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## SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND PROGRAMMES OF MASONIC LODGES

In the third report from the ad hoc Committee on Organizational Analysis and Evaluation (*Annual Proceedings 2012*), details of successful practices and programmes from many lodges were collected. The list below is a summary of those findings.

The material collected fell into two categories:

- i. Healthy dynamic practices for lodges in general to work effectively
- ii. Success stories - special programs which when injected into a lodge program, create a more interesting year

A recommendation brought to the committee's attention was that the lists created be broken into programmes worthy for consideration for small membership lodges, and programmes for large membership lodges. In the committee's opinion, such a division should be left to lodges to decide. Any further ideas, which could enhance the list, should be submitted to the Grand Lodge office for future inclusion.

### Healthy and dynamic regular lodge practices

- a. Treating visitors above and beyond a simple welcome – they are special guests
- b. Running of an effective lodge meeting (efficiency – when things happen, effectiveness – how things happen)
- c. Reducing business to minimum
- d. Making all meetings as special events – Don't wait for extraordinary opportunities. "Seize common occasions and make them great!" **Orison Swett Marden** (1850 - 1924)
- e. Education that is relevant and professionally presented
- f. For emergent meeting – festive board before the meeting – dessert following meeting
- g. Formal festive boards at special meetings [implying informal festive boards other times]
- h. Strength of a lodge is in its variety of programmes
- i. Successful lodges plan
- j. Mentoring of members and officers – the former appears obvious, the latter cannot be forgotten
- k. Communicating in a variety of ways to cover the styles brethren use in their communication
- l. Long-range plans are made
- m. Regular connection with widows, and shut-in members
- n. Approval of minutes at the end of the meeting (GL of Washington style)
- o. New members be involved in ritual work, festive board socials, and projects, as soon as possible
- p. Regular visitations by members to other lodges
- q. Advertise in local newspapers when lodge meets – inviting sojourning brethren
- r. Proper protocol at all times
- s. Find the passion of members and support them in projects they wish to try

## Successful Programmes

- a. Masonic plays
- b. Table lodges
- c. Ladies programmes incorporated as part of the year's plan of the lodge
- d. Inviting men who have expressed an interest in Freemasonry to join the lodge at the festive board (preferably if board is before a meeting)
- e. Entertainment at Ladies Events
- f. Fraternal visits and conferring a degree for the visited lodge
- g. Fraternal visits and each lodge confers the degree on the other lodge's candidate (with the obligation given by Masters to their candidates)
- i. Yearly feedback meeting of members – how is the lodge doing, is it meeting needs? (state of the "nation")
- j. Have Deacons from two lodges mentor each other
- k. Draw up a training manual for your lodge – the duties and expectation of brethren in each chair
- l. Six Step Programme – has shown strong success where used
- m. Certificates acknowledging brothers' work
- n. Incoming Master communicates individually with each member of the lodge before he is installed
- o. Theme meetings and festive boards reflecting local traditions – Joppa Crab night, Nanaimo Miners' night, Robbie Burns Evening, etc. Some lodges create a Burns Night as a community event – creates items for local newspaper – good publicity
- p. Regular monthly lunches with families
- q. Open house – buddy night
- r. Community outreach with attendance in local parades
- s. Installation held on regular lodge nights (weekends left for family)
- t. Degree teams support in district
- u. Local speakers bureau established
- v. Mass visitation from one district to another
- w. L\*E\*A\*P program involvement – shown to bring a lodge together quickly
- x. Serve breakfast for lodge families and friends
- y. Creation of a local speakers bureau