

Chapter Meetings in the Doldrums? Spark Up Your Meetings with These Simple Ideas!

(Gathered from 2017 Area Conferences)

To bring some life back into meetings and gain participation, just add a bit of fun. Anyone can lead the social before or after the meeting and you will be amazed at the creativity and knowledge of your members when you pass the refreshment planning around.

It does take a bit of asking to encourage members to take the reins for the social and it does require a small budget to cover unusual expenses. However, through the generosity and resourcefulness of members, things can be done very economically. Prizes often can be from donations of members or businesses.

Then, sit back and watch the magic happen! The conversations are what we gather for and what strengthen us to work together on charitable endeavors when the need arises. The less fuss the more we realize the value of getting together to forge our ties as Masonic sisters and brothers.

And fear not adding another Masonic Body to your event, to enjoy the fun or to help make the event less burdensome on the organizers. We are under the Masonic umbrella and it is wonderful to work together to provide help to the Masonic Home, Hospital or Cancer Center or for a mutually chosen charity. Spreading our resources and fraternal friendships is another way to spark involvement of members. So, invite your Lodge to join you!

Include invitations to family and friends to join you at events before or after your meetings so the fun is extended as the fellowship grows. Fundraisers are wonderful opportunities to include the public and show them the value we provide in our communities.

Oh, and any one of these ideas can be made into a fundraiser or freewill event.

There will be something for everyone on this list to volunteer to organize or to wish to attend...some things for during the meeting and some things for before or after the meetings. Let your imaginations soar as you plan these socials!

For outside the Chapter Room:

Kentucky Derby Party <i>Mint juleps, derby outfits, betting on a horse, viewing it live</i>	Cooking Demonstration <i>Pick a theme, watch it being prepared, enjoy the meal, with recipes to take home</i>
Antiques Roadshow <i>Ask an antiques hobbyist to speak, bring in an item to be "valued" and share its story</i>	Cribbage Tournament <i>Need we say more?</i>
Chili or Crockpot Cookoff <i>May the best chef win (and what a great meal you will have!)</i>	Ribfest (Bibs Provided) <i>Outlandish fun included, with all the fixin's</i>
Puzzle Making	Yoga (Chair or Mat)

<i>Bring in your favorite and build with friends or bring in small ones for a team competition</i>	<i>To stretch and grow! Contact Silver Sneakers to find an instructor if you don't know one right offhand</i>
Group Painting <i>Everyone paints the same picture...with the same results?</i>	Seminars <i>Any topic is possible and there are experts in your membership</i>
Coloring Together <i>It's all the rage</i>	Writing/Journaling, Poetry Reading, Invited Author <i>Use your words, share your words</i>
Garden Party <i>Bring in any plant and plant it outside your building for beautification</i>	Talent Show or Skit Night <i>Who's got talent? Bring it on!</i>
Bunco <i>A great mixer</i>	Pajama Party <i>To raise money for the pajama project at the Masonic Hospital</i>
Appetizer Night <i>Bring your favorite to share</i>	Book Club <i>Read a book together/hear the book on tape and have a discussion with themed refreshments</i>
Turkey Bingo <i>Other prizes can be ingredients for the traditional dinner</i>	Cookie Exchange <i>Nice around the holidays</i>
Fire Up The Grill <i>Chapter provides the meat, potluck everything else, or vice versa</i>	Dance Night <i>Push back the tables, crank the tunes, and get moving!</i>
Tie-One-On Party <i>To make blankets for a shelter the Masonic Cancer Center</i>	Sing-Along <i>A wonderful way to enjoy music or dueling instruments – let the band play on!</i>
White Elephant Exchange <i>For holidays, for birthdays, perhaps as an auction</i>	Favorite Apron Party <i>Wear one (and who doesn't have a story about a favorite apron?) or make one</i>
Chinese Auction <i>Buy a number from a bingo card and get an item when your number is drawn – stealing items, anyone?</i>	Come to Dinner – Stay for Chapter <i>Particularly nice on a cold winter's night</i>
Widows' Events <i>Recognize and honor these strong women</i>	Christmas Cookie Sale <i>Your baking, someone else's joy</i>
Cook for a Lodge Meeting and Invite their Spouses to attend <i>Their members get to know you – collect a Freewill offering to pay for the meal and/or for kitchen staff – have membership information available</i>	Stone Soup Night <i>Provide the soup base with celery, carrots, and onions – other attendees bring other things to add to the pot. Simmer during the meeting and enjoy afterwards. Read the Stone Soup story</i>

	<i>(revised with OES lessons, perhaps) during the meal to remind everyone of how we work together!</i>
Election Day Salad Lunch <i>Celebrate our right to vote</i>	Super Bowl Spaghetti <i>Gather together and cheer on your favorite team</i>
Cover Hangers to Sell <i>Perfect for our formals!</i>	Help a Florist Deliver Flowers <i>They could use extra delivery help on Valentine's Day and Mother's Day (and perhaps earn \$5/delivery)</i>
Hands-Only Emergency Medical Response Training <i>A time for training and a time to get to know local emergency responder staff</i>	Backpacks for School programs <i>Fundraise to purchase backpacks for your school district and/or school supplies</i>
Pillowcases with Drawstrings for Shelters <i>Instead of kids moving out of shelters using black garbage bags, they move out with a nifty pillowcase that doubles as a bag for their belongings</i>	Tailgate Party <i>Wear your favorite team gear and gather for hotdogs, hamburgers, and all the fixin's</i>

And for inside the Chapter Room:

Mix-It-Up Night <i>Anyone can be the Worthy Matron!</i>	Honorings <i>For the special members in our lives</i>
Costume Night <i>Pick a theme, any theme</i>	Comfy Night <i>Including slippers for those long Annual Meetings</i>
Football/Baseball/Jeopardy/Star Bingo <i>Fun learning tools for reminding members of the Ritual Work and Rules and Regulations of our Order</i>	

Remember to send your fun pictures into the Starlites so your news gets spread around. This list is small and there are many more ideas for us to learn about through our sharing. Enjoy yourselves!