

Member Engagement: In-Meeting Projects

In-meeting service projects are a great way to increase member engagement.

When planning your service projects, consider:

1. **Budget:** Are there any costs associated with these projects?
2. **Timing:** Projects must be short and achievable in your meeting timeframe.
3. **Hands-on-Deck:** Will members all have a role in the project? Is there enough to do to allow for everyone to participate?
4. **Beneficiaries:** Who will receive your completed projects? How will the items get to their intended destination?
5. **Clean-up:** Be sure to allow for clean-up time, or ask a few to stay later. Bring your own trash bags so as to not overwhelm your venue.
6. **Set-up:** How will you transition from your meal to the project (ie: clean off work space, set up the project, etc.)?
7. **Invite guests:** Project meetings are the perfect time to invite potential members!

Some Projects to Consider

Club Service Day: Update all of your banners with new flags, Paul Harris names, personal recognition, website bios, and club-based items.

9/11 Service: Skip a meeting and deliver breakfast, lunch, and dinner to your community first responders on September 11th.

Safety Kits: Build safety kits to highlight trick-or-treating safety. Deliver them to the police and elementary schools for Halloween.

Sox for Vets: Many clubs collect socks for veterans. Build your club's collection boxes and let members get creative!

Holiday Cookies: Ask all members to bring in 2 dozen cookies. Have members separate and vary the cookies into appropriate portions, label with a sticker and deliver to Elder Services.

Warm Kits: Create a packing line and stuff resealable bags with items to keep homeless people warm in the winter including lip balm, hats, gloves, socks, mylar blankets, dental supplies, and more. Deliver to your local shelter.

Party Bags: Many clubs donate food items to the food pantry, but what do food pantry clients do when they want to celebrate a special occasion? Decorate and pack birthday party bags complete with table cloths, party supplies, cake mix, candles and frosting!

Project Linus: Pre-cut fabric for no-sew blankies and let your members tie the knots. Deliver to your local Emergency Room or contact Project Linus to find your local chapter.

Another Blanket idea: 2 yards of fleece, one a plain color and the other an uplifting scene (flamingo's, race cars, water scene,...). Match the two fleece patterns together, pin to keep in place. Cut a 5" square off each corner, cut the sides 1" apart and 5" deep to make flaps that can be ties together. Do the prep work before the meeting and have members tie the flaps during the meeting to make full size blankets. These are welcome in your local oncology departments to keep the patients warm and upbeat.

Happy Birthday: Celebrate your club's birthday with a food drive. Ask members to bring in an item. Use the time to package and sort the items by category and deliver to your local food pantry.

Bathroom Kits: Similar to the warm kits, pack bathroom and toiletry supplies for local shelters including hygiene products, flip-flops, soaps, and shampoo.

Paracords: Learn and teach members how to make paracord bracelets and deliver them to your local Veterans Services Agent.

Herb/Veggie Starter Kits: Ask members to bring in 1 packet of seeds for their favorite herb or vegetable. Members can decorate 4"-6" clay pots with acrylic paint (it dries fast) and seal with Modge Podge. Deliver the seed starter kits with potting spoil to a local summer camp and have the kids plant their own gardens.

Project Labels: Does your club do a dictionary project? How about a book donation? Use club time to place book plates on the inside covers

Valentines for Troops: Bring in markers, stickers, stamps and all kinds of art supplies. Ask members to personally create a Valentine for our active duty service men and women with a personal note. Don't forget the envelope and "Made with love by Rotary" sticker to seal it! Send them by mail to HugsforSoldiers.org.

Home-Made Soup: Ask members to bring in the recipe and ingredients to make a home-made soup (including the fresh vegetables). Pack them neatly and deliver to the Senior Center or Food Pantry for their clients to take home that day.

Home-Made Soup: You can make a Dry soup mix, needing just turkey and water, seal enough of this soup mix for an after Holiday dinner, label with the ingredients and Donated by your Rotary Club, and give to the Food Pantry a few weeks prior to the Holiday. Contact Larry if you would like a recipe.

3 Cheers: Make hand-made signs supporting your town's upcoming event, Special Olympics, Relay for Life, road race, etc.

Youth Book Project: Get some used childrens books, in great shape, label the inside cover with a Donated by your Rotary Club, state in large letters **We encourage you to bring this book home and read to your child.** Place them in public locations, like a laundromat, where young families might spend time.

You can also make this a contest to find the best books, the most books for under \$10.00, and give a coveted award at the meeting.

Ramp Up the Fun

Ramp up the fun in your club by hiring or inviting a speaker to teach the members a new skill or talent such as:

soap making	ancestry investigating	how to get published
cooking healthier	basic car maintenance	extreme couponing
paranormal research	upcycle household items	balloon animals
magic or coin tricks	a foreign language primer	cupcake decorating

Other great in meeting idea's? Send them to me at Larryvrotary@gmail.com

These ideas have come from club member of District 7930 and District 7850