

Program of the Month

Throughout the rest of our Five Year Renewal Program your Lodge will receive a Program of the Month. This Program is created for you to utilize in your Lodge.

If your lodge already has a program similar to the program that is contained in this brochure, by all means continue your efforts. If however, you are not conducting this type of program please utilize this procedure.

These programs are created to help your lodge retain your members and it is specifically tied to our Renewal Effort.

Be sure to let me know how this program worked out by calling me at 1-800-632-8764 or by emailing me at renewal@gl-mi.org.



If your lodge needs assistance in the preparation of this program. Please call Robert Conley at the number below.

Grand Lodge of Michigan Renewal Programs

If you need assistance with this program,
Please call:

Robert Conley
Member Services Grand Lodge of Michigan
800-632-8764
renewal@gl-mi.org

Grand Lodge of
Michigan

Festive Board Program



Grand Lodge of Michigan
Renewal Programs

Tel: 1-800-632-8764

Festive Board Program

Masonic Festive Boards are one of the oldest forms of Masonic Fellowship. Unfortunately, this practice has fallen into disuse in the United States in the last several decades.

The practice however goes back many centuries when a dinner with toasting and eating was considered a completely natural part of the Masonic experience. In 1721 we read in the minutes of a lodge in England "after grace said, they sat down in the ancient manner of Masons to a very elegant feast and dined with joy and gladness".

From our earliest roots the festive board has been an integral part of the craft. For those who have partaken of a Festive Board the memories and friendships that are formed are long lasting, enticing us to venture from afar to participate in the next one.

Toasts, speeches, eating, drinking and having fun are the details of the event, but fellowship and relaxation are the effects.

Festive Boards are occasions that are special. Preparation is necessary and an understanding of its intention is paramount. Dining with others creates a bond, having a Festive Board makes that easier.

How does it work?

You will find a script for the Festive Board already printed out for you in the resource section of our web site at www.gl-mi.org or in the Michigan Masonic Manual in the "Ceremonies" section.

Once you have your script you are ready to begin. In the script you will notice the initials M.C. these are the initials of the Master of Ceremonies. This person is the leader of the toasting and keeps the evening on track. He should be someone who is comfortable in front of people and be able to read well. This evening is meant to be fun and entertaining. When presenting toasts, it is not meant that the toast should just be to who it is intended. Rather, it should be a story or a short description of why the toast is being given. When the reply is made it is supposed to be a thank you for the toast as well as some other short return comment. From our experience, Masons who can't be shut up in the lodge room often are scared to death to talk at the Festive Board. Give them time to prepare a short (3 minutes at the most) toast or response. Spread the toasts out so that the evening doesn't just seem like dinner and then out the door. The intent is to maintain the brothers interest and keep them interested until they must leave.

The dining room or other room that is used for the Festive Board is to be set up in a U shape pattern. It doesn't matter whether your lodge has round or rectangular tables as long as there is a head table and then two sets of tables extending from the ends of the head table. The Worshipful Master, the Chaplain and the MC are to sit at the head table, with others that the Worshipful Master has as distinguished guests, and so on. The Junior and Senior Warden's are seated at the ends of the extending tables. The meal should be as first class as the lodge is capable of. This is not the time for pizza or KFC. Break out the good plates and silverware. The Stewards are to serve and the guests are to be treated royally. It is best to have refreshments at this gathering that reflect the tastes of all of the members. Some imbibe, some do not. Have wine, or perhaps some beer, but remember that whatever alcoholic beverage you do have available, that

the intent is in no way to overindulge! One or two glasses of wine or beer over the course of a two or three hour Festive Board should be sufficient to warm the heart and aid in the digestion of your meal. Anymore than that however, and we will ask that you provide designated drivers to assist them in arriving safely home. The last thing we need is any stress being caused at home, or having someone get hurt. If this is a grave concern among the members in your lodge then by all means forgo the alcohol and just have coffee, tea, and soda. Also, there are excellent non alcoholic wines and sparkling beverages as well.

The tradition of a Festive Board is one that we encourage our lodges to begin, if you have not, and to continue if you have conducted them in the past. This connection with our past is a fine part of our craft and a welcome addition in your lodge.

Grand Lodge of Michigan Renewal Programs

If you need assistance with this program,
Please call:

Robert Conley
Member Services Grand Lodge of Michigan
800-632-8764
renewal@gl-mi.org