

# Club Sponsor Night

## *Attract New Members by Holding a Recruitment Dinner*

**Concept:** Add a social twist to your membership growth efforts by inviting community leaders and other prospective members to a special **Club Sponsor Night** recruitment dinner. During the event, introduce invitees to the outstanding services your club provides to the community, as well as highlight the many benefits of club membership.

### *Steps to Success:*

- 1) **Invite Potential Members:** You will need about 3 months to properly plan this event. Solicit your club members' support and ask them to provide you with a list of people they feel would be interested in Lions club membership. To this list, add community leaders. (As you develop a list, keep in mind that approximately 50% of those invited will attend.) Send invitation letters, using the sample included as a guide. Be sure to use your club letterhead and proofread the document for spelling and grammar. List a contact name for response, as well as a deadline date for responding.
- 2) **Follow-up with Invitees:** Have your members follow-up with the people they recommended. Keep in mind that at this point, you are only inviting people to attend the dinner, not trying to convince them to join your club.
- 3) **Find a Suitable Location:** Look for a site that is large enough to accommodate your guests and has some privacy, such as a banquet room at a restaurant, Lions meeting room, etc.
- 4) **Set the Stage:** Decorate the tables and choose a menu that will be tastefully appropriate for this event. At each place setting, have a program for the evening's event, your club brochure and perhaps a response card (see example). Decide if you want soft music played during the social hour and dinner.
- 5) **Plan the Program:** Begin the evening with a social hour. This provides an excellent opportunity for informal fellowship and networking. The actual program can begin with a welcome, an introduction of guests and then the meal, handled much as you would during a regular club meeting. During dessert, one of your club's leaders can speak about the contributions your club has made to the community and the positive impact it has had. This speaker can also address the satisfaction members feel while helping those in need. For the keynote address, choose a prominent Lion from your club, district or multiple district who is very enthusiastic and can really "sell" the concept of Lions club membership. Have him or her speak about the "big picture" of Lions and the international association. These speeches should take approximately 10 minutes each. After the presentations, allow time for questions and answers. When it is time to close the event, tell attendees your club is looking for a few good members and would very much like for them to consider joining your club. Encourage them to fill out the response card if they are interested. You might consider holding a door prize raffle at the conclusion of the evening.

- 6) Follow-up with Interested Guests:** Be sure to promptly followup with those people who indicated an interest in membership. Clubs that have held recruitment dinners have found that approximately 1/3-1/2 of those invited have become club members.

*Note: If your club's budget doesn't permit holding a dinner, consider holding a social hour with hors d'oeuvres and the speaker portion of the event. If there are other clubs in your town, you could combine efforts and host a dinner together.*

{ GRAPHICS—Please insert logos in both the samples – make the sample letter look like it is on club stationery – use logo and club name }

## Sample Invitation Letter

February 23, 2002

Paul Jackson  
340 W. Redbud Road  
Mechanics Grove, IL 60060

Dear Paul:

Please take a moment to consider the following questions:

- Are you interested in serving your community?
- Are you interested in having the opportunity to network with key people in the community?
- Are you interested in meeting people and having fun?

If you answered “yes” to any one of these questions, then the Mechanics Grove Lions club is the organization for you! On behalf of my club, I'd like to invite you and your spouse to join us for a special dinner and the opportunity to learn more about the Mechanics Grove Lions Club. Please join us on March 23 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lions Hall for an evening filled with great food, fellowship and valuable information about Lions clubs.

Our guest speaker will be Past District Governor Roger Goldbach, who has served his community through Lions clubs for almost 20 years. Roger is an excellent motivational speaker and will share his volunteer experiences, including a recent mission to Mexico to distribute recycled eyeglasses.

The Mechanics Grove Lions Club has been active in the community for more than 50 years. With projects as diverse as collecting used eyeglasses, supporting Lions-Quest programs in local schools, donating new park benches for the Riverwalk renovation and providing free eye care for those in need, the Mechanics Grove Lions Club is dedicated to serving our fine community. We would like to continue to expand our projects, and want you to be a part of our efforts and successes.

We hope you can join us on March 23. We promise good food, good fun and some enlightening information on how you can help serve the citizens of Mechanics Grove and surrounding communities, as well as the world. Please respond to Lion Jill Manning at (847) 555-1243 by March 10.

Sincerely,

Judy Sheehy  
Membership Chairman  
Mechanics Grove Lions Club

### **Sample Response Form**

**YES! I am interested in becoming a member of the Mechanics Grove Lions Club.**

Name:

Home Address:

Phone Number:

(business)

(residence)

The best time to reach me:

E-mail Address: