



~ Kruse's **MEMBERSHIP** Muses ~

September 2008

Assistant Governors, Club Presidents and Membership Chairs:

September is *New Generations Month*. One might ask “how does ‘New Generations’ relate to membership development?” Plenty! The successful future of Rotary relies on our clubs’ ability to attract young people into their ranks. During September we focus on activities that help young people appreciate the importance of service to others, enhance their leadership skills and focus on world understanding and peace. Sound familiar? Of course! It’s the **Object of Rotary**! These involved young people will become future Rotarians through their positive experiences in RYLA, Interact, Rotaract, Youth Exchange, Ambassadorial Scholars and other youth-focused activities. Rotary states that “...it is the responsibility of each Rotarian to prepare the **New Generations—all young people up to the age of 30—by improving their life skills to ensure a better future while recognizing the diversity of their needs.**” Basically, it’s a WIN-WIN-WIN situation: our younger generations win by becoming better citizens of the world, those in need win by being the recipients of increased service opportunities, and our Rotary clubs win by having new members full of energy, fresh ideas, and a willingness to serve others. You are encouraged to read the September 2008 *Rotarian* magazine’s article (pg 27) on “Bridging Generations” and how to attract new age groups. Clubs are also encouraged to use the slogan *Every Rotarian an Example to Youth* in bulletins and publicity material during **New Generations Month**.

And now, some straight talk about member retention which is and always will be a challenge to our clubs. For the larger clubs (>75 members) the ability to retain active, productive Rotarians may indeed be their greatest challenge. However, all clubs should periodically (remember those quarterly **Club Assemblies**???) review the following checklist to see if there is a need to rethink, retool or redo certain club activities and priorities.

Remember, above all else, your club must give GREATER VALUE for your members’ time and money than they can get elsewhere. Failure to provide greater value can, and most likely will be, deadly to any club.

MEMBER RETENTION CHECKLIST

- [] How *informative* and *lively* are your club’s weekly programs?
- [] Are these programs held in a *comfortable* and *attractive* venue?
- [] How *relevant* is your club to its members’ interests and the community?
- [] How *relevant* are your club service projects to the *needs of the community*?
- [] Does your club *respect members’ time* and keep to its meeting schedule?
- [] Does your club *personally contact* members who miss meetings?
- [] How *connected* are your members to the club AND to one another?
- [] Do your members have adequate opportunities to *get to know one another*?
- [] Are your members aware of their *responsibilities* to the club and Rotary International?
- [] How *active* are your members in service projects, committees, and club operations?
- [] How *informed* are your members of Rotary’s work at the *community, district and international levels*?
- [] How *effectively* and *frequently* do you *really communicate* with your club members?
- [] Are you *aware* of why members are *leaving* your club?
- [] Do your members make efforts to *include new members in club activities*?
- [] Does your club have *ongoing new member orientation and continuing education* programs?

Yours in Rotary Service,
Carl



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