

# D5420 Membership Best Practices

## Summary

Based on twelve and a half (12.5) years of membership data provided by Zone 27 (from July 1, 2007 to January 1, 2020), 10 clubs in the district had a net gain of two or more members each (for a total net gain of 119). During this same period of time, the district experienced a net loss of about 300 members.

The 10 clubs and their net gains are:

Bountiful (+19)  
Cedar City (+2)  
Centerville-Farmington (+2)  
Dixie Sunrise (+7)  
Park City (+11)  
Park City Sunrise (+52)  
Red Rock (+3)  
Springville (+4)  
Tooele Valley (+7)  
West Jordan (+12)

In order to learn more about why their clubs experienced net growth over the 12+ year period, the clubs were asked to provide the major reasons with a brief explanation for each.

Several common “best practices” can be found in the more detailed club responses below. Briefly summarized, these are:

1. Fun and engaging service projects that attract new members and help retain members
2. Members personally inviting others (often friends and family) to meetings or service projects
3. Fun and interesting meetings, programs and socials
4. Flexibility in trying new ideas for meeting formats/times and alternative dues structures
5. Immediate engagement of new members in areas of interest and committee assignments

These best practices are being provided to all clubs in the district so they may learn and apply them as appropriate to aid in membership retention and recruitment efforts.

## Club Responses

### Bountiful

We inducted 6 new members in 2018 and 10 in 2019. We went through each name to list why they joined Rotary and there were almost 18 different reasons. If there is a common theme it is member to member word of mouth and members talking to their friends about the great things our club is doing, our Coats for Kids Car show being the big item. This service project is what brought many members to the club and is a great talking point for recruiting.

Another important item is face to face meeting with an interested person. That is the only way you can communicate the caring you have for the people receiving service and how important our Rotary

program is to members. Generally, when a person who has an interest in service feels the passion we have as members, they want to be a part of the program.

We have a flexible dues structure that has helped as well. We have an alternate dues structure that separates the meals and allows the person to pay for the meals when they attend a meeting and have a meal.

### *Cedar City*

Our club is focused on growing our membership. From a dedicated membership committee to collective accountability of our members, we understand the need to recruit new, younger members. Supporting this focus is an infrastructure of strong leadership, a flexible dues structure, new member orientation, members' willingness to invite prospects to attend meetings, and a welcoming environment.

In Cedar City, we are known as the "service club of choice". Through our city-wide fundraisers (July Jamboree and golf tournament) and the impact we have made in the community (Rotary Veterans Park and many service projects), prospective members learn about Rotary and want to be a part of a successful organization.

Engaging members with our service projects, with fund-raiser assignments, and on committees has been an effective recruiting and retention tool and builds camaraderie within the club. Pairing the member with his/her passion (service, youth, international projects, membership, public image, etc.) results in an engaged member who actively recruits others.

### *Centerville-Farmington*

Our new members were invited by a club member and they liked what they saw. Our membership committee is doing a good job training and supporting them as they make the decision to join or not. Nothing magic, just good old friendships and relationships.

### *Dixie Sunrise*

We have an emphasis that every member brings a guest at least once a year. We constantly remind our members of this program. When we do have guests, we give them a Dixie Sunrise brochure to keep that reminds them of our club and how much fun we have at our meetings. Everyone is responsible to greet and welcome our guests. Our club has fun at each meeting.

We call every member that has missed two meetings in a row.

We have a great service committee and that has a lot to do with member retention. They don't have to make every service project but when they do, they see the comradery our club has.

Every time we induct a new member, we get them involved immediately in a committee. They joined for a reason and we find out what that reason is and try to involve them in the area of interest they have.

We are flexible within the parameters of Rotary. We have adjusted and moved forward with the times to make people more comfortable. Formality is not what we are focused on. We are focused on service and fellowship.

We engage the spouses of our Rotarians and invite them to socials, service projects etc. We have one member in particular that has been instrumental. He has a way of greeting people, getting to know a little bit about them and engages them in our meetings immediately.

### Park City

We created a membership type called “senior active” that allows experienced Rotarians (combined age & Rotary membership  $\geq 80$ ) to attend meetings when they’re able. This basically offered flexibility on the later end of Rotary membership, a bit different than current Rotary recommendations, but it does allow members to continue their memberships longer than they otherwise might have. These Senior Active members do not have their attendance counted, and only pay for lunch when they attend meetings. (Other members pay for every lunch regardless of attendance.)

We have a marquee community event that the whole town can participate in that builds Rotary awareness, fellowship, and is a successful fundraiser each year. The day-long event called “Miners’ Day” occurs on Labor Day each year and celebrates Park City’s mining history. This event has created a great shared history among Rotarians, and is an event our club members look forward to each year.

We are a fun & irreverent club that makes our members feel like an important part of the Park City community. We pride ourselves on our ability to have fun, tell some inappropriate jokes, and poke fun at ourselves a little, all while making sure we have a significant impact on those in need in our community. This is a formula that is a significant draw for new members in our community.

### Park City Sunrise

We have community service projects that make a difference, such as bi-annual Hazardous Waste Days and giving out over 600 presents to needy children in our school system. They are something the entire club gets behind.

The club membership chair’s job has been made easy – just make sure we have membership applications available after the meetings for new comers. What made it so easy was having the right person in two critical jobs, Program Director and Sergeant at Arms. Having an interesting program each week keeps our members coming back.

One of the reasons the Dodgers and the Yankees win so many games each year, is because they have the best ball players money can buy. We have had the best Sergeant at Arms any club could have. His wit and enthusiasm are matchless and entertaining to the point that they help define our club.

We have been so fortunate to have the talent we have in our club. One way of improving your club may be to select or even recruit the talent your club needs to fill these two important positions.

### Red Rock

We are a fun, vibrant and active club that people want to be part of. We do a lot together whether it's club socials or service projects. Our club started volunteering at the local homeless shelter several years ago on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month in place of a regular meeting. This has provided a meaningful and recurring service project in addition to our one big annual service project/fund raiser collecting parking fees for the country fair.

Our meetings are friendly, fun and inviting. We do "horseplay/happy dollars" where members share positive, personal aspects about their lives. This helps us get to know each other a little more each week. Our meetings feel like a reunion between friends, not a business meeting.

We are flexible, especially in our dues structure. We created and offer several different types of dues and associated costs to fit everyone's need. This has helped retain and even get back some former members who couldn't afford the regular dues (our minimum dues are \$100 annually, which just about covers the district and RI per capita with meals optional).

We invite friends and family members to join (we have 4 couples who are under the "family membership" plan where one pays regular dues and the other pays the minimum dues). We try to stay in touch with former and potential members as well as those who miss several meetings in a row. Our club has also been the lucky recipient of 4 members through the RI membership lead program.

### Springville

They are a non-traditional club that meets in the evenings.

### Tooele Valley

Our members recruit and invite people to come to our meetings and invite friends to come to our service projects.

We always take a minute or two to go over our service projects or talk about our service projects before a speaker presents. They are usually impressed with what we are doing. Then we let them know that we are always looking for new members such as them and invite them to join and give them a membership application.

We are having better meetings - quality speakers, busy business meetings and a service project or two every month if it is possible. The service projects allow us to connect socially in a world with a lot of disconnect. We have grown closer as a club this year because of it. Also, our social media guys have knocked it out of the ballpark with a constant presence on Facebook. Plus, we have a stellar writer in our club who has submitted several articles about Rotary and what our club is doing. We are more "out there" than ever before.

West Jordan

Their satellite e-club has added substantially to the club's membership numbers.