

**ROTARY MEMBER RETENTION**  
**PDG Vickie Randel**  
**District 5710 Foundation/Membership/Leadership Seminar**  
**August 8, 2009**

- Recruit new ROTARIANS, not just new members! No point is more important than this. We don't want bodies or numbers – we want committed, dedicated, service-minded people, like you!
- Orient them properly before they are inducted, so they know what Rotary is, what your club does, and what will be expected of them once they've joined.
- Educate them about Rotary. The more people know about Rotary, the more they love it.
  - Do you know when and where Rotary was founded, and where it is now, in the world? Do you know how many Rotarians there are world-wide?
  - Can you name three Rotary programs funded by The Rotary Foundation? Can you name three that are not?
  - Do you know how money gets to The Rotary Foundation, and what becomes of it after that?
  - Do you know the Four Avenues of Service, The Four Way Test, and the Rotary motto?
  - Do you know what a Sustaining Member of The Rotary Foundation is?
  - Can you tell new members where the next RI annual convention will be?
  - Do you know the web address for Rotary International and for our District, 5710?

If you can't answer yes to all these questions, educate yourself, and be sure your club members are educated, as well. (Many resources are readily available and easily accessible, through the District and RI.) Understanding and knowing about Rotary is too valuable and effective a retention tool to be overlooked.

- Engage new members, early and often. Get them on committees, get them involved, get them acquainted, get them busy.
- Respond to a diversity of interests, causes, desires, and motivations. One service project per year won't cut it. You need several, of different types, scope, and function.
- Encourage family involvement. Be sure members know that it's great to involve their age-appropriate children and their spouse, partner, or friends in service projects. Have social events for the family, not just the members. We are the Family of Rotary.
- Encourage participation in all district events. We have to get outside our own clubs to truly experience Rotary. Have you ever attended a District Conference or Foundation Banquet? If not, why not, and when will you? Lead by example.
- Plug them in to the District website, for information and a sense of connectedness.

- Have a mentoring program. Stay close to them until they fully understand why they are there. Assign a seasoned and knowledgeable member to every new member, for at least six months after they join.
- Create the kind of club environment and activities that you can be proud of, and that you want to share. View your club objectively. If you weren't already in it, would you make the decision to join? If not, help your club create the environment you personally would find appealing as a new member.
- Review your meeting practices and habits. Are they still appropriate and meaningful, in today's world? Can you add or discontinue anything that would make the meetings more broadly interesting and relevant? Do you have to meet when you do? Do you have to have a meal, and if you don't now, should you consider adding one? Is your meeting place conducive to productive and enjoyable meetings? Are your club agendas broadly appealing and inclusive?
- Review the cost of membership in your club and be sure it is appropriate and necessary. Don't be afraid to charge a fair price for membership – there is perceived value in the cost of things. But, don't make it any more costly than it needs to be.
- Focus on what Rotary really is – what Rotary really does. It's NOT about the food!.....It's about service and fellowship.
- Reaffirm their decision to join, time and again. Make it worth their time, effort, and money.
- Have fun!! Make your meetings and club activities bright spots in your members' days. There aren't many things more fun than creating a better world, while having a good time among friends.