



Susan Riggle
Grand Council Member

Faith Through the Storm

A young man applied for a job as a farmhand. When the farmer asked for his qualifications, he said, "I can sleep through a storm." This puzzled the farmer... but he liked the young man. So he hired him.

A few weeks later, the farmer and his wife were awakened in the night by a violent storm ripping through the valley. He jumped out of bed and called his new farmhand, but found him sleeping soundly in the midst of the storm.

He quickly began to check things to see what had been damaged in the storm. They found that the shutters of the farmhouse had been securely fastened. A good supply of logs had been set next to the fireplace. The farmer and his wife then inspected their property. They found that the farm tools had been placed in the storage shed, safe from the elements. And wheat bales had been bound and wrapped in tarps. The tractor had been moved into its garage. The barn was properly locked tight. Even the animals were calm and had plenty of feed. All was well. The farmer then understood the meaning of the young man's words, "I can sleep through a storm."

Because the farmhand did his work loyally and faithfully when the skies were clear, he was prepared for any storm. So when the storm did actually break, he was not concerned or afraid. He could sleep in peace.

So that our structure is built to withstand the storm we must educate ourselves and our members. There is a reason for everything in the Moose Organization. They give us every tool we need to help us grow. We just don't use them. We choose to leave the barn door open.

As stated in the Women of the Moose Orientation Guide, Co-workers who have attended a New Member Orientation Program continue to renew their dues year after year. Through this program you can introduce the principles and precepts of the Moose Fraternity. Help them to take pride in knowing the Moose support our young at Mooseheart and seniors at Moosehaven. Educate her on how Mooseheart and Moosehaven may be beneficial to her. You can show the latest DVDS from International Headquarters and what a great opportunity to get to know the officers and committee members of the lodge.

How about the Women of the Moose Resume'? Here she will find the chapter name, address, meeting nights, email address and website. Along with a list of the current Senior Regent, Recorder and Secretary Treasurer contact information. Inside they will find the purpose of our meetings, the Higher Degrees and committees.

Educate her on the condensed history and purpose of the Women of the Moose, the Endowment fund, Mooseheart and Moosehaven. And let's not forget a copy of our "*Mooseheart the Happiest*" song.

The Keys to Successful Membership Retention Guide provides resources and information that will assist every chapter with membership retention efforts. The first objective of the Women of the Moose is "to bring women together in a closer fraternal relationship, to assist in the charitable activities of the Moose fraternity with special attention to Mooseheart and Moosehaven". Inside you will find a list of co-workers most enjoyable chapter meetings such as a Men's fashion show, cookie exchange, guest speakers and many more. There is a list of the reasons co-workers continue to come to meetings. Some of these include obligation, social time, to know what's going on, to be with my friends, receiving hugs, enthusiasm of officers, to eat and want to be involved in the community activities. There are many more but if you take 2 or 3 of these and introduced them into your meetings each time you may see an increase in your meetings. Besides a hug doesn't cost anything and what a wonderful way to bring women together in a closer fraternal relationship.

The Women of the Moose Fun, Fun, Fun book is full of Games, fundraisers and skits. How about a mystery auction box? Have co-worker wrap items and write on the outside a hint of the contents. Members bid on the hint. One hint may be "I am the light unto your path". The item is a set of yard lights. I know of one man who went home with 2 purses. Watching members open their mystery items is the fun part. How about Raising Bail Money? (*photo of Susan in handcuffs*) have to buy a get out of jail free card or get escorted to jail any time someone takes out a warrant for them. Handcuffs add a little bit of humor also. What about some cheap entertainment? Try one of the skits in the Social Quarters. We are always looking for new ideas and the Fun, Fun, Fun book is a good place to find some.

A variety of events can reach many of our members. Educate yourself on what your members want. Do you have a large group of members who like to play pool? How often do you have tournaments? Make it interesting by offering different kinds of pool tournaments like 8 Ball- Solids and Stripes-Cutthroat or Bank Pool. The same can be done with darts, 300-500- double in-double out or Cricket. Corn Hole is a fun game that can also be added to your lodge functions that isn't too costly. It can also be played indoors. Raise a little more money by guessing on who will hit the ceiling first.

If it's legal in your area, a deck of cards can be used for many different games. Poker-Texas Hold'em- Black Jack- Caribbean Stud-or family night card games can include Rummy- Hearts-Crazy Eights and War.

Give the Moose Family Activities and Sports Chairmen Guide Book to the Chairman. Here they will find the responsibilities of the chairmen on the association, District, Lodge and chapter level. There is a Ten Steps to Success and a Theme Events Suggestions list. How about that Shotgun Wedding night or a Hillbilly Hoe Down night? What about a Moose Teen Club? This helps our youth with a safe place to hang out with their

friends. You will find so much more in this book.

There is even a week dedicated to Membership Retention. Did you use this tool to do something crazy like work on Membership Retention? Gather at the lodge for some sister time and call your members. Not only the expired ones but all of them. If you wait until they're expired they feel used. And who likes that? While on the phone invite them. to a Pot Luck dinner later in the week. Have a kids' night with games and prizes.

Keep the door closed on rumors, gossip and bullies. We need to be kind and honest to each other. Tie that rumor down before the wind picks it up and carries it through the chapter like a storm in the night.

The storm comes every April. We know it's coming....but we wait. We wait to use our tools until our membership numbers are too low to make up for our plus 1. We wait until the end of March to see where we stand on membership and then try to make up the difference in April. It could be easy if we just use the tools Moose International gives us. We too should be able to sleep through a storm.

As my 2 year term comes to an end, I'm going kicking and screaming.. But I am excited to make new friends on another part of my Moose journey. The Women of the Moose International Staff are the best of the best. I have them to thank for allowing me to be here before you with more confidence than I ever thought possible. The Boards, the Grand Councils and the Grand Regents I have had the pleasure of working with while on AOF Board and the Grand Council have been the adventure I could only hope you all get to experience. Many people attribute part of their professional growth to the guidance of a patient mentor who challenged them to think differently and open their eyes and mind to different perspectives. I thank all my mentors. You may not even know that you are one of my mentors, but I was watching and I was listening. I hope I can do justice to your guidance. To my home chapter of J-Town #1100 and the girls I call sisters in Kentucky thank you for having my back every time I say "trust me, there's a reason for my madness".

There are certain tools that make every job easier. A hair stylist needs a comb and scissors. A doctor needs a stethoscope. A builder needs a hammer. A farmer needs a tractor. The Loyal Order of Moose needs the Women of the Moose. So we need to use all the tools made available to us. Build a strong structure so you can have faith through the storm.