

Masons Helping You Protect The Ones You Love

## What would you do if your child went missing?

### MasoniCh.I.P. Ontario – A sigh of Relief for Ontario Parents

#### What could Masons and the Amber Alert possibly have in common? MasoniCh.I.P.!!!!

Ontario Masons reached their first milestone this weekend with their Child Identification Program. Sunday afternoon, in Chesley, Ontario, a village of 1,850 people, about 40 kilometres north of Walkerton, in Bruce County, the members of Forest Lodge No. 393 were holding their first Masonic Child Identification program.

2 year old Lauren, with her 4 year old big brother, and her mom attended the program. Lauren was identified as our 5,000<sup>th</sup> child. Lauren's mom was so pleased at how professional the program is, and stated "this is the best thing anyone could do for children, of all ages". She said that they will be telling everyone they know about what Masons are doing.

No parent wants to believe that the unimaginable could happen to them, though nearly 55 children are reported missing to Police in Ontario every day (164 every day in Canada). According to Canada's "Our Missing Children" network and "Ontario Child Find", a current good quality photo is the single most effective tool in locating a missing child. Parents are encouraged to be prepared by assembling their child's photos and vital information ahead of time. Enter MasoniCHIP Ontario (Child Identification Program) – deemed "one of the most comprehensive child recovery and identification programs in the nation" by The National Center for Exploited and Missing Children--- and brought exclusively to Ontario families by dedicated Masons **free of charge**.



Sponsored by the Grand Lodge A. F. & A. M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario, the MasoniCHIP program consists of five major components – digital photographs; digital video; digital fingerprints; vital child information; and a dental bite impression or Intra Oral Swab for DNA. The photographs, video, fingerprints, and child data are burned onto a C.D. that is compatible with Amber Alert. The dental impression provides a virtual diagram of the child's biting surface, which, like fingerprints, are unique to each individual, and further supplies saliva to provide a DNA sample. Combined, this five part process **provides a dramatic, time-sensitive recovery tool for authorities**.

Parents are urged to gather pertinent information about their child prior to the event such as an emergency contact name, address and phone numbers, distinguishing marks and scars, allergies, medications and the child's height and weight. Security and privacy are of utmost importance. All information is collected on site, processed, and provided to the parent or guardian in an envelope—along with the sentiment of all the Masonic volunteers – "We hope you never need to use it." After each child is processed, the data is deleted and erased from the computer using state-of-the-art software. The only item retained by MasoniCh.I.P. Ontario is the signed permission slip.

The Masonic brethren of Ontario, and their volunteers, are pleased to offer this program to our communities. "We started in August, 2007, and are very pleased to reach this milestone."

*As of October 14th 2009, the total number of kits produced to protect our children is 23,296*

Fraternally,

Bro. Drew Johnston (Spry Lodge MasoniCh.I.P. Committee Chairman)