**News Release: General Lodge Information**

 **Please retype on your Lodge letterhead.**

**NEWS**

 **(M*m/day/yr*)**

**For further information, please contact: (*Name of Lodge Secretary and telephone number*.)**

 Freemasons have been involved in **(*city*)** for **(*#*)** years. **(*Name*)** Masonic Lodge No. **(#)** was formed **(*date*)**, and **(*ex. John Doe, superintendent of schools from 1888-1895*)** was the first Master of the Lodge. It is one of the (youngest/oldest) fraternal organizations in the **(*city or area*)**.

 Freemasonry is the oldest, largest and most widely recognized fraternal organization in the world. Thirteen signers of the Constitution and fourteen Presidents of the United States, including George Washington, were Freemasons. Today, there are more than 2 million Freemasons in North America alone, 90,000 of which are Ohio Freemasons.

 The Mission Statement of Ohio Freemasons is: “Freemasonry provides opportunities for sincere, honest, forthright men who believe in God and desire to contribute to the improvement of their communities and themselves. Through our Masonic Fraternalism, we reaffirm our dedication and unity to become involved citizens who have a strong desire to preserve the values that have made, and continue to make America great.”

Freemasonry is descended from lodges of stonemasons, who built the castles and cathedrals of the middle ages. The tools and objects used by stonemasons have been adapted as symbols in the ritual and ceremonies of modern Freemasonry to teach moral lessons. Known worldwide as a symbol of character, charity and brotherly love, the Square and Compasses design is the emblem of every Masonic lodge.

 Today, Freemasonry is deeply involved with helping people. Masonic related groups in the United States, including Lodges, Shriners, Scottish and York Rite, Grotto and the Order of the Eastern Star, contribute more than $2 million every day to charity. Various college scholarships are also available. ***(Name)*** Masonic Lodge has made contributions of money and time to local charities and organizations through the years. ***(Mention specific charities and organizations if appropriate.)***

 Freemasons are men, age 19 and over, of good character who strive to improve themselves and make the world a better place, and have a belief in a Supreme Being. If an individual is interested in becoming a member, he can begin by contacting a Lodge in his area or speaking to a Freemason.

 General information is available at [www.freemason.com](http://www.freemason.com/). For local information, contact ***(name of Lodge Secretary and telephone number.)***

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