

Dear Masonic News Hawk:

Congratulations! Your position as Masonic News Hawk will enable your lodge to have the visibility that is so rightfully yours, not only in the Wisconsin Masonic Journal but in the public news media serving your city or area as well.

Why are we doing this? As you well know, Masonry today is competing perhaps as never before for the hearts, minds and time of our present and future members in the public marketplace of activities and ideas. With this in mind, we offer the information contained in this News Hawk Program to help you and your lodge “get the word out” about what Freemasonry is and reach our respective communities with our message.

Using the information presented here, you will have the knowledge needed to get the job done. We look forward to receiving responses, pictures and any questions that you need answered. We are here to help and will do our best to make creating submissions, editorial or advertising, as easy for you as possible.

EDITORIAL – NEWS AND FEATURES

- 1. What is News?** Almost any event, program or service through which your lodge as a whole, or members individually, impact your community or lodge in a positive manner would be considered “news.” Things like Masonic Square Bear & Kid ID Kit presentations or Project A.D.A.M. defibrillator projects are all excellent examples of your lodge’s charitable outreach and are certainly newsworthy. Remember, newspapers as well as other media outlets are always looking for stories to share with readers. Take advantage of this interest to get publicity for your lodge.

One example of a newsworthy story idea would be your lodge’s involvement in a community service project, especially when one or more members of your lodge play key roles in making it happen. Another might be a lodge program in which a prominent guest speaker shares a particularly relevant message that members of the Fraternity or general public would like to read about. Of interest too would be a membership development idea (Friend’s Night or similar program) that has proven successful in bringing in a number of petitions. A major anniversary for your lodge? You bet! The announcement of new lodge officers or 50-year membership presentations are also good material. Ideas are as plentiful and varied as you make them. They are all worth sharing!

Remember, what you are doing in your lodge is important, and your brethren around the state really are interested in reading about it. They like to read about your lodge’s program ideas, how they were organized, how challenges were met and overcome, and of course, your successes or failures. Additionally, you should know that Grand Lodges and individual Masons across the United States receive and read our fine publication each and every month. Some have even adopted ideas they’ve read about first in the Wisconsin Masonic Journal.

- 2. Need Help Writing?** What follows is the “secret formula” most professional writers use in crafting news stories for publication. If you answer the questions, “Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?” in your story - and make it interesting – you will have covered most of the important information. Begin with a short, catchy sentence that grabs the reader’s attention, inviting him or her to read further. Use your imagination. Sell the event. Follow with the details in order of their importance.

People & Events Are News - When writing stories or picture captions, don’t forget that people make news and people have names. Tell who they are, what they did, when they did it, where it happened, why they did it and how they did it. Be sure to get the correct spelling and include their titles. We’ll help smooth out the rough spots. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us anytime. If we’re not immediately available to answer your question, please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible.

Copy What’s Been Done - A good source of ready-made “how to do it” examples exists right at your fingertips in the Wisconsin Masonic Journal or local newspaper. Each issue has several already published

“ready-to-copy” stories, news releases and picture captions you can use as guides. Just rewrite it using your lodge’s information. Nothing could be easier.

Hidden Talent - As an added thought, why not pass the word in lodge that you are looking for a volunteer to write a news release and photo captions for a particular event. You might be surprised at the undiscovered talent that various members possess and are willing to share just for the asking. Better still, assign the task to your lodge Public Relations Committee (if your lodge doesn’t have one, ask the Master if you can form one). Don’t feel you have to do everything yourself!

Be Proactive - If your lodge or any of its members are involved in a special or unique charitable, public service or Fraternity-related activity, do not hesitate to bring it to our attention. All media outlets would rather cover a worthwhile project while it is in progress, rather than afterwards when there is only an award presentation remaining, and so would we. Though time for travel is limited, we are willing to travel and put our skills to work helping you tell your special story as it should be told – of Masons unselfishly working for the betterment of their community. Also, we can feed our coverage to the local media in your area if they do not cover it and vice versa. However, we can’t cover it if we don’t know about it. We also welcome news features from outside media and give proper credit for the courtesy.

- 3. Preparing Submissions** - Submissions to the Wisconsin Masonic Journal (or any other publication for that matter) should be composed on a computer or carbon ribbon word processor/typewriter. Printouts from these can be digitally captured if they cannot be submitted via e-mail. Please do not submit handwritten articles - they must be retyped and can lead to the incorrect spelling of names. Printouts from dot matrix printers or fabric ribbon typewriters should be avoided because text created on these devices does not scan well and must be retyped. Be sure to include a phone number in case questions arise. If you wish materials returned, please include a self-addressed and stamped return envelope. Pictures should not be stapled, paper clipped or taped (on the front of the picture) to pages.

Images/Photographs - General Guidelines: Images will be accepted from either digital or film camera. As far as non-digital photographs are concerned, we welcome pictures in either color or B&W. To make things easy, color prints are preferred. They may be glossy, matte or lightly textured prints. Do not send negatives. Polaroid pictures should be avoided unless they are of exceptional quality. We can improve most pictures to reproduce well but those that are too dark overall and show little difference in tone between the subject and background provide little to work with and may be rejected.

Quality Is Important - Whether images are captured using a digital or film camera, quality is important! Pictures should be sharply focused, faces should be bright and showing good detail, and backgrounds should not be black. Pictures taken in an area with an 8 to 10-foot high white ceiling and a light to medium-toned wall close behind those pictured will turn out best. Remember to fill the viewfinder with the subject, and get as close as possible. We suggest asking a lodge member who has a high quality camera and flash, or who is an experienced amateur photo hobbyist, to volunteer to shoot pictures of special events and occasions. Please do not submit pictures that have been printed on plain paper via an inkjet, laser or other color printer. The ink soaks in and the image will be blurred. Instead, use one of the special photo papers available from a variety of suppliers that is compatible with your printer

E-mail Is Preferred - The ideal method of submitting stories, pictures and captions is by e-mail. Text is best sent as an **MSWord** (preferred) or WordPerfect document as an attachment. You may also send text typed as part of your e-mail message. Rich Text Format, MS-DOS TextThe preferred picture format is **.jpeg** set at highest quality. Send pictures as attachments to the e-mail message detailing what is being sent. Do not send pictures as a part of the e-mail message because the computer recognizes them as text files. You may also submit text and pictures via **.pdf** (Portable Document Format) files. Text and pictures may also be submitted via CD or 3.5-inch “floppy” disk, especially if the files are large.

The Wisconsin Masonic Journal e-mail address for submissions or questions is:
<wmjedit@sbcglobal.net>

This is your direct e-mail link to William L. Stonecipher, Editor.
If you need help or advice by phone, the number is 262-334-1876
No question is too trivial!

- 4. Photos by E-mail** – Photographs that have been scanned or made with digital cameras should be sent as **attachments** to an e-mail message in the **.JPEG** file format. Designate “high or maximum quality” in the picture quality dialogue box when saving. Do not send pictures as a part of the e-mail message itself because the computer recognizes it as text and not as an image file (they are unusable). It is important that photo captions accompany all pictures sent by themselves or accompanying a story. Persons pictured should be correctly identified, especially non-Masons. Photo captions should be brief, identify persons pictured and explain what is shown, should it not be obvious. “Who, what, when and where” information should be included.

Digital Camera Tips - Persons using digital cameras should follow the same guidelines as users of regular cameras. A good picture is one that is well lit, accurately focused, sharply detailed, correctly exposed and composed to maximize use of space within the image. The quality of digital images, much like Polaroids before them, is determined in large part by the quality of the camera that produces them and its settings. A digital camera with a 3 megapixel image capture capability would be considered quite adequate. Usually, the lowest priced digital cameras produce images of poor quality for reproduction. Pictures taken with video cameras set on the “still or single frame mode” are not acceptable.

Digital File Size – The Picture Size (file size) setting for your camera should be either the largest or second largest. **Use a file size of at least 1600 pixels and preferably 2240 pixels.** Images captured at lower settings (such as 620 or 1120 for example) may be fine for viewing and sharing over the Internet, but not for reproduction. Picture Quality should be set at the minimum .JPEG compression setting. Files saved in the .TIFF format are too large to transmit conveniently via the internet. Do not send .RAW images.

- 5. Masonic Protocols** - We publish group pictures of lodge officers, Past Master’s Night group pictures and 50-year (and greater) honorees as space permits. We welcome a once or twice-yearly group picture of Master Masons raised during that period, but we do request that you limit the submission of individual Master Mason pictures unless they involve multiple family members (as in a father raising a son, with his grandfather giving the Charge, for example), members of the military or other special circumstances. We do not publish names or pictures of candidates, Entered Apprentices or Fellowcrafts. Yearly group pictures of lodge officers will be published as space permits.
- 6. Timing of Submissions** - Timing is everything, especially when you wish to let the Masonic Family in Wisconsin know when you have a special event scheduled. If you have an upcoming event you would like to have publicised in The Wisconsin Masonic Journal please send in your pre-event news release to the editor at least 30 days prior to the event. **The deadline for each issue is the fifth of the month preceding the intended month of publication** (February 5 for the March issue, for example).

The surest way to have the future date of your special lodge event listed in the Wisconsin Masonic Calendar on the back page of the Journal is to call or e-mail the Grand Lodge Office in Dousman at 1-800-242-2307 with the proper information and ask that be added to the Grand Lodge Future Dates calendar of events.

- 7. Accessing the Public Media** – Gaining access to the public media (newspapers, public access cable television or local radio) can be accomplished in one of three ways.

First, and most desirable if you can get it, is through coverage by media staff members as a bonafide news story, general interest event or special interest feature. Be advised that members of the media are very selective about what they themselves cover with their scarce editorial resources. The bigger the hoopla, the more significant the guest speaker, the more unusual the event, or the higher the level of interest the event is judged to have for staff members and their readers, the more likely they will be to respond to your request. Be prepared to cover the event yourself.

Second, and next best, is through post-event coverage. This works especially well for award presentations and recognitions. To achieve coverage of these it is important that pictures are taken at the event and that a story with picture captions is prepared and submitted to the media in

question. It is also important that this should happen as soon after the event as possible. Old news is not attractive to the media (including the Wisconsin Masonic Journal, by the way). Let the newspaper tell you when they need your material. As a general guide, daily papers need it immediately; weekly papers within at least three or four days before their next issue; and monthlies such as ours by the next month's deadline. When and if the news or feature item actually appears in print or on the air is up to them. You will have done your part by getting things to them in a timely fashion. If it is well presented and written and easy for them to use, they are likely to do so. Know and follow your local publication's deadlines.

Third, paid advertising. There is one sure way of placing your message before the general public and that is through paid advertising. Ask if there is a special discounted rate for non-profit fraternal organizations like ours. In Wisconsin, the Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons has been granted a 501(c)(10) not-for-profit fraternal organization by the IRS. In addition, it is well known that members of the media supports advertisers with editorial pictures and stories. Advertisers know this and use it effectively to obtain free editorial coverage for their enterprise through worthy events or programs. Food stores are very good at this. Also, since radio and television stations bear a federal responsibility to carry a certain amount of free public service programming, you might inquire of them about what activities or programs your lodge has scheduled that might qualify. Print media has no such responsibility.

Smoothing the Way - Get to know your local media contacts on a personal basis. If you do not know who this person is and you have not formed a working relationship with a staff member, call and ask to speak with the publisher or station manager. This is usually the top level of management and is a good place to start. You may be referred to an editor, and that's okay. You will want to meet this person and develop a positive working relationship. Ask for an appointment and be prepared to discuss the role Freemasonry plays in society and the significant role your lodge plays in the life of your community. Ask which staff member would likely be assigned to receive and process information from your lodge and get to know them as well. Ask them how they would like information presented so that it is most easy for them to use. They will be favorably impressed with your approach and will be more likely to make space for your contributions.

- 8. Where to Send News and Pictures** - Please send your news releases and pictures with captions directly to:

**William L. Stonecipher, Editor,
The Wisconsin Masonic Journal,
232 Lincoln Drive South,
West Bend, WI 53095
Phone/Fax 262-334-1876
E-mail at <wmjedit@sbcglobal.net>**

ADVERTISING SERVICES

- 9. Advertising Services** - Consider placing an ad in the Wisconsin Masonic Journal to help promote extra special events for your lodge. We offer specially discounted rates for Masonic Lodges and affiliated Bodies. This is your most effective way to reach the Fraternity statewide with your advertising message. Please refer to the accompanying advertising rate sheets for all you need to know about placing an ad. In addition, perhaps there are members of your lodge who own businesses. They might appreciate information on placing a commercial ad or list their business card in the business card advertising section. Consider Classified Advertising as a cost effective way to tap into the statewide "Masonic Marketplace" of goods and services. Please communicate this information to your lodge members.
- 10. Advertising Contact** - Advertising inquiries should be directed to Ms Diane Igl, Wisconsin Masonic Journal Advertising Manager, 36275 Sunset Drive, Dousman, WI 53118. **Phone/Fax 262-965-3979.** **E-mail at <eieio@execpc.com>.**

- Make as many copies of this page as needed -

PLACE
FOR
PHOTO

(Use a curl of tape on backside of picture to secure.)
Do not place tape on front of photo or staple picture to the sheet.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PHOTO

Who is in the picture?

First and last names plus titles by row left to right: (Example: front row, left to right: Todd Mayer with son Braden Mayer. Back row: Frank Desoto, with sons Bill Desoto and Harold Desoto, center)

What is going on at the function you photographed? (Ex: officers Installed for 2007)

Where did this function take place? (Ex: at Brotherhood Lodge No. 14 in Deansville, Wisconsin)

When was this function and photo taken? (Ex: taken after the dinner and installation of officers, August 8, 2008)

Why did this function take place? (Ex: Deansville Lodge No. 14, installations)

Send submissions for photos and editorial to:

William L. Stonecipher, Editor
Editorial Production Office
232 Lincoln Drive South
West Bend, WI 53095

Phone/Fax: 262-334-1876 * By E-mail: <wmedit@sbcglobal.net>