

## Assignment III

Benjamin Franklin was a man of action. He didn't just sit around thinking about his community; he met with his fellow citizens to discuss community matters. The meetings were called Junto meetings and were the first community improvement meetings in the colonies. The Junto was the predecessor of present day organizations.

Today, we have many Civic Action groups that work to make local communities better places in which to live. These groups have names like: The Civic Club, Interact, Rotaract, Rotary Clubs, Key Club, Lion's Club, the YMCA, and The United Way.

Think about the Community that you live in. Can you think of a facility or service that you feel would improve your school or neighborhood? Discuss some of your community's needs with your group members. You will form a civic group of your own that will perform community service. Give your group a name, and then brainstorm solutions for making your neighborhood a better place in which to live.

### **Internet Connection: What can ordinary citizens do?**

You have the power to make things happen in your neighborhood. You have lots of great ideas, but how will you turn your ideas into actions? A group of school children from Florida formed The Monday Group. They work on a new neighborhood project every year. You can read about this group on:

[http://www.farmers.com/FarmComm/AmericanPromise/downloadables/amprom\\_community/amprom\\_06.html](http://www.farmers.com/FarmComm/AmericanPromise/downloadables/amprom_community/amprom_06.html)

A Franklin Quote: "The noblest question in the world is, 'What good may I do in it?'"

## Background Dossier Three

Ben Franklin, Community Leader and Diplomat

Here are some of Mr. Franklin's community contributions:

- Created the first lending library
- Organized the first volunteer fire department
- Opened the first post office
- Saw a need for Fire Insurance, and thus established the first fire insurance company
- Founded the Junto, a club "for mutual improvement"
- Helped to get the streets of Philadelphia paved and cleaned
- Urged that an army be formed to protect the city
- Formed the American Philosophical Society
- Initiated reform of the Philadelphia Police Department
- Member of the Pennsylvania Assembly
- Defended Native Americans in Philadelphia from the Paxton Boys
- Witness in Parliament on the Stamp Act issue
- Established the Pennsylvania Hospital, the first public hospital in the colonies
- Established the Philadelphia Academy and Charitable School which eventually became the University of Pennsylvania
- Gathered intelligence for the Committee of Secret Correspondence
- Witness in Parliament on the Stamp Act issue
- Delegate to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Continental Congress
- Served on the committee of 5 to draft the Declaration of Independence
- Negotiated peace treaty with England in 1783
- Delegate to the Constitutional Convention
- President of the Pennsylvania Abolitionist Society



This fire mark identified homes with Franklin's fire insurance