



Keep Them, Don't Sweep Them: Strengthening Community by Valuing Every Member

As we head into the fall season, many clubs prepare for membership renewals by looking at their roster to identify those whom they plan to drop. Every January, we hear the same phrase: “We’re just cleaning our rolls.” But too often, what that really means is: *We’ve lost someone.*

It’s easy to focus on growth by adding new members, but real, lasting growth also comes from holding on to the people who already said “yes, “ the ones who believed in us enough to join. This is the heart of the 2014 campaign mentioned by President Becky that still rings true today: **“Keep them, don’t sweep them.”**

We all know the feeling of being left out or overlooked. The poem “*The Member Who Never Came Back*” reminds us that someone sitting quietly at our meetings—or missing a few—might be a member slipping through the cracks—not because they didn’t care, but because we didn’t notice.

So how can we do better? Here are five simple actions your club can take this fall to re-engage members before they’re swept away:

- 1. Check in with intention.** Create a list of members who haven’t attended recently. Reach out personally—not just through group emails. A simple phone call or handwritten card can make a big difference.
- 2. Ask, don’t assume.** Sometimes, people stop coming because they feel excluded, don’t know how to help, or struggle with scheduling. Ask what they need to feel welcome and involved again.
- 3. Make room for everyone.** Don’t let your club become cliquish. Rotate where you sit, invite newer members into conversations, and encourage mixed-age or interest-based teams for projects.
- 4. Offer flexible engagement.** Not every member can attend every meeting, but that doesn’t mean they don’t care. Let them know how they can still help—online, behind the scenes, or through one-time service events.
- 5. Celebrate every contribution.** Recognize members who show up consistently *and* those who’ve stepped away but are returning. Highlight small wins and acts of kindness, not just big service projects.

As you reflect on your club’s year, ask: Who haven’t we seen in a while? Who might be waiting for someone to notice their absence?

We build thriving communities not just by who we bring in but also by how we keep people connected once they arrive. Be the saguaro cactus not only for your community but also for your members. Let’s live out our values of Fellowship, Goodwill, and Community Service—not just for the new faces but also for the familiar ones who might need us now more than ever.

Keep them, don’t sweep them. Because every member matters.