



HANDBOOK ON LODGE COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS



THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE, A.F. & A.M.
OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
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Foreword

Freemasonry seeks to make good men better. One way it does this is by cultivating the charitable instincts of its members and encouraging them to help those in our communities who need that help. Our ritual tells us that “Every human being has a claim upon our kind offices. Do good unto all.”

This updated handbook offers 80 project ideas and a brief guide to running each project. One of these projects may be perfect for your Lodge to undertake, but the Handbook is also designed to stimulate you to come up with additional ideas.

The important point is that your Lodge should be doing something that interests and excites the Brethren, helps your community, and shows your friends and neighbors something about the values and contributions of our great Fraternity.

You should select a project that is tailored to the interests of the Brethren and the available manpower in your Lodge. It also should meet the needs of your community.

Additional assistance can be obtained by contacting your Grand Lodge Committee on Lodge Services.

Fraternally,

Edmund Cohen
Grand Master of Masons in Virginia



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Group A

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Project # A-1
Organize the Brethren to
Learn Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation and First Aid

Concept: Establish a goal to have as many members as possible 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.

Not only is this a great community service, but the training may help you to save a Brother or a family member.

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 is also available from the American Heart Association.
2. Invite a speaker from one of those organizations to speak at 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 CPR-trained.
3. Provide light refreshments (coffee and nibbles).
4. Publicize the fact that Masons are trained in CPR and encourage others in the community to obtain such training.
5. 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.



Project # A-2
Have an Active Lodge 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, 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 one-time, 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 form three-person groups to give blood together. That way each can encourage and motivate the other two, and the periodic visit to the donor center can be a social event, with brunch or a movie afterward.
4. 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, or each team when they can safely donate blood.
5. 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.
6. The chairman should ensure that the program is well publicized and that the donors are recognized.



Project # A-3
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 Virginia, the donor card can be completed when you obtain 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 an 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 Virginia Department 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. The Regional Transplant Consortium in Washington, D.C. 1-202-223-8229 can also provide additional up-to-date information and brochures.
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.
5. Donations of bone marrow for transplants are sponsored by the Grand Lodge of Virginia under the Community Blood Program. Contact the Chairman of the Grand Lodge of Virginia Community Blood Program or your local, district, area Blood Program representative for assistance with the Blood Marrow Donation.



Project # A-4

Have the Lodge Involved in Family and Community Disaster Preparedness Projects

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. 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 that are prepared can better deal with the situation with less fear, panic, inconvenience, and losses. This is because they are 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 because 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. Obtain Home Study material by writing to: FEMA Home Study Program, Administrative Office, Emergency Management Institute. Request the EMI Home Study Course Brochure (L-173). This leaflet lists all home study courses offered by FEMA's Emergency Management Institute. You can also get some of this material on the Internet.
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.
4. The Lodge can also put on programs for its members and the members of the appendant bodies.



Project # A-5
Establish a Community Emergency Shelter at the Lodge

Concept: Masonic Temples 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.

Overview: 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 Temples; 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 energetic 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 communication. 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 and publicize its availability in emergency circumstances.
5. Establish and publish a watch list to ensure a reliable point-of-contact is available to "man" the shelter during an emergency.



Project # A-6
Organize or Participate in a Neighborhood Watch Program

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 provide meeting room facilities will yield a positive Lodge image.

Implementation Guidance:

The following is a brief outline of the key elements necessary to activate and execute this program:

1. Planning Committee
 - a. Hold a preliminary meeting to form a Lodge team
 - b. The Lodge committee should work with police and neighborhood representatives to determine type and extent of crime in a particular area
 - c. The committee should survey the community to assess the degree of interest in starting a Neighborhood Watch Program

2. The committee would work with the neighborhood to set up the first Neighborhood Watch meeting and take the following steps:
 - a. Contact law enforcement agency
 - b. Choose site of meeting
 - c. Send out notices
 - d. Prepare meeting agenda

3. The committee can assist at the organizational Neighborhood Watch meeting to set up a Neighborhood Watch Program Structure:
 - a. Elect a Neighborhood Watch Coordinator
 - b. Select Block Captains
 - c. Enlist volunteer participants

4. Turn the program over to the neighborhood to run



Project # A-7
Support a Battered Women's Shelter

Concept: Shelters for battered women 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, nightstands, 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.



Project # A-8
Have the Lodge Partner with the Community to
Provide Home Management Guidance

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 home owner. 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. This is a community project that can pay large dividends by helping families get a new chance for success.

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. The telephone directory is a good place to start. Have this additional "support source" available for our mentors.
4. Contact those community organizations, which 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.



Project # A-9
Provide Space at the Lodge for Job Fairs

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. In areas where job fairs are not well established, use the personal and business contacts of Lodge 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 resumé 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.



Project # A-10
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; the money earned at these sales is used to buy new books.

Implementation Guidance:

1. The Lodge project chairman contacts the library public information office to obtain information about book sale dates and procedures.
2. The chairman should organize a drive to collect books. This drive should include publicity to encourage local residents to bring their old books to the Lodge one or two Saturdays 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.
3. 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.
4. If requested by the Library, a couple of weeks before the books are needed at the library the project chairman gets his committee together to sort and/or price the books.



Project # A-11
Sponsor a Neighborhood Fair

Concept: Our mobile society has lessened the sense of community that used to exist in our cities and towns. 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 may 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. Contact community leaders to join with the Lodge in planning and promoting the event.
3. 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. 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. Follow the guidance in the Public Relations manual.



Project # A-12
Present Patriotic Programs in Various Public Settings,
Including Flag Presentation

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 accomplished speakers and perhaps "Toastmasters." Members active in the local community, who have name recognition are also a good choice as speakers, and 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.
4. For a Flag Presentation, the Chairman can contact the National Sojourners who can do the "Building the Flag" program or a "Toast to the Flag."



Project # A-13

Conduct Child-ID Programs at Schools, Community Events, Health Fairs, etc.

Concept: The Lodge selects one or more days during the year to sponsor a Child-ID clinic at a convenient location where significant numbers of parents and children can be expected, such as, a shopping center, county fair, or parade.

Overview: Each year thousands of children are kidnapped, get lost, or run away. Finding these children requires a quick reaction by parents to get information about their child to the police and media. Having current information about the child close at hand is crucial, particularly if the child disappears while the family is away from home, for example, on vacation. The Child-ID Program, endorsed by many police organizations, provides the parent with a booklet containing a picture of the child, fingerprints, hair sample, and other descriptive information, as well as, helpful tips on how to prevent kidnapping, and what action to take when a child is missing.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Obtain permission to conduct a Child-ID Program from the officials sponsoring the event or operating the shopping center.
2. Publicize the program in advance in the media and with banners at the event. Contact the Grand Lodge Public Relations Committee for guidance on media relations.
3. Consider having the Lodge or district purchase the new computerized Child-ID packages (CHIPS) or borrow it from Grand Lodge. Alternatively, acquire Child-ID record booklets from the Grand Lodge; fingerprint kits from the Police or Sheriff; camera and film, and other supplies from local wholesale sources.
4. Sign up at least ten people (members and their wives, a representative from a Masonic-youth group, and possibly a uniformed Police Officer) to run each clinic. Training on how to take clear fingerprints is available locally.
5. If using the computerized CHIPS system, have a table for each computer you are using. If using the traditional system, set up three large tables in a "U" shape, so parents can start at one side filling out the Child ID record booklets; then have fingerprints taken, fingers cleaned; one side view and full face Polaroid picture is taken and stapled in the booklet; one hair pulled (not cut) and taped to the page (the root portion is used for DNA examination).
6. Stress the fact that the completed information from the CHIPS system is given to the parent free of charge, and no information remains in the computer. All information is wiped out as the transaction is completed. Similarly explain that in the traditional setup, the completed booklet is given to the parent or guardian to keep free of charge and nothing is retained by the Lodge.



Project # A-14
Sponsor or Coach a Little League Sports 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. If your Lodge is considering 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. Contact the Little League Organization in your area and determine its needs
4. In addition, to the specific help to the team the Lodge will provide, encourage the members to attend games and meet the parents and children. You will be able to talk about the game, the team, and Freemasonry.



Project # A-15
Perform a Cemetery Survey

Concept: Our ancestors left us much historical information in the form of grave markers. These gravestones are subject to decay and vandalism, so surveying all known cemeteries is important to do before these monuments and the information they contain are lost forever. The information found on gravestones is not only important for historical reasons, it is of great interest for genealogical studies – which is the third most popular hobby after stamp, and coin collecting.

Overview: The members of the Lodge can provide manpower for the survey of local cemeteries.

A survey consists of:

- a. Marking the location of the cemetery on a map.
- b. Measuring the area of the cemetery and recording the information on graph paper.
- c. Recording the location of every gravestone and its size on graph paper.
- d. Recording information found on each gravestone.
- e. Taking black and white photographs of the grave stones.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee chairman to take charge of the project.
2. Determine the ownership of the cemetery by examining the city/county tax rolls.
3. Determine if a survey has been taken of the cemetery by contacting the owners, the cemetery association, the local library, or historical society. If a complete survey has been taken, don't duplicate the effort. If an incomplete survey or no survey has been made, then seek permission to perform the survey.
4. Provide the information to the local library and local historical society.



Project # A-16
Organize a Group of Lodge Brethren to be Volunteer
"Guides" at Historical Sites and Monuments
and publicize these Sites and Monuments among
high school and college students

Concept: The easy availability of much of our history is not widely known, and the Lodge can help to promote better awareness of this history by becoming involved in a "Docent" program in a local museum or other historical site and monuments. The Lodge can also reach out to young people to become docents as well, because this activity is tailor made for young people to participate in after school or during summer vacation as a way to further their academic endeavors.

Overview: Such programs offer both the Brethren and their young recruits 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 are then in a position to share that information with the general public.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Contact local museums concerning their particular docent program.
2. Arrange for a presentation to the Brethren, who have expressed an interest to acquaint them with the Docent Program. This presentation should be at the curatorial or museum level.
3. Talk about this opportunity with members of the Masonic Youth Groups and other young people. [Contact local high schools and colleges to identify those who may express an interest in museum work and target those students.]
4. Organize interviews with museum personnel for those students expressing interest.
5. Assure interested students that they will work directly with the museum personnel.



Project # A-17
Sponsor or assist a Local Historic Site or Museum

Concept: Most museums/historic sites are managed by local or state governments and 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 as outlined in the Public Relations manual.
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.



Project # A-18
***Have the Lodge Develop Maps or Other Walking or Driving
Tours of Identified Historical Sites and Points of Interest, and Conduct Tours***

Concept: This is a way to get the Lodge and interested Brethren more involved in the history of their local communities, and provide valuable assistance in identifying historic sites.

Overview: There are many major historical sites and many less well known sites in our communities. The Lodge can identify all of these sites and develop a walking tour to all locals and visitors to visit these sites and learn more about them.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman and form a committee with Brethren who have historical inclinations.
2. Consult with the local historical museum, historian, archivist, and visitor's center for advice and guidance, and to learn what information already is available.
3. The committee can organize and enjoy a history day with picnics, camp-out trips, or hikes. Wives and family can be included.
4. During these trips, the Lodge should develop information about each site, develop tentative tour routes, and mark potential rest areas and rest rooms. Highlight special facilities for the handicapped.
5. Organize the information and route in an easy to carry format (perhaps a tri-fold).
6. Provide the information to the local historical museum, historian, archivist, and visitor's center and have local reporters do a story on your project.
7. On your field trips, be alert to new sites that many not have been identified and recorded. A site could be prehistoric: finding an Indian arrowhead; or a site could be historic: finding a Civil War uniform button during your walk.
8. If a site is found:
 - 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.
9. All new discoveries should be recorded and reported. 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 Department of Historic Resources, State Archaeologist, Richmond, VA



Project # A-19
Honor Community Volunteers and Professional Service Providers

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: Pay 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. These are people to whom the Lodge might consider giving the Grand Lodge Community Builder's award.

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 organizations and request that they submit nominations for the person(s) to be honored.
2. Contact Grand Lodge to get the certificate and leave time to have it framed. The Lodge might consider additional plaques or trophies it might want to award.
3. Select the date and place for the award, consulting with the groups and recipients to ensure there are no schedule conflicts.
4. The award could be given at a special banquet in their honor, or at a meeting of the Board of Directors, or general assembly of the organization.
5. Determine who will do the presentation. In addition to the Master, the District Deputy, or a Grand Lodge Officer, consider a political dignitary such as the Mayor or Councilman.
6. Arrange for media coverage, and develop a news release in advance to be provided for the media at the event.



Group B

Projects to Help the Environment

- B-20** Plant a Tree
- B-21** Adopt-A-Field
- B-22** Adopt a Stream
- B-23** Adopt a Wilderness Area or Cave
- B-24** Adopt-A-Highway
- B-25** Adopt a Cemetery
- B-26** Start a Lodge Project to Encourage Recycling
- B-27** Start a Lodge Project to Encourage Energy Savings



Project # B-20
Plant a Tree

Concept: The Lodge organizes a program to plant trees in one or places in the community.

Overview: Because so 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 help beautify the community while it grows.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Contact a park authority, community association, 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. 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.
5. Contact the media well in advance of the event and establish a media event. Contact the Grand Lodge Public Relations Committee for any needed guidance.
6. Invite to the program all local Lodge members, public officials, Masonic dignitaries, and the general public.



Project # B-21
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 one-time, 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 chairman to manage, oversee, and coordinate the project. He should recruit a committee from Brethren who enjoy working out of doors. Remember, this can also be a family project and one involving our youth groups.
2. Choose the level of responsibility your resources will allow you to assume. This can range from litter control and raking infields to inspecting fences and mowing the grass.
3. Contact your local, county, or State Park Department representative. Request an application and list of available locations. Your local park authority may be listed in the phone book under a variety of names, such as:
 - 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 information, equipment, and necessary technical advice you will need.



Project # B-22
Adopt-A-Stream

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: Pollution, (air, water, and land), is one of our greatest problems of today. Local conservation groups, such as the Virginia Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited Chapters, and Local Fish & Game Clubs, and many others, are involved in keeping our rivers and streams clean and they all need help. 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. Recruit a committee from Lodge Brethren who have the skills for, and interest in, such a project.
3. Contact the local wilderness and conservation groups and check also with the State Government, Game & Inland Fisheries Department, and with game and fishing clubs through your local bait and tackle shops to see how the resources of the Lodge can best be used.
4. Organize a Lodge program which need the needs you have identifies and uses the skills of each Brother on the Committee.
5. Take action photographs of Lodge members assisting with the project and prepare suitable press releases.



Project # B-23
Adopt-A-Wilderness Area or Cave

Concept: There are many wilderness areas, trails, and natural caves in Virginia, which have neither full time nor part time caretakers assigned to them. These wilderness areas are used by individuals and groups for hiking, biking, relaxation, camping, and caving. Major sections of the Potomac Appalachian, Big Blue, and other trails are now being maintained by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. Other sections of these trails are maintained by clubs associated with the Appalachian Trail Conference. Northern Virginia Scout Groups in conjunction with a Caving Club, is caring for the Stillhouse Cave – the entrance, which was once used as a dumpsite, has been cleaned up and accessible.

Overview: The Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Appalachian Trail Conference, National Forest and Park Services, and State Park Services need our help and are looking for groups like ours to adopt and care for these wilderness areas. The Adopt-A-Wilderness/Cave Program will permit local Masonic Lodges (and youth organizations) to assist in site maintenance on a continuing basis. Available tasks include litter control, and maintaining trails, forest access roads, caves, and other wilderness areas.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee chairman to manage the project.
2. Recruit a committee from Lodge Brethren who have the skills for, and interest in, such a project.
3. Contact and request specific information from the National Forest and Park Services, the State Park Services or from the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (703) 242-0315 or Appalachian Trail Conference (304) 535-6331. These organizations can make available to you a list of locations needing your support. Alternatively, your Lodge can select or recommend another wilderness area that you'd like to adopt.
4. Organize a Lodge program once you have selected a location.
5. Take action photographs of Lodge members assisting with the project and prepare suitable press releases.



Project # B-24
Adopt-A-Highway

Concept: Keep Virginia 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. Appoint a committee chairman to manage the project.
2. Recruit a committee from Lodge Brethren who have the skills for, and interest in, such a project.
3. Contact the local Virginia Department of Highway Residency or Litter Control Office for an information packet. If the number of the local office is not known, call the Highway Helpline at 1-800-367-ROAD for information about participating in the "adopt" a highway program.
4. Their information packet will include 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. Litter pickup will be done on both sides of the highway at least four times a year, or more often if necessary. 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.

5. Take action photographs of Lodge members assisting with the project and prepare suitable press releases.



Project # B-25
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 grave stones) and when necessary, trash removal.

Overview: Many private cemeteries, state-wide, 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 head stones.

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.

4. Consider linking this Project # A-15 (Perform a Cemetery Survey) and do some historical research at the cemetery you have adopted.



Project # B-26
Start a Lodge Project to Encourage Recycling

Concept: Set up a collection center for recyclable materials.

Overview: The population growth is having two devastating consequences to our life: it is depleting natural resources and it is polluting the environment.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee to determine what materials are not being recycled in your community, i.e. aluminum cans, glass, batteries, fluorescence light bulbs, newspapers, etc.
2. Contact local government agencies to determine how your Lodge can help.
3. Advertise what you are doing and where the recyclable materials are being collected.
4. Make sure the Lodge provides a person to notify the recycling plant when you are ready for a pick-up.



Project # B-27
Start a Lodge Project to Encourage Energy Savings

Concept: Educate the public on energy savings.

Overview: Our economy runs on energy, and saving energy not only saves our natural resources and minimizes pollution, but it can save money for everyone.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Select a chairman and form a Committee to review energy saving techniques
2. Contact government organizations as well as public interest groups and your local power and light companies for information on energy saving tips and for other ideas of how your Lodge can help.
3. Have discussions on energy saving techniques at your Lodge meetings
4. Produce educational programs on energy saving tips that can be given to the Brethren and made available to the public.
5. Disseminate to the public “fliers” describing practical energy savings tips. Include the Lodge name and address on these fliers.



GROUP C

Projects to Assist Various Charities

- C-28** Sponsor a Charity Walk-A-Thon
- C-29** Sponsor a Charity Race or Marathon
- C-30** Sponsor a Charity Bike-A-Thon
- C-31** Answer Phones on Telethons and Radio-thons
- C-32** Support to a Specific Charitable Organization



Project # C-28
Sponsor a Charity 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 the place for the walk. Examples are: a. high school 400 meter track, a local County or State park, or 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 to:
 - a. Record the entries
 - b. Provide them with a pledge sheet to enable them to obtain very pledges
 1. Pledges may be paid in advance to eliminate a collection process
 2. Donations without mileage criteria also are acceptable)
 - c. Issue the walkers a number
 - d. Provide awards to those with the best times in various age classes
 - e. Develop a cancellation policy
5. A free picnic and lunch after the walk can be held as an added benefit for the walkers, if a sponsor can be obtained. And the spectators can add to the collections by purchasing a picnic lunch ticket.
6. Charities which will generally cooperate fully with a Walk-A-Thon include: the Muscular Dystrophy Association; Heart Association; Kidney Society; Multiple Sclerosis; American Cancer Society; Church Rebuilding; and, local community special charitable activity.
7. These charities may also be able to suggest various special events that can be attached to this event to raise additional funds and be ever more fun.



Project # C-29
Sponsor a Charity Race or Marathon

Concept: The Masonic Fraternity recognizes the need within the community to provide for its less fortunate citizens. The race concept provides an opportunity for major exposure of the Masonic Family to the community.

Overview: The Lodge undertakes to provide the impetus to obtain personnel and financial resources to organize the event. With the hearty cooperation of your Lodge members, ladies and 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.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Chairman to coordinate the effort and do all of the planning months in advance of the event.
2. Determine what kind of help the members can offer; put them to work. Don't forget the ladies and the youth organizations; be sure to make them an integral part of the entire effort.
3. Contact City Hall to obtain the necessary permits and clearance documentation.
4. Involve both the Police and Fire Departments. They're always agreeable to help with such things as safety and traffic control.
5. 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.
6. Develop a system to:
 - a. Obtain and record the pledges
 1. Pledges may be paid in advance to eliminate a collection process
 2. Donations without mileage criteria also are acceptable)
 - b. Register the runners and issue each one a number
 - c. Provide awards to those with the best times in various age classes
 - d. Develop a cancellation policy



Project # C-30
Sponsor a 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. A list of possibilities is as close as your phone book.
2. Have the Charity define their needs. Find out how you can help to support their efforts. This might even lend itself to a stated communication presentation.
3. Choose those tasks that are within your capabilities and scope of your 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.



Project # C-31
Answer Phones on Telethons and Radiothons

Concept: Many charities sponsor telethons and radiothons to solicit operating funds. These "thons" require many people to answer telephones from callers making donations, to tally pledges or count money, to help with the paper work, to provide courier service, as well as to serve as food service assistants and provide security.

Overview: These telethons offer an excellent opportunity for Masonic Lodges and appendant bodies and their families to help the community projects and promote greater awareness of our Masonic fraternity. The level of involvement for the Lodge and for each person can be as narrow or as broad as desired – ranging from one person working a shift as a telephone operator to the Lodge having 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 of service required, the available dates and periods of time. Select the proper mix of times and service jobs to fit the Lodge family.
3. Recruit members of the Lodge and appendant bodies 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. The Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations can be of assistance.
5. Obtain certificates of appreciation for those who participated and assisted. Bring them together for a special certificate presentation ceremony – and invite the press. Be sure that an article is written for the *Masonic Herald* and photographs taken.



Project # C-32
Support to a specific Charitable Organization

Concept: The Brethren in each Lodge may have a particular charity they desire to support. In addition to raising money for that charity, the Lodge could provide personnel resources to help the charity during one of its fund raising activities. Such help could range from soliciting funds, answering the telephone, or stuffing envelopes in support of a scheduled event.

Overview: There are hundreds of charities that augment what the government is able to do to address health and other problems facing our citizens and communities. These organizations rely heavily on voluntary assistance, need help, and would welcome our participation. A sufficient number of willing volunteer workers can provide significant assistance. Not only will you be doing good work, you will have an opportunity to meet many interesting people and talk to them about Freemasonry.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman to canvas the Lodge for which charity to support and to coordinate the effort.
2. Contact the charity.
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.



GROUP D

Projects to Assist the Aged

- D-33** Set up a Program for Daily Phone Calls to the Elderly
- D-34** Assist the Meals-on-Wheels Program
- D-35** Regularly Visit and Assist Shut-ins
- D-36** Assist a Pets for Seniors Program
- D-37** Provide Personalized Shopping Service for the Aged
- D-38** Transportation Clearinghouse
- D-39** Set up a Home Maintenance and Repair Program for the Aged
- D-40** Nursing Home Visitation



Project # D-33
Set up a Program for Daily Phone Calls to the Elderly

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 only should take about two-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 back-up 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.



Project # D-34
Assist the Meals-on-Wheels Program

Concept: The Lodge can 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 every day and a cold meal that 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 Lodge would appoint a chairman and a committee to run the project.
2. The chairman or 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.
3. The chairman would enlist the help of Lodge Brethren and their wives to assist by delivering meals, prepare a roster of the members willing to help, and maintain liaison with the local Meals-on-Wheels organization.
4. A Brother can provide assistance 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.
5. The Lodge coordinator can organize a fund raising effort within the Lodge or within the local community to solicit contributions for the program. This is because while the recipients pay per week for the meals and if they are unable to pay, they may be entitled to public assistance; there is a need for additional funds to assist the Meals-on-Wheels program.
6. 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 your area.



Project # D-35
Regularly Visit and Assist Shut-ins

Concept: The Lodge provides assistance to elderly or handicapped 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. But with a little help, they can retain their independence and stay in the home they love. Such help can pay large dividends because it often is far cheaper for the individual and for the community to 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 nursing home.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman to coordinate the effort. Contact the Virginia Department for the Aging, the County Agency on Aging, senior citizens organizations, 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. The type of help could 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. Select one or more individuals who could benefit from Lodge assistance.
4. Organize a roster of members who can visit with the individual. Try to ensure that one or two members, or a member and his wife, 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.



Project #D-36
Assist a Pets for Seniors Program

Concept: The Lodge could establish a program for Brethren 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 have or care for pets. Many of these people are without family or close friends; they are lonely and feel unloved. Being able to spend some time with a pet and to cuddle a dog or cat dramatically improves their quality of life.

Implementation Guidance:

Appoint a program chairman to contact local nursing homes to find those interested in such a program.

1. 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 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.
3. The chairman would enlist the support of Brethren and their families who have suitable pets. Children may be particularly interested in being part of this activity 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.
4. The chairman should establish a regular schedule of visits and encourage compliance to prevent disappointment due to missed appointments.



Project # D-37
Provide Personalized Shopping Service for the Aged

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. Assistance with shopping would make a major difference in their lives and allow them to obtain items they require as well as things they 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 social service agency, senior citizen residence house, or nursing home which would 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 that would make the holiday or special 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.



Project # D-38
Transportation Clearinghouse

Concept: The Lodge provides to some of the elderly citizens in the community 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 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 social service agency or senior citizens residence house establishes a program to provide such assistance.

Implementation guidance:

1. Appoint one Lodge member as transportation coordinator. The coordinator will contact a local a social service agency or senior citizen residence house 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, or a couple of hours one night a week. Once a number of volunteers have been recruited, the Lodge coordinator will work with his counterpart at the agency or residence to establish a transportation schedule, which links volunteers and their passengers.
3. Drivers must ensure that their own personal automobile policies or insurance coverage available to the agency or residence will cover them, the Lodge, and their passengers in case of accident.
4. The Lodge should particularly seek Brethren who have vehicles that are wheel-chair accessible to participate in the program unless such vehicles are provided by the agency or residence.



Project # D-39

Set up a Home Maintenance and Repair Program for the Aged

Concept: Home ownership is an integral part of the American dream. But 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 can 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.
6. If there is both a need in your community and your Lodge has the capacity to help, appoint a project coordinator to consult with your local social services agency to determine where your assistance is most needed.



Project # D-40
Nursing Home Visitation

Concept: The Lodge organizes a nursing home visitation team of members and their wives 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, local 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. Contact the Masonic Home of Virginia 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. 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.
3. The coordinator prepares a roster of members who will visit the nursing home, and maintains a schedule to ensure that weekly visits are made.
4. Maintain regular contact with one or more of the residents. Make reports in Lodge and send cards and letters on appropriate occasions.
5. As particular needs of the residents visited are identified, the Lodge might collect funds to assist. Small personal items or occasional gifts will be particularly appreciated.
6. 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.



GROUP E

Projects to Assist the Handicapped

- E-41** Produce a Public Facility "Locator" for Handicapped Visitors
- E-42** Participate in a Program to Read to and/or Record Books for the Blind
- E-43** Sponsor a Picnic or Swim Party for Handicapped Children
- E-44** Sponsor, Encourage, or Coach a Special Olympian.
- E-45** Assist in the Handicapped Citizen Family Services Program



Project # E-41
Produce a Public Facility “Locator” for Handicapped Visitors

Concept: One of the important things that physically handicapped 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 Metro, 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 handicapped visitors. It doesn’t have to be elaborate; several easily duplicated sheets may be all that is needed for some geographical 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 visitor’s centers and information booths.

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 pick-up 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 and furnish abundant copies to the Visitor’s Center. Provide the “Repro-copy” (original) to the Chamber of Commerce, so supplies can be replenished as necessary.



Project # E-42

Participate in a Program to Read to and/or Record Books for the Blind

Concept: Although books on tape or CD have become more available over time, and certain best-selling books are readily available, there is still a need to provide books for the blind or visually impaired on many subjects that are not commercially available.

Overview: Books on a variety of subjects, including Masonic favorites can be recorded and provided to those who need them, including students, hospitalized members of the armed forces, and residents at senior citizens facilities.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Lodge project chairman to contact the Lighthouse for the Blind and other organizations that provide assistance to the Blind to determine what books need to be recorded. Appoint a Lodge talking book librarian. Have him compile a list of books to be recorded. Earmark a small budget for DVDs or 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's and Warden's Association meetings, and word-of-mouth to pass the word that you're looking for readers, blank tapes, loan of portable recorders, and mailing packets.
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 handicapped. Always express your gratitude for their generosity. When possible, 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.
5. Establish guidelines to ensure the tapes are returned after use. Publish a catalog of titles and include directions for ordering the taped books. Provide copies of the catalog to local hospitals and libraries.



Project # E-43
Sponsor a Picnic or Swim Party for Handicapped Children

Concept: Establish an annual Lodge outing and picnic lunch for mentally handicapped children in the community.

Overview: Handicapped 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, 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 retarded 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. A Local Clown Alley, the 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
 - 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. Assistance may be obtained from the Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations.
7. Prepare an article for the *Masonic Herald*.



Project # E-44
Sponsor, Encourage or 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 the patience and have the knowledge and athletic skills that could be shared with these special children. 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 can encourage a young mentally retarded 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 encourage and "hug" the athletes, to acting as a team coach.

Implementation Guidance:

1. If the Lodge is interested in this project, appoint a chairman to recruit Lodge Brethren to help these special athletes with time or financial support.
2. Contact the Special Olympics of Virginia by phone at (1-800-932-4653). Volunteer your services; let them know that you'd like to help.
3. The committee will send you an application form and information on upcoming events by return mail. Select a seasonal sport.
4. Have the Brother meet with his athlete on a mutually agreed upon schedule. The schedule can be flexible enough to accommodate both of their needs.



Project # E-45
Handicapped Citizens Family Services

Concept: This program is designed to provide a wide variety of direct assistance to families of the mentally handicapped, who need public support services and to assist them to negotiate for service.

Overview: A goal of Volunteer Advocacy Services is to make the immediate family of the mentally handicapped self-sufficient. This goal supports a long standing principle of normalization. It provides the mentally handicapped individual an opportunity for a better life and be treated with dignity and respect. The services include: (a) Technical Assistance, (b) Advocacy Training and (c) Neighborhood Family Support Groups.

Implementation Guidance:

1. The Lodge, if interested in this project, should contact the Handicapped Citizens Volunteer Advocacy Services Association to obtain information about participating in this activity.
2. The Lodge should appoint a chairman and a committee to provide, through technical and emotional support, assistance to families in resolving problems, addressing crises, and obtaining needed services.
3. The goal of technical assistance is to share valuable information and strategies to enable families to become more confident and effective advocates on behalf of their family member with a disability.
4. With help from the Handicapped Citizens Volunteer Advocacy Services Association, advocacy training can be offered to parent-groups to heighten their awareness of the significant role they can play. Training sessions are designed to teach strategies for effective advocacy, techniques to improve community services and resources.
5. The Lodge also can provide support to existing neighborhood Family Support Groups that share common experiences, encouragement, and hope. The goal is to help these groups become self-sufficient, thus reducing reliance on the assistance of the Family Services Staff.



GROUP F

Projects to Assist the Sick

- F-46** Organize the Lodge to Participate in the Grant-A-Wish Program
- F-47** Start or Participate in a Hospital Visitation Program
- F-48** Provide Needed Services to the Family of a Hospitalized, Chronically Ill, or Dying Patient



Project # F-46
Organize the Lodge to Participate in the Grant-A-Wish Program

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 is particularly sensitive to the needs of terminally ill children and their families.
2. Contact the Grant-A-Wish Foundation or other similar organizations that help children with life-threatening illnesses for additional guidance.
3. Advertise this Lodge project in your local papers and on the Internet to identify children who need your help.
4. Prepare a list of possible donors to finance specific projects and identify other financial assistance sources.
5. Contact destination for clearance and any special arrangements.



Project # F-47
Visit a 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.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Lodge project chairman to contact the Masonic Service Association's hospital visitation program and also develop a Lodge hospital visitation program.
2. The Lodge hospital visitation coordinator should consult with hospital officials about patients that would particularly benefit from your visits. Additional information can be obtained by supervising nurses, who can pinpoint which wards are most appropriate to visit and which patients could most benefit from visits. In general, patients with certain types of illness have long hospital stays and would particularly appreciate visits from concerned, interested people during the recovery period.
3. The Lodge project chairman should organize teams of members, who can commit to making hospital visits.
4. Each team, consisting of two or more members, would make daily or at least regular visits to a particular patient for the duration of their hospital stay. In most cases, patients rarely stay in the hospital more than a few weeks.
5. Some retired Brethren 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.



Project # F-48
***Provide Needed Services to the Family of a
Hospitalized, Chronically Ill, or Dying Patient***

Concept: The Lodge could perform routine tasks for a family having trouble coping with the illness of a family member.

Overview: Wives and other family members are often overburdened with the needs of ill family members and cannot keep up with the necessary daily needs of the family. The Lodge could relieve those burdens by performing needed tasks for the wives and families.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee chairman to determine those families in the community in need of help.
2. Contact nursing homes, hospitals, and friends that might know families that are in need of help.
3. Determine the family needs, such as mowing grass, doing grocery shopping, providing transportation, etc.
4. Identify Lodge members to provide these needed services, assigning a team of the Brethren to support each family the Lodge “adopts.”



GROUP G

Projects to Assist to Educate Our Children and Others

- G-49** Sponsor an Essay Contest, particularly on a Patriotic Topic
- G-50** Sponsor a Poster Project on a Patriotic, Substance Abuse, or Public Education Theme
- G-51** Sponsor a Student Citizenship Award Program
- G-52** Prepare Historical Reenactments for Schools
- G-53** Recognize Educators at Teacher of the Year Programs
- G-54** Provide Recycled Art/Handicraft Materials for Schools
- G-55** Support Public Education
- G-56** Participate in a Child Reading Tutor Program and Help Sponsor a Summer Reading Program
- G-57** Set Up a Student Assistance Program
- G-58** Tutor an Illiterate Adult or an Immigrant



Project # G-49
Sponsor an Essay Contest, particularly on a Patriotic Topic

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 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.

Implementing Guidance:

1. Enlist the consent and cooperation of the School Board or Principal, and the faculty of the school(s) in which the contest will be sponsored.
2. Announce the contest via letters to the faculty, handouts 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 provides excellent opportunities to make presentations which will emphasize the involvement of the Lodge in the community and Freemasonry's concern for youth.



Project # G-50

Sponsor a Poster Project on a Patriotic, Substance Abuse, or Public Education

Concept: Children today 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 anti-drug 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 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 \$25.00. 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 be newsworthy and so you should 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. The Grand Lodge Public Relations Committee can provide assistance.
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. Try to have a local official assist in the presentation of the major awards.



Project # G-51
Sponsor a 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 should always 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. 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. The committee would have the plaque designed and engraved, and obtain the savings bond. Select a prominent Mason to make the presentation at an awards assembly or during the graduation ceremony.

2. The Lodge would arrange to have the Worshipful Master, District Deputy, or a Grand Lodge Officer, or other prominent Mason make the award presentation at the graduation ceremony.



Project # G-52
Prepare Historical Re-enactments for Schools

Concept: School children respond to historical events when those events come to life through re-enactments. The re-enactments 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 re-enactment 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. The Lodge appoints a chairman who selects the cast and stage crew for the reenactment.
2. The reenactment team selects a topic, does the research, writes the script, obtains the costumes, and schedules the rehearsals. Each of these tasks requires different skills and experience, and these various activities provide opportunities for many members of the Lodge with different skills to play a part in this project.
3. The team may select a topic or play that already is scripted and use that, after obtaining the appropriate permission.
4. Local schools should then be contacted, and the Principal notified of the willingness of the Lodge to provide a living history re-enactment that would fit into the history or social studies curriculum.
5. Local museums can be notified of the Lodge's willingness to do a reenactment when school children visit the museum or at other times.
6. After each public presentation, a critique should be held to see if any refinements or improvements can be made.
7. The Lodge should notify the media of the event, and take pictures for the *Masonic Herald*.



Project G-53
Recognize Educators at Teacher of the Year Programs

Concept: Quality education is essential to the well-being of a community, and teachers are one of the critical factors in maintaining 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, elementary 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 chairman, perhaps a Brother who is an active or former educator, to contact the local School District Board of Education and/or school Principals.
2. Establish the selection criteria for publication.
3. Determine the award "setting:" a special dinner, or as part of another public forum, or even a part of the Grand Master's district dinner visit.
4. Invite nominations from the school board, principals, or teacher's organizations.
5. Determine what award will be given: a cash award and a plaque or framed certificate. Consider recommending this outstanding individual for a Grand Lodge Award of Excellence. Lodges considering the presentation of this award must initiate it by a written resolution. The recommendation should state the person's full name and the reasons he or she is to be honored. The recommendation is then sent to the Grand Secretary.
6. Consider recognizing and congratulating all teachers, who received nominations in a public forum such as the awards dinner and in a newspaper article.



Project #G-54
Provide Recycled Art/Handicraft Materials for Schools

Concept: In the past few years, we've all become recyclers. You and your neighbors probably have more extra coffee cans, margarine tubs, meat trays, egg cartons, shirt cardboards, and other similar materials than you need. 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 can be used for school projects.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Lodge project coordinator, perhaps a Brother with young school aged children or be a former school teacher, and a project team.
2. The project coordinator should contact the local school district and a school to determine what supplies would be wanted and, thereafter, request a periodic (once a semester/quarter/monthly) wish list be provided by the school staff. After the relationship with the school has progressed, a "standard" order form could be developed so the teachers could simply tick-off the type and quantity of the items they need.
3. The project coordinator would compile a "Master" wish-list, and provide it to the members of the project team, who would contact members of the Lodge and district to obtain these supplies. The project coordinator would also distribute the wish list at a stated communication and perhaps ask that it be included in the Lodge trestleboard or posted on the Lodge website.
4. Brethren would be asked to bring the desired articles when they came to Lodge, and the project coordinator might ask other Lodges in the District to act as "collection sites" as well too. The Lodge can also, in appropriate cases arrange to pick up large collections.
5. Maintain a file of donor's names, recipients, dates of delivery, and types of materials, so you can "report" to your members and thank the donors.



Project # G-55
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 immigrants from every nation, and people of every race, creed, color, and religious persuasion into patriotic, freedom-loving Americans. The public school system needs our support.

Overview: The Lodge can “adopt” a school and demonstrate Masonry's support for our public schools by partnering with the school to provide supplies and volunteer services that the school principle might need.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Public Schools Program Chairman and a standing committee of three dynamic, self-starters to spearhead this program.
2. The project chairman should contact the principal of the school the Lodge wants to assist to determine what help is needed.
3. Consider offering 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. Also consider offering to obtain frequently needed items such audio-visual equipment, computer hardware and software, library books and supplies, or athletic and playground equipment
5. The Committee would then solicit funds and time commitments from the Brethren and wives to support the needs of the school.
6. Develop awards for Brethren and their wives, who make major contributions of time or money to the schools, and work with the school principal to provide an award to the outstanding teacher in that school.



Project # G-56
Participate in a Child Reading Tutor Program and
Help Sponsor a Summer Reading Program

Concept: Reading skills are among the most fundamental tools that youngsters need to be successful and share the American dream of well-educated 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 Lodge or district project chairman and committee of those who are willing to tutor
2. The project chairman should contact the school principal or School Board Member to explain that the Lodge or district is interested in assisting by providing tutors (either during school hours or after school). The principal, in consultation with the teaching staff, can identify students who need personal attention. The school will also provide the textbooks.
3. The project chairman should link Lodge tutors with students. It can 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.



Project # G-57
Set Up a Student Assistance Program

Concept: Ignoring problem behaviors of our youth can have devastating effects on our country's future. Chemical abuse and dependency, truancy and drop out, pregnancy, eating disorders, depression, and suicide often have been found to affect even very young children. Student Assistance Programs seek to minimize the effects of these harmful behaviors with systematic early identification, intervention and referral. And some Lodges have chosen to address this problem by providing moral and financial support to the Department of Education in its efforts to establish Student Assistance Programs.

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 Student Assistance Program is not a crisis center or a treatment program. Instead its 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.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a project chairman to establish contact with the Department of Education of a school to learn more about Student Assistance Programs and how the Lodge might help.
2. Typically, the Lodge would be asked to provide some initial organizing help, financial support, arranging for facilities, and contributing a continuing positive presence to the program.
3. The program helps teachers to better observe children's behavior and judge performance, and be in a position to identify early stages of difficulty in the life of a child, and initiate prompt, effective, and appropriate action.



Project # G-58
Tutor an Illiterate Adult or 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. Appoint a project chairman, perhaps with a teaching background, to consult with local schools, adult education offices, and social service agencies to determine the types of tutoring needed in the community and the availability of teaching materials.
2. The chairman should recruit Lodge members, who possess the necessary skills, based on the determined needs of the community. For example, a "citizenship" course, designed to help candidates for naturalization may be needed and could be conducted with one instructor and several students in a classroom style. Language training and tutoring in certain other skills might be conducted best in a one-on-one setting.
3. The chairman, particularly if he is an educator himself, can provide advice on teaching methods and help the tutors present information in a way that is appropriate for teaching adults, and keeps pace with the abilities of the student.



GROUP H

Projects to Assist Those in Need

- H-59** Develop an Emergency Referral Services Handbook and Provide Family Tragedy Assistance
- H-60** Support Programs that Conduct Pre-School Eye Screening
- H-61** Provide School Supplies for Needy Children
- H-62** Set Up a Christmas in April Program
- H-63** Collect and Distribute Holiday Food and Gift Baskets
- H-64** Support an Established Soup Kitchen
- H-65** Set up a Community Food Bank



Project # H-59
***Develop an Emergency Referral Services Handbook
and Provide Family Tragedy Assistance***

Concept: Assistance and 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 period and times of stress, many people don't know where to turn for help, information, or counseling services. A Lodge can be instrumental in acting as a clearinghouse to compile and publish a catalog of local emergency and long-term support services. This list can be useful to our Brethren and widows, and the community-at-large. Also consider establishing an around-the-clock telephone help hot-line, possibly in collaboration with a local radio or TV station or newspaper.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a Chairman and select a committee to work on this project.
2. The project committee would compile accurate lists of available help to include: counseling, medical, dental, emotional support, crisis intervention centers, and legal-aid resources. Include times of operation and other pertinent information.
3. In preparing the list, personally contact each person and "activity" on the list to ensure the accuracy of the data.
4. Provide wide distribution of the pamphlet, placing it with the local Welcome Wagon, the Chamber of Commerce, city/town elected officials, public library, school offices, church offices, police stations, fire houses, etc. In addition, service providers listed in the pamphlet should be given several courtesy copies for their personal use. Finally, have the list available on the Lodge Internet site, and explore other electronic postings as well.
5. Include the month and date the list was prepared, and then issue a revised list every six or twelve months. Put the Lodge name on the front cover of the pamphlet, and consider putting the name and phone number of the editor on the inside cover to receive information about changes and to allow "new or additional" service providers to provide their information.
6. If there is a need and the Lodge has the capability, a 24-hour help hot-line could be established as well. The help hot-line number needs to be widely publicized in the local community.



Project # H-60
Support Programs that Conduct Pre-School Eye Screening

Concept: Manpower and facilities are needed to promote and conduct pre-school 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 persons Masons should strive to help.

Overview: The Lodge would organize and publicize the screening opportunity, register people who come, and perhaps provide the Lodge building for the screening. The actual screening should be done by a medical professional, who would then refer persons with vision problems for a professional eye examination.

Implementation Guidance:

1. A project chairman and committee should be appointed, and the chairman would 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. If there is a need for the screen service, the committee would take the following steps:
 - a. Arrange for the services of one or more eye care professionals to do the screening;
 - b. Decide on a date and location for the screening, for example, a Lodge, community center, or school; and,
 - c. Publicize the screening opportunity by sending information to newspapers and radio and television station, and by getting permission to place fliers in schools and senior citizen facilities, and in government offices and local business.
3. The Lodge can also offer to assist the eye care professionals at the screening.
4. Finally, the Lodge can consider offering transportation to and from the screening site to the elderly or others who need it.
5. A related activity would be to set up a network to provide eyeglasses and other services to those who cannot afford them by setting up a Lodge eye glass fund and by referring the needy to the local Lions Club, or Commandery of Knights Templar.
6. A "Partners in Prevention Award" for service can be awarded Lodge Brethren based on hours of volunteer service.



Project # H-61
Provide School Supplies for Needy Children

Concept: A good, well-rounded education is necessary to break the unemployment welfare trap in which many poor families are caught. But there are many families that 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: The Lodge would organize a drive to collect needed items such as loose-leaf notebooks, paper, crayons, pens, pencils, pencil boxes, and backpacks. It would then distribute these school supplies just prior to or during the first week of school.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a committee and a chairman to lead the project. The chairman should be a Brother who is a self-starter with good management and organization skills.
2. The chairman would contact the local schools or Board of Education to determine the supplies needed.
3. In addition to publicizing the project within the Lodge and district, the committee would notify the public of this activity to enlist additional support.
4. Determine whether stores or shopping centers in your community will allow collection bins on their premises. If not, use your Lodge facility as a drop-off point.
5. Collaborate with the local school principal, and with social welfare agencies to identify potential recipients.
6. School supplies can be gotten to the intended recipients by providing them to the local school, delivering them to the homes of pre-selected families, or having these families come to the Lodge to pick up the supplies.



Project # H-62
Set Up a Christmas in April Program

Concept: Establish an annual event in your Lodge or district to improve the lives of some elderly, handicapped, 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 year-long focused activity for those with management organizational skills, such as fund raising and coordination to do-their-thing, but only requires the majority of the members to provide their time and skills for short period of time.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a project chairman and committee.
2. Compile a list of potential recipients by consulting with churches, synagogues, senior citizen centers, local welfare agencies, as well as referrals from Lodge Brethren.
3. Develop a budget and recruit from the Lodge Brethren with general "fix-it" skills and other volunteers with plumbing, carpentry, and electrical skills. Determine what building materials might be needed, and possibly find a restaurant or two to donate a lunch for the volunteers or a group picnic at the end of the day.
4. Develop a Logistics Plan and schedule for:
 - a. Fund raising
 - b. Donations of building materials
 - c. Transportation for volunteers and materials, and
 - d. Site clean-up
5. Match the list of people you are going to help with the persons who will undertake the work and schedule the date and time for the repairs.
6. 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.



Project H-63
Collect and Distribute Holiday Food and Gift Baskets

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

Overview: The less fortunate members of our community often face added disappointments during holidays such as Easter, Christmas, or Thanksgiving. These holidays present a unique opportunity for us to share our bounty with those who need our help.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a project chairman and a committee to coordinate the effort.
2. Identify local families you will help through your church or synagogue, or community assistance groups.
3. Contact local merchants willing to participate by either donating or providing foodstuffs and at reduced cost.
4. Publicize the project in your Lodge trestleboard and enlist the Brethren and their families to participate as food collectors, basket packers and in the food delivery part of the project.
5. Organize each of these functions as a special sub-committee to involve more of the Brethren and their families and prevent overburdening a few members.



Project # H-64
Support an Established Soup Kitchen

Concept: The Lodge, through the combined talents and economic resources of its members, has 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 a public manifestation 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 inexpensively obtained foodstuffs.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Establish a committee and appoint a chairman to research the possibility of implementing this activity.
2. Develop a relationship with a local soup kitchen and determine what support they need.
 - a. 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 and recurring basis.
 - b. Consider volunteering to help with one dinner on the same night each week or every other week, or all lunches during one week each month.
3. Allocate a portion of the Lodge's charitable funds each year to the support of the soup kitchen.
4. Establish a collection center in the Lodge for canned or non-perishable items which will help stock the pantry of a local soup kitchen.
5. Solicit contributions, or discounted prices on fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, and baked goods from representatives of the food service or grocery industry.
6. Get permission from local food stores and shopping centers to establish additional collection sites for non-perishables and to help advertize the effort.
7. Establish a team of volunteers to work at the soup kitchen on an agreed-upon schedule.



Project # H-65
Set Up a Community Food Bank

Concept: Amidst all of the wealth and plenty in our great country, there still are those who go to bed hungry, and this project is a very tangible way to help those who are less fortunate to obtain the food they need for themselves and their families.

Overview: The Lodge would identify sources to ensure a steady and substantial supply of non-perishable foods to make available to needy persons in the community.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a project chairman and committee.
2. Determine the scope of your activity. It is best to start small by targeting one of the major holidays (Easter, Thanksgiving, or Christmas). An early success is essential to create the necessary motivation and enthusiasm for a longer-term food bank.
3. Establish subcommittees for publicity, pick-up, sorting, packaging, and accounting for foods received and disseminated. This is a great way to get a large number of your members involved and excited about helping in a community oriented project.
4. Allocate a portion of the Lodge's charitable funds each year to the support of the food bank project.
5. Publicize the project in your Lodge trestleboard to enlist the support of the Brethren and their families to participate as food collectors, and advertise the effort in the media to gain broader public support.
6. Establish a collection center in the Lodge for canned or non-perishable items, which will help stock the food bank.
7. In addition to having the Lodge as a central collection site, contact local caterers and food stores in your area to establish additional collection sites for non-perishables and to help advertize the effort.
8. Establish hours when the needy can obtain bags of foods or deliver them to a different community distribution point.
9. Consider whether you can deliver bags of food to those without transportation or who are unable to leave their home.



GROUP I

Projects to Assist Armed Forces Personnel and Veterans

- I-66** Set Up a Program or Join an Existing Program (MSA) to Visit a Veterans Hospital
- I-67** Write Letters to Service Personnel, Especially Masons and Members from the Local Community
- I-68** Mail "Care Packages" to Service Members
- I-69** Provide Assistance to the Wife and Family of Service Personnel, Especially Masons, who are Deployed



Project I-66

Set Up a Program or Join an Existing Program (MSA) to Visit a Veterans Hospital

Concept: Our veterans have given a great deal to our country and need our support, particularly when they are in a Veterans hospital recovering from war injuries or simply in poor health. The Lodge can show its support and brighten the day of our veterans by encouraging two-person teams of Brethren to visit the nearest Veterans Hospital to spend time with patients.

Overview: The Lodge can join the Hospital Visitation Program sponsored by the Masonic Services Association (MSA) or start its own program. Either way, MSA offers several wonderful films and video tapes available on loan that can be used by the Lodge for implementing the program. You might also invite a MSA staff member to give a short informative presentation to the Lodge.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a project coordinator to organize a committee of Brethren willing to visit our veterans.
2. The project coordinator should contact the veterans hospital and/or the MSA to ask whether there is a need for clearance and to learn the best times to visits. You can reach MSA by mail: Masonic Service Association, 8120 Fenton Street, Suite 203, Silver Spring, MD 20910-4785; by phone: (301) 588-4010; and by e-mail: msana@ix.netcom.com.
3. Visiting Brethren, in addition to simply spending time with the veterans can act as a personal shopper for bedridden patients and purchase items for patients recommended by the Hospital staff, but not obtainable through regular hospital facilities. They can also assist in procuring vital documents, such as birth or marriage certificates or obtain notary public services, particularly for patients confined to their beds. They can arrange or furnish emergency transportation to a patient's home, secure clothing for a needy patient or his family. They can counsel with a patient and his family, if it doesn't conflict with hospital procedures, and they can help arrange religious, entertainment, and recreational activities for patients. Some of your Brethren may themselves have "special" talents, such as, singing, musical skill, or entertaining and may be able to make a short presentation during their visit – and the rehearsals might make an interesting Lodge program some evening.
4. If a large delegation is visiting, arrange necessary transportation for the visit.



Project # I-67
Write Letters to Service Personnel,
Especially Masons and Members from the Local Community

Concept: A letter from "home" is treasured by every man or woman 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 war zone 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 these service personnel.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman to recruit members of the Lodge and their families to write informative, upbeat letters to Service Personnel.
2. The 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. The letters should be addressed to "Any Serviceman or Servicewoman" via the U.S. Postal Service APO and FPO addresses.
4. Expect to receive a response to some of your letters and keep the exchange going with the service man or woman.



Project # I-68
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. Appoint a project chairman to recruit Lodge Brethren and their families to put together and mail "care packages" to our troops.
2. The project chairman should contact the Pentagon and the USO to determine some of the most sought after items to send. Find out about transit times, weather conditions, local customs and any restrictions on certain items.
3. Generally, non-perishable snack foods are welcome; as are books, and personal grooming items, including skin lotions and creams.
4. Consider whether each Brother would be responsible for assembling a package or whether the Lodge would collect the items and assemble packages at one time in assembly line fashion as a group activity.
5. Consider soliciting funds or donations for items for the "care packages."
6. Lodges can also purchase from mail order supply centers packages of grooming items and toiletries in a reusable carrying case emblazoned with the name of your Lodge and the Square and Compasses.
7. Packages can be directed to "Any serviceman or servicewoman" with an APO or FPO address to reach out to personnel who might not otherwise receive packages "from home." Packages should also be sent to known service men and women.



Project # I-69
Provide Assistance to the Wife and Family of Service Personnel,
Especially Masons, who are Deployed

Concept: Our service men and women are often more worried about their families than themselves and would welcome someone looking in on the family and attending to some of their emerging needs. There are few ways of demonstrating that Masons care than providing help and support to the families of our troops.

Overview: The Lodge would provide help with certain chores or repairs or even take children to bowling or to a movie to relieve a single parent for a few hours.

Implementation Guidance:

1. A project chairman and committee are appointed to determine the needs of Masonic wives and families whose spouses are in the military, as well as to identify non-Masonic families in the area who may need our assistance.
2. The chairman would match Masons with these families.
3. The Mason assigned to a family would call at regular intervals to check that all is well, offer moral support, and learn what assistance is needed.
4. If specific assistance is needed and the Brother cannot perform that service, he would call the project chairman to see if someone else in the Lodge could help.
5. Assistance could range from doing light repairs, running errands, or driving a family member to a doctor's appointment.
6. If funds are needed, the Lodge could hold a fund-raising effort to support this project.



GROUP J

Miscellaneous Projects

- J-70** Join the War on Drugs
- J-71** Paint a Church
- J-72** Traveler's Way-stop
- J-73** Masonic Anniversaries
- J-74** Collect Eye Glasses for the Lions Club
- J-75** Joint Brotherhood Nights with Other Fraternal Organizations
- J-76** Community Health Fair



Project # J-70
Join the War on Drugs

Concept: The prevalence of illegal drugs jeopardizes school performance and puts our children risk. It increases crime and violence, and impacts job performance. Keeping drugs out of our schools and neighborhoods is a goal that Masons support, and Lodges should have a visible presence in the fight against illegal drug use.

Overview: The Lodge could offer speakers and sponsor youth group panels to discuss the problems caused by the use of illegal drugs, strategies to keep children from experimenting with drugs, and to help those addicted to break the habit.

Implementation Guidance:

1. If interested in this project, the Lodge would appoint a project chair and committee to become familiar with the National Drug Control Program Strategy and become knowledgeable about the effects of various illegal drugs and ways to combat their use.
2. The Lodge or committee can engage in a number of ways:
 - a. It can invite Federal, State, or local experts in the field of drug prevention, treatment, or enforcement to make a presentation or lead a discussion about the problem.
 - b. It can invite Masonic Youth organizations to the Lodge for a workshop or a round table discussion of the drug problem, with a local expert in attendance to answer questions.
 - c. As a result of the workshops, the committee can determine more specific concerns about our youth with respect to drugs, and can determine what additional work can be done in the local community.
 - d. To create awareness and help our youth resist the influence of the pushers, a poster contest could be sponsored at the local schools with Savings Bonds for the winner. Arrange for copies of the posters to be posted, not only in the school, but also at local food markets and other public places to showcase the children's handiwork. Request that local newspapers publish outstanding entries.
 - e. The Lodge can also support programs that stop drug use before it starts, and programs that provide treatment for drug users.
3. Most important of all, each Mason who engages with our youth, acts as a role model, and shows that he cares, can make a difference in someone's life. If even one or two young people are saved from drug dependency by each Mason, we would have a powerful impact on our community.



Project # J-71
Paint a Church

Concept: Although Masonry is not a religion, reliance on Deity is one of the cornerstones of the Fraternity. Providing assistance to houses of worship would enhance the image of Freemasonry across the community – providing a significant benefit to the churches that need help, and also helping to beautify the community.

Overview: The Lodge would identify places of worship in the community that need painting but lack adequate resources. A group of Masons from the Lodge or district could band together and perform this task as a public service.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman who is a painter or a good manager, and a committee of handy Brethren.
2. Select church sites that are in the greatest need, and determine if the church officials would like our assistance.
3. Determine with the church officials the 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. The Lodge can use one or a combination of the following methods to obtain the paint and additional equipment or supplies required.
 - a. It could be provided by the church
 - b. It could be solicited as a donation from local businesses
 - c. It could be provided by a Lodge member, or other individual; or
 - d. It could be 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 (newspaper, radio, television) present during the painting. The Grand Lodge Public Relations Committee can provide assistance.



Project # J-72
Traveler's Way-stop

Concept: A Lodge can arrange with the appropriate authorities to establish a Traveler's Way-stop 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. Select an enthusiastic Lodge member to organize and manage the project.
2. Obtain official approval to set up a Traveler's Way-stop at a conveniently located, but heavily visited road stop.
3. If in town, publicize the service and get permission to place large signs near the location to encourage travelers to "stop by" for a cup of coffee. If on a highway, check with officials to see if special signage can be posted.
4. 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 doughnuts, wives of Lodge members may be able to provide home-baked cookies.
5. Arrange a duty schedule with adequate Lodge members, wives, and youth group volunteers to properly operate the way-stop. This should include at least the provision of trash facilities, tables, tents (if no covered area is easily available), chairs, heaters (if the weather is cool), one or more persons to pick up the supplies, adequate clean water, and extension cords (if electric supply is not close).
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, having a volunteer uniformed officer on duty at all times is recommended.



Project # J-73
Masonic Anniversaries

Concept: Celebrate significant Grand Lodge and Blue Lodge anniversaries by inviting the public to the celebration. These anniversaries offer an excellent opportunity for Masonic Lodges to remind the public that it has been a part of the community for 50, 100, or even 200 years.

Overview: The Lodge should plan its special anniversary celebration with the public in mind and focus on the role Freemasonry and the Lodge have played in the community, in the Commonwealth and in the nation.

Implementation Guidance:

1. At least a year in advance, appoint a chairman and committee to organize the anniversary celebration.
2. At the planning session, determine what events to have and which speakers to invite. You will want to invite the Brother, who will be Grand Master during the celebration, but also may want to invite the Mayor or other local officials.
3. The committee should consider a dinner, dance, parade, and open house to celebrate the occasion. Determine where the event(s) will be held and arrange for commemorative items such as pins, coins, medallions, or cups. Have some, if not all, of the events open to the public.
4. Contact local and state elected officials to have certificates and proclamations issued.
5. Begin a year-long publicity campaign to raise public awareness of the Lodge. One idea is to do a series of "decades" articles. The first would describe life in the nation and in the community when the Lodge was formed and then, perhaps monthly, write an article describing life every decade thereafter. Review the Lodge records and include in the articles prominent citizens who were members, and community activities undertaken by the Lodge.
6. Send out press releases and public interest radio and TV spots to publicize the anniversary celebrations a month before the event. (The Grand Lodge Public Relations Committee can assist you.)



Project # J-74
Collect Eye Glasses for the Lions Club

Concept: The Lodge may wish to partner with other organizations engaged in projects that are of interest to the Brethren. For example, a Lodge might want to support the Lions Clubs International or another local fraternal or civic club which has an established program, for example, to provide for sight restoration and sight enhancement services for members of the community.

Overview: The Lodge can assist to collect eye glasses as a separate project and make them available to community welfare organizations, or if there is a local Lions Club assist them in the collection of eye glasses.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a chairman for the project. Especially consider a Brother who is also a Lion or has past experience with the program.
2. Contact the nearest Lions Club to acquire some of their published literature and offer to place a collection box in the Lodge building.
3. Consider having a knowledgeable member of the Lions Club present a program to Lodge members to make them aware of the Lions Club's program.
4. Make periodic announcements in the Lodge bulletin regarding the action taken and progress made in support of the project. Short articles on the number of pairs of usable glasses collected, and how they benefit the community would be helpful.
5. Follow-up by visiting with the local Lions group to:
 - a. Deliver glasses
 - b. Share lessons learned
 - c. Encourage future interaction



Project # J-75
Joint Brotherhood Nights with Other Fraternal Organizations

Concept: Many other fraternal organizations are engaged in charitable and community activities. It can benefit us to learn about them and to engage with them on joint activities where our combined efforts would be of benefit to the community and to the image of Freemasonry.

Overview: A get-acquainted night with other local fraternal groups may be of interest to the Brethren, both to provide an opportunity for cross fertilization and exchange of ideas, as well as to mobilize a larger group of men to deal with a community project.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a working fraternal liaison committee to explore the possibility of meeting with members of another local fraternal organization.
2. Determine what activities these other organizations are engaged in and consider whether the Lodge would want to invite their leaders to an informal meeting to discuss joint activities. These activities could include: Information exchange meetings to learn more about each other, a social evening such as Brotherhood Night, dance or picnic, or working together on a community project.
3. Invite the District Deputy and district team to the meeting.



Project # J-76
Community Health Fair

Concept: Our members and their immediate families are becoming more and more health conscious. The Lodge can address this health consciousness by assembling materials and speakers on pertinent topics and then helping to get this information out to the local community.

Overview: The Lodge can collaborate with a hospital or community health department to obtain written material on a wide range of health subjects, and information on upcoming lectures and screening programs. The Lodge can make this information available to the Brethren and help at community health fairs. If there are no community health fairs, the Lodge can partner with a local hospital or community center to establish one.

Implementation Guidance:

1. A Lodge project chairman (a medical professional, if available) and committee should be appointed.
2. The committee should begin to collect information on subjects of interest to the Brethren, for example, on diet and nutrition, exercise and health maintenance programs, baby care and elder care. A supply of written materials can be obtained on the Internet, or from your local hospital, druggist or pharmaceutical supply house.
3. The committee should publicize any lectures or screening tests available at community centers or local hospitals.
4. The committee should invite speakers to the Lodge to give talks on such subjects as nutrition and your heart, shopping for low cholesterol foods, prostate exams and treatment regimes, problems associated with aging and how to deal with them.
5. The committee should explore whether community health fairs are conducted in the community, sponsored, for example, by the local hospital or community center, and if so, consider whether the Lodge can provide services at, or otherwise help or promote the health fair.
6. If there are no local community health fairs, the committee should try to locate other communities where such a fair is conducted and learn how they are organized and run. With this information, the Lodge could then seek to partner with a local hospital or community center to establish a health fair in its community
7. Use your trestleboard, the news media, local neighborhood bulletin boards, and computer bulletin board network to publicize your activities and the health fair.



GROUP K

Projects to Assist a Lodge to Raise its Profiles in the Community

- K-77** Make the Lodge Building and Facilities Available for Public and Community Functions
- K-78** Get Permission to Have a Cornerstone Laying Ceremony for a Public Building
- K-79** Sponsor a Neighborhood Event, Such as a Halloween Party
- K-80** Have Open Lodge Days For the Community to Visit the Lodge and Learn About Freemasonry and What Goes On in the Building



Project # K-77

Make the Lodge Building and Facilities Available for Public and Community Functions

Concept: If you have a Lodge building, it could be one of your best communications tools. Use it to better integrate Freemasonry into the fabric of the community, and make the public to more aware of Freemasonry by offering it as a place for community events to be held. As more members of the community learn about your Lodge and the work it does, they will want to be a part of our great organization.

Overview: Consider making your Lodge a center for major community activities. You can help the community and get the public to visit your facility by offering it as a place for voter registration, voting booths, blood drives, or senior citizen or neighborhood association meetings. Also consider allowing the community use of your parking lot for such events as band practice sessions or other community events.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a community relations chairman and committee to explore what community activities are in need of a place to meet and which are appropriate for your Lodge to support.
 - a. Match the size of the event with the size of your Lodge Hall and parking lot.
 - b. Ensure that community events will not interfere with Lodge or appendant body activities.
 - c. Always ensure that the event will be covered under your Lodge insurance policy or that the group using your facility will provide sufficient coverage for the event and agree to hold the Lodge harmless for any liability associated with the event.
 - d. In certain cases, the Lodge could be offered free, in other cases a nominal charge for utilities might be charged, but the Lodge may want to charge more substantial fees for certain uses as a way to raise funds.
 - e. The Lodge is well advised to have a Brother on site to supervise the activity.

2. There are many possible users and uses for the Lodge facility, but in each case you must determine that both are appropriate for the Lodge to host. A few examples are:
 - a. Lodge facilities might be offered as a site for voter registration or a place to put voting booths.
 - b. Lodge facilities might be offered for meetings of civic organizations, churches, senior citizens groups, schools, and scouts.
 - c. The Lodge parking lot can be made available for band practice, drill teams, and community flea markets.
 - d. The Lodge parking lot can be made available for daytime commuter parking for a fee.



Project # K-78

Get Permission to Have a Cornerstone Laying Ceremony for a Public Building

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. Advanced 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 *Manual of Ceremonies* published by the Grand Lodge of Virginia.
5. The cornerstone laying and activities immediately before and after the ceremony may be newsworthy, and you should invite the press, take pictures, and prepare suitable press releases. The Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations can assist you.



Project # K-79
Sponsor a Neighborhood Event, Such as a Halloween Party

Concept: In recent years news reports have shaken the confidence of parents regarding the safety and welfare of their children on Halloween. The Lodge can provide a safe and wholesome alternative to the way children have traditionally observed the holiday by opening the Lodge to the public for an evening celebration.

Overview: The Lodge would offer an evening of fun to include a period of story-telling, small games, music, dancing, bobbing-for-apples, cider, donuts, and hard candy. There could also be a contest by age group to judge the best "homemade" costume or a talent contest. At the end of the evening, each child can be awarded a bag of goodies such as candy, nuts, and fruit to take home.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a project chairman and committee, and consider including the Job's Daughters Bethel, DeMolay Chapter, or Rainbow Assembly in the planning and execution phases of the program.
2. Develop a program of activities for the evening and establish the beginning and ending times.
3. Prepare invitations. Use local public school PTA organizations and Church/Synagogue Sunday School advisory groups to provide focus for the activity and to gain public support.
4. On the evening before the event, review all plans to ensure that nothing has inadvertently fallen between the cracks.
5. After the event, initiate thank you notes to the presiding officers of the youth groups that participated and adult organizations, which provided support for this activity.
6. Ensure that follow up publicity is provided to local news media. Ensure that adult and youth organizations that participated are appropriately recognized in print. See the Public Relations Manual for guidance.
7. Prepare a "lessons-learned" and "new ideas" portfolio. Put it away for safe keeping as a reference source for next year's event planning group.



Project # K-80
**Have "Open Lodge Days" For the Community to Visit the Lodge and Learn
About Freemasonry and What Goes On in the Building.**

Concept: We want our Lodge halls to be welcoming not forbidding. One way to help the general public to learn more about our organization and the work we do, is to have set aside a day for the general public to visit the Lodge hall, get a guided tour, and learn about Freemasonry.

Overview: A well publicized and well designed tour and program, with some light refreshments, can attract members of the community to visit the Lodge hall, satisfy their curiosity, and help them to better appreciate the role Freemasonry has had in the country and in the community.

Implementation Guidance:

1. Appoint a project chairman and committee to plan a program the open Lodge day.
2. Have the committee develop a tour and program, perhaps including a display of Masonic artifacts, the showing of a Masonic film or video, and a short presentation with a question and answer period.
 - a. The Lodge can use some of the materials in the Grand Lodge Bring a Friend Night Event publication.
 - b. But remember, your visitors are members of the general public, and your task is only to give them a briefing on our organization, its history and philosophy, and the role Lodge and Freemasonry plays in the community.
3. You will want the Lodge to look its best, so before the open Lodge event, look at the Lodge hall with a critical eye as though it were your first visit. Preparation for the open house can be a good reason to take care of the painting you had long planned to do and the deep cleaning that may be needed. Be sure the interior has been dusted and the windows washed. Look at the exterior grounds and ensure the grass is cut, the shrubbery trimmed, and the trash collected.
4. Publicize the open house through the Internet, press releases, radio and TV public service announcements, distributing and posting flyers throughout the neighborhood homes, and getting permission to post them in stores.
5. On the day of the event, open the Lodge on time and assure those who are hosts are properly attired. Light refreshments: coffee, tea, soda, and cookies could be provided for the guests and hosts.