

Ideas from 2015 Chapter Excellence Reports

The list below represents some of the best ideas and programs reported by Ohio Eastern Star Chapters through our Chapter Excellence Awards program. Take a look at these ideas and see any of them might work in YOUR chapter.

Charity and Service

Community Service:

Ravenna Chapter #46, District 2, sponsors an ANNUAL Walk and Run for Kids event in conjunction with the Cleveland Children's Home.

Members of Ravenna Chapter also filled plastic eggs with candy for residents of a local Care Center.

Several chapters have "adopted" residents at the Ohio Eastern Star Home. They remember them with cards, gifts for Christmas and birthdays, and visits.

East Palestine Chapter #381, District 13, hosted a pancake breakfast to benefit a local charitable organization -- East Palestine Social Concerns. They advertised the breakfast in the community and to their own members. Even a 50-year member no longer living in the area sent a check to support the project. Leftovers from the event were donated to the food pantry and other local charities. The breakfast raised \$670.

Owensville Chapter #370, District 22 sets up a small Christmas tree in the chapter room in December, and members clip monetary donations to its branches. The donations, together with a budgeted amount from the chapter, was used to purchase gifts for the 11 children who spent Christmas at the homeless shelter in Batavia.

Each line officer in The River Chapter #517, District 3, selected a charity and had a fund-raiser or two during the year (gift basket auction, dinners, etc.). Money bowls were placed on each line officer's pedestal for donations at the meetings.

Palestine Chapter #51, District 6, spent the year supporting two area food pantries, with a focus on specific food items. At one meeting, they built a "Jello Tower."

Triune Chapter #344, District 6, had a patriotic theme for the year and held several events to provide care packages to the military. One activity was a casual meeting night -- members paid \$5 for the privilege of coming to the meeting in casual dress, and the funds were used to purchase gift cards for service men.

Glenwood Chapter #303, District 12, supports a local elementary school by collecting school supplies in late summer/fall and gloves, hats and scarves as winter approaches.

Glenwood Chapter also donated funds to a member who needed hearing aids and could not afford them.

Jacob Eby Chapter #571, District 19, collaborates with all of the Masonic bodies that meet in the West Carrollton Masonic Temple to host the annual Community Care Givers Christmas Open House for the policemen, firemen and other civil servants who must work on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Teresa Chapter #257, District 24, provides scholarships to a senior in each of the local high schools (Fairland and Chesapeake). The \$500 award to each student is accompanied by a \$250 gas card.

Hoffner Chapter #286, District 20, partners with St. Paul United church of Christ to provide a monthly neighborhood dinner

Knox Chapter #236, District 12, sponsors two YMCA youth teams, and members go to their games to cheer them on.

Louisville Chapter #400, District 13, partners with the Louisville Schools to buy tennis shoes for needy kids.

Hillsboro Chapter #441, District 21, partners with its lodge to serve dinner and clean up one night at Kamp Dovetail for children with special needs. They also drive golf carts at the Highland County Fair for handicapped fair-goers who can't walk long distances.

Owensville Chapter #370, District 22, sponsors an annual Eastern Egg Hunt for kids in the community.

Palestine Chapter #51, District 6, designated half of each sunshine collection for a local charity (announced before the collection is taken).

Support of Masonic/OES Charities:

Guernsey Chapter #211, District 5, attends the graduation ceremony of the Learning Center at Cambridge Masonic Hall, and presents a gift to each graduating student.

Several chapters sponsored an ESTARL candidate. It is especially nice when a chapter does more than just the paper work. Seek out potential candidates for the award, and then show your support through cards, small gifts, even money, throughout the year.

Miami Chapter #107, District 21, provides two \$1,000 scholarships to students in the two high schools in their area. They also worked with the Warren County Girls' Home to select and buy gifts for girls living there, and delivered them to the girls themselves.

Miami Chapter also served as on-site supporters for their Associate Patron as he made the "Polar Plunge" for Special Olympics.

Home City Chapter #258, District 18, sponsored a 50's Sock Hope to raise money for the Heart Association.

Caring For Our Own Members:

Several chapters have a relief committee that is allowed to provide immediate response to members in need (maximum of \$200 per need) without chapter action. This process avoids an open-chapter discussion of the expenditure, which could cause embarrassment to the needy member.

Miami Chapter #107, District 21, gave teddy bears to their shut-ins at Christmas time. Each bear had a card attached to its neck saying that the bear attended a recent meeting where the members thought about the shut-in.

Tippecanoe Chapter #307, District 9, sends gift cards to members who are in the hospital, so they can buy what they need.

As an alternative (or addition) to Christmas gifts, Brecksville Chapter #537, District 3, takes "Bunny Baskets" to their shut-in members at Easter time.

Harvest Chapter #564, District 19, hosted a 95th birthday luncheon for one of its charter members.

Several chapters collected personal care items and bought gift cards to be sent to servicemen -- including Ashland #92, District 4, and Triune #344, District 6.

East Palestine Chapter #381, District 13, held a tea for members with 50 or more years of membership, and their guests.

Kingston Chapter #411, District 23, has developed its own, more personal, Resolutions of Respect for the families of members who pass away.

Fellowship and Social Activities

Before/During/After Meeting Activities:

Shreve Chapter #496, District 4, had a "Silver Shoes Night" at one of their meetings. A male officer easily won the top prize with his work boots that had been spray-painted with metallic paint.

Yondota Chapter #317, District 6, had a Tropical Heat Wave party in February. Members wore tropical shirts/blouses that were judged after the meeting with prizes for the ugliest, prettiest, most colorful, etc. Tropical refreshments were served.

Yondota Chapter had a "Get To Know Your Sister and Brother" event; Information about certain members was given, and the side-liners guessed who it might be.

Falls Chapter #245, District 2, held a chili cook-off, before AND after the meeting.

Tippecanoe Chapter #307, District 9, asked members to dress in Biblical costumes in October, and had an in-house talent show at its EGGSTRAVAGANZA night in March.

Teresa Chapter #257, District 24, had an ugly sweater contest.

Special events:

Triune Chapter #344 and Yondota Chapter #317, District 6, meet on the same night, so they got together and co-sponsored an "All Star Point Night" on an alternate night and invited other chapters in the district to attend. All five Grand Star Points attended as honored guests.

Five chapters in District #13 (Iva, Crystal, East Liverpool, Salem and East Palestine) take turns hosting an East Side Friendship Night

Falls Chapter #245, District 2, hosts a Mocktail Party and Game Night for New Year's Eve.

Palestine Chapter #51 and Woodbine Chapter #61, District 6, held a "Road Rally" as a Sister Chapter event.

East Palestine Chapter #381, District 13, hosted an Ohio/ Pennsylvania Night with the top officers from both states (August, 2012).

Grove City Chapter #502, District 17, has an annual Family Game Night in January or February, to chase away the winter blues. A variety of card and board games are offered, as well as refreshments. The event is open to members and non-members and is widely publicized throughout the district.

Belmont Chapter #555, District 19, invited members of Jacob Eby Chapter #571 to a "Friendship Picnic" instead of the usual "Friendship Night" during a meeting.

Knox Chapter #236 and Mount Vernon Lodge have an annual Chapter/Lodge Valentine Dance.

Hoffner Chapter #286, District 20, gets together as a group to attend the local high school musical presentations.

Members of Falls Chapter #245, District 2, attend games at Kent State and Akron football game as a group, beginning with a tailgate party in the parking lot.

Worship Together

Members of Falls Chapter #245, District 2, attend church together at the home churches of various members, following by lunch at a restaurant or a member's home.

Western Reserve Chapter #71, District 3, has an annual "Breakfast in the Woods" followed by a worship service.

Celebrate Your Sisters and Brothers:

Ashland Chapter #92, District 4, held a special "Thank You" Dinner for the 2012 WM and WP. The WM was fighting cancer at that time and died in May, 2013. The dinner recognized many years of service the WM and WP had given to the chapter, and included several of their family members.

Grove City Chapter #502, District 17, held a surprise baby shower for one of their Star Points.

Rawson Chapter #550, District 26, had a wedding shower for their Associate Patron at a chapter picnic.

Ritual Quality and Officer Excellence

Ravenna Chapter #46, District 2, conducted a Study of Star Point Heroines at five meetings during the year. The Worthy Patron led the program and the Worthy Matron created handouts with detailed information.

Ravenna Chapter also presented Quiet Noise-maker Awards -- in recognition of officers who "toot their own horns" in a quiet way through excellent ritual work.

Officers of many chapters attend district-wide line officers' meetings, schools of instruction, schools on site, and the leadership conference.

Bellefontaine Chapter #456, District 11, paid the registration fees for four of its members to attend the Leadership Conference.

Several chapters developed and printed membership rosters, and others updated existing rosters. This is a tremendous help to line officers as they try to get to know their members and look for new officer materials.

The River Chapter #517, District 3, had a "shower" for the Worthy Matron-elect, to help her prepare for her year in the East.

Ashland Chapter held a thank you dinner for the junior past WM and WP

Crystal Chapter #18, District 13, established an "Officers Club" for planning, discussion, calendars and future projects (and fun!).

Hoffner Chapter #286, District 20, has developed a line officer workbook to help their leaders as they progress to the East.

Beacon Chapter #593, District 17, has made good use of a van owned by one of its members (AKA "The Betty Bus") to attend OES meetings throughout the Region and the State. Hearing the work again and again is a great way to become proficient in the work of our beautiful Order.

Membership and Public Relations

Crystal Chapter #18, District 13, hosted a Breakfast with Santa at the Masonic Center, that was open to the public (children had to be accompanied by an adult). Cost was \$6 per person. Children could have their picture taken with Santa, enjoy seeing tricks by a magician, and shop at "Santa's Workshop" for gifts for friends and family.

Ravenna #46, District 2, has a great group of crafters among their members, and they take their wares to various craft shows, along with OES brochures and signs.

Crystal Chapter #18, District 13, made some major improvements to the bathroom and kitchen in the Masonic Temple in East Liverpool. In addition, two chapter members spearheaded the Mural Development Committee of the East Liverpool Temple Company, raising more than \$40,000 for a community-focused mural that was painted on the side of the Masonic building by a professional artist.

Several chapters have developed a Facebook page to publicize chapter events and post pictures of activities.

The River Chapter #517, District 3, uses a phone system to call members about upcoming events; the chapter also buys an ad, with contact information, in the local phone directory.

Glenwood Chapter #303, District 12, has a group of members who carry out a “card-making mission,” creating personal, hand-made cards for shut-in members, the military, children of servicemen, and many others. A written request to a local company resulted in a monetary donation to help the group pay for postage and supplies to continue the mission.

Legacy Chapter #596, District 13, and Hoover Lodge have challenged each other to see which body can attend the most meetings of their local Job’s Daughters’ Bethel.

Worthington Chapter #287, District 17, provides funds for a “ritual award” for a member of Columbus Rainbow Assembly. Selection is made by the Rainbow Board on the basis of performance at inspection, and the funds are applied to the girl’s Grand Assembly fee.

Worthington Chapter also provides an annual college scholarship of \$1,000 to a member, or the child or grandchild of a member of the chapter.

Port Clinton Chapter #267, District 6, provides scholarships for students at three area high schools. They raise money for the awards by baking and selling apple pies!

Beacon Chapter #593, District 17, provides specially designed ribbons and bookmarks for their new members. They note the location of the Star Point stories and are included in the Bible presented after their initiation.

Beacon Chapter also provided an educational program about the family of Masonry (with the help of the Worthy Patron and Masonic Ambassador) for the wives of the lodge members while the men were busy with their inspection meeting.

At Tippecanoe Chapter #307, District 9, the Masons honor the Eastern Stars with a meal before the meeting, as a thank you for the Eastern Stars serving their installation and inspection receptions.

Knox Chapter #236 developed its own New Member Guidebook, and Hoffner Chapter #286, District 20, sends its new members a lengthy, but friendly and well-written letter explaining what they need to know as they begin attending Eastern Star meetings.

Several chapters provided refreshments for the Lodge presentation by the Masonic Ambassador. At some events, the Worthy Patron and Associate Patron attended the the lodge meeting so they could be available to answer questions. One chapter provided refreshments after the installation of one of their own members as a District Education Officer. Others serve inspection dinners on an annual basis.

Prosser Chapter #367, District 19, took the initiative to invite the members of Jefferson lodge and their wives, to a special dinner and program featuring the Masonic Ambassador.

Teresa Chapter #257, District 24, serves hot chocolate to participants and audience members during the community's Live Nativity at Christmas time.

Windermere Chapter #388, District 3, hosts an annual Fathers' Day Pancake Breakfast every year.

Celina Chapter #91, District 9, partners with Celina Lodge in sponsoring an open house as well as a spaghetti dinner friendship night/open house.

Many chapters are developing e-mail distribution lists to communicate with their members. Dayton-Victory Chapter #594, District 19, uses "Calling Post" which sends messages to their members via phone, and Mount Healthy Chapter #365, District 20, uses a phone program called "One-Call-Now."