



Sons of Norway
HERITAGE PROGRAMS



IdeaBank16

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

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Welcoming New Members

New members mean new life to your lodge. A new member's very first introduction to the local lodge may be of vital importance to this person's active involvement with the group. Not everyone who joins knows someone in the lodge. Trying to get acquainted can be a frustrating experience. And even if the newcomer does know some of the other members, it is still important that the new member interact with many other people. If efforts are made to make new members feel that they belong from the very first meeting, it is more likely that they will spend time and consideration working for their lodge. It is also more likely that they will encourage their friends and relatives to join.

Some lodges have a special "welcome committee" in order to make sure that someone has the responsibility to take care of newcomers. These lodges have experienced that if this responsibility is given to specifically appointed people, the job will get done. Members will be greeted with equal warmth, friendliness, and goodwill—no one will be forgotten and forced to make it on their own.

The new member's first contact with the lodge is sometimes made through the local field staff representative who signs them up. The representative is trained to take care of new members, but from that point on, the person is more or less on his/her own, depending on what kind of welcoming procedures the individual lodge has developed. If practiced, the following routine will ensure that all new members start their "new life" as Sons of Norway members in the most positive way possible.

1. The lodge financial secretary receives information on new members from the local field staff representative. This officer or other designated person(s) immediately contact(s) the new member to inform him/her that his/her application is in—that he/she will be voted for at the next meeting—that the person's application for membership is greatly appreciated—or other relevant information. This will make the applicant feel that he/she is important and that the lodge follows up on and cares about its individual members.
2. A couple of days later—or at some other appropriate time—the designated "welcomer(s)" call(s) to inform the new member about the date of the next meeting and what the program will be. Members of the welcome committee may also offer to pick up the person and take him/her to the meeting, or arrange for others to pick up the newcomer or meet at the lodge if the new member does not wish for a ride.
3. At the meeting the welcome committee should stay with the new member all that evening to make him/her feel welcome and to be presented to others. This courtesy might be extended to later meetings as well.
4. New members should be given recognition for at least four consecutive meetings.

5. The lodge should provide the new member with a badge with his/her name on. It might also be convenient for all members present to wear name tags when a new member is introduced.
6. Being involved makes a person feel that he/she belongs. The welcome committee might consider asking a new member to help with some small task—something which is easy to do, but something which still makes that person feel involved.
7. The lodge might consider preparing a membership certificate for new members. This gives a new member the opportunity to proudly display his/her Sons of Norway affiliation at home or in the office. If the lodge decides to do this, the membership certificate should be framed. If it is not worth putting a frame on, it is not worth having. And it is the worth of the Sons of Norway membership we wish to announce. A membership certificate on the wall will present Sons of Norway to all visitors in homes or offices where it is displayed.

Idea Bank #45, “New Member Interest Questionnaire,” is available through Sons of Norway. This article shows a sample form to give to new members to find out their interests. This form can be adapted to your lodge and will also provide the new members with a listing of your lodge’s activities.