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P.E.O.
MEMBERSHIP
HANDBOOK

FOR USE BY CHAPTERS IN THE
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Dear Membership Chairman and Committee,

In 2002 the New Jersey State Membership Committee studied the membership handbooks of New York, Ohio, and Michigan. Along with original material created from workshops and other resources, they blended all the best material to produce this membership handbook. It was their hope that this handbook would enable you to increase membership and member participation within your chapter. We hope you have found this to be true.

It is important that chapters have an active Membership Committee, with an enthusiastic chairman. The committee should report regularly at chapter meetings, and give a program on membership annually.

We want you to use this handbook as a workbook. Do not be afraid to write in it. Make copies of the tools, worksheets, and checklists found in section VII. Add your own ideas, especially programs that have worked well for you. Then share your ideas with the state Membership Committee, so that we can share them with all New Jersey chapters.

The state Membership Committee is prepared to offer support to our NJ chapters so please contact us if you need our help with your chapter life. Our contact information is available on the NJ state web site (www.njpeo.org) or in the state directory found in your chapter's Proceedings Notebook.

Lovingly in P.E.O.,

Your New Jersey State Membership Committee

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★★★ NOTE ★★★ This section is where you should keep records concerning potential new members of your chapter (Forms FL, FR and FC).

MISSION STATEMENT

Of the Membership Committee

P.E.O. values ALL its members, therefore the Membership Committee in the local chapter has a very special mission. We are challenged to take a good look at our chapter membership to be certain that each sister feels included and has the opportunity to contribute in some way to the success of the chapter.

The very essence of our sisterhood depends upon a closely knit chapter membership. The strength of a chapter is determined by the attendance and participation of its members and by continued chapter growth. This requires each member's commitment, willingness to work, attention to the careful development of close relationships with all sisters, and vigorous effort to seek out new members by dimit and initiation.

STRUCTURE

STATE CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The state chapter Membership Committee is a standing committee of the New Jersey State Chapter. This committee, advised by the second vice president of New Jersey State Chapter, is listed in the New Jersey State Chapter Directory, which each local chapter president is given at convention. We are always willing to help you solve any chapter problems before they become threatening to your chapter's well-being. We have tools to help assist you, one of which is this membership handbook. Please call on us if we may be of service to you. We suggest you work directly with the state chapter president and the state chapter organizer if your chapter is experiencing serious problems.

LOCAL CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

As stated in the Standing Rules of the Bylaws of New Jersey State Chapter, all local chapters are required to establish a Membership Committee. This committee should consist of three or more ENTHUSIASTIC chapter members, depending on chapter size and determined workload. This committee shall be responsible for membership activities in the chapter, following the suggested guidelines of the state chapter Membership Committee. These guidelines are as follows:

- ☒ Assess the health of your chapter annually.
- ☒ Present a committee report to the chapter monthly.
- ☒ Present a chapter program periodically.
- ☒ Plan at least one membership related activity per year (such as a tea, open house, B.I.L. event).
- ☒ Share specific concerns with the state chapter Membership Committee.

MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK

This membership handbook is a permanent supply of the local chapter Membership Committee. Review its contents with your successor before you pass it on to her. The state chapter Membership Committee will provide updated materials from time to time. YOUR QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, AND IDEAS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!!

DUTIES OF THE LOCAL CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

- ★ Assess the MEMBERSHIP HEALTH of the chapter.
- ★ Encourage ACTIVE chapter membership.
- ★ Keep in touch with your NONPARTICIPATING RESIDENT MEMBER by phone, chapter newsletters, notes, and cards. Encourage this member, invite her to a 2-3 member lunch, ask her to serve on the social committee or calling committee. Arrange transportation for a member who finds it difficult to get to meetings.
- ★ Keep your NONRESIDENT MEMBER informed of chapter activities. Encourage her to become active in a chapter close to where she lives. The corresponding secretary should send a Form FL each year until the member dimit.
- ★ Appoint a “big sister” or “mentor” to assist NEW INITIATES and NEW DIMITS for the first year in your chapter.
- ★ Show your loving concern by keeping in touch with your INACTIVE MEMBER. Invite her to social events and encourage reinstatement.
- ★ Encourage your chapter to invite UNAFFILIATES to meetings as soon as possible and to offer an invitation to dimit.
- ★ Assist members in seeking PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS. Encourage the invitation of guests whenever possible.
- ★ Encourage LATERAL DIMITS for members who cannot regularly attend meetings due to change in life style, employment, family responsibilities, or moving to another area of the city.
- ★ Respond to and follow up on any Form FR received.
- ★ Educate members on matters pertinent to P.E.O. membership through programs, fact sheets, games.
- ★ Read THE P.E.O. RECORD, looking for membership information to share with your chapter.
- ★ Be ENTHUSIASTIC!

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

You have heard the expression “once a P.E.O., always a P.E.O.”. Once you are initiated into the P.E.O. Sisterhood, your name appears forever on P.E.O. membership lists and is never “erased”. The type of membership you maintain is your decision.

LOCAL CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP CONSISTS OF:

1. RESIDENT MEMBERS – these members pay their dues. They can be broken down into the following two categories:
 - a. THE ACTIVE MEMBER – she is the backbone of the chapter, the one who attends meetings regularly and is always willing. She is wonderful! Just don’t overwork her. Nurture and compliment her.
 - b. THE NONPARTICIPATING MEMBER – she pays her dues, but seldom attends meetings. Keep in touch by phone, newsletters, and President’s Letter. Offer a ride to meetings occasionally. Ask her to serve on a committee. Perhaps suggest a LATERAL DIMIT to another chapter in town which meets at a more suitable time for her (use FORM FC – Introduction of a P.E.O. Member Unable to Attend Present Chapter Meetings).
2. THE NONRESIDENT MEMBER – she still pays her dues, but does not live in the same geographic area as her chapter, or lives at a distance which makes it impractical for her to attend chapter meetings. Keep her informed of chapter activities through the President’s Letter and chapter newsletters or emails. Send a card at Christmas and birthday. The corresponding secretary sends a Form FL when members move to another community. Give members who are moving away a copy of “A Guide for the Unaffiliate”.
3. THE NEW INITIATE – she is the chapters’ number one concern. Teaching her the benefits and responsibilities of membership will ease her assimilation into the chapter.
4. THE NEW DIMIT – she is the unaffiliate who accepts your invitation to dimit to your chapter. She may be a recent initiate and should be treated accordingly with the same loving care. Be sure she understands her responsibilities as outlined in the Invitation to Dimit your chapter sends her.

5. THE INACTIVE MEMBER – she no longer pays her dues. Show your continued interest by keeping in touch. Invite inactives to a chapter social event, send a newsletter, try a phone call. When the member is ready to become active again, she requests reinstatement. See the P.E.O. Constitution, Part III, Article 9, Reinstatement, Section 1, Inactive Member.

LOCAL CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP GROWS THROUGH:

1. THE UNAFFILIATE – she lives in your community but belongs to a chapter in another community. To welcome unaffiliates is a cooperative effort between Reciprocity and local chapters, but it is the individual chapter's responsibility to involve the unaffiliate in chapter activities.
2. THE REINSTATED MEMBER – she is the inactive member who has written her chapter and requested to become an active member again. Welcome her back!
3. THE PROSPECTIVE MEMBER – she is your friend and neighbor, your co-worker, a member of your church. She exemplifies the characteristics of a P.E.O. You need to invite her to social events, to a small luncheon with several members, a chapter program. Then propose her name for membership!

THE ACTIVE RESIDENT MEMBER

What do you do with her?

This is the member you want every sister to be.

DO...

- ★ Love her!
- ★ Nurture her!
- ★ Let her know she is appreciated!
- ★ Be sure each sister feels included and has the opportunity to contribute in some way to the success of the chapter.
- ★ Keep the chapter alive and vital with newsletters telling the news of the chapter, highlights from meetings, THE P.E.O. RECORD, chapter activities, state chapter convention, biographies of new members, Reciprocity news, project news...
- ★ Organize small luncheons...send new members to conventions as delegates...go to Reciprocity as a group.
- ★ Hold a “family meeting”.
- ★ Create a chapter book with biographies and pictures of all members to lend chapter members as well as new initiates and dimitts.
- ★ Try care/share calls after each meeting to those who did not attend.
- ★ Use the telephone tree to get urgent news around and the courtesy committee to send flowers, greeting cards, or arrange meals to be taken to the ill or bereaved families.
- ★ Something special for active members. Call attention to a special achievement.
- ★ Express a loving concern for each sister!

Joyce Goff, international first vice president, '01-'03, said, “There is no mention in the Constitution that you must sit during the meeting or social time, next to the person with whom you rode to the meeting. Plan to sit with someone different each time.”

THE NONPARTICIPATING RESIDENT MEMBER

What do you do with her?

This category might include members who are employed full-time/part-time; members who are not employed, yet don't participate; members who are very elderly and can no longer come; or members with young children. Evaluate which of the above you have and think about what you are doing to include them.

DO...

- ★ Consider changing your meeting time to accommodate the needs of your members. Every member should have the opportunity to attend some of the meetings. If a woman can come just once a year, how can she possibly learn about P.E.O. and catch the spirit? It is just a token for a daytime chapter to have only one evening meeting. Chapters which only meet during the day are cutting out the working woman. Some chapters meet half day, half evening. Some meet at several different times: late morning, late afternoon, early evening. Some meet year round so as to catch those who teach school and snowbirds who miss as much as six months of the year. Some have Saturday meetings.
- ★ Investigate why a member is not working and still not attending. This member is ripe for inactive status. Don't let this happen. Often the member who has not attended in some time finds it difficult to walk in the door again without some special encouragement. Start by getting a small group (4-5) together, informally, for lunch, etc. Perhaps another member is active in an organization in which the member in question is very active—that's a contact. The president should contact her, letting her know how very much she is missed and how much the chapter would like to have her at meetings. She needs to feel welcomed and useful to make coming a priority.
- ★ Consider "bringing" a meeting to the elderly sister if possible, or perhaps a committee meeting or, more likely, organized visitation. The chapter can pay her dues if it comes to that rather than allow her to become inactive. Keep up the contact.
- ★ Not burden young mothers with a heavy job such as treasurer or corresponding secretary unless she is very eager. The chapter could pay for babysitting or chapter members could offer their services as babysitters in the home of the child. If there are several pre-schoolers, perhaps they could all be cared for in the home of the meeting. It would take organization, but that is what we are good at! Do we want the young mothers at our meetings or do we want to risk losing them?

- ★ Use every sister's talents. Show your faith in her abilities by asking her to take an office or chair a committee and you just might see more of her!
- ★ Suggest that the lateral dimit (see procedure in Section II: page 15) might be an option. The lateral dimit is the gift which allows full participation in chapter life. Don't be afraid to encourage this – as it strengthens the sisterhood as a whole!

THE NONRESIDENT MEMBER

What do you do with her?

Nonresident members are active members because they pay their dues. They live too far away to attend your meetings, but may live close to another P.E.O. chapter.

DO...

- ★ Send Form FL once, twice, as many times as necessary until that sister affiliates with a new P.E.O. chapter. (The local chapter corresponding secretary refers to the Care issue of THE P.E.O. RECORD for the state chapter organizer's name or to the P.E.O. International web site before she sends Form FL.)
- ★ Keep in touch with her through chapter newsletters, notes, cards from members (and not just a collective card from the chapter at Christmas), the President's Letter, the New Jersey State Chapter newsletter, as well as her membership card and yearbook. A member not affiliated with a chapter where she lives, if there is one, is not giving and is surely not getting!
- ★ Send out her dues notice in plenty of time so the treasurer is not delayed with her reports. If she does not respond promptly, enlist the president or a close friend to write or call.
- ★ Encourage her to share her talents in a new chapter!

THE NEW INITIATE

What do you do with her?

How do you make a new initiate feel comfortable in her first meetings?

DO...

- ★ Make sure all members' yearbooks are updated with her new information.
- ★ Have a post-initiation counseling session.
- ★ Assign her a buddy.
- ★ Offer her a ride to the meetings.
- ★ Help her become comfortable with the meeting format.
- ★ Add her name to the telephone tree, chat line, or e-mail list.
- ★ Quickly get her involved in some small way – committee, co-hostess, etc.
- ★ Send her to the next state chapter convention. Have her go with an established active member to broaden her P.E.O. horizons on all levels.
- ★ Encourage her to attend Founders' Day luncheons/programs and Reciprocity luncheons.
- ★ Make sure she gets a chapter yearbook as well as a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws and special pamphlets such as "Now You Are a P.E.O." and "The Spirit of P.E.O." (Both are available from the P.E.O. Supply Department.)
- ★ Loan her the chapter's copy of *Out of the Heart* or "A Society of Our Own" to read so she can learn about our history.

THE NEW DIMIT

What do you do with her?

The new dimit (often a new initiate who has attended one or two meetings in her initiating chapter) needs special help assimilating into chapter life. She may be brand new to the community and could use advice on matters unrelated to P.E.O. All members should make a point of sitting beside this new member during the social time and meeting and get to know her well. As time allows, see her outside the meeting (her B.I.L. too).

DO...

- ★ Give her similar treatment as a new initiate – chapter yearbook, rides to meetings, teaching chapter customs, assigning a buddy.
- ★ Make sure all members' yearbooks are updated with her new information.
- ★ Add her name to the telephone tree, chat line, or e-mail list.
- ★ Involve her in a committee or chapter activity right away so she can get to know the members better.

THE INACTIVE MEMBER

What do you do with her?

An inactive member no longer pays her dues, but she was once an active member of your local chapter. Keep in touch with her periodically.

DO...

- ★ Read her name aloud once a year. Many chapter members do not even know who is on the list. Are their whereabouts known?
- ★ Provide a friendly contact and lots of encouragement as her circumstances may change.
- ★ Encourage reinstatement. Provide the procedure for becoming reinstated (a written request to the chapter and a \$25 fee).
- ★ Show your continual interest by keeping in touch with her. Invite her to a social event. Send the chapter newsletter and the President's Letter. Make P.E.O. fun.
- ★ Subscribe to THE P.E.O. RECORD for her.
- ★ Let her know you care. Express a loving concern.

THE UNAFFILIATE

What do you do with her?

Is your state chapter membership chairman prompt in notifying all chapters in the area about a new unaffiliate? Do you promptly invite her to a meeting? Once? Twice? Or do you ignore her? An unaffiliate is a ready-made member and is entitled to a place in a chapter, yet chapters often give up if she can't come the first time she is invited. If one member of your chapter is better than others at making an enthusiastic contact, use her! She should be on the Membership Committee and train the others in her successful manner of reaching out. The Form FL is about just such a woman. Follow up on them immediately!

For the unaffiliate in your area

DO...

- ★ Make good use of your unaffiliate contact list; don't let it sit.
- ★ Contact the unaffiliate promptly, before she becomes too busy with other activities.
- ★ Extend a friendly welcome to her. She may need a warm, sisterly voice and advice on doctors, dentists, babysitters, etc.
- ★ Invite her to chapter meetings and social functions, repeatedly. This should be a chapter's first priority. Many of these sisters are new P.E.O.s. Some never became involved after their initiation. As a result, participation became a low priority. Give them the "welcome wagon" treatment.
- ★ Invite her often. There is no limit to the number of meetings she may attend as an unaffiliate. Be alert for informative/required meetings that would re-acquaint her with the purposes of P.E.O.
- ★ Not wait until you have a "good" program to ask her to a meeting.
- ★ Continue to invite the unaffiliate who does not come. Be sensitive to her reasons. Eventually, she will be able to meet with you and will respond to your loving friendship.
- ★ Extend the invitation to visit your chapter at least one week in advance of the meeting, so she can plan ahead and have time to locate the address.
- ★ Provide transportation with another P.E.O. for the first and second visits. The unaffiliate will feel much more comfortable meeting unfamiliar women if she does not have to do so alone.

- ★ Assign a member to be responsible for contacting a given unaffiliate, and also for providing transportation.
- ★ If possible, invite two unaffiliates at once, to provide moral support.
- ★ Forget any excuse your chapter may have to avoid involving unaffiliates. New members enrich and strengthen a chapter. In no case shall limited membership prevent the invitation to dimit from being extended (see Constitution Part III, Article X, Section 2).
- ★ Know that unaffiliates are the best way to get younger women into a chapter composed of older women. Daughters are another way.
- ★ Join with other chapters to invite all unaffiliates in the area to a special gathering.
- ★ Be sure, when the time comes to extend an invitation to dimit, that your candidate realizes she should acknowledge the invitation, and send to her chapter a written request for a dimit, stating that she has received a formal invitation to dimit.
- ★ Know that some healthy chapters extend an invitation to dimit to all unaffiliates who visit.

For your sister who is moving

DO...

- ★ Give her a copy of “A Guide for the Unaffiliate”.
- ★ Give your newly initiated P.E.O. sister who is about to move, additional counseling and education to encourage her to affiliate in her new community.

Make sure the corresponding secretary sends her name and address immediately on Form FL to chapters in the area where she has moved. (She can find addresses in the Care issue of THE P.E.O. RECORD for the state chapter organizer’s name and local Reciprocity groups and to the P.E.O. International web site for the addresses of Presidents of local chapters.)

- ★ All you can to help your nonresident member find a new home!

THE REINSTATED MEMBER

What do you do with her?

A reinstated member was once an active member of your chapter. At one time she felt it necessary to go inactive, but thankfully she has requested reinstatement to your chapter.

DO...

- ★ Show her the bond of friendship which is a cherished part of chapter life. Welcome her back into the chapter joyfully.
- ★ Encourage her to get involved right away. An involved member is an active member.
- ★ Make sure all members' yearbooks are updated with her information.
- ★ Add her name to the telephone tree, chat line or e-mail list.
- ★ Make sure any new sisters who have been initiated or dimitted in since she went inactive are introduced to her.
- ★ Be proud of your chapter for keeping in touch with her until this special day.
- ★ Make sure her subscription to THE P.E.O. RECORD is also reinstated.

THE PROSPECTIVE MEMBER

What do you do with her?

You want as many sisters as possible to get to know your prospective member.

DO...

- ★ Invite her to socials and programs.
- ★ Host a small luncheon or morning coffee and chat with just a few members.
- ★ Invite her to the luncheon and Educational Hour of convention.
- ★ Tell her about our projects.
- ★ Encourage your chapter to schedule special guest nights where several prospective members can visit at once. Make sure your chapter president makes a short presentation about P.E.O.

THE PROSPECTIVE MEMBER AND SOCIAL MEETINGS

At International convention in Vancouver delegates voted to amend our P.E.O. constitution to allow each chapter to choose to have up to three social meetings, substituting them for three of the required fifteen (15) business meetings.

Chapters may use this opportunity to plan one or more of these social meetings as guest meetings. Invite prospective members. Plan a great program. Use this expanded social time to get to know these perspective members and your own sisters better. You may even invite BILs to attend.

The place and date of regular social meetings may now be omitted from the bylaws and the standing rules. This gives your chapter opportunities to plan for meetings in places other than members' homes and at times that can change from year to year without having to amend the bylaws and standing rules. Some suggestions:

- Meet at a museum, concert, lecture or play. You may decide to go back to a member's home afterwards for refreshments.
- Go to a ball game or other sporting event.
- Meet at a restaurant.

The P.E.O. International web site has the following information on social meetings in a question and answer form.

Q. Does a social meeting need a quorum?

A. Yes, all regular meetings (whether business or social) need a quorum as required by the Constitution. The quorum for a social meeting shall be established by a sign-in sheet.

Q. Does a social meeting need minutes?

A. Yes, all 15 constitutionally required regular meetings must have minutes. Since social meetings do not involve business nor use the Procedure for P.E.O. Chapter Meeting, their minutes may be very simple. Here's a sample: The regular social meeting of Chapter __ was held on _____ at _____. Two unaffiliates and three guests joined (number) members for a tour of the new city library and later enjoyed a light supper at the Ambler House.

Q. May a regular social meeting include B.I.L.s? May a joint Founders' Day event be a regular social meeting?

A. Yes to both questions.

Remember that the hour (time), date and location for social meetings must be included in the yearbooks.

Have fun; plan for fun at your social meetings.



THE LATERAL DIMIT

What do you do with her?

If a member can no longer attend chapter meetings because of a change in her present lifestyle, she should consider a lateral dimit to another chapter which does meet her needs. A member in this situation should contact her chapter president and make her interest known (this applies only to those towns or cities with more than one chapter). Her chapter can then send a Form FC – Introduction of a P.E.O. Member Unable to Attend Present Chapter Meetings. This form can help start the process of dimitting to a new chapter.

DO...

- ★ Advertise this option! It is far better for both our sister and the chapter that we share her and gain her full participation in P.E.O.

What is a lateral dimit?

A lateral dimit is a dimit from one chapter to another in the same city or geographic area. This may be within the same city or suburbs or between nearby chapters in rural areas. The lateral dimit provides a vehicle in which a member who is unable to attend regular meetings of her chapter can once again become a participating, active P.E.O. in another, more convenient chapter.

What is the purpose of a lateral dimit?

A lateral dimit allows a P.E.O. to dimit to another chapter whose schedule or location of meetings may be more convenient to her. It is appropriate when the lifestyle of a member changes (e.g., family responsibilities, employment, a move to another part of the city) and she becomes unable to attend meetings at the time and/or date scheduled.

What are the responsibilities of the member's present chapter?

The chapter should designate a specific member to assist the sister who wants to laterally dimit. This could be the president or a member of the Membership Committee.

The designated member should first check to see when other chapters in the same city or area meet. She should provide the member seeking a lateral dimit with the above information and offer to send the Form FC to the appropriate chapter(s) for her.

The designated member should keep in touch with her sister to be sure contact is made and, as needed, help facilitate the dimit procedure.

What are the responsibilities of the prospective chapter?

The chapter contacts the P.E.O. promptly to invite her to the next meeting(s) and offers to arrange transportation. If a social event or B.I.L. party is planned in the near future, invite the prospective member to those as well.

After a P.E.O. visits the chapter, an invitation to dimit **may** be issued using the invitation to dimit procedure as outlined in the President's book. *A lateral dimit is processed in the same way as any other dimit.*

Welcome the dimitting member to her new chapter home. A post-initiation type meeting with her may be helpful; tell her of chapter traditions, what makes the new chapter special. Assign a special sister or mentor to her for the first year. Involve her in the business and activities of the chapter; ask if she would like to serve on a committee, give a program or serve as hostess or co-hostess for a meeting.

What are the responsibilities of the P.E.O. member?

If possible, accept the first invitation to visit the new chapter. Show an interest in the chapter and its members. When an invitation to dimit is received, respond promptly; write the present chapter requesting that a dimit be granted. Attend meetings of the new chapter regularly to become acquainted; enthusiastically offer to participate in chapter activities and responsibilities.

WHAT IS P.E.O.?

Have you ever felt at a loss for words when someone asks you, “What is P.E.O.?” Because we realize this is a common occurrence for many P.E.O.s, the Membership Committee offers the following suggestions.

As P.E.O.s we can differentiate between casual acquaintances, and those whom we might consider inviting as guests to a P.E.O. program, Founders’ Day, or a social event. The casual acquaintance who asks, “What is P.E.O.?” may be given a standard response. A response that explains our basic mission might be: *“P.E.O. is a philanthropic organization where women **celebrate** the advancement of women; **educate** women through scholarships, grants, awards, loans, and stewardship of Cottey College; and **motivate** women to achieve their highest aspirations.”* For those who may be prospective sisters you could share the following points.

EMPHASIS NUMBER ONE: P.E.O. is a Sisterhood which began in 1869 as a college sorority, with a mission of nurturing loving and caring friendships. We are a group of women who support each other in all of life’s circumstances. In our Sisterhood there are more than 250,000 members in the United States and Canada. You can usually find another chapter when you move to a new city or state.

EMPHASIS NUMBER TWO: P.E.O. supports five educational projects to advance the education of women: a loan fund, a two year women’s college the Sisterhood owns and operates, an international scholarship fund, and grants for women pursuing advanced degrees or for women whose education has been interrupted.

An example of how we may offer an introduction is: *“Mary, I’d like to have you join me for a special program at my P.E.O. chapter meeting in two weeks. We’re having a speaker on women’s health. P.E.O. is a wonderful group of women who care deeply about one another and I’ve been a member for more than 10 years. One of our chief missions is promoting educational opportunities for women.”* After a prospective sister is invited to join, our pre-acceptance counseling will incorporate our commitment and responsibilities.

IT'S OKAY TO TALK ABOUT P.E.O.



Publicity

Your chapter received a Media Kit in early 2006. Use that information to help your community learn more about our great organization and how our projects assist women in achieving their educational goals. As it says in the media kit:

“Publicity opportunities occur throughout the year for local and state chapters and reciprocity groups. Special events such as a state convention, Founders’ Day celebration and events for fund-raising or community service are all opportunities to spread the news about the work of P.E.O. and the accomplishments of local members.”

- If your chapter has sponsored a woman who was awarded a loan or grant, take a picture of her with your chapter members and submit a brief article to a local paper. Weekly papers may be more receptive to publishing such an article than large daily papers. Include an email contact address. Your chapter can set up a “chapter email address” with Yahoo to protect the privacy of individual members’ email addresses.
- Have a handout about our projects available at your yard sales or other public fundraisers so people will know where the money we raise goes. Selling pecans or other items? Include information about our projects with the order.
- There is a handout about our projects available on the International web site (www.peointernational.org). Look for it on the home page under About P.E.O. and Its Projects (scroll down to P.E.O. Philanthropies, or Projects and click on P.E.O. Projects Fact Chart).

As people in your community learn about P.E.O. and our projects you should find it easier to interest women who share our values and want to be a part of our organization and to locate women to sponsor for one of our projects.

Answering Questions about P.E.O.

One consequence of publicity is that people will ask questions about P.E.O. We need to be prepared to answer these questions appropriately. P.E.O. International has given us tools (words) to use when these questions are asked.

1. What is P.E.O.?
P.E.O. International has given us provided us a mission statement that we can use to respond to this question.

“P.E.O. is a philanthropic organization where women celebrate the advancement of women; educate women through scholarships, grants, awards, loans and stewardship of Cottey College; and motivate each other to achieve their highest aspirations.”

An abbreviated version, our elevator statement, can also be used to respond.

“P.E.O. provides educational opportunities for women. We do this by offering scholarship, grants, awards, and loans to help women enhance their lives through learning.”

2. What do the letters P.E.O. stand for?

Philanthropic Education Organization is the meaning officially listed in the minutes of International Chapter so you may say:

“Our organization is a Philanthropic Education Organization. “

If you need to say more you could add:

“P.E.O. **p**rovides **e**ducational **o**pportunities for women, a mission that our members are very proud of.”

3. How does one join P.E.O.?

In your media kit International suggests saying the following:

“A woman is sponsored by five members in the chapter. The sponsorship and invitation process includes getting to know the prospective member well.”

Explain that membership in P.E.O. is a commitment of time, talents, and energy. We need to give the prospective member an opportunity to get to know us and to learn what our expectations of her will be and also to learn about organization’s values and goals. This “getting to know you” process takes time.

HOW CAN I HELP P.E.O. GROW?

Membership begins with members. *Every member* must be an integral part of your Membership Committee. Each member can be responsible for:

one nonparticipating member
one unaffiliated member
one potential member.

Positive ways to have contact with these sisters would include her children, interests, work, hobbies, etc. Results may not be immediate, but over time the continuous flow of loving concern will strengthen the relationship and should lead to positive results.

Give the “collegiate rush” to sisters introduced by *Form FL (Notice of Member Moving)*. These sisters may be just-initiated daughters who have moved to your area. Think of the benefits they would bring to your chapter.

Respond to the *Form FC (Introduction of a P.E.O. Member Unable to attend Present Chapter Meetings)*. It may be that the only thing that is keeping these sisters from being involved in a chapter is a scheduling issue (wrong day/wrong time). Your chapter could be the perfect fit for one of these sisters!

Follow up on *Form FR (Introduction of a Woman Who is Not a P.E.O.)*. Do respond to these, a fellow sister has felt strongly enough to present you this opportunity. The pursuit may be vital to your chapter.

Look for *younger members*, not just young members. Chapters that are primarily elderly need to focus their attention on potential members who may be five years younger than their median age, and build downward from that point.

Assist in *providing child care*, if needed, during meetings.

Offer transportation. It is very difficult to say “I’m not going” to someone who will pick you up for a meeting. Do not give up, keep trying!

Promote every opportunity to relate the doings of P.E.O. Let women and educators know about us.

Talk up the *joys of your elected position* as a leader in your chapter. Make every member envious and desirous of assuming your office.

Be active and involved. Show that *P.E.O. is fun!!*

Remember, the simple difference between ordinary and extraordinary is the little *extra*. You can make a difference!!

ENCOURAGE GUESTS – SEEK PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

“New members bring zest and enthusiasm to the chapter and balance loss of members from the chapter.”

Where do I find new members?

Look at your church, service organizations, neighbors, family, and friends from interest groups. Don't assume that anyone is too busy – let her decide. She may choose to make the time. If yours is a daytime chapter, look amongst your daytime activities for possibilities.

- ★ Have each member draw up a guest list of 10-12 for an imaginary luncheon party. Would any of these “guests” be appropriate potential members?
- ★ Use *Form FR*. Develop a chapter plan for following up on these names.
- ★ Put news of P.E.O. in the local paper. Use the media kit from International that was mailed out to each chapter in the winter of 2006.
- ★ Invite women to meetings who have turned down an invitation in the past. Their lives may have changed.
- ★ Check out the surrounding towns without chapters to find members.
- ★ Don't forget daughters, daughters-in-law, and granddaughters.

How do we introduce new members to the chapter?

Depending on how many in the chapter know your prospective member, it may take some time to get her well acquainted with 3-4 others. Do this through small group activities, over lunch, bridge, coffee, museum visits or other outings. Then introduce her to the chapter, and the chapter to her. Consider substituting at least one Social Meeting for a Business Meeting and designate certain programs as “guest programs”. Make the necessary arrangements with your hostess, and bring your guests, if possible, so she does not have to find the location on her own. Introduce her to your sisters, letting them discover common interests and her special qualities. Enjoy the program with her and follow up afterwards. Answer her questions openly and look for more opportunities for your sisters to get to know her better.

- ★ Invite her to: annual potluck dinner, holiday party, B.I.L. events (always guest friendly), program and luncheon meetings, informal coffees, guest meeting with special outside speaker, guest teas, Saturday brunch, auctions, summer get-togethers, golf outings, bridge parties, summer salad luncheons, 5th week of the month outings, fundraisers, soup supper, cookie exchange...

How do we interest younger women in P.E.O.?

Young women in this mobile society seek warm, solid, dependable friendships from women of all ages and diverse backgrounds, plus they are interested in promoting educational

opportunities for women. P.E.O. is as relevant today as it was in 1869. We are really an easy sell...just be enthusiastic! Be a proud promoter of our projects, they have appeal because they are substantive. Remember to stress that the friendships we make are for a lifetime.

Why do women today need P.E.O.?

- ★ keeps our sanity
- ★ stabilizing influence
- ★ love and warmth
- ★ sense of belonging
- ★ tradition
- ★ support system
- ★ reinforces nurturing
- ★ friendship
- ★ intergenerational
- ★ learning
- ★ personal growth
- ★ extended family
- ★ education
- ★ acceptance
- ★ reaffirmation of self
- ★ nonjudgmental
- ★ diversity
- ★ place for ideals

What should I consider before presenting a name?

There are a few questions to ask yourself before presenting a name.

- ★ Will she be cooperative with all the chapter members?
- ★ Does she accept tradition?
- ★ Will she work to help achieve our ideals?
- ★ Does she exhibit commitment and responsibility?
- ★ Go over the chapter roster and picture each member conversing with the prospective member – do you perceive congeniality with all members?

How can we expect women will become committed, dedicated members of P.E.O.?

Proper pre-acceptance and post-initiation counseling is vital. Women must understand the expectations before agreeing to membership. Then, not only the members who present and vouch for a new member, but the whole chapter is responsible for nurturing a new sister into becoming a dedicated, active, participating member. The first two years are crucial for establishing her as an integral part of the sisterhood. Thereafter, even if her life situation changes, she will continue, however she can, her devotion to P.E.O.

STILL HOMELESS IN P.E.O.?

By Lillian Corley, president of International Chapter
September 1987

Have you ever been an unaffiliate? Have you ever been a P.E.O. without a chapter home in your new community? Have you ever wished that some P.E.O. would “find” you, invite you to a meeting of her chapter, and eventually open the door of that chapter to you? That is what being an unaffiliate means...a homeless member of our Sisterhood. She is also on her own chapter’s record as a “nonresident member”. Had you realized that each nonresident member of your chapter is a homeless P.E.O.?

A recent letter about a P.E.O. daughter’s experience is the latest of several I have received about P.E.O. indifference to our many unaffiliates. This mother told of her daughter’s delight at becoming a P.E.O., her anticipation during college and graduate study as her dues were paid and she dreamed that some day she would be an active member of a chapter. At last she had a chance to become active! Her chapter did all the proper things. Nothing happened. Her mother’s friends wrote their P.E.O. friends in the city. Nothing happened. Finally, this year, after almost three years of waiting, the daughter has gone inactive.

During the first months this young member was in the city, she needed P.E.O. Even in that first year, before she went to work, found her own busy life and her own group of friends, it would have been great to have P.E.O. She wanted to become actively involved and intended to do so. Now a young unaffiliate is an inactive member of our Sisterhood.

Why did this happen? That state does not have a problem of floods of unaffiliates moving in, so many that chapters cannot absorb them and new chapters cannot be organized fast enough to take them all. Surely some of those forms and letters got through. Were the chapters in that city so big they would not even invite a visitor to a meeting? Was it oversight, or good intentions which for some unknown reason were not carried out, or even telephone calls that were not completed? Whatever the reasons, they are not appropriate to P.E.O.

What are we to do? Each chapter must be sure to pass on to her new community the name of the member moving there, or to the state or provincial

organizer if there is no chapter in the area. Then the chapter must not give up, but keep asking both the member and the members in the new community what is happening.

At the other end no unaffiliate name should be ignored. See that she is invited to chapter meetings, to a Founders' Day, to a special P.E.O. event. Find a place for her. There is no restriction in our Constitution that says she must visit all chapters twice before one of them can invite her to membership, or other such arbitrary rules which some reciprocities and chapters have set up.

This unaffiliate is already a P.E.O. sister. When she first moves into a new community she is eager to become active in P.E.O., meet her new sisters and fulfill her P.E.O. dream. When she is ignored, she finds that our assurance to an initiate of a P.E.O. home chapter wherever she moves (or almost) is a hollow promise. She wonders "what is wrong with me?" and "what is wrong with P.E.O.?"

Will you in your chapter and reciprocity check and be sure that each unaffiliate in your area is being given the loving care and concern which is her birthright in our Sisterhood? Will you also please be sure that you know why, if she has not dimitted, each nonresident member of your own chapter is still homeless in P.E.O.? Only if each member, each chapter, each reciprocity does its part, can we truly say we care for each sister. Bless you for increasing that care.

TOP 10 REASONS TO CONSIDER A LATERAL DIMIT

The lateral dimit provides a solution for the sister who is unable to attend regular meetings of her chapter. She can become an actively participating P.E.O. by dimitting to another chapter with a more convenient meeting time or location. Chapters are sometimes reluctant to offer this option and sisters are frequently hesitant to explore this alternative. It is important to remember that each P.E.O. became a member of the Sisterhood at large and our loyalty is to fulfilling our vows of participating membership. Chapters must encourage the lateral dimit process when applicable. This will enable a sister to enlarge her P.E.O. circle by enjoying new sisters and all the benefits of active participation. Consider the following situation and solutions:

- ★ Sandy is a member of a chapter that meets in the afternoon. She has become employed full time and can no longer attend her chapter meetings.

Solution: A lateral dimit to a chapter that meets in the evenings. Many of the members in this chapter also work outside the home and understand the demands on Sandy's time.

- ★ Marion is a member of a chapter that meets in the evening. She is aging, no longer comfortable driving at night, and would prefer her outside activities in the daytime.

Solution: A lateral dimit to another chapter that meets in the daytime.

- ★ Cathy has always been interested in joining a five year Bible Study Fellowship group. She has just learned that one is beginning in her area. Unfortunately, it will meet on Tuesday mornings when her P.E.O. chapter meets.

Solution: A lateral dimit to another chapter in her area that meets at a convenient time.

- ★ Dorothy doesn't drive much anymore and none of her chapter sisters live nearby. However, there are several members of another chapter that do live in her neighborhood.

Solution: A lateral dimit to the chapter where her neighbors belong, allowing her to ride with them to meetings.

- ★ June's husband recently retired and at long last they are spending their winters in a warmer climate. Her chapter meets from September through May, and not at all in the summer months. June is now able to make it to only a few meetings.

Solution: A lateral dimit to a nearby chapter that meets year round. Now June rarely misses a chapter meeting and has a lot more contact with her sisters.

- ★ Amy, soon after turning eighteen, was initiated into her mother's chapter which meets in the morning. While away at college, she could rarely attend meetings. Now Amy has returned to her hometown, has begun her career, and morning meetings are impossible.

Solution: A lateral dimit to the other chapter in town which meets in the evenings. Amy enjoys the friendship of other working women and begins her journey in "becoming" a P.E.O.

- ★ Marcia knows her friend Donna wants to organize a new P.E.O. chapter in the community. There are only a few unaffiliates in the area. Donna asks Marcia if she might consider being a charter member and helping this new chapter get started.

Solution: Marcia discusses this with several of her chapter sisters, and although she will miss them, decides that this is something she can do for the Sisterhood. Soon two other members of Marcia's chapter decide they will also ask for lateral dimit. The new chapter gets off to a healthy start and Marcia's previous chapter is pleased they have contributed to the birth of this new P.E.O. chapter.

- ★ Ann, a long-standing P.E.O. who has held several offices, receives a call from the state organizer. Ann is a member of a large, healthy chapter. Another chapter in the same city is struggling to survive. Several members are elderly, many are snowbirds, and the chapter is having difficulty getting officers. The organizer asks Ann if she would consider a lateral dimit, along with a couple of other nearby P.E.O.s. They just might be the tonic needed to promote growth and lift the spirits of this troubled chapter.

Solution: Ann thinks long and hard. After all, she is in a thriving chapter, with many sisters willing to be officers. Why would she want to make this change? Then she remembers her vows. She knows this is what she should do. Two years later, the struggling chapter has added four members by lateral dimit and has initiated four more. Another lateral dimit success story!

- ★ Jenny is a member of a very large chapter, with average attendance between 28 and 32. Jenny dearly loves her chapter sisters, but has always been more comfortable in a small group. Jenny knows most of the sisters in another chapter in her area, which is much smaller and averages 12 to 15 members at a meeting.

Solution: After a thoughtful and loving discussion with her sisters, Jenny proceeds with a lateral dimit to the smaller chapter.

- ★ Sarah lives in a medium size town that has two P.E.O. chapters. Her chapter consists of mostly stay at home moms and many grandmothers. She enjoys them all immensely, but the other chapter's members are mostly career women. Sarah is single and is building a law practice. She would really like to become better acquainted with the members of the other chapter and feels like she might have more in common with them

Solution: Sarah explores the option of a lateral dimit and after the process has been completed, has a new circle of friends with common interests, plus the continued loving support of the members of her first chapter.

Lateral dimit tips for the chapter

Do any of these circumstances apply to a sister in your chapter? If a member of your chapter could benefit from a lateral dimit, discuss the possibilities with her. Find out the meeting times of the possible alternative chapters and offer to send the Form FC – Introduction of a P.E.O. Member Unable to Attend Present Chapter Meetings to the appropriate chapter(s) for her. Encourage your member to accept their first invitation if possible. After the member visits, an invitation to dimit *may* be issued. A lateral dimit is processed in the same manner as any other dimit. After the invitation to dimit has been extended, the member writes your chapter asking that the dimit be granted.

UNFOLDING THE MYSTERY OF FORM FR

Form FR, Introduction of a Woman Who is Not a P.E.O. This form, kept in the president's box or with the corresponding secretary's supplies, is used by a P.E.O. to introduce a woman who is not a P.E.O. to a chapter in another community. This form would not be sent on behalf of a casual acquaintance, but rather for a relative or well-known friend who "possesses those qualities we admire". If she lived in your community, you would want to present her name for membership in your chapter. You do not need permission of your chapter to send a name on *Form FR*. You should send along a note telling about this woman's interests, family, and personal situation. You can send her name to as many chapters as you wish or to the area reciprocity and the state organizer. The presidents' addresses are found on the P.E.O. International web site; the contact for local reciprocity and the state organizer is found in the Care issue of THE P.E.O. RECORD which is also available on the International web site.

"In our transient society, it is imperative that we expend special effort to establish and sustain human ties. Form FR offers such opportunities for P.E.O.s. There are many of us to testify that our members introduced by a Form FR have become enthusiastic participants in our chapters. Our FR members are a special gift!"

Wilma Leonard Turner, president, International Chapter 1997-1999

The chapter receiving *Form FR* should attempt to become acquainted with the woman recommended. This woman might be just the fresh spark of enthusiasm your chapter needs! When a chapter receives *Form FR*, it should be read and discussed at a chapter meeting. The "pertinent information" and note included will give clues to the woman's interests and personal situation, which will help you in knowing which members might contact her. Although you are under no obligation to extend an invitation to membership, this is a woman dear to the heart of a P.E.O. sister and it is her way of saying, "If I were a member of your chapter, I would propose this woman for membership". It is important, and a courtesy, to acknowledge receipt of *Form FR* by filling in the bottom perforated section of the form and returning it to the sender.

Remember:

- ★ This is an excellent source for new members, very often young ones.
- ★ Have an enthusiastic member make the first contact.
- ★ It is equally important for your chapter members to use *Form FR* to recommend a friend who lives elsewhere and who would contribute to and profit from a P.E.O. chapter.
- ★ There have been many reports of happy outcomes from using *Form FR*!

SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE PARTICIPATION

The P.E.O. Sisterhood is committed to attracting, reaching and staying in touch with all our sisters. How can we do this?

- ★ Start meetings on time; insist on quality use of time.
- ★ Vary meeting times and/or meet year-round.
- ★ Let members know they are missed when unable to attend.
- ★ Understand family and work responsibilities, but prepare a member for P.E.O. commitment and growth.
- ★ Help members with transportation to the meetings. Plan carpools.
- ★ Acknowledge the special achievement of a member at your meeting.
- ★ Help with childcare arrangements.
- ★ Involve a new member early, no matter how small the task.
- ★ Assign a member to a committee that especially interests her.
- ★ Keep in contact via telephone.
- ★ Ask members to hostess or co-hostess a meeting.
- ★ Listen to your sister and then encourage her to give a program on something interesting she has shared with you.
- ★ Send newsletters, birthday cards, and “thinking of you” notes. When appropriate, bring refreshments from the meeting and offer tender loving care.
- ★ Have a “friendship basket” at your meetings – share the happenings in your life.
- ★ Have coffees and/or luncheons on non-meeting days.
- ★ Dine out together before an evening meeting.
- ★ Develop small interest groups – bridge, book clubs, play groups...

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

- ★ Start meetings on time
- ★ Be brief but efficient
- ★ Show loving concern with good communication
- ★ Report thoroughly and completely as an officer, a committee chairman, a project chairman, a hostess or co-hostess
- ★ Be familiar with your responsibilities. Officers read, read, read your instructions.
- ★ President – plan ahead
 - ★ Assign responsibilities rather than take meeting time to call for volunteers
 - ★ Ask committees to bring recommendations rather than open floor to long discussions
 - ★ Make a monthly timeline for each officer and committee chairman
- ★ Be accommodating
 - ★ Change hour or day of meeting
 - ★ Choose a variety of times throughout the year
 - ★ Plan a Saturday event

HOW TO HAVE QUALITY PROGRAMS

Variety is the Spice of Life!

The five Es of quality programs are:

Enlightening
Entertaining
Educational
Enjoyable
Ends on time!

Presenters can be:

- ★ Chapter members
- ★ B.I.L.s
- ★ Chapter family members, e.g. children, those with special talents or interests
- ★ Members of another chapter
- ★ Local residents

Be creative and imaginative in your types of programs:

- ★ Skits
- ★ Sing-a-longs
- ★ Panel and group discussion
- ★ Auctions
- ★ Slumber parties
- ★ Retreats
- ★ Fieldtrips, e.g. farmers' market, museums, historic home tours

Resources available:

- ★ State chapter P.E.O. program file (contact the state chapter recording secretary)
- ★ P.E.O. publications
- ★ Ideas from other chapter yearbooks
- ★ Local interests and presenters
- ★ Reciprocity/Founders' Day presentations
- ★ THE P.E.O. RECORD

Limit programs to 15 – 30 minutes

MAKING P.E.O. A PRIORITY

All P.E.O.s need counseling throughout their P.E.O. years!

All P.E.O.s can give counseling throughout their P.E.O. years!

QUALITY counseling is critical to chapter health and growth!

Counseling comes in all forms, from pre-acceptance counseling for a prospective member to ongoing counseling for the active member. Nurturing is constant, always showing a loving concern for each sister. Ultimately the goal is to make your sister feel needed in the chapter and help her develop a commitment to P.E.O. This involves “taking ones turn” and “doing ones share”. There is also the goal of having everyone feel connected to her sisters with a life long bond of friendship and love. This involves getting to know your sisters, through programs such as *“What did you do this summer?”*, sharing things about yourself under *Suggestions for the Good of the Chapter*, and caring for each other through courtesy or sunshine needs. You should never stop counseling and nurturing your sisters.

New members bring zest and enthusiasm to the chapter and balance loss of members from the chapter. Quality new member education and assimilation are very important in guiding her to active participation in P.E.O. Nurturing her through these steps will help her develop that loving concern for each sister.

Dimits need to be given the same pre-acceptance counseling as new initiates. Although the procedures of P.E.O. are universal, local chapter customs can vary greatly. You want the new dimit to feel as comfortable as possible in your chapter, so she will easily become an active and contributing member.

Nonparticipating members need to be encouraged to renew their commitment to the chapter. Special counseling aimed at rekindling her enthusiasm for the Sisterhood and helping her realize how that can be accomplished is vital to her becoming active. The chapter must listen carefully to why she is not actively participating in order to react appropriately. Changes may need to be made on both sides.

Inactive members need to be informed of the consequences of going inactive. She needs to know how to reactivate her membership. Circumstances can change in a sister’s life and she may desire active membership, but not know how to make that happen, or may be too embarrassed to ask. She needs to be reminded that she is missed and would be welcomed back as an active member of the chapter.

Active members perhaps need more nurturing than counseling. Who does not appreciate a pat on the back or a “job well done”? However education is vital to remaining active and involved. There are always areas that we can learn more about, or share our knowledge with others. Ongoing counseling is the key to your chapter’s health and prosperity!

PRE-ACCEPTANCE COUNSELING

EDUCATION

New member education and assimilation are very important in guiding an initiate to active participation in P.E.O. You should plan for a pre-acceptance counseling session to be held very soon after an invitation to membership has been received by a candidate. All potential new members, including dimitts, should be provided pre-acceptance counseling.

It is recommended that a copy of “You Are Invited”, available from the P.E.O. Supply Department, be mailed to each prospective member on the same day as the invitation to membership is sent. Send them in separate envelopes and enclose a note such as “We’ll contact you soon to talk about P.E.O.”.

The pre-acceptance committee should include the president of the local chapter, the person who proposed the name for membership, and one other voucher for the candidate. Other potential members of this three person committee could include a member of the Membership Committee, a past president, or a long standing member.

Remember that the prospective initiate may be hearing about P.E.O. for the first time. It is imperative that she understands P.E.O.; that she realizes her responsibilities, and comprehends the commitment she is being asked to make. Do not underestimate this commitment and responsibility. P.E.O. is very special and is not for everyone. Stress the lifetime membership, the importance of regular attendance, and the continued pledging of time, talent and energy to the organization.

The pre-acceptance counseling should include information on membership. Explain how the sisterly bonds of P.E.O. extend beyond the local chapter. Point out how membership provides opportunities for personal growth and close friendships between sisters. And of course tell her about our projects and how we strongly support them.

It is a good idea to put together a “prospective sister packet” which should include the following items: “You Are Invited” (if not previously mailed); a copy of THE P.E.O. RECORD; a local chapter yearbook; the Constitution; “P.E.O., Our Educational Heritage” (a booklet about our projects); and anything else specific to your chapter.

Remember, the more informed your new sister is the better member she will become.

POST-INITIATION COUNSELING

PARTICIPATION

Post-initiation counseling should really start right at the initiation meeting. Under *Suggestions for the Good of the Chapter* it is recommended that you present the new initiate with a copy of “Now You Are a P.E.O.” along with her membership card. This booklet is available from the P.E.O. Supply Department in Des Moines.

Make her feel at ease during the business meeting. The member who presented her name should continue to be her mentor, sitting beside her at first, reminding her of the gavel taps, password, and that we answer the roll call by saying “Present”. Make certain she is acquainted with all the chapter members...this is everyone’s duty!

Chapter members could wear nametags, especially in a large chapter, so she can get to know everyone quickly. Offer to provide transportation until she indicates otherwise. The Membership Committee could prepare a map indicating each member’s home, or directions can be printed in your chapter yearbook.

Schedule the post-initiation counseling visit. This is an important step in helping the new member feel she is a valued part of the chapter. The post-initiation committee should include a past president or a current officer, her mentor or “special sister”, and someone from the Membership Committee. Aside from her mentor, if the other members of this committee are different from the pre-acceptance committee, it will give the new member an opportunity to get to know more of her sisters in a more intimate setting. This meeting’s most powerful resource is the President’s Book. Step by step the committee can review the agenda and explain the procedure the new sister will need to know. Refer to the booklet “Counsel for Pre-Acceptance and Post-Initiation”, which is kept in the President’s Box, as a guideline for the visit. Discuss all items mentioned in this booklet, especially presenting, vouching, proposing, and balloting on a name, as well as demonstrating the use of the ballot box and voucher form. P.E.O. education must start early! Share some of the chapter’s history and traditions that are unique to your chapter. Be sure to respond to all her questions. Counseling several new initiates at the same time can be helpful.

Get her involved right away in a fun way. Have her join a committee such as social, or have her help with an upcoming program (model, hold up a poster, act as the game show host...). Be sure to add her to your telephone tree, chat line or e-mail list. Make certain everyone has added her name and information to their yearbook.

All members of the chapter should work together to counsel, welcome, and assimilate a new sister. Your goal is to make her feel right at home with all her sisters, and ready to actively participate in the life of your chapter.

SPECIAL NURTURING FOR THE NEW SISTER

COMMITMENT

After initiation and post-initiation counseling, the new sister needs nurturing into the life of your chapter. She needs to be educated in our procedures, customs, and traditions and to become knowledgeable about our P.E.O. projects. Also she needs to be brought into the close circle of the chapter and made to feel she is special and belongs. It is essential for each chapter to have a nurturing process to support a new sister in becoming a dedicated, active, participating member so that she will be, not only an asset to your chapter, but to the Sisterhood at large. Each member needs to take part in this process. Below are some ideas and suggestions for nurturing a new member your chapter may want to consider:

Make her initiation day a special occasion! Present her with a bouquet of daisies under *Suggestions for the Good of the Chapter*, along with her membership card. Wear nametags on initiation day and perhaps for several meetings after to help her get acquainted. Add her to the chat line or telephone tree, and give everyone her information for their yearbooks. Have a special cake for your refreshments.

Encourage her to attend, if possible, every meeting, for her attendance is crucial in establishing her as an integral part of the Sisterhood. Offer her a ride to meetings, which is a perfect time to discuss P.E.O. and answer her questions. Make sure she has good directions if she is driving herself. Let her know she is missed when she is unable to attend.

Encourage sisters to take turns sitting with her at meetings so she gets to know everyone.

Educate her in our P.E.O. procedures, projects, and traditions. During the meeting it is acceptable for the president to give brief explanations about procedures that may be confusing. Often other sisters have questions too, but are hesitant to ask. Her “mentor” or “special sister” can also quietly explain things during the meeting.

Assign her to a project committee. This will help her learn more about our projects.

Make her feel included in the life of your chapter. Involve her immediately in a social activity or on an active committee (making sure she is serving with experienced sisters who can offer her wisdom). Ask her to be a prompter at the next initiation. Appoint her pro-tem guard or chaplain. Ask her to sign-up with you when several volunteers are needed. Invite her to share her talents. Encourage her to share suggestions as fresh ideas are always welcome.

Have her present a short autobiography or share something about her interests. Perhaps 2-3 members could do this at the same time.

Share the file of the annual President's Letters so she gets an understanding of your chapter's activities. If you have scrapbooks, share these as well.

Encourage her to attend convention, Reciprocity, and Founders' Day programs to broaden her P.E.O. horizons.

Ask her to accompany you when visiting a shut-in sister or a nonparticipating member so she becomes acquainted with those unable to attend meetings regularly.

Encourage her to read "A Society of Our Own" (this could be a traditional presentation from the chapter along with the membership card and Constitution following initiation) or *Out of the Heart* (which could be shared from the Presidents' Box).

COUNSELING FOR DIMITS

COUNSELING DIMITS IN

Frequently you will find that your new dimit has had little or no opportunity to attend full meetings and become familiar with P.E.O. traditions. If she is a P.E.O. daughter who was initiated into her mother's chapter, she may have been away at college, or just newly initiated before relocating with marriage or a new job. She has become an unaffiliate in unfamiliar territory. You would not want your daughter to feel uncomfortable in another chapter, so be sure you are helping this unaffiliate to feel comfortable in your chapter by giving her the knowledge she needs.

Make sure the unaffiliate knows the procedure to request a dimit from her chapter. In case her chapter has not done so, give her "A Guide for the Unaffiliate", which you can order from the P.E.O. Supply Department in Des Moines. Be ready to answer any questions she has regarding the procedure.

Include her in pre-acceptance counseling. Many of the items suggested for new initiates pertain to the unaffiliate as well. It does not matter how long she has been a sister, everyone can benefit from counseling.

Make sure the new dimit has a copy of your yearbook and the Constitution. If she has recently moved, check with her after awhile to make sure she is getting THE P.E.O. RECORD at her new address. Assign her a "special sister" to make sure she feels at home in her new chapter!

COUNSELING DIMITS OUT

The responsibilities of your chapter do not stop until your moving sister has been accepted into another chapter. First off, the corresponding secretary should immediately send a Form FL to all the chapters in the area where your sister has moved. A copy should also be sent to the state chapter organizer, whose name can be found in Care issue of THE P.E.O. RECORD. This form should be sent annually until the sister has dimitted.

Give her "A Guide for the Unaffiliate". This will give her the instructions for how to initiate a dimit when she has found a new chapter. Encourage her to attend Reciprocity meetings where she can meet sisters in many chapters at once.

If anyone in your chapter knows a P.E.O. in the new area, it might be helpful to personally notify them of your sister's move.

Be sure to keep in touch with your sister. Send her chapter newsletters, a copy of the annual President's Letter, and copies of the New Jersey State Chapter newsletter. Let her know you miss her, but encourage her to find a new P.E.O. home so she can feel connected and add new friendships to her circle.

COUNSELING FOR NONPARTICIPATING MEMBERS

P.E.O. counseling goes far beyond the traditional pre-acceptance and post-initiation counseling. We need to counsel all categories of members. A very important category is the nonparticipating member. She is paying her dues, so P.E.O. must be important to her. Be sure to let her know you understand this.

Keep in touch with her by telephone and e-mail. Send her note cards and your chapter newsletter. Notify her of upcoming special occasions. Encourage her participation.

Sometimes a nonparticipating member needs to step back into active status gradually. Consult with her as to what she might enjoy doing to help the chapter. Call and ask if she could give a program on something you know is of interest to her. Ask her to serve on a short-term committee. Ask her to be the prompter so she will hear the beautiful words of the initiation ceremony. Get her to a meeting and give her such a terrific experience that she cannot wait to come back!

When a member is physically unable to make it to a meeting, why not tape the program and take it to her, along with refreshments and a lot of TLC.

For some of our older members, attending a meeting is just too much. Perhaps your chapter could occasionally arrange to meet at the retirement home where she lives. Lessen the responsibilities of older members, so they can enjoy their membership without the related stress of obligation. Respect their years of experience and ask for their advice and opinion.

When a member has not been participating because of conflicts with job or family commitments, remind her of the lateral dimit. Remember, we would rather see our sister active and contributing in another chapter than nonparticipating and unhappy remaining in her current chapter.

The direction of a nonparticipating member's status can go one of two ways. The counseling and nurturing of your chapter can insure that she becomes a participating, active member. That is our goal for all nonparticipating members.

NURTURE YOUR NONRESIDENT MEMBERS

A nonresident member is an active member of her chapter, regardless of where she lives. She is an unaffiliate in her new location.

When a member moves too far away to conveniently attend your chapter meetings, your chapter should put her on your nonresident member list. This adds her name to the unaffiliate list in the area where she is now living. Make sure you give her a copy of “A Guide for the Unaffiliate” so she knows the procedure for dimitting into a new chapter. Encourage her to visit new chapters and to dimit as soon as possible.

Your chapter’s corresponding secretary should send Form FL to any chapters in her new community and also to the organizer of the state to which she is moving. If your nonresident member is not contacted within a reasonable amount of time, see that another Form FL and/or personal note is sent. You may also contact the president of the new chapter directly, finding her name in the current year Directory of Presidents.

Keep in close touch with your nonresident member, sharing interest and loving concern. Send her copies of the chapter President’s Letter, birthday greetings, and copies of chapter newsletters. Send a chapter yearbook to each nonresident member of your chapter. Be sure that when she is in your area for a visit, she is invited to chapter activities.

Send her dues notice in plenty of time for her to respond so the treasurer is not delayed with her reports. Inform her of your chapter fundraisers, giving her an opportunity to participate in some way if she wishes. A special note of thanks should be sent promptly for any contribution received.

Often it is difficult for the member and/or the chapter to sever membership ties when she moves. Help each other to realize that by her move she has left your chapter and she needs to dimit to a new chapter in order to enjoy new sisters and the benefits of the Sisterhood. If it is not possible for her to dimit and she remains a nonresident member of your chapter, be sure to keep in touch with her as often as possible.

WELCOME THE UNAFFILIATE

All of America seems to be on the move and P.E.O.s are no exception. We are fortunate in P.E.O. to have the means by which the name of a P.E.O. can be sent to the chapters in her new area. To welcome unaffiliates is a cooperative effort between Reciprocity and local chapter, but it is the individual chapter's responsibility to involve the unaffiliate in chapter activities.

Some moving sisters may be arriving for a permanent stay; others may be semi-permanent, only staying for a few years. Regardless of how long a P.E.O. sister will be in your area, remember a P.E.O. unaffiliate needs your friendship and loving concern. Also remember unaffiliates can bring new ideas and enthusiasm to your chapter.

Make sure all unaffiliates in the area are contacted as often as necessary and feasible. February and March are particularly prime months as the unaffiliate has just committed to another year of active membership by paying her dues and has received the President's Letter from her chapter.

When a Form FL is received, make sure that it is followed up on immediately. The sooner the new resident finds a new P.E.O. home the better! Invite her as often as necessary – she may not be able to come the first time. Don't give up.

Provide transportation with one or several sisters to help make her feel comfortable. Offer information about your area that will help her establish herself in the community. Help her find babysitters if necessary to attend your meetings.

Promptly extend an invitation to dimit. Remember, she is already a P.E.O.

If an unaffiliate remains on the list for several years, continue to contact her at least annually. Her life situation may change. Again, March is a prime time as she has just paid her dues and obviously wants to retain her active status. Perhaps she is now ready to become active in your chapter's life.

COUNSELING FOR INACTIVE MEMBERS

The ideal goal is to continually give quality counseling to active members to avoid any member choosing inactive status. Recommend a lateral dimit, used when a member is unable to regularly attend her chapter meetings. Explain that employment responsibilities, responsibilities for children, family illness, travel, etc. need not present a conflict. Call a state chapter officer for suggestions with the tough questions.

When going inactive seems the only solution, the chapter should inform the member of the reinstatement procedures and fees (a written request to the chapter along with \$25 fee). The local chapter should hold her emblem for three years in the President's Box. (Note in the General Enrollment Book *in pencil* if the emblem was or was not returned.) As a courtesy, you could notify her prior to the conclusion of the three year period that you are returning her emblem to Des Moines.

Keep in touch with your sister. Tell her you miss her when you run into her at church or around town. Send her a holiday or birthday card at least once a year. Send her the annual President's Letter or the chapter newsletter. Send her name to the state chapter organizer in case a new chapter is being organized near her.

Invite her to your chapter socials. An inactive member may not attend the business meetings of your chapter, but she may still attend any function which does not require the password.

Maintain a current address and phone number for each inactive. List these sisters in a special section of your yearbook. Remember to record her name in Chapter Eternal upon her death. Members inactive for 25 years or more who have not been heard from within a reasonable number of years, and/or whose whereabouts are unknown, shall be marked L.C. (lost contact) in the General Enrollment Book.

Encourage her to reconsider her status. It is always hoped that these inactive members will request to be reinstated in the chapter and become active again.

DON'T FORGET TO NURTURE YOUR ACTIVE MEMBERS

All work and no play...

Active members are the backbone of our Sisterhood, the heart of our organization. Just like any parts of the body, they must be cared for and nurtured to remain healthy and vital. Never take any sister for granted. We must show a loving concern for every member.

Congratulate a sister when she has accomplished something special. Thank her when she has done something special. Applaud her when she has performed something special. Hug her when she has created something special. You get the idea. Acknowledge those things a sister does that are special, to you, to your chapter, to another sister. Recognition and appreciation go a long way to maintaining the health of your chapter.

Announce birthdays at your chapter meetings. Have a "Friendship Basket" so members can share good news with her sisters. If a member is absent, be sure someone calls her to update her on the latest news and let her know she was missed.

Do things with each other outside of chapter meetings. Arrange for lunch or dinner out, go to the movies or a play, or just meet to walk around the block on a nice day. Plan a mystery field trip!

Exchange the name of a sister and do special things for her. Keep it a secret and it is even more exciting. Keep it up all year long or just around a holiday.

Do you have an historian in your midst? How about doing a profile on the life of each chapter member? Keep your scrapbooks up to date with current pictures of each member and their involvement in chapter life. Have a member interview a few sisters at each meeting to help everyone know more about each other.

Do not forget those B.I.L.s. Often your active members are able to participate so fully because of their loving support. Be sure to plan B.I.L. functions such as pot luck suppers, barbecues, pool parties, Sunday brunch, or outings to a local attraction. An occasional family get together can be fun as well. The idea is to have fun, laugh often, and enjoy each other's company.

Be positive! Remember to tell each other about what you value in your friendships. Follow carefully the words of the Objects and Aims. Make that special effort and you will be duly rewarded.

WHAT'S THE VALUE OF ONE MEMBER?

Ten little P.E.O.s standing in a line.
One disliked the president; then there were nine.
Nine ambitious P.E.O.s offered to work late.
One forgot her promise; then there were eight.
Eight creative P.E.O.s had ideas good as heaven.
One lost enthusiasm; then there were seven.
Seven loyal P.E.O.s got into a fix.
They quarreled over membership and then there were six.
Six P.E.O.s remained with spirit and drive.
One moved away; then there were five.
Five steadfast P.E.O.s wished there were more.
One became indifferent; then there were four.
Four cheerful P.E.O.s who never disagree
‘Til one complained of meetings; then there were three.
Three eager P.E.O.s! What do they do?
One got discouraged; then there were two.
Two lonely P.E.O.s, our rhyme is nearly done.
One joined a bridge club; then there was one.

One faithful P.E.O. was feeling rather blue.
Met with a neighbor; then there were two.
Two earnest P.E.O.s each proposed one more,
Doubling their number and then there were four.
Four determined P.E.O.s just couldn't wait
‘Til each proposed another and then there were eight.
Eight excited members signed up sixteen more.
In another six verses, there'll be a thousand twenty-four!

From a newsletter in Saginaw Valley

GENERAL CHAPTER HEALTH

THRIVING

The key words used to describe such a chapter are growth, vitality and confidence.

It is a nurturing community. People today are hungry for a connection and a place where they are loved and accepted.

Members believe in the virtues symbolized by our star.

Leadership in the chapter is strong, prepared and open to new ideas.

Thriving chapters are also focused outward. They believe in our Sisterhood, and our projects, and they are eager to share these with other women who have similar values.

MAINTAINING

The key words used to describe such a chapter are contentment, complacency, and sustaining.

These chapters have a set way of always doing things and are quick to reject new ways.

The business meeting is the total focus of the meeting.

There is often a lack of concern demonstrated for one another. (This is more like a civic organization.)

The chapter supports the projects, but seldom sponsors a candidate for one of the projects.

FADING

The key words that describe such a chapter are panic and helplessness.

The chapter needs to be open to change.

These chapters give token support to the projects.

These chapters have often focused on disbandment – not renewing the chapter's spirit and their commitment to each other and to our Sisterhood.

These chapters are reluctant to invite new members.

IT'S TIME FOR A CHAPTER CHECKUP

MEMBERSHIP

P.E.O. is a personal commitment that lasts a lifetime. Members should be active in a local chapter to experience the full value of P.E.O. The warning signs of disease in this “system” include:

No Growth – Chapters need to renew themselves through initiation or dimit – new energy and ideas are the lifeblood of a chapter. How long has it been since you last initiated a new member? Look for at least 2 new members each year.

Low Attendance – Is this persistent or cyclical? Consider meeting year round. If your chapter has women who can no longer attend your meetings, the loving thing to do may be to investigate a lateral dimit. Seek assistance from the state chapter Membership Committee or the state chapter organizer if your average attendance is less than 50% of resident members.

Oversize Chapter – Larger chapters can give birth to a new chapter. This is an exciting way to extend giving the gift of P.E.O.

No Plan for Nurture – Each member needs encouragement to become a successful P.E.O. New members need counsel, new dimitts need a “buddy”, and nonresident members need support in the dimitting process. The five members who vouched for a new member should be actively involved in bringing this new sister to every meeting. They should be available to answer questions and explain procedure.

MEETINGS

Late Meetings – the world is run by those who arrive on time. Meetings should start on time with the president planning ahead for tellers, pro-tem officers, etc. Officers should take the responsibility to get a pro-tem and to notify the president when they are not able to be present.

Lengthy Meetings – Most meetings should be ideally no longer than 30-45 minutes. Each member plans ahead for the business to be accomplished. Use the committee structure to do the working business of the chapter.

Meetings Out of Control – Encourage use of parliamentary procedure. Become familiar with the President's Book, use post-its and the gavel. Items requiring lengthy discussion should be tabled and referred to a committee for a report at the next meeting.

Long Committee Reports – Committee business should take place outside of the meetings. Committee chairmen should come with a plan and not ask for ideas at the meeting. Reports should be concise and proposals should be well thought out before they are presented.

PROGRAM

Dull Programs – Programs should be informative, entertaining and engaging; move around, have a participatory program. Adults learn best when they have a chance to participate, process and feedback. Limit the listening parts of your programs to 15 minutes. Keep them lively.

Do I have to do a program? – Why not? All P.E.O.s share this responsibility. Plan and present a program with another sister or a group of sisters. Think of programs that allow members to become better acquainted. Have members share their hobbies or interests.

Other Programs Sources – Ask B.I.L.s, prospective members, P.E.O.s from other chapters, or project recipients to give a program. Remember that there is a state program file held by the state chapter recording secretary. If you use outside speakers, make sure they know what P.E.O. is when you invite them to speak.

FINANCES

We're always raising money – Chapter fundraising is only a part of chapter life, do not talk about it at every meeting, use the committee structure. Remember the “fun” in fundraising.

I'm not sure where the money goes – Each chapter should use a budget, prepared annually, with realistic goals. The chapter adopts the budget, and then sticks to it. Very successful fundraising is usually tied to special goals.

Only sisters who attend meetings help with fundraising – Every member has a responsibility to assist with meeting the chapter's financial obligations. Remember fundraising's social value, too, and plan for “fun” fundraising.

SOCIAL

People only talk to the people they know – Allow time for visiting at each meeting. If a few sisters know each other well or see each other often, make special efforts to get to know other members of the chapter. Perhaps play a mixer or introduction game occasionally.

It is so hard to get to know our newer members – Consider nametags, name games or a chapter membership information book which can be loaned to newer members. Be sure to use nametags at events which include unaffiliates or prospective members. Profile a sister under *Suggestions for the Good of the Chapter*.

Chapter social activities are too expensive – Make sure your chapter year has low-cost social activities that include members and visitors, as well as B.I.L.s. Chapter socials should be

identified by themes and not labeled B.I.L. parties. Theme ideas such as a Tailgate Party, a Garden Party, or a Spring Brunch help everyone feel welcome to attend.

I miss my sisters in the summer – Take advantage of long vacation periods for informal get-togethers (coffees, brunch, Dutch treat lunches, swim parties, family picnics). Schedule summer meetings, especially if your chapter has snow birds.

We do the same things over and over again – Remember the social opportunities provided by Reciprocity groups, convention, meeting with other chapters for report of Convention of International Chapter, etc.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND LEADERSHIP

It's so hard to get officers – Use a nominating committee, which can help to match sister and skills. Remember the option to use pro-tem officers for initiation or exemplification if memory work is a problem. The nominating committee may ask for volunteers and should make note when pro-tem officers participate. Pro-tem provides a stepping stone into an office.

The jobs seem so complicated – Arrange for a smooth transition from one officer team to another with the experienced officer training the new officer. A “new and old officers” meeting allows for effective exchange of leadership.

I'm not sure what the future holds – Your current chapter responsibility is temporary. Do the best you can in the time you have. Chapter officers are elected for a single year term, and they may be re-elected, but do have the option not to continue. This flexibility may help a sister say “yes!”

I don't understand what is going on – Every able-bodied member should serve on a committee or as an officer. Committee chairs should challenge and give responsibility to their committee members and let them know their work is appreciated.

There are too many committees – Don't hesitate to evaluate committees and appointments annually and ask if they are necessary. Can any be combined? What new ones might be needed?

“FOR THE GOOD OF THE CHAPTER”

Observe...

How healthy is your chapter? What is the quality of life in your chapter?

- ★ Is it exciting, interesting, fun, stimulating to attend meetings?
- ★ Is the loving concern and sisterly support obvious in your chapter?
- ★ Do you leave P.E.O. feeling uplifted? Inspired? (You should!)

What are the needs of your chapter?

- ★ Does your chapter meet on your community's church night?
- ★ Do meetings conflict with local high school activities or school athletic events, limiting attendance of mothers of teens for several years?
- ★ Are your day members absent because they are working?

Ask...

Be flexible. Just because “we’ve always done it that way” doesn’t mean you cannot change, even in small ways. For example:

- ★ Is it time to reassess meeting time and day?
- ★ Is it difficult to host so many luncheon or dinner meetings each year?
- ★ Give chapter members a chance to express their opinions about the serving of refreshments.

Ask easy questions too.

- ★ Would you prefer we serve dessert before the meeting rather than after?
- ★ Would you prefer cheese and crackers to ‘gooey’ desserts?

Ask the questions, study the responses, and determine the changes that must be made!

Survey...

What to survey?

- ★ Why is P.E.O. special to you? Why not?
- ★ Chapter's strengths and weaknesses
- ★ Individual involvement over the years
- ★ Meeting times and dates
- ★ Age of members
- ★ Attendance patterns

When you survey:

- ★ Allow for private, secret survey ballots
- ★ Include ALL members, nonparticipating as well as those who attend every meeting
- ★ Respectfully assess all responses, not just the good ones

Then...

- ★ DISCUSS responses in a meeting
- ★ ACT on these ideas
- ★ IMPLEMENT needed changes

Why do women today need P.E.O.?

- ★ keeps our sanity
- ★ stabilizing influence
- ★ love and warmth
- ★ sense of belonging
- ★ tradition
- ★ support system
- ★ reinforces nurturing
- ★ friendship
- ★ intergenerational
- ★ learning
- ★ personal growth
- ★ extended family
- ★ education
- ★ acceptance
- ★ reaffirmation of self
- ★ nonjudgmental
- ★ diversity
- ★ place for ideals

WARNING SIGNALS TO PINPOINT TROUBLE

Do you recognize trouble when you see it?

The following list has been compiled to alert chapters to membership concerns. Consider each item on the list thoughtfully in relation to your chapter's situation. If some of the items are problems or are foreseen as future problems, your chapter is urged to face them squarely.

- ★ Age span of membership is too small or too large.
- ★ Membership spans too large a geographic area.
- ★ Average attendance is lower than 50% of active resident membership.
- ★ Average attendance is lower than 10 to 12.
- ★ Attendance of some members is very irregular.
- ★ Chapter growth through new initiates and/or dimitts has stalled (less than one or two annually).
- ★ Leadership rests on a few, rather than most, active resident members.
- ★ Finding members who will serve as officers or committee chairmen is difficult.
- ★ Timing of meetings, committee meetings, and social events is inconvenient.
- ★ Meeting locations are difficult to find.
- ★ Communication lines are frayed between members, between unaffiliates, between local chapter and sister chapters, state chapter activities, hostess groups, or Reciprocity activities and members.

Your state chapter officers offer preventive medicine; they can offer a cure.

Your state chapter officers and the state chapter Membership Committee are at your service in helping you solve chapter problems before they become threatening. We have many programs, tools for evaluating the health of your chapter, and suggestions for diagnosing minor problems. However, if your chapter is seriously ill, or approaching a critical time, we suggest you work directly with the state chapter president and organizer, who have many skills and the authority of the New Jersey State Chapter Executive Board to intercede on behalf of your chapter.

TOP TEN REASONS SISTERS GO INACTIVE

Unfortunately a sister sometimes makes the difficult decision to no longer remain an active member by not paying her dues and returning her emblem. Sadly, this often comes as no real surprise to the chapter. After your chapter has determined the circumstances that have led members to go inactive, you CAN take steps to prevent sisters from choosing to do so in the future.

- ★ A recent member who really never “became” a P.E.O.
Chapter prevention: Improve pre-acceptance and post-initiation counseling. Make a greater commitment to nurture new sisters into “becoming” P.E.O.s.
- ★ A dimit who never felt a real part of your chapter.
Chapter prevention: Warmly welcome unaffiliates, enjoy their enthusiasm and fresh ideas. Enlarge your close-knit circle to really include them and get to know them.
- ★ A sister who discovered P.E.O. is not what she had anticipated.
Chapter prevention: Provide more thorough pre-acceptance counseling.
- ★ A nonparticipating member who got “out of the habit”.
Chapter prevention: Keep all sisters involved any way possible as their time allows.
- ★ A member who was “too busy” to make P.E.O. a priority.
Chapter prevention: Understand her circumstances and encourage her to participate as she is able.
- ★ A nonresident member who, after moving, was not contacted by local chapters.
Chapter prevention: Give her the presidents’ names from the current Directory of Presidents when she moves. Resend Form FL to all chapters in her new area with a note of introduction.
- ★ A member whose lifestyle change prevented her from regular attendance.
Chapter prevention: Encourage a lateral dimit. Be supportive and keep her involved as much as her circumstances allow.
- ★ An elderly member who no longer felt she could undertake chapter responsibilities.
Chapter prevention: Make valuable older members realize they contribute to your chapter in so many small ways. Create ways to include them as often as feasible.
- ★ A sister who chose to go inactive for financial reasons.
Chapter prevention: Waive local chapter dues and help to pay International and state chapter dues/fees.

By establishing loyal bonds of friendship, expressing loving concern and support, and nurturing our sisters in the unconditional acceptance of P.E.O., we can retain our members and strengthen the Sisterhood.

THE FAMILY MEETING

Why is it called a “Family Meeting”?

Our local chapter is our immediate P.E.O. family. As in any family, we each have a commitment to share responsibility for each other’s development, and to share the attributes of tolerance and forgiveness. It also means continually changing inter-actions, moods, and seeing each other through periods of stress and joy. Each sister in our P.E.O. family has an individuality that flavors our chapter and therein lies the basis of our Sisterhood.

Why have a “Family Meeting”?

Occasions arise from time to time when family members need the opportunity to talk to each other openly about issues and situations that concern them, outside the framework of an official meeting. In an informal setting, a family meeting gives every member the opportunity to discuss opinions, feelings, ideas for the good of the chapter, and offer suggestions. It is a time when concerns about inactive members, attendance, or goals may be discussed. Since it is not part of a regular meeting, there are no minutes. It is intended to be a brain-storming session, problem-solving opportunity, and strengthening of bonds. It is not a time to socialize or gossip or discuss our sisters in an unloving manner.

When is a “Family Meeting” held?

A family meeting can be held during a relaxed get-together of your chapter, as the program of a regular meeting, or the purpose for the calling of a special meeting. For a special meeting, the president opens the meeting under the “Procedure for Special P.E.O. Chapter Meeting” found in the President’s Book. After Roll Call, the president will state, “This meeting was called for the purpose of a Family Meeting, which will be held after the closing benediction.” Although this may seem needless, the meeting is already started on the right foot by singing the Opening Ode, reciting the Objects and Aims, and having devotions.

How is a “Family Meeting” conducted?

Since the main goal of the meeting is the bonding of our members, you should come together with an open mind for communication. Your chapter’s unique situation will determine the topic(s) to be thoroughly discussed.

- ★ Identify areas such as attendance, initiating new members, socials, fundraising, or recruiting officers.
- ★ Jot down the ideas presented.
- ★ Share ideas, needs, and expand on each other’s ideas as a group, i.e. a sense of coming together of ideas.
- ★ Assess the feasibility of the solutions and decide on the implementation plan as a chapter.

- ★ Evaluate the plan later in the year.
- ★ Remember it is normal to have some resistance to change. The goal is to accomplish more when we join hands together.

What should be the results of a “Family Meeting”?

We strive for a new outlook and more vigorous life for the chapter. It may help us:

- ★ Increase awareness and also see our accomplishments.
- ★ Assess problem situations and express concerns.
- ★ Motivate our chapter towards new goals.
- ★ Evaluate our chapter’s health.

Each chapter is organized with a lot of love, hope, and promise. The promise is fulfilled through the development of a good family relationship – with lots of loving concern for each sister. Sometimes a family meeting may be just the thing to take us out of the rut in which we may be stuck, set us on a new path, and to make the bonds between sisters stronger than ever.

DREAM BIG AND ENVISION THE FUTURE

SUGGESTIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES

- ★ Do a “Chapter Health Assessment”, available in Section VII.
- ★ Study chapter membership for several recent years – look at your numbers. Use the General Enrollment Book, Roll Call book, any past surveys for statistics.
- ★ Analyze the needs of your active resident members. Assess meeting quality, reasons for irregular attendance, etc.
- ★ Assist with counseling or mentoring a new member.
- ★ Keep in touch with nonparticipating members. Encourage them to attend an upcoming social event. Communicate through chapter newsletters, cards and phone calls.
- ★ Keep in touch with inactive members. Let them know you care.
- ★ Keep in touch with nonresident members. Resend Form FL every year.
- ★ Contact unaffiliates. Offer them a ride to your next meeting.
- ★ Encourage lateral dimits. Help your sister remain active.
- ★ Seek prospective members. Be open to all ages from 18 years up. Don’t forget qualified daughters, daughters-in-law and granddaughters.
- ★ Respond promptly to any Form FL (Notice of a Member Moving) received.
- ★ Respond promptly to any Form FR (Introduction of a Woman...) received.
- ★ Make a brief report at every meeting. Keep the chapter informed of and involved with all committee activities. Keep membership on every member’s mind.
- ★ Make sure a present member will call or write a note to an absent member to keep her up-to-date on the latest news and let her know she was missed.

Many of these tasks are already being done by other committees. The Membership Committee merely brings them together under one committee and better defines the duties.

The Membership Committee should organize the activities, delegating some duties, e.g. picking up an unaffiliate for meetings, calling absent members to tell them the chapter news and that you missed them, etc. The Membership Committee is the coordinator of all member related issues in the chapter.

MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Membership TLC

- ★ Recognize members with 100% meeting attendance each year.
- ★ Encourage small group lunches and gatherings with a theme or interest.
- ★ Try an over-niter to encourage getting to know each other.
- ★ Have “Star Sisters” or “Secret Sisters”.
- ★ Get working sisters to commit to two lunches on chapter meeting schedule.
- ★ Have a “Marguerite Remembrance” for members initiated that month.
- ★ Keep everyone in touch with a summer newsletter.
- ★ Go out to lunch after meetings.
- ★ Briefly share joys or concerns during *Suggestions for the Good of the Chapter*.
- ★ Maintain a book of chapter member profiles and their pictures.
- ★ Have “getting-to-know-you” activities that encourage member sharing.
- ★ Use permanent nametags.

Membership Growth

- ★ Hold a book exchange for prospective members and unaffiliates.
- ★ Include prospective members and unaffiliates in social gatherings.
- ★ Have acquaintance groups for mixing and introducing members.
- ★ Hold a Membership Tea for prospective members.

Meeting Programs

- ★ Share books on tape among the members.
- ★ Include field trips in meeting schedules.
- ★ Alternate day and time of meetings.
- ★ Have a Beach Brunch.
- ★ Alternate meeting places.
- ★ Have small interest groups plan chapter meetings, one meeting per group.

Fun-raising

- ★ Hold a Chinese auction or a white elephant sale.
- ★ Have a “Make it, bake it, take it” sale.
- ★ Have a spring auction or a garage sale.
- ★ Host a book sale.
- ★ Hold a plant sale.

HOW MUCH TIME DOES P.E.O. REALLY TAKE?

A response to the sister who says, "I really don't have time for P.E.O."

Meetings are 45 minutes long	45 minutes
Social time varies from 30-60 minutes (so let's use the top limit)	60 minutes
Program 15-30 minutes	30 minutes
Prep time – varies with the office	<u>30 minutes</u>
Total time spent for a meeting	2 hours 45 minutes
There are 15 required meeting a year	41 hours 15 minutes

This is a total of 41 hours a YEAR! (give or take 15 minutes)

There are 8760 hours in a year, so the percent of time spent on P.E.O. in a year is .4%.
Yes, that is four tenths of 1%!

Sure, you can say, "That's not fair! I spend time sleeping!" Okay, but even then you still spend less than 1% of your waking hours at P.E.O. meetings.

Comparisons:

One hour of TV watching a day	365 hours
One hour of answering e-mails a day	365 hours
Eating breakfast 30 minutes a day	182.5 hours
Changing sheets and towels one hour per week (includes time spent putting in washer/dryer and folding)	52 hours
P.E.O. meetings	41 hours

*You get more out of P.E.O. meetings than changing sheets
and spend less time at it!!*

Are you sure you don't have time for P.E.O.?

WAYS TO LIVE THE P.E.O. SPIRIT

Here are some thoughtful considerations to be made by every member with regard to her P.E.O. membership. If each member of your chapter would do even one of these things, life in your chapter would be more interesting, meetings more lively, and P.E.O. would become more important and meaningful to each member.

- ★ Will you come to meetings this next program year with enthusiasm and not just because you think you have to? Put joy in your heart, a smile on your face and a lift to your step as you enter the meeting place.
- ★ Will you come to the meetings determined to give something of yourself, not just to receive something? In other words, will you participate in the discussions, ask questions, make suggestions – instead of letting others do all the talking?
- ★ Will you suggest a stimulating program or even better, give one?
- ★ Will you become more familiar with our projects and really support them – not necessarily with money but with knowledge and commitment? Perhaps you could find a woman who needs a PCE grant or an ELF loan, or recruit a student for Cottey, or find an applicant for a P.E.O. Scholar Awards. Maybe you could entertain an IPS student for an American holiday, or just for a meal. Give a capsule report on one of the projects at a meeting – surprise the education committee chairman with the offer to give an interesting fact or two. She will welcome the help and your interest.
- ★ Will you do each job you are asked to do to the best of your ability, whether you think you'll like it or not? Try it, you might like it! Serving as an officer is a great learning experience, you may find you have executive abilities you did not know you had.
- ★ Will you give that extra bit of love to that sister who especially needs it? Maybe your newest sister needs to become better acquainted with some of the women she does not know well. Have a coffee, brunch, card party, anything to help her feel more a part of the chapter. Perhaps you have a very shy sister who needs a special friend, or a shut-in member who needs a call once in a while or a cheerful card every week. Loving concern does not take a lot of time or money ~ just a thoughtful act of kindness or an encouraging word – a minute a day for a sister in need does not seem too much to ask and the benefit to both giver and receiver is immeasurable.

TOP TEN WAYS I WILL HELP MAINTAIN THE MEMBERSHIP HEALTH OF MY CHAPTER

- ★ I can attend meetings regularly...P.E.O. is a priority!
I can arrive promptly so the meetings can start on time.
I can stand to address the chair so meetings are efficient.
I can 'regret' so the co-hostess knows how many to expect.
- ★ I can say "YES" to being an officer so leadership does not fall on too few.
I can serve cheerfully so others are not timid or overwhelmed by the duties.
If not an officer, I can express my appreciation to those holding office by praising their efforts.
- ★ I can present a name for membership and I can get well acquainted with guests.
I can hostess a special event when guests can be introduced to the chapter.
- ★ I can help nurture a new sister into "becoming" a P.E.O. or help welcome a dimitting sister.
I can offer her a ride to the meeting so we have extra time to get to know each other.
I can sit with her during a meeting and help her get acquainted so she feels that she belongs.
I can encourage her to volunteer with me when help is needed.
I can ask her to accompany me on a visit to a shut-in sister.
- ★ I can call an unaffiliate, bring her to a meeting, and help her get acquainted.
- ★ I can call on a nonparticipating member.
I can ask a new initiate or dimit to join me so she can get acquainted with one unable to regularly attend meetings.
- ★ I can offer TLC to a chapter sister in need.
- ★ I can attend state chapter convention or go for the Educational Hour, attend a local Founders' Day or Reciprocity meeting and encourage others to join me.
- ★ I can always be alert for women to sponsor for our P.E.O. projects.
- ★ I can promote special "**P**eriodic **E**xtra **O**utings" for members of our chapter, giving us additional opportunities to bond our friendships. I can participate in special interest groups within our chapter such as bridge marathons, lunch bunches, stitching circles, etc.

Be enthusiastic – it is contagious!!

OUTLINE FOR A CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Each year the Membership Committee should give a program pertaining to membership. At first your programs will be concerned with assessment, finding solutions, and setting goals. After the chapter is aware of this necessity and committed to the process, your focus shifts to maintaining the enthusiasm and developing the ‘sister’ in Sisterhood. Energetic participation strengthens the chapter, so your job – as chapter cheerleader – is to encourage this vital aspect. Below are several suggestions. Be creative...remembering the five E’s of effective programs – to be educational, enlightening, entertaining, enthusiastic and end on time!

The Membership Meeting or “Making a Problem an Opportunity”

It is important that discussion of the health or goals of your chapter be carried out in a positive, constructive way. Therefore the member in charge of this program should be a sister who has a **P**ositive, **E**nthusiastic, **O**ptimistic attitude. The results should create a caring, sharing atmosphere in your chapter.

Discuss the membership health of the chapter. If there are several concerns perhaps you could break up into small groups for brainstorming, then reconvene to discuss possible solutions and goals. Some questions you might discuss:

1. *What do you like most about P.E.O.? or What would you miss most if you did not have P.E.O. in your life?* Allow everyone to answer, but keep it brief.
2. *What are the strengths of our chapter? or What one thing our chapter did last year impacted you the most?* Having an easel and poster board would allow the facilitator to make a list as things are mentioned or you may want to have the secretary record these.
3. *How do you view the current membership health of our chapter?* As facilitator be sure the following areas are considered: age span, membership growth, participation, leadership rests on too few, etc.
4. *Do you see any area of concern our Membership Committee/ chapter should be addressing?* List these and after everyone has had an opportunity to add any go back to the first and ask...
5. *What is a possible solution?* If there are several, get a general consensus on prioritizing them. Discuss a plan for implementing the solution.
6. *Where do you see our chapter in five years?*
7. *I wish our chapter _____?* Allow members to “dream”... be creative, ambitious, foresighted. The ideas and suggestions may not be directly the responsibility of the Membership Committee (i.e. more project involvement) but may very well impact membership in the future!

When approaching this meeting with your chapter, emphasize that your chapter is very special, and has many strengths, but note this doesn’t happen without effort. Every chapter can always improve in some way.

Other Program Ideas for the Membership Meeting

If you do not need to discuss problems and possible solutions, some of these ideas can be a starting point for an interesting program. Be creative!!!

- ★ Secret mystery biographies of several members.
- ★ Make a craft project for yourself and one to take to an absent member.
- ★ Have several sisters conduct one-on-one interviews with your nonparticipating members and then share biographies, or news reports, at the meeting. Note cards could be passed to thank them, or perhaps members could ‘adopt’ these sisters for a year.
- ★ Review the vows of the Ceremony of Initiation and discuss their impact on your life. Each could express their favorite or most meaningful part.
- ★ Have 1-2 sisters research previous sisters who have entered Chapter Eternal and give highlights of their lives and contributions to your chapter. Use the chapter history scrapbooks for some of this information.
- ★ Have a chapter birthday party.
- ★ Plan a chapter retreat. Get away for a weekend and talk about the chapter’s growth needs. Spend time talking in small groups, perhaps on the beach, and getting better acquainted.
- ★ Present a skit about the process for a lateral dimit – and include the happy ending.
- ★ When you come up with a great program, please share it with others. Your state chapter “program librarian” (the recording secretary) is probably looking for more to share!
- ★ Pass out tea bags and have members share at the next meeting who they enjoyed a cup of tea with.
- ★ Use past President’s Letters for a program.

MEMBERSHIP MINUTES

Share one of these “membership minutes” under committee reports.

- ★ Placement of the P.E.O. emblem
- ★ Chewing gum or munching during business meetings is a no-no!
- ★ We are all responsible for informing the courtesy or TLC committee of news
- ★ Inform the president before proposing a new member
- ★ Introduce yourself to a new member if you missed her initiation
- ★ Continue to make sure new members meet everyone, especially older members
- ★ Cultivate a “big sister” attitude
- ★ Discuss lateral dimits, why and how they are useful
- ★ Have you done something with your sisters outside chapter meetings lately?
- ★ Notify your hostess when you cannot attend a meeting
- ★ Make it a point to speak to a minimum of 4-6 sisters at each meeting
- ★ Disposition of emblem after demise (P.E.O. Will is found in local chapter president’s files)
- ★ Have you contacted a sister through cards, phone, or visit lately?
- ★ Ask everyone to change seats and learn something about the sister on each side
- ★ Pass a letter around for notes for a sister who has not attended lately, or ask someone to call her
- ★ Announce the good attendance of a sister
- ★ Have you discussed Cottey, PCE, IPS, ELF, or Scholar Awards with any prospect lately?
- ★ One may abstain from voting on a prospective member
- ★ Describe on a slip of paper what you want for P.E.O. in the next five years
- ★ Use an excerpt from THE P.E.O. RECORD, the president’s page has wonderful quotes

SPECIAL SISTERS

THE IDEA:	to keep in touch in a special way with each sister in our chapter
THE PURPOSE:	to remind us that we each are special in the bond of P.E.O.
THE ACTIVITY:	to drop a line to say hello to update by phone the events of the last P.E.O. meeting to drop off a bouquet of garden blooms to send a cartoon that ought to be shared to add to the gallery of refrigerator magnets to gather for a Dutch treat bagel bite to double a recipe and share the spoils to explore a new store in good company to split a dessert at a chapter meeting to use your unlimited imagination in being a special sister
THE TIMELINE:	whenever your schedule allows
THE SISTER:	someone you would like to know better or, someone who lives near you, or someone who is not your best friend, or someone you rarely see
THE REALITY:	there are times in our lives when this is not possible and would be a burden – not fun!
THE SOLUTION:	indicate if you would like to have a special sister, or that this would not work for you at this time

TEAR OFF THE FOLLOWING AND RETURN TO THE MEMBERSHIP
COMMITTEE TODAY

I would like a special sister. It would be fun to get to know _____.
(if you do not choose, we will select at random)

Name _____

I cannot be a part of the special sister program at this time.

Name _____

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEES CAN HELP CHAPTER SPIRIT

- ★ encourage “outside activities” to introduce potential members...don’t make them feel on display...have a mixed group of friends
- ★ try “lunch bunch” once a month...whoever can do it on a scheduled day/time
- ★ member biography notebook which is helpful for new dimitts and initiates
- ★ sister of the month...guess who from biography sketch
- ★ “brag bag”...for one positive happening
- ★ courtesy reports on nonparticipating and absent members
- ★ secret sister...special sisters
- ★ send newsletter – notes – cards – phone calls
- ★ get to know sisters well...“take yourself in a paper bag” - take three items in a paper bag and all guess who brought the bag
- ★ check on dates of last initiation – who do I know who would be a good P.E.O.?
- ★ what will my chapter be like in five or ten years?
- ★ always express a loving concern for each member
- ★ have gatherings with other chapters; use the lateral dimit
- ★ family day...museum, park, picnic
- ★ one member who is centrally located might always have soup on the stove on meeting nights for anyone who is running late before meeting...they can stop in and have a mug of soup before the meeting...leftovers might be taken to sick sister or one who needs extra TLC
- ★ summer mother/daughter/granddaughter/daughter-in-law party...if you don’t have a daughter, “adopt” one for the day
- ★ suggest chapter pay for babysitting or do it yourself so a young member could come to a meeting
- ★ bring the projects home to your local community...use the projects to reach out and serve your hometown
- ★ send a care package to a New Jersey Cottey student, or the Seaboard Suite residents
- ★ send cards and/or small gifts to the IPS students in New Jersey, your chapter’s PCE, ELF, or SA recipients
- ★ plan B.I.L. parties and make them fun so everyone wants to attend; acknowledge or “initiate” new B.I.L.s
- ★ birthday parties – chapter members gather informally by birth month to celebrate together sometime during that month
- ★ no-host meals at a local restaurant
- ★ backyard lawn party, possibly with entertainment (live music?), holiday or season parties, i.e., Easter egg hunt for members’ small children, Valentine party, back to school/fall party or school’s out party, hay ride in the fall, family Christmas party complete with Santa, Super Bowl party, picnic
- ★ trips or outings to: points of interest, historical sites, shopping in the city, antiquing, a great new restaurant, special showing at the art gallery, local theater

THINGS YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT P.E.O.

Founded by seven young college women in 1869 at Iowa Wesleyan College, P.E.O. now has more than 250,000 members. We invite our friends to become members of our own local chapter. There are now more than 6000 chapters, 42 of them in New Jersey.

We offer the gift of P.E.O. to our friends so that

- ★ they may develop rich associations with women of diverse ages and occupations
- ★ they may have almost ready-made friends if they move anywhere in the US or Canada and also find friendly contacts in many foreign countries
- ★ they may use or develop skills through stretching their talents in a loving atmosphere
- ★ they may participate in P.E.O. projects that promote educational opportunities for women by providing
 - ☑ a loan fund that offers women loans at 4% interest for a wide variety of studies
 - ☑ a grant to women graduate students from other countries to study in the US or Canada and then return to their own countries
 - ☑ a grant to women who have discontinued their education and who need to return to develop marketable skills
 - ☑ a grant to women doing advanced research or degrees
 - ☑ ownership of a two-year college for women in Nevada, Missouri – the ONLY college in the US owned and operated solely by women, for women
 - ☑ a New Jersey State Cottey College Scholarship aiding New Jersey residents who attend Cottey College
 - ☑ a New Jersey Special Assistance Fund which aids residents with emergency financial problems

P.E.O. members are always looking for women who can benefit from our loans and awards. With the exception of international students, each recipient is sponsored by a P.E.O. chapter, thus enabling members to be meaningfully woven into the lives of the students they are helping. More than 57,000 women have benefited from our projects.

We use a Ceremony of Initiation written in the early days of P.E.O. In over 125 years it has undergone few changes. We think it is very beautiful, written in the style of that day. Following our initiation we are loaned a star-shaped gold pin engraved on the back with our name and initiation date. We wear these at each meeting. Each initiate affirms her belief in

God when she accepts her invitation. She takes her vows with a hand on the Bible. The officers at an initiation always wear white. Our colors are white and yellow. At each meeting we have devotions which include our reciting the Lord's Prayer.

Members hold meetings in their homes or other appropriate places. We have 15 meetings required per year; three of these meetings may be designated as Social Meetings. Members memorize an opening song and the Objects and Aims of the Sisterhood. Officers also memorize the Ceremony of Initiation. We always have improving ourselves as a goal, so informative programs are given or planned by members. Husbands or significant others, called B.I.L.s (Brothers-In-Law), and other friends of P.E.O.s are invited to social functions and to our convention banquet.

Our state chapter convention is usually held in May each year, all day Friday and Saturday, with 4-5 chapters cooperating on arrangements and serving as hostesses. All chapters send two delegates to convention and visitors are most welcome. Members are encouraged to attend convention where they can visit with, and come to know, sisters from all areas of the state.

Dues, payable in February, support the ongoing work of the Sisterhood. International chapter dues are \$23 (which includes \$6.00 for Cottey College). New Jersey State Chapter dues are \$14.50. Local chapter dues set individually by each chapter. A new initiate pays an initiation fee of \$25.00. Of this, \$5.00 is a subscription to THE P.E.O. RECORD magazine (6 issues a year).

We do other fun and fundraising activities primarily to benefit our educational projects. Some popular ways and means activities are:

- ☺ Selling bean soup mixes
- ☺ Garage sales
- ☺ Gift basket auctions
- ☺ Selling holiday nuts, fruit, candies, cards, wrapping paper
- ☺ White elephant sales or silent auctions
- ☺ Coffees, teas, luncheons or dinners
- ☺ Plant sales

Women who enjoy being with friends on a regular basis, who are interested in developing their potential talents, and who want to be involved in the education of women will find true sisterhood in P.E.O.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to give you the opportunity to evaluate your P.E.O. membership. *(Have every member of the chapter complete this survey; mail to those who are absent, asking them to return it to the chairman of the Membership Committee. Share the results with the chapter.)*

A. How often do you:

	Regularly	Frequently	Seldom	Never
Attend chapter meetings	—	—	—	—
Serve as an officer	—	—	—	—
Serve on a committee	—	—	—	—
Give a program, fostering growth in knowledge and/or culture	—	—	—	—
Serve as a hostess or co-hostess	—	—	—	—
Propose a name for membership	—	—	—	—
Vouch for a prospective member	—	—	—	—
Contribute to chapter fundraising efforts	—	—	—	—
Participate in social activities of the chapter (B.I.L. parties, luncheons, etc.)	—	—	—	—
Attend the state chapter convention	—	—	—	—

B. How important are the following to you in P.E.O.?

	Extremely Important	Important	Makes A Difference	Makes No Difference
Opportunity to develop leadership ability	—	—	—	—
Associating with women whose basic principles of living are the same as mine	—	—	—	—
A sense of prestige for being known as a P.E.O.	—	—	—	—
Developing enduring and meaningful friendships	—	—	—	—
Opportunities to exercise my talents	—	—	—	—
Improving myself by following the examples set by other members	—	—	—	—
Working in an organization which transacts its business in an efficient manner	—	—	—	—
Participating in an organization characterized by loving concern for one another	—	—	—	—
Belonging to an organization that promotes educational opportunities for women	—	—	—	—
Finding eligible recipients for P.E.O. projects	—	—	—	—

CHAPTER SELF-EVALUATION OF NONPARTICIPATING MEMBERS

If you have a nonparticipating member, there must be a reason. Ask yourselves the following questions. The answers may help you discover the reason and help to eliminate it.

Number of times she has been present the past two years: _____

1. Has she served as a hostess?
2. Has she served as an officer?
3. Has she served as a committee chairman?
4. Has she been visited by the president? When?
5. Has she been visited by the Membership Committee? When?
6. How many chapter members have contacted her personally? When?

Sisters who know her well: _____

She has expressed interest in: _____

Programs she could give: _____

Constructive Comments: _____

PROFILE OF A STRONG CHAPTER

This questionnaire is for your members' responses. Make copies and let all members answer individually – mail to those absent. Please share your results during a chapter meeting.

Place the number which best describes your chapter in the blank before each question.

1=never 2=seldom 3=usually 4=often 5=always

- _____ My chapter has a good attendance range with several members in their 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s and above.
- _____ My chapter brings in one or two new members each year, through initiates and dimitts.
- _____ We welcome unaffiliates into our chapter.
- _____ We have an organized plan for making new members feel welcome and learn about P.E.O. during their first year in our chapter.
- _____ We agree each year on specific chapter goals and work conscientiously toward them.
- _____ Our chapter members willingly assume chapter leadership responsibilities.
- _____ We reach beyond our chapter to other P.E.O.s in our area by participating regularly in hostess group and/or Reciprocity activities.
- _____ We have time to just visit at each meeting.
- _____ Chapter members have the opportunity to really get to know each other through activities outside chapter meetings.
- _____ Our meeting days and times are convenient for our members.
- _____ Our programs are usually thought provoking, or fun, fostering growth in knowledge and/or culture.
- _____ There is a spirit of loving kindness which permeates our chapter.
- _____ We are all willing to try something new.
- _____ We are adequately informed about the P.E.O. projects and are satisfied with the chapter's support of the International projects.
- _____ We regularly sponsor project recipients and keep close contact throughout the year.
- _____ Total 75-64 Excellent, 63-54 Good, 53-40 Average, 39-31 Poor, 30-0 Whoops!!

*If you marked any of these with a 1 or 2, evaluate why you did so.
This may be the starting point for strengthening the chapter.*

TAKING YOUR CHAPTER'S PULSE

A Worksheet for the Membership Committee and/or Officers of your Chapter

Chapter membership: Number of resident members _____
Number of nonresident members _____

Approximate age of oldest member _____
youngest member _____

Average attendance at meetings _____
time of meetings _____

1. What is the average length of your business meeting? Of your program? What do members of your chapter consider a good program?
2. Does your chapter vary time schedules to occasionally accommodate the young mother or the working woman? If so, how?
3. How do you prepare the members of your chapter for leadership? Do the officers of your chapter progress (i.e., from one office to another) in a particular order?
4. How does your chapter deal with the disinterested, nonparticipating member?
5. What special consideration does your chapter give to the member who is physically unable to attend meetings? Unable to pay her dues?
6. Do many unaffiliates come to your community? From whom do you receive their names (their chapter, the unaffiliated herself, the state chapter Membership Committee)? How does your chapter deal with the unaffiliate?
7. When did you last initiate a new member? Invite an unaffiliate to dimit? Accept your last dimit?

TAKING YOUR CHAPTER'S PULSE, continued

As a matter of interest to your chapter, after your local chapter Membership Committee has examined the responses to the preceding questionnaire, "Taking Your Chapter's Pulse", you could compare your responses to these taken in a random survey conducted by the International Committee for General Improvement in 1981.

- ★ Ages in chapters range from 18 to 95.
- ★ The average attendance at meetings is 50% of the resident membership.
- ★ The average length of the business meeting is one hour.
- ★ The average length of the chapter program is one half hour. Chapters feel programs promote participation, growth, and knowledge. Most enjoy the talents of their own members.
- ★ There is an increasing concern about the number of members returning to work, and the consequent difficulty in attending meetings. Many chapters are varying their meeting times to accommodate these sisters.
- ★ Chapters prepare members for leadership through encouragement, participation on committees, and the experience of previous offices. It appears that most chapter officers do not progress (from one office to another) in any particular order.
- ★ The question of how the chapter deals with the disinterested, nonparticipating member was the most difficult for chapters to answer. Some chapters have success keeping in touch with members through personal phone calls and visits. Others have placed these members on the telephone committee. A few chapters print a newsletter informing absent members of the chapter's activities.
- ★ Special considerations given to members who are handicapped or physically unable to attend meetings included: taking the meeting to them, when possible; offering support and encouragement through cards, phone calls, visits and lots of TLC.
- ★ Local chapters are assuming payment of dues for members when necessary.
- ★ Unaffiliates come into most communities where there are chapters, although there are many more unaffiliates in some areas than in others. Names are received from the unaffiliate's chapter, Reciprocity and sometimes the unaffiliate herself makes contact with a chapter. Invitations are extended for chapter meetings and social events and to Reciprocity functions.
- ★ Chapters surveyed have initiated a new member more recently than they have issued or received a dimit. It would appear that a large number of unaffiliates still have not found a new chapter home.

CHAPTER HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Chapter membership: Number of resident members: _____
Number of nonresident members: _____
Total number of members: _____

Age span of members: number between:
18 to 40 _____ 41 to 60 _____ 61 and above _____

Membership growth in last four years:

_____	Initiates	_____	Dimits out
_____	Dimits in	_____	Deaths
_____	Reinstatements	_____	Inactives
_____	Total Increase	_____	Total Decrease

_____ Net Increase or Decrease in membership in last four years

When did you last initiate a new member: _____
When did you last invite an unaffiliate to dimit: _____
When did you last reinstate an inactive member of your chapter: _____

Average attendance at meetings in last year: _____
Percentage of active membership attendance in last year: _____

Geographic area of members:

Number of members living in Chapter City designation: _____
Number of members living up to 20 miles from Chapter City designation: _____
Number of members living over 20 miles from Chapter City designation: _____

Day of meetings: _____ Time of meetings: _____
(morning, afternoon or evening)

Average length of your business meeting: _____
Average length of your program: _____

Core Group of Chapter Workers:

	_____	active resident members
minus	_____	full time employed during chapter meeting hours
minus	_____	college daughters
minus	_____	nonparticipating members
equals	_____	Core Group of Chapter Workers

SETTING GOALS

- _____ Is chapter too small (less than 20 resident members)?
- _____ Average attendance 50% or less?
- _____ Average attendance fewer than 15?
- _____ Age range too high? Too narrow?
- _____ Date of last initiation? No initiations in three years?
- _____ Growth stalled? Less than 1-2 per year?
- _____ Negative net change in membership?
- _____ Small core group (less than 15)?
- _____ Large number of nonparticipating members?
- _____ Number attending 0-2 meetings greater than average attendance?
- _____ Members going inactive?
- _____ Unaffiliates dimitting elsewhere?
- _____ Leadership rests on too few?

Consider each item on the above list of “red flags” thoughtfully in relation to your chapter. If ANY of the items are concerns, bring them to the attention of your chapter. In a chapter meeting you are urged to face them, discuss them, brainstorm possible solutions that will work for you and **set realistic, attainable goals**. Establish a plan of action to accomplish these goals and solicit each member’s commitment and dedication to work toward achieving your chapter’s objectives. It is work, takes time and effort, and needs the cooperation of all your members. It sometimes is a slow process – be patient. Your efforts will be well worth the investment for the future of your chapter.

***“Remember what we will be tomorrow
depends upon the choices we make today.”***

Be flexible...just because “we’ve always done it that way” doesn’t mean you cannot change, even in small ways. For example:

- ★ Is it time to reassess meeting time or day?
- ★ Have you considered meeting all year instead of during the school year?
- ★ Is it difficult to host so many luncheon or dinner meetings each year?
- ★ Would you prefer cheese and crackers to ‘gooey’ desserts?

**Ask the questions
~ evaluate the responses
~ determine the changes that must be made**

Take steps now in planning for the chapter’s vitality ten years from now!

THE NEW STORY OF CHAPTER ____

Write one statement that describes a characteristic of Chapter ____ today. Select a characteristic that you want to build upon in the future.

Write a statement about where you would like Chapter ____ to be with regard to that characteristic in the future. Follow that statement with specific ideas as to how the chapter can move toward that goal.

To achieve this goal, we need to:

- ★

- ★

- ★

- ★

- ★

To help you identify ways to stay connected and energized both as an individual and as a chapter, think about and answer the following questions:

When you are physically exhausted, what types of activities do you look forward to with anticipation?

When you are in emotional doldrums, what lifts your spirits?

What types of chapter activities generate the most enthusiasm? Consider not only meeting topics but activities outside of official meetings.

If you have missed several chapter meetings, what helps you feel connected to the chapter?

What are some ways your chapter could express their support to you?

What are some ways you could express your support of your chapter?

THE CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

What do you love most about P.E.O.?

What would you miss most if you did not have P.E.O. in your life?

What are the strengths of our chapter?

What one thing did our chapter do last year that impacted you the most?

How do you view the current health of our chapter?

Do you see any area of concern that our chapter should be addressing?

What is a possible solution?

Where do you see our chapter in five years?

I wish our chapter _____

DO YOU HAVE THE SPIRIT?

The Spirit of P.E.O. is Friendship

Have you reached out to others by:

- _____ inviting a guest?
- _____ welcoming a visitor?
- _____ contacting an unaffiliate?

The Spirit of P.E.O. is Sisterly Concern

Have you contacted a sister this year to help keep in touch:

- _____ sent a card to someone who is ill?
- _____ telephoned someone who lives at a distance?
- _____ made a plan to meet someone to share news aside from the meeting?

The Spirit of P.E.O. is the Joy of Serving Together

Have you offered to do any of these:

- _____ serve on a committee?
- _____ fill in when someone is needed?
- _____ offered your home for a meeting?

The Spirit of P.E.O. is Usefulness

Are you informed with up-to-date information about:

- _____ Cottey College opportunities?
- _____ our International projects?
- _____ have you helped fund these projects?

The Spirit of P.E.O. Needs to be Nurtured

How can you continue to renew the Spirit of P.E.O.?

- _____ You can attend meetings regularly.
- _____ Think about the meaning of the Objects and Aims in your daily life.
- _____ You can borrow the President's Book and read the ritual.
- _____ Read the projects reports in THE P.E.O. RECORD.
- _____ You can remember the many happy moments spent with your chapter.

P.E.O. is a lifetime investment of You. As you give, you shall receive manifold.

Will you make a point to:

- _____ do one extra thing this year that you have not done in years past? Send one extra card or go to one extra meeting. Take on a 'special P.E.O. project' or newsletter or program. Take an office!

For You, the Spirit of P.E.O. is _____

PROSPECTIVE MEMBER CHECKLIST

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

How did we receive her name? _____

Replied to Form FR/Form FL? _____

First contact: _____

Events invited to/ attended: _____

“Special Sister” to help her feel welcome: _____

Helpful personal information: _____

_____ Invitation to membership sent

_____ “You Are Invited” brochure sent

_____ Pre-acceptance meeting scheduled

Members who will visit: _____

_____ Loan: P.E.O. Constitution, current issue of THE
P.E.O. RECORD, chapter yearbook, chapter Bylaws

_____ Reply received

_____ Initiation scheduled

NEW MEMBER CHECKLIST

Name _____

- _____ Received membership card
- _____ Received Constitution
- _____ Post-initiation meeting scheduled
- Members who will visit: _____

- _____ Received chapter yearbook
- _____ Emblem ordered
- _____ Included in telephone tree, chat line, e-mail list
- _____ Assigned a mentor or “special sister”
- _____ Form H-I-J sent to state chapter corresponding secretary
- _____ Ride offered to next meeting

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR SISTER?

You may have one sister sign at most three blocks for you. Find as many different talents, interests and activities of as many different sisters as you can. There will be a time limit. Work as quickly as you can. Have fun!!!

Volunteers at a hospital	Teaches school	Has a pet (what kind?)	Volunteers at the library	Has a brother
Grows own cut flowers	Volunteers at hospice	Bowls	Can ice or roller skate	Likes to camp
Likes to hike	Has been school board president	Plays tennis	Plays bridge	Grows own veggies
Swims daily	Likes to dance	Plays golf	Exercises daily	Runs own business
Past officer of Chapter ____ (what office?)	Jogs daily	Paints pictures	Makes crafts	Likes jazz

Does own wallpapering, painting	Bakes bread regularly	Can balance own check book	Past president of another club	Plays a musical instrument
Past president of Chapter ____	Bakes cakes and cookies from scratch	Grandmother of ____ grandchildren	Uses coupons at the grocery store	Bakes casseroles
Is a sales person	Sings in a choir	Performed on stage	Walks more than 3 miles/week	Designs or sews clothes
Mom was a P.E.O.	Sister is a P.E.O.	Grandmother is a P.E.O.	Travels abroad	Has been a state chapter officer
Is a native of New Jersey	e-mails	Has a cell phone	Has visited Des Moines	Has been on the NJ P.E.O. website

WHO IS IT?

People needed: one emcee, one P.E.O. chapter

Materials needed: Fact Sheet and pencil for each member, small prizes (optional, e.g. white and yellow jelly beans, daisies...)

How to play: Divide up into groups of three. In each group the members will come up with three unique facts about each group member. Write these facts down on the Fact Sheets provided. Hand these Fact Sheets back to the emcee. The emcee will then read three facts about a chapter member. The chapter member who guesses the correct member described gets one point. At the end of the game, the chapter member with the most points is the winner.

FACT SHEET

.....

Name _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Once a P.E.O.
Always a P.E.O.

New Jersey State Chapter
2003



Once a P.E.O.
ALWAYS a P.E.O.



The Star is Forever
A Guide for the
Inactive Sister



INACTIVE is your status,
But you're still a P.E.O.
And we're waiting and we're hoping
For your return, you know.

Keep this little folder
So you will know that when
You want to say, "I'm ready,"
You can become ACTIVE once again.

All you need to do is WRITE
The chapter that holds your pin.
(It's kept safe for three whole years
Before it's sent back in.)



REQUEST your reinstatement
Don't forget! ENCLOSE the fee.
It's only \$25.00
Then ACTIVE you will be.

You may stay within that chapter,
Old friendships to renew.
Or perhaps a different chapter
Has asked to welcome you.

No matter where you wander,
No matter where you go,
Remember! You're STILL A SISTER,
Though an inactive P.E.O.