

RETAINING MEMBERS

NOTE: The greatest number of people who decide to drop their League membership have belonged to the organization for two years or less. The best way to retain members is to never have them consider dropping in the first place. New members will remain if:

- They feel welcome, accepted and needed.
 - Their own personal needs and objectives are being met.
 - They feel some sense of commitment to the organization.
 - They are not overwhelmed with too much responsibility.
1. Build a system that keeps members informed about what's happening. Send out email reminders the week of an event. Reminders to busy people can be quick and easy.
 2. Make the most of the local bulletin:
 - a. Write articles so members unfamiliar with League lingo, acronyms, and leaders' names can make sense of them. Articles should convey enthusiasm for projects and encourage members to participate.
 - b. Biographical sketches of new members introduce them to the membership. Acknowledge accomplishments with articles about members who have been with the League five, ten, or more years.
 3. Arrange meeting times and locations for the convenience and comfort of your members.
 4. Attractive meetings include:
 - a. An agenda that outlines specific goals and assure attendees of the estimated timeframe in which items will be addressed. All will appreciate the organization and consideration of their time.
 - b. A calendar at the beginning of the year keyed to member interests to allow them to plan accordingly and set aside dates when appropriate. This helps the Board and committees organize League events, maximize the media and community **visibility**, and recruitment opportunities in advance. LWVUS/EF has a national calendar that lists many important dates your League may want to consider placing on its calendar.
 - c. Start and end promptly.
 - d. Don't forget the social aspect of meetings by offering food, a beautiful setting, a celebration of something special.
 - e. Don't forget those nametags.
 5. Let all members know the jobs/functions needed to run the organization and have a list of needed in-kind contributions. Small tasks make people feel like they are contributing without being overwhelmed.
 6. Continuously promote member benefits, both tangible and intangible, in your bulletin and other venues. Always, always, always make members aware that they are special and appreciated. Send thank you emails or notes to committee members.
 7. Try surveying member interests at the beginning of the year after you create your calendar. Event leaders will have a better idea for who may want to assist with their event. It is an opportunity to ask what sort of tasks members would be willing to undertake throughout the year. You will see what topics would be of interest to your members that may not be covered during the year. This can be remedied early in the year, before interest drops.

8. Start the membership renewal cycle earlier. Renewal instructions that come earlier often mean better cash flow, renewal during the dues period, not the grace period. Mailed renewal packages must include: window envelope, return envelope and the dues invoice. Adding anything else will often delay return of payment.

Above all else....HAVE FUN

Enjoy the League...bring a little food at next meeting...have a strictly social event...we are a social network by nature and league friendships can last a life time.