

## GUIDELINE FOR PROSPECT NIGHT

This information packet is intended to assist your Chapter in planning and implementing a "Prospect Night" to get prospective Eastern Star members to attend and hopefully join your Chapter. Using this information, you will readily identify prospective members and then be able to invite them to your Prospect Night. The key is to use the plan and work hard to see that it is followed as closely as possible. Remember to contact your Grand Chapter Central Membership Committee or your District Chairman if you need assistance in planning this event.

1. Discuss the idea of a Prospect Night in your Chapter. Determine if there is enough interest and commitment to make it work. Explain to your membership that they must come up with a list of names to be invited to the Prospect Night. This might be personal friends, family members, co-workers, business associates, members of other organizations you belong to, friends from your church, members of the local Masonic Lodge who are not presently members of Eastern Star and their wives, or former Rainbow Girls or Jobs Daughters. There are also others in your community with the proper Masonic affiliations that would make them eligible for membership in the Order. A list of at least 15-20 prospective members should be easily achieved.

2. As soon as the decision is made to have the Prospect Night, contact the Worshipful Master of the local Masonic Lodge and other organizations who reside at your Masonic Temple to invite them to participate. Ask the presiding officers of the groups to allow you time at their meeting to explain the program and the benefits of working together to bring in new members. Each organization will be given time to present information about their organization at the Prospect Night.

If your Masonic Lodge will join you in this project, remember that Blue Lodge elects their officers the first meeting in December. If your Prospect Night is scheduled in December or later it will be necessary to coordinate this with the new Worshipful Master.

If other organizations do not choose to participate, you may launch the program on your own.

3. As there should be a Membership Committee of 3 persons already in place and appointed by your Worthy Matron, the work can begin. The most qualified enthusiastic member in the Chapter should "chair" this committee. This committee will be responsible for setting the date and planning the event. Following each Chapter member submitting prospective member's names to the

committee, the committee will meet, compile the list, and assign a member of the Chapter to each prospect. This assignment should be done according to whom best knows the prospect. Some members may have more than one prospect to contact. Allow plenty of time to collect and screen names. This committee should be well versed in the laws of our Eastern star and who is eligible for membership.

4. The committee will prepare and send the invitation letters (sample is enclosed) allowing at least three weeks. This letter should give prospects all the essential information about the Prospect Night, such as the day, date, time, place, and name of the Chapter member who will be in contact with them.

5. Each prospect should be contacted by their appointed chapter member within 3-4 days after the letter is mailed. Have the member simply inquire if they received and read their invitation. Ask them to mark that date on the calendar and inform them that you will be back in contact with them approximately one week before the meeting. Answer any questions they may have.

6. At the contact, one week before the meeting, tell the prospect what a nice evening is being planned and the child care service will be available. Inform them what is suitable attire, and ask if you can pick them up to take them or if they prefer to meet you at the meeting. If they choose to drive themselves, remember they are still your guests; please plan to arrive at the meeting early so that when your guests arrive, you will be there to greet them and introduce them to others.

7. Everyone should wear a name tag. A small gift with the emblem on it is a nice touch but optional.

8. Decide who the speakers will be, one for each organization. It is very helpful to have a rehearsal ahead of time. This will let you know how long each will speak and to allow time for questions. Do not allow any speaker to use up all the time. There needs to be equal time for each organization.

9. If you choose to launch the program on your own, the enclosed "Prospect Night Program" will assist you in presenting all aspects of the Masonic Family Organizations.

10. In the week following the Prospect Night, it is important that you contact each prospect again in person. It is preferable that this contact be made by the same person who contacted them about going to the initial meeting. Ask the prospect if they have any questions and answer them if possible, or tell them you will find out the answers. THEN PRESENT YOUR PROSPECT WITH A PETITION THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY SIGNED AS A RECOMMENDER. IMPRESS UPON YOUR PROSPECT WHAT AN HONOR AND PRIVILEGE IT WOULD BE FOR YOU TO RECOMMEND THEM TO YOUR CHAPTER AND TO SUBMIT THE PETITION TO YOUR CHAPTER. Leave the petition with the prospect unless they want to fill it out then. Tell them when you will be back to pick it up so it can be read at your next meeting. Tell them a “visiting” committee will make a visitation to their home, answer any final questions they may have, and that this is an ordinary procedure.

11. Some prospects will need more time to think about joining, others will take petitions that night. It is good to have an ongoing list. Not everyone will be able to come, but are still interested. Continue to let them know that you care, and would like them to be members.

12. DON'T send your letters to the prospects and just expect them to come. THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN!! PERSONAL CONTACT IS THE KEY!

This packet should help you in preparing the program for the evening. You will inform your prospective members about the Order of the Eastern Star and our many wonderful charities. A question and answer period is essential. The entire program should take no longer than 1 1/4 hour. The prospects will NOT be asked to sign a petition or to join the Eastern Star at this meeting.

The results of a successful Prospect Night and the degree work that follows can be a very exciting time for any Chapter. It is important that you make your new members feel welcome and have meetings that are fun and entertaining, so they will want to return. It is just as important NOT to pressure them into immediately becoming officers as they quickly become overwhelmed by the large amount of time that needs to be committed. Make your plan and carry it out-- success will result.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHAIRPERSONS

- 1) Contact your local Masonic Lodge to enlist their help and support to launch this program. Contact your Youth groups to enlist their participation. Perhaps you will go together with several other Chapters that meet in your area. Ask for a chairperson from each group to work as a committee with you.
- 2) With your committee, decide the location and secure the facilities. What type of function you will have: catered dinner? Potluck? Dessert? Arrange for the food and if it is a catered meal, be certain to set a charge for the meal and ask for reservations. Decide on tablecloths, centerpieces, who will give the invocation? Give careful attention to detail.
- 3) If not serving a dinner, arrange for refreshments for the evening. If you are including several groups, you may ask each of them for assistance with the refreshments. We do not need to be extravagant with our refreshments; however we are trying to impress our guests.
- 4) A podium is essential and a microphone if the room dictates. If the slide presentation on our Eastern Star Masonic Center is used, a TV and VCR will be needed.
- 5) Please have two greeters at the door--someone that is "glad to see everyone." Remember--some of our prospects may be coming on their own and we want them to feel welcome. Name tags would be nice for everyone to wear.
- 6) We will not have the Star Point chairs in their regular positions for the Prospect Night and I would encourage you to have chairs for those attending arranged from the symbolic North to South. It is much easier to talk to folks if they are sitting directly in front of a speaker instead of on the sidelines. These chairs can be in front of the Altar as well as behind the Altar. The presentation will be from the East. Please leave the Altar in the center with the Bible. If several Masonic Family organizations are participating, light their emblems if you have them displayed.
- 7) Arrange for child care--should it be needed. You might involve the Rainbow Girls or Job's Daughters for this. If we have prospects with small children, it would be best if they were entertained outside the Chapter room.