



*Inner Wheel U.S.A. Inc.*

# *Strategic Plan*

*Enthusiastic, strong and loving women taking action to strengthening Inner Wheel U.S.A. by their energy, kindness, and working as a team!*

*(To be revised in 2013)*

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# **INTRODUCTION**

## **PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES**

Inner Wheel has been one of the largest women's organizations throughout the world, the decline in membership in the United States as well as all over the world is very evident. Membership is down approximately 15%.

Several facets have played a part in this, among them: lack of Inner Wheel knowledge, community service projects, family responsibilities, time, economics and probably most important; everyone trying to juggle day-to-day responsibilities between family life, work, and the need for a little time for oneself!

The following guidelines for Districts/Clubs/Members are intended to inform Inner Wheel members about Inner Wheel, provide a tool to use in training members (current and new), ideas for membership growth and retention, recommendations for revitalizing district and club meetings and educating districts and clubs on Internal Revenue Service requirements that allow Inner Wheel U.S.A. to maintain a 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt status.

The goal is to provide guidance and suggestions to each district and club in hope they will share the information compiled with all members in order to facilitate a better and more thorough understanding of Inner Wheel; its objects and goals and create a energy among members in seeing Inner Wheel grow and prosper as well as encourage members to become committed to Inner Wheel and partake in the training that will create a desire to serve Inner Wheel as future leaders.

Inner Wheel is a wonderful organization bringing others together in a bond of love and friendship. Inner Wheel is an avenue for strong, long lasting friendships, both in the United States and around the world. It provides a bond among members through community service and in assisting each other in times of need.

***“IN A TIME OF DRASTIC CHANGE, IT IS THE LEARNERS WHO  
INHERIT THE FUTURE. THE LEARNED FIND THEMSELVES  
EQUIPPED TO LIVE IN A WORLD THAT NO LONGER EXISTS”***

Eric Hoffer

## **VISION**

Inner Wheel U.S.A. provides the mechanism for members to support the humanitarian and social activities of Rotary and to supplement these through additional humanitarian and social efforts. It is also to develop at the Club, District, Zone, National and International levels a network for others with the same focus.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Inner Wheel U.S.A. is to unify and support the Clubs, Districts and Zones throughout the United States in fulfilling the object of Inner Wheel by:

- Fostering unity among the Clubs,
- Strengthening and expanding Inner Wheel throughout the United States,
- Supporting the work of the IWUSA Foundation, and
- To support the goals and objects of International Inner Wheel

## **OBJECT**

Inner Wheel U.S.A. is to:

- Promote true friendship,
- Encourage the ideals of personal service, and
- To foster international understanding.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

## Membership

Inner Wheel U.S.A. is an organization with its Members and Clubs committed to friendship, supporting the IWUSA Foundation, increasing membership and clubs and participating in community service.

## New Members

1. IDENTIFY: Potential, qualified members.  
Talk to spouses of all new Rotarians (ask for a Rotary roster).  
Talk to family members of Rotarians, Inner Wheel members and friends who have or have had a relationship with Rotary or Inner Wheel.  
Attract younger members who have the potential to lead at the Club, District, Zone and National level.  
Once officers have been announced for the coming year, begin planning for the next year.  
Ask the new member to become engaged right from the start.  
Describe the various committees; work with them to identify which committee they would like to serve on.  
Make them feel a part of the Club right away.  
This is a wonderful way for them to meet new friends and receive important information.
2. INFORM/  
EDUCATE Educate members on what Inner Wheel is all about.  
Talk about the community projects the club is involved in, International Projects, social activities, Rotary/Inner Wheel involvement and the bond formed among members. Have an on-going program on educating members on changes that may develop.
3. INVITE Invite prospective members to a meeting.  
Make it an interesting meeting.  
Have a good speaker or program.  
Have someone pick them up and bring them. Have this person be their mentor, and accompany them to a number of meetings until they are comfortable with the group.  
Introduce them, make them feel welcome.  
Let them see how you enjoy one another and work together.
4. ORIENT: When they join, orient them on Inner Wheel and its policies.  
Prepare an Orientation Package of Information that includes the IW pin, the Handbook and a copy of the Club roster.  
This might be a good time to re-educate existing members with the Inner Wheel Constitution and By-laws.
5. INDUCT: Make this a very memorable occasion when this new member is inducted into the Club. Invite the sponsor of the new member family and/or any Rotarian(s) to attend the induction. (Sample induction ceremony can be found in the IWUSA Handbook).  
This is also true when chartering a new club.

## Membership, continued

6. INVOLVE: Get them involved.  
Get the new member or members involved immediately.  
Put them on a committee to work with other members on a project. Make them feel important.

### Retaining Members:

Time is precious to members in today's environment. Meetings need to be geared toward interests and likes of members. Most members want a variety of meetings that include business and social speakers on current issues, educational tours and a community project periodically. No meeting should be all of one type. It is also important to know your membership and be aware of what type of meeting suits the majority of members; i.e. daytime meetings (possibly middle of afternoon); luncheon meetings or evening meetings. Variety is the key.

**COMMUNICATION!** This is important to make members aware of clubs activities, meetings, etc. and to also feel a part of the organization.

Meetings need to be organized and punctual. Members are not comfortable with dis-organization and leaders lack of concern for their time. It shows lack of interest in members valuable time.

Be proud of Inner Wheel and promoting ideas of Inner Wheel with others. Be friendly and outgoing **and** aware of the needs of others. Listen to others. Be open to others! Their ideas and recommendations may be just what is needed to revitalize the club.

*Friendliness to all members. Feeling of welcoming!*

# **COMMUNICATION**

*Communication* is most important in order to inform membership of the workings of Districts/Clubs. It involves members in the knowledge of the clubs activities, meetings, projects and social activities. Communication allows members to be a part of the club and to feel that they are an important part of the whole club.

Inner Wheel U.S.A. fosters the Vision, Mission, Object and Service of the Members and Clubs. It encourages better communication with the Rotary Districts and Rotary Clubs (in the geographic location of the members), the business community and the public. It is comprised of a Governing Body that disseminates information on what is going on at the Club, District, Zone, National and International level.

Avenues of communication include:

IIW website

“google” International Inner Wheel  
Website includes International Information,  
IIW Constitution, International up-to-date information  
and information on upcoming events.

IWUSA website [www.innerwheelusa.com](http://www.innerwheelusa.com)

**Your** avenue to see the latest on what is going on  
with Inner Wheel U.S.A.  
You will be able to see a letter from **your** President,  
You will see what the “*Red Rose of Friendship*” means to you,  
You can see the list of current Inner Wheel U.S.A. and Inner Wheel  
U.S.A. Foundation officers and trustees,  
You will see the current list of Districts and Clubs,  
You will get the most current information of the Inner Wheel U.S.A.  
Foundation,  
You will get the dates of forthcoming important dates of meetings/events,  
Download from Website forms, Inner Wheel logo for stationery, cards and for use  
in decorating functions,  
Link to other Inner Wheel Councils/National Associations and  
see what other Inner Wheel groups are doing.

Newsletters

The best avenue to see what Inner Wheel districts and clubs are doing.  
International Inner Wheel produces two newsletters each year.  
IWUSA produces two or three newsletters each year.  
The number of District newsletters will vary.  
Club newsletters are an important avenue to remind members of the clubs  
projects; meetings and upcoming events. It keeps members informed  
about the Club and, again, makes them aware of their importance to the  
club.  
Club “*phone trees*” keep members updated and make necessary changes  
to events current. It is that “personal” touch brought back to life!

**communications continued:**

Email

Email is the quickest, least expensive, most efficient means of communication. This information should be included on all Club, District, Zone and Rosters. Utilizing this source will enhance better communication at all levels. It should never take the place of sending written or computer generated invitations, announcements of special events and other correspondence.

# **LEADERSHIP AND MOTIVATION**

### **Leadership**

Inner Wheel needs charismatic, enthusiastic leaders with an eye and ear for her members. A good leader inspires her members to take positions in her club by being a good example, motivating them and focusing on their talents. To achieve this she needs to know the members of her club: a person who could be a perfect secretary might not be a good treasurer. If a leader is emphatic, approachable, pragmatic and knows how to communicate she will be an asset to her club or district. Be proactive and try to stimulate members to take part in the activities organized by the club. Be a “come on” person rather than a “go on” person. Use your sense of humor. Be honest, clear in what you want, open about it and consistent in your actions. Do not be afraid to speak out. A leader cannot assume power from her title, but it certainly helps; more importantly, she must assume the responsibility of her title. She should, however, honor her position by her words and deeds and keep in mind that she is still a normal member of her club. Remember: imposing, bossing and pressuring never works.

### **Teamwork**

A good team is essential. A good team radiates joy and motivates others to join. A leader should delegate, but still be the “primus inter paris” – the first among the others. Be open to ideas from the members of your team and give them a chance to contribute, but be decisive and take responsibility. If a leader shows that she believes in and has respect for the members of her team it will work wonders. She should share the credit with others and take the blame when something goes wrong. Mistakes can be made, but be honest about them and do not repeat them.

### **Problems**

If problems arise between members, try not to take sides, but act as a mediator. A friendly talk, person to person, is the best way to solve a problem. Humor will often help as well as a pragmatic approach. Women often have difficulty separating issues from persons. A leader should recognize this and be aware of misunderstandings because of it.

### **Pitfalls**

There are pitfalls leaders should be aware of.

Never say: “I am right” or “I have been doing this for so long, I know what I am doing.” Facts are observed differently so nothing IS! Do not become glued to your chair, but know when to make room for others. Do not blame others for mistakes you are responsible for. Your way may not always be the right way and others may contribute ideas that are beneficial to the club and its members. LISTEN to others. Have an open mind!

# TRAINING

*Training* officers and members is more than just building the skills and knowledge of each individual for their own personal benefit. Training members of Inner Wheel allows them to

become knowledgeable about Inner Wheel and about our National Project which brings all members together through the Inner Wheel Foundation's Myo-electric Limb Project. It fosters personal growth and members are likely to stay active within the club. The more members become knowledgeable, the more productive and motivated they are to be an active, strong, participating member.

People skills are generally those a person is born with. They may have been improved or "roughened" by years of grooming or unfortunate experience; however, it is possible to ensure that matters of communication, care, consideration, confidentiality and correctness are fully learned and implemented through proper and continued training.

Training should cover the following topics:

- History of Inner Wheel
- International Inner Wheel Constitution
- Inner Wheel U.S.A. Bylaws
- Inner Wheel U.S.A. Foundation – its history, mission, goals, future and children served
- Information on the District/Club
- Benefits of Membership in Inner Wheel
- Inner Wheel goals
- Website Training
- Relationship between Rotary and Inner Wheel
- District/Club activities/fundraising projects/community service projects

Training sessions can be made fun. Ice breakers, small group sessions and games are some ways of sharing information on Inner Wheel. Sessions should not be long, nor should all things be covered at one time. Focus on one facet of Inner Wheel at a time. There is so much to share with members that it is important to make sessions fun, enjoyable, informative and understandable to members.

Taking the time at a District meeting, a Club meeting, or in some cases, a Saturday morning to train members will bring so much excitement into the organization. Members will feel a real part of the organization and want to become a better member and eventually feel comfortable in a leadership role.

You will be surprised when you open your training session to the floor for questions, what members want to know. Most people are eager to know about an organization they belong to. If we do not share our knowledge and train members in the organization's purpose and benefits of membership, we are not respecting their time and their talent as members.

An Arapaho Proverb states: *When we show our respect for other living things, they respond with respect for us.*

Erick Fromm says: *To respect a person is not possible without knowing him; care and responsibility would be blind if they were not **guided**.*

## PREPARING FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEETING

Successful meetings do not just happen. They require you to have a thorough understanding of your club, the club goals, the members, and a working knowledge of the meeting process and parliamentary procedure.

There are several “P’s” that can help you accomplish the art of chairing a successful meeting.

- 1. PROBE:** Do your homework.  
Review minutes from previous year or years’ meetings. Refresh your memory of the club’s projects and goals.  
Look at last year’s chairman and the contribution that each member represents.  
Review and calendar District, Inner Wheel U.S.A., International Inner Wheel items.  
Study the District Guidelines (found in your District Directory). Familiarize yourself with the IIW Constitution.
- 2. PLAN:** Determine what is to be accomplished.  
Every meeting has its’ own flavor. A first meeting differs greatly, in that the new year needs an overview. More fellowship time will be necessary for members to catch up with what each has done over the summer.  
If you know that you are going to have an extra long monthly meeting, it is a good idea to plan for an Executive Board Meeting. Have this prior to the regular meeting. You can achieve a great deal that will save you and the membership time.  
*Advance planning is crucial to keep a meeting on track.*
- 3. PROGRAM:** Set your agenda.  
Contact the members that are on the agenda. Inform them of what you expect them to cover in their presentation – give them an approximate time limit.  
Encourage clarity and conciseness. (With a women’s group, that is easier said than done.)  
Send agendas to members in advance. This will speed up the meeting time and also serves as a meeting notice.
- 4. PUNCTUALITY:** Arrive early to be sure everything is ready.
- 5. PERSISTENCE:** Remember a meeting that does not go as planned is not fatal unless the planning has been fatally flawed.  
Review and evaluate what went right and what didn’t.  
Discuss the meeting with your officers and decide what changes are needed to encourage success at the next meeting.
- 6. PRAYER/THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:** It never hurts!!

## **PRESENTATION** **(Conducting Meetings)**

### **1. Start the meeting on time.**

2. If necessary, review your club's meeting: roles, ground rules and standards. (You may have new members that would appreciate this information.)
3. Agree on the agenda or change it.
4. Follow the agenda. Have a time limit for each agenda item. (You should have previously informed participants approximately how much time they have.)
5. Have each person on the agenda do the following:
  - Begin by telling what the subject is and what he/she wants to accomplish in the meeting.
  - The presenter should conclude their part of the agenda by reviewing what has been accomplished.
6. Keep control of the meeting. Gently return members to the subject's focus when they begin to stray.
7. Conclude the meeting with a summary of what has been accomplished. Review what actions are to be taken by whom and when their report will be due.
8. **Close the meeting ON or BEFORE time.** (The members will look forward to the next meeting, rather than dreading another long drawn out session.)

**NOTE: Preparation and Communication,** are two of the greatest allies that a President of any club can have. You cannot communicate effectively what you have not prepared. Come to your meeting prepared and the above numbered items will assist you in conducting a successful meeting.

## PRESIDENTIAL “DO’S AND DON’TS”

1. **DO** prepare an agenda for each meeting and carefully think through the business to come up. **DON’T** just come to the meeting unprepared.
2. **DO** have a gavel. Use it to obtain and maintain order.  
**DON’T** pound the gavel, thus creating more noise. One tap should be sufficient. State “The Chair is waiting for the meeting to come to order”.
3. **DO** call the meeting to order on time.  
**DON’T** wait more than 10 minutes for anyone.
4. **DO** ascertain whether a quorum is present.  
**DON’T** make it possible for a member to rise to a point of no quorum. Call for a recess or call for a time to re-adjourn.
5. **DO** study the by-laws and standing rules of your organization, as well as the basic law of parliamentary procedure necessary to conduct an ordinary meeting.  
**DON’T** say “But the President always appointed our convention delegate”, or ask a past officer what is usually done.
6. **DO** ask for approval of minutes with correct wording: “Are there any corrections?”  
**DON’T** add words such as: “omissions, deletions, etc.”.
7. **DO** have a calendar and watch available or appoint a time keeper at every meeting.  
**DON’T** depend upon others to give you correct dates or inform you as to time (unless appointed as time keeper).
8. **DO** know that the only authority a President has is stated in the by-laws or delegated by the organization.  
**DON’T** make decisions that should be made by the organization or appoint committees you are not authorized to appoint. A President cannot assume that she is ex-officio of committees unless the by-laws or a motion so state.
9. **DO** be objective, impersonal, courteous and pleasant at all times.  
**DON’T** indicate your feelings so that the assembly knows your opinion on the question under discussion.
10. **DO** speak of self in the third person, or as “the Chair”.  
**DON’T** say I-I-I.

### **Presidential Do's and Don'ts, Continued:**

11. **DO** vote only when the vote is by ballot or when the result will be affected, as to make or break a tie.  
**DON'T** vote when vote is by acclamation as your opinion is thus revealed.
12. **DO** remain in the Chair at all times except when you finish to discuss a motion or the questions is of personal significance and others are not involved.  
**DON'T** discuss merits of a question when in the Chair.
13. **DO** introduce or present the program chairman and ask her to present the program.  
**DON'T** say you are "Turning the meeting over to the program chairman".
14. **DO** stand when addressing the assembly; while giving reasons for a decision on a point of order; and while speaking on an appeal.  
**DON'T** stand during the reading of the minutes; the financial report, other reports or a debate.
15. **DO** keep the discussion directed to the Chair. This may require tact.  
**DON'T** permit discussion on a question between members.
16. **DO** keep the discussions to the pending question.  
**DON'T** allow remarks to wander off on tangents.
17. **DO** state the motion clearly and distinctly after it has been made and seconded, changing wording, if necessary.  
**DON'T** say "You have heard the motion", and call for a vote. If a motion is made has no second, say "Is there a second?", not "Do I have a second?"
18. **DO** say "Those opposed".  
**DON'T** say "Contrary".
19. **DO** announce the results of a vote, saying, "The ayes have it, and the motion is carried, so we will....." or "The no's have it and the motion is lost".  
**DON'T** assume that everyone heard and knows the effect of the vote. Unless stated by the Chair, the motion is not in effect.
20. **DO** learn to expedite business by using the "General Consent" type of motion whenever possible: i.e., approving minutes, adjourning meetings and other routine matters.  
**DON'T** consume valuable time by insisting that motions by made, seconded and noted upon when you know general consent is available.

### **Presidential Do's and Don'ts, Continued:**

21. **DO** help a member to reword a motion so that it is suitable, if an improper motion is made.  
**DON'T** say a *member* is out of order, state the *motion* is out of order.
22. **DO** encourage committee chairmen to make reports.  
**DON'T** allow committee business to take place at a general meeting.
23. **DO** refer to yourself in reports as “The President” or “Your President”.  
**DON'T** say “The Chair” as this term applies only to the presiding officer as such.
24. **DO** learn to delegate responsibilities. You not only save yourself, but provide motivation from members to participate and the spirit of TEAM work.  
**DON'T** try to do everything yourself.
25. **DO** have a parliamentarian, one who is **qualified**, with a fair, judicial mind. She gives advise only when called upon by the President.
26. **DO** keep meetings friendly; informally formal; **LEAD THE WAY**.
27. **DON'T** continually complain of the hard work.
28. **DO** remember that simplicity is best.
29. **DO ENJOY SERVING AS PRESIDENT OF YOUR CLUB!**

## **ROTARY/INNER WHEEL CONNECTION**

Inner Wheel exists because of Rotary. It was Mrs. Paul Harris who first instituted the idea of the spouses of Rotarians getting together to assist Rotarians with projects during war time. Later, because of the friendships and fellowship that developed among the women, it was Paul Harris who suggested to his wife to form a group of those women who would meet for social activities and work together providing community service.

Over the years many Inner Wheel clubs have worked side by side with Rotary making this a better world. Silently we have stood by our spouses and shared in the sweat and drudgery of manual labor which contributes to the success of helping others. Like Rotary, *service*, has been the motto of Inner Wheel.

Because of the continued strength, love and support between Rotary clubs and Inner Wheel clubs, during the 2010 Council of Legislation held at Rotary Headquarters, Rotary International put forth a proposal to recognize Inner Wheel. At the June, 2010 Rotary International Board Meeting, Rotary, in response to Council resolution 10-102 passed the following:

*To consider recognizing Inner Wheel as a valuable working associate of Rotary, (Rotary) recognizes the valuable contribution that Inner Wheel continues to make in association with Rotary clubs and commends their service to humanity.*

Rotary recognizes the valuable association and strength Inner Wheel brings as we work together to enhance the world around us!

It is our job to spread the Inner Wheel good news. We need to constantly speak of all the good work we do. Women and children are our focus, but each and every District and Club does so much in their own community. It has been proven that Rotary Clubs are stronger when there is an Inner Wheel Club partnered with that Rotary Club.

This is our chance to arrange a meeting with the Inner Wheel Zone Representatives, District Chairman and/or Club President with the Rotary District Governor or Assistant Governor informing them of Inner Wheel. Encourage Rotary to partner with a local Inner Wheel Club. Attend Rotary installations. Invite Rotary Presidents and their members to attend Inner Wheel functions. Attend their training sessions – so much we can learn from Rotary! Put Rotary officers and the District Governor on the mailing list so they will receive Inner Wheel newsletters. Encourage Rotarians who might have an interest in being in Rotary and in Inner Wheel to become a member of Inner Wheel. Dual membership is possible – only rule is that an officer may not, at the same time, hold an office in both Rotary and Inner Wheel.

Promote Inner Wheel at all times with Rotarians! Wear your Inner Wheel regalia, shirts, etc. when attending Rotary functions. Be proud of your organization! Speak up!

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

**Public Relations is our avenue to communicate our message of Inner Wheel and the work our members do to others.** Creating awareness of Inner Wheel is important for the development and implementation of our programs, ideas and initiatives. It is up to each of us to inform the public including Rotarians, friends, family and the media (where possible) in order for others to understand our great organization and to assist us in meeting the needs of our members. The Foundation depends on public relations to meet the needs of the children we serve.

A well-implemented public relations initiative will help present our organization's offerings to our best advantage.

We have not been the best in getting the word out about Inner Wheel. We need to share our story and not be afraid to speak on behalf of Inner Wheel U.S.A. and the Inner Wheel U.S.A. Foundation. A daunting task- yes it is. But we have to work on it.

Ideas include:

- Communicating with other Districts and Clubs in the United States as well as around the world regarding our local projects, type of club, our Foundation's goals and the number of children we have served
- Newspaper articles
- Speaking at Rotary meetings and functions
- Visual aides are a wonderful tool for PR
- Sharing IW with friends and family and
- Educating yourself with current issues of IW

Some of the main goals of public relations are to create, maintain and protect the organization's reputation, enhance its prestige and present a favorable image. "Studies have shown that consumers often base their purchase decisions on a company's reputation, so public relations can have a definite impact on revenue. Public relations can be an effective part of a company's overall marketing strategy."

Another major public relations goal is to create goodwill for our organization. This involves such functions as social activities for members, media relations and community relations. Public relations may function to educate others about many things relevant to the organization as well as to overcome misconceptions and prejudices.

*Educating ourselves, showing excitement about our organization, and sharing information with others will enhance the objects of Inner Wheel.  
But it is up to each of us to spread the word!*

## ***Twelve Benefits of Being Affiliated with Inner Wheel U.S.A.***

1. **Form equals substance.** Organizational structure and by-laws give each Inner Wheel club its legitimacy, reporting procedures, form and substance. Without these, a group cannot sustain itself in the long-run. Without form, it has been shown that groups lose their substance and durability and dissolve quickly.

By-laws and rules for governance are **required by the IRS** in order for charitable clubs to maintain a non-profit 501©(3) tax-exempt, charitable status. The IRS reviews this status annually.

2. The highly desirable non-profit 501©(3) status is **automatically conferred** from IWUSA via the clubs' charters. Thus, there's no need for clubs to establish their own or spend extra money for required IRS or State DOJ filings.
3. Non-profit 501©(3) status, **grants the legal authority** or an Inner Wheel club to raise monies for charities. Without this status, clubs cannot raise any monies legally in many states unless they are professional fundraisers, a status that has its own legal costs, filing and requirements.
4. With a non-profit 501©(3) status, **donors are more willing to contribute** because:
  - a. They can take a tax deduction, if allowable.
  - b. They view the club as legitimate and durable and are thus more likely to support the cause.
5. All annual **IRS renewal filings are handled** by IWUSA, savings the clubs paperwork and time.
6. IWUSA affiliation and annual dues **include liability insurance coverage** for members and guests attending a sponsored IW club event.
7. Each IW club may select its own charitable causes. Additionally, IWUSA also offers an optional avenue for giving via the IWUSA Foundation. With wise participation, major amounts of money are raised for its designated service effort, the national IWUSA Myoelectric Limb Project.
8. The overall mission shared by Inner Wheel clubs meets the very humanistic needs of its members to give of their time, talent and energy to millions of hurting and helpless women and children.
9. **There is strength in numbers and shared missions.** Sustaining local friendships month-to-month creates a developed feeling of satisfaction and connectedness to one another and ones community.
10. There is an opportunity to serve the **one of the world's largest women's service organization** through optional participation in district, zone, national or international offices, committees and foundations.

*Twelve Benefits of Being Affiliation with Inner Wheel U.S.A. continued:*

11. The connection with Inner Wheel Clubs throughout the world allows members an introduction when they travel. Members may also write, connect with other clubs and develop international understanding.
12. Contact with Rotary International and local Rotary clubs provides extra **status, visibility and responsibility** and helps to further each club's ability to raise funds for its selected charitable causes.

# *Call to Service*

Suggested Ideas for Implementing the Inner Wheel U.S.A. Strategic Plan

Ideas compiled from Districts and Clubs of IWUSA

## Membership Expansion & Retention

### Questions!

How do you get new members?  
How do you keep the ones you have?

It seems like a giant puzzle that is constantly being reworked with little success. The following are suggestions that may help to put some pieces of the puzzle into place, to produce a satisfying result.

**Piece 1** - The most effective way to get new members is working with your Rotary clubs. As you will see, many clubs have gotten away from this concept and have merely become a women's organization. They may have fund and do good works, but it is very difficult to get new members from Rotary spouses with no connection. We have listed the clubs and ways some of them work with their Rotary. Think about what activities/functions your Rotary is involved in and how church club might help out.

**Piece 2** - Next in importance is keeping the members you have. Making meetings fun is probably the most important thing you as president can do. Under *Piece 2* on the following pages is a list of months with some possible ideas to make your meetings fun. Check out [familycrafts.about.com/library/spdays/blocktdayslong.htm](http://familycrafts.about.com/library/spdays/blocktdayslong.htm) and you will find a mountain of ideas and holiday fun projects for each month.

**Piece 3** - Charity work is a good way to build camaraderie and just plain feel good while fulfilling one of the objectives of Inner Wheel.

**Piece 4** - The last part of the packet is the last piece of the puzzle, friendship. Some would say that this is the most important piece. Hopefully while having fun and doing good work with your club you will have forged some friendships along the way. But to further this objective, extending yourself beyond your own club is very helpful. Of course your ISO extends friendship by communicating with clubs in other countries; however it is important to communicate within your own district and zone. Several clubs have done this already and I've listed what they have done in the recent past. It's a great way to meet people and get ideas for your own club.

## IDEAS FROM VARIOUS CLUBS TO HELP IMPLEMENT EACH OF THE PUZZLE PIECES

### **Piece 1 – Getting New Members** Ways IW Clubs Have Assisted Rotary

Assisted with food box distribution

Worked at Bingo Parlor, met at a pub where a deceased Inner Wheel member was honored, and they assisted Rotary with the Special Olympics.

Prepared and served hors d'oeuvres for Rotary Clubs annual Christmas party.

Selling hot dogs and beer at Golden Gate Fields Race Track.

Provided volunteers for Senior Luau, Crab Feed, Chicken Festival, Demotion Dinner, and Rotary uncorked and put on a Spaghetti Dinner for one of Rotary's meetings.

Helped sell snow cones at Duck Races, and was a speaker at a meeting.

Often helps with BBQ.

Provided a spouse program during Large Club Executive Meeting.

Provided a speaker for a meeting.

Now that you are assisting Rotary, take advantage of these times by approaching wives if they are there and befriend them. Tell them you're in IW if possible, hopefully they will see a group wearing Inner Wheel shirts of some sort while working and laughing. Invite them to your next meeting or wait and call them later. If you invited them at the time, follow this up with a phone call and an offer to take them to the meeting. Also use this time to talk to women Rotarians - having them support IW is huge. Some may even want to also join IW for the woman connection. Do the same thing at Rotary couples' functions.

As Club President, you should contact the Rotary President and:

Ask for their calendar of events, especially if the president doesn't currently have a husband in Rotary.

Ask if Inner Wheel members could be included in some of their meetings and functions, especially widows of former Rotarians.

Ask if you can be put on their mail or email list to receive a copy of their newsletter to monitor upcoming events.

Always obtain a membership roster and make copies for every member in your club so each person has the ability to contact a wife they may have made contact with.

Support Rotary projects with donations of materials and money.

**Ideas from Various Clubs to Help Implement Each of the Puzzle Pieces continued:**

Decorate for Rotary events.

Assist Rotary with Exchange Students – (housing and hosting parties for students).

Thank Rotary in person for supporting Inner Wheel.

Make Rotary a Sustaining Member or Rose Council member of the IW Foundation.

If you are going to contribute to one of their causes, tell the President you want to come to their meeting to present them with a check. You want to make sure all Rotarians know about IW, sending a check may result in only the treasurer and or president knowing.

## Piece 2 - Keeping Members/ Having Fun Monthly Meeting Ideas

**January** - Wear mufflers and hats and make snowmen. Be sweater girls and make snowflakes. Wear comfy cozies and exchange or collect books. Tell about the book you brought. Take snowmen, snowflakes, or books to assisted living facility. On my birthday, it's National Blonde Brownie Day. It's Hot Tea month so enjoy a variety of teas at the meeting.

**February** - Wear something red or pink. Decorate valentine cookies or make valentines to take to seniors or group home. Wear red, white, and blue and everyone come with one fact about a president. It's International Friendship month, go to Founder's Day lunch. It's National Embroidery month, learn to embroider.

**March** - Wear something green. Serve Irish coffee. Decorate shamrocks. Decorate Easter eggs. The 2<sup>nd</sup> week is crochet week, so learn how to crochet.

**April** - Wear or make spring bonnets. Have a contest. Plant a seed for you or go to group home and plant flowers there. Celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday and everyone bring one of his books. Chew bubble gum for bubble gum week.

**May** - Wear something flowery or just wear a flower. Bring in flowers from gardens to take to seniors or a sick Inner Wheeler or Rotarian. Make paper flowers to decorate senior rooms. It's Asparagus month, bring in favorite asparagus recipe to share. Tour your favorite nursery.

**June** - Usually installation time, so that would be the theme. Did you know June is Potty Training Awareness month? How about members bringing Depends to the meeting and gave them to seniors in need. Have members bring item of interest (unique) to share. Visit art gallery. How did you meet your husband? Plan theater party with husbands.

**July** - Usually a dark month for clubs.

**August** - Have a picnic planning meeting indoors or out, meet at a park. The second week is National Smile Week, so smile a lot. The 3<sup>rd</sup> week is American Dance Week so go out dancing together. Go to an art gallery in celebration of American Artist Appreciation Month.

**September** - Come dressed in something fitting what your job/career is or was and have an occupational minute. Wear fall colors. Decorate fall leaves. Make garlands for seniors. Go to Apple Hill (California location). Make caramel apples. It's Classical Music month so bring in favorite classical CD and listen to them during meeting. Welcome back dinner. Back to school - bring grade school pictures and have everyone guess who's who. Have a speaker on breast cancer.

*Piece 2 - Keeping members....continued:*

**October** -October is Cancer Awareness Month – Form a Club team and participate in a walk.

Wear a costume. Have a contest. Wear orange. Bring a pumpkin to decorate. It's Family History month, so come dressed in your clothes from your country of origin. Bring in your family tree. Museum tour. Have a taffy pull or make popcorn balls.

**November** - Besides Thanksgiving, celebrate Veterans Day, International Drum month, National Epilepsy month, National Model Railroad month, Peanut Butter Lover's month, Children's Book week, National Author's Day. Or you can just make a Christmas craft. Wrap gifts for Rotary. Go to one of your areas old town or visit a museum. Make pies. Reading hour at library or children's hospital.

Support our Servicemen by making boxes to send overseas for the holidays.

**December** - Christmas party. Teams make snowman or wreaths. Christmas carol at Senior Center.

\* Go to [familycrafts.about.com](http://familycrafts.about.com) for something about every month.

## WHAT INNER WHEEL CLUBS HAVE DONE FOR FUN!

Speakers - Principal of a K-8 private school for gifted kids.  
Sheriff/Fire Department Representatives  
Slide show about member's trip to Romania for Feed the Children  
KARE Crisis Nursery  
Princess Diana's Press Corp  
Author Brenda Novak

### BBQs

Strolled through a local garden or visited Flower Farm in Loomis & a nursery

Played Partini, Bunco, Bingo

Food tour of S.F. North Beach area

Work party meeting testing recipes for treats

Made serving dishes out of pie plates

Ice cream social

Bought jewelry made by women in Kenya

Shared pictures of members from their past

Went to Red Mule Ranch in Fiddletown

Played with clay

Bus trip to Ashland

Went to Sacramento Archives & Museum Collection Center

Had a summer social in member's garden

Champagne River Cruise

Soup social

Pizza party

Sutter County Memorial Museum

Several clubs toured community libraries and discovered a great wealth of resources for people of all ages including computer opportunities, movies – no rental cost to pay and recorded books.

Making cooling rings for military person's neck.

Mixed meeting with other Inner Wheel clubs.

### Piece 3 - Charities

Made blankets and donated them to the Community Center for needy children.

Collected bears throughout the year and donated them to Sheriff's Office, Fire Dept. and the Sacramento Receiving Home. Donated money and toys to the Stanford Settlement.

Worked at a Bingo Parlor

Collect canned or dry goods at every meeting for local food closet; each member donated a gift card to a local grocery store which were donated to the C.H. Domestic Violence Intervention Center. Adopted a family at Christmas and provided Christmas dinner. Held a book sale with those proceeds funding our literacy program.

Held an annual Bunco game to raise funds for the Roseville Quilter's Guild to make quilts for hospitalized children. Provide scholarships and a laptop to students at Sierra Nueva High School. Helped seniors and teen mothers.

Adopted 2 classrooms at elementary school. Provided toiletries, paper goods, and food items to The Family House at local hospital, and donated books for local hospitals.

Donated IW books to Chicks in Crisis. Donated hand-made decorative serving dishes to Senior Center. Had a book sale and donated books to the IW Literacy Program and to Mercy Hospital Pre-natal Recovery Program.

Had a Bunco and Spaghetti Feed fundraiser. Sold self-published cookbooks. Donated to local school's Art Docent Program. Made blankets for Project Linus. Held a jewelry sale fundraiser for PEMA Counseling & Training Center in Kenya. Took part in the Read Across America program at local schools. Donated to a family who lost their wife/mother killed by drunk driver.

Collected canned food for local bank. Collected toys for needy children at Christmas. Delivered IW books to Casa de Esperanza and A Woman's Friend office. Donated canned goods to Christian Assistance Network.

Support KARE Crisis Nursery and baked pies for them to sell at the Penn Valley Rodeo and the Draft Horse Classic. Support local Maternity Health Clinic with donations of high protein food, gift certificates for baby stuff.

Helped girls at a group home decorate Valentine cookies in February. Carve pumpkins at Halloween. Distributed baby bottles to collect change for the Sacramento Crisis Nursery. Members bring items to a consignment shop with proceeds going to charities.

Had a Bunco brunch fundraiser and donated to Folsom Cordova School District Summer Food Service Program.

Volunteers at Adult Care centers.

**Piece 3 – Charities continued-**

Inner Wheel Young Reader's Club (placing books for underprivileged children at county centers for children)

Set up Teacher/Student Supply Stations at local schools.

Donated paper, toiletry, cleaning items and groceries for County Children's homes.

Contribution for camp scholarships for children.

Provide layettes for needy parents at local hospitals.

Support immunization projects within your community.

Hold a tea to honor outstanding teen volunteers.

Take gifts bags to children in hospitals.

Donated to Mustard Seed School for homeless children. Donated IW books to Flourishing Families Program.

Help out at a local book store. Help the Senior Center luncheon program and support the Yolo County Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Center.

Donated to Hand of Hope and Able Riders

Most clubs support the Inner Wheel U.S.A. Foundation which is, AND SHOULD BE, our first priority. The Foundation is our National Project.

#### **Piece 4 - Club Interaction**

Inner Wheel Clubs come together for joint meetings, dinners,  
visiting local entertainment centers, plays.

Out of town bus trips.

Supporting various community walks together as a team – WEAR AN  
INNER WHEEL SHIRT!

Getting together for craft nights.

Hosting International Inner Wheel members.