

***If We're a 'Best Kept Secret'
It's Only Because We've Not
Emphasized Enough to You That ...***

There is a Difference Between Advertising and Marketing!

Office of General Governor

At the Dec. 7-8 fraternity-wide workshop in Las Vegas, I was surprised to learn our volunteer leaders carry a common misconception: that lodges “may not advertise under any circumstances.” Several times that weekend, I heard: “We’re the best kept secret in town; why can’t we market our fraternity?”

It is important for you, the lodge officer, to understand what you can, and cannot do regarding the advertising of lodge activities, the reason for such rules, and the difference between *promoting our fraternity’s good works* versus *advertising lodge activities*.

Sections 45.2 and 50.4 of our General Laws prohibits the *advertising* of Moose “activities” in a “public medium”- a newspaper, radio station, outdoor marquee, or the Internet – unless dispensation is issued by the General Governor. This applies to lodge activities for members (i.e. dances, meals, etc.). Who so restrictive?

First, in the United States, the IRS prohibits lodges and chapters from advertising member activities to the public in a manner that would infer the public is allowed to attend. Also, if we publicly solicit members, or advertise in a manner implying that we are inviting the public to a member event, we become a public accommodation. We cannot have it both ways – enjoying the benefits of being private, while generating revenue from the public.

Some lodges wish to augment their promotion of member events in the lodge newsletter with an advertisement in the local newspaper. We grant dispensation for this only if the ad copy makes very clear that it is a “members-only” activity.

However, what you can, and *should*, do at every opportunity is to tell the public about the positive contributions to society of your lodge and of the Moose fraternity. Whenever planning a community service or a fundraiser for Mooseheart or Moosehaven, you should inform local news media in an attempt to receive appropriate recognition. These good works are our “products”. We should take advantage of, if not create, every opportunity to market these products.

You certainly do not need permission or dispensation to tell the world about the good things your lodge and fraternity are doing.

(Our Publications Department at Moose International offers a wide variety of materials and guidance to help you work with your local news media toward this end. Call them at 630-966-2229.

To protect your lodge and the fraternity, please remember the following:

- All advertisements must comply with the requirements contained in Section 45.2 of the General Laws.
- A lodge website is a public medium.
- Providing information to the news media, and the public, about the philanthropic work of your lodge and our fraternity *does not* require a dispensation.
- Advertising a community service event involving the public and occurring on lodge property *does not* require a dispensation from the General Governor. The advertisement must clearly state that the function is a community service event or fundraiser.
- Advertising bingo to the public *is* permitted and no dispensation is required. (Because bingo *is* generally required to be open to the public).

Questions? Call us at 630-966-2207.