

ROTARY CLUB OF VENTURA



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) FOR PROSPECTIVE & NEW MEMBERS

Updated May 1, 2011

1. I have been invited to be a member of the Rotary Club of Ventura. What should I know before deciding to join?

You should read the "Rotary Basics" publication and these FAQ, make sure any questions are answered and be able to make the commitment to become an active participant in the multitude of opportunities for service that Rotary, and especially the Rotary Club of Ventura, provides. You must be willing to join and actively participate in a non-political, totally non-discriminatory organization based on the ideals of service.

2. There are several Rotary clubs in the area. What's special about the Rotary Club of Ventura?

The Rotary Club of Ventura was chartered on May 1, 1919, after being sponsored by the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara. At over 90 years of age and founded only 10 years after Rotary was founded, the Rotary Club of Ventura is the oldest service association in Ventura County with a distinguished legacy of service and membership that has evolved with Rotary overall. The scope of the club's service projects and activities has grown as the club membership has diversified and expanded. Today, the size of the club provides multiple opportunities for fellowship and service at many levels. Each member has an array of choices about how to participate. The club motto is "The Friendliest Club in Rotary."

By now you should have attended several meetings of the club. You should have a general "feel" for the membership and hopefully some insight into what the club does. Each Rotary club has its own "personality," and is noted for what it does, its members and its projects. You should be comfortable with the club and able to meet the responsibilities of being an active club member.

3. How is the Rotary Club of Ventura organized?

The club is governed by a 15 member Board of Directors consisting of:

- a. The 5 club officers: President, President-elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Immediate Past President
- b. The 5 Avenue of Service Directors: Club Service, Community Service, Vocational Service, International Service and New Generations Service
- c. The 5 Assistant Avenue of Service Directors.

Meetings of the Board of Directors are not public meetings but are open to the entire membership. Board meetings are held monthly, on the third Thursday of each month, at 11:45 at the 71 Palm Restaurant. Meetings last from 1½ to 2 hours. New members are encouraged to attend.

All club members are expected to know the Board Directors (know who to ask about what), participate in the operation of the club and serve on one or more club committees.

4. What are the responsibilities of membership?

Every Rotarian is responsible for attendance at the weekly club meetings, for participating in service projects and activities, and for membership recruitment and retention. This involves a commitment of personal resources, both time and money.

The Rotary Club of Ventura maintains and promotes these overall responsibilities by the following commitments of members:

Attendance

- a. The Rotary Club of Ventura meets almost every Wednesday. Meetings begin at **12:00 p.m.** and end at **1:30 p.m.** **You are expected to remain in attendance for the entire 1½ hours.** However, there may be a rare instance where you have to leave early. In such a case, it is courteous to introduce yourself to the speaker or those involved with the program and apologize for your early departure.
- b. Regular attendance - The club strives to maintain a high level of attendance, between 85 and 100%. Unless a member has a high percentage of attendance, service to the club cannot be provided, nor may that member receive the benefits of fellowship that are the foundation of Rotary membership. **Four (4) consecutive missed meetings or missing forty percent (40%) of the meetings over a six (6) month period will result in a possible loss of membership.**
- c. If, for business or health reasons, you cannot attend the regular meeting, you may make-up at any Rotary club in the world. However you must attend at least thirty percent (30%) of the meetings in a six (6) month period at our club. A directory, listing all the Rotary clubs in the world, is available on the Rotary International web site (www.Rotary.org). Nearby Rotary clubs and their meeting times and places are listed on the Rotary District 5240 web site.
- d. Make-ups are strongly encouraged but must be made no more than fourteen (14) days before or after your missed meeting. Make-ups at other Rotary clubs always involve an embrace of fellowship and often an educational and culturally enriching experience. With over 33,000 Rotary clubs meeting every week, and with the ability to make-up on line, there should be no reason for missing a make-up. Also, attendance at a club Board meeting and participation in many of the club's projects and activities qualify as a make-up.
- e. If you cannot meet your attendance requirement you should request a leave of absence from the Board of Directors explaining the reason for your request and indicating the length of the requested leave of absence. Please talk with the club secretary before requesting a leave of absence.

Service

Every member is expected to become involved in one or more service projects supported by the club and to become involved with each of the Avenues of Service: Club, Community, Vocational, International and New Generations.

All activities are to meet the object of Rotary and the Four-Way Test. (see the "Rotary Basics" publication.)

New members of the Rotary Club of Ventura are given a "Red" temporary identification badge. To gain a "Blue" permanent identification badge new members, new to Rotary must complete the attached "To Achieve Your Blue Badge" requirements. New members are encouraged to complete these requirements and gain their Blue Badge within a year of becoming a member. The Blue Badge requirements are intended to encourage new members to become involved with and knowledgeable about Rotary. They are not punitive or mandatory but do reflect your commitment to being a Rotarian in the Rotary Club of Ventura.

Membership

Rotary relies on its ideals, fellowship and the service efforts of each club to sustain membership. However, it is the responsibility of each Rotarian to sustain and enhance membership in Rotary by encouraging others to participate in service projects and activities and by learning about the objectives and value of Rotary. Each Rotary member is encouraged to constantly be alert for those individuals who demonstrate the ideals of Rotary and invite them to be prospective Rotarians.

Newcomers

All new members of the Rotary Club of Ventura who have never been in Rotary before are expected to attend at least six of the monthly, hour-long Newcomers breakfast meetings. Attendance at least six Newcomers meetings is also one of the mandatory requirements for receiving a Blue Badge. These meetings are held on the fourth Friday of the month at the Crowne Plaza's C-Street Café from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Until you attend at least six Newcomers meetings the cost will be billed to you in your quarterly statement whether you attend or not. The meetings are designed to provide you with ongoing information about our club and Rotary in general. You may also use this opportunity to become better acquainted with the other new members in the club. Attendance at Newcomers meetings counts as a make-up if you cannot attend a regular meeting.

5. How much does it cost to be a member of the Rotary Club of Ventura?

Overall you should expect your membership in the Rotary Club of Ventura to cost at least \$1,500 annually (at least \$375 per quarter). About 45% of this cost is for the weekly meeting facility and meals, correlating with Rotary's fellowship roots. The rest is for dues, contributions to both the Rotary Foundation and the Julius Gius Memorial Rotary Foundation, a foundation established by our club for local charitable giving, and social events. Note that the costs for the first year of membership are higher due to the \$100 Rotary initiation fee charged by Rotary International and the costs of for at least six Newcomers meetings.

Each club member receives an invoice for his or her charges on a quarterly basis, usually within 45 days of the close of each calendar quarter. Invoices are for charges incurred during the prior quarter and are due upon receipt, especially as they are for charges already incurred. There is no grace period. Payment may be made by check or credit card, but those who pay by credit card are encouraged to pay an additional \$10 to the Julius Gius Foundation to offset the costs of processing credit card payments.

A sample of a typical quarterly invoice is attached. Also attached is a copy of a spreadsheet providing a detailed listing of the costs and an explanation of each charge. Note that for new members there is a \$100 initiation fee and also the costs of the required Newcomer's Meetings.

Costs of membership, and especially contributions to the Rotary Foundation and the Julius Gius Memorial Rotary Foundation, may be tax deductible. Members are encouraged to consult with their own tax advisor about the tax status of each component of the costs of membership.

6. What is the Julius Gius Memorial Rotary Foundation?

The Julius Gius Memorial Rotary Foundation is an independent non-profit corporation established and supported by the Rotary Club of Ventura. The JGMRF receives and administers funds that support Ventura County based educational and charitable organizations. Julius Gius was a long time member of the Rotary Club of Ventura and publisher of what is now the Ventura County Star newspaper. The Board of Directors of the JGMRF is comprised of current and past officers of the Rotary Club of Ventura. Members of the Rotary Club of Ventura contribute to the JGMRF as a part of their membership.

In June 2009 the JGMRF awarded \$1,000 grants to eight local non-profits and schools and the following major grants:

- Museum of Ventura County - \$10,000. A commitment for the next 5 years for a naming opportunity in the new and expanded facilities. It is anticipated that many other Rotary clubs in Ventura County will participate.
- Turning Point Foundation - \$10,000. For the River Haven Homeless project.
- City Corps, Ventura - \$10,000. To assist with hiring an executive director.
- Ventura Boys & Girls Club - \$20,000. For the remodel of the kitchen at the Addison Center.
- Ventura Botanical Gardens - \$15,000. Matching grant toward the first phase of the gardens in Grant Park.

7. Why will I be assigned a mentor?

Before or shortly after your induction you will be assigned a mentor. Your mentor is the person responsible for helping you meet the Blue Badge requirements within

your first year in the club. Your mentor may be your sponsor or another member who has agreed to be your mentor. Your mentor can also provide information about the operation of the club and the many diverse projects we support and that are supported by Rotary International and the Rotary Foundation. You should take the initiative to meet with your mentor for lunch (or coffee, etc.) to discuss your Rotary experience and progress toward obtaining your Blue Badge.

8. How can I find out about Rotary on the Internet?

The Internet has become the hub for information and Rotary is no exception. Each member is given information about how to access the "members only" portion of the club web site. If you need help, ask the club secretary or seek assistance from the club web master (or ask your mentor). As soon as possible you should log on to the club website, create your own password and check out the information in your profile to make sure it is accurate. The club web site contains a considerable amount of information about the club, including a complete list of members and contact information. You should check it out regularly.

In addition to the club web site, the Rotary District 5240 web site and, especially, the Rotary International web site contain a wealth of information. Check them out!

Rotary Club of Ventura: [http:// www.venturarotary.org](http://www.venturarotary.org)

Rotary District 5240: <http://www.rotarydistrict5240.org/>

Rotary International: <http://www.rotary.org/>

9. There seems to be a lot of jargon and acronyms. What does it all mean?

Rotary, like any large organization, has its share of jargon and acronyms. This carries through to the club level too. To help decipher things please refer to the attached "Glossary of Terms."

