

Increasing Association Membership:

ToolTip #7
Mar. 2003



One of the most difficult functions for many new (and sometimes old) Neighborhood Associations (NA) is to develop and/or sustain good attendance and participation at meetings. The following are a few tips that might help.

TALK TO PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD:



The best way to build membership is by personal invitation!

Although this can be "time consuming", most associations agree that personal contact is sometimes the only way to effectively bring people to meetings. Start a volunteer team of individuals (the more the merrier) who commit to contacting others. Here are three approaches:

1. **Friend to friend:** Ask members to commit to talking to at least one new person and personally inviting them to the next meeting.
2. **Door to Door:** Set up a block system to distribute flyers and ask each 2-3 block "mayor" to knock on doors & personally invite neighbors or distribute newsletters.
3. **Telephone to Telephone:** Establish a telephone tree. (Form in book) At first, ask volunteers to call one to three other neighborhood people and build from there.

CONTACT OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.



Networking will strengthen your NA! Enrolling others to help bring new members is the next best way to increase membership.

Different groups may share goals. Find out what groups are active. Chances are you have common members. Develop these connections.

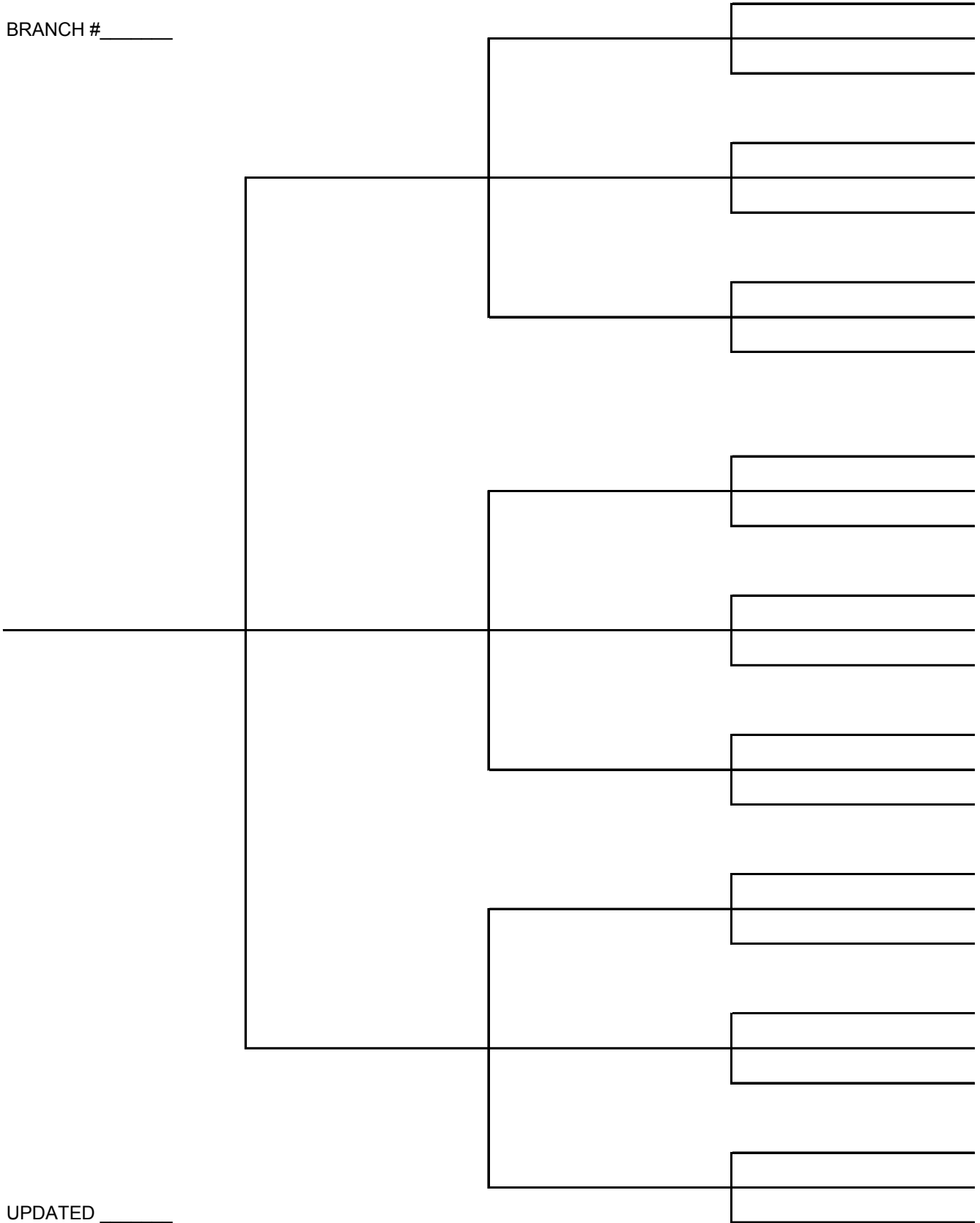
1. **Neighborhood Schools:** Ask to speak at your local PTO/PTA meetings. Or work with the school administration to identify common issues --then hold a joint meeting.
2. **Faith Community:** An informal survey of community organizations suggests a "weak" link between NAs & the faith community. Look for ways to strengthen connections.
3. **Nonprofit Organizations & Special Interest Groups:** Identify these organizations & groups; let them know what you are doing; & look for opportunities to collaborate.

FLYERS: Flyers are good as notices and/or reminders for those who are already attending meetings. Experience has shown they do not effectively bring in new members - (unless there is a big issue affecting all residents). An interesting or topical agenda can encourage sporadic members to attend. Once there, they must leave with the feeling that they have gained something from the meeting and want to come back.

INCENTIVES TO ATTEND: Sometimes you need to provide extra incentives to attract people. Consider having refreshments or offering door prizes. Once you get people there, you have an opportunity to give them a reason to come back—i.e. a well run, effective, interesting meeting with lots of neighborhood camaraderie.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION TELEPHONE TREE

BRANCH # _____



UPDATED _____