

**Presenting Enrichment Opportunities
for
CHAPTERS NEEDING HELP
in
MEMBERSHIP GROWTH and FUND RAISING**

NOTE: This program is designed to identify attitudes which prevent chapter growth and cause lethargy in chapter spirit. Chapter enthusiasm for giving to projects is often affected by this lethargy, as a low spirit gives way to lack of interest in presenting and promoting fund raising activities. As you meet the chapter members in this skit, please have pencil and paper ready to list the attitudes and problems you hear them reveal. Be ready to make some positive suggestions to get this chapter back on the track to vitality.

SETTING: Six chairs placed in a semicircle - speakers stand to one side.

CHARACTERS: Guardian Angel of Troubled Chapters

Officers of Chapter LO: Lucy Levelhead, Winona Worker, Nancy Negative, Carol Creative, Sue Satisfied, Debbie Decider.

As the scene opens, the angel enters wearing a sheet that is dragging in disarray and looks worse for wear; her fake wings are broken and askew, her halo slipped over one eye. (Wings may be white poster board stapled to the sheet at the shoulder blades; halo can be strip of aluminum foil or Christmas tinsel circled on the head.) She takes her place at the speakers stand.

ANGEL: (breathlessly) Whew! What a trip! Ever since my appointment as the Guardian Angel of Troubled Chapters, I have had a hectic life. It's not that there are so many troubled chapters, it's that there seems to be a virus affecting chapters which causes them to be indifferent to actively seeking new members, both by transfer and initiation. They view fund raising as a chore, an odious task to be undertaken only as a last resort; thinking that token gifts to the projects will get them an award in Chapter Eternal just the same as generous gifts. Somehow they have acquired the idea that all fund raising is too much work, and have missed making a fund raiser an opportunity to socialize together, to include BILs, and even a way to get to know new women who might well become new P.E.O.s.

Let's look together at some officers of a Chapter LO as they meet to explore some ways to lead their chapter to seek new members by transfer and initiation and to find ways to involve non-participating members, including encouragement in a lateral dimit to another chapter whose meeting schedule would permit them to be active. Their overburdened budget has been strained by rising costs in everything from sending letters and cards to sending delegates to convention, and they are considering the unthinkable: REDUCING THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROJECTS!

As we meet the officers of Chapter LO, some may be familiar to you...Here they come now... I'll tell you about them as they come in. The names have been changed to protect the innocent, or

guilty, as the case may be and any similarity to a sister or chapter is purely intentional.

(Lucy Levelhead enters, pushes chairs into place.. . stops to greet each person who enters, one at a time. Each is carrying a briefcase or file folder, papers and pencils.)

ANGEL: Lucy Levelhead, a practical, progressive thinker is the newly elected president of Chapter LO. She has called the officers together to go over supplies and duties AND to make plans for the coming year.

ANGEL: Winona Worker is the newly elected recording secretary. She is a dear sister, always willing to help,
open to new ideas, a true chapter asset.
(As each one enters, there is smiling, hugging greeting, finding a seat, shuffling of papers and getting ready for the meeting.)

ANGEL: Nancy Negative is the guard. She is a willing worker, but always seems to see the dark side of everything. She is often heard to say, "I don't like it!" and she vigorously dislikes a lot of things suggested by others.

Carol Creative is the new corresponding secretary. She has creative ideas, is enthusiastic and always willing to cooperate.

Sue Satisfied is the reelected vice president. She is a thoughtful sister, loved by all, but resistant to change, likes for things to stay the same, and is fond of the phrase, "We've always done it that way."

Debbie Decider was reelected treasurer for the third year. She has strong ideas, especially about the use of chapter funds, but is very efficient and does her job well. She sometimes makes snap judgements, but she means well.., and after all, nobody else wants to be treasurer. Let's listen as they begin their meeting. Don't forget to take notes, listing the problems and the attitudes that cause them.

LUCY: It's time to begin the meeting...maybe the others will come later, but we'll go ahead and start.

I asked our former president, recording secretary and corresponding secretary to come. They can give us some help with tips from their experience;and I thought that they might help us to brainstorm some ways to get some new members AND some ways to increase our budget by having some new kinds of fund raisers. Does anyone know about the others?

DEBBIE: Oh...I didn't know you really wanted them...I ran into Peggy Past and she asked me the time of the meeting...I told her that since they had already turned over their supplies, I didn't see any need for them to be at the meeting. She said she would pass the word along, and tell the chaplain too...we figured that she didn't need to come either, since all she does is read the Bible and pray.

LUCY: Oh,well,I guess this is it then. Carol, why don't you share with the others what you told me the other day about our membership?

CAROL: In looking over our Chapter Membership History, I started wondering about our inactive members and if we might ask the ones who still live in our area if they would be interested in reinstating? It might be that the reason for going inactive no longer exists and they might want to come back to our chapter.

WINONA: That is a wonderful idea! And so like you to come up with such a thoughtful solution to finding some new members...just reinstate some inactive sisters.

DEBBIE: I agree that it is a good idea, and if I figure it right, we probably make a \$5 profit on the deal, after purchasing an emblem and paying the \$5 RECORD fee, but I know some of them, and think they've probably been out of it too long; they won't be interested.

NANCY: The constitution says that they are supposed to ask us for reinstatement. I say just leave it that way...I don't think we're supposed to beg them to come back.

LUCY: I don't think anyone is going to beg them; but it would be nice to let know that we still care, that they are still our sisters, and that we would like to have them back. Carol, why don't you call them or better still, write a personal note and follow up with a call later.

SUE: We have a lot of members who have just quit coming, or who come infrequently - why is that?

LUCY: Well, let's just go over the roll and see who they are. Debbie, get your roll and give us some names.

DEBBIE: Mary, Polly, Deedee, and Ann have all gone back to work full time. Martha has illness in the family and just can't be regular in attendance right now. Jane, Helen and Joann have small children; and Carolyn, Pat and Betty say that the meetings are too long and boring.

CAROL: Wow! I knew we had some members who didn't attend, but didn't realize the list was so long! We really need to do something to get these people back to regular attendance.

WINONA: Maybe if we change the time of our meeting, or even investigate changing the day, we can get some of them back to regular attendance.

SUE: I see no reason for that, especially since none of them give the meeting day or time as the excuse for not coming. We've had the same day and time since the chapter organized - Why change it?

NANCY: What was that excuse about the meetings being too long and boring? We've had some long meetings, it's true, but long enough to keep someone away? It seems to be only the newest members who are complaining about the length of the meetings...What right do they have to protest the way we do things?

LUCY: As members of this chapter, everyone is equal, regardless of the number of years they have been with us. Their point is valid - We do seem to run over an hour, even without the organizer. We need to explore ways to streamline the meeting.

NANCY: I don't like to put a limit on important reports like the projects and deciding what to do about Ways and Means.

CAROL: I don't think we would leave out anything important if we asked everyone to limit their reports to one minute...if you organize your thoughts and then write it down, you'd be surprised at how much can be said.

WINONA: And how much it would help the recording secretary!

SUE: What about the members who have changed lifestyles - gone back to work and the ones who now have babies and young children?

LUCY: It's not unheard of to introduce them to the idea of a lateral dimit into a chapter that meets on a day and time when they could attend, or even to a chapter closer to where they live.

SUE: But we can't just tell them to go to another chapter - It isn't a very sisterly thing to do - We love them!

NANCY: Well, I for one resent the fact that they are never here, rarely take part in anything we do, including raising money and holding office. I don't like to tell them to go either, but what good are they?

DEBBIE: Well if we subtract all their local chapter dues, AND do without the assessment we charge members who do not contribute time, energy and goods to our fund raising, our budget will suffer serious damage. I say let's keep them...at least until we can get some new members.

SUE: That's no way to view sisters that we have promised to love! They are more than a bunch of bucks to the chapter!

DEBBIE: I just call 'em like I see 'em...Being watch dog of chapter funds makes a big difference in the way you look at things!

LUCY: Well, since we can't agree, maybe we'd better just continue to love them and stay in touch, hoping they'll come back to life...ha, ha,...that is chapter life. Nancy, you mentioned deciding what to do about Ways and Means. . That is the job of the committee to decide and then report to the chapter. I recently heard of a chapter who sponsored a fashion show and a luncheon, sold tickets and many of the members brought guests...This kind of thing combines seeking new members and raising funds. We really haven't initiated anyone in about 3 years.

DEBBIE: There's nothing wrong with that! We had too many members to fit comfortably in our homes (hesitating) but-er-they aren't coming now and I guess it's time to start finding some new members...But isn't a fashion show and luncheon a lot of work?

SUE: Yes!! And we have a hard enough time getting 1 or 2 people to work at our yearly yard sale for two hours. Just think what trouble we would to get them to prepare food, sell tickets, bring a guest and work serving tables! We need to stick with what we' ve always done.

WINONA: Maybe changing the way we raise money would give a renewed interest. We have not been making that much lately...I' ve about run out of junk!

CAROL: How about a box lunch picnic with our B.I.L.s?...Maybe combine it with a riverboat ride, sell tickets (pause)...and invite the three women we received FR forms for They could bring their husbands.. . I'll bet they bring their own box lunch and even buy a ticket - if they are newcomers to the area, they would probably welcome the chance to meet some people.

DEBBIE: I don't think we could charge enough to rent the boat and furnish our own lunch! That boat rents for \$75 an hour!

WINONA: Well just 15 couples at \$10 a couple would pay for a two hour dinner ride. The rest would be clear profit...plus what we would make on the picnic boxes if we sold them to the B.I.L.s. We'd have fun, make money, and perhaps find someone new for our chapter.

NANCY: I don't believe in those FR forms! If they are such great catches for a chapter, then why have they waited until they came here to introduce them to P.E.O.?

SUE: Maybe they are like my daughter...She married while she was in college, and since then has not lived in a town where there is a chapter. All the forms we've received are from a relative who is a P.E.O. They already know about P.E.O. Isn't that a point in their favor?

CAROL: I think it is a possibility that is certainly worth exploring. We need to be alert for friends who ask questions about P.E.O. and express admiration and interest in our projects.

NANCY: Carol, I'm surprised at you! You know we're not supposed to talk about P.E.O. to someone who is not a member! That's why I don't feel we should include outsiders in our socials and fund raisers.

LUCY: Nancy, it really is ok to speak of P.E.O. and I encourage doing so. Talk about P.E.O. If someone asks what the letters stand for, define P.E.O. in terms of our projects. They'll get so caught up in what we do, they'll forget the meaning of our letters. I guess we won't resolve the question concerning inviting names on FR forms to socials and fund raisers today, but we do need to give it some serious thought.

Someone on the state board sent us a list of unaffiliates last year. We were supposed to contact all of them. Does anyone remember what happened to that list of names and if we ever contacted them?

DEBBIE: I called a few of them...two of them were old - living with a son or daughter, and three had small children; then there were several that never did answer - so I gave it up as a lost cause. We already have three members who have small children, and they don't attend!

CAROL: Do you still have the list?

DEBBIE: I don't know - I haven't seen it in a while. Maybe we'll get another one at state convention....Those state officers are always dreaming up something else for us to do.

LUCY: It really looks like we need a membership committee to keep the chapter aware of membership opportunities with unaffiliates, and to arrange ways for us to meet the women whose names we receive on FR forms.

WINONA: We need to invite these people to socials and any fund raising events too!

SUE: I thought that we could only invite people we know really well to chapter membership.

NANCY: And I think that it will take more than social events to get to know some people well enough to invite them into our chapter.

CAROL: Oh Nancy, have you forgotten how we became almost instant friends when we met at the PTO meeting at school? And anyway, we might find plenty of common ground once we finally meet these unaffiliates and other prospects.

LUCY: Well, we've covered the membership subject - Is it agreed that we need a membership committee to contact unaffiliates, and help us to find ways to get acquainted with prospective initiates? (all nod or say yes)

SUE: I think that's good, but I veto mixing up seeking members with fund raising. We've never done it before and I see no reason to start now!

WINONA: I don't think we intend to mix it up. I just think the idea is to have fun making money, whether it's an auction, a rummage sale, or a social. and what's wrong with trying something new?...I say let's ask our friends to come...Why should it just be only our money which buys all our stuff? Their money will be just as good - even better, since we won't have to spend as much. Maybe we could even think of something original to sell -and advertise in the RECORD.

NANCY: Now don't get carried away...things like that cost money and what we're trying to do is make it, not spend it; and besides, ads in the RECORD cost a lot too!

DEBBIE: I agree. And that tax form that the treasurer fills out at the end of the year is no fun - it will be even less if we buy something that we sell for a profit. Still...we are going to have to increase our income if we maintain our gift of \$25 to each project and if any other cost increases come along, we just might have to cut our project gifts.

LUCY: That is the problem. We have been giving \$25 to each of our projects for last 15 years. Last year at state convention, I looked at the list of chapter contributions, and our chapter is way behind some of the others - smaller chapters did better than we did. It looks like we could do better.

SUE: They probably have some wealthy members - or - (pauses) - Wonder how they raise money? We've always had yard sales, bake sales at our meetings, silent auctions come to think of it, we buy all our own stuff.

NANCY: Not only that, we've been buying and selling the same junk to each other for the last 20 years!

CAROL: I know what let's do. Let's get every one in the chapter to submit a fund raising idea...have a contest and give a really nice prize for the winner.

DEBBIE: There you go spending money again!

WINONA: It will be worth it if it brings in big bucks!

NANCY: Who will decide on the winner?

LUCY: Why don't we let the Ways and Means Committee be the judges figure out a way to have the ideas judged impartially, without names being on the idea which is submitted...maybe use numbers. Let's call all our non-participating members and get them involved in this too. Maybe we can give a second and third prize too and have all our projects chosen for the year.

DEBBIE: There you go again - spending money before it's made.

SUE: They say you have to spend money to make money. We'll find out soon enough if that's true!

WINONA: Maybe they'll have a workshop on fund raising at state convention this year. There ought to be some good ideas in that.

NANCY: What works in other chapters probably won't work for us - and anyway...Won't that be cheating?

LUCY: Not if we find something terrific that works....and the Ways and Means Committee chooses the idea.

CAROL: I think getting together to brainstorm ideas is the best thing we've done in a long time...and I think letting the chapter help by submitting ideas will give everyone a chance for input into what we choose to do.

WINONA: Maybe that would work for socials too - new ideas to have fun.

SUE: We've never had any trouble in that department - We always have a good time. Even talking about our problems has been fun.

LUCY: And now - we need to check our supplies and finish what we came to do - go over all our duties and know what we're supposed to do BEFORE we do it wrong. It will save time in the long run.

(everyone begins to shuffle papers, look through folders and check supplies)

ANGEL: Now wasn't that special? This chapter is actually addressing some serious problems with membership and fund raising. I guess you sort of picked up on the fact that there is more they can do. Did you find any attitudes, problems, or people that you already know about?

Did you list attitudes that would prevent chapter growth??Now SAVE THAT LIST!

Did you hear any attitudes about fund raising that sounded familiar? I hope you made some notes? SAVE THOSE NOTES!

And now I must FLY! There are chapters all over that must be helped. This one has been easy..

. they got together to talk about their problems. Can you imagine how hard my job would be if they refused to get the officers together to plan the year and start of knowing how to do their job? Why it would be an organizer's nightmare and a guardian angel's downfall! Speaking of downfalls, I am late for my 100,000 mile wing checkup...Gotta keep flapping!

Source: Charley Jean Moyers, E, P.S.P., GA., 1995.