



Portage Rotary Club Traditions and Expectations

Welcome to Portage Rotary! Your fellow club members want you to know that we are ready to welcome you and help you to fully engage in fellowship with the good work and great fun we share with each other, and with our community and our world. When joining any group, it takes a while to figure out a club's customs and traditions, and what's expected of members. Here is a primer we hope will help you in this process.

As you would expect, Portage Rotary Club's Traditions and Expectations have been developed over the years. This document will provide some of them. Please feel free to ask veteran members or club officers any questions you find are not answered here.

New Member Orientation:

The Fireside Chat will typically occur an hour before the meeting at which you will be inducted. The goal will be to further familiarize you with the world of Rotary both locally and globally. Here is an opportunity for any questions you might have.

When inducted, new members are asked to give a three-minute biography. Here is your chance to introduce yourself to the club. Tells us where you are from, where you went to school, where you work and your hobbies, and tells us about your family. Please adhere to the three-minute rule.

You will be presented with your Rotary pin and your name badge with a red ribbon on it. This helps club members to recognize you, so they can introduce themselves to you. At the end of your induction meeting, please stand at the room's exit and meet club members as they leave the room.

You should also plan on arriving early for the next few meetings and stand at the entrance with the Greeter of the day. In this way, you will meet and re-meet your fellow Rotarians. After several meetings, one of the senior members of the club will invite you to remove the red ribbon.

Attendance: Members are expected to maintain at least 60 percent attendance. Our club goal is 65 percent attendance (which is the current average of Clubs within District 6360).

Each week when you arrive, when you pay for your lunch at the registration table just inside the door, you will be asked to register your attendance by writing your initials next to your name on the Club roster.

Rotarians are encouraged to make up missed meetings at other clubs. Clubs in our area include: Gull Lake, Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Sunrise, Oshtemo, Otsego, Plainwell, and Vicksburg. A list of clubs with places and times they meet is available on www.district6360.com. The club you visit will ask you to fill out a make-up card - which some clubs will mail to our club Secretary for you; or you can bring the card to our Club Secretary to record as a make-up. If by chance, you do not fill out a card, just notify our Secretary; who knows you adhere to the Four Way Test.

Makeup meetings must occur within two weeks either before or after the missed Portage Rotary meeting. It is the Rotarian's responsibility to be sure the makeup is reported to the Club Secretary. A Rotarian may check his/her attendance on the club's Web site (www.portagerotary.org) Check with the Secretary for your Login Name and Password.

If you are out of town, you can locate a club on www.rotary.org . Before leaving, you may wish to ask the Club Secretary for a banner for an exchange with the club you visit. You can then bring their banner to present to the President. It will be proudly displayed on our fabric panels. Making up meetings at other clubs offers a unique opportunity to engage with Rotarians who may choose to show you their town, and engage in additional fellowship.

You may also perform a make-up online (www.district6360.com). Look to the side bar on the right to click onto the "makeup club meeting" function.

"Dollars and Sense"

Rotarians commit time, talent, and some treasure to meet our goals of humanitarian **"Service Above Self"** for our community and our world. You'll find below a description of financial obligations and voluntary contributions that you will encounter as a club member.

The first obligation is a payment of \$14 as you enter the room for a club meeting, of which \$13 covers your meal, and \$1 goes into the Portage Rotary Club Charities account. A separate fee equal to \$1 per meeting (formerly paid with lunch and based on 46 meetings per year) is assessed/invoiced each year with the dues cycle. This fee covers the rental for our meeting space, currently at the Portage Senior Center. If you choose not to eat lunch, there is an assessment of \$3 to help cover the commitment to our vendor of 40 lunches per meeting. With regard to maintaining this commitment to 40 lunches, each Rotarian is expected to help support the lunch service through a \$4 fee for missed meetings. However, each Rotarian is allowed to miss 12 meetings per year before this fee will be assessed per each meeting missed. Also, any Rotarian on a Board-authorized Leave of Absence (LOA) will not be charged for missed meetings during that LOA.

Your next obligation is payment of Rotary dues, which when combined with the above facility fee on the dues invoice totals \$225.00, and is payable by June 15 of each year, just prior to the beginning of the new Rotary Year. Your first year's dues will be prorated to the number of months you will be a member in the current Rotary year (July 1 to June 30 each year). You will receive an invoice from the Club Treasurer, and may wish to arrange a payment plan with them. Your payment(s) will cover Rotary International dues, Rotary District 6360 dues, club dues, and your subscription to The Rotarian Magazine.

Giving to the Rotary Foundation and Portage Rotary Charities is important for us to support our service projects. We recommend you support The Rotary Foundation with a suggested donation of \$50 on your birthday and \$50 on your wedding anniversary if your budget allows. A donation in any amount is welcome, payable by cash or check to **Portage Rotary Charities** which can be deposited in the Sergeant at Arm's "fine bucket" as the club sings to honor your happy occasion. In the memo field of the check, note Paul Harris donation. This will begin your account towards a Paul Harris Fellowship.

The Kalamazoo Community Foundation also manages an account for the Portage Rotary Club Foundation. A donation to this fund will increase the principle, with earned interest paid to the club to support our charities each year. Talk to the Club Treasurer about contributing to this fund. Paul Harris Fellowships are awarded for accumulated donations of \$1,000 to The Rotary Foundation's Annual Fund (recommended) or to Polio+. The Annual Fund is recommended because your donation will be held by Rotary International in trust for three years (with the interest going towards the Foundation's worldwide humanitarian projects). After three years, one half of your donation is credited back to our District 6360, where it is used for District Grants to clubs within the District. Our club has been awarded these grants in the past — which are our dollars coming back to

us for our charitable work here at home. The other half of your money will be used for Rotary Foundation Projects worldwide.

Portage Rotary Charities:

There are several ways that our club raises money for Portage Rotary Charities, which is the 501 (c) (3) non-profit entity of our club. These are the dollars we use to fund our club's charity projects. Funds are raised by:

"Fifty/Fifty Raffle" Tickets can be purchased at the desk when you come in. You may, if you choose to, buy one ticket for \$1, three for \$2 or 6 for \$3. The raffle dollars are split, with 50% going to Portage Rotary Charities and 50% for raffle winners. There are two chances to win at the meeting's end. A ticket is drawn for 25% of the day's proceeds. A second ticket is selected for a chance to draw the ***Ace of Spades*** from a deck of cards. The kitty continues to build as the deck of cards decreases week-by-week until the ace of spades is finally drawn or the state-mandated maximum prize of \$500 is reached. At that point, a new deck of cards is placed in service and the kitty starts over again. Members may keep the proceeds or donate them back to the club for a Rotary charity of choice. Winners are encouraged not to announce their desires for their winnings in front of the club (it's okay to keep them). If you choose to donate, give the proceeds or any part thereof as you choose to the Club Treasurer, and designate a charity you would like to receive the funds.

Happy Bucks are paid in whatever denomination a member desires. The happy-buck period at the end of the meeting is where you can celebrate family or work achievements, kudos to another individual, or short "commercials" for work, community, or non-Rotary, charity-related events.

Fun Fines (generally \$1) are a tradition at Portage Rotary and are levied at the discretion of the Sergeant of Arms, in the spirit of fellowship and fun. Fines may result on any meeting day for the following types of "infractions:"

- Not wearing the Rotary pin or Rotary name badge
- Arriving late (at least you get a song for this one)
- Leaving early (you are expected to drop your fine in the fine bucket) unless the meeting runs past 1:15 p.m.
- Uttering the name of an alma mater or personal business at any meeting
- Showing up in a photograph or having your name mentioned in a public location such as the newspaper
- Allowing your cell phone to disrupt a meeting
- Sitting at a table at which both genders are not represented
- Disrupting a meeting with too much table conversation
- Improperly filling out or initialing the weekly attendance card

Our Sergeants at Arms are very creative in levying fines. Please participate knowing you are helping feed our Charities account.

"Service Above Self:"

Rotary International recognizes **Five Avenues of Service:**

- **Club Service** (for the smooth operations of the club)
- **Community Service** (for projects which directly serve the needs of our community)
- **International Service** (for projects supported by our club that reach out to our global neighbors)
- **Vocational Service** (for exhibiting high ethical standards and community outreach through our professions)
- **New Generations** (mentoring students, and nurturing tomorrow's leaders to help secure our future).

Each year, the club presents five separate awards to deserving club members, each based on one of the five avenues of service. In addition, the Club President nominates one of our members to receive the **Five Avenues of Service Citation**, signed by the President of Rotary International, in recognition of exemplary service in all five areas.

Active Participation:

Participation in club events is expected and highly recommended. In April/May each year, the President Elect will request sign-up for committee membership. The Club expects every Portage Rotarian to serve actively in at least one club service activity; one project addressing one of the other four avenues of service; one club fundraiser.

Portage Rotary has a proud tradition of raising and donating significant funds that benefit our community directly. As is our practice in recent years, two-thirds of these donations directly benefit the youth of our community through support of Rotary-sponsored **Interact Clubs**, mentoring programs at the Portage Community High School, and scholarships to worthy students.

Raising Funds:

Fundraisers provide club members with hands-on "fund and fun" raising opportunities. The Rotary Year normally begins with the **Fourth of July Fireworks** (raising money through food vending and donation buckets). The **Golf Outing** comes at summer's end and is usually our most successful revenue generator. The **Super Bowl Sweepstakes** takes place leading up to the NFL game. The annual **Portage Hockey Classic** held at Wings Stadium between Northern and Central high school squads celebrates their hockey rivalry with Portage Rotary Charities receiving a part of the proceeds of admissions and the "*Chuck-a-Puck*" game. A new activity, begun in 2018, will have Rotarians supporting food service at community concerts held at the Portage Band Shell behind the police station.

Your Service is Valued:

Community Service Hours: When members participate in board or committee meetings, club projects, working at fundraisers, or other qualifying events, they are eligible to receive either a club meeting make-up credit, or community service hours. Community service hours are tallied by Committee Chairs and reported to the Club Secretary. The five members with greatest number of hours may designate a charity to which a \$100 donation will be made in his/her name. The Club bestows "Perfect Attendance" awards in recognition of the engagement of those members - ACTIVE membership is essential to the vitality of the Club and to maintaining its valued service to our community.

In Summary:

We hope that this document has given you some insight into the **Traditions and Expectations** of our Portage Rotary Club. We are honored to have you join us in fellowship as a new Rotarian.

Welcome to Portage Rotary!

