

# **Remember**

**The most  
often used reason  
for people not to  
join an organization  
is because no one  
ever asked them.**

## *HOW DO I FIND THOSE PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS?*

### **FIRST:**

Majority Rainbow girls and Job's Daughters are a natural. Contact the current leaders of those organizations and get a list of those prospects as far back as you can. If you don't have a Rainbow Assembly in your town anymore, find out who used to be the Mother Advisor and see if she can conjure up a list or remember who was in Rainbow way back when. Once you have some names, invite them out to lunch with a couple of "FUN" Star members and don't forget to have a petition with you and ask them to join.

### **SECOND:**

Find out who the Masons are in your area, from either the local lodge or from the Grand Lodge. Also, try and find out the names of those Masons who have passed away. You might do the same with the nearest Shrine, as some of their members may not belong to a Montana Lodge. Once you have some names, find out who knows whom...and then go ahead and figure out who are the prospective members in your area. Again, invite them out to lunch with some "FUN" Star members...and don't forget to have a petition with you and ask them to join.

### **THIRD:**

Hold a brain-storming party with as many chapter members as you can get...to identify who they might know that would be eligible, including their own family members. Once you have some names of prospects, invite them to lunch with some "FUN" Star members...and don't forget to have a petition with you and ask them to join.

If you decide to invite your prospective members to a "Friendship Night" that involves either a dinner or a potluck, make sure you keep your program short, keep it fun, and don't scare them away with an overload of too much information. Your speaker should be good, prepared, and brief. Resist the temptation to let everybody talk who wants to say something. Have just ONE speaker. Then open it up for questions. Have plenty of time for fellowship, because that will sell more of them than anything else.

Don't get discouraged. Not everyone is going to join. But you will get some, and that's way better than doing nothing.

March 4, 2000

Dear Sister or Brother:

We are writing on behalf of our Chapter because of the concern expressed by our Officers about the future of *Eastern Star Chapter #1*. There are many positive aspects of our Chapter: the officers' ritualistic work is excellent, (which indicates they care a great deal for our Order); we continually support Grand Chapter projects for Cancer Research, Scholarships and the Masonic Home; our lodge building and facilities are beautiful, and *Eastern Star Chapter #1* has been an essential part of this community for over 75 years!. However, in the recent past we have spent time discussing the concerns of the Chapter, including the fact that although there are approximately 150 Chapter members (with over half of them within a 30 miles radius) it has been difficult to get members to participate; the same members fill the offices repeatedly; and the average age is over 50.

We have discussed the possibility of making changes that would, perhaps, make attendance more likely -- for instance, changing the meeting night from Wednesday (a traditional church night) to possibly Thursday. Another suggestion was to be dark in January and February and meet through the summer months, alleviating some of the worst snow and cold problems, and perhaps, attract visitors that vacation in the area. Our discussions are open and positive and everyone continues to express concern about possible satisfactory solutions.

In today's world of upheaval, the lessons taught by our ritual and the projects supported by the Order of the Eastern Star are vitally needed. It is one of the few places that people with similar moral and social values can participate in vital, fundamental and essential causes, while expanding their personal well-being through social activities. *Eastern Star Chapter #1* Membership Committee would like to cultivate a spirit of optimism and confidence in our Chapter. To do that, we need YOUR help. We desire your input and preferences in order to shape our Chapter for the future. Your participation and membership is precious to *Eastern Star Chapter #1*. We have every confidence that you care about the future of our Chapter and so are asking you to respond promptly with your ideas, suggestions and participation. We have enclosed a checklist with a few opportunities and possibilities for your consideration. Please return your comments to: Chapter Secretary, Address. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and response.

Sincerely,

Susie Star  
Membership Committee

Suggestions for the Chapter:

- Change meeting night from Wednesday
- Meet through the summer months
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Pick at least two of the following ways to participate:

- I would be willing to serve refreshments for one meeting
- I would be willing (occasionally) to drive someone who is not able to get to a meeting
- I would be willing to serve on a telephone calling committee
- I would be willing to help set up the Chapter before meetings
- I would be willing to be an officer
- I would be willing to plan a program or entertainment for one meeting
- I would be willing to invite a friend, who is not a member, to a social activity
- I would be willing to bring another member to a meeting who has not been to Chapter for awhile
- I would be willing to attend a social function with another Chapter/Lodge
- I would be willing to decorate the lunch tables for one meeting
- I would be willing to visit a shut-in or member in a nursing home
- I would be willing to send cards or notes occasionally to cheer a member in need
- I would be willing to audit the Chapter books once a year
- I would be willing to help with a newsletter or other mass mailing
- I would be willing to \_\_\_\_\_
- I would be willing to \_\_\_\_\_
- I would be willing to \_\_\_\_\_
- I would be willing to \_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE LETTER FOR INACTIVE MEMBERS

to be mailed with our new pamphlet (brochure)

DEAR (Members name)

(Chapter name and no.), Order of the Eastern Star, of which you are a member in good standing, has started a Membership Program in cooperation with the Minnesota Grand Chapter Membership Committee.

The first step in this program is contacting all of our present Chapter members and asking for your help and support.

We are all very concerned with the declining membership and chapter consolidations. We ask for your help in this area. If you know of anyone, in any part of our state, who has Masonic relationship, please give them the enclosed information. In addition, please give their name and address to our Chapter Membership Chairman (name and address or phone no.) who will contact them and give them any further information they may request or require.

We also need your help serving on an active committee such as calling members, informing them of Chapter activities and encouraging attendance, or, by helping in any way you can.

We need your support by your attendance at our meetings whenever possible. If transportation is a problem, please let us know and we will provide rides for you. We hope to encourage our present members to be as active as their time and health permit.

We look forward to hearing from you.

With fraternal love,

(name)

Worthy Matron

(name & address)

Chapter Secretary

## WORTHY MATRON'S LETTER TO PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS (SAMPLE)

Dear (Prospective Member),

I have just started my year as Worthy Matron for \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter, and I would really like you to fill out your petition to join Eastern Star. Let me tell you why---and yes, I am willing to beg!

**Reason One:**

I would selfishly like you to join during my term as Worthy Matron.

**Reason Two:**

We have asked your friends \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to join at the same time. I am begging them, too.

**Reason Three:**

Our state convention is in Butte this June and I would love for you to be able to be there. We have so much fun!!!

**Reason Four:**

We will call you for meetings and arrange to pick you up if you would like.

**Reason Five:**

You will build a friendship support group. I have life-long friends that I have met through Star and you will too. No one can have too many friends. And, we have lots of fun!!!

**Reason Six:**

I will offer you a money back guarantee. If you do not like what you see once you give us a chance, I will pay your dues for this year. Dues are \_\_\_\_\_---not very expensive for all the fun we have.

**Reason Seven:**

We need you!

There is an evening question session at my home on \_\_\_\_\_ so you can ask any questions you may have. The other prospective members are invited as well.

Please, please, please consider my pleas. I am so subtle, right?

Initiation is \_\_\_\_\_, so I need your petition by \_\_\_\_\_.

Fraternally, and with fun,

Dear ( Prospective member):

Yes, I am going to beg!!! I would really like you to fill out your petition to join Eastern Star this year. Let me tell you why using the 10 reason format from the Letterman Show.

**Reason One:**

The year 2005 would be an easy year to remember when you are old. I joined in 1970, so I will just add 35 on to your year- so I'll always remember your anniversary.

**Reason Two:**

I would selfishly like you to join during my term as Worthy Matron.

**Reason Three:**

We have asked your friends \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to join at the same time. I am begging them too.

**Reason Four:**

Petition signers can qualify for an International award for members brought in this year.

**Reason Five:**

Our state convention will be in Billings and I would love for you to be able to be there. You may go for one day, the whole time, the Installation or any portion. We have so much fun!!

**Reason Six:**

A chance to get involved with community activities. Make a difference in a child's life and your own.

**Reason Seven:**

We have some neat shopping booths for formals at our Grand Chapter and at other Grand Chapters, where we could take you.

**Reason Eight:**

We will call you for meetings and arrange to pick you up if you would like.

**Reason Nine:**

I will offer you a money back guarantee. If you do not like what you see once you give us a chance, I will pay your dues for 2005. Dues are not very expensive for all the fun we have.

**Reason Ten:**

You will build a friendship support group. I have life-long friends that I have met through Star and you will too. No one can have too many friends. And, we have lots of fun!!

There is an evening question session at my home on so you can ask any questions you may have. The other prospective members are invited as well.

Please, please, please consider my pleas. I am so subtle, right? Initiation is \_\_\_\_\_ so I need your petition by \_\_\_\_\_.

Fraternally, and with fun,

## Let's Reactivate Those Inactive Members

An active Chapter, large or small, will be a drawing card to potential members in your community so we need our present members to be enthusiastic and active. That means our meetings need to be fun, interesting and worthwhile; our projects meaningful; our concern for all our Sisters and Brothers sincere; and our enthusiasm for the Order evident to outsiders.

### Who Are These Inactive Members?

A first step should be to know who these people are, to keep in touch with them regularly and to learn why they are no longer regularly attending Chapter meetings or events.

#### **If they are not living in the community,**

- ◇ Keep in touch. Send birthday and holiday cards.
- ◇ Let them know what the Chapter is doing and who the officers are. Perhaps send a program after installation.
- ◇ Thank them for their continued interest in and support of the Chapter.
- ◇ Be aware of and let the chapter know of any health or other problems they may have.

#### **If they are local residents,**

- ◇ Let them know the Chapter cares about them and misses them. Always express brotherly-love and keep in mind we are dedicated to Charity, Truth, and Loving-kindness. Determine the reasons for non-attendance if possible.
- ◇ Make contacts on a regular basis. Use phone calls, visits, letters or notes. (Remember that someone who found it difficult to be active at one time, may be able to take part again at a later time. A personal contact may be just what is needed to encourage the member to return to active status.)
- ◇ Is a member homebound? A visit, cards or notes from members, small gifts at holiday times and reports on Chapter activities will help to keep the member interested. Be sure every Sister and Brother knows they are cherished members of the Chapter (they will communicate positive attitudes about the Order and the Chapter if they feel they are remembered.)
- ◇ Is a member about to be dropped for non-payment of dues or because a demit has been requested? Before letting that happen or taking any such action, make personal contact with that member (a visit, if possible). Find out what might be done to change the person's decision. Personal interest and encouragement may be the key to bringing the member back to active membership.



- ◇ Is getting into the lodge room difficult? If climbing the stairs is a problem, move a meeting once-in-awhile to a handicapped accessible location - your dining room or another place that is easy to enter. Make sure these members know of the change of location and arrange transportation for them. This has been done very successfully by some Chapters.

Hold a 'special meeting' for those who don't drive or get out at night-perhaps lunch followed by an afternoon meeting. Again, be sure the members know of it and arrange rides if needed.

- ◇ If a member has lost interest, try to find out why and what it would take to reactivate that member. You may be surprised what a little attention can do.
- ◇ After an interesting meeting, call members who were not present. Tell them about what they missed and that they were missed. Then update them on coming events and the next meeting. Call again before the next event or meeting and offer a ride.

### **Other Ways To Get Inactive Members Involved Again**

- ◇ Use committees for planning activities and meetings. Involve a variety of people on these committees including some inactive members each time. (Sometimes we tend to have the same people doing everything. A conscious effort to involve others and make them feel they have much to contribute is important).
- ◇ Have a visitation committee. This committee should not just visit shut-ins, but also visit and give small gifts or remembrances to all inactive members. Tell them what is going on in the Chapter and update them on any news of members, projects, Grand Chapter, etc. Offer to refresh their memories as to what goes on at a meeting (some will feel they don't remember such things as the reverent attitude, the prayer response, the Star Point passes, etc.) Then invite them to the next meeting, offer to pick them up and if possible, to sit with them or have another member who will sit with them during the meeting.

Is there a problem? What could the Chapter do to correct or help solve it?

Is there any assistance the Chapter could give this member?

Is payment of dues a hardship at present? Could the Chapter consider absorbing the dues for the member if it would help?

- ◇ Is a member just not attending meetings? Perhaps this member no longer drives, fears wintry roads, has no one to attend with, or just has gotten out of the habit of attending. Assign someone to contact the member, to offer rides, to offer to sit with the member (one who has been away for some time often feels uneasy about coming back to a meeting alone), and to continue to keep in touch.
- ◇ Is there a feeling that meetings run too late? Instead of having refreshments after your meeting (especially if it is to be a long meeting) have a potluck or coffee and dessert before the meeting sometimes. Many members are anxious to get home after the meeting and miss out on the fellowship which is such an important part of our Chapters.

**Give members a reason to come,**

- ◇ a job, task or assignment (not only in the kitchen, but to be a part of the meeting). Involve them in meetings or special nights with something that would make them feel a part of the group and a contributor.

You might ask a different person for each meeting to:

Be an official greeter or hostess

Be the prompter for the evening (offer directions if needed)

Retire the flag at the close of the meeting (any member may retire the flag)

Read or present something under the Good of the Order

Pour coffee or serve punch for a special meeting or event

Assist with special nights - Friendship Night, Rob Morris Night, etc.

Bring something that may be used for the evening's program or theme

Take part in the installation

## HOW TO KEEP NEW MEMBERS

Impress them with your efficiency and personal interest!

### Before the Initiation

Acknowledge receipt of the petition in writing. Conduct a cordial and dignified investigation. Send the petitioner a calendar of activities and Chapter publication. Notify the candidate in writing when and where the Initiation will be held. Invite their friends and relatives who are Eastern Star members.

### At the Initiation

Designate a *member* to receive the candidate at the door, make them feel welcome, and direct them to the Preparation Room. This is done by someone other than the AC and Sentinel.

This *member* should stay with the Candidates until the AC comes to get them.

Have each candidate fill out a personnel survey form, indicating their interests, talents, abilities, and desire to participate.

Treat each candidate as an individual. Present outstanding ritualistic work. Continue the pageantry right to the close of the meeting.

Following the close of the meeting, have each member approach new members to get better acquainted and offer a sincere welcome. This should be done besides the official greeting at the end of the initiation.

### After the Initiation

Show an interest in each new member.

Review their personnel survey, and fit them into an activity, which they like.

Explain meeting procedure.

Involve the member in the Chapter work -

Committees

Initiations / Projects

Special interests and hobbies

***Encourage but don't insist.***

Invite and remind the member of the upcoming meeting; offer a ride. When the new members miss a meeting for the first time, phone them and let them know that she was missed. Tell them what was missed. ***DON'T*** let it be even suspected that they are being pressured.

## ACTIVE MEMBER PARTICIPATION

People who join an organization, no matter what that organization may be, join for several reasons. If they do not find what they are expecting within that organization they soon become inactive members or even drop out. It is important, therefore, to be aware of the personal reasons for joining as well as ways for chapters to accommodate the expectations of their members. That said; let us see what we can make of this.

**First**, why do people join? There are a multitude of reasons and we can list a few and you probably could list many more.

1. We may need to be in a relationship with others of our own kind and mindset.
2. We may need to be of a service to others.
3. We may be followers and need leadership and guidance.
4. We may be leaders and need followers to lead and guide.
5. We may need to feel needed, wanted, and part of something worthwhile and that we have something to give and to feel that we are important to others.

Keeping these reasons for joining in mind we must now look for ways of meeting those needs for the members of our chapters.

One word describes most of these needs and that is "participation". Perhaps the easiest method to keep members active is in the formation of committees! Now many feel that committees are, for the most part, a waste of time. You often hear that "a camel is a horse designed by a committee", but given a purpose and meaning a committee can fill our needs. It should be the responsibility of the Worthy Matron of the Chapter to see that the work of the Chapter is placed in the hands of the members of the Chapter. **Thus the committee is born!** Another thought to keep in mind is that members can be appointed to more than one committee if they so desire. So, if committee work is one of the methods we can utilize to foster participation in our members maybe we should see what the possibilities are!

Let's list a few, not necessarily in the order of preference or importance and try to see how these committees can function!

**1. Refreshment or Food Committee:** Some would consider this to be one of the most important committees! This committee would be responsible for seeing that a light meal or refreshments are served after each chapter meeting. The head or chair of this committee could volunteer, be appointed or be the duty of the person that holds a particular office in the Chapter.

As an example, the chair of this committee would make up a roster of members who would, in turn, be responsible for supplying the refreshments on one or two meeting nights throughout the year. Each month the committee could be made up of two or three persons, thereby spreading that job in the course of a year to include many of the members. It would be the duty of the head of the committee to remind those persons selected for a given month that is their turn to supply the refreshments. They, in turn, would be responsible to provide refreshments or to find somebody to take their place if they cannot fulfill their duties.

Recognition is a great way to get members  
Willing to help on projects.

“Accentuate the Positive”

## *Forms of Recognition*

## *Giving Recognition is a 3 Step Process*

## *Reasons People Don't Use Recognition*

“I keep meaning to give people recognition, but I'm just too busy.”

“Giving recognition is always so embarrassing- for me and the other person.”

“I haven't been recognizing people in the past. If I start now, they'll probably think I have a hidden agenda.”

“People know when things are going well; they don't need to hear it from me.”

“We have programs and appointments that take care of recognizing people. I don't see that it's my responsibility.”

“I save my recognition for really big accomplishments. That way it means more.”  
I'm worried that if I single out one person for his or her accomplishment, others in the Group will feel slighted.”

“Why should I recognize people who never recognize my efforts.”

# 10 Steps to Chapter Renewal

## **1. Plan, Program, Prepare**

## **2. Attract New Members**

*Identify men and women in your community who would meet the qualifications of membership. Have trouble coming up with names? Try the following tools...*

## **3. Spice up Chapter Meetings**

## **4. Family Involvement**

## **5. Community Involvement/Visibility**

**6. Initiate a major fundraiser, either for your chapter or a worthy cause in your community.**

**7. Membership Retention/Utilization**

**8. Publicize Your Chapter (Internally and Externally)**

**9. Lodge Appearance**

## **10. Last But Certainly Not Least -- RITUAL**

*Make sure your Chapter can and does provide top-notch ritual in your Initiation and meetings.*

*Hold a Ritual School of Instruction.*

· Contact your Chapter Instructor, Area Instructor, and Worthy Patron.

**Finally, Sisters and Brothers,** please understand that you and your Chapter are not in this thing alone. It is a TEAM effort!