

CHANGING WITH THE TIMES IN SDRTA

BYLAWS/STANDING RULES

- **May need changing prior to action**
- **Consider a “pilot program” for a year first**
- **Don’t be too restrictive/specific about meeting dates & times**
- **Decrease number of officers/committee chairs**
- **Open membership to all retired school personnel**

OFFICERS

- **Relieve officers of some duties. Appoint “hosts” or ask for volunteers to arrange meetings and organize programs; involve more members and take responsibility off same leaders year after year.**
- **Request help from SDRTA Board liaison.**
- **Attend leadership workshops.**
- **Encourage members to attend convention and SDRTA bus trips.**
- **Don’t be afraid to try something new and different.**
- **Mentor and encourage new leaders.**
- **Form local unit committee of both long-time and newer members to suggest change.**

MEMBERSHIP

- **Collect names and addresses of retired school personnel from current members; write letters inviting them to meetings.**
- **Work diligently to acquire names of new retirees each spring and contact them. (Send congratulations upon retirement and enclose one-year local membership; invite them to first meeting in the fall; assign a member to contact them in person; be encouraging; stress importance of RTA)**
- **If one doesn’t join the first year of retirement, don’t forget about him/her.**
- **Get word out to recent retirees about RTA activities. Involve potential and new members in one specific event that might be of interest (assist at Food Bank once a month, judge essay contest, community clean-up day, join book club). An episodic event may appeal to new member more than commitment to attend meetings.**
- **Inform potential members about AARP and SDRTA lobbyists working to protect retirement system.**

- Ask a new retiree with a special interest/hobby to present a program at unit meeting.

MEETINGS

- Distribute interest survey at fall meeting. (Ask for program suggestions or volunteer interest. Use this to match member with certain “job”.)
- Schedule brainstorming meeting to learn what members want from local RTA. (Meet less often; change meeting place; different time; more socialization; type of community service, etc)
- Always make meetings meaningful; have programs that appeal to most members.
- Consider varying meeting times and places. Need good communication system in place (email, calling committee, printed program)
- Consider variety of food events (breakfast, morning coffee, lunch, soup supper, potluck, hors d’oeuvres, afternoon pie & coffee)
- Have a joint meeting with other units in the area, especially when you have a “special” program of interest. Consider a “regional meeting” with 3-4 units invited.
- “Field trips” to area places of interest or attend a theatrical performance in a neighboring community as the monthly meeting or a special event. May want to charter bus for longer-distance trips (Pierre to Sioux Falls)
- Organize interest groups (book club, card playing, Mah Jongg)
- “Guest Meeting” when each member brings or invites a new retiree to a regular meeting or maybe just a meeting to inform them about RTA. Use a coffee/tea talk time to get acquainted and share what unit and state organization have to offer. Have handout prepared to give the potential member.
- Encourage spouses to attend meetings. (State membership is open to spouses.)
- Promote SDRTA bus trips by having a member tell briefly about a recent trip.
- Advertise meetings in local newspaper, if not too costly. Send emails about meetings to members and to potential members.
- Ask members for program ideas.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- If limited number of volunteers or lack of interest in volunteering, opt to do one big project a year, such as Back-to-School Supply Drive, local food drive, etc.
- Ask members for community service ideas.

- **Gain community service ideas from unit reports in newsletters. (available online)**

WEBSITE

- **Share meeting/program ideas, unit activities, and community service projects on website.**
- **Network with other unit presidents for specifics about an idea or project.**

These are merely SUGGESTIONS for unit leaders. Compiled by an SDRTA Committee (Marrietta Catlin, Dr. Hank Kusters, Shirley Eisnach). August, 2011