

Swartz Creek Kiwanis Club New Member Orientation Pack

The focus of the Swartz Creek Kiwanis Club is to support projects and activities that build character and leadership skills and encourage community service by the youth of the Swartz Creek area. This is a fun and informal community service club (no secret rooms, hats, or initiation rituals)!

Meeting Structure: Weekly membership meetings are held at 7:30am. Thursday mornings at the Country Carriage Restaurant, Miller Road, Swartz Creek. Meetings begin with the call to order (bell) the Pledge of Allegiance, a song and grace. Business is then brought forward by the president, followed by a short presentation from a “guest speaker”. Each member provides 1 or 2 meeting speakers a year. At many meetings the “Sheriff” will collect fines (usually 25 cents) and some members donate “Happy Bucks”. For a buck you can stand up and announce something that is going good in your world. Fines and happy bucks are deposited in the club administrative accounts and are used to pay for breakfasts for speakers and guests. Meetings adjourn at 8:30 a.m. so folks can get to work.

Interclub: We send four members of our club to “visit” other area Kiwanis clubs regular meetings. This is a chance to meet other civic minded citizens in the area and share fund raising ideas and service projects.

Dues: Annual dues are \$120/year. They are payable in August/September of each year. Members joining after September 1st will have their dues pro-rated for the first year at a rate of \$10/month.

Kiwanis Board of Directors: The business of the club is in large part conducted by a 9 member Board (annual elections are held in the spring for 2 year terms). Board meetings are held at 7:30 a.m on the first Tuesday of the month at the Senior Citizens Center on Civic Drive. The discuss projects, and donations and general activity of the club. All members are welcome to sit in on the meeting.

Fund Raising Projects

Horse Show: This is a 2 day (Friday & Saturday) event held at the Shiawassee County Fair Grounds in late July. Club members man entrance and exit gates present awards and assist folks who are showing horses/judging the events. In advance of the show members sell ads to area businesses that promote their organizations services in a program book produced for the event. This event has been the major fundraiser for the club for 25 years.

Art in the Park: a juried art show and sale held in Elms Road park in Mid-August. Members layout the booth placement on the sales field - who goes where - help vendors set up their booths, assist the vendors and host the 6000-8000 customers that circulate through the park on the Saturday of the sale the event. A committee meets for 10 months prior to the event to promote the sale to vendors, working with other community groups to structure what happens and acts as a liaison for juried sample pieces submitted for consideration by artists.

Weenie Wagon/Lunch at the Dump/Hotdog sales: Members sell hot dogs at Hometown Days (June), Tuesday night Concerts in June/July/August sponsored by the SC Fine Arts Association. Lunch at the Dump is a catered meal for truck drivers and area elected officials at the land fill

in Grand Blanc. Members cook and serve food for those in attendance at this July/August event.

Peanut Sale: an on the street sale of peanuts in October. Members are stationed at intersections, banks and grocery stores to collect donations.

Prayer Breakfast: is held on Maundy Thursday 7:30 a.m. at the SC Methodist Church bringing together community members and Kiwanians from across Genesee County generally featuring a motivational speaker. Members sell tickets for this event.

Croquet: a fun program that teaches competitive croquet play techniques. This competitive activity is a series of game/tournament days that raises funds through playing fees while providing a recreational activity with croquet players from across the state.

Scripts: A fund raiser that allows us to make money as we make our routine purchases. The club sells gift cards for restaurants, grocery stores, gas stations, drugstores, lumber yards... Pre-paid gift cards are available from about 200 major retailers. The club receives between 2 and 20% of the face amount as commission for selling the card. Cards are paid for when the order is placed at any Thursday meeting and are delivered at the meeting the following week. Cards are redeemed like cash at the retail outlet for the full face amount of the card/purchase price.

Projects/Activities we currently support

Center Stage: A community/Youth theater program in which live performances are held at Mary Crapo School several time a year.

SC Area Food Bank: Supplies food and basic toiletry items for area residents in need. The club regularly contributes to this activity housed at the Methodist church. Food provided is purchased from the Eastern Michigan Food Bank and donations from area gardens and farms. Donations from area churches are also part of the food banks support.

Camp 911: Co-sponsored by the SC Police Department teaching elementary students how to be safe and how to react in emergency situations.

DDA Movie Night: Free Friday night movies at the Pijtas Pavilion on Civic Drive

ABC Awards: At the end of each semester the club recognizes "Good Citizens" among the students at the high school, middle school and the alternative academy.

College Scholarships: At the SC High School graduation/awards ceremonies, the club makes a contribution to 3-4 deserving good citizen/students attending college each fall.

Law Enforcement Career Program: We pay student tuition for this career exploration program.

Youth Priority One: Providing books/supplies to Head Start Students.

Tall Pine Council: Providing funding to cub scouts and boy scouts in the area.

Christmas party: This is a fun event for pre-school and early elementary school students featuring pictures with Santa and snacks.

Whaley House: This is a house for teenage boys who are wards of the county because of disastrous home life situations. We, along with other Kiwanis Clubs in the county purchased the house years ago and continue to support repair and maintenance of the house, sponsor events and provide birthday gifts for residents

People to people: This is an international student exchange program. Over the past few years the club has contributed funds to help meet the tuition for area youth to attend/participate in this program...

Blue Lake: This is a regionally recognized music camp. Over the past few years the club has contributed to tuition for students from this area to attend this program.

Key Club: This is a Kiwanis sponsored community service organization for high school students at SCHS. It is a sub set of the national program for Kiwanis youth/leadership development.

Elms Road Park: In the 1970's the club designed a plan for the utilization of a highway borrow pit that would turn it into a park. A design for landscape, activity areas and pavilions was created. The club donated trees and planted the area. They also built the large pavilion next to the playscape which currently has a plaque indicating it is the Kiwanis structure. In recent years, the club has re-roofed and replaced the structural beams of the pavilion. We have ongoing interest in keeping this public space open, safe and in good repair for the residents of the area to enjoy.

Parking Cars: Club members direct traffic and supervise the parking of cars at the summer concert series held in the Pijtas pavilion on Civic Drive.

Club Funds

Administrative Accounts: Funds collected as Dues, 50-50 proceeds - Happy Bucks and Fines - (funds from our own pockets) used for meeting club obligations to the national state and regional Kiwanis organizations. These funds are also used for breakfast for guest speakers and prospective members and provides awards for club members.

Project Accounts: Funds collected from the public. Cannot be used for general club operation. Can only be used for grants given to individuals and organizations for community good works, support of projects that focus on area youth and leadership experiences.

Time Commitment

There are no meeting attendance requirements, however members are encouraged to attend at least half of the regularly scheduled Thursday meetings and participate in as many project/fundraising activities as their schedule will allow. Your level of participation in fundraising and community service projects is largely a decision that you make based on your other life commitment. Members are not expected to participate in all project/fundraising activities.

Most projects have a committee chair. If you have particular interest in a particular project or service activity, talk to the committee chair to find out how you can be involved at a level that is comfortable for you.

There are chances to chair/organize new and existing projects and serve on the board of directors. If you have interest in assuming a leadership role in the club speak with the president, the vice president or your mentor about how to get involved.

The Famous “Sign-Up Sheet! Before each event/activity a sign-up sheet (generally a yellow notebook pad!) indicating activities and time frames where staffing is needed will be circulated among the tables at breakfast meetings. Sign your name to time slots that will work for your schedule. If you need information regarding what is involved with the assignment. PLEASE DON'T BE AFRIID TO ASK ... ASK YOUR SPONSOR, MENTOR, THE COMMITTEE CHAIR OR EVEN THE FOLKS AT YOUR BREAKFAST TABLE. This is how folks get involved with all kinds of stuff. Keep in mind, we never try to set anyone up to work alone! These are activities where you not only do some good for the community, but, you can get to know the other folks in the club.

Mentors

Each new member should have two mentors. His/her sponsor and another individual volunteer or appointee by the club president usually fills this role.

Mentors should sit with the new member at the meeting for the first few months, moving from table to table at successive meetings so that the new person can get to know all the members of the club and form relationships with many of them.

Mentors should work as a team with the new member on the first few project/ service activities the individual participates in, allowing the new person to engage with the activity of the club in a comfortable way.

Mentors should suggest committee assignments available based on the interest pattern of the new member.

Mentors should contact their new member when he/she misses meetings or service projects to see if there is a problem and try to insure that they keep coming back.