significant services are provided to local children. A secondary benefit is the unification of a Lodges' membership by focusing on a common goal. Non

## **Sponsor a Halloween “Haunted House” to Benifit Local Chatity**

### Concept

A Lodge or District organizes a safe Halloween program for the youth of their community which financially benefits one or more local charities.

### Overview

The Barre 13th District has sponsored a very successful “Haunted House” program annually since 1998. With the entrance fees being accepted either as cash or a donation of nonperishable food items, hundreds of new faces came through the protals of the Lodge. Over \$300 was donated to the local Cancer Fund and over 700 food items were donated to the local food pantry.

### Implementation Guidelines

1. Appoint a general program chairman
2. Form working committees to cover various aspects of the program
  - a. Site selection
  - b. Layout, Props, and Materials
  - c. Finance (Budget and Resources)
  - d. Refreshments
  - e. Charity selection
  - f. Staffing and schedules
  - g. Publicity
3. Arrange for necessary community support personnel.

## **Sponsor a “Seniors” Thanksgiving or Christmas Dinner**

### Concept

Honor your community's senior citizens with a free Holiday Dinner

### Overview

The Lodge solicits donations from local businesses and hosts the dinner at the Lodge or other location such as a high school cafeteria. In the case of Mount Zion Lodge, the high school cafeteria manager donates his time preparing a meal while the wait staff is provided by the local Rainbow Assembly. Entertainment is provided for all in attendance; but what had added a slightly different twist is the Lodge takes over the “Meals-on-Wheels” Program for the day and makes the days' deliveries to those homebound in full tuxedo! This makes for quite the reception by those receiving the services.

### Implementation Guidelines

1. Contact local Senior Citizen Agency, Housing Organizations, Churches
2. Solicit donations from local businesses
3. Arrange for meal preparation and servers
4. Arrange for entertainment
5. Arrange for transportation
6. Arrange for community support staff

## **Recognize Youth for their Community Service efforts**

### Concept

Select and Honor one or more youth from your city or town for their contribution to the community.

### Overview

Orient Lodge in Norwood is celebrating over thirty years of recognizing Norwood residents in grades 9 thru 12 by awarding them with a T.O.N.Y. (Ten Outstanding Norwood Youth) Award. Any individual over 21 years of age and not a blood relative may nominate any Norwood youth who has made significant contributions of time, effort and talent in volunteerism, church/synagogue or other charitable causes. The program seeks not only to honor those individuals but also to feature them as positive role models to younger students in the community.

After nominations are received in November, All T.O.N.Y. Award nominees are invited to a banquet at the Lodge Hall in Norwood every January. The ten recipients receive a citation from the governor, a U.S. Savings Bond and a special plaque.

Local businesses assist as sponsors and are listed in the event program and with the press releases.

This is a program which is very easily adaptable by any Lodge for their town and as Orient Lodge can attest, make them and Masonry very visible in their community.

### Implementation Guidance

1. Contact local schools, churches and other community agencies and provide them with details of the award program and nomination process.
2. Arrange for general community publicity
3. Solicit support from area businesses
4. Arrange for banquet and recognition ceremony

## **Establish Escort Service for Hospital Day-Stay Patients**

### Concept

Establish a group of volunteer Masons to work at a local hospital outpatient or day-stay facility.

### Overview

Your local hospital has several opportunities for individuals to volunteer a few hours of time each week. Duties can range from serving as a messenger between various departments to assisting and escorting patients to and from day-stay and outpatient treatment areas. By filling these positions as a group, you and the hospital mutually benefit. Essential services for the patient are met, you as the volunteer receive the personal satisfaction of serving your neighbors, and your lodge and our fraternity gain the recognition as a caring organization within the community.

### Implementation Guidance

1. Contact your local hospital's volunteer office to determine specific needs.
2. Promote the program within area lodges
3. Make personal contacts to retiree members of your lodge to solicit volunteers
4. Make arrangements for your group to have jackets and/or name tags showing both the volunteers name and the fraternity.

## **Establish a Chapel Escort Service for Veterans Hospital**

### Concept

Provide a means of getting patients to church services each week at a local Veterans Hospital.

### Overview

Solicit volunteers from area lodges and districts to serve as escorts to wheel patients to and from religious services at your local Veterans Hospital. This program has been in existence at the VA Hospital in Leeds, MA for over fifteen years. Every Sunday morning a group of volunteers from area districts meet at the local hospital, visit with residents and escort those who wish to attend church services at the hospital chapel. This program assists the hospital staff, allows the volunteer an opportunity to show appreciation to these veterans who served our country, provides brothers with further opportunity to develop friendships between lodges, and promotes a positive image of freemasonry to the local community.

### Implementation Guidance

1. Contact local Veterans Hospital to discuss volunteer opportunities and needs.
2. Contact area lodges to solicit teams of volunteers
3. Establish a schedule to spread the assignments out over time. Perhaps each team would be responsible for one Sunday every other month.

Masons may become new members as they are attracted to the activity and encouraged to assist a Lodge in working for a common purpose in their community.

### Implementation Guidance

The Masonic Angel Foundation, Inc. has prepared an information kit which should answer most of your questions about the Masonic Angel Fund™ program. The Foundation staff is most eager to answer your inquiries and to work with you in establishing the program in your area.

To request an Information Kit or other information, please contact the Masonic Angel Foundation, Inc., P. O. Box 1389, Orleans, MA 02356, by e-mail at [info@masonicangelfund.org](mailto:info@masonicangelfund.org), or their web site at [www.masonicangelfund.org](http://www.masonicangelfund.org).

## **Multiple Sclerosis Society Support**

### Concept:

The Lodge provides personnel resources to help supply the services required by the Society. It could range from soliciting funds, answering the telephone, and stuffing envelopes to providing security and assistance during a scheduled event.

### Overview:

There are hundreds of thousands of people who suffer the ravages of the disease identified as Multiple Sclerosis (MS). This debilitating disease knows no bounds. It strikes children and adults alike. Treatment is an on going, hands-on process consisting of intense physical therapy and medication. To provide both treatments, the MS Society relies exclusively on funds donated by fraternal organizations, corporate sponsors, and the general public.

The MS Society sponsors many fund raising events during the year. For example, every year, during early spring, they sponsor a public Walk-A-Thon and can use our assistance in all phases of this project. Their principle resource is voluntary assistance.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Chairman to coordinate the effort.
2. Contact the MS Society. The local chapter is listed in the telephone directory.
3. Determine the specific kind of help that Lodge members could provide.
4. Identify the local resources necessary to assure success. Involve everyone. Don't forget the ladies or our youth organizations. Try to make it an all-hands event.
5. A sufficient number of willing volunteer workers can enthusiastically provide the reliable services needed. You will have an opportunity to meet many interesting people.

## **Adopt-A-Highway**

Concept:

Keep Massachusetts beautiful; save state and county roadway maintenance funds by volunteering to “adopt” a highway.

Overview:

The Lodge agrees to clear approximately two miles of selected highway of litter for two years. A sign which bears the name of the Lodge will be placed at the ends of their adopted section of highway.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Contact the local Massachusetts Highways Office (D. P. W. ) for an information packet. If the number of the local office is not known, call the Highway Office Headquarters in Boston at 1-617-973-7500.
2. Their information packet contains a letter which explains the conditions of the program, permit application, plus a brochure describing the program and safety tips to follow. There is also information on recycling trash, particularly glass and aluminum. Also included is a pickup report card, which is used to keep records on the program’s progress.
3. Litter pickup will be done on both sides of the highway once a month from April to November. In return, Mass Highways will erect a sign promoting your Lodge at each end of your two-mile stretch of highway.
4. At the end of the two-year period, the Lodge will receive recognition for the work, and may renew their adoption or take another section.

NOTE: Recycling of aluminum cans found along your roadway may be used as a way of raising funds for your Lodge charity fund.

## **Child, Reading-Tutor Program**

### Concept:

Reading skills are among the fundamental tools that youngsters need to be successful and share the American dream of well-educated and fit citizens able to function in the work force and contribute to our society.

### Overview:

Masons, along with other community leaders, are sensitive to youth problems-school dropouts, deficiencies in basic skills, drug abuse, etc. Many of our nation's youth are not well equipped with the basic reading skills they need. We can help provide them with the fundamental tools necessary to be successful.

This project is equally as suitable for implementation District-wide, on the Lodge level or for our members on an individual basis. Please encourage them to consider forming a Partnership in Education Program with a school district or a particular school. It will provide our members with an unequalled opportunity to contribute something meaningful to the community. The program helps to enrich the community's future employable resources and has a positive impact through role model identification.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a local Lodge/District Partner in Education project chairman.
2. Have the chairman contact the local school principal or school board member. Explain that you are inter interested in assisting by providing tutors (either during school hours or after school).
3. Through the teaching staff, the principal will provide students who need personal attention. The school also will provide the textbooks.
4. We can provide the caring individuals to participate. It will take as little as one hour a week, at a time mutually convenient to both the student and the tutor, to transform a child's future.

## **Assist Local Conservation Groups With Stream Bank Cleanup**

### Concept:

The Lodge members assist in this important program by providing the manpower to clean and restore stream banks, take water samples for acid rain surveys and participation in other ongoing projects.

### Overview:

Many people now realize that pollution, (air, water, and land), is one of the greatest problems of today. Pollution is caused by ignorance, apathy or greed. Education and legislation can combat some of the problems, but conservation and restoration are necessary now.

Local conservation groups, such as the Massachusetts Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited Chapters, and local fish & game clubs, to name a few, are involved in keeping our rivers and streams clean. Many have “Adopt-A-Stream” programs which are similar in nature to the “Adopt-A-Highway” program.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee chairman to manage the project.
2. Contact the local groups to see how the resources of the Lodge can best be used. You can find some game and fishing clubs through your local bait and tackle shops or through the State Fisheries, Wildlife & Environmental Law Department by calling (617)727-3151.
3. Notify the members of the Lodge of the importance of the project and request their help.
4. Organize a local program which uses the skills of each participating member.
5. Review the Public Relations manual. Take action photographs of Lodge members assisting with projects. Prepare suitable press releases.

## **Adopt-A-Field**

### Concept:

The Adopt-A-Field Program will allow local Masonic Lodges (and youth organizations) to assist in field maintenance on a long-term, continuing basis.

### Overview:

Hundreds of parks and playing fields have no full-time employees. These public areas are used by individuals and groups for ball games, family outings, office parties and other onetime, unscheduled events. Park authorities want groups like ours to adopt and care for a small park or playing field to supplement their scarce resources.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee and a committee chairman to manage, oversee and coordinate the project.
2. Adopters are able to choose their level of responsibility, depending upon their resources and what they believe they are qualified to do. This may range from litter control and raking infields to inspecting fences and mowing the grass.
3. Contact your local, County, or State Park Department representative. They are listed in the phone directory under various headings dependent upon where you live. Request an application and list of available locations. Various names that the park authority may be listed under include:
  - a. Department of Recreation and Community Service
  - b. Agriculture Information Center
  - c. Park Maintenance
  - d. Park Authority-Facility Operations Division
4. Park authorities can provide the equipment, information and any necessary technical advice. Get together a group that enjoys working out of doors and start today.

## **Charity Bike-A-Thon**

### Concept:

Every year, several national societies sponsor fund raising efforts such as Bike-A-Thons to help defray the enormous cost of providing patient care. They cannot carry the fund-raising burden alone. They need support and assistance of the general public.

### Overview:

The Lodge provides people to work doing the myriad chores that the group cannot provide alone during the event.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman to spearhead the project and establish a small committee to research those organizations which conduct Bike-A-Thons that may need our help. An impressive list is as close as your phone book.
2. Have the society define their needs. Find out how you can help to support their efforts. This might even lend itself to a stated meeting presentation.
3. Choose those things that are within the capabilities of your available resources.
4. Do not overlook your youth groups, your ladies, and interested neighbors.
5. If a Bike-A-Thon is not now locally scheduled by any organization; contact a neighborhood bicycle club or bike rental agency. Discuss the possibility of a joint sponsorship venture with them.

## Christmas in April

### Concept:

Establish an annual event in your Lodge or District to improve the lives of some elderly, physically or mentally challenged, or needy local resident(s) in a special way. The list of recipients or beneficiaries could include local day-care centers or adult group homes that may need painting and plastering, or work on electrical wiring, locks, windows, faulty stoves, broken stairs, or leaky plumbing.

### Overview:

The idea began in Midland, Texas in 1973 when a group of volunteers decided to devote one day in spring to repair or spruce up the homes of their low income or older neighbors who were not able to do the necessary work. After the first day, one resident of a repaired home told a volunteer, “Why, this is just like getting Christmas in April” and the name stuck.

This project is ideal for an organization like ours. It provides a yearlong focused activity for those with management organizational skills such as fund-raising and coordination to do-their-thing, while it only requires the majority of the members for short-term commitments of their time and talents.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Identify and name a management coordinating committee.
2. Compile a list of potential recipients. Churches, synagogues, local welfare agencies, and/or our own members are a good source for leads.
3. Identify resources needed. Budget (\$), volunteer technical skills, building materials necessary to do the job(s), possibly a restaurant or two to donate a lunch for the volunteers or a group picnic at the end of the day.
4. Develop Logistics Plans (schedules and dates).
  - a. Fund raising
  - b. Donations of building materials
  - c. Transportation for volunteers and materials
  - d. Site clean up
5. Take “before” and “after” pictures and action photos of the work in progress as a keepsake for your Lodge’s scrapbook and for their possible publicity value.

## **Feed the Homeless**

### Concept:

The homeless lack more than just a roof over their heads. The lack of a home carries with it the lost ability to prepare one's daily meals. The Lodge can serve as a significant source of manpower and resources to help feed this needy and frequently overlooked segment of our populace.

### Overview:

Homelessness, a socioeconomic problem that has been made more publicly noticeable in recent years, is not a new problem, nor is it one that suggests a quick, readily achievable solution. It will be with us for a long time. While legislators and sociologists debate cause and effect, real people are out there, trying to survive on our streets. Some people cannot find shelter, others will not accept it. For many, the kindest act of brotherly love that we can offer would be a nutritious, satisfying meal.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Provide a holiday meal for the homeless. Open the Lodge to those persons in need, no questions asked, and provide an Easter, Thanksgiving, or Christmas dinner with "all the trimmings." Obtain commitments from members to support this project in any of several ways: purchasing/contributing food and supplies, preparing food, setting up, serving and clean up.
2. If the location of the Lodge, time, and resources of the members permit, consider opening the Lodge on certain days (on a fixed, publicly known schedule) to provide a simple, nutritious lunch for the homeless.
3. Do not overlook the possibility of cooperative ventures with other fraternal organizations, churches, or community agencies. The combined resources of such ventures can provide a valuable lifesaving service for our homeless that no one organization could sustain unassisted.
4. Confer with your insurance carrier and local Health Department for guidance regarding liability for food handling and food service activities.

## **Support an Established Soup Kitchen**

### Concept:

The Lodge, through the combined talents and economic resources of its members, as the ability to provide manpower, food, and funds to support the activities of a local soup kitchen. Such an act of outreach for charity is public evidence of the principles taught within the Lodge.

### Overview:

In many of our communities, the homeless and the indigent receive basic levels of daily nutrition through the efforts of established soup kitchens. The vital service performed by these entities is made possible by thousands of hours of volunteer manpower and a constant inflow of donated or pensively obtained foodstuffs.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Establish a committee and appoint a chairman to research the possibility of implementing this activity.
2. While many soup kitchens welcome individual volunteers, the greatest assistance to such organizations (and the most visible demonstration of Masonic involvement) occurs when a Lodge commits itself to the preparation of one or more meals on a fixed, recurring basis, e. g. , dinner on the same night each week or all lunches during one week each month.
3. Establish a collection center in the Lodge for canned or nonperishable items which will stock the pantry of a local soup kitchen.
4. Solicit contributions, or discounted sales of fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, and baked goods from representatives of the food service or grocery industry.
5. Allocate a portion of the Lodge's charitable funds each year to the support of the soup kitchen.

## **Grant A Wish**

### Concept:

Terminally ill children need uplifting experiences to take their minds and thoughts off their tragic personal situations.

### Overview

Each child has a fantasy, a special daydream to do something completely out of the ordinary; to visit someplace special they dreamed about but never really expected to see; to do something distinctive, something truly spectacular. By catering to that very special desire, you will fulfill these special children and help satisfy their dreams.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Lodge project coordinator who should be particularly sensitive to the needs of terminally ill children and their families.
2. Research to identify such children.
3. Prepare a list of possible donors to finance specific projects.
4. Identify other financial assistance sources.
5. Contact destination for clearance, and any special arrangements.
6. There is a national organization already at work on just such projects as these for you to contact for particulars. Write: Make A Wish Foundation, 99 Bedford Street, Boston, MA or phone: (617) 451-9474.

## Join the War on Drugs

### Concept:

It is our goal, together with the support of every other interested citizens group, to reduce the level of illegal drug use in America.

### Overview:

Our children are at risk, job performance has suffered in our work places, and America has a long way to go to reach its goal of a drug-free environment. If we want to be successful in keeping drugs out of our schools and neighborhoods, we must begin in earnest to mobilize individual citizens, local governments, and other organizations like ours. Masons couldn't ask for a more important challenge.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Become knowledgeable; become armed with the (disturbing) facts. Invite federal, state, or local experts in the field of drug prevention, treatment or enforcement to your Lodge for Stated Meeting presentations. Discuss the matter among yourselves. Become strong, vocal advocates of the National Drug Control Program Strategy.
2. Invite Masonic youth organizations to the Lodge for a workshop or a round table discussion of the drug problem. Have a local expert in attendance to answer questions. The Masons will learn from our young men and women the things that are bothering them as a group and also be able to show them that we truly care. The workshops will help us become better focused on specific things that can and should be done in our local community. Develop a game plan and take action on the things you've learned.
3. Initiate a poster contest at the local schools with a savings bond for the winner that best captures the general theme in an original way. Arrange for local food markets or other public places to showcase the children's handiwork (even those which are not selected as "winners"). Request the local newspaper to publish outstanding entries.
4. On an individual level, speak with a local politician, youth group, or fellow Mason about drug use in America. If we each discuss our concerns with just five people, think of the impact we Masons can have.

## Paint a Church

### Concept:

Identify a church which may lack adequate resources to pay the huge labor costs for painters. A group of Masons from the local area could band together and perform this task in the name of Freemasonry.

### Overview:

Although Masonry is not a religion, the reliance on deity is one of the cornerstones of the Fraternity. Providing assistance to a church to enhance its external image can provide a significant benefit to the church and community. A Masonic Lodge or group of Lodges could organize and provide the labor and other resources necessary to help beautify the community by painting the church.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman. Select a member of the Lodge who is a painter, or at least a good manager. Together with the chairman, select church sites which are in the greatest need.
2. Determine with the church officials the local availability of ladders, brushes, rollers, scrapers, and other equipment required to complete the task. Have the church leaders determine the base and trim colors desired.
3. The Lodge can use one or a combination of the following methods to obtain the paint and additional equipment or supplies required.
  - a. Provided by the church
  - b. Solicited as a donation from local businesses
  - c. Provided by a Lodge member, or other individual
  - d. Provided by the Lodge through a special fund raising activity
4. Organize the manpower, equipment, supplies and paint to be available on a specified day. If scraping is required first, two groups on two separate days are recommended.
5. Arrange to have the local media present during the painting. This includes newspapers, radio, television, etc.

## **Meals-on-Wheels**

### Concept:

The Lodge could organize its members to provide fund raising, administrative and/or delivery services to an existing, Meals on Wheels program or establish a new program, if none exists locally.

### Overview:

The elderly, the infirm, and convalescent can receive a hot meal for lunch everyday and a cold meal which can be eaten at supper time. This service permits many older people, who otherwise would have to be placed in nursing homes, to remain independent years longer, and to help persons who are essentially bedridden, recovering from illness or accidents.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. The project Coordinator would contact the local Meals-on-Wheels organization (look in the phone book or call the County Agency on Aging) to determine what assistance is needed. Generally, there are administrative tasks, such as adding and removing people from the list, assessing meal needs, planning routes, scheduling volunteers, and keeping records. There are also delivery volunteers who pick up the meals from hospitals, schools or food services and deliver them to individuals being assisted.
2. We can assist by delivering meals as infrequently as once every two weeks or even once a month, or donate a couple of hours a day to do some of the administrative work. The Lodge coordinator would prepare a roster of the members willing to help maintain liaison with the local Meals-on-Wheels organization.
3. Recipients pay \$20-\$25 per week for the meals; costs vary by geographic areas. If the recipients cannot afford to pay, they may be entitled to public assistance. Nevertheless, there often is a need for additional funds to assist the Meals-on-Wheels program. The Lodge coordinator can organize a fund raising effort within the Lodge or within the local community to solicit contributions for the program.
4. If no Meals-on-Wheels program exists in your community, the County Agency on Aging can put you in touch with a neighboring program and help you organize Meals-on-Wheels in you area.

## Travelers' Waystop

### Concept:

A Lodge can arrange with the appropriate authorities to establish a Travelers' Waystop on holiday weekends.

### Overview:

A safe place for travelers to stop for a cup of coffee and a few cookies may save lives and will be very rewarding to those who participate. This place is particularly helpful during weekends and holiday periods when rest stops assist drowsy drivers to keep alert.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Obtain official approval for the use of a convenient, heavily visited road stop.
2. Negotiate with a local food supplier and/or grocery store to provide the coffee, sugar, cups, lids, cream, doughnuts, cookies, etc. In addition, or in lieu of the doughnuts, wives of Lodge members may be requested to donate home-baked cookies.
3. Select an enthusiastic Lodge member to organize and manage the project.
4. Arrange a duty schedule with adequate Lodge members, wives, and youth group volunteers to properly operate the facility. This will include at least the provision of trash facilities, tables, tents (if no covered area is easily available), chairs, heaters (if weather is cool), one or more persons to pickup the supplies, adequate clean water, and extension cords (if electric supply is not close).
5. Significant advance publicity is a major requirement. Be sure very specific directions are provided so that motorists passing through the area can find the location easily.
6. As a security measure, have the location adequately staffed. Also, make advance arrangements for very frequent stops by local city, county and state police and sheriff's department officers. If possible, a volunteer uniformed officer on duty all times is recommended.
7. Place signs, as large as will be permitted by local custom and law, at locations to encourage travelers to "stop by" for a cup of coffee.

## **Transportation Clearinghouse**

### Concept:

The Lodge provides a limited amount of transportation services, for example, on Saturday or Sunday or on one or more nights during the week.

### Overview:

Senior citizens by reasons of safety or finances stop driving; some do not have the vision or the necessary reflexes; some cannot afford the cost of a car. Many of these people cannot afford the cost of a taxi and may be unable to use public transportation. What they need on a periodic basis is door-to-door transportation for medical care, grocery and other personal shopping. The Lodge, in coordination with a senior citizens residence house or a social service agency, establishes a program to provide such assistance.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint one Lodge member as transportation coordinator. The coordinator will contact a local senior citizen residence house or a social service agency to work out details.
2. The coordinator will get commitments from members and their families who are willing to be drivers. A person, for example, might be able to provide only four hours of driving service every fourth Saturday. Once a number of volunteers have been recruited, the Lodge coordinator will work with his counterpart at the residence or agency to establish a transportation schedule which links volunteers and their passengers.
3. Drivers must ensure that Lodge insurance, and their own personal automobile policies or insurance coverage available to the residence or the agency will cover them and their passengers in case of accident.
4. Volunteer drivers may not be able to accommodate some physically or mentally challenged persons needing extraordinary assistance unless special vehicles are provided by the residence or agency.

## **Collect Books For the Local Library**

### Concept:

Establish a program to encourage Lodge members, and their families and friends to bring new and used books to the Lodge. The books collected are delivered to the local library at appropriate times to support book sales.

### Overview:

Many library systems do not have sufficient funds available to purchase new books, magazines and other materials. They supplement their collections and their budget with books donated by local residents. The library staff surveys the donated books and may add some of them to the collection. The remaining books are sold to the public at library book sales. Money earned at these sales is used to buy new books, periodicals, and to support library functions.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. The Lodge project chairman contacts the library public information office to obtain information about book sale dates and procedures.
2. To ensure the continued collection of books, the chairman may set up a book drop outside the Lodge and can organize a weekly program to solicit donations.
3. In addition, some weeks before the books are needed at the library to be sorted and priced for sale, the chairman should organize a special drive to collect books. This drive should include publicity to encourage local residents to bring their old books to the Lodge on the Saturday before they are to be delivered to the library. Not only is this a useful way to obtain books, but it can help the local residents become more familiar with the Lodge and its members.

## **Sponsor a Race/Marathon**

### Concept:

The Masonic Fraternity recognizes the need within the community to provide for its less fortunate citizens. The Lodge could be the catalyst to raise the money by sponsoring a race or marathon.

### Overview:

The Lodge undertakes to provide the impetus to obtain personnel and financial resources to organize the event.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Chairman willing to coordinate the effort. Impress upon him the need to start developing plans many months in advance.
2. Determine what kind of help the members can offer; put them to work.
3. Don't forget the ladies and the youth organizations; be sure to make them an integral part of the entire effort (including the planning phase).
4. Contact city hall to obtain the necessary permits and clearance documentation.
5. Involve both the police and fire departments. They're always agreeable to help with such things as safety and traffic control.
6. Canvass the local community and in suburbs. Obtain a commitment from local merchants to sponsor one or more runners. Contact schools, churches and other community organizations such as the Rotary and Lions Clubs.
7. With the hearty cooperation of your Lodge members, ladies, youth groups, and the local neighborhood, you will have created a sense of camaraderie within your community. You will meet many interesting and talented people, and will have opened another door toward improved community relations.

## **Pets for Seniors**

### Concept:

The Lodge could establish a program whereby members with suitable pets take them on regular weekly visits to nursing homes to spend time with selected residents.

### Overview:

Persons living in nursing homes are unable to care for or have pets. Many of these people are without family or close friends; they are lonely and feel unloved. Being able to spend some time with, pet, and cuddle a dog or cat dramatically improves their quality of life.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a program chairman who will contact local nursing homes to find those interested in such a program. The chairman would gather information about types of pets desired, visiting hours and the names of residents who would benefit from pet visits.
2. The chairman should enlist the support of members and their families who have suitable pets. Children may be particularly interested in attendance and the elderly residents are likely to appreciate the children's visits as much as the pets. Visits may be made, for example, once a week or once every two weeks.
3. The chairman should work through the county or state Agency on Aging. Typically, the agency will check the health and temperament of the pet and provide insurance coverage.
4. The chairman should establish a regular schedule of visits and encourage compliance to prevent disappointment due to missed appointments.

## **Sponsor a Special Olympian**

### Concept:

The Lodge sponsors one or more Special Olympians as part of Massachusetts Special Olympics Program created expressly to encourage all developmentally challenged persons to successfully compete in a specially designed athletic program. Typical Special Olympians enjoy training for and participating in the summer games so much that it spills over to everything else that touches their lives throughout the entire year.

### Overview:

The summer track and field events are usually held each year during the first weekend in June. Similar year-round seasonal events are conducted elsewhere. Commemorative, keepsake postcards preprinted with a sponsor's name, are usually tailor-made for each season's games so that the athletes can personally thank their new friends and sponsors. By letting a special athlete share their joy with your Lodge, you will be able to experience the true essence of Special Olympics and the deep meaning it has to people who are usually ignored, passed over, or even shunned.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee to contact the organizers of the Special Olympics to determine how the Lodge can help.

Massachusetts Special Olympics  
450 Maple Street  
Danvers, MA 01923  
or phone: 1-508-774-1501

2. Help to solicit tax deductible gifts to the Massachusetts Special Olympics from your members. A donation will help support an eager Special Olympian for a year. Sponsorship gifts go toward defraying the many costs incurred during competitions such as lodging, transportation, and food.
3. See how else the Lodge or individual members can assist.

## **Sponsor a Little League Sport Team**

### **Concept:**

Organized team sports keep American youngsters mentally alert, physically active and help to develop many desirable social skills in a wholesome and mildly competitive atmosphere. Your Lodge should consider adopting a little league baseball, football, soccer, hockey, basketball, or other local athletic team.

### **Overview:**

Sports leagues and teams can be found in every city, town, and hamlet in every corner of our state. In some geographic areas, certain team sports seem to enjoy a greater popularity and participation than they do in others. But, no matter where you live we've found that the leagues and teams need help. The level of involvement can range from simply providing moral support by watching and rooting for your team as a Masonic family group in the stands, to providing financial support, or by coaching and managing the team. Many Lodges purchase equipment and uniforms for their teams and have their Lodge name printed on the team jerseys.

### **Implementation Guidance:**

1. Consider adopting or sponsoring a team in Lodge. Appoint a committee to research:
  - a. How much this effort will cost.
  - b. Whether the league or city carries liability insurance.
2. Enlist the needed personnel and financial support from the members.
3. The Lodge will be able to help the children both as part of the team and in learning to deal with the problems of life. Masons also will meet the parents who will be exposed to Masonry and Masonic values.

## **Tutor an Immigrant**

### Concept:

Those who are new to our country have a variety of short to intermediate term educational needs. While some of these needs are addressed formally through the educational system, others are best met through one-on-one community-based efforts.

### Overview:

Throughout our nation's history, one aspect of our American dream has been the "melting pot," the mixing of people and cultures, each contributing something, each drawing from the others. The Lodge, long a symbol of stability and respectability in the community, can assist our newest Americans by providing an orientation to their new community.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Consult with your local schools, adult education office and social service agency to determine the types of tutoring needed in the community and the availability of teaching materials.
2. Based on the results of your inquiries, recruit Lodge members who possess the necessary skills. A member with a teaching background might serve as a project coordinator, giving advice on teaching methods and helping the tutors present information in a way that keeps pace with the abilities of the students.
3. Determine the type of tutoring to be undertaken and the most appropriate means of presentation. For example, a "citizenship" course, designed to help candidates for naturalization, might best be given to several students in a classroom style, perhaps in the Lodge room on Saturday mornings. Language skills or other topics which have more individualized needs may best be treated on a one-to-one basis between tutor and student.
4. Use the same offices and agencies mentioned above to publicize the Lodge tutoring program throughout the community.

## **Reading for the Visually Impaired**

### Concept:

Establish a program for Lodge members to read for the blind or visually impaired for a number of hours each month.

### Overview:

Individuals who are blind can learn to function and live productive lives but they do need some help. Volunteers who can read and tape record books and other material, or who can read directly to the visually impaired can make a meaningful contribution to the quality of their lives.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Lodge project coordinator who will contact the Director of Special Education in the local public school system, the Office of Student Affairs at the local college, the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind in Boston at 1-800-392-6556 or the American Foundation for the Blind (1-800-232-5463) to determine where the need exists for volunteer reading services for the visually impaired.
2. Volunteers may be called upon to tape articles and books or to read study material aloud for individual students. Or, they may be requested to visit elderly blind persons at their homes to read their mail, and assist them in answering it.
3. Once the project coordinator has determined where the need for readers exists, he should enlist the support of a number of members who are good readers and have pleasant speaking voices.
4. The coordinator would match available volunteers with people that have special reading needs. Some volunteer readers might better relate to younger children, others to college students, still others to senior citizens. Some volunteers may prefer to work directly with individuals, others may prefer to just tape articles. The particular time of day, convenient to the volunteer, will be a determining factor in assigning a specific member to a certain volunteer assignment.

## **Sponsor an Organ Donor Awareness Program**

### Concept:

The Lodge establishes a program to publicize the organ and tissue donor program, and to encourage members, their families and friends to fill out donor cards. In Massachusetts, the donor card can be completed at the time one obtains a driver's license.

### Overview:

As we say in our memorial service, "notwithstanding the warnings of mortality with which we daily meet, we put from us the thought that we are born to die. Yet, even in death and at no cost to ourselves, we can practice charity and give the gift of life to our fellow man. All we have to do is to sign and execute a organ/tissue donor card. Then, when we die our bones, corneas, heart valves, tendons and cartilage can be used to help others. If we are brain dead, it is possible for our heart, lungs, kidneys, liver and pancreas to be used to bring renewed life to others.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. The Lodge appoints a project chairman who establishes contact with the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles for information about the uniform donor document. He could call the local hospital to determine if there is a local donor organization which provides information, and obtain publicity brochures on the program.
2. The chairman forms a committee, and establishes an annual goal receipt of commitments from a certain number of persons that they will fill out properly witnessed uniform donor cards.
3. The chairman or members of the committee put on one or more programs in open Lodge providing information about the organ and tissue donor program. It also might be possible to invite a prominent doctor, a member of a transplant organization, or a transplant recipient to speak to the Lodge.
4. The chairman and his committee might also put together an interesting presentation and solicit invitations to speak before other organizations about the donor program.

## **Counsel with Battered Women**

### Concept:

Battered women more often carry emotional scars that are far more painful and much less likely to heal than the physical scars. As Masons, we believe in the dignity and worth of every person. We can offer our members' practical and professional skills to help rebuild the lives of those women who have been physically and emotionally abused.

### Overview:

Counseling on a variety of social and practical issues can do much to restore the lost self-esteem of a battered woman and aid in the healing process. Done in cooperation with shelters or social service agencies, such counseling provides a valuable supplement to professional counseling services.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Consult with your local office on abused women to determine the range of programs currently offered. Seek suggestions regarding services that are in demand.
2. Depending upon the skills of your Lodge members, be prepared to offer services which complement those presently available. While the emotional issues faced by battered women are best left to trained professionals, be aware that frequently these women have been so intimidated or dominated that they have no background which would permit them to take charge of their own lives.
3. Many women will need workplace-related skills such as resume preparation and job interview techniques; others may have no understanding of managing their personal financial affairs or such basics as balancing a checkbook. Some will need practical skills such as how to make minor repairs to their automobile or around the home. Any skill that builds self-esteem and produces a practical benefit is a skill worth teaching.
4. Be patient and sensitive in any counseling environment. The one thing that most battered women may not understand is that there are men, such as Masons, who genuinely care about others and see dignity and value in each human life.

## **Public Facility “Locator” for Physically or Mentally Challenged Visitors**

Concept:

One of the important things that physically or mentally challenged visitors and their families require to make their visits to our picturesque state more enjoyable is a compilation of convenient access routes and facilities such as elevators and ramps into local museums, public buildings, the M. B. T. A., or historic sites and the location of public “comfort stations that accommodate wheelchairs.

Overview:

Assemble a small pamphlet that highlights the times of operation, precise locations and range of services available for our physically or mentally challenged visitors. It doesn’t have to be elaborate. Several easily duplicated sheets may be all that is needed for some geographic areas. In other locations, you might want to include a few neatly hand drawn maps. These diagrams would be a welcome addition to the pamphlets now available at visitors’ centers and information booths.

This project is one that probably can be accomplished in several stages. Periodic updates can be scheduled to introduce additional information as new facilities for the physically or mentally challenged are installed.

### **Implementation Guidance**

1. Gather and compile information needed.
  - a. List frequently visited local attractions.
  - b. Visit each site personally; carefully note where ramps, access routes, toilets and “hidden” elevators are located. Draw simple site-maps which highlight these essential facilities.
  - c. If public transportation to these places is available, include such things as drop-off and pickup points, and schedules.
2. Test your directions by having another person find the locations you’ve described to ensure that nothing has been missed.
3. Publish your pamphlet; furnish abundant copies to the Visitor’s Center. Provide the “Repro-copy” (original) to the Chamber of Commerce so that supplies can be replenished as necessary. Establish a goal to have at least 10 members each year obtain CPR training. The Lodge organizes and arranges the initial training and necessary refresher courses. Members so trained are encouraged to post symbols indicating that they are CPR-trained at their workplace and on their car.

## **Learn Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)**

### Concept:

Establish a goal to have at least 10 members each year obtain CPR training. The Lodge organizes and arranges the initial training and necessary refresher courses. Members so trained are encouraged to post symbols indicating that they are CPR-trained at their workplace and on their car.

### Overview:

A large number of preventable deaths occur each year as a result of choking. Many victims of heart attack, stroke, drowning, electrical shock or drug overdose could be saved if there were someone available who could promptly begin CPR. If you are familiar with the Heimlich Maneuver to assist someone whose airway is obstructed by a foreign body and trained in CPR to help someone who is unable to breathe, you can give the greatest gift of all, the gift of life!

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman to obtain information about CPR training available through the Red Cross, your local rescue squad or hospital. Information on CPR also is available from the American Heart Association.
2. Invite a speaker from one of those organizations to speak in the Lodge. Call the Lodge from Labor to Refreshment so that wives and invited guests can participate. Encourage each member to take the training; stress the importance of having several members of every family group to be CPR-trained.
3. Publicize that Masons are trained in CPR; encourage others in the community to obtain such training.
4. Maintain a roster of members who already are CPR trained. Establish a file to remind them to receive refresher training. Continue to encourage untrained members to join the program.

## **Inmate Counseling**

### Concept:

Mature, stable individuals who can provide decision-making counseling to inmates of correctional centers who are about to reenter the community are needed. The hours are flexible and volunteers can work evenings, days or weekends, although a minimum commitment of two hours per week for the program is suggested.

### Overview:

Volunteers receive extensive practical and classroom training before being allowed to work individually with prisoners of state or county correctional facilities. Instruction most often covers such topics as active listening, verbal communication, role negotiation, problem solving, crisis management and other personal, motivational, skill-development topics. In addition to acting as an instructor and counselor, the volunteer provides a viable role model image for the potential parolee.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Contact either (or both) the county or state department of corrections to determine whether the program can be implemented (is available) in your area.
2. Announce the project in Lodge at a stated meeting and publish it in your trestleboard.
3. Invite a local corrections officer to make an informative presentation. If the officer isn't a Mason, you may consider having an open meeting to which wives, families, and other community representatives participate.
4. During the counselor-training portion, you may request our member to report on the process.
5. Without violating the privacy of the inmates, a periodic "How-goes-it" may prove very interesting to Lodge members during the period that he's working with an inmate to prepare for reentry into the community.
6. If the parolee will be making his home in your area after release from the correctional center, there's a possibility that our counselor-member might use his Lodge contacts for reemployment training.

## **Volunteer “Guides” at Historical Sites and State Monuments**

### Concept:

Summer vacation provides an outlet for young people to become involved in a “docent” program in a local museum. This activity is tailor made for young people to further their academic endeavors by preparing themselves for careers after completing high school.

### Overview:

Such programs offer these young folk the opportunity to discover the wonderful collections available in local and national museums. They would not only discover these treasured collections, but would also learn about them, and demonstrate their knowledge about how the collections are obtained and organized. They would learn how collections are assembled and displayed for optimum viewing pleasure. Such exposure of the arts may give such students the interest to pursue a career in the field and go on to become curators.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Target those young people who express an interest in museum work. Contact local high schools to identify those who may express an interest.
2. Contact local museums concerning their particular docent program.
3. Arrange for a presentation to those who have expressed an interest to acquaint them with the docent program. This presentation should be at the curatorial level or the museum level.
4. Organize interviews with museum personnel for those students expressing interest.
5. Assure interested students that they will work directly with the museum personnel.
6. Most docent programs are nonpaying. The student’s desire concerning museum activity and interaction with interested segments of the general public is in the best interest of the student docent and the visitors.

## Teacher of the Year

### Concept:

Quality education is essential to the well being of a community, and teachers are one of the critical factors to ensure the high standards of our school systems. Teachers are a very special group of people who care about and daily enrich the lives of their students. A Masonic Lodge or district could organize to honor those outstanding men and women who exemplify excellence in their profession.

### Overview:

A Lodge or district (possibly under the auspices of the local Masters and Wardens Association) could establish in the name of a prominent educator an annual award to publicly salute dedicated, grammar or high school teachers who have shown initiative, creativity and an exceptional degree of professionalism in teaching.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint an “Outstanding Educator” program coordinator. He could be an active or former educator, but that’s not essential, so long as he’s well spoken and can take initiative to contact local school district education boards and/or school principals.
2. Establish the selection criteria for publication.
3. Determine the award “setting.” Decide whether it will be a dinner, or be held in conjunction with another public forum (possibly even part of the Grand Master’s visit program).
4. Invite nominations from among the Lodge members, school boards, principals, teacher’s organizations, or other public officials.
5. Consider recommending this outstanding individual for a Grand Lodge Award of Excellence. Lodges considering the presentation of such an award must initiate a written resolution. The recommendation will state the person’s full name and the reasons he or she is to be honored. The recommendation may be sent to the Grand Secretary.
6. It would be appropriate to “recognize” and congratulate all teachers who received nominations in a public forum such as an awards dinner and a newspaper article.

## **Better Eyesight for the Needy**

### Concept:

Manpower and facilities are needed to promote and conduct preschool eyesight and glaucoma screening programs. The screening process that detects a need for vision correction is aimed at both children and senior citizens, the very type of persons Masons should strive to help.

### Overview:

Booking and conducting of eye screening clinics is required. The screening process should not be confused with a professional eye examination. Only eye doctors conduct eye exams and the screening process only flags or indicates that a person might have vision problems. Screening can be organized through school systems. The method(s) should be left to the professionals!!

### Implementation Guidance:

1. A chairman should be appointed to contact the local schools and eye association to determine the need and location of an eye evaluation screening clinic, and to work with them to organize the event.
2. A “Partners in Prevention Award” for service can be awarded based on hours of volunteer service.
3. The screening causes adults and children to have their vision evaluated and will produce many referrals for professional eye exams.
4. There is another important link in this chain that has yet to be explored. Up to now we’ve only talked about finding needy people and helping them to know that they may require glasses. The committee can network for prospects in need of eyeglasses. These leads can be “worked” in the same manner as a salesperson would handle his business leads. Regular sources of leads include schools, churches, nursing homes, United Way, and of course, word of mouth.
5. Many who need glasses don’t have money for them. There may be an opportunity for Masonic charity hidden here!
6. This program will provide many needy children and senior citizens a chance to see better. Good eyesight is essential for reading and study. For more information , contact the local Lions Club. In the event needy persons require surgery for their sight, contact the nearest Commandery of Knights Templar.

## **“Re-Cycled” Art/Handicraft Materials for Schools**

### Concept:

In the past few years, we’ve all become recyclers. By this time, you and your neighbors probably have more extra coffee cans, margarine tubs, meat trays, egg cartons, shirt card boards, and the like than you can use. Consider a project to collect and distribute these items to local schools and day care centers for children’s handicraft projects.

### Overview:

Schools everywhere need to stretch their limited budget dollars . We can help them by providing salvaged materials. Each art and kindergarten teacher usually keeps a wish-list of items ranging from empty toilet tissue rolls to oven warming trays that would prove useful to them.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Lodge project coordinator. The member selected could have young school aged children or be a former school teacher, but what is essential is that he be able to take the initiative to contact various local school districts and/or schools.
2. Request a periodic (once a semester/quarter/monthly) wish list be provided by the school staff. After some experience, a “standard” order form could be developed so the teachers could simply tick-off the type and quantity of the items they need.
3. Compile your “Master” wish list, and provide it to the members during a stated meeting or prepare a paragraph which addresses the sort of materials you’re looking for, to include in the Lodge trestleboard.
4. You may want to consider asking other Masonic Lodges in your District to act as “collection sites” too. Their members would be asked to bring the articles when they came to Lodge. Your Lodge can arrange to pick up the collections.
5. Maintain an informal file of recipients names, dates of delivery, and types of materials so that you can “report” to your members.

## **Encourage/Coach a “Special” Olympian**

### Concept:

Special children need special friends. They need men like us to help them better fit into the community in which they live. They can be taught by patient, loving, caring individuals those simple athletic (motor) skills that will foster development in other facets of their lives.

### Overview:

Many Lodge members possess infinite patience, and would like to share their knowledge and athletic skills with others. In most instances, journeyman-level athletic prowess isn't needed; sensitive, caring men are. Mature men who can devote a minimum of one or two hours a week to encourage a young mentally challenged individual to try-something-new, are needed.

The rewards are enormous both to the Olympian and for the coaches. This program would “interest” our affiliate youth organizations. It would provide us and them an opportunity to interface with each other in a meaningful way. They could learn, first hand, how to exercise nurturing skills. Involvement ranges from as little as being available during scheduled events to encouraging and “hugging” the athletes to acting as a team coach.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Contact the Special Olympics of Massachusetts by phone at (1-508-774-1501). Volunteer your services; let them know that you'd like to help.
2. The Committee will send you an application form and information on upcoming events by return mail. Select a seasonal sport.
3. Meet with your athlete on a mutually agreed upon schedule . You'll find that it will be flexible enough to accommodate both your needs and theirs.
4. Talk-it-up in Lodge. Others may be interested in helping these special athletes also, if not with time, with financial support.

## **Prepare Tax Returns for the Elderly**

### Concept:

Although many elderly citizens have relatively uncomplicated tax returns, coping with the forms, interpreting the instructions, and obtaining any additional information or documents is a difficult process. Some assistance is offered by the Internal Revenue Service, but this aid is no substitute for more personal services which will be provided by a concerned volunteer.

### Overview:

Qualified Lodge members would volunteer their time to assist persons who have difficulty getting around or coping with their tax returns.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Although this service would be concentrated during a few months of the year (February to May), the Lodge should appoint a chairman well in advance of tax season to organize the effort.
2. The Lodge project chairman should form a committee composed of members who are accountants and tax preparers. The committee should also include others who have the skills needed to assist in tax preparation.
3. The more skilled members should supervise the other members, but the Lodge might wish to provide service only on simple returns.
4. The Lodge should publicize its free tax service to the elderly. It could rely on senior citizens' organizations to get the word out, and refer to the project chairman those people who could benefit from this program.

## **Establish a Substance Abuse Poster Program**

### Concept:

These days children create colorful posters and banners to illustrate just about every subject and on every occasion. The Lodge should consider capitalizing on this school activity to launch a substance abuse awareness campaign.

### Overview:

This element of a larger community effort to curb and control the drug and alcohol problem concentrates on the elementary schools, the segment of the educational community selected by Masons across America as a primary target. The steps to initiate a simple, effective program of constructive involvement in the local school's antidrug and alcohol abuse work are outlined here.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Drug and Alcohol Abuse Committee. Ensure that they coordinate activities throughout the Masonic district so that efforts are not duplicated where there are several Lodges in the area.
2. Contact the district school board, school principals, and local administrators to ask if they would like the Lodge to sponsor a poster contest for the children.
3. Offer prizes for the best posters—a U. S. Savings Bond starts at \$50.00. Other prizes can be obtained by contacting local stores and merchants.
4. Approach local groups (stores, municipal offices, banks, etc. ) and ask them to display the posters.
5. This event has potential to generate interesting news. Contact the media, provide them with an outline of your plans and invite them to be present at the awards ceremony.
6. Independently prepare short press releases to announce the project.
7. When the time comes to present the awards, have a Lodge delegation present to honor the winners and congratulate all the participants. A simple, inexpensive certificate should be given to each contributing artist. Perhaps a local official will assist in the presentation of the major awards.

## **Honor Professional Service Providers**

### Concept:

Quality service is essential to the well being of a community, and special people are one of the critical factors in ensuring the high standards. A Masonic Lodge or district could honor these outstanding men and women who exemplify excellence in their profession.

### Overview:

A Lodge or District (possibly under the auspices of the local Masters and Wardens Association) could establish an annual award to publicly salute dedicated individuals who have shown initiative, creativity, and an exceptional degree of professionalism.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Lodge “Outstanding Professional Award” pro gram coordinator. It could be an active or formerly active person in the career field to be recognized, but that’s not essential if he’s well spoken and can take the initiative to contact the proper local officials.
2. Establish the selection criteria for publication.
3. Determine the award “setting.” Will it be a dinner, or will it be held in conjunction with another forum (possibly even the Grand Master’s visit program)?
4. Invite nominations from among your members, other persons who work in the same area of endeavor, city or county management organizations, or other public officials.
5. Consider recommending this outstanding individual for a Grand Lodge Award of Excellence. (Lodges considering recommendation will state the individual’s full name and the reasons he or she is to be honored. The nomination should be forwarded to the Grand Secretary.)
6. It would be appropriate to “recognize” and congratulate all persons who received nominations in a public forum such as an award’s dinner and a newspaper article.

## **Sponsor a Neighborhood Fair**

### Concept:

Our mobile society has created a problem. People living in the same neighborhood no longer know each other. A neighborhood fair offers an opportunity to meet, develop a common understanding, and reestablish a sense of “belonging” to a community.

### Overview:

The Lodge, long regarded as one of the leading institutions in the community, can reaffirm its leadership role through the sponsorship of a neighborhood fair. It could be the “kickoff event” for a larger community project or just a time for fun and relaxation.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Determine a site for the fair. If Lodge buildings or property are to be used, verify that the property is in good repair and that adequate liability insurance is in effect.
2. Choose the types of activities that will take place. Be certain, in all cases, to comply with all applicable civil laws and Masonic regulations regarding alcoholic beverages, raffles or games of chance, food handling or food service, and similar matters.
3. If permits of any type are needed from state or local government, apply for them at the earliest possible date.
4. Obtain the cooperation of local radio, television and newspapers to publicize the event. Be certain to stress that the fair is sponsored by the Lodge for the public, not just for the membership of the Lodge. If your planning and preparations are thorough and people have an enjoyable time, the Lodge will get its best public relations exposure at the fair.
5. Take lots of action photographs and prepare articles for publication in the local news media.

## **Regularly Visit/Assist Shut-Ins**

### Concept:

The Lodge provides assistance to elderly or physically or mentally challenged persons so that, in conjunction with other services available from the social service agencies, they can remain in their own homes.

### Overview:

Many elderly people have to go to “old-age” or nursing homes sooner than they would like because they cannot totally care for themselves. With just a little help, they can retain their independence and stay in the home they love. In such cases, a little help can pay large dividends. It often is far cheaper for the individual and for the community to have the person remain at home than to occupy a bed in a nursing home. The return in human terms is even greater, with the individual able to remain in familiar surroundings rather than having to sell the possessions of a lifetime and move to a home.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman to coordinate the effort. Contact the Massachusetts Council for the Aging, the County Agency on Aging, senior citizens organizations, Meals on Wheels, your church or synagogue, or local hospital for the names of individuals who would benefit from your assistance.
2. Determine the type of help required and the type of help the Lodge members could provide; select one or more individuals who could benefit from Lodge assistance. The type of help may be assistance with food shopping, light housekeeping, or simply visits during which the person could talk, get advice or share their feelings and concerns.
3. Organize a roster of members who can visit with the individual. Try to ensure that one or two members, or a member and his lady, are available to attend the individual at least one hour a day. With a sufficient roster, there will be no excess demands upon any of the members, the needed services will be reliably provided, and the individual will interact regularly with a number of interested and interesting people they ordinarily would not have had the opportunity to meet.

## **Personalized Shopping Service for the Aged and Infirm**

### Concept:

The Lodge organizes a shopping service to assist one or more persons on a periodic basis to obtain needed items.

### Overview:

Some aged or infirm persons are shut-ins, unable to visit a store or shopping center to purchase items they require. Others can get out but lack the stamina to do much more than the most essential shopping. Still others are without needed transportation and are very limited in where and when they can go to shop. These people rely upon catalog sales or delivery services which may be expensive and may not carry needed items-or they simply do without. A major difference in their lives would be assistance in obtaining some items they require or would like to have.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. The Lodge appoints a shopping coordinator who in turn enlists a number of shopping volunteers.
2. The coordinator offers this service through a senior citizen residence house, nursing home or social service agency which will select elderly or infirm persons who can benefit from this service.
3. The service can be offered in a number of different ways, depending on the level of support available within the Lodge.
  - a. The Lodge can provide holiday and birthday shopping. This assistance will help the elderly or infirm person purchase gifts for others, or purchase items for themselves to help make the holiday or occasion more special.
  - b. The Lodge might provide additional shopping services to supplement the individual's weekly or monthly shopping requirements.
  - c. The Lodge might provide financial assistance as well as a time contribution.

## **Plant a Tree**

### Concept:

The Lodge organizes a program to plant trees in one or several different parts of the community.

### Overview:

As many trees are removed by land clearing in new communities, there is a pressing need to establish a replacement program. This tree restoration project can provide a permanent symbol in the community of the Fraternity's obligation to helping the community grow.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Contact a park authority, community association, the municipal authority or whoever owns the property on which the proposed trees are to be planted. Obtain the necessary approval and determine the recommended location to plant the tree. Be sure to determine whether a special type of tree is required.
2. Confer with one or more reputable garden stores to obtain a high quality tree (cheap trees fail easily and the Lodge's image will suffer). Schedule the delivery of the trees two to three days in advance of the planting.
3. Organize a crew to dig the hole for the planting ceremony. After the hole is dug, have the area watered. Arrange for the delivery of fertilizer to be mixed with the dirt removed from the hole. After the tree is seated in the hole, partially cover the root ball with a prepared fertilizer and earth mixture.
4. Contact the media well in advance of the event and establish a media event.
5. Develop a program for the tree planting ceremony. This program should include a welcome, invocation, very short Lodge history, short dedication ceremony, remarks by public officials/Masonic dignitaries and a benediction.
6. Invitations to the program should be sent to all local Lodge members, public officials, Masonic dignitaries, and the general public.

## **Blood Donor/Pheresis Program**

### Concept:

It often has been said that a gift of blood is a gift of life. Area hospitals regularly are short of blood. But, as easy and painless as giving blood is, all too few potential donors have gotten into the habit of helping in this important way.

### Overview:

Every Lodge should have an active blood/pheresis program. This program should not be a onetime, or even a four-time a year effort. Rather, it should consist of an active roster of all the members who can give blood, along with sufficient encouragement and reminders so that regular blood donations become the norm rather than the exception.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Each Lodge should have a qualified and enthusiastic blood chairman who, working with the district blood coordinator, contacts every Lodge member to determine whether he-or members of his family-can give blood.
2. The chairman should explain that the Pheresis donation differs from a normal donation of blood in that only part of the blood (the platelets or white cells) is taken. This process takes between two and three hours, but it is vitally needed, for example, to keep a leukemia patient alive.
3. The chairman, assisted by members of his committee, should work closely with each first time donor and then keep a file to remind each blood and pheresis donor when they can safely donate blood.
4. The chairman should check with the hospital or blood bank to which the Lodge contributes to make certain that all contributions are credited to the Lodge.
5. The chairman should ensure that the program is well publicized and that the donors are recognized.

## Recorded Books for the Blind

### Concept:

Reading the books available on our library shelves is educational, informative, and entertaining. Visually impaired men and women in our communities should also be allowed to experience the works of good literature. We can provide them with books to which they can listen.

### Overview:

Develop a lending library of interesting talking books on cassette tape at no cost to blind or bedridden men and women. The library list could include titles that range from the old classics, favorite fiction, and stimulating biographies to books of poetry. A separate list of Masonic favorites could be earmarked for our hospitalized members or for residents of the Masonic home.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Lodge talking book librarian. Have him compile a list of books to be recorded. Earmark a small budget for cassette tapes and to defray the cost of mailing blanks and finished products.
2. Identify candidate-readers from among our members and their families with talent to do more than just read words into a cassette tape microphone. There are many good books available, but good narrators are a little more difficult to find. Use your trestleboard, Master and Warden's Association meetings and word-of-mouth to pass the word that you're looking for readers.
3. Coordinate the production of the talking books. Ensure that copyright laws aren't violated. Contact the author and/or publisher in writing to request their permission to copy the books. Explain that the talking book, when completed, is to be loaned free of charge to the physically or mentally challenged. Always express your gratitude for their generosity. Recommend other books by the same author/publisher in the written material that will accompany the book and in narrative form at the beginning or end of the tape.
4. Make and retain a "Master Tape." Never send out the original tape but use it for reproduction purposes. Establish guidelines to ensure the tapes are returned. Publish a catalog of titles and include directions for ordering the taped books. Provide the catalog to local hospitals and libraries.

## **Masonic Anniversaries**

### Concept:

Celebrate Grand Lodge and Blue Lodge anniversaries and significant Masonic birthdays of your veterans (50, 60, 75) by inviting the public to learn about Masonry and for Masons to honor deserving members of the community.

### Overview:

These anniversaries offer an excellent opportunity for Masonic Lodges, appendant bodies, youth organizations, and their families to bring Masonry to the community.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman and committee to organize the various aspects of the project.
2. The committee should plan a dinner, dance, or open house to make the recognition.
3. Arrange a planning session of the entire committee and assure the details are thoroughly discussed, clearly understood and assigned to responsible persons who will effectively execute them.
4. Begin very early as much as one year in advance to assure the attendance and participation of key players. The plan should include such items as:
  - a. Obtaining proper facilities and permits
  - b. Arranging for certificates/proclamations
  - c. Assuring that adequate seating is available
  - d. Informing the persons to be included.
5. The final implementation phase should begin no later than one month before the event. Inform the news media. Assure that all events, tickets, invitations, proclamations, and reservations are on-track according to your plans. A second follow-up two weeks in advance will pick up loose ends. A third check, one week ahead of time, and a final check the day before the event, will assure the plans for implementation have been faithfully accomplished.

## **Patriotic Essay Contests**

### Concept:

Essay contests provide a means of improving the visibility of the Lodge, demonstrating its support for youth and the educational system, and motivating young people to research our nation's history and cultivate their writing skills.

### Overview:

There are many opportunities in our schools for students to practice the research and writing skills which are essential for academic success. A Patriotic Essay Contest, sponsored by the Lodge, provides another such occasion, invites free expression and creativity, and offers a showcase and reward for excellence.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Enlist the consent and cooperation of the school board, principal, and faculty of the school(s) in which the contest will be sponsored.
2. Announce the contest via letters to the faculty, hand outs for the students, and posters. The announcement should contain precise information regarding: age or grade level of participants; the theme or topic of the essay; maximum length; judging criteria; final date for submission of entries; number, type, and value of awards; and date of award announcement. Awards may be monetary (U. S. Savings Bonds are recommended), or symbolic (a medal or certificate).
3. Assemble a panel of well-qualified judges. The judges should agree on a set of grading criteria before beginning their task. Each judge should read and grade every essay, to assure uniformity. Do not be afraid to emphasize the importance the Fraternity attaches to Grammar, Rhetoric, and Logic!
4. Present the awards to the winners in a setting which will honor both the recipient and the Lodge. Participation in school assemblies or award nights are excellent opportunities to make presentations which will emphasize the involvement of the Lodge in the community and Freemasonry's concern for youth.

## **Nursing Home Visitation (Masonic Home or Local Nursing Home)**

### Concept:

The Lodge should “adopt” at least one nursing home resident and maintain regular contact with that person.

### Overview:

Masons are justly proud of their support of the Masonic home, but an annual contribution to the Endowment Fund and some pocket change for the Christmas Fund is not enough. These are real people, Masons and their wives or widows, living at the home who need human contact, personal attention, and ongoing relationships with people outside the Home.

The Lodge commits to: having a member or his lady call the “resident” at least once a week; sending two of the members or at most two couples to visit that resident four times a year; and, taking them small personal gifts on their birthday, anniversary, and holiday seasons.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Contact the Masonic Home in Charlton or a local nursing home to identify the appropriate persons to “adopt.” Focus particularly on someone without a good support network of family and friends.
2. Appoint a member to coordinate the program, ensuring that weekly calls are made, quarterly visits scheduled, and small presents are bought, wrapped and delivered.
3. If the individual can leave the Home, plan an outing during the visit to a shopping center, restaurant, movie or other agreeable place.
4. Send frequent letters and cards to the individual and let them know that they are being remembered by the Lodge members. If appropriate, mail the person your trestleboard.

## **Citizen Neighborhood Watch/Patrol**

### Concept:

Assist with the development and organization of a neighborhood watch and/or patrol program.

### Overview:

In a geographic area where problems are occurring with home security, assisting the community to organize a Neighborhood Watch Program and providing meeting room facilities will yield a positive Lodge image.

### Implementation Guidance:

The following is an outline of the elements needed to activate and execute this program.

1. Planning Committee
  - a. Preliminary meeting
  - b. Determining extent of crime
  - c. Suggested survey questions
  - d. Survey summary
2. Neighborhood Watch Meeting
  - a. Contact law enforcement agency
  - b. Choose site of meeting
  - c. Send out notices
  - d. Prepare meeting agenda
3. Organization Structure
  - a. Neighborhood watch coordinator
  - b. Block captains
  - c. Volunteers or participants
4. Available Programs
5. External Resources
  - a. Established law enforcement agencies are a primary resource for the neighborhood watch program.
  - b. Neighborhood watch groups should cooperate with each other.
  - c. Central statewide point of contact.
  - d. Viable contributors

## **Present a Patriotic Program to the Public**

### Concept:

The Lodge or district assembles a speakers' bureau and develops a number of speeches suitable for the Fourth of July, Flag Day, Presidential birthdays, Veterans' day and other similar occasions. Speakers would be available to address meetings of various organizations or to lecture at public ceremonies when speakers are desired.

### Overview:

Freemasonry is a patriotic organization; it teaches love of the flag, loyalty to the government of one's country and obedience to the laws of the land. Many of our founding fathers were Freemasons. It is entirely fitting, therefore, that talented Masonic speakers go into the local community to talk about the Masonic values of morality, justice and patriotism. In the process, the public is educated not only about U. S. history, philosophy, and government, but also about the role of Freemasons in forming and supporting our great country.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. A project chairman is appointed to recruit the support of members who are "Toastmasters" or who otherwise are accomplished speakers. Members active in the local community may have name recognition and be sought as speakers. They may be particularly receptive to an invitation for public speaking on behalf of the Lodge.
2. Speech texts should be reviewed by the Worshipful Master and the District Deputy Grand Master to ensure that the subject matter is suitable and that Masonry is presented in an appropriate manner.
3. The project chairman should contact local civic organizations' program coordinators and organizers of patriotic parades about the availability of Masonic speakers. When a request is received, match the speakers ability to the occasion.

## **Legal Services for the Elderly**

### Concept:

Many elderly persons have legal problems which need attention, but often they have little understanding of their rights, do not know where or how to get an attorney, and have little money available to purchase the legal services they require. Key problem areas include: social security and other financial assistance matters; contracts, credit and consumer affairs; housing; health care; wills; guardianship; and powers of attorney. Lawyers are encouraged to donate some of their time and talents to help the elderly with such problems.

### Overview:

Depending upon the number of members who are attorneys, this project could be organized by the Lodge or at the district level. The Worshipful Master or the District Deputy would enlist the support of members who are attorneys who would be willing to devote a certain number of hours to assist the elderly on a free basis.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. The Worshipful Master or District Deputy would select a member who is a practicing or retired attorney as the project chairman.
2. The project chairman would contact either the Massachusetts Bar Association's Pro Bono Coordinator or its Senior Lawyers Section for additional information and guidance.
3. All members who are active or retired attorneys should receive a letter explaining the project and be invited to a meeting to discuss the effort. They should be encouraged to attend and provide their ideas and suggestions, even if they feel they would be unable to participate actively.
4. When the program is established, the Lodge/district should publicize the "Consult An Attorney Sessions" at the Lodge, attorney's offices, or other convenient location. Also, contact the local Legal Aid Society and senior citizens' organizations as a way of making this service known to those among the elderly who need this assistance.

## **Make Lodge Facilities Available for Public Functions**

### Concept:

Provide a facility for the community to use for voter registration, voting booths, childcare, or senior citizen meetings. Also consider the parking lot for such events as band practice sessions.

### Overview:

This community center concept, when properly planned in advance and coordinated, will provide a center for major community activities. Non-Masons will know about the Lodge and can more easily ask about membership. If people know we exist and some of the community services we provide, they are more likely to have a “favorable opinion of the Fraternity.” It’s one of the first steps toward improving membership.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Selecting the proper community activity is important. The first order of business is an analysis of the general community needs, and how use of the Lodge hall could assist.
2. If the community is having a problem with a site to place voting booths, the Lodge could easily make space available. A call to the proper authorities within the community is necessary.
3. This same investigative action is required to provide for voter registration and meetings. A call to the proper official is the first order of business.
4. In the case of childcare and/or senior citizens, a decision is required as to whether the Lodge facilities should be rented or loaned. This can include one day or evening per month or can be a full time use of the Lodge facilities.
5. Use of Lodge facilities for meetings may be offered to civic organizations, churches, senior citizens groups, schools and scouts.
6. The Lodge parking lot can be made available for band practice, drill teams, and community flea markets. Another possible use of the parking facilities would be for daytime commuter parking (free, or for a fee).
7. In each of these situations, the user should be screened to assure adequate security for the Lodge facilities and building as well as adequate liability insurance.

## Historical Re-Enactments for Schools

Concept:

School children respond to historical events when those events come to life through reenactments.

The reenactments may be of events from:

- a. The Colonial Period
- b. The Civil War Period
- c. Local or national history

Overview:

The Lodge researches an historical event, writes a script, obtains costumes (if needed), and then presents the reenactment as a part of living history. A well-performed and historically accurate presentation will bring much credit to the Lodge and its members.

Implementation Guidance:

1. After discussion, and agreement by the members, a chairman should be appointed to form a reenactment committee.
2. A topic needs to be selected, research conducted, a script written, costumes obtained, and rehearsals scheduled. Each of these tasks requires a different type of -orientation, training, and experience. The wide variety of activities provides many opportunities for members of the Lodge with those necessary talents to be of assistance.
3. Local schools should then be contacted, and the principal notified of the willingness of the Lodge to contribute to the affairs of the community by providing a living history reenactment.
4. Local museums should also be notified of the Lodge's interest in the community.
5. After each public presentation, a critique should be held to see if any refinements or improvements can be made.

## **Cornerstone Laying for Public Buildings**

### Concept:

The ceremony of laying the cornerstone of a public building by a Masonic Lodge is one of the few times the Lodge is on display before the public.

### Overview:

Since the early days of this country, the cornerstones of public buildings have been laid with impressive Masonic ceremonies.

This honor is reserved for the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge officers, and may only be conducted by subordinate Lodges with a dispensation from the Grand Master.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. A representative of the Lodge should meet with the local city or county building permit department, explain the traditions of Masonic involvement in the cornerstone ceremony, and ask to be notified when a building permit for a public building is requested.
2. After notification by the permit department, contact the architect and the builder to offer Masonic assistance in the cornerstone laying ceremony.
3. When a request is received to perform a cornerstone laying ceremony, immediately contact the Grand Secretary for further instructions. Intensive planning is required to assure the event is conducted in a dignified manner.
4. The prescribed ritual for the ceremony for laying cornerstones is found in the Masonic Trestleboard published by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.
5. This is an outstanding PR candidate. Activities immediately before and after the ceremony have photo potential.

## **Mentally Challenged Children's Picnic**

### **Concept:**

Establish an annual Lodge outing and picnic lunch for mentally challenged children who are members of the community.

### **Overview:**

Mentally challenged children in our communities are frequently forgotten or ignored. An annual outing, organized with activities specially tailored to encourage and entertain them is a small way to show that they are accepted as valuable human beings.

A picnic will always include food, but it would be better if it also featured clowns in makeup, games, a sing-along and a quiet period with interesting stories. It may be held at the Lodge or at a local school playground, park, or other local facility.

### **Implementation Guidance:**

1. Appoint a Lodge member who will serve as project Chairman.
2. Identify and contact charitable groups who specialize in service to mentally challenged children. With the group's assistance and guidance, select the proper location, time, attendance, menu, and general activities.
3. Solicit local establishments who might assist by providing all or part of the picnic supplies, including food, tables, chairs, and games.
4. Organize entertainment by contacting: (a) local Clown Alley, Shrine, Tall Cedars, Grotto, or other similar organizations, (b) a local model airplane flying club to provide an aerobatics display; (c) the local high school regarding some type of sport or theater performance; and (d) local dignitaries or a politician to act as the Master of Ceremonies or speaker.
5. Establish a committee to include one or more persons to control food solicitation, delivery, preparation, table and chair pickup and return, supplies pickup and display (silverware, plates, table cloths) table servers, tapes and/or live music, general cleanup, transportation and other special requirements.
6. Arrange for the development of media release material by a Lodge member.

## **Honor Volunteers of the Year**

### Concept:

Many people regularly volunteer a significant number of hours each year to assist organizations such as the Boy/Girl Scouts, YMCA, YWCA, Salvation Army and local hospitals. Their contributions vary from manual labor to participating as an active member on the Board of Directors.

### Overview:

Paying public tribute to these volunteers provides an excellent opportunity to say “thank you” for dedicated performance and outstanding achievement in these voluntary efforts on behalf of the community.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee; have them visit with the Executive Directors of various service organizations and well known local institutions in search of 5 (or some other specific number) outstanding volunteers. Seek the support of those organization and request that they submit nominations for the person(s) to be honored.
2. Arrange for the preparation of certificates, plaques, trophies or whatever is selected as the award vehicle. Together with the service organization representative determine a suitable forum, such as the following, for the presentation:
  - a. A special banquet in their honor
  - b. A meeting of the Board of Directors or general assembly of the organization.
  - c. A presentation by a political dignitary such as the Mayor or Councilman.
3. Arrange for media coverage. Develop a news release in advance to be provided for the media at the event.
4. The use of an existing occasion such as those listed in paragraph 2 above will require coordination of the presentation with the manager of that affair. It will also include selection of the proper person to make the presentation, and the development of the presentation narrative.

## **Swim Party for the Physically or Mentally Challenged/Disabled**

### Concept:

Masonic Lodges (and youth organizations that base their membership on Masonic relationship) could directly provide or cooperate to sponsor wholesome, outdoor, summer fun activities. These activities are best provided for small groups of disabled or the disadvantaged, to supplement long term sports programs established by the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation, Multiple Sclerosis Society, Mental Health Organization and others similar organizations.

### Overview:

There are hundreds of physically or mentally challenged children and young adults in every community with motor or mental disorders. Many times they are omitted from the fun filled sports and social activities enjoyed by their normal, healthy peers. We can contribute to their sense of well being by taking an active role in their lives. We can nurture and encourage them to be “all they can be,” reinforce their sense of self-worth, and provide them with an opportunity to simultaneously strengthen their bodies and build character, and most importantly let them experience the exuberant joy of being young with a zestful frolic in the sun.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a small nucleus group of members to act as a committee to plan and oversee the project. Request that they elect their own chairman, integrate at least three members of the youth group and one of their adult leaders into the committee, and report on the following items in one month:
  - a. The names of all committee members
  - b. Major subcommittees, if desired (i.e.; safety, lifeguards, refreshments, and transportation)
  - c. Dates and location of the swim parties
  - d. Expected number of physically or mentally challenged guests
  - e. Projected costs to the Lodge
2. The committee chairman should brief the Lodge at a stated meeting. You should steer the discussion such as to encourage other Lodge members to provide assistance also (i.e., transportation, fund raising, public relations, etc).
3. Prepare an interesting and informative article for the *Trowel*.
4. Prepare letters of appreciation to the youth group and their adult leaders for their participation after the event.

## **Holiday Food Baskets for the Needy**

### Concept:

The Lodge arranges to provide food baskets for families in need.

### Overview:

Holidays such as Easter, Christmas, or Thanksgiving present a unique opportunity to show needy members of our community how much we care. Those less fortunate members of our community who, during holiday seasons, would go unnoticed in the hustle and bustle that consumes us as we rush about, should be targeted for our service.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman to coordinate the effort and form a committee.
2. Identify local families with financial problems through your church or synagogue, neighbors, or other local community assistance groups.
3. Target those families with the greatest need.
4. Contact local merchants willing to participate by providing foodstuff at a reasonable cost.
5. Announce the project in your Lodge trestleboard. Encourage your members to participate as:
  - a. Food collectors
  - b. Basket packers
  - c. Delivery service
6. Past experience suggests that each of the groups be organized as a special subcommittee to prevent over burdening a few members.

## **Provide Family Tragedy Assistance**

### **Concept:**

The Lodge establishes a program to provide guidance, moral support and financial assistance to families in distress.

### **Overview:**

A Mason has long been known as a man to whom one could turn for advice and assistance in time of trouble. There is no lack of need for such Masonic help; every day, we hear from friends or read in our local newspapers about families, and our neighbors who face unexpected difficulties and need help and encouragement. Their difficulties take many forms; for example, a family home is destroyed by fire; a father laid off from work; or a mother is severely injured and temporarily unable to care for her children. These families may be new to the area, without relatives or friends to help, and so overwhelmed by the tragedy as to be unable to cope or unclear how to get help.

### **Implementation Guidance:**

1. The Lodge coordinator and his committee would assemble a manual, broken down by type of problem, which details the various community services, public and private assistance programs, and counseling services which are available locally.
2. The committee would solicit contributions for an emergency fund to provide temporary assistance to families in difficulty, until other sources of assistance can be obtained. Any moneys repaid by families receiving such assistance would be put back into the fund.
3. When the Lodge becomes aware of a family tragedy, members of the committee would call or visit to determine whether the Lodge could be of assistance, and if so, to plan the type of help which should be provided. This could range from simple neighborly visits to help raise morale, to more tangible help, such as providing transportation, baby-sitting, shopping assistance or temporary financial help.

## **Preparedness for Fire, Flood, and Similar Disasters**

### Concept:

Every day millions of people wake up, go to work, take children to school, farm their land or go to ball games. But every so often, the unexpected will happen: an earthquake, a fire, a chemical spill on the highway or some other disaster occurs. Routines change drastically, and people are suddenly aware of how fragile their lives can be. Some disasters make national headlines, but most disasters that seriously affect cities and rural communities do not get this kind of publicity, even though hundreds of thousands of lives are disrupted every year. Each calamity has lasting effects: people are seriously injured, sometimes killed; and, property damage runs into the billions of dollars.

### Overview:

Families which are prepared can reduce fear, panic, inconvenience and losses that surround a disaster. They can be ready to evacuate their homes, make their stays in public shelters more comfortable and know how to take care of their basic medical needs. They can even save each other's lives. But you need to be prepared. Local officials may be overwhelmed after a major disaster and emergency response personnel may not be able to reach you right away. What you do to prepare can make a difference. After most disasters, you should be ready to be self-sufficient for at least three days. This means providing for your own shelter, first aid, food, water and sanitation.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Develop a program of community awareness of the need for being prepared and encourage enrollment and completion of one or more of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Home Study Courses.
2. To obtain Home Study material, write to: FEMA Home Study Program, Administrative Office, Emergency Management Institute, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727. Request the EMI Home Study Course Brochure (L-173). This leaflet lists all home study courses offered by FEMA's Emergency Management Institute.
3. The Lodge can make the information and material available to the public in various ways. This can include community briefings, informing other organizations and encouraging their similar support.

## **First Aid Classes (For the Public)**

### Concept:

We live in a society that depends on the quick reaction of our neighbors (and casual bystanders) in crisis situations. In most emergencies, things happen so fast that people don't have time to think about what has to be done. Training in simple lifesaving techniques must be provided so that more individuals will have the practical skills and confidence necessary to perform the appropriate procedures while waiting for medical assistance.

### Overview:

The Red Cross, fire and rescue squads, military bases, and retired civilian medical practitioners (courtesy of the AMA) in Massachusetts will provide certified instructors when requested. The Lodge would provide the training facility, minimal expendable supplies, and coordinate the classes. According to the Red Cross, evening and weekend courses can be arranged for those persons who desire them.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Assign a Lodge point-of-contact to act as coordinator and provide a liaison between the Lodge, the public, and with the instructors. This possibly can be an active or retired health care professional or a person who was the past recipient of a stranger's lifesaving skills.
2. Invite a spokesperson from one of the established community health care organizations or rescue squads to your Lodge to make a short presentation on the evening that you intend to kick off this project.
3. Advertise in the newspaper and radio that courses will be given. Provide details on course length, schedule, and location.
4. Provide light refreshments (coffee and nibbles) during scheduled breaks and possibly arrange for a small celebration in the Lodge as part of the class graduation ceremony. Invite the families and friends of the students and Lodge members to the affair; it doesn't have to be elaborate. A short article for the newspaper with a picture of the students and instructor is in order. A clear, action photograph of the students practicing one of the lifesaving procedures is a certain attention getter.
5. Maintain informal contact with the students. Invite them to return periodically for update courses to keep their skills fresh.

## **Sponsor a Sunrise Worship Service**

Concept:

To provide an Easter Sunrise Service for the entire community.

Overview:

Provide a central location where all members of the community can celebrate Easter with a Sunrise Service (This same method can be used for other celebrations in the Christian, Jewish or other faiths).

Implementation Guidance:

Schedule

August: Arrange for Minister; Announcement in Visitors Bureau publication; Contract for a location. September: Arrange for preparation of press releases. October: Notice to committee members. November: Arrange for musical portion (band/organ/piano/other); Arrange for speaker systems; Arrange for a soloist and chorus. January: Notice to heads of delegations and Masonic dignitaries; Get sermon subject and hymns from minister; Arrange insurance; Arrange with police department for traffic control; Arrange distribution of a proposed press release to all area churches. February: Arrange with American Red Cross (or other group); Arrange with DeMolay for ushers and Saturday setup; Coordinate with breakfast manager; Develop program and take to printer. March: Get someone to “baby-sit” equipment on Saturday night; Arrange for assistance to setup the stage; Distribute newspaper releases; Develop alternative/contingency (foul weather) plan; Arrange for a supply of Easter lilies.

Before Easter - last minute activities: Friday: Pick up or have Easter lilies delivered. Saturday: Determine whether “foul weather” plan should be implemented; See that crews are present to set up everything Easter Morning; Get up at 4 A.M.; See that coffee and donuts are on hand; Conduct service; Have crew take-down and return items; Go to breakfast.

Monday after Easter: Finalize take down and return; Send thank you letters; Make list of “Lessons Learned” so same mistakes will not occur next year; Draw sigh of relief.

## Support a Battered Women's Shelter

### Concept:

Shelters for battered women serve a vital purpose: to provide both physical and emotional shelter to women who have been abused by a spouse, parent, or any other person. As Masons, our offer of assistance to such shelters is a positive manifestation of our belief in human dignity, and of our obligation to protect the oppressed.

### Overview:

Every community in our Commonwealth is served by one or more shelters, some are privately operated, and others are administered through the city or county office. These shelters provide a much-needed safe haven for women in physical or emotional distress. Too often, funding for these shelters is a low priority in the budgets of larger entities. The Lodge can provide a wide range of goods and services that will be welcomed.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Contact a local shelter to make known your offer of assistance and to determine specific local needs. Women arriving at a shelter frequently have left home in a hurry under stressful conditions. Many women will have brought few personal possessions; some will have small children with them. Many need to seek employment to become self-sustaining. Commonly recurring needs include:
  - a. Furniture, particularly beds, night stands, tables and chairs;
  - b. Kitchen appliances;
  - c. Children's clothing and toys;
  - d. Women's clothing, suitable for employment interviews
2. Encourage the members of the Lodge to search their own homes for needed items. The Lodge may wish to provide space which serves as a community deposit/collection site for contributed items. Members with trucks or vans may be recruited to provide pick up service for those items which are too large or cumbersome for the donor to transport.
3. The Lodge might offer to sponsor a fund raising event (pancake breakfast, barbecue dinner, yard sale) with the proceeds contributed to the shelter, for general operating support or toward the purchase of some specific item.

## **Sponsor a Local Historic Site/Museum**

### Concept:

Most museums/historic sites are managed by local or state governments and therefore come under severe budgetary and funding restrictions.

### Overview:

Many museums/historic sites seek additional funding from corporate donors and acknowledge these donations in brochures and newsletters. Individuals may also volunteer as docents.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman to take charge of the project.
2. Establish a financial goal for donations and pledges.
3. Have a fund raising drive. Notify all members by the usual means.
4. Institute a PR-campaign.
5. Present the donation check in Lodge or at the museum. Take action photographs to record the event and prepare a short news article for publication.

## **Support a Marrow Transplant Register**

### Concept:

The Lodge establishes a program to provide financial support for the Marrow Transplant Program, encourage persons to be tested and consider becoming potential donors.

### Overview:

Each year in the United States more than 9,000 people anxiously hope for a marrow transplant which can save their lives. They are seriously ill with blood disorders such as leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's Disease, and aplastic anemia. Twenty-four people die each day for lack of a donor. The major difficulty is matching a potential donor and recipient, but testing to find a match involves only a simple blood test. Moreover, donating marrow is a safe, painless, and relatively simple procedure. The donor can resume normal activities the following day and the marrow is entirely replenished in about ten days.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. The Lodge appoints a project chairman who establishes contact with a marrow register to obtain additional information on setting up the program. One example, the Lifesavers Foundation of America, a national, nonprofit organization, can be reached by phone at 800-950-1050.
2. The chairman educates members of the Lodge, their families and friends about the program. Since a marrow transplant sounds frightening, information should be provided about the testing program and the actual procedures if a match is found. One important point is that consenting to be tested does not irrevocably commit one to become a donor if a match is found. A separate decision can be made and the individual is free to say no.
3. The chairman organizes a fund raising effort to help defray the cost of the blood-testing program.
4. One or more days are selected for the blood testing to take place; persons are encouraged to give a blood sample.

## **Daily Phone Call to an Elderly Live-Alone to Check on Health or Needs**

### **Concept:**

The Lodge undertakes to call a number of elderly persons at an established time each day to make certain that they are well and to send someone to check on them if they do not answer their phone.

### **Overview:**

There are many elderly persons in our communities who, while able to care for themselves, are worried that they might become ill or injured, and not be discovered for days. Often these are people whose friends have died or moved away and who do not have family close by. In some areas, people who are particularly at risk can purchase a device, worn around their neck, which if pressed, automatically dials the rescue squad. Many others whose condition is not so serious cannot justify subscribing to such a service, but would be greatly reassured by a daily call from someone who would say hello and check that all was well.

### **Implementation Guidance:**

1. The Lodge contacts senior citizens' organizations for the names of elderly persons who would benefit from such a service and appoints a chairman responsible for organizing a committee to place such calls.
2. Each call should take about five minutes. Each member of the committee could make as many as three or four calls a night. It is best for the same person to call each night. This method permits a more personal relationship, and assists the caller to better assess mood changes which might signal a problem in the elderly person. Each caller should have a backup person to make the call, in case he is unable to do so. The primary and alternate callers should meet the elderly person(s) they are calling.
3. The elderly person should rely on receiving the daily call at the same time each day. A convenient time should be agreed upon. The caller should check that the elderly person is well, inquire as to any special needs, and learn if the elderly person is going to be away the next day and thus, unable to receive the call at the usual time.
4. Reach agreement as to the steps to be taken if the daily call is not answered. A neighbor, building manager, or other person with a key to the residence might be notified, or the police rescue squad alerted.

## **Coach a Little League Team**

### Concept:

Hundreds of children between the ages of 8 to 12 want to play little league baseball. In all too many cases there are more children than there are available coaches to comprise teams.

### Overview:

The coaching staff generally comes from the ranks of parents. Not all parents are sufficiently versed in the game rules or skilled in batting and fielding techniques to provide the adult leadership necessary for a successful team. We can provide assistance to recruit, train, organize, and provide coaches to aid the little league in its mission.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Contact the little league within the area of the Lodge to determine their needs.
2. Appoint a chairman of the “search committee.”
3. Committee members contact Lodge members with the skill and expertise to determine whether they might be willing to help.
4. Contact little league with names of volunteers. Work with the little league to assign the persons to tasks which are consistent with their ability and training.
5. The Lodge might consider “sponsoring” the youngsters that our members will coach.

# Tutoring

## Concept:

A variety of people in our communities need educational help; young people with learning disabilities, dropouts from the established educational system, and adults with literacy problems. The establishment of a tutoring program can enrich the life of an individual and improve the quality of life for an entire community.

## Overview:

Using the time and educational abilities of the members and the physical facilities of the Lodge, a tutoring program can be established. This type of program carries rewards and benefits for everyone; the individuals being tutored become more capable and productive, the tutors become more aware of those around them, and the Lodge becomes more visible as a concerned, constructive presence in the community.

## Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a member to act as Lodge Tutor Program chairman to help organize the program, explore alternatives and coordinate tutorial assignments. It is not essential for him to be a former schoolteacher.
2. Consult with officials from local schools and adult education programs to determine the type of tutoring that is most needed and best suited to the skills and available time of your members.
3. Because of the varying needs of individuals, most tutoring must be based on a one-to-one relationship. Be certain that your members understand the time commitment which will be required of them if they support this project.
4. Determine the most appropriate “delivery method” for your tutoring program; does the Lodge offer a central location and a sufficient number of quiet areas to be used as a base for the program, or will the tutors travel to homes, school, or other sites?

## **Answer Phones on Telethons/Radio Thons**

### Concept:

Many charities sponsor telethons and radio thons to solicit operating funds. These “thons” require many people to answer telephones from donating callers, as well as persons to tally pledges or count money, maintain paper work, couriers, food service assistants and security.

### Overview:

These telethons offer an excellent opportunity for Masonic Lodges, appendant bodies, youth organizations, and their families to help the community projects. The level of involvement can be as narrow or as broad as the Lodge desires; ranges include one person to work a shift as a telephone operator to the full shift responsibility for the entire operation.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a project chairman for this effort and with his assistance select a charity for which this service will be provided.
2. Meet with the charity and arrange with them the type(s) of service(s) required, the available date(s) and period(s) of time. Select the proper mix of times and service jobs to fit the Lodge family.
3. Recruit members of the Lodge, appendant bodies, youth and their families to work the various shifts and jobs selected.
4. Assist in the development of proper media releases and accompanying photographs to relate this community involvement by the Lodge.
5. Obtain certificates of appreciation for those who participated and assisted. Bring them together for a special certificate presentation ceremony. Be sure that an article is written for the *Trowel* and photographs taken during this “bonus” media event.

## **Sponsor a Job Fair**

### Concept:

Regardless of the prevailing economic conditions, there is an ever-present need to match the skills possessed by people in the community with the needs of employers. At a job fair potential employees may meet with employers to exchange information about job availability, needed skills, benefits and wages.

### Overview:

A job fair provides the Lodge with an opportunity to be seen as a productive force in society and as an institution that not only attracts the leaders of the community but provides them with the vehicle to assert that leadership by acting for the good of the community.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Use personal and business contacts of the members to solicit participation of potential employers.
2. Open the Lodge to the community for the job fair; do not schedule any conflicting uses of the building. Schedule the job fair for one or more days and for hours that are appropriate to both the potential employers and job seekers.
3. Make tables and chairs available, leaving sufficient space to allow relative privacy for interviews.
4. Consider offering a resume writing workshop or an interviewing skills program concurrently with or as a prelude to the job fair. This effort will enable some of your members to actually share relevant skills with the job seekers, and have a positive impact on the results of the job fair.
5. If your Lodge sponsors other work-related community programs such as adult literacy tutoring, set up a booth or table at the job fair to publicize these programs and enroll participants.

## **Prepare Driving Tour Guides of Local Historical Sites or Points of Interest**

### Concept:

Every city holds something of interest to any visitor. Each Lodge has one or more members familiar with the local color and heritage. Rather than giving a visitor written directions on how to find these local points-of-interest, provide it to them in a cassette so that it can be played on their car stereo or on a portable, battery operated tape player.

### Overview:

Massachusetts attracts thousands of visitors every year. Many guests travel by auto, and miss some of the more significant landmarks because they can't find them. Wouldn't it be a nice idea to provide them with detailed maps, clear directions, and some interesting facts and local folklore about these sites? It can be done with the aid of a carefully timed, taped message prepared by the members of your Lodge. In some instances the areas are so widespread and there's so much to see that you can break these self-guided tours into bite sized, hour-long packages.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Make hand drawn maps of the areas that you want to explore or get a ready-made map from the information center. Pin point the areas of interest; collect factual information about those sites from the local historical society, library, or long term residents. Items such as old newspaper clippings, land grant maps, church records, and family diaries are excellent sources of data.
2. Develop tentative tour routes by marking them off on your map. Drive the route with a clipboard handy; note comfortable driving speeds, location of prominent landmarks, historical markers and areas of local interest. You might even point out the location of your Lodge building and meeting times.
3. Prepare a script; while someone else is driving, record your message on tape. There will be places on the tour where you're going to direct them to stop the tape player so that they can read a marker or visit an area. It will probably take several circuits and careful editing to get the precise timing down pat; it's worth the trouble.
4. Provide several copies of the finished cassettes to the library, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Historical Society. Send a copy also to the Grand Lodge-it will be helpful during Grand Visitations.

## **Visit a Veteran's Hospital**

### Concept:

The Lodge assembles willing members who visit the nearest Veteran's Hospital to spread sunshine in the lives of those who are shut-in and limited by poor health or physical disability.

### Overview:

This program can be adopted by the Lodge as a whole, by several members as a small group, or by individual members acting on their own. Either way, it's a very worthwhile way for our Fraternity to show that we care. There are several wonderful films and videotapes available on loan from the Masonic Service Association to be used in Lodge for implementing the program.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Contact the hospital to ask whether there is a need for clearance and to learn the best time to visit: i.e., special days or random visits.
2. Contact members willing to visit our veterans. Find out if they have any "special" talents, such as: singing, musical skill or entertaining.
3. Organize a program to use those skills for a short presentation during your visit. Your rehearsals might also make an interesting Lodge program some evening.
4. Gather the necessary equipment, if any required, to provide a program to the patients. Obtain a supply of proper and approved food items for distribution after any program presentation.
5. Arrange transportation for the committee group. Car-pool as much as possible. Pick up elderly members and transport them direct.

## Walking Your Maps

### Concept:

Every city, village, or hamlet in Massachusetts could be made more fascinating to out-of-town visitors if they only knew where to find the points of local interest.

### Overview:

Divide your project into bite-sized pieces so that several Lodge members could get involved. In fact, this project could eventually spawn a small pamphlet of local maps and thumbnail sketches to act as substitute tour guides, to focus on:

- a. Various geographic locations (e.g., the northeast sector, the southwest section)
- b. Seasonal points-of-interest (i.e., a springtime trek through that part of town where wild flowers bloom, a winter wonderland tour, or an autumn tour that might take our guests past the ancestral homes of famous, or near famous, local historic heroes).
- c. Historic buildings with architectural interest.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Decide on the scope of the project. Determine whether it will be one all encompassing map or several maps with each having its own focus.
2. Develop tentative tour routes. Sketch a preliminary map; mark points of interest, potential rest areas, or nearby comfort stations. Highlight special facilities for the physically or mentally challenged such as wheelchair ramps or easy access points.
3. Establish route(s); refine the sketches into a working copy; double-check the direction markers.
4. Have other members verify your maps through actual use. Edit where necessary; add specific details and items of interest. If the map tends to get “cluttered,” consider adding supplementary information on a separate sheet.
5. Prepare the final copy (to scale if possible).
6. Provide good quality, duplicated copies of your maps to the local library, chamber of commerce, and to the historical society for distribution.

## **Joint Brotherhood Night With Other Fraternal Organizations**

### Concept:

The Lodge contacts local fraternal organizations to establish the possibility of holding joint activities at a get acquainted night in order to explore some outside activities.

### Overview:

Fraternal organizations, as a whole, have many of the same problems we experience (i.e., declining membership, attendance and apathy). Joint activities provide an opportunity for cross-fertilization of organization objectives, charities, and goals.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a working committee and make sure the chairman understands the assignment. The details committee actions depend on the selection of activities and projects of the collective group.
2. Recruit energetic workers to contact organizations and to set up meetings. Contact local fraternities. Invite their leaders to an informal meeting to discuss mutual problems and possible remedies.
3. Tailor the team building and problem-solving workshop to your needs. Invite the District Awareness Officer to the meeting to act as the workshop facilitator.
4. Determine how the Lodge can help. At the very least, organize a social evening (such as Brotherhood Night). Other projects to be considered could be a joint:
  - a. Dance
  - b. Picnic
  - c. Community project (one of these 100 ways)
  - d. Charity collection
  - e. Information exchange meeting to learn more about each other.
5. Be sure to pursue any public relations opportunities.

## Community Health Fair

### Concept:

Our members, their immediate families, and community at-large are more health conscious than ever before in history. People today try to eat healthier foods, and live in a healthier environment than did our parents and grandparents. Every part of the body and mind seems to concern one or more members of our immediate family and our neighbors.

### Overview:

Consider collaborating with a hospital or community services commission to invite your local citizens to an annual health fair. Medical professionals can provide screening and assessment for cholesterol, blood pressure, dental, eye care, hearing and lung functions. Written information can be made available on such wide-ranging subjects as baby care and nutrition, or mammography. Invite mental health professionals to make short presentations on topics of current interest such as, mentally challenged and/or the effects of substance abuse. You might even consider having a short lecture on nutrition and the heart, so that our neighbors can learn how to eat for a lower cholesterol level or learn how to shop for low cholesterol and low fat foods.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Although it's not considered important to the outcome of this project, if there are enough medical professionals who are Masons you may be able to capitalize on that fact in the publicity planned for advertisement of the fair(s).
2. Identify "screening" professionals who will be available for (a) blood pressure, (b) cholesterol, (c) eye care, and (d) dental examinations.
3. Lineup presenters/lecturers (i.e., Nutrition and your heart, shopping for low cholesterol foods).
4. Arrange for a reasonable supply of written materials. Your local druggist or pharmaceutical supply house usually have these items as free materials to be used as advertisements.
5. Advertise. Use your trestleboard, the news media, local neighborhood bulletin boards, and even computer bulletin boards.

## Identify Historical Sites

### Concept:

While this is not necessarily a Lodge project, individual members, as citizens of the community, can provide valuable assistance in identifying historic sites.

### Overview:

Historic sites are all around us; many major sites have been identified and recorded, but many sites remain unidentified and unrecorded. All new discoveries should be recorded with the state.

A site could be prehistoric, a farmer finding an Indian arrowhead while plowing; or a site could be historic, finding a Civil War uniform button during a walk in the park. The popularity of metal detectors has resulted in the discovery of many new sites, and with these discoveries have come increased incidents of vandalism and desecration of the sites.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. This program can be organized as a Lodge project by appointing a chairman and obtaining a list of volunteers who have historical inclinations.
2. The group can organize and enjoy a history day with picnics, camp-out trips, or hikes.
3. The group or individuals should:
  - a. Record the location of the site, preferably on a United States Geological Survey (USGS) map.
  - b. Record all items discovered.
  - c. Notify the city/county historic/prehistoric archaeologist, and request a site form.
4. If your city or county does not have an archaeologist, immediately notify the State to request a site form and ask for further guidance contact:

The Massachusetts District Commission  
Reservations and Historic Sites Office  
20 Somerset Street Boston, MA 02115  
(617) 727-5250

## **Public Education Week**

### Concept:

During a review of Community Builders Award recipients, it was found that a high percentage of the honorees were professional educators. This phenomenon suggests that we consider escalating to the next plateau and, where possible, implement a concentrated, District-wide “Public Schools Recognition Week” to include a testimonial dinner which celebrates and publicizes the achievements of our teachers.

### Overview:

The leadership and resources necessary to plan, implement and coordinate an effort of this magnitude with local school boards could be sponsored by the Masters and Wardens Association.

### Implementation Guidance:

It is generally recognized that well educated and alert young men and women are keys to the future of America. Projects with promise to reinforce the dedication and achievements of public school teachers include:

1. Sponsor a summer reading program for slower learning students. Our Masonic youth may be interested in assisting.
2. Initiate an honor board in the Lodge of members who are active on local school boards or parent/teacher associations.
3. Consider an informal contest among the grammar school teachers to recognize those teachers who have the most visitors during the week.
4. Sponsor an essay contest. Award first, second and third place prizes (monetary, plaques, or cups), and recognize their teachers.
5. Conduct a poster project with a patriotic, substance abuse, or public education theme.
6. Champion a flag day project. Every classroom should display an American flag. See if any flags are needed, and present them during public education week.
7. Hold a District-wide open meeting and provide a guest speaker who is knowledgeable on local education peculiarities, difficulties and needs.

## **Adopt a Cemetery**

### Concept:

The Lodge can become the caretaker of a local cemetery by providing the manpower and equipment for grass cutting, tree trimming (a falling tree limb could break or damage the gravestones) and when necessary, trash removal.

### Overview:

Many private cemeteries, statewide, have been severely neglected or abandoned due to the absence of family members or other interested individuals. A well maintained cemetery reduces the probability of vandalism to grave sites and damage to headstones.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee chairman to take charge of the project. Compile a list of members who would be interested in assisting on a project of this sort (usually, on a quarterly basis).
2. Check with the county tax assessor's office to determine the ownership of the cemetery.
3. Contact the heirs to receive permission to become the caretaker of the cemetery. If the heirs are not known, request permission from the office of the city/county clerk.

Note: In addition to voluntary manpower only basic equipment (lawn mowers, nylon string trimmers, pruning saws), is needed for most maintenance.

## **Partners in Home-Management Development**

### Concept:

Some single parent, or low/moderate income families, and other persons who are potential first time private home dwellers require some training in certain basic home-management skills in order to be successful. A “partnership” is established to provide counseling mentor support. It is not (and should not) be used as a vehicle to provide direct financial assistance to the potential homeowner. Recently, several public welfare organizations have established programs that attempt to break the welfare cycle by moving some families from public housing projects into the mainstream. It was found that many of these small families have no one to turn to for advice, when needed.

### Overview:

In our Lodges we have a ready source of mature role models. We have many individuals who can provide home management advice, and friendly guidance to potential first-time home owners as they prepare for independent living. They can then continue to offer advocacy and periodic advice, once these fledgling families have gone out on their own.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Discuss the project in Lodge. Determine whether there are members who would volunteer, if requested, on a short term basis to provide one-on-one training to a stranger on things that they’ve been successfully doing for years. The skills needed range from how to change a washer in a faucet, to establishing a budget, to finding competent assistance when plumbing drains are plugged, to finding a dentist.
2. Compile a directory of volunteers together with the specific skills that they bring with them.
3. Compile a list of established organizations in your community that already provide support services.
4. Contact those community organizations who place welfare families into private-sector dwellings and banking institutions whose policies encourage young families to purchase first-time homes and volunteer our support services. Let them know that we have a register of capable volunteers with appropriate mentoring skills. They are looking for us!

## Open Lodge Day

### Concept:

Provide a day for the general public to visit the Lodge hall and learn about Freemasonry.

### Overview:

Well designed advanced planning, publicity and a good program for the visitors can provide the basis on which potential new members can be introduced properly to the Fraternity. In addition, a good program observed by long term but inactive Masons, many times results in a reactivated member.

Opening of the Lodge hall permits neighbors to know and understand the Lodge and its mission and purpose. The availability of the Lodge social hall, parking lot and facilities for community affairs and functions should be pointed out.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Plan a program to demonstrate Freemasonry in the community for the visitors.
2. Organize a staff of members whose specialized interests relate to the program developed for the “Open Lodge Day”.
3. Advance publicity is necessary to advise the community. This notification can be accomplished by:
  - a. Developing, printing, and distributing flyers to the neighborhood homes and posting in stores.
  - b. Development of newspaper articles, radio and TV ads and distribute to the proper media.
4. Preparation of the Lodge for the visitation should include as a minimum:
  - a. Interior cleaning dusting, window washing
  - b. Exterior grounds grass cutting, trash collecting and general cleaning.
  - c. Facility scraping, painting, and deep cleaning.
5. Open the lodge on time and assure those who are hosts are properly attired. A small snack should be provided such as coffee, tea or soda for the guests and staff.

## **Establish a Community Food Bank**

### Concept:

Identify sources and gather a steady, substantial supply of nonperishable foods in an organized manner.

### Overview:

Generally the same process would be followed whether you're going to distribute the foods to the homes of pre-selected families during a holiday season or whether you're establishing a free food store. An organized drive to collect canned goods and nonperishable items such as packaged pasta, rice, flour, dried beans and spices is necessary.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee chairman; discuss the project with him and together establish broad guidelines. Ensure that you both feel comfortable with the scope of your first endeavor. An early success is essential to create the necessary motivation and enthusiasm for a long-term food bank related project. Most Lodges start very small; they target one of the major holidays (Easter, Thanksgiving, or Christmas) to test the water.
2. Contact local caterers and food stores in your area to establish central collection sites for nonperishables and locations to help advertise the effort.
3. The length of time necessary for gathering supplies is determined by several factors including the quantity of food necessary and the number of collection bins. Lodges who traditionally target food deliveries at holiday time usually start in October for Thanksgiving, and in November for Christmas baskets.
4. The identity of recipient families is available from several reliable community sources (Church offices, welfare offices, and your own Lodge members).
5. Publicity, pickup, sorting, packaging, accounting for, and delivery of the material are tasks which can be divided and assigned to subcommittees if you desire. It's a great way to get a large number of our members involved and excited about helping in a community-oriented project. Try it!

## Write Letters to Service Personnel

### Concept:

A letter from “home” is a rare treasure, desired by every man or women who wears the country’s uniform. All too often, the letters do not arrive, and loneliness becomes a stronger enemy than any that ever bore arms.

### Overview:

Troops returning from the Persian Gulf war have testified to the importance of a letter from “home,” even from strangers, as a source of news and inspiration while serving in a lonely and hostile place. If the “Brotherhood of Man” is to be a reality in our lives, our Fraternity should regularly seek every opportunity to reach out to unknown service personnel.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Recruit members of the Lodge and their families to write informative, upbeat letters to Service Personnel.
2. Letters should include current news, expressions of support, and enough personal information to allow the recipient to develop a sense of “knowing” the writer. Writers ought to ask questions that will encourage a written response.
3. Letters may be addressed to “Any Serviceman or Servicewoman” via the U.S. Postal Service APO and FPO addresses.
4. Although letter writing campaigns became quite popular as a form of support during “Operation Desert Shield (Storm),” our nation has thousands of uniformed personnel at sea and in the field at all times to maintain the peace. These brave young men and women should not be forgotten.
5. This isn’t a one-way street; you too will gain immeasurably. You’ll learn about new people and places; you’ll gain a new friend.

## Mail “Care Packages” to Service Members

### Concept:

While providing for the comfort and recreational needs of our armed forces, the government must, of necessity, rely upon methods and materials that are standardized, uniform, and often impersonal. Service men and women often must hope for a package from home to relieve the daily routine and to supply otherwise unobtainable items.

### Overview:

The Masonic Fraternity, with its long history of providing fellowship for its members in uniform, can logically extend its expression of Brotherly love to all Service personnel by placing in their hands a package “from home.” The contents need not be expensive or numerous; the knowledge that someone cares and values the work being done in distant places by these young men and women is at least as important as the actual contents.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Consider items to be included in the packages, taking into account such variables as time in transit, weather conditions, local customs and military restrictions on certain items. Nonperishable snack foods are always welcome; personal grooming items, including skin lotions and creams, have proven to be popular.
2. Determine how the packages will be assembled. Will items be purchased or will donations be sought? Will several members each, independently take the responsibility of assembling a specific number of packages or will all items be brought together and the packages produced at one time, assembly line fashion?
3. How will the packages be distributed? Packages can be directed to “Any serviceman or servicewoman” with an APO or FPO address. This method is a fine way to reach out to personnel who might not otherwise receive packages “from home.”
4. Another distribution plan, used with success by the Grand Lodge of New York, encourages members to submit the names and unit addresses of family members or friends; a package of grooming items and toiletries in a reusable carrying case emblazoned with the phrase, “Masonic Grand Lodge of Massachusetts” surrounding the Square and Compasses, is promptly shipped to the designated Service member. This idea can be adapted to fit the resources of any Lodge (or District).

## **Provide Student School Supplies**

### Concept:

A good, well-rounded education is necessary to break the unemployment-welfare trap in which many poor families are caught. These families cannot furnish their children with basic school supplies. The Masonic community can be instrumental in establishing a school supply bank to provide these necessities.

### Overview:

Generally the same process would be followed whether you're going to distribute the materials to the homes of pre-selected families just prior to or during the first week of school, or whether you're going to establish a free supply store. A drive, organized to collect items such as new or used loose-leaf notebooks, paper, and pens may be necessary.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee chairman to lead the project. The person that you select should be a self-starter with good management and organization skills.
2. Discuss tentative long-range program goals, length of time considered necessary for a project of this sort. Dates should coincide with school opening in your area, and the number of key-players required for this committee. Reach a consensus!
3. Determine whether shopping centers in your community will allow you to locate bins to collect pens, pencils, loose-leaf notebooks, pencil boxes, crayons, pads of paper, and other school oriented supplies on their property. If not, use your Lodge facility as a drop off point.
4. Publicize this activity. Use your trestleboard to gain support of your members and their families.
5. Collaborate with the local school principal to identify potential recipients. You should consider using him to orchestrate the distribution of materials you collect.
6. If the collection strategy works well, consider introducing this project as an annual event.

## **Provide Emergency Referral Services**

### **Concept:**

Competent assistance and local professional counseling is usually available from a wide variety of established community sources to assist with the solution of acute one time or chronic problems.

### **Overview:**

During difficult periods and times of stress, many people don't know where to turn for competent help, information, or counseling services. Our members can be instrumental in acting as a clearinghouse to compile and publish a local catalog of emergency or long term support services. This list can be useful to our members and our widows, but should also be made available to the community-at-large. Consider establishing a round-the-clock telephone hot line, possibly in collaboration with a local radio or TV station or newspaper for the community to call.

### **Implementation Guidance:**

1. Discuss this project with Lodge members; determine the scope of the effort to be implemented.
2. Compile an accurate list of counseling, medical, dental, emotional support, crisis intervention centers, and legal-aid resources, that are available locally. A good place to start is the local phone directory. Provide times of operation and other information considered pertinent.
3. During the list preparation phase, personally contact each person and "activity" on the list to ensure the accuracy of the data. Ensure that the list is "dated" (month/year) to facilitate a periodic update revision process (annually or semiannually).
4. Make wide distribution of the pamphlet; good places to target are the local Welcome Wagon, Chamber of Commerce, city/town elected officials, public library, school offices, church office staffs, police stations, fire houses. In addition, ensure each service provider should be given several courtesy copies for their personal use.
5. The pamphlet should be systematically reviewed to assure currency. Consider furnishing the name and phone number of the editor on the cover of the pamphlet as the single point-of-contact to submit "new/additional" service providers.

## **Student Assistance Program**

### Concept:

We recognize the devastating effects on our country's future of ignoring the problem behaviors of our youth. Chemical abuse and dependency, truancy and drop out, pregnancy, eating disorders, depression and suicide often have been found to effect even very young children. Some Lodges have chosen to address this problem by working with state governments, principally by providing moral and financial support to the Department of Education in their efforts to establish Student Assistance Programs. Student Assistance Programs seek to minimize the effects of these harmful behaviors with systematic early identification, intervention and referral.

### Overview:

Student Assistance Programs are modeled after business and industry Employee Assistance Programs which intervene in the self-destructive behaviors affecting employees' performance in the work place.

The program's purpose is to train school personnel to identify and refer "high-risk" children for help. It works in conjunction with the school's disciplinary mechanisms, provides room for student support groups, and encourages parental involvement.

A Student Assistance Program is not a crisis center or a treatment program. Neither Masons nor teachers have the expertise or the responsibility to provide treatment. A teacher's expertise lies in the ability to observe children's behavior and judge performance. With this expertise, they are in a position to identify early stages of difficulty in the life of a child, and initiate effective and appropriate action.

### Implementation Guidance:

Typically, the role of Freemasonry has been to provide some initial organizing help, sharing of finances, arrangement for facilities, and most importantly, a continuing positive presence.

## Student Citizenship Award Program

### Concept:

The Lodge establishes an annual Masonic award; a plaque and a \$100 savings bond, to be given to the graduating senior who best exemplifies good citizenship in the community.

### Overview:

The youth of today are the adults of tomorrow. Encouraging good citizenship and community mindedness in our high school students is something Masons always should do. Sponsoring an award to be given to a deserving youngster during graduation ceremonies is a highly visible way of focusing public attention on Masonic interest in good citizenship and on Masonic support of the youth of our community.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. The Lodge appoints a project chairman who establishes contact with the principal of the local high school to work out the details of the award.
2. The award program can be set up in a number of ways:
  - a. The Lodge might require an essay on citizenship, written by the student, describing what the student has done for the community which qualifies him or her as a “model citizen.” The Lodge would judge the various essays and select the winner.
  - b. The Lodge would establish objective criteria for the award. The school would nominate a number of graduating seniors who met the qualifications and the Lodge committee would select the winner.
  - c. The Lodge could leave the choice completely to the school principal.
3. The committee would have the plaque designed and engraved, and obtain the savings bond.
4. Select a prominent Mason to make the presentation at an awards assembly or during the graduation ceremony.

## **10K Race and/or Fun Run**

### **Concept:**

A race conducted to support a local charity (or the Lodge).

### **Overview:**

The race concept provides an opportunity for exposure of the Masonic family in a health-related environment for a community project. It requires the cooperation of the city/jurisdictional government authority to block streets, roads and public areas.

### **Implementation Guidance:**

The items which require major research, development, operation, management, and actual implementation include, but are not limited to:

1. Scheduling
  - a. City/county for area to be use
  - b. Merchants for a time which will not obstruct business
  - c. Communities to prevent conflict
  - d. Lodge family to assure adequate volunteer workers
  
2. Costs analysis (budget etc.)
  - a. Registration
  - b. Sponsors
  - c. Prizes
  - d. Refreshments sales
  - e. Jacket or tee shirts for entrants
  - f. Profit for the charity
  
3. Operations (staff)
  - a. Preregistration
  - b. Eligibility
  - c. Forms design
  - d. Pre-mailing
  - e. Registration desk
  - f. Number assignments
  - g. Information desk
  
4. Other
  - a. Local accommodations
  - b. Judges (professional)
  - c. Award groups
  - d. Prizes
  - e. Cancellation policy

## **Establish a Community Emergency Shelter**

### Concept:

Masonic buildings can easily become known to the community as a safe haven. We are usually centrally located geographically, and the public knows who and where we are.

### Overviews:

Local citizens need a temporary haven and a safe place to go during periods of disaster. For the most part, our Lodge buildings can provide convenient shelter from the elements to families driven out of their homes by fire. We already have cooking facilities in our buildings; cots can be set up to provide safe, transient sleeping quarters. With a little upgrade, many Masonic Lodge buildings built to code requirements within the past 10-15 years could also provide emergency shelter during flood, earthquakes or other natural disaster situations.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Designate an aggressive 3 man oversight/steering committee (and chairman) to contact local government officials to identify minimum health, safety, building, sanitation, electric power and habitability code requirements that must be met prior to formal designation and occupancy (in an emergency). Request that they thoroughly study the matter, prepare a written report and cost analysis, and make the requirements known to the Lodge at a stated meeting. The cost analysis must reflect all building and known hardware needs (like a gas operated electric power generator).
2. Acquire building permits; solicit the assistance of fire and rescue department officials and the police department. Their early involvement will ensure that their requirements are met, and just as importantly will ensure that the very people who “steer business our way” will be familiar with the facility.
3. Establish Lodge “work teams” to participate in the renovation and system testing projects.
4. When completed, hold an open house; invite the public and news media to “inspect” the facility.
5. Establish and publish a watch list to ensure a reliable point-of-contact is available to “man” the shelter during an emergency.

## Flag Presentation

### Concept:

Present American flags to schools, churches, social groups, senior citizens groups and youth organizations on behalf of the Lodge.

### Overview:

Identify a local community group to whom presentation of an American flag by an organization like ours would have lasting significance.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Official flags can be obtained from your Congressman, Senator, or the Architect of the Capitol to commemorate significant occasions such as the anniversary date of the organization to whom you're going to make the presentation. With sufficient lead-time, these flags will have been flown over the U.S. Capitol on the date requested.
2. Arrange a suitable time and place with the organization to whom you're going to present the flag. The ceremony should be a patriotic occasion, and should be given wide spread publicity. Planning for such an affair can include a dinner or an old-fashioned picnic with civic leaders, guest speakers, and a marching band at an outdoors special meeting.
3. The occasion lends itself to a good publicity campaign. Write an article for the local news media and the *Trowel*. Include some action photos of the recipients at the affair.
4. Please order your flag well in advance of the date it is to be flown and needed for the actual presentation. Delivery time is about 2 to 4 weeks from the date it is flown. The costs vary on type and size; however, they are relatively inexpensive keepsakes.

## Visits With Nursing Home Residents

### Concept:

The Lodge organizes a nursing home visitation team, of members and their ladies to visit nursing home residents at least once a week.

### Overview:

For many elderly persons, going to a nursing home is a frightening experience, made worse if there are no close family members or friends who can regularly visit. Moreover, nursing home care often is more attentive when residents are regularly visited by concerned outsiders. The Lodge should consider making scheduled visits to a local nursing home to maintain regular contact with some of the residents.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. The Master should appoint a visit coordinator who in turn should contact the administrator of a local nursing home to identify residents who could benefit from visits.
2. The coordinator prepares a roster of members who will visit the nursing home, and maintains a schedule to ensure that weekly visits are made.
3. Maintain regular contact with one or more of the residents. Make reports in Lodge and send cards and letters on appropriate occasions.
4. As particular needs of the residents visited are identified, the Lodge might collect funds to assist. Small personal items, or occasional gifts might be particularly appreciated.
5. Assist residents in making phone calls or writing letters to maintain contact with their friends outside the nursing home. Visitors can also take pictures of the residents which can be included in the letters they write.

## **Hospital Visitation Program**

### Concept:

The Lodge establishes a hospital visitation team to visit with particular individuals during their hospital stay.

### Overview:

It long has been recognized that a positive mental attitude can assist patient recovery. Being lonely, frightened, bored, or isolated in a hospital does not contribute to a positive mental attitude. Receiving frequent visits and being engaged in warm interpersonal relationships does. The Lodge should support the Masonic Service Association's hospital visitation program and also develop its own hospital visitation program.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Patients with certain types of illness have long hospital stays and can benefit from visits by concerned, interested people during the recovery period. The supervising nurses can pinpoint which wards are most appropriate to visit and which patients could most benefit from visits.
2. The Lodge hospital visitation coordinator, after consulting with hospital officials, organizes teams of members who can commit to making hospital visits.
3. Each team, consisting of two or more members, would make daily visits to a particular patient for the duration of their hospital stay. We have found that in most cases patients rarely stay in the hospital more than a few weeks.
4. Some retired members may be willing and able to visit more than one patient or to continue hospital visits on a regular basis. Other members, after serving on a visitation team, may not be able to join a new team for several weeks. The important thing is to have a team available to support patients, one at a time, and not to commit more than the Lodge can deliver.

## **Partners In Home Maintenance/Repair**

### Concept:

Home ownership is an integral part of the American dream. Yet all too often, the elderly or infirm must leave their home due to an inability to repair or maintain it. In other communities, abandoned properties can be made available to those who need decent housing only if these properties can be rehabilitated.

### Overview:

While modern Freemasons no longer build cathedrals, we can build communities. What better way to demonstrate our commitment to the building of the social fabric of the community than by sponsoring the rehabilitation or repair of housing in our community.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Determine the availability of necessary skills among the members of the Lodge before committing to a project. While experience in certain highly skilled occupations will be necessary, do not underestimate the need for large numbers of willing workers who can move materials, swing a hammer, or otherwise just follow instructions.
2. Consider the cost of materials. Will the Lodge provide only labor, or will it underwrite all or part of the materials needed? Will costs be shared with other community charitable organizations?
3. Permits are customarily the legal responsibility of the owner of the property. However, it would be prudent to determine that the necessary permits have been issued before the Lodge expends the time and resources of its members.
4. Determine which portion(s) of the work must be performed by licensed tradesmen. Seek their cooperation and, possibly, a contribution of all or part of their portion of the project.
5. Consider the Lodge's liability with respect to injuries sustained during the project. Consult with the Lodge's insurance carrier and legal advisors about the possibility of having participants sign waivers of liability.

## Walk-A-Thon

### Concept:

Arrange with a local charity to organize a walk of up to ten or more miles. Each volunteer walker will secure pledges for the number of miles walked.

### Overview:

Organize as many walkers as possible and encourage each walker to solicit as many persons as possible to either pledge from \$.10 to \$ 1.00 or more per mile walked or a flat amount for the charity.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Identify the charity and obtain their written approval of support and assistance.
2. Arrange for walk a facility. Examples are:
  - a. A high school 400 meter track.
  - b. A local county or state park.
  - c. A rural road where the walk will not inhibit the flow of traffic.
3. Organize assistance for guards to protect the participants. (Note: All participants should be in plain view of a guard at all times.)
4. Develop a system of recording the entries, issuing them a number, providing them with a pledge sheet to enable them to obtain very favorable, collectable pledges (pledges may be paid in advance to eliminate a collection process). Donations without mileage criteria are also acceptable.
5. A picnic after the walk can be held as an added benefit for the walkers, if a sponsor can be obtained.
6. Various special events can be attached to this event with details to meet the preferences of the sponsor.
7. Charities which will generally cooperate fully with a Walk-A-Thon include, but are not limited to: Muscular Dystrophy Association; Heart Association; Kidney Society; Multiple Sclerosis; American Cancer Society; church rebuilding; and, local community special charitable activities.

## Support Public Education

### Concept:

Our public school system is the foundation of American society. It provides the basis for a common body of knowledge and experience that has transformed generation after generation of diverse people of every race, creed, color or religious persuasion from every nation in the world into patriotic, freedom-loving Americans. The public school system needs our support.

### Overview:

The Lodge can implement a host of programs to clearly demonstrate Masonry's support for our public schools in a practical way. Be prepared to be flexible and innovative. No two schools will have precisely the same needs. Get to know the faculty, administration, and the students. Design a plan of action that will fit your community's requirements. Almost anything that adds to the depth and breadth of student oriented programs will be gratefully accepted by our schools.

### Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a public schools program chairman and a standing committee of three dynamic, self-starters to spearhead this program.
2. Initiate community-wide efforts to acquire new equipment for local schools. Frequently needed items may include:
  - a. Audiovisual equipment
  - b. Computer hardware and software
  - c. Library books and supplies
  - d. Athletic and playground equipment.
3. Consider "adopting" a school. Make a long-term commitment to provide volunteer manpower to support a variety of school projects, such as: teachers' assistants for before or after school enrichment programs; tutoring; and, providing a pool of speakers for career-day.
4. Develop awards that give tangible recognition to outstanding teachers. No other single element of the educational environment is as important as a knowledgeable and inspiring teacher. Show them that Masons appreciate their influence on our children.

## **LODGE FUND-RAISING IDEAS**

Anything we do for the community costs time, effort, or money. In many instances, more money is required than an individual member or even a Lodge can afford to spend.

Masonic law, the Constitutions of Masonry, and the Ancient Landmarks prohibit certain fund-raising strategies and techniques used by other organizations. However, there are many innovative methods available to us that do not carry the stain of gambling or lotteries associated with them.

This section of our handbook is designed as a fancy-tickler; that is, we've compiled and provided thumbnail sketches of some successful fund raisers, used by Masonic Lodges around the country, for your review. No attempt is made to recommend one method over another or to encourage the adoption of a specific method. Each Masonic Lodge must decide for itself. What's good (or seemingly tailor-made) for one Masonic District is not possible in another because of local biases or the personality of the area.

The Worshipful Master is encouraged to isolate three or four of these ideas and "brainstorm" them at a stated communication or committee meeting scheduled for that purpose. One of these seeds probably will take root and be ideally shaped for your Lodge.

Several active committees, with well-defined responsibilities, could be formed. For example; a committee could be available for the tiring task of counting and rolling coins, collected by whatever means, and transfer the money to the Secretary. Another committee could identify and contact potential workers. While another group could attend to the important job of internal and external public relations.

### **a. Lodge Breakfasts/Suppers:**

Moderately priced opportunities for community families to get together socially over a nourishing meal have been high on the list of Lodge fund-raisers across the country. The key to this method is consistency. If it's something that they can count on from month-to-month, you'll find that there will be quite a bit of return business. Much of the advertisement is by word of mouth. Advertise on local bulletin boards and inexpensive flyers. Announce the function at district meetings.

### **b. Church Breakfasts:**

Collaborate with one of the local churchmen's groups to sponsor a periodic Saturday morning brunch at the church (or if it's more convenient, at your Lodge). The only difference between this and item (a) is that you're also inviting input from the house of worship's leadership for the project. One small

disadvantage is that you'll be splitting the proceeds. Advantages include a wider sales base and a small outside group to help with the food preparation and cleanup.

### **c. Christmas Fund:**

Start the Christmas toy fund collections at your first meeting in January. Announce in your trestleboard that donations for this special project are welcome all-year-round. Periodically remind the members that the "collection box" is available for them to feed if they desire. Recommend that if they have a special "occasion" which they want to commemorate it could be publicly recognized with a donation to this fund.

### **d. Christmas Caroling:**

An old fashioned songfest that can be fun all year long takes on a special festive air during the holiday season. Masonic Lodges in England and Scotland sometimes raise money for the destitute and the hospitals in a geographic area by periodically conducting a strolling serenade. They advertise the time that the balladeers will be in the neighborhood and the purpose of the fundraiser in local newspapers or bulletin boards. It's jolly good fun!

### **e. Lodge Dinners/Barbecue:**

Everyone has to eat, and among your membership you're going to find several members who have a talent for cooking. Why not couple these two ideas and consider an old-fashioned bull roast or piggy-rib dinner? Paper plates, plastic cutlery, a couple of gallons of iced tea, a few quarts of cole slaw, throw in an

ice-cold watermelon and you're in business. You can easily advertise in supermarkets, the local newspaper, or with hand drawn signs placed in strategic spots in the community. It's loads of fun. Here's a partial list of some types of meals which have been served recently. You probably know a score of others:

Chicken Dinner	Roast Beef Dinner	Steak Fry
Seafood Dinner	Oyster Dinner	Crab Dinner
Crab Cakes	Pancake Breakfast	Spaghetti
Sub-sales	Ham Dinner	Soup & Salad
Mutton Munch	Turkey Dinner	Lobster Dinner
Venison Roast	Pot Pie Dinner	Turtle Dinner
Strawberry Feast	Pot Luck Buffet	Variety Buffet
Rabbit Roast	Fish Fry	Pork Roast

### **f. Sponsor a Play or Musical Concert:**

Contract with a local amateur theater group to buy-out a special afternoon or evening performance. Publish the availability of tickets in your Lodge Bulletin and encourage sales to outsiders by advertising in the news media. Especially contact other Lodges in your district to widen the sales market base. The

performance should be sold out prior to the event.

### **g. Collect and Recycle Newspapers:**

In addition to raising money for a good cause, this “painless” fundraiser also helps to protect the forests and keeps landfills from premature overflow. There are recycling companies in your area who would be pleased to locate one of their neatly painted paper bins in a corner of your parking area and establish a routine pickup service. Periodically they send a check to the Secretary in payment.

### **h. Recycle Aluminum Cans:**

Aluminum collection campaigns can be either passive or active. In addition to doing something to save our natural resources you’ll be making a lot of money. Consider doing this project over a long period of time. You can capitalize on the program to make people recycle conscious.

### **i. Run a Craft Fair:**

A Lodge can provide space in their social hall or parking lot for local artisans to display and sell their wares. Prior financial arrangements are always established with the vendors. Some Lodges simply rent space at a given rate for a table or square footage display; others negotiate for a percentage of sales. In both instances, the sales tax charged on saleable items is the responsibility of the vendor. It may be a nice gesture to give Masonic youth organizations an invitation to run the soft drink concession. Intake from the sale of soft drinks usually stays with the Masonic youth, to support their charity programs. The Lodge or the Eastern Star may elect to sell foodstuff during the fair.

### **j. Craft/Sewing Projects for Sale:**

Craft fairs are fun. Many people would rather give a hand made gift than a store bought item. Our ladies can be recruited to manufacture handmade items for sale. Items can range from children’s toys and bird houses, to handcrafted cummerbunds or other wearing apparel.

### **k. Run a Dinner Theater Party:**

This entry is the same as item (f), except that you contract with your local professional dinner theater group.

### **1. Save your Pocket Change:**

Encourage your members to empty their pocket of coins every night into a Mason jar or other suitable receptacle. Once a quarter or some other specified period, have them bring their accumulated change to Lodge. It’s not uncommon for some of our members to collect over \$100 a year this way alone.

### **m. Rent Yourself Out as a Handyman for an Afternoon:**

Every one of us has a particular talent, which may be useful to someone. This activity is a takeoff on that Personal Assistant Day that some college fraternities and sororities sometimes hold. One member of the Lodge (or a committee) can be designated to schedule the work and make the financial arrangements. A catalog of available resources (i.e., painters, plasterers, gardeners, plumbers, etc.) can be compiled.

### **n. Bazaar:**

A central theme is usually selected, such as Mediterranean Day, or a Day in Mexico, or some local celebrated historic event. Music, dancers, food, rides for children, and items for sale are made available. Either charge an entrance fee or make financial arrangements with individual vendors. The central theme should be carried by the decorations, table settings, and advertisements. In some communities these “days” have been popular for several generations. Vendors sometimes enroll for table space a year in advance. School band concerts can be arranged. Close coordination is required with local citizens groups to ensure that there is no conflict in dates, or local ordinances.

### **o. Bake Sale:**

Always a very popular event. Select a date, have the members deliver their home made baked goods to a selected spot or have a team arrange a pickup service. Widespread advertisement is a necessity. Bake sales can be held in conjunction with other activities or tables can be set up, with prior permission, at shopping centers or malls. A separate sales team should be on hand to man the tables during sale hours. Cakes and pies can be sold whole or by the slice. It is essential that sanitary considerations be maintained. Each cake or pie should be plastic wrapped. Containers for cookies should be provided. Food trays should be covered to keep off airborne dirt and insects.

### **p. Bakeless Bake Sale:**

Some members have decided that rather than spending time in the kitchen, they’d rather donate the cost of buying and preparing the baked goods. It is traditional in one office where I worked, that each member “bake” at least one cake or pie; the proceeds go to an established fund.

### **r. Truckload Sales:**

Christmas trees, candy, Vedralia onions, azaleas, citrus fruit, rose bushes and fireworks can be successfully sold by Masonic organizations at various times during the year. Front money is usually required to contract for bulk stock acquisition. Some companies may consign their stock to reputable retailers-however the safety/security of this selling strategy is always offset by a smaller overall financial return.

### **s. Sandwich Sales:**

Make sandwiches for sale to our members and to the public. Take orders from friends, family members, coworkers and acquaintances to determine how much material to purchase. It is always best to have the money in hand prior to the day of the sale as it ensures that you won't have any leftovers to eat into your profits.

### **t. Soda Machine Revenue:**

Earmark the revenue from your soda machine for a specific purpose by establishing a special fund. You would be surprised how quickly the nickels and dimes add up.

### **u. Yard Sale (white elephant):**

Everyone has something lying around the house, stashed away in the attic, or stuck in the garage that is no longer useful to them. It has been said that one man's junk is another man's treasure. Why not consider asking your members to clear out these potential treasures, donate them to the Lodge, and conduct a yard sale? A little bit of local coordination, a few carefully hand-lettered signs to advertise the venture and you're in business. It's a lot of fun-and you're likely to find a REAL treasure among the relics. Just the thing that you've been looking for!!

### **v. Art Auction:**

Use the Lodge hall or recreation area to conduct the event. It can easily become the focus of an annual affair. There are several reputable national organizations who regularly advertise in trade journals that put on these art auctions. Most of the work, all of the art for sale, and the bulk of the advertising is done by the company. This same concept can also apply to other items (i.e., house wares, etc.).

### **w. Almoners Box at the Tyler's Door:**

This is by far the oldest method that Lodges worldwide have used to raise money to serve the needy. Periodic announcements are necessary to remind our members that it's there to provide a valuable service. Many otherwise generous members just forget that it's there. They see it so often, that it becomes invisible. Hundreds of dollars worth of pocket change (and low denomination bills) can be collected this easy way.

### **x. Direct Mail Solicitation (for specific purpose from Members):**

It is inappropriate to solicit any but your own Lodge members in this way. But, you should always give your members an opportunity to support all the fund raising activities in which you engage. For instance, if you decide to sell candy to raise money for a food bank, even those members who can't use the candy

and those who live half way around the globe should be given the chance to buy a few boxes. If you're raising money for any charitable program every member of the Lodge should be given the opportunity to participate.

**y. Yard Work (for Hourly or by the Job Fee Arrangements):**

Advertise in local newspapers or bulletin boards that capable, mature men are available to perform certain types of labor for a fee. The advertisement should specify the charity that will be the beneficiary of this event. Some Lodges set aside a whole weekend once a quarter or once a year for this sort of activity. Many members are pleased to donate their time and energy when they know that "their" favorite charity will benefit from their work.

**z. Vend Soft Drinks and/or Candy at Municipal Sites:**

Many fraternal organizations or other nonprofit organizations are offered low (or no cost) vending licenses to conduct a sales venture with competitive prices at community affairs. Clearly advertise the charity that will profit from the sales effort. Surveys show that many people who might not even be thirsty will buy a soft drink, or people on a diet will pick up a candy bar to support some charitable or other worthwhile endeavor.

**aa. Prepare and Sell a Lodge Cookbook:**

This effort is always a surefire winner. Everybody loves to see their culinary favorites in print and to occasionally sample one of your choice dishes at their own dinner table. Two alternative approaches can be undertaken. Your Lodge can collect recipes, sort, type, proofread, correct, duplicate, collate, assemble, bind, and package the finished books yourselves-which is rather labor intensive, or you can contract to have the book published. In the latter instance, the cookbook publishing company handles all aspects of the business-all the Lodge has to do is select the style of cookbook desired, determine the number of books that you want to put into circulation, and furnish the recipes.

When you receive your finished stock (whether you print them yourselves or contract-out) you can sell them at various outlets in your geographic area. Most people that take time to provide their tried and true recipes can also be counted on to purchase several copies of the finished cookbook as a gift or as a family keepsake.

The following are names, addresses, and phone numbers of three companies that specialize in publishing cookbooks, for organizations like ours. Please contact them directly for additional firsthand information:

Cookbook Publishers Inc.  
2 101 Kansas City Road  
PO Box 1260  
Olathe, KS 66061-1260

Phone: 1-800-227-7282

Circulation Service, Inc.  
PO Box 7306  
Indian Creek Station  
Leawood, KS 66207  
Phone: 1-913-491-6300

Note: Undoubtedly there are others, we just don't know who they are. If you find others, please let us know who they are -we'll publish them in future updates of this handbook.

### **ab. Prepare and Sell Visit-Guides:**

Prepare visitor information pamphlets (or tape recorded version) for sale to the public. Although it's not essential, you should consider protecting your investment with a copyright. The most obvious places to sell items of this sort are at yard sales and bazaars, or you can consign the book or tapes at visitor's centers. Some local businesses might consider using your visit-guide as a promotional item.

### **ac. Sponsor a Community Golf Tournament:**

Sell tickets for an opportunity to spend a pleasant day of golfing with your favorite foursome. Some Masonic Districts sponsor an annual event. They invite local celebrities or popular sports stars to participate to attract the public. In most instances, the local golf club provides added financial incentives and takes care of most of the administrative chores. Lodge members are recruited as the sales force.

### **ad. Dime-and-Pin Sales:**

The handymen in your Lodge could be recruited to solder diaper pins to the backsides of 10-cent pieces. The finished Dime-and-Pin is an attractive piece of costume jewelry, which can be consigned or sold to novelty shops for their resale. You can market them individually to the public. There might be a retailer in your community who desires to acquire several gross of these items as a sales promotion item.

### **ae. Sponsor a Carnival or Circus:**

Some Masonic Districts across the country sponsor an annual circus which accounts for and covers their yearlong charitable giving needs and also pays for a school scholarship program. Every member of each Lodge shares in the joy of selling tickets and providing publicity. Lodge members buy out a whole seating section for themselves to be used as giveaways to orphanages and homes for the aged.

Some companies, which have a proven local track record, are listed below. They aren't the only ones. If during your research you locate other companies, please share their names and addresses with us so that we can pass them on.

Carnivals  
Snyder Amusements  
3 43 5 Sportsman Road  
Greencastle, PA 17225  
Phone: (717) 597-4871  
Fax: (717) 597-5024

Degler Attractions  
Joel T. Cadwell  
400 Esmont Court  
Chesapeake, VA 23320  
Phone: (804) 436-2366  
Fax: (804) 548-0684

Circus  
Robert Bros Three Ring Circus  
5619 Antoinette Street  
Sarasota, FL 34232  
Phone: (813) 371-7367  
Fax: (813) 377-5434

**af. Poll Tax (Dollar-a-Vote):**

This “tax” is an added way to collect extra money for your favorite charity or scholarship fund. It can be introduced at a picnic, carnival, county fair or anyplace where large groups congregate to have fun. Sell an opportunity for people to register to vote on something. It can be something as silly as the ugliest piglet of the bunch, or the prettiest calf in a herd, or a vote on the most outrageous hat worn by a model. At a given time the votes are counted and the winner announced. The real winner is the charity for which you've gathered the money.

**ag. Collection Box for Refreshments:**

A collection box at the end of the refreshment line can provide a method to offset food costs. This system allows other funds, previously used to purchase refreshments, to be earmarked for other important purposes.

**ah. Rental of Lodge Facilities or Property:**

It is very proper to permit the use of Lodge chairs, tables, or microphones for a fee. Rental fees which are scaled for the geographic area can be determined by contacting a local rental agency. Also, rental of the Lodge social hall for proper

functions is encouraged. Organizations wishing to use the Lodge parking area for such events as flea markets, auctions, or drill practices should be encouraged. In any of these situations, the Lodge can realize significant additional income with little or no out-of-pocket expense. **WARNING:** Be sure the function being conducted is legal and, if required, is properly licensed and insured.

**ai. Masonic Regalia Sales:**

Providing Masonic regalia for purchase by Lodge members and visiting Masons is encouraged. The Lodge can procure a wide range of items at reasonable cost from many sources. Markup the prices to provide a reasonable profit for the Lodge and have them available for sale at each meeting. Here are some frequently used sources for Masonic regalia:

**Macy Publishing & Supply**

3011 Old Dumbarton Road  
Richmond, VA 23228  
(800) 637-4640

Harry Klitzner  
44 Warren Street  
Providence, RI 02901  
(401) 751-7500

Ihling Brothers  
2022 Fulford Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
(800) 999-4232

J.P. Luther Co.  
PO Box #344 (or)  
173 S. Pearl Street  
Berlin, WI 54923  
(800) 558-8292

## **CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS**

Thank you for taking the time to study the 100-Ways to Serve Your Community Guidebook. We hope that it proved informative and that it turns out to be the first step in a lifetime journey of rewarding community service for you and other members of your Lodge.

Check the Appendixes for phone numbers of local organizations that can assist you in finding the volunteer work that's right for you.

If you have any questions about community service in general, or would like to receive information on a specific volunteer organization, don't hesitate to call:

Volunteers of America, Inc., Jamaica Plain, MA (800) 522-8086  
Voluntary Action Center, United Way & Mass Bay, Boston (617) 482-8370

America is entering a new and exciting era. It is an era of volunteerism. A time when more Masons and their families, nationwide, are focusing their considerable talents and energies on helping others who are less fortunate.