

**LIONS
OF
MD 11
MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
MODEL**

2007

**PDG James Walls
MD-11 Membership Chairman**

The following club membership development model has been perfected over a number of years. Each time it is used by a club, the result is an increase anywhere from one or two to 15 or more new Lion members. Minor variations seem to work. In fact, some are mentioned in the following discussion. However, when significant variations are tried, the result ends up with fewer new members. In other words, follow the program carefully.

Undertaking a membership drive is a serious undertaking by a club. Several meetings are required for planning, the actual presentation to potential new members and the follow-up sessions once the candidates actually become members. The results are worth the effort. Every Lions Club can use new hands, new ideas and new projects not to mention having enough help so that every member does not have to turn out for every project for it to be a success.

One of the reasons this approach seems to work is that a whole group joins together. This gives the club a “class” of new members, not just one or two at a time. This class can then learn the hows and whys of Lionism together rather than someone being the lone individual in the club that does not know everything. Also, the current members are forced to deal with all these new members by giving those jobs and committee responsibilities. Later we will talk about getting the new members involved.

Here’s how we start.

Planning and Organizing

The first step involves a commitment by the entire club that new members are needed and that the existing members are willing to make a significant effort to gain those new members. Membership is not the responsibility of just the membership chairman or the membership committee. Membership must be approached like any other club project. Everyone must agree to be involved.

Once the club has committed to the effort, a special planning meeting should be set to begin the process. The planning meeting should be the topic at a regular club meeting. Separate meetings tend to end up with very few members attending. Use the attached planning sheet to set your date and to assign responsibility to individual club members for the various parts of the program.

At that meeting, dates, times and locations should be set for the open house event (more later on the open house). A list of potential members should be developed. One of the best ways of developing the list is to use the New Member Resources form (a copy is attached). Members should use the form to generate ideas as to those friends, neighbors, acquaintances and civic leaders that would make good lions. A deadline is necessary for club members to turn in suggested names. Sending the New Member Resources form with the club newsletter is a good way to get everyone involved, including those who do

not attend regular meetings. Remember to ask your closest friends and your spouse for recommendations as to who might make good members. You might consider asking your spouse! Be sure to have a specific date for the final return of the forms. Allow two or three meetings for names to be returned. You need everyone's ideas. Don't stop at just those suggestions on the form. Stretch your imagination. Think of those individuals that are not traditionally asked; such as, women, minorities, members of other service clubs (like the JC's), corporate leaders, community leaders or those that might have physical or financial resources that could be of benefit to your club. If a member does not turn in a form, be sure to contact them. The more names, the more likely you will get the new members you need.

Be sure to get the addresses and phone numbers for those being suggested as members. The committee typing the invitation letters does not necessarily know "Bud" Smith from all the other Smiths in the phone book.

When all the names are turned in, a letter must be sent inviting each individual to the open house. A sample letter is attached to this packet. Adjust the letter to meet your specific club needs. Be sure to allow your committee enough time to type each person's name on the letter. You should consider addressing your invitations to both the husband and wife. Today's couples like to do things together. By addressing the invitation to both, you have the opportunity to get two members for one invitation. Open house invitation letters should be sent about three weeks in advance. Never send them less than two weeks in advance.

About five days in advance call each prospective member to remind them of the open house and to confirm their attendance. This is an important step. Experience has shown that if you call too early, you will have a lower turnout. Three to five days seems to be about right. Getting an accurate count will also allow you to plan for the right amount of food. Not calling has been shown to severely reduce the number of attendees.

Planning the Open House

The open house should be at your normal meeting time and place. With a different time or place, you may have prospective members attend that might not be able to attend a regular meeting or you may not get those that could attend a regular meeting.

Plan a light meal. A sandwich buffet seems to work well. Lots of bread, cold cuts, lettuce, tomato, cheese, catsup, mustard, mayonnaise, chips, dip, perhaps cake for dessert, etc. Drinks should be coffee, tea and soft drinks. **NO ALCOHOL!** This keeps the eats inexpensive, allows for slight variations in attendance and lets folks go through the food line as soon as they arrive. Don't charge guests for the meal. This may not be what you would normally serve at a meeting but you are not conducting a regular meeting.

Remember, you are having an open house, not a regular meeting. Skip the ceremonies.

You should consider the pledge and invocation but skip all the normal reports, other agenda items and tail twisting. For this meeting, all activities should be directed toward the new member candidates. Members should dress reasonably the same and be sure to wear their name badges! Have a greeter. Have name badges for the guests. Members should be encouraged to approach each guest, shake his or her hand, introduce themselves, ask something about the prospective member and generally try to make the new person welcome. Ask about what community causes are most important to them. This is the members time to get acquainted with the prospective new member. By encouraging them to do the talking, they will feel at home and comfortable with your club. Remember, they are looking you over at the same time as you are checking them out.

Plan a program of about 1/2 hour. Cover the following topics. Past experience shows about five minutes on each topic seems to work well without getting into too many details. Remember, you are simply giving an outline of what Lions are all about and what you club does in your community, not providing them with a detailed orientation.

- The International organization and activities

- The State organization and activities

- The District organization and activities

- The Club organization and activities

- Obligations of membership

- Types of membership (regular, associate, affiliate)

- What goes on at a meeting (speakers, tail twisting, business sessions, meals.)

- How to join, Cost of membership

- Summarize (Lions provide opportunities for recognition, praise, advancement, self satisfaction, pride, teamwork and feeling good, for example)

Have at least one of the presentations made by a dignitary from outside the club; the District Governor or a respected Past District Governor, if available. Have the District officials give short five minute presentations on the International, State and District topics. Remember, it is not important that each topic be covered in depth. Use the club President to tell about the club's community support activities. Stress the local community projects. The Treasurer could talk about how much money is made on projects. The Secretary could tell about the cost of membership, how meals are paid for and how dues are billed. One speaker should address opportunities for service, leadership and having a say in which projects are supported by the club. Emphasize that projects are possible when done by a group that cannot be done by the individual members working by themselves. A broad presentation of what we do is much more important than being 100% complete. Whatever happens, do not try to correct the speaker or add a pet project from the audience. Keep it to the 1/2-hour limit!

Invite guests to join. Provide them with a membership application, tell them how to fill it out and encourage them to give the application, along with their check, to a club officer before they leave. Have a table where a club officer sits that can take applications and answer questions (preferably by the exit door).

Have enough membership applications available so each prospective member has one. Order them ahead of time from the Club Supplies Division of Lions International (Form ME-6). Don't use Xerox copies of the membership application. Don't make a bad first impression.

Prepare for your open house by having a table of Lions related materials. These could be brochures on various Lions activities and photographs of your club working on projects. Have copies of the International and State magazines as well as you club newsletter. The Eye-Bank and Leader Dog are well received.

Consider having a door prize or a token gift. It doesn't have to be much. A Lions or club cap, a coffee mug or some other item with a Lion symbol is nice. The prizes should be for the prospective members.

Impress the prospective members by starting and stopping on time. Ask them to become a Lion member today.

Follow-up

Be sure to send a nice note thanking each individual for coming to the open house. Congratulate those that joined, remind them to schedule the club meeting dates on their calendars and tell them your club is looking forward to seeing them at the next meeting. Set a meeting date for a formal installation ceremony and include that date in your letter. For those that attended but did not join, send a thank you along with another membership application, ask them to consider joining in the near future and invite them to attend a regular meeting. Remind them of the application fee and be sure to tell them where to send their membership application (or to bring it with them to their first meeting) should they decide to become a member.

For those that were invited and were unable to attend, send a letter with a membership application noting the membership application fee. Invite them to attend a regular meeting of your club and encourage them to attend at their convenience.

All new members must be formally installed. Have a district officer or past District Governor do a mass installation of the new members. It must be memorable for the new member. Be sure to have a membership pin and a new member packet for each of the new members. Their sponsor should pin on their pin. Be sure to schedule the new member installation very soon after the open house.

New members should participate in a new member orientation program. This is generally a three hour session on the items covered briefly at the open house. There are a number of outlines available on orientation programs. Be sure one is used.

Frequently asked questions

Who gets credit for the new member? Generally most clubs give credit to the member

that suggested the new member's name. Ties, two members that suggest the same person, go to the first member suggesting the new member.

How many will sign up? Experience has shown that 50% or more will accept your invitation to the open house. Of those, most will actually sign up.

Should we let them take the application home and "think about it"? The majority of those that take the application home are not likely to join. If a prospective member does take an applications home, they should receive a follow-up phone call in about one week.

"Our club likes to invite new members to several meetings to see if the new member will "fit in" with our club and our members. Then, we vote on asking them to join. How can we make this program work?" Lions Clubs are slowly going away from this type of membership approval. Ask your members to carefully consider those you invite. In other words, pre qualify those to whom you send letters so that those who accept your invitation to join would have been accepted under the old method. You might also consider changing your standards and/or your method of bringing new members into your club. Lions International does not specify how prospective members are to be approved.

MEMBERSHIP IS EXCITING - GROW YOUR CLUB

PLEASANTVILLE LIONS CLUB
Lions Clubhouse
123 Fourth Street
Pleasantville, MI 12345

Fred and Mary Smith
456 7th Avenue
Pleasantville, MI 12345

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Smith,

Your names have been given to us as leaders in our community, those who are concerned with the well being of our fellow citizens.

The Pleasantville Lions Club, formed over 38 years ago, is part of an international organization founded with a desire to serve our communities. The club participates in numerous projects to raise funds to purchase eyeglasses for needy children and adults. Our club owns and has fully equipped four baseball diamonds at Lions Field, north of town. The baseball program has grown to the point where all the fields are busy well into the night, all season. We also sponsor Boy Scout Troop and Cub Pack #322.

The Pleasantville Lions sponsor high school students in the Lions All-State Band; sending qualified student musicians to the Lions International Convention in sites around the world. We sponsor the Quest program at Central High School, considered one of the most effective drug prevention programs in the nation.

We are extending a cordial invitation to both of you to attend a special Lions Club meeting on Wednesday, October 7 at 7:00 PM at our meeting room in the Pleasantville Lions Clubhouse at 123 Fourth Street. A light meal is planned along with a short informative program. We should adjourn no later than 8:30 PM.

A few days before the meeting one of our Lions members will phone to confirm your reservation. We hope you will make plans to attend this special Lions Club meeting.

We have enclosed a brochure, "The Lions...We Serve", which gives an excellent outline of what we do as an organization.

Very truly yours,

Thomas Jones
Membership Chairman

**LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL
MICHIGAN MEMBERSHIP MEETING MODEL**

NEW MEMBER RESOURCES

**A Friend A Neighbor A Church Member A Business Associate A Relative
Your Doctor Your Lawyer Your Optometrist Your Minister or Priest
A Fellow Worker A Retiree Your Spouse A Current or Former Roommate
Your Golf or Bowling Partner Your Broker Your Accountant A Hobby Friend
A New Person in Your Office or Neighborhood A Recipient of Our Services
A Guest Speaker at Your Club A Community Leader The Police Chief
The Fire Chief The Head of a Community Organization A Business Client
A Politician A Corporate Leader An Educator A Member of Another Clubs**

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ____ Zip ____
Phone _____ (W) ____ (H) ____
Spouse's Name _____
Invite Spouse Yes _____ No _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ____ Zip ____
Phone _____ (W) ____ (H) ____
Spouse's Name _____
Invite Spouse Yes _____ No _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ____ Zip ____
Phone _____ (W) ____ (H) ____
Spouse's Name _____
Invite Spouse Yes _____ No _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ____ Zip ____
Phone _____ (W) ____ (H) ____
Spouse's Name _____
Invite Spouse Yes _____ No _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ____ Zip ____
Phone _____ (W) ____ (H) ____
Spouse's Name _____
Invite Spouse Yes _____ No _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ____ Zip ____
Phone _____ (W) ____ (H) ____
Spouse's Name _____
Invite Spouse Yes _____ No _____

Date _____

SUBMITTING MEMBER:

| Step | Task | Status & Remarks | Responsibility | Target Completion Date | Completion Date |
|------|--|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1.0 | Kick-off planning meeting | Goal: Obtain Club membership Commitment to support significant effort as a Club Project. | Ex: Name (s) Chairperson(s) | Ex: Set date for Kick-off meeting | Ex: Actual Completion date |
| 1.1 | Schedule Kick-off meeting | Set date to establish agenda item for a specific club meeting | | | |
| 1.2 | Kick-off Meeting Presentation | <p>Prepare presentation: Purpose of presentation is to gain club individual member concurrence and support for project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify need for new members • Overview the plan to gain new members • Identify membership roles, opportunities, responsibilities commitments and support necessary to complete the project • Gain individual commitments for every club member (100%) to support • Gain universal commitment to agreed upon goals – Note: Set ground rules: Complaints may only be accepted if accompanied with a positive suggestion as to how to improve the program/task • Have committee members stand up and make a “public” commitment to the “club”. Identify sub-committee chairpersons | | | |
| 1.3 | Set date for special membership planning meeting | Special planning meeting to detail plans for each task, establish accountability, determine manpower support requirements. | | | |
| 1.4 | New member Induction meeting | Set date for new member induction meeting | | | |

Add or insert rows to customize this document to meet your clubs needs.

| | | | | | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 2.0 | Special membership Planning Meeting | Goals: Set up for open house events and program presentations, establish an invitation list, set date time and location(s) | | | |
| 2.1.1 | Program Goals | Identify and establish Open house program goals | | | |
| 2.1.1.1 | Program presentation | <p>Establish agenda for Open House presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals of Lionism: International, State, and District • Club Goals and activities, typical meeting • Typical club projects and events, community support activities • Membership meeting nights and club expectations • Costs of Membership and how to Join • Rewards of membership – personal stories | | | |
| 2.1.3 | Invite dignitary to attend Open House | Invite PDG or DG to attend open house and participate in presentation/activities. | | | |
| 2.1.4 | Open House task assignments | <p>Assign dignitaries and or club members to fill specific roles and responsibilities for presenting the open house new member program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speakers • Greeters • Support members • Open house host(s) | | | |

| | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------|---|--|--|--|
| 2.2.0 | New member listing | Identify potential new members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbors and Friends whom are potential good members • Spouses, relatives, children and parents of current members • Individuals with resources and or contacts needed by the club • Spouses of new members | | | |
| 2.2.1 | Open House 1 | Open House Date, Time and Location | | | |
| 2.2.2 | Open House 1 | Establish invitation list for open house Members and potential new members | | | |
| 2.2.3 | Open House 2 | Open House Date, Time and Location | | | |
| 2.2.4 | Open House 2 | Establish invitation list for open house Members and potential new members | | | |

| | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| 3.0 | New Members | Identify and create invitation letters for potential new members, follow up to ensure attendance | | | |
| 3.1 | Potential New Member listing | Establish new member listing including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Address • Phone number • Identify a Lion Sponsor for each new member | | | |
| 3.2 | New Membership invitation letter | Create letters inviting potential new members to the open house in their neighborhood. Include sponsor name and phone number | | | |
| 3.3 | Create envelopes for mailing | Create mailing labels and arrange for mailing of invitations approximately 3 weeks prior to open House meeting night (no later than 2 weeks in advance) | | | |
| 3.4 | Follow Up | Call each potential new member to ensure that the have received the invitations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the meeting date on the calendar • Have transportation to the Open House – give them a ride if possible • Have the phone number of a sponsoring Lion to address concerns or answer any questions they may have. | | | |
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|--|------------------------------|--|--|
| 4.0 | Open House | Follow program developed in 2.1.2 | DG/PDG: President: ??? | | |
| 4.1 | Social activity * 15 minutes * | Have a brief social session for everyone to get to know each other | | | |
| 4.2 | Formal presentation * 30 minutes total * | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions and opening overview • Presentations • Closing remarks – why we need them as new members, why they need us as potential new Lions • Provide meeting schedule • Pass out membership application forms and provide the date for new member induction meeting. • Q&A | | | |
| 4.3 | Membership sign-up * 15 minutes * | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain filled out membership application, or, • Set date to pick up filled out membership application (1 on 1 meeting with sponsoring lion, in addition a club officer may also attend if desired) , or, • Arrange to mutually agreed upon follow up process | | | |
| 4.4 | Guest Departure | <p>Club officer/representative at the door:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to collect completed applications • extend a personalized thank you for attending the open house | | | |

| | | | | |
|-----|------------------------|---|--|--|
| 5.0 | Post meeting follow up | <p>Follow up on all invitations to join</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those that joined • Those that said they will join later • Those that were unable to attend | | |
| 5.1 | Thank You notes | <p>Send thank you notes for those that filled out an application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending open house • Filling out application • Providing club meeting schedule information • Congratulate them for making the decision to join Lions | | |
| 5.2 | Thank you notes | <p>For those that were unable to attend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an application to join Lions • Provide a meeting schedule • Provide an overview of the meeting • Identify the application/membership fee • Advise that you will be contact them for follow up | | |
| 5.3 | Thank You notes | <p>For those that declined to join</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank them for attending • Indicate that they are welcome to join later if their circumstances change | | |

| | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| 6.0 | New member Induction Meeting | <p>Induct new members at general meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set Meeting date and provide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Membership pin ○ Name badge ○ New member packet | | |
| 6.1 | New Member Orientation meeting | <p>Provide new member orientation information. Discuss club activities, upcoming events, programs, etc. Tell how the new members can help</p> | | |
| 6.2 | New member Assignments | <p>Assign new members to work with existing lions in co-assignments to assist them in learning about the club, it's activities and Lionism</p> | | |

Thanks to individuals who have contributed to the development of the Michigan Membership Model Program: Lion Debbie Sydowski, PID Ken Lautzenheiser, PDG Roger LaMothe, PDG Dave Prohaska, PDG Gary Babcock, PDG Hank Bosma, Lion Alan Vredberg, and the MD 11 Membership Committee 2004, 2005, 2006.