

New Member Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How does our club fit into the greater Rotary?

A. Rotary is a worldwide collection of over 34,000 Rotary Clubs in more than 200 countries and other territories. Each club is a member of a Rotary District, which is led by a District Governor and his/her leadership team. Districts typically have between 40 and 80 clubs. We are a part of District 6440, comprised of 73 clubs in Northeast Illinois (Chicago's north, northwest and many of the western suburbs). Districts are part of one of 34 Zones. Rotary International is led by a President and 17 member Board of Directors, all of whom are volunteer Rotarians. Each Zone is paired with another Zone, and each pair of Zones elects one of its members to serve on the RI Board.

Q. What is "The Foundation"?

A. **"The Rotary Foundation"** (TRF) is the charitable arm of Rotary International. TRF engages in Humanitarian and Educational programs with the support and participation of Rotary Clubs. Detailed information about TRF can be found in the [TRF Annual Report](#). All Rotarians are expected to support the work of the Rotary Foundation with tax deductible contributions, *"Every Rotarian Every Year"* making a contribution to the Annual Programs Fund. \$100 is the suggested minimum donation, which may be made via Rotary.org through ["Member Access"](#) (an easy and painless way to do this is through a monthly automatic contribution). Or you may make a donation to our club's foundation, designating it for TRF.

The **"Winnetka-Northfield Rotary Charitable Foundation"** (WNRCF) is the 501(c)(3) charitable arm of our club, contributions to which are tax deductible. WNRCF is led by a President and Board of Directors, who manage its activities and projects. WNRCF traditionally makes annual community grants and supports club service projects in conjunction with other charitable organizations like Operation Warm and Kids Against Hunger and TRF. Our club usually has one or more fundraisers each year, and its club members are expected to contribute time and resources in their support, as their circumstances permit.

Q. How do I pay my dues?

A. Quarterly invoices for dues and meal charges are emailed around the first of July, October, January and April. Payments may be made by check at lunch or mailed to the club c/o the Winnetka Community House, or by PayPal (a link is included on the invoice), or by Intuit Payment Network using the link on the emailed invoice. If you have a question regarding your dues, contact the club Treasurer or [Administrator](#).

Q. Is business networking acceptable?

A. While Rotary first started as the first business networking organization, it has evolved over time into an organization focused on fellowship and service with a dedication to upholding the highest ethical standards. Business owners who join Rotary can expect to see their businesses supported by fellow Rotarians over time, as they and their business become known. However, aggressive promotion of

one's business is frowned upon and not in keeping with the core mission of Rotary which is to serve communities locally and internationally while forming lasting friendships. There are several outlets available for the promotion of your business to the network of Rotary, including sponsorships of our club's website and e-newsletter, an e-Yellow Pages managed by District 6440, sponsorship of our club's benefit events, and our weekly "Time to Shine" in our meetings in which one member is given five minutes to speak about themselves or their business. Finally, you may make announcements about your business at our weekly meetings, which are generally "paid announcements" by adding a little more to the Dig 'n Grin pot.

Q. How can I get a list of members?

A. You may find lists of our members on the Admin page of our [website](#). You will need to log on to the site. If you do not know your user id and password, there is a link to have it emailed to you. Once on the Admin page, look in the My ClubRunner links for the View Club Directory and View Club Photo Directory links.

Q. How do I log onto the website? What is on the website?

A. Our website is at www.wnrotary.org. The home page includes stories about our club, a list of upcoming speakers and club events, links to email club leaders and links to other Rotary websites and resources. All club members can log onto the site using the Login link in the upper right. Once in the Admin section, members may update their own profile, access lists of club members, use an email feature to send emails to other club members, and help with club administration. If you do not know your user id and password, there is a link to have it emailed to you.

Q. What is the attendance requirement for members?

A. Our club has a fairly loose attendance requirement. New members are expected to regularly attend weekly meetings, generally maintaining at least 50% attendance. Members are encouraged to "make up" missed meetings by attending another local Rotary meeting (a list of local clubs and meeting times and locations may be found on the [District 6440 website](#).) As life's circumstances change, established members sometimes find they cannot continue to regularly attend meetings, but the wish to continue supporting the club and be a part of Rotary. The club's Board determines when it is acceptable for a member to maintain their membership while not being an active weekly participant in the club.

Q. What's a "Make Up"?

A. Members who miss a weekly meeting are encouraged to "make up" missed meetings by attending another local Rotary meeting (a list of local clubs and meeting times and locations may be found on the [District 6440 website](#) or on Rotary.org.)

Q. How can I get involved and help?

A. All of our club projects and activates have small committees who plan and manage them. Volunteer to help the next time a committee is starting. We also have a standing Membership and PR committee which could use your help. Finally, serving on the Board (a two year term) is a great way to get to know the club, a bit about the District and other leaders in our club. Board elections take place every December for terms beginning in July. Let the President Elect know of your interest in serving on our Board.

Another way to get involved is to bring new project ideas to the club. All of our great projects

happen because one or two members think it's a great idea and propose it to the club's Board and provide the leadership to make it happen.

Q. How is the Club managed?

A. The club is led by a President who serves a one year term, and a Board of Directors who serve two year terms. The Rotary year runs from July through June. Prior to assuming office, the President Elect organizes his/her leadership team, prepares a Club Planning Document and attends Presidents Elect Training (PETS) with PEs from other clubs in the Midwest. Key members of the Leadership Team include a VP/President Elect, Secretary/President Nominee, Treasurer and finance committee, Public Relations, Membership, International, Youth Exchange Officer and committee, and ad hoc committees for our various projects. The WNRCF is managed by a separate President and Board who is elected each July by the club's Board.

Q. How does the club and its foundation decide what charitable work to support?

A. The WNRCF Board ultimately determines which projects and charitable organizations to support, in consultation with the Club's President, Board and membership.

Q. What is a Paul Harris Fellow?

A. To encourage and recognize support of The Rotary Foundation, and to honor Rotary founder Paul Harris, the Paul Harris Fellowship award was created. Rotarians are awarded a Paul Harris Fellow award and special pin for contributing \$1,000 to TRF.

In addition to cash contributions, Rotarians may have "Paul Harris points" contributed in their name by fellow Rotarians or clubs. Once a Rotarian has become a Paul Harris Fellow for the first time, all subsequent cash contributions are matched by Paul Harris points which may be donated to other Rotarians or non-Rotarians to help make them a Paul Harris Fellow.

Each time someone's contributions plus point reaches another \$1,000 milestone, another Paul Harris Fellow award is made by The Rotary Foundation.

The Rotary Club of Winnetka Northfield will donate up to 500 points to any Rotarian who contributes \$200 or more in one Rotary year in order to help the Rotarian reach a Paul Harris Fellow award.

Learn more about Paul Harris Fellowships at Rotary.org.

Questions about Meetings

Q. What are the meeting assignments?

A. Each week, club members participate in Club Service by serving as, Sargent at Arms and Greeter and offering the weekly Invocation and entertaining the club with Dig 'n Grin. The Sargent at Arms assists in setting up the room and returning club property to the "Rotary Closet" after the meeting, and should arrive before noon. The Greeter is the clubs official greeter, collects names of visiting Rotarians and guests to be introduced during the meeting, and should also arrive before noon. Meeting assignments rotate, and are announced in the weekly e-bulletin and in a Thursday morning email sent to all assignees. If you cannot fulfill your service in a given week, you should arrange your own replacement and inform the club President.

Q. Is it ok to leave a meeting early?

A. Leaving during our weekly program is rude, and should be avoided. If you must leave a meeting early, common courtesy suggests you should notify the program speaker during the pre-meeting social time, and leave prior to the start of the program.

Q. What is the raffle all about, and how do I win?

A. Our weekly raffle is another way we raise money for WNRCF and TRF. Raffle tickets cost \$1 or 6 for \$5. If your ticket is the weekly winner, you have a chance to win half the accumulated pot by drawing a card from a deck of cards. If you draw the Ace of Hearts, you win! If not, the pot rolls over to the next week and the card is discarded. If not one wins the raffle by the last week of December or the last week of June, custom is that the pot is donated to WNRCF, the partial deck is discarded, and a new raffle is begun the next week.

Q. What is Dig 'n Grin?

A. Every Rotary club has its own meeting traditions, which can change over time as club leadership changes. Our club enjoys the tradition of "Dig 'n Grin", where a member entertains the club with a few jokes or humorous stories (the "Grin" part), and members in attendance "dig" into their pockets for \$2. These "tips" are collected by our foundation (WNRCF). In recent years, the first \$2,000 collected are forwarded to TRF's **End Polio Now** fund to support the RI led effort to eradicate polio from the world.

Q. What are "paid announcements"?

A. Members who wish to make an announcement that benefits their business or personal interests may do so by contributing a little extra to the Dig 'n Grin pot.

Q. What is "A Time to Shine"?

A. Each week, one member of the club is given 5 minutes during the program to share a bit about themselves and/or their business. This is a way to help every member of the club get to know other members of the club and to provide a formal way for members to promote their businesses to the club.

Q. What are "Happy Bucks"?

A. Each week, members are encouraged to share good news from their lives with the club and to express their gratitude by contributing a little extra to the Dig 'n Grin pot.

Q. I see some people making donations on their birthdays. What is expected?

A. Many members of our club make an annual contribution to WNRCF or TRF on their birthday. In years past, it was customary to contribute \$1 for each year. Members who choose to continue this tradition should feel comfortable contributing whatever amount they deem appropriate. Donations may be designated for a specific WNRCF or TRF project with a note in the check's memo line.

Q. What is the “4 Way Test?”

A. We close all of our meetings by standing and reciting the Rotary Four-Way Test:

Of the things we think, say or do

Is it the TRUTH?

Is it FAIR to all concerned?

Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?

Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

Learn about the history of the 4 Way Test at Rotary.org.

Q. What if I have a good program idea?

A. Our club has a great history of consistently terrific programs. Each year, one member serves as Program Chair (currently [Tom Evans](#)). If you have a great idea for a program, pass it on to the Program Chair or Club President.

Q. What if I have a good project idea?

A. All club projects originate from one of our members. If you have an idea, discuss it with the Club President or member of the Board. Consider attending a monthly Board meeting and discussing it with the board there. If you bring the leadership for a project and it is consistent with the mission of Rotary, history shows that our club will support the project.

If you have another question you would like included in this FAQ, email it to info@wnrotary.org.