**New Member Information**

Rotary Club of Madison, SD

“Service Above Self”

W

elcome to Rotary, the greatest service organization in the world! Rotary is a global organization with more than 34,000 clubs in over 200 countries. Most people only know Rotary as a service club in their area and though they know Rotary clubs are in many cities and towns in the US, they don’t necessarily know that it’s an international organization with an amazing reach and with an amazing power to Do Good in the World.

Rotary was started in 1905 by Chicago attorney, Paul Harris. His goal was to bring ethical professionals and businessmen together to provide a network that provided fellowship and friendship. They named themselves “Rotary” because at first they rotated their weekly meetings to each other’s offices. The group soon decided they needed to have a purpose beyond that and they soon began doing local service projects. Within ten years the organization had spread across the United States. Serving others continues to be the focus of Rotary today, as is noted by Rotary’s motto: Service Above Self. One of Rotary’s major international projects is the world-wide elimination of polio through its PolioPlus program, a program started in 1985. Although polio has been eliminated in most of the developed countries, it is still a serious problem in underdeveloped nations and nations experiencing major conflict. Rotary focuses on six broad types of projects: 1) Maternal and Child Health, 2) Basic Education and Literacy, 3) Economic and Community Development, 4) Water and Sanitation, 5) Disease Prevention and Treatment, and 6) Peace and Conflict Prevention/Resolution.

Ethics is a fundamental principle of Rotary. Those who join Rotary basically agree to do their business and live their lives according to Rotary’s Four Way Test of the things we think, say, or do: 1) Is it the truth? 2) Is it fair to all concerned? 3) Will it build good will and friendship? 4) Will it be beneficial to all concerned? Two things Rotarians are not allowed to discuss at Rotary meetings and activities are politics and religion. Because of this rule, Rotary is able to carry out service projects in more countries around the world than can the United Nations.

Now that you’re thinking about to joining the Rotary Club in Madison, SD, what can you expect? What are the costs? What are the activities and opportunities available to you?

**Organization:**

Our club and others in our geographic area are part of a district, led by our district governor. Districts help clubs connect to each other and access Rotary resources. There are around 530 districts, and these are organized into 34 zones. Each zone has about the same number of Rotarians. The Rotary Club of Madison, SD, club number 1455, is part of Rotary District 5610. Our district is made up of all the clubs in South Dakota, five clubs in Minnesota, eight clubs in Iowa, and one club in Nebraska. We have 43 clubs with just under 2000 members in our district. District 5610 is part of Zone 27 which includes part of Idaho, Montana, South Dakota, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, part of Nebraska, part of Oklahoma, Kansas, New Mexico, and part of Texas.

**A Typical Meeting of the Madison Rotary Club:**

***Location and Meal:*** Locally, in the Madison, SD, club, we meet every Monday noon (we don’t meet on Monday holidays) for one hour at Nicky’s Restaurant. We start with a meal ($7.00 per person billed monthly).

***Weekly Drawing:*** While we are eating, a couple of small plastic bowls will be circulated around the table. Each person puts his/her name and one dollar into the money bowl for our weekly drawing. This money is our dues because the Madison club does not formally collect dues. If a member is absent, the treasurer adds a dollar to his/her bill for each absence.

***Call to Order:*** At about 12:20 or so, the meeting is called to order when the president rings the bell. We stand to say the Pledge of Allegiance; then we say Rotary’s Four Way Test, followed by the invocation.

***Fines:*** To collect additional funds, our club has weekly fines—and every member at the meeting is fined in one way or another, so you’ll need to bring at least $2.00 to every meeting ($1 for the drawing and $1 for the fines). Fines are done in good humor and make contributing more fun.

***Rules of the Drawing:*** We have the drawing using the names that were placed in the plastic bowl during the meal. The person whose name is drawn has the chance to draw the black marble out of a bag that starts out with 13 marbles: one black and twelve clear ones. However, if the person was absent from the meeting the week before, s/he forfeits the chance to draw and one of the clear marbles is removed from the bag. If the person was in attendance the week before and draws a clear marble, that marble is removed and, the person whose name is drawn the following week has fewer marbles from which to draw. Some people who were absent the week before don’t want to put their names or money in the drawing because they have no chance to win. These are our dues, so everyone is expected to put in a dollar anyway—besides, it adds to the fun! If the person draws the black marble, s/he wins $5.00 for each clear marble that has been discarded.

***Club Business:*** Items range from announcements to requests for funds or help on various projects. Most club business is handled by the Board which is made up of the club officers, the past president, and committee chairs.

***Funny videos:*** One of our members has taken on the task of setting up a computer and providing a humorous video that may last from 30 seconds to a few minutes.

***Programs:*** Following the video is our program, usually someone in the Madison area who can tell us about their business or a project they may be involved with or any other topic that might be of interest to the club. Programs are arranged by the members, based on alphabetical order.

***Adjournment:*** Meetings generally end right at 1pm or shortly before. If we happen to have a program that lasts beyond that 1pm time, those who have appointments or other commitments just quietly leave.

***Note:*** Different clubs have different ways of running a meeting. Some clubs sing; some play bingo, some have “happy dollars,” some are very formal, but they all have the same Rotary ideals.

**Costs for Members of the Madison Rotary Club**

***International dues*** are $55 per year (assessed in semi-annual increments)

***District dues and fees*** are $45 per year (assessed in semi-annual increments)

***Informal club dues and fees*** are about $90 per year (assessed incrementally each week)

***Meals*** are $7 per week (assessed each month)

***Football books***: $50 per member (each member is expected to purchase two books at $25 each); the income funds DSU scholarships. Members can sell the books to anyone they choose or they can keep the books for themselves. Each week one of the books wins $50 and at the end of the football season, the names of three of the book owners are drawn and winners receive $50, $75, or $100.

***Rotary Roses:*** $75 per member; each member is expected to buy or sell $75 worth of roses coupons (5 of them for $15 each).

***Golf Tournament:*** $50 per member or participate in the tournament or work at the tournament or some aspect of the event.

***District Foundation Raffle:*** $100 per member (each member is given 10 tickets--$10 each—which the member can either keep for him/herself or sell the tickets to others; the $100 counts toward a Paul Harris Fellow award)

The ***total amount*** you are responsible for over the course of the year is $465 if you purchase everything yourself; this amount does not include the meals you eat. If you sell the raffle tickets, the football books, the roses’ coupons, and work at the tournament, the cost is $190 per year along with meals.

**Organization of the Madison, SD, Club:**

The Madison Rotary Club is presided over by a president who serves a one year term starting on July 1. Other officers are the vice-president, the secretary, the treasurer, the sergeant-at-arms, and chairs of committees: membership, foundation, and youth exchange. Other committees that the club may have, but which Madison does not, are community service, vocational service, international service, public relations, and new generations.

**Organization of District 5610:**

District 5610, which is divided into nine geographical areas, is led by a District Governor (DG) who serves a one year term starting on July 1. Other executive officers are the District Governor Elect (DGE), the District Governor Nominee (DGN), the treasurer, the secretary, the Foundation Chair, and past district governors (PDGs). The District Governor is assisted by nine Assistant Governors (AGs) who act as liaisons between the governor and the clubs in each of the nine areas. Other officers are chairs of committees which are the same as on the club level: Membership, Public Relations, Foundation, Grants, Rotary Youth Exchange, Community Service, Vocational Service, New Generations, and International Service. Other committee chairs on the District level are Vocational Technical Training Teams, Annual Fund, Permanent Fund, Polio Plus, Peace Fellowships/Scholarships, Finance, Stewardship, Friendship Exchange, Fellowship, and more.

**Local Service Activities:**

The Madison Rotary Club serves the Madison community by contributing to a variety of the community projects, such as United Way, the Domestic Abuse Shelter, the Food Pantry, Bethel Transportation services, as well as others. We also at least once a year fund and serve The Gathering, a weekly meal ministry at the Methodist Church. We distribute Meals on Wheels for the month of December, and we help the Food Pantry with their Christmas deliveries. We decorate a tree at Smith Zimmerman Museum for their annual fundraiser. We select three area students to receive a $500 scholarship to Dakota State University

**Local Fundraising Activities:**

The official Rotary year begins on July 1 of each year. In the summer we conduct the Donnie Gross Memorial Golf Tournament. The tournament is held at the Madison Country Club and is our largest fund raiser. Every member is expected to contribute and/or participate. Profits go to local projects.

In late August we buy/sell Football books. The cost of the books and drawing is funded by advertising. The sales of the books are used to fund the DSU scholarships. Each week one of the football books is a winner of $50. The winning book is based on the score of the Sunday night football game. The club secretary contacts/sends the winner his/her winnings.

In October we sell Rotary Roses. Each member is expected to sell (or buy) at least five dozen roses at a cost of $15 per dozen. The roses are purchased through the floral shops in Madison; each year a different shop provides the service. Rotarians sell coupons about a month before the roses are available for pickup. Buyers pick up the roses the first weekend of November by presenting their coupon to the floral shop. Rotarians work at the floral shop to distribute the roses. Funds often go to Rotary’s PolioPlus project, but can be used for local projects as well.

In February we sell the District Raffle tickets. These come in $100 booklets at $10 per ticket. The raffle prizes, valued between $200 and $500, are donated by each club in the district. The raffle tickets are drawn at the annual Present-Elect Training Seminar which is usually held in late March or early April. The funds from these ticket sales go the Rotary Foundation, to which clubs and districts can apply to get grants for large projects. Rotary International wants every Rotarian every year (EREY) to contribute $100 to the Rotary Foundation. It’s through the Foundation that Rotary can provide the greatest service to the greatest number of people.

**Your Rotary Pin:**

Every Rotarian around the world has a Rotary pin. The typical pin is a Rotary Wheel with a cog in the middle showing that it’s a working wheel, not an idler. Every year the President of Rotary International develops a new theme and a theme pin which contains the Rotary Wheel. Subsequently, each year the new District Governor distributes those theme pins to club members around the district, thus giving you a variety of choices of Rotary pins to wear. Regardless of which Rotary pin you choose, wear it with pride, and be sure to wear it at every Rotary meeting and activity. The Rotary pin is one of the easiest ways to recognize fellow Rotarians during your travels.

**The Rotary Foundation:**

The Rotary Foundation and Rotary International are two different entities. Dues are sent to Rotary International and those monies fund all the expenses of Rotary. Money that is contributed to the Rotary Foundation is held and invested for three years. At the end of the three years, 50% of the money that the clubs in each district contributed comes back to the district in the form of a grant that the district can then use to fund whatever grants the district’s clubs apply for. The remaining 50% stays with the Rotary Foundation and any club or district around the world can submit a grant for those monies, so long as the grant is for $30,000 or more and fits one of Rotary’s Six Areas of Focus: 1) Maternal and Child Health, 2) Basic Education and Literacy, 3) Economic and Community Development, 4) Water and Sanitation, 5) Disease Prevention and Treatment, and 6) Peace and Conflict Prevention/Resolution.

Rotarians, as noted above, are highly encouraged to contribute a minimum of $100 per year to the Rotary Foundation. Every Rotarian Every Year (EREY) is a program carried out by many clubs around the world. Many clubs in District 5610 have the treasurer collect an extra $10 each month from each member, which is then sent to the Rotary Foundation. Once a Rotarian has contributed a total of $100 to the Foundation, he/she becomes a Paul Harris Fellow and receives a special pin denoting that status. Rotarians who agree to contribute $1000 every year become members of the Paul Harris Society, are honored by the District at the annual Foundation Dinner, and they receive a metal ribbon to attach to their Paul Harris pin.

**District and International Opportunities:**

Those who wish to become further involved can do so in many ways. District committees are always in need of volunteers. See the list in the District 5610 Organization sections if you are interested in any of those areas.

If you wish to be involved on an International level, you can do so either as part of a service project (a National Immunization Day, for example, when volunteers get together to distribute polio vaccine to a particular place, such as a city in India) or as part of a Vocational Training Team to teach someone in another country how to do a particular skill (such as building a well, learning to sew, maintain a piece of machinery, do physical therapy, etc.) or you can travel for fun as part of the Friendship Exchange or a Fellowship activity.

You can learn about District 5610 at [www.rotary5610.org](http://www.rotary5610.org) and you can learn about the Rotary International organization at [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org).