

Benevolent Endowment Foundation

ANSWERING QUESTIONS...SOLVING PROBLEMS

Each year, the Foundation answers thousands of questions from donors, prospective donors, lodge officers, staff, residents and their family members, attorneys, financial services organizations, event sponsors, golfers, Grand Lodge officers, folks pursuing genealogical quests and others. Many of these calls are seeking answers to simple questions about Foundation programs, events, forms, and gifts or Home information or history. Some callers want to advise us of a gift they're making, either now or in the future. Still others want help with more serious considerations: the best way to memorialize a friend through a gift, a question about a recent column, or seeking assistance in determining the best giving vehicle for their circumstances. In other words, seeking help to solve a problem (we prefer to call them challenges or opportunities).

We welcome all such questions and are always striving to be of assistance to as many of our friends, new and old, as possible. Much of what we do and speak about in our newsletters, seminars, brochures, publications and our various speaking engagements is directed to answering questions and solving challenges. And we're always looking for new ways to share that kind of information.

During 2008, we answered several significant questions....

Q. How do we raise more large, major gifts?

A. The Major Gifts function requires an ability to research prospective donors. We took action to significantly improve our capability in this area by acquiring software and technical support which has already proved invaluable in this task. That technical capacity combined with the background and experience of our new Director of Major Gifts, Brother Ken Marsenburg, enabled us to complete the Foundation's primary gift areas and be of substantially greater assistance to those donors interested in gifts of this nature.

Q. How do we assist a Grand Master and his wife in their desire to support the Home during his year as Grand Master?

A. Gift ideas solicited from all three campuses created Lady Linda's List which was made available to the membership via the Home's Web site, brochures, the Beacon and other avenues. Each of the 25 Districts, which typically provide an appreciation gift to the First Lady of Ohio Freemasonry at their respective receptions, were asked to choose their gift from the List. We're proud to say that gifts came from every district, many individuals and a basket auction involving the wives of the Deputies from all the districts. A total of \$37,030 was raised!

Q. Where will we (Grand Lodge) put the time capsules the districts and grand Masonic bodies are creating for the bicentennial of Ohio Freemasonry?

A. Once again, the Home steps up to help! A special spot in the cemetery on the grounds of the Springfield Masonic Community was made available for this purpose. The Foundation developed the "Covering the Future" program which sold beautiful black and gray granite stones to 76 donors who inscribed their name or a message to our brothers of the future. Thus, in 2108 on the occasion of the Grand Lodge's Tricentennial, there will be time capsules to open.

Q. Where will we (Masonic Homes Executives Association of North America) meet for our annual educational conference in 2008?

A. The Ohio Masonic Home, of course! Several years prior, the Home offered to host this annual educational program for executives at Masonic Homes throughout the country which it last hosted in 1988. An exciting, out of the box educational program as well as tours of the Springfield campus, an optional tour of Western Reserve Masonic Community and other points of interest, entertainment and good fellowship was provided for the 120 attendees. The Foundation's role, in addition to providing significant staff support, was to develop sponsorships totaling more than \$25,000 to support the event.

In all these projects as well as the traditional, yearly work of the Foundation, we have sought to expand our ability to answer questions, solve challenges and provide assistance to those who continue to affirm our efforts or are new to our family of friends and advocates. We are honored and privileged to have their support which, this year... in difficult times... enabled us to raise \$1.6 million more than last year – more than \$500,000 over our budget! We thank them and all who consider The Ohio Masonic Home as the destination for a gift in support of our 114 year tradition of quality care, concern and compassion for all our residents and clients.

Right Worshipful Brother Timothy B. Strawn
Benevolent Endowment Foundation President

