

# **CLUB STORIES: GROWTH**

Featuring the Kiwanis Clubs of Kewanee  
and Berea

2025 Kiwanis International Convention  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.



## **TODAY'S SESSION**

**Goal:** Learn successful membership growth using proven strategies.

**Agenda:**

- Each club will share a unique approach to growing their club membership.
- Panel Q&A session





# **KIWANIS CLUB OF KEWANEE**

**Two For Two**

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**Angie Burford**



## **KEWANEE KIWANIS CLUB**

- Founded in 1922.
- Sponsor of 10 SLP clubs.
- Biggest community projects:
  - Santa's Helpers.
  - Pancake breakfast.
  - Peanut Day.
  - Kiwanis Kids Golf Classic.

And  
many  
more!



 **Kiwanis**

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- Biggest community projects:
  - Santa's Helpers.
  - Pancake breakfast.
  - Peanut Day.
  - Kiwanis Kids Golf Classic.

## **CHALLENGE BEFORE GROWTH**

At 100-year mark, number of members fell to 65.

Decline due to:

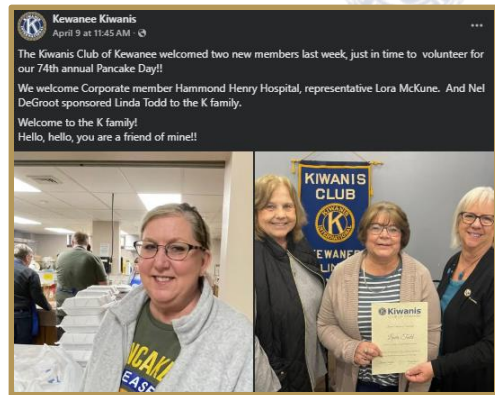
- Aging membership.
- Lack of recruitment efforts.



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- Declining membership due to:
  - Aging members.
  - Lack of recruitment efforts.

# RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

- Membership drives.
- Celebrate new members!
- Two For Two.
- Follow the steps in Kiwanis International's ACE tools.



- We used it all. Two For Two was a tool we worked and adapted to fit our members' recruiting skills. Members were asked to provide referrals. The membership committee worked on a list of community contacts to make cold calls and set appointments. We held concentrated membership drives. We promoted on our FB page the new members joining the K family.
- Membership drives.
  - Celebrate new members on social media!
- Two for Two:
  - Members provide referrals.
  - Membership committee creates cold call lists.
  - Appointments are set.
  - Follow up within 10 days to answer any questions and invite to join.

## RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

- Modernize meetings:
  - Offer evening meeting for younger members.
  - Two meeting types: traditional and service project.
- Put club activities, fundraisers, etc., in print.



 Kiwanis

- Modernize meetings.
  - Offer evening meetings for younger members.
  - Two meeting types:
    - One is a service project.
    - One is traditional.
- Put club activities, fundraisers, etc. in print.
  - Prospective members can take back to review as they make their decision.

## **IMPACT OF TWO FOR TWO**

- Corporate membership resulted in SLP sponsor.
- Growth: 65 members to 103 in a year in a half.
- Increase in younger members.
- Renewed member energy.



 **Kiwaniis**

- Corporate membership resulted in Builder's Club sponsor.
  - The new Corporate membership with the Police Department resulted in the Kiwanis advisor to one of our Builders club. The students love seeing the Police officers attending their meetings and service project.
- 65 members to 103 in a year in a half.
  - Increase in younger members.
- Member energy is revitalized:
  - Excited to try new projects.
  - Extra hands for service means less pressure on everyone!

## **SUSTAINING GROWTH**

- Expand committees to engage new members:
  - Listen.
  - Brainstorm.
  - Ask.
- Provide more support to our community and our 10 SLPs!



- Expand committees to engage new members.
  - Listen to their interests.
  - Brainstorm new project ideas.
  - Ask them to invite their friends and family to join the Kiwanis family.
- Provide more support to our community and our 10 SLPs!

## OUR ADVICE

- Make recruiting a party with Two For Two!
  - Desire for growth.
  - Clean house.
  - Invite.
- 3 biggest lessons:
  - Everyone contributes.
  - "No" means "not now."
  - Quality over quantity is essential.



- Make recruiting for your club a party using Two for Two!
  - The first step is the club must decide that they want to grow.
  - The second step is to “clean your house for the party.”
  - The third step is to invite people to the party.
- 3 biggest lessons learned:
  - Everyone can contribute to the effort.
  - "No" is not always "no" but a "not now." Patience will pay off.
  - Quality over quantity is essential.



# **KIWANIS CLUB OF BEREA**

**Open House**

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**Robin Gagnow**



## **KIWANIS CLUB OF BEREA**

- Over 100 years.
- Sponsor of 4 SLPs.
- Biggest community projects:
  - Operation Berea Kind.
  - Berea Rib Cook Off.
  - Scholarships and grants.
  - Empty Bowl.
  - Oktoberfest.
  - Providence House holiday wish list.



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## **CHALLENGE BEFORE GROWTH**

Out of 85 members, only about:

- 25 consistently came to meetings.
- 10 served in leadership roles.
- 40 participated in service projects.



"We needed younger members who were ready to serve in leadership roles."  
-Club President Jeff Haas



- Out of 85 members, only about...
  - 25 consistently came to meetings.
  - 10 served in leadership roles.
  - 40 participated in various service projects.

# RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

- Created recruitment video:
  - Educates about Kiwanis.
  - Highlights club and community.
  - Invites them to visit a club meeting!
- Refreshed the website.



- Created recruitment video:
  - Educates about Kiwanis.
  - Highlights club and community:
    - community.
    - service projects.
    - fundraising.
    - SLPs.
  - Invites them to visit a club meeting!
- Refreshed the website.

## RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

### Recruiting committee:

- Advertised open house.
- Visited potential corporate members (police/fire departments, local banks).
- Invited personal and community contacts.



 Kiwanis

- Established recruitment committee:
  - Advertised open house.
    - Members put notices in local publications, even including church bulletins, and visited local institutions.
    - Like many successful Kiwanis clubs, the Berea club drew upon existing factors in the community: a relationship with local leadership and a knowledge of what interests people. For instance, members invited Berea's mayor, Cyril Kleem, to speak at a club meeting — and then made a special effort to invite as many community members as possible to attend.
  - Visited potential corporate members:
    - Police/fire departments.
    - Local bank community.
  - Invited personal and community contacts.

## NIGHT OF OPEN HOUSE

- Questions answered by club members and SLPs.
- Guest speakers.
- Recruitment video shown.



 **Kiwaniis**

- The event was set up with tables for club members and members of local Kiwanis Service Leadership Program clubs to talk with prospects, introducing themselves and answering questions. Some time also was set for presentations, such as an opening address from Haas, a showing of the “five-minute” video and one member’s discussion of the Kiwanis Objects. The club included a Kiwanis leader in the event as well: Alan Penn, executive director of the Ohio District Kiwanis Foundation and 2011-12 Kiwanis International president.
- Club members and SLPs sat at tables to answer questions.
- Speakers:
  - Former international Kiwanis President, Alan Penn.
  - Berea's club president.
- Recruitment video shown.

## **AFTER OPEN HOUSE**

- Committee followed up with open house attendees.
- Continued connecting with prospects.

Make those phone calls!

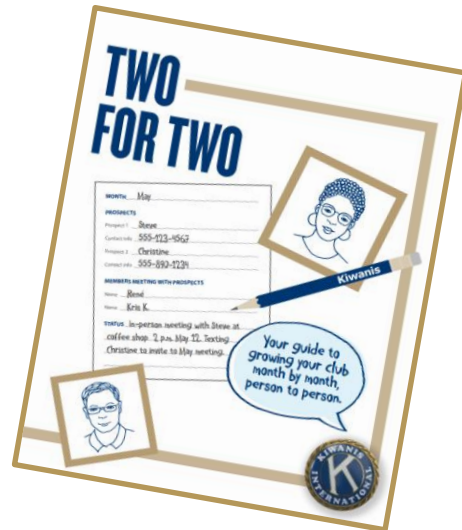


 **Kiwanis**

- We had (40) prospects attend our Open House. We captured names, emails and phone numbers from them. While we added (21) new members, we still plan to continue to reach out to the remaining prospects by politely implementing the following:
  - Keeping them abreast and inviting them to our events.
  - Encourage them to attend a meeting or two.
  - Answered any questions.
  - Offered invitation to join.

## SUSTAINING GROWTH

- Continue engaging new members.
- Acquire new prospects.
- Support your membership recruitment committee.



 Kiwanis

- Continue engaging new members:
  - Invite them for coffee (Two for Two).
  - Discuss their club experience.
  - Invite them to step into leadership or the recruitment committee.
- Acquire new prospects:
  - Record and track our regular meeting speakers and grant winners as potential new Kiwanis members.
  - Ask new members for referrals.
    - Ask existing members for corporate membership connections (For example, our club has two local banks that may be interested).
- Support your membership recruitment committee:
  - Add members who have sales experience to help in the recruiting.
  - Write phone scripts for "shy" members. Everyone can help make phone calls with the right support!
- Similar to how we invite speakers to our meetings, we are going to pursue our Kiwanis club presenting the Kiwanis mission to local businesses and various clubs throughout the city.

## OUR ADVICE

- Be proactive with recruiting.
- Personalize recruitment.
- Communicate membership expectations.



**ACE TOOL**

### HOST POTENTIAL MEMBERS GUIDE

**PURPOSE:** To give your club steps for determining your readiness for recruiting and welcoming new members. It is important for your club and your members to periodically look in the mirror and see if you are ready for guests and new members.

**AUDIENCE:** Club members and membership committee.

**FREQUENCY:** Annually — and any time before a membership event.

**STEP 1: SELF-EVALUATION**  
Use the character cards in the online club toolbox. Discuss how any of these people would feel joining your regular club meetings, service projects or fundraisers.

- What situations would make them comfortable?
- Do club members act in a way that is welcoming to newcomers?
- What are some member habits or club traditions that may seem strange to them?

Of course, you can also ask these questions about your potential new members.

**STEP 2: MYSTERY SHOPPER**  
While putting yourself into someone else's shoes is beneficial, there's nothing like feedback from an actual potential member. Find someone who matches the demographics your club wants, and ask them to visit.

• Make sure you have a backup for every assignment in case the person in charge isn't there.

**STEP 4: ENHANCE YOUR HOSTING**  
Put your hard work into practice. The Two For Two program ([kiwanis.org/twofortwo](http://kiwanis.org/twofortwo)) is a great way to practice on one or two guests at a time. Remember to evaluate how well you did and discuss how improvements can be made.

Once you're accustomed to hosting one or two potential members at a club meeting, you can use the **Host an open house** resource to invite a large number of potential members. Don't forget to use the **roster/skills analysis** resource to help create that list of invitees. And have your club's nominating committee recommend future leaders in the community to invite.

**STEP 5: EMBRACING YOUR NEW MEMBERS**

- The days of hoping that new prospects and members simply reach out and join are gone. Clubs need a proactive approach to recruiting. Be proactive with recruiting:
  - Form a recruitment committee.
  - Make calls; use phone scripts.
  - Utilize the ACE Tools from Kiwanis International.
  - Don't wait for a Pancake Breakfast, an Open House or other activity to recruit. The time is NOW.
- Personalize recruitment:
  - Don't ask them to "join" your club—ask someone to "visit your club".
- Communicate membership expectations.
  - Incorporate their passions and interests.

**One key piece of advice for struggling clubs:** Social media activities to recruit members like Facebook, Instagram, a nice website, etc. are nice but the personal contact with existing members and new prospects is essential. Friendly persistence is the key to success with recruitment.