

IDOS Chapters – The vision

The first thing in setting up a chapter is to understand what a chapter is and the vision of how they help to promote IDOS and Dutch Oven Cooking. Below are excerpts from an IDOS newsletter article that describes this vision.

Many of you know about the humble beginnings of the International Dutch Oven Society (IDOS). It was a wonderful beginning with a lot of hopes and dreams about what it could become. Through much struggle and some times of doubt, it has truly become an international organization that is expanding in leaps and bounds. Why? I believe it is because of the three GF's; "Good Friends, Good Food, and Good Fun." This is what brought that first group of cooks together and this is what we are still about today. We don't want to lose that vision as we grow and expand into the "international" organization envisioned by our founders.

In an effort to address how we keep our heritage and still continue to expand, the IDOS governing board has formalized the process of becoming a Chapter. As we continue through this article and gain an understanding of what Chapters really are, how they are formed, and how they fit into the IDOS vision of the future, I would ask that you remember a couple of things. First, that the chapter vision is to create an avenue that allows people to gather together with good friends, cook some good food, and have some good fun. We want to create an atmosphere that makes our current members and any potential members feel like: while they belong to local chapters they also belong to an international organization that extends beyond their geographical location and that each of us could travel to many different places, and eventually around the world, and still have "Good Friends, Good Food, and Good Fun".

To IDOS, as stated in the Chapter Bylaws, "A Chapter is a small to medium-sized regionalized group of IDOS members in good standing (refer to Article 5 Section 1) who have organized themselves for the purpose of sharing the art of Dutch Oven cooking and the promotion of membership within IDOS and the Chapter." We would like to see the Chapters remain fairly small to medium in number because we want to promote "Good Friends". In the eyes of IDOS, a successful Chapter is a Chapter where members are having fun getting together to cook Good Food, and have some Good Fun. Additionally, a successful Chapter would be one that increases in membership to the point of needing to divide into two chapters to maintain these goals.

Not only is the purpose and hope of IDOS Chapters to keep alive the Good Friends heritage that was started with the formation of IDOS, "It is," once again from the bylaws, "recommended that one of the main functions of a Chapter be the organization of local Dutch Oven Gatherings (called DOGs) within their region and with neighboring regions. Additionally, IDOS may call upon the Chapter to help in promotional activities in their surrounding regions." Many Chapters have decided to do more by raising funds, holding demonstrations, sponsoring cook offs, publishing web sites, etc. but these are not expectations of IDOS. We only expect what is stated in the Chapter bylaws. The bylaws define, "The purpose of this Chapter shall be to support the activities of IDOS through the recruitment of memberships and the promotion of IDOS events in your local region (see Article 1 Section 4). Additionally, the Chapter will supplement the activities of IDOS and provide mutual fellowship for members." Activities outside of these expectations become activities of the Chapter and not IDOS. However, we give our gratitude, appreciation, and encouragement for everyone's efforts, both small and large, to share this great hobby and past-time with others.

We want to organize an association that allows people to gather together to enjoy that old heritage of the three GF's, make all members feel like they belong to a local organization that is a part of a larger international organization and that they would be welcome wherever they were to go. I get goose bumps when I imagine the ability to travel to different parts of the world and know that I have friends there from a local Chapter, because I am a member of my local chapter and we are all members of IDOS.

I hope this has gotten you excited to create a Chapter in your area. If you have any questions, please contact either the IDOS President or an IDOS regional representative (see the list of officers on the Leadership page of the IDOS website).

To “Good Friends, Good Food, and Good Fun” worldwide.