

District 11 Membership Committee 2013 Update
By Lieutenant Governor, Karen Pati

Status of District 11 Membership

Recognizing that our D11 service, advocacy and fundraising goals are dependent on strong membership, the District strategic plan includes our goal to: "Grow D11 membership by 20% through increased membership retention and new member recruitment." Our goal, as established by Governor Tami Page is for 950 members. Although that falls in your 'unrealistic realm' our entire board has agreed it is feasible, and I'll detail why below.

As of 3/31/12 our District Treasurer, Carmen Elias Levenson, reflects current membership at 932, a mere 28 members away from target. The Villages is preparing their paperwork to charter on June 21, 2013 with 20 members, moving our gap to just 8 members.

The District leadership: Vice Area Directors, Area Directors, Lieutenant Governor and Governor are ALL committed to assisting clubs with issues and questions as strengthen their membership base. Following are some additional details.

1. ACHIEVING OUR GOAL THRU RETENTION

When we look at D11 paid dues, we peaked in 2010/11 at 1,099 members. For 2011/2012 we were at 991 paid members. The point is we have had many people that went through all the hoops to become a member, and in my view are still potential targets. Regarding the goal of 950, we were there just last year, we can do it!

2. ACHIEVING OUR GOAL THRU NEW CLUBS

Fortunately there continues to be interest in establishing more new clubs in the District, another positive step toward our membership turnaround. In my view our biggest obstacle is the need for sponsoring clubs to step forward and agree to Sponsor, Organize and Mentor (SOM) the new clubs until they are solidly operating. Therefore, this is a key module in our Area meetings, being executed throughout April 2013.

Orlando, FL is still a target for a new club, with Tampa as SOM. A follow up conference call is being planned within the next few weeks. "Information Nights" are being planned for the following sites, in this fiscal year.

- Huntsville, AL
- Decatur, AL
- Columbus, GA
- Auburn, AL
- Walton County, FL
- Hattiesburg, MS

Once a location has a core of potential members identified, we'll confirm the SOM. Meanwhile we have been building a list of interested potential members throughout the district, and may consider an area E-club in our plans for next fiscal year, still this biennium.

3. TOOLS AND TRAINING FOR ACHIEVING OUR GOAL

D11 developed a structured format for our 6 Area Meetings, all being executed in April 2013. Included were interactive modules on:

- Leadership, with a 'call to action' for District Leadership
- Tutorial on the new D11 Website, a great tool for new members
- ZI Foundation
- Advocacy, with a focus on "Zonta says NO"
- Membership: Recruitment & Retention, including 2 handouts:
 - D11 Membership Handbook
 - 100 Ways to Recruit New Members
- STARTING A NEW CLUB
- Z-Clubs and Golden Z-Clubs
- Small group sessions, focused on
 - Membership
 - Fundraising
 - Service

After all meetings have been conducted and evaluations completed we will have a board conference call to determine next steps for the District Conference. The date of the conference is September 26-29, 2013.

Members are the key to our success

In summary, while membership is still low in many the District Clubs, we have delivered quality service to our communities. This is clearly seen in the Club Reports the Board has been reviewing. By continuing to stay on-mission, by focusing on retention, and by developing new clubs, we feel confident in achieving our district goals.