

RUSTY TROWEL CEREMONY

Grand Lodge Of California

Free And Accepted Masons

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I. INTRODUCTION

All of us have noticed the tremendous increase in the population of our Jurisdiction, but how many of us have thought about this growth in terms of Masonry? When you go by a new housing tract do you ask yourself these

questions:

"How many sojourning Masons are moving here?"

"What can I do to help these Brethren find a new Masonic home?" "What does my Lodge do to make itself known to these Brothers?" There are thousands of sojourning Masons living in our Jurisdiction who are not active in Masonry. Unknown hundreds of them belong to Lodges in other Jurisdictions, but an equal amount are California Masons who have been displaced for one reason or another. It has been said that there are at least as many unaffiliated Masons living in our Jurisdiction as there are members.

Bringing these Brothers back into Masonic communication is not just of interest to the Lodges. It is important to them also. Here they are without Masonic communication and completely cut off from all of the social connections of their home areas. We can offer these Brothers and their families that which is missing. There is no substitute for the continuing activity, friendship and the sharing that are stimulated by the principles of Freemasonry.

II. DEFINITION

A "Sojourner" is generally considered to be a Mason from another jurisdiction who is now either traveling or living in our Jurisdiction. The Sojourner Committee has however expanded on that. When we use the term "Sojourner" we mean: Master Masons living or visiting in a jurisdiction other than their own. AND Members of California Masonic Lodges who are either displaced in our Jurisdiction or are just not active.

III. GRAND LODGE SOJOURNERS COMMITTEE

The Sojourners Committee of the Grand Lodge was established to assist our member Lodges in developing methods to reactivate Sojourning Masons. Use the ideas presented here freely. Modify them to meet your Lodge's specific needs and most of all share your successes with other Lodges, that they too may benefit. If we of the Sojourners Committee can help you increase your membership, you will have helped yourself with more income, more participation, more enthusiasm, and possibly new officers and we will have done what we have been instituted to do.

IV. LODGE SOJOURNERS COMMITTEE

Every Lodge should have a Committee responsible for developing programs to reactivate Sojourners. It is the responsibility of the Master to appoint the Committee. The Chairman should be selected with care and forethought. Appoint a Brother who is sincerely interested, is active in the Lodge, and who understands the importance of reactivating sojourning Brothers. The Committee should consist of from two to four

members and their terms should be staggered to maintain continuity. The Tiler of the Lodge should definitely be involved as he is usually the first member to meet visitors.

V. BASIC LODGE SOJOURNERS PROGRAM

Locating Sojourners and bringing them back into Lodge is not a once a year effort. We must continually be working on bringing our Brothers back into the fold. This requires an ongoing commitment of all the members of the Lodge. The following are the basics of any Sojourners program. Modify them to meet your Lodge's needs. 1. LOCATING THE SOJOURNER There are several ways to locate Sojourners. For example: Discussions with members of the Lodge will generally produce the names of Sojourning Masons. Provide each Lodge member and the Secretaries of the local Concordant Bodies with a supply of "Sojourner Cards" (see example on next page) Look for men wearing a Masonic insignia and ask them where they attend Lodge. Fathers of the members of our Masonic Youth orders are potential applicants. Contact the Secretaries of other Masonic bodies for names of members who refer to Lodges in other Jurisdictions. Radio, television and the newspaper are also useful. This method is very effective; however to insure adherence to the CMC contact the appropriate Grand Lodge committee. Announce your meetings in the Community Service section of the newspaper. Place a Masonic sign at the entrance to your town the same is as done by Rotary or Lions. Emphasize the listing your Lodge has in the Telephone Directory. GRAND LODGE OF CALIFORNIA SOJOURNERS CONTACT REQUEST Do you know a Sojourner or an inactive Brother? If so fill out this card and return it. SOJOURNER INFORMATION

NAME: HOME PHONE:

ADDRESS: City: ZIP:

LODGE NAME & NO: STATE:

YOUR NAME: HOME PHONE:

REMARKS:

RETURN TO:

Master

Your Lodge Address

Telephone Number

2. MAINTAIN CONTACT

Register Sojourners living in your area.

Personally invite each Sojourner to your meetings.

Mail a copy of your Lodge bulletin to each Sojourner in your area. Special invitations by mail or telephone should be implemented to assure good attendance at special events. Establish "car pools" for older Brothers who are unable to drive, especially at night. 3. EXAMINATIONS Many Sojourners do not attend Lodge because they are concerned with their "rustiness". Do not make your examination an inquisition. If the Sojourner can not answer your questions ask him what he remembers. The purpose of the examination is not to determine how much ritual a visitor knows, but rather to make certain he is a Master Mason. After the examination review all of the ritual that the Sojourner will need to know. This will keep him from getting embarrassed during the meeting. 4. FIRST TIME VISITS Identify first time visitors by a name card. Introduce the visitor to a Brother who shares the same interests (i.e. Profession, hobbies, home town, etc.) Have the Brother remain with the Sojourner throughout the meeting. The Brother should explain to the Sojourner what is taking place in the meeting. Introduce the Sojourner from the sidelines. Personally introduce the Sojourner to all the Brethren in attendance. Present a card, signed by the Master as a memento of the visit. 5. RETURN VISITS If the Sojourner continues to attend your Lodge, explain to him the advantages of affiliation. In your pursuit of affiliates you will find many who do not care to break the ties with the Mother Lodge. This is understandable; however, challenge them with the question, "who gains?" Does the Lodge in the community where the Brother formally resided gain? Does the Lodge here in his "new" hometown gain? What of the Brother himself? Or even the Fraternity at large? We must convince them that the answer is simple...no one gains. This "offering" should be done in "good taste" and dignity and not be given coercively or overbearingly, (i.e. ...coming on too strongly). Thus, the Sojourners can benefit from our Jurisdiction as well as from his original one.

When challenged with the question "may I be a member of more than one Lodge or Jurisdiction?"

Remember: Our Jurisdiction permits plural and dual membership and there are only four (4) states in the United States which do not now permit dual membership. Those states are Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Tennessee and Mississippi.. all the rest do permit dual membership under certain conditions. 1. Purpose The Rusty Trowel program provides Sojourners in our Jurisdiction an opportunity to renew their Masonic Careers. The program reopens the door of Masonry to Brothers who do not attend Lodge regularly and may be "rusty" in their work. The program also provides information about other members of the family that will help our appendant and concordant bodies grow. 2. Background The Rusty Trowel program came from Nevada, where it is called the "Rusty Nail". In each instance where the program has been used several of the participants have affiliated with local Lodges, others are actively looking for a Lodge to join and some took out petitions for appendant and concordant bodies. The program consists of three phases: Locating Sojourners Examination Rusty Trowel Night

3. Getting Started

The intent of the Rusty Trowel program is to place Sojourners in a Lodge they are likely to attend regularly. Therefore, the Rusty Trowel program is most effective if all of the Masonic bodies in an area work together. Wide representation also increases the chances for success in locating Sojourners and placing them in the Lodge that will best meet their needs. The first step therefore is to set up a Rusty Trowel committee. The typical committee positions are: General Chairman—General coordination Secretary, Minutes—Letters Treasurer—Account for funds. Committee Chairmen for the following: Funding—Fund raising. Examinations—Supervises examinations on Rusty Trowel Night. Telephone—Receives phone calls from Sojourners. Performs initial screening of participants. Refreshments—Provides refreshments for Rusty Trowel Night. Ritual—Coordinates Ritual for Rusty Trowel Night. The following is a letter designed to involve all of the members of our Masonic bodies in this program: Dear Leaders of the Masonic Family: Friday night, May 12, 1990, the "Rusty Trowel Ceremony" will be conducted at the Sunshine Masonic Temple. The purpose of the ceremony is to reactivate members who have not attended Lodge in a long while and to give newcomers to the area an opportunity to continue their Masonic career. The ceremony is for Master Masons only. However, we will be extracting information about the families of those attending the ceremony so that we may identify candidates for our concordant and appendant bodies. This will be a highly publicized event with articles about the program in the newspaper. A quarter page colored ad will be in the April 27th issue of the "Progress Bulletin" and the "Daily Report". We are also expecting to have both radio and television coverage. We would like to provide each attendee with as much information about the Masonic organizations in the Golden View Valley as possible. To assist us in doing this we will be setting aside a portion of the social hall for each organization. I would like to take this opportunity to invite your organization to provide a representative for this event. I would also like to invite each of you and the members of your organization to participate in the program by encouraging those Masons you may know who are not currently affiliated or not active to attend this event. Many of us know a Mason who has not attended Lodge for a long time because he is afraid that he cannot pass an examination We guarantee that nobody will be embarrassed. Everybody will be able to pass the examination. Please provide me with the name of your representative by May 1st, 90 that I may ensure that sufficient space is available. The success of this program depends greatly on the members of our Masonic family. With success for the Rusty Trowel Ceremony in mind I remain, Fraternally, Chairman Rusty Trowel Committee

4. Locating Sojourners

The techniques for locating Sojourners are the same for the Rusty Trowel as those stated in section VI with one addition. By increasing the number of bodies involved it is possible to use the news media more effectively. Radio, television and the newspaper are very effective, however, to insure adherence to the CMC contact the appropriate Grand Lodge committee. The following is a copy of a newspaper ad used very successfully by the Lodges in the Southern California area: MASTER MASONS Rusty Trowel Ceremony. A must for all Master Masons who are new comers in this area. A must for Masons who have

not attended Blue Lodge in year's. A must for those afraid their work to gain admittance is rusty. For further information on all Masonic Organizations and to participate in Rusty Trowel Ceremony (at no charge) call the following numbers Call Between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. (insert your telephone numbers here) CLIP AND SAVE THIS AD 5. Funding Expected expenditures for a Rusty Trowel program include: Refreshments Publicity (local news media) Reproduction Postage Certificates Cards There are several available methods of fund raising. One successful method is to ask each of the participating bodies to assist by donating the required funds. A second method is to hold a dance or other fund raising activity. In the latter case care is required to insure adherence to the CMC. 6. Examination (ref. CMC & Master's Handbook) Examination of participants consists of two phases. Initial Screening Initial screening is done by phone. This process allows the examining committee time to insure our jurisdiction recognizes the Lodge the caller provides. Once the examining committee is certain the information provided is accurate, invite the caller to Rusty Trowel Night. To insure that the initial screening is done in an effective manner the telephone committee should review and discuss the procedures. To assist in this screening a typical questionnaire is provided on the next page. Rusty Trowel Questionnaire Name Address City Zip Phone_____ Lodge Name & Number_____

City State_____

Current Dues Card YES NO

Date Demit Lapsed

Affiliations:

SCOTTISH RITE VALLEY_____

YORK RITE: Commandery

Council_____

Royal Arch_____

SHRINE TEMPLE_____

OTHER

Wife's Name

ORDER OF EASTERN STAR YES NO

CHAPTER CITY STATE_____

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS_____

GIRLS:

Name Age Job's Daughters Rainbow____

Name Age Job's Daughters Rainbow____

BOYS:

Name Age DeMolay

Name Age____DeMolay

REMARKS:

Examination on Rusty Trowel Night

The examination on Rusty Trowel Night is a typical Tiler's examination. Ask enough questions to be certain that the participant is a Master Mason. Be careful, however, to ensure that the examination does not become an interrogation. Remember that the participants may not have been in Lodge for many years and we do not want to embarrass them. The examination committee should consist of Master Masons skilled in making others comfortable in a strange environment. This committee should have enough members to ensure that the participants spend as little time as possible waiting for their examination. To speed up the examination process have several examination teams, keep the examination as short as possible and provide several examining rooms.

VI. "Rusty Trowel Ceremony"

To expedite the ceremony the Lodge should already be open on the Third Degree. After completing the examinations it is time to put on the actual Rusty Trowel program. The ceremony is done in the Lodge room and consists of a review of basic Masonic ritual. Included should be a review of: All Signs, Tokens,

Words and how they should be given. Review of closing and opening in each degree. Step for degree. Addressing the Master Entering and retiring from an open Lodge Not crossing between East and Altar Balloting After the review, present a certificate and card (example below) to each participant. The ceremony is most effective if the District Inspector or his representative perform the review and present the certificates. After the ceremony invite the participants into the social hall for refreshments and to meet with representatives of the local Masonic bodies. Follow Up Follow up is the most important part of the program. Proper follow up encourages a Sojourner to select a Lodge and become active. Provide all participants with a list of the local Masonic bodies. Ask each of the local Lodges to send their trestleboard to each of the participants for at least two months following the program. When a Sojourner visits a Lodge, seat him with one of the Brothers who is active and will endeavor to make him feel at home. About 60 days after the Rusty Trowel program contact each of the participants and find out if they have attended a Lodge. If the participant is now attending Lodge, there is nothing further to do. If the participant is not attending Lodge, ask why. It may be necessary to provide an escort to bring him to a meeting (or several meetings). Provide the names of those not attending Lodge to the Master of a nearby Lodge. The Master can then contact the participant and personally invite him to attend.

VII. Sojourners Committee Services

The Sojourners Committee is ready to help you in many ways. Some of the services we currently offer are: Providing speakers to speak at Lodge or Officers meetings. Setting up your Lodge Sojourners Committee. Assistance in planning Lodge Sojourners program. Assistance in planning and presenting a Rusty Trowel program. To obtain assistance call a member of the committee that is in your area. Their names and addresses are in the Grand Lodge Roster which your Secretary receives each year.