

Best Practices - Social Evenings

Malahat Lodge No. 107

What did you do?

Our lodge (sponsored by the Temple Association) organizes seven social evenings each year, roughly six weeks apart. Each evening begins at 5:30 pm with time for fellowship, and a dinner at 6:30 pm followed by an activity of some sort with games and entertainment. These social evenings are open to Freemasons and their spouses as well as extended family, non-mason friends, and the community in general. These evenings follow themes as follows:

October: Mediaeval (K)night: Full costumes encouraged. White knight *vs* Black knight divides the participants in half. Compete in games of jousting (on a large board... dice move pieces, spurred by the betting of "groats". A feast consisting of mediaeval foods eaten with a knife and possibly a spoon but never a fork. At the end of the evening, participants bid their "groats" on donated auction items.

December: Christmas Dinner followed by a Christmas carol sing-a-long and, of course, Santa Claus.

February: Petrov the Pierogi. A Ukrainian dinner party which includes the "piping in" and "dedication" of the pierogi. Dancing and entertainment.

March: St. Patrick's Day. Green beer and Irish whiskey. Irish stew with soda bread.

May: Cinco de Malahat (Cinco de Mayo) Margaritas and coronas. Full Mexican buffet with tacos, burritos, *etc.*, and a pudding. Spanish lessons and flamenco guitar entertainment.

June/July: Great summer barbecue: Shorts and sandals. Burgers, chicken and sockeye salmon.

September: Gala dinner and dance: Catered gourmet meal. Formal attire. Roses for the ladies, sparkling wine, live music for dancing. This event is to congratulate and celebrate the new Worshipful Master and his slate of officers on the evening after our annual installation of officers.

Why did your lodge undertake the idea? Malahat Lodge has a reputation for fine hospitality and welcoming visitors. These events reach out beyond our ranks to our families and into the community.

How was it implemented? Each event has a sponsor who designates the cooks, servers, set up and cleanup.

What was the cost? \$20 per person, per event. After expenses, we usually net between \$600 and \$900.

How many members were involved? Three for planning, seven for implementation.

What were the results? Our members, families and those who come from the community in general look forward to each and every one of our social evenings.

What lessons were learned? Provide quality meals and entertainment.
Use linen tablecloths. Put on a quality evening.

Benefits to the lodge: Continued interest in the lodge by members. Families feel part of our lodge. The lodge becomes more visible in the community.

Contact for more information on this successful practice:

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