

Fulfilling the Masonic Obligation

More than 450 Ohio senior lodge members or family members received services in their homes in 2006 from The Masonic Senior Services I-CARE Program. More than 150 Ohio lodges were served in 2006.

I-CARE Coordinators work with lodges to identify Brethren needing community services and identify resources for providing the services. Needs range from getting transportation to medical appointments or the supermarket to help with yard work or helping people understand Medicare programs.

The new I-CARE program gets lodges directly involved in providing assistance to their Brethren and widows. I-CARE Service Coordinators work with lodges to establish voluntary committees to help those in need. This may include changing smoke detector batteries, taking out garbage, checking on widows, driving members to meetings or decorating their homes for the holidays. They are things that seem small, but mean a great deal to the recipients, who may sometimes feel lonely or overwhelmed.

In turn, it gives lodge members an opportunity to help their own. At the same time, it allows Brethren to fulfill their Masonic obligation.

The comments from lodge leaders who have helped their senior Brethren have been overwhelmingly positive, with the members jumping right in to aid those in need.

As health care changes and people age in place and new generations of seniors come along, Masonic Senior Services and the I-CARE Program will be more in need than ever. By establishing I-CARE committees now, lodges are establishing a system for providing relief for Brethren in need.

Masonic Senior Services was created to serve senior Masons, their wives, widows, Prince Hall Masons and Eastern Star members who desire to stay independent and remain in their homes, but need some outside assistance.

I-CARE stands for Independence, through Coordination, Assistance, Referral and Education. The program saw immense growth in 2006 and is continuing to work to serve Masons in their homes, wherever they may be. ❖

