

## **Lodge Education Program**

Chandler Lodge #138

Date: 28 April 09

What is the importance of a new member? We always have discussions on masonry, and the other related organizations. We always take it upon ourselves to discuss the great attributes of our volunteers and all of our charitable efforts. Lately we have even discussed the One-day class and getting petitions and spreading the word of this opportunity to non-masons.

But, when have we ever discussed the new member. Yes its true we always talk about ourselves and what we can provide to the community or what masonry will bring to a new candidate. But do they care? Do we care?.

I pose the question – next time you sit down to discuss a petition, or take part of an investigation committee - could we be better served to realize what they bring to us? How important is the new member to us?

1. Foremost the new mason brings us a new man void of Masonic light and this brings us the opportunity to improve ourselves because we cannot teach without first understanding ourselves. He is helping us be better men & masons with out even knowing or trying.
2. The new mason is interested and wants to be involved and learn. This let's us give more of ourselves, and can only promote activism and enthusiasm with-in our lodge and our members. Not only does it allow us to teach Masonic lessons, but also lets us 'show them the ropes' of our lodge. From our traditions and history to general knowledge of the community. It's a new volunteer for events, or a different approach to a problem, or ideas for a fundraiser.
3. Of courses there are the dues. We all appreciate the fine buildings, and meals, and especially showing our support of the community and charities. But this all takes money and not only does the new member bring in more dues, but its more donations for dinner, or another buck when we pass the hat for a destitute brother. Masonry doesn't run on money, but it helps some of our efforts.
4. What about the degree work. Without the new member we wouldn't maintain our ritual. Yes we always perform the required work but we all know it's done better and more sincerely when there is a brand new mason out on the floor. Our ceremonies and ritual are part of the Masonic draw; its what our members want to see, and what our officers train to do. Without the new members coming for ritual work our officers would have no drive to learn and excel, eventually meetings would just slowly dissolve into boredom and then extinction.
5. Lastly the fraternity as a whole and the lodge benefit from the social network of having a new member. What of his family? He has a spouse or children to learn about masonry and all its relations. He may have a different career than others. His circle of friends will be different than ours. This allows the branches of masonry to spread a little further maybe out to touch someone who has never been around freemasonry. All these differences also influence his persona and style, and now this will in turn influence us, just as we are influencing him. The lodge really is a melting pot. Not only for the various characters but the opinions and ideas held by individuals, this makes us all better. The law of averages proves the more ideas and opinions we can have, the better chance we have of having the right ones. This is the true greatness of a new member, just by joining; freemasonry will gain a larger circle of friends and influences. Its that old saying 'we are the sum of our parts'.

So please brothers take these thoughts with you into your next discussion with a new member. We all know about not asking for members. We shouldn't pressure new members about being active. The final decision is always with the petitioners, and instead of saying what we can give them; we should be thanking them for the opportunity to improve the fraternity and ourselves. Truly the importance of a new member cannot be wholly understood. For every item masonry can provide to a new mason the new member returns ten-fold.

Freemasonry has succeeded through generations. The ritual and ceremonies are what make us better and different than other organizations, but truly it is the new man that makes each individual mason what they are today, and in-turn what freemasonry will be tomorrow.