

INSPIRATION FOR MODERN WOODMEN FRATERNAL LEADERS

# Impact

M A G A Z I N E

SUMMER 2024

## GET SOCIAL

*Fun events not  
focused on food*  
p. 4

*Plan the rest of*  
**YOUR YEAR**  
p. 11

**CELEBRATE**  
*service animals*  
p. 8

Chapter member  
from Illinois



[imakeanimpact.org](http://imakeanimpact.org)



## Bring new ideas TO LIFE

**Fraternal.** When you read that word, what comes to your mind?

I think of members coming together to help one another and their communities. Through the fraternal activities you host each year, you're helping members get the most of their membership at Modern Woodmen. You're providing opportunities for them to volunteer, socialize and learn right in their local town.

The neat thing to me is that **not one fraternal activity is ever the same.** The members, guests, locations, experiences and impact are ever-changing.

This year's national fraternal initiative, Wild About Animals, has been challenging us all to think of new ways to make an impact. Honor an animal shelter volunteer as a Hometown Hero. Ask a local farmer to talk about cows, pigs and chickens for an educational event. Or host a social activity where members interact with kittens and puppies to boost mental health.

Wild About Animals relates back to the basics of fraternalism. And it shows how fun it can be to challenge ourselves to brainstorm activity ideas we might not have tried yet. As you read through this issue of Impact, **think of new ways your members can come together to learn, socialize and volunteer in different settings.**



It could help you attract members who might not have attended in the past.

To get you started, here are three of my favorite ideas I've heard this year:

- **Host a day at the library on a Saturday.** Invite a few characters, like a Disney princess or superhero, to join the fun and read books to kids.
- **Attend a candle-making class.** Members can pick out their favorite scents and take their masterpieces home after the candle has settled.
- **Honor a Hometown Hero** at the local high school football game so the community can help celebrate the honoree's accomplishments.

I'm confident you'll finish this issue with a new idea you can't wait to bring to life!



*Helene*  
**Helene DeVine**  
Fraternal Outreach Associate

### IMPACT MAGAZINE

Official fraternal publication of Modern Woodmen of America.  
1701 1st Avenue, P.O. Box 2005  
Rock Island, IL 61204-2005

#### FRATERNAL ADMINISTRATION

Jason Nickles  
Chief Fraternal Officer and Vice President  
Keri Rursch  
Director of Fraternal  
Karen Mizner

#### FRATERNAL IMPACT

Melissa Gottwalt (manager)  
Helene DeVine  
Hannah Glaub  
Kate Schieffer

#### FRATERNAL SERVICE & PROGRAMS

Karen Dahlstrom (manager)  
Abigail Berntgen  
Cynthia Flores  
Ann Held  
Britney Holst  
Melissa Mayers  
Tammy Mielke  
Martha Nelson  
Amber Nichols

#### IMPACT EDITOR

Julie Fuhr, *Enterprise Communications*

#### IMPACT DESIGNER

Christine Elliott, *Creative Services*

#### Find us on:

f Modern Woodmen fraternal leaders (group)

f @ModernWoodmen

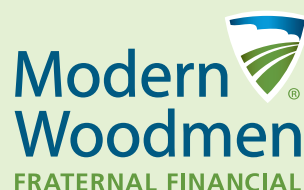
ig @ModernWoodmen1883

yt @ModernWoodmen

x @ModernWoodmen

800-322-9805

fraternal@modern-woodmen.org  
imakeanimpact.org



## Look inside | Summer 2024



- 4 **Forks down!**  
Raise the fun level of social activities.
- 6 **Follow the leaders**  
Borrow these chapter/club-tested ideas.
- 8 **More than a best friend**  
Go wild for service animals.
- 10 **News to use**  
Reminders and updates you need to know.

## Fraternal SHOUTOUT!

### Meet Kate Schieffer, the newest member of the Fraternal Department

**My role:** I'm teaming up with Helene DeVine to provide fraternal training to Modern Woodmen financial representatives. I primarily focus on supporting new reps in their first year.

**My past experience:** I previously worked in both higher education and the nonprofit sector. This new role is an exciting opportunity to bring my expertise to a new audience. The Fraternal Department feels like a perfect fit for me!

#### My belief in community involvement:

Giving back has been part of my life on a personal and professional level for as long as I can remember. Through volunteering and jobs focused on supporting my community, I've learned so much about the hard



work and passion it takes to help every member of a community thrive. I believe we all have an important role to play in making our home communities healthy and happy places to live and visit – from saying hello to a stranger to cleaning a park to sitting on a board.

**A little-known fact about me:** I was a community health volunteer in the Peace Corps from 2011 through 2013. I lived in several rural communities in Cameroon, Africa, working in partnership with their local health clinics to prevent malaria, HIV/AIDS and water-borne illnesses.

**In my free time:** I enjoy hiking and biking with my husband, dabbling in gardening, and spending time with family and friends.





Paint and bubbly



Take a hike



Bowling for a cause



Hockey



Baseball and fireworks

Kallene Faris serves as the activities coordinator for three Colorado chapters. She strives to make social activities as memorable as possible for members.

# FORKS down

Kallene Faris, Colorado, raises the fun level of social activities . . . utensils optional

## You set a limit on activities focused on meals. Why?

**Kallene:** Meals are an easy activity to plan, but they're not exciting or different. And different is what fraternalism is all about. Besides, how many people do you know who will be talking about their free food the next day at work? No one.

## What's your planning process?

**Kallene:** I plan one activity a month. Consistency is key. I like my members to give me ideas of things they want to see and do. I also enjoy helping small-business owners and brainstorming out-of-the-box ideas.

The goal is to come up with an activity you couldn't

do on your own. For example: Everyone can go to the zoo – that's easy. So, I talked to the zoo, and we found a volunteer who took us on a private guided tour. Now that's something you can't do on your own!

I have a list of ideas I'm always working on. And I try to stay relevant, too. Right now, I'm in the process of finding a person to teach us how to make sourdough bread. That's kind of a trendy topic happening right now.

## What are some of the most successful social activities you've had?

**Kallene:** Make a bouquet for Mother's Day. I had a local florist teach us how to make flower

bouquets, and then everyone got to make one to take home. The interesting thing about this activity was that it was mostly guys who came out. It was super cute to see men putting flower bouquets together for their wives.

**Mediterranean diet class.** Our college extension office put on this class for members. They taught us how to eat healthy, and we made hummus and salad dressing to take home. The class filled up so fast that we're scheduling a second one later in the year.

## The hap, hap, happiest Christmas.

This was a spin-off from the movie "Christmas Vacation." All I told members was to pick up a bag from my office for a fun, old-fashioned, family Christmas. I had a cardboard cutout of Clark Griswold set up in my office, so people could take selfies. (One member actually used her picture for her Christmas cards.) The bag was filled with stuff members could do with their families over the Christmas holiday – a puzzle, recipe and ingredients to make Aunt Bethany's Jell-O mold, Santa hats for the entire family, and a jar of jelly. (Those who had seen the movie thought this was hilarious. Side note: I think I bought every box of green Jell-O available in our town!)

## Do you have a favorite memory from a recent activity?

**Kallene:** My favorite activity is always the activity I'm doing at the moment.

Recently, we read a book for the summer. Then on July 12, we had a Zoom event with the author. I teamed up with five other chapter coordinators around the country to put this event together.

We've actually started a five-state chapter event with Zoom activities scheduled throughout this year. Great minds coming together to do really awesome things through fraternalism!

## What's your best advice for other leaders?

**Kallene:** I had a member who asked if we could take a tour of our local fish hatchery. The tour guide called close to the event and canceled. Instead of canceling the activity, we just pivoted. I found a fly-fishing shop that was willing to teach an intro to fly-fishing class at the same time. Not everything goes as planned, but don't give up. There's fun stuff to do, you just have to find it. And members will help you.

## BEYOND THE MEAL

Traditional chapter dinners have a place. However, by exploring alternative social activities, you can enhance the fraternal experience, increase member satisfaction, and attract a more diverse group of participants.

- **Variety and engagement:** Some members are never going to attend a dinner. Diverse activities attract different types of people, keep members engaged and interested, and prevent your events from becoming monotonous.
- **Social interaction:** Activities and experiences can encourage more interaction and bonding among members compared to a seated dinner.
- **Cost:** Activities not held at restaurants can be more budget-friendly, allowing you to allocate funds to other initiatives or more frequent events.
- **Accessibility:** Dining activities could be tough for families with small children, older members, and those with dietary restrictions or allergies.
- **Cultural enrichment:** Visits to museums, art galleries or festivals can enrich members' cultural experiences and provide unique learning opportunities.





### Bonding in bloom

Social activity  
Rock Island, Illinois  
Chapter activities coordinator: John Vander Wal

Chapter 26 (also featured on the cover) gathered at a nearby farm, where members picked flowers, enjoyed each other's company, and went home with beautiful bouquets. Outdoor social activities are a blast all year round. This fall, consider exploring local pumpkin patches, historical sites, parks and other places where members can spend time in nature and with each other.



### Pup cups and soda pop

Social activity  
Plain City, Utah  
Chapter activities coordinator: Lisa Cox

A little rain didn't stop the four-legged fur members of Chapter 10206 (and their owners, of course!) from meeting up at a local soda shop to socialize. The pets even got a pup-cup treat and Modern Woodmen branded bandannas and tennis balls to take home. Pet-friendly events are a fun way to bring member families together in a relaxed atmosphere.



### Sit and stretch

Educational event  
Booneville, Mississippi  
Chapter activities coordinator: Jeannie Tice

Members of Summit Chapter 18351 attended a chair yoga class, held by an organization in their community. Chair yoga is a fun and unique way for those with mobility limitations to reap the health benefits of yoga. Keep an eye out for similar programs offered in your area. They can offer fantastic opportunities to bring members together to learn something new.



### Life on the farm

Educational event  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Club leader: Mark Gunderson

Chickens, cows and turtles, oh my! The kids of Youth Service Club 6715-2 interacted with animals and experienced rural life at a local farm. Ask your members what they'd like to explore or discover. Check local libraries, government facilities, community organizations or your city's webpage for engaging programs for kids. Or, ask a parent for a possible career site tour.



### Not horsing around

Service project  
Ringgold, Georgia  
Chapter activities coordinator: Darlene Suggs

Members of Chapter 13763 helped build a ramp to allow children with mobility challenges to mount therapy horses. Ask local nonprofits if they need volunteers for projects. You don't have to complete a build. They may need help with a variety of simple tasks that members can complete.



### Teacher appreciation

Service project  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Club leader: Ina Sharon Mitchell

Members of Youth Service Club 10475-1 wrote thank-you notes for area teachers and delivered them with a rose and snack. Show your chapter's/club's support for educators now and throughout the year. Consider stocking a supply closet with notebooks, crayons, tissues, etc. Many teachers pay for these items out of pocket for their students.



### Bikes for all

Service project  
Elizabethtown, Kentucky  
Club leader: Tracy Olson

Youth Service Club 12161-3 teamed up with local law enforcement and a nonprofit service organization devoted to providing special bicycles to those of all abilities. Together, they assembled three Amtryke adaptive tricycles. Find out how the kids in your club can connect with others in your community to make an impact.



### Get creative!

Social activity  
Cape Coral, Florida  
Club leader: Carolyn Peplow

Members of Chapter 7175 met at a local business to create home décor projects. Ask members what hobbies they enjoy as you plan upcoming social activities. Look for common interests, such as arts and crafts, sports, music, theatre, exercise, or family activities.





## QUICK DEFINITIONS

- **Service animals:** Dogs (and in some cases, miniature horses) trained to assist people with physical challenges.
  - **Emotional support animals:** Animals that have been prescribed for a person by a mental health professional.
  - **Therapy animals:** Animals that comfort and provide affection to people:
    - In hospitals, retirement homes, nursing homes, schools, hospices and disaster areas.
    - At funerals.
    - With learning difficulties.
- Horses and equine therapy animals also provide services to promote physical and mental health.

They say dogs are man's best friend. Turns out, they can be so much more! According to the National Library of Medicine, service animals can play a major role in increasing psychosocial health for individuals with disabilities or chronic conditions.

The fourth-quarter Wild About Animals focus showcases and supports the amazing role service, emotional support and therapy animals play in the lives of humans and the impact they make in our communities.

Don't have your project planned yet? Consider one of these ideas ...

### Educational event

- Introduce members to the types of service that animals can provide.

- Invite a speaker to talk about:
  - K-9 unit(s).
  - Military working dogs.
  - Horses and equine service animals.
  - Comfort animals.
  - Therapy animals.
- Share how comfort/therapy animals impact our mental health.
- Ask a service animal trainer to provide a demonstration.

### Matching Fund project

- Work with a local organization to raise funds to train, adopt or sponsor an animal.
- Raise funds to purchase protective equipment for a K-9 unit or military working dogs.
- Partner with a local nonprofit,

Last year, Chapter 5412 recognized a comfort dog as a Hometown Hero. Seth visits cancer centers, assisted living homes, schools and more, impacting the Seneca, S.C., community in his own unique way.



## WHAT CAN SERVICE DOGS DO?

- Work in K-9 units, with the military and with fire departments.
- Provide mobility assistance.
- Serve on search-and-rescue teams.
- Detect explosive materials and illegal drugs.
- Offer support to individuals with visual and hearing impairments.
- Alert those with diabetic concerns.

raising funds to provide comfort/therapy animals to those who need them (and/or supplies for the animals).

- Provide funding to place an animal with a new owner when costs are prohibitive.
- Raise money to support a local equine therapy facility.

- Plan a walk-a-thon/5K event to raise funds.
- Schedule a bowling event to support service dogs.
- Hold a western-themed or derby event to support the needs of horses providing service.
- Host a party to celebrate service animals and raise awareness.

### Hometown Hero event

Honor:

- Dog(s) in a local K-9 unit.
- Military working dog.
- Working or retired therapy, comfort or service animals.
- Mental health providers who help place animals.
- Service animal organizations.
- Service animal owner/trainers.

- Equine therapy staff.
- Veterinarians who support service animals.

## THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

In the first half of the year, you helped host **1,024** Wild About Animals activities.

- **86** social activities.
- **128** educational events.
- **655** service projects.
- **43** Hometown Hero events.
- **112** Matching Fund projects.



The transition is complete!

# Banking info for chapter leaders

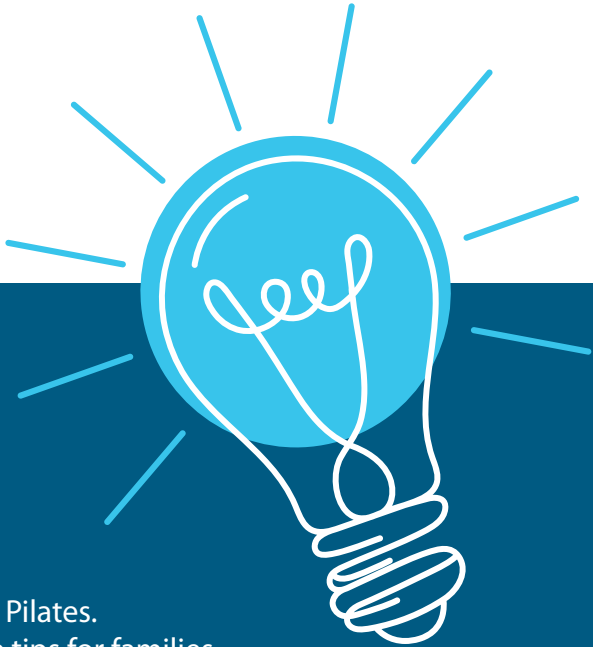
Chapter bank accounts officially moved from Axos to Vibrant Credit Union in June.

Thanks so much for your cooperation during the transition. It was a multimillion dollar test of patience, and chapter leaders from coast to coast couldn't have been more helpful!

**Reminder:** You can write checks from Vibrant and use your Vibrant ATM/debit card as needed. Destroy any Axos checks/debit cards you may still have. They're no longer valid and cannot be used.

- Need help?**
- Email Vibrant: MWACHapters@VibrantCU.org.
  - Call Vibrant: 800-323-5109.

Anytime you have questions, you can also call the Fraternal Department at 800-322-9805.



# 17 ideas for awesome educational events

The Fraternal Department can no longer accept chapter requests for most educational events related to financial topics.\* But, no worries. You can find local speakers to present on a wide variety of other subjects, such as:

- Service animals. (See Page 8 for ideas!)
- Recycling.
- Water or energy conservation.
- Composting or gardening.
- Mental health awareness.
- Healthy habits.
- Red Cross training or CPR.
- Nutrition or cooking tips.
- Cake/cookie decorating.
- Emergency preparedness.
- Local history, traditions and culture.
- Resume writing and job search tips.
- Pickleball or disc golf.

- Yoga or Pilates.
- Exercise tips for families.
- Calligraphy, pottery or painting.

Or, take a tour at a winery, museum, factory or other unique venue. The possibilities are endless. Talk to your members for ideas and get creative!

*\*New, approved educational programs are in the works. However, at this time, reps and fraternal leaders can no longer:*

- *Discuss financial products offered by Modern Woodmen, its subsidiaries or other organizations as educational events.*
- *Use Planning for Life as a discussion guide for chapter presentations.*

*Exception: Modern Woodmen's MoneyMasters program offers five workshop topics representatives can present at chapter educational events.*

# Make this your premier year

## Are you on track?

**Remember, you now have 12 full months to complete the requirements for premier status.** Hitting this goal helps ensure your chapter/club is active and your members and communities are benefiting. It also means more money to make an even bigger impact!

**You could use funds to:**

- **Host a celebration for your members.** Use premier funds to provide a special treat for attendees, rent a bus to drive members to a fun event, buy T-shirts

- or Modern Woodmen swag for volunteers, etc.
- **Complete an additional service project.** Maybe one that goes above and beyond your usual projects. Ask your members for ideas.
- **Help offset future costs.** You could use premier funds to provide a larger discount for members at an upcoming activity.

Talk to your members about the benefits of earning premier. And plan out the rest of your year now to ensure you achieve this goal.

## SEPTEMBER

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ACTIVITY: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

## OCTOBER

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ACTIVITY: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

## NOVEMBER

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ACTIVITY: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

## DECEMBER

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ACTIVITY: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_





**WILD ABOUT**  
*animals*



# *How **WILD** are you this year?*

## **2024 NATIONAL FRATERNAL INITIATIVE**

Furry. Feathered. Scaly. Slimy. Big, boisterous, small, silent . . .  
and everything in between.

Animals play an important role in our lives and our environment.  
Let's show them some love and help some humans in the process.

**3rd quarter:** Go wild for wildlife.

**4th quarter:** Go wild for service animals.

## **Participate and win!**

You could be one of 30 lucky leaders to win a special prize  
each quarter.

Go to the 2024 National Campaign page of the Training &  
Resources site (accessible through **[imakeanimpact.org](https://imakeanimpact.org)**).

Find prize details, tips, supplies and fun ideas for hosting  
projects throughout the year.