

THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE  
OF ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF MAINE



July 15, 2011

Dear Masters, Wardens, Secretaries and Masonic Ambassadors:

As Grand Master, I have designated **October 15, 2011**, as the day to celebrate our **Fall Open House** across the Maine Masonic jurisdiction, in conjunction with Masonic open houses being held by lodges throughout New England. Open houses in other states have attracted many good men to the Craft, and I'm confident that Maine Masons will produce similar results.

Through your efforts, more men are becoming Maine Masons each year. Maine lodges raised 519 Masons last year, the most since 1990, and R.W. A. James Ross and I are committed to attracting even more men to our Craft, thereby strengthening our lodges and sharing what it means to be a Mason. Open houses will be held at all lodges on the third Saturday of October for the next three years.

Grand Lodge is preparing program and media materials that will be sent to you later this summer, including DVDs and posters, as well as a draft press release that lodges are encouraged to submit to local newspapers. The Grand Lodge Membership Committee has assembled guidelines and suggestions that will help you to be successful with your planning for this event at your Lodge, and to help us prepare for next year's program. Please share this information with your officers, Ambassadors and active members, and start planning right away. The enclosed package contains:

- 1) Guidelines for planning your Fall Open House
- 2) Information on publicity and available resources, and
- 3) A Feedback Report to help the Membership Committee assist you better in the future. Please use the report to tell us what worked and what didn't work with your efforts, and why, so that we can share this information with other lodges. By helping each other we can all be successful.

RW Bro. Ross and I urge you to immediately start engaging your Lodge Ambassadors on planning and organizing your activities for October 15th. By working together and planning accordingly, your lodge should have a successful Fall Open House. We cannot stress enough for you to engage your lodge members and to take full advantage of this opportunity to increase community awareness of your lodge.

Please confirm to Wor. Bernie Gaines (bgaines@travelwisemaine.com, 207-286-4192) as soon as possible and not later than September 1, 2011, that your lodge will participate in the Fall Open House and provide the name, telephone number and email address of the contact person for your lodge. In addition, please provide the physical address of your lodge and the Internet address of your lodge's web site. This information will be listed on the Grand Lodge web site and should be included in information provided to lodge members and local newspapers about your Fall Open House.

My best wishes for a successful Fall Open House.

Fraternal regards,

Handwritten signature of the Grand Master in cursive script.

Grand Master

Handwritten signature of the Deputy Grand Master in cursive script.

Deputy Grand Master

XC Grand Lodge Membership Committee  
XC Grand Lodge officers and Permanent Members

## **Guidelines for Planning your Fall Open House – October 15, 2011**

- All lodge buildings in Maine will be open from 9 AM to 3 PM. Specific arrangements for the day are at the discretion of the lodge.
- Prior planning and preparation, by the officers and ambassadors, is imperative!
- The Grand Master expects that all lodges that meet in a given building will be represented. The Master, Wardens and Secretary of every lodge should be present to greet guests and accept applications for membership and affiliation.
- There should be one to three spokesmen (preferably Masonic Ambassadors) available to discuss Masonry and give lodge building tours. Spokesmen must be capable of sparking an interest in Masonry in non-Masons, and should be well versed both about Freemasonry, and about their lodge building, history and community activities. Multiple lodges that share a Masonic building can share this duty.
- Effort should be made to advertise the Fall Open House via local newspapers, radio, and cable TV stations. Grand Lodge will provide advertising materials for newspapers. Posters will be provided by Grand Lodge and should be displayed in stores, etc. for at least one week prior to October 15th and should be posted in lodge for the month before the Fall Open House and included in lodge and district trestle boards. (See the enclosed Publicity Package).
- The dress code for the day is at the discretion of the lodge, but it must be consistent across multiple lodges in the same building. The recommendation is that lodge leaders and ambassadors wear a jacket and tie, or tuxedo, consistent with how lodge officers dress for lodge meetings, including officer regalia.
- Appropriate audio visual equipment should be available to show videos. Grand Lodge will provide DVDs with “Freemasonry and the Fabric of America” produced by the Scottish Rite Supreme Council, and talks by “Benjamin Franklin,” produced by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

### **Suggestions**

- Lodge leaders should encourage all members to bring at least one prospective member.
- Members should wear name tags identifying themselves and their lodge.
- Other Masonic organizations meeting in your building should be encouraged to attend and staff tables displaying materials that explain the variety of activities offered by the bodies in our Masonic family of organizations.
- All lodge spokesmen should be mindful of the need to be friendly and courteous to our visitors.
- Lodges must be clean and presentable. We are inviting the public into our homes.
- Appropriate refreshments should be provided in the morning and afternoon.
- Informational materials should be conspicuously displayed and readily available.
- If available, display pictures of past lodge events.
- Display a list of lodge activities and charity work that has aided the community (don't forget to mention the blood drives, CHIPs events and Bikes for Books!)
- Create appropriate programming to interest the public.

### **Programming Ideas**

- Run a Child Identification Program
- Hold a Bloodmobile
- Hold a public breakfast or supper
- Ask appendant bodies to show videos to talk about what they do. Current Masons might want to join the bodies if applications are available.
- Have a member talk about the personal enrichment he has gained from Masonry, and the member and community programs that the lodge sponsors.
- Discuss Famous Masons and prominent local Masons or Masonic history in the community

## **Publicity Information and Resources to promote your Fall Open House October 15, 2011**

Grand Lodge will support Blue Lodges with several initiatives to increase awareness of Freemasonry in Maine and to generate attendance at your Fall Open House.

Copies of short presentations by Brother Benjamin Franklin and by Lee Dreyfus (Freemasonry and the Fabric of America) will be sent to all lodges and should be shown during the Fall Open House. Copies may also be submitted to local cable access television stations for viewing prior to the Fall Open House. The films talk about the value of Freemasonry, and how it has inspired Greatness among its members, and in our communities and country. These messages will be aired on Massachusetts stations penetrating the southern Maine market and will promote our Fall Open House and direct interested people to visit [AskAFreemason.org](http://AskAFreemason.org) to learn more about Freemasonry, provide them an avenue for obtaining additional information, and help them find the closest lodge and lodges participating in the Fall Open House.

We encourage lodges to enhance their exposure by submitting news releases or advertising to their local media. Grand Lodge will provide a customizable print ad, a digital file of radio and television spots, and additional materials to help promote the event in the community. To better manage our costs, we will post some of the materials to a Grand Lodge website from which they can be downloaded. The URL of the site will be emailed to lodge Masters, Wardens, Secretaries and Ambassadors by early September.

Grand Lodge will also provide copies of the Maine Mason as well as brochures on Freemasonry that should be presented to Fall Open House visitors.

Best wishes on planning your promotional efforts. Do not hesitate to let contact the Grand Lodge Membership Committee if we can address any questions, provide additional information, or be of service to you and your lodge.

The Membership Committee chairman is Wor. Bernie Gaines, who may be contacted at [bgaines@travelwisemaine.com](mailto:bgaines@travelwisemaine.com) or 207-286-4192.

Continued thanks for all that you do for Maine Freemasonry.

## 2011 Fall Open House Feedback Report

**The Master, Lodge Ambassador or designate must complete and return this form prior to October 31, 2011**

Please forward to: Grand Lodge Membership Committee  
Grand Lodge of Maine  
PO Box 15058  
Portland, ME 04112-5058

Lodge Name, Number & Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Master of the Lodge: \_\_\_\_\_ Masonic District: \_\_\_\_\_  
Person completing this report & position in lodge: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of officers at the open house: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Ambassadors attending: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of members attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of visitors attending: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of prospective candidates: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of applications received: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of program(s) held at the open house: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What went well? \_\_\_\_\_

What didn't work? \_\_\_\_\_

Suggestions for Improvements: \_\_\_\_\_

If applicable, how did the multiple lodges in your building share greeting visitors? \_\_\_\_\_

Rate your this open house overall – (1-10 with 10 being the best): \_\_\_\_\_

Is your lodge improving in terms of running Fellowship events / open houses?  
YES or NO, and comments: \_\_\_\_\_

In recent years, is your lodge seeing movement towards younger men joining the craft?  
YES or NO, and comments \_\_\_\_\_

Is your lodge seeing an improvement with retention & engagement of new members?  
YES or NO, and comments \_\_\_\_\_

Are the new members who have joined in recent years having a positive affect on your lodge?  
YES or NO, and comments \_\_\_\_\_

*Please Use Other Side for Additional Comments*