** SCWDC MEMBERSHIP IDEAS**

Howard Fisher May 2015

“The culture of a company to me defines how excellent it will be.” Tim Cook, Apple CEO

This quote is on top because the “culture” concept is vital to our search for success in obtaining and keeping members.

All ideas presented herein are at no or low cost to the Club. The guiding philosophy is for the Club to grow organically. The Club has attempted advertising campaigns and membership contests, which are not recommended at this time, and never played a role in growing the Club when it was growing.

Membership Growth:

* Make membership growth a focused goal (versus pointing to the numerous participant slots that are filled). Members are needed to run the Club.
* Young Professionals. Find out about them. How many members & non-members? Their needs? Their view of the social/recreational world? Their view on belonging? Their view on commitments? Set up a coordinated effort to get them into leading activities and serving on committees.
* Find a way to reconcile our Club’s presence in the world of Meet-Up and EventBrite, which bring non-members into our world, with the need to obtain new members?
* Keep track of non-member participant names and contact info. Follow-up on their participation by contacting them.
* Charge non-members for our free activities including membership meetings with food.
* Ski-O-Gram – For members. Perhaps non-members get a modified version or there’s a limited trial period for non-members.
* Revisit our guest fee table. Have a guest fee versus non-member fee. A guest would be a guest of a specific member, with a fee less than a non-member fee.
* Cut off non-members who participate over some limit.
* Have membership application forms at as many events as feasible.
* At activities, have a more focused effort for Club leaders to spot non-members and approach them toward making them feel welcome and comfortable.
* SCWDC brochures into ski and sport shops.
* Web site – Show less info in the public area. Look for ways to make the public area more enticing, friendly, positive image. “Our trips are better than those provided by others.” “Our members find well-run activities and also long-lasting friendships.” Let’s not encourage lurkers who have no intention of ever becoming members.

Member Retention:

* Create a better sense of community on the web site. This can include more blogs, photos, videos, post-trip stories.
* A stronger social program
* Create surprises, especially at membership meetings and social activities.
* Membership cards.
* Membership discounts at participating shops and ski areas
* Skiers are the most apt to retain membership. So let’s step up encouraging non-skiers to try skiing; and tell them about our instructional events.
* Include an open forum at the annual election meeting.
* Define our Club as being more than the sum of our activities. What image do we want to present to our members? How do we make SCWDC more “clubby”? How about “a place to meet active and interesting people”? This is important toward having members stick around and also volunteer more.

Volunteering:

Establish a healthy and positive volunteer culture. It’s not enough to find volunteers just to fill the Club’s needs. A happy volunteer corps not only encourages more members to volunteer, but can also bring in and help retain members. A positive culture at Google encourages the best prospects to apply there for employment. The management at Marriott endeavors to keep their employees happy because this helps bring back more customers. This is relevant to our goals. That’s why a volunteering section is included here amongst the membership ideas.

* Mentoring program for volunteers on the way up
* Improved BOD Volunteer Party with a twist. Make it earlier; 7:30-11:30pm is too late, and is probably discouraging some.
* Other gatherings for volunteers (ski, tennis, sailing) – build a bond
* Trainings that are more informative and fun; include new or advanced topics. This can act as a perk to volunteers.

Follow-up and Feedback:

* Surveys via email
* Know how new members learned about us and why they joined
* Maintain statistics that tell us how many non-members show up, how many of them become members, how new and non-members found out about us, average age of existing and new members.
* Membership growth committee meets occasionally to interpret data, review progress, and make adjustments or try new ideas.