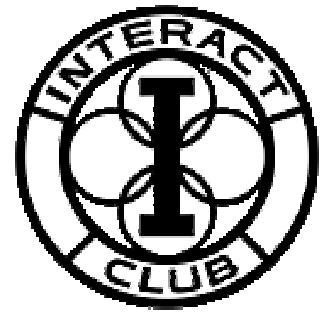


You think you want to sponsor an Interact Club...



Many Rotarians have considered asking their clubs to sponsor an Interact Club. The following is some thoughts that need to be considered before embarking upon a quest for starting a club.

During the preliminary fact-finding phase of the Morris Rotary's decision to sponsor a club, Thomas Bursh, Naperville Rotarian and 1993-94 District Interact Chairman, was invited to speak to the Morris Rotary club. It was a rah-rah program from another club's advisor and two Interactors. Then Tom brought reality to the meeting by saying how easy it is to get caught up in the thrill of starting a club. He said, "*Before a club commits to starting an Interact, it should commit to continuing to support the club for decades*". If such a commitment can't be agreed upon, then, the idea should be dropped. We already have too many Rotary clubs that are unaware they have sponsored an Interact club.

- After the members have chosen to commit the necessary support, they should read the Interact handbook to see how the organization operates.
- Second, the club should contact the district's committee for advice in working with the school's administration and setting up a meeting program.
- Third, following the committee's advice, the club should contact the school's administrators, interested teachers, and perhaps some core parents. They should be invited to attend the program.
- The Rotary club should appoint one or more members to coordinate the organizational activities. The club should

explore the possibility that a school based (most common) Interact will require the teacher advisor to be paid. Some schools cannot afford to do so and the club may have to make that financial commitment, too.

After proceeding through the varying processes of setting up an Interact club, the Rotary club should, at a minimum, purchase the Interact Banner, Four-Way Test Banner, (poles and bases may be needed) and a bell and gavel. Some Rotary clubs purchase Interact T-shirts for their clubs. This will increase visibility and status of the group.

The long-term commitment will require one Rotarian to attend each meeting to lend the support of the Rotary club and it's members. Rotary clubs often invite Interactors to attend Rotary meetings for the experience and encouragement. Special socials with the Interactors' parents involved is good for both organizations.

An Interact club can invigorate a Rotary Club by working on projects with Interactors. Their enthusiasm is contagious and their creativity is inspiring. Enjoy your new club.

(By PDG Chuck Johnson, 2003-04)