

Altadena Rotary Club - Membership Committee

Minutes for Thursday, November 8th
at the Seyffert home, 610 E. Calaveras St., 7 p.m.

Present: Carlson, Cunningham, Foreman, Kayali, Kindrick, Mehringer, Zoeller & Seyffert (chair).

Gordon Seyffert distributed copies of a job description he had written to summarize his duties as Membership Chair, as he currently understands them. Mike Zoeller made a recommendation that he shift the focus to a description of the duties of the committee as a whole, saying that one person cannot reasonably be responsible for so much and that it should be understood that all members of the committee must contribute.

Jacque Foreman suggested that items #3 (support and promote club membership targets...) and #4 (regularly distribute club flyers, invitation cards and member proposal forms...) and perhaps others should be changed to reflect Mike's views. She further proposed that elements of the job description and the membership page on the club's web site should be combined into a new on-line description of the responsibility of this committee.

Ray Carlson that more should be said about the inclusion of new members, including mention of "fireside chats," exposure to Rotary videos, and club meetings with new members and their spouses. Gordon agreed to take these ideas into consideration, but explained that he had written the job description as he did because there is no assigned membership for this committee, which remains open to all. Hence, he explained, it is hard to hold specific individuals other than the chair accountable for its operation.

The second handout of the evening was a listing of the "Friends of the Club" as shown on ClubRunner. Gordon explained that he uses this now to circulate announcements of the weekly programs to those who might be interested in attending (and who are prospective new members). There was a brief discussion of one prospect who was not on the list, a person of Pakistani origin, and of how this individual might be encouraged.

The group discussed the arrangement by which the local Scouting council underwrites membership of its executives in community organizations. Dennis Mehringer agreed to take to the Board of Directors the sense of the Membership Committee that a special arrangement should be made to accommodate early initiation of a willing "recruit" whose membership expense coverage must await the arrival of the new calendar year.

Jacque offered that our prospects might be further encouraged to join our club through the use of a quarterly postcard of 5x7" foldover card sent by USPS to remind them of our interest in bringing in new members. This would be a way of inviting them through other media, and could have a cumulative effect upon their perception of how we value community participation through the infusion of "new blood." Ray added that we should publicize our community activities to them, to which Gordon suggested the October 27th pilot entrepreneurship program at the Westminster Presbyterian Church as a good example of what we are attempting to achieve in the area of youth-oriented projects.

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The last handout (and third agenda item) of the evening was a description of the IGNITE Membership “Premier Club” Citation. This is to be a District recognition vehicle that promotes the idea that “Everyone has something to contribute toward the success of their club....” Club targets are established based upon club membership numbers, and various individual or club activities and achievements earn points towards this target and yearly awarding of the [District] Governor’s Membership Citation.

There were several not-unexpected questions about this new District venture and what it is attempting to accomplish. A short answer is that the Western U.S. Rotary zones are showing some signs of stemming the RI membership decline, and the IGNITE program is designed to promote growth in a “semi-stable” region. If successful, the program can then be initiated elsewhere. Gordon closed by noting that our club will soon be asked to track the activities and achievements noted on the handout.

The meeting turned briefly to a discussion of possible additional support for veterans. Sammy Kayali inquired as to how club and community members can acquire info about our current projects. Dennis responded that our semi-annual Club Assemblies should serve this purpose in part, but that in recent years the club has fallen out of the habit of requiring each committee chair to report orally to the club.

Lastly, Mike asked that our future meetings of this committee include monthly review of the membership efforts that have been volunteered in prior meetings. Gordon agreed to add this feature, which has been offered only on an occasional basis this Rotary year.

The meeting was adjourned after slightly more than one hour’s duration.