



Guide

Welcoming New Members

Navy League of the United States
July 2001

2300 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22201-3308
800.356.5760

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OVERVIEW

"Now you have added new members to your council's roster, so lets make them welcome by recognizing them and including them immediately in council activities."

GOAL: To retain your new members and give them opportunities to add to the enthusiasm, creativity, and growth of your council, you must provide an environment of acceptance.

New members are added to your council monthly by members recruiting new members or through national direct mail campaigns. To help ensure that your new members become involved, your council should have a program which recognizes new members and provides opportunities for involvement.

There are three core areas to focus on to retain new members:

1. Recognition
2. Acceptance
3. Involvement

Everyone has different strengths and talents, so find out what your new members' interests and talents are and get them involved!

As you develop your plans for getting new members involved, please review the **Retention Kit** (Revised: 6/00) for general retention ideas. The new member orientation program, welcome letter, and survey are reprinted in this kit.

New members are essential for the continued growth of the Navy League - So make them immediately welcome!

RECOGNIZING NEW MEMBERS

Correspondence

As soon as a new member is recruited, send a new member

- A Welcome letter,
- A new member survey, and
- Your council's most recent newsletter

A sample survey is enclosed on page 6. You may simply copy this or revise it to include all your local council's activities. **Expect new members to become involved and give them ample opportunities.** Some of your best workers may be hesitant to volunteer initially because they are unsure if their input is welcomed when they first join.

When new members surveys are returned, the member should be immediately contacted. If they request to assist with a project which is several weeks or months away, call and tell them when they can expect to be contacted by the Chairman of the committee. Or, if the chairman for that activity has been selected, have the committee chairman call the new member and tell them about the activity and when their participation will be needed. **Following up on the survey is essential.**

Newsletter

All new members should be listed in your council's newsletter as soon after they join as possible. If you have available space in your newsletter, include at least one line of information about the new member.

Here's a sample:

John Smith, Computer Specialist, ACE Communications, former Navy.

June Smith, Lawyer, Smith & Smith, recently relocated from Washington, DC.

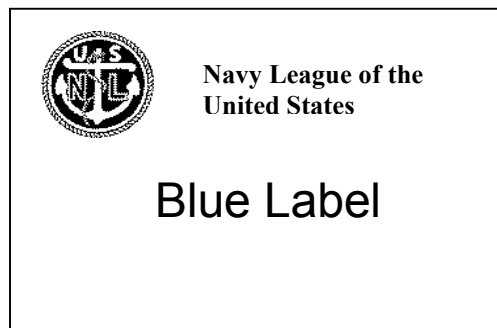
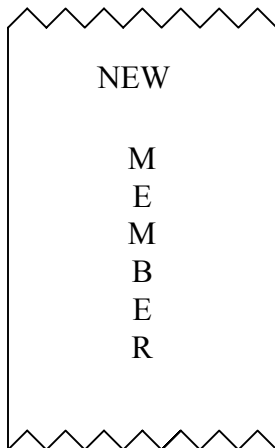
Meetings

Pre-Meeting/Social Hour--Assign a new member to be a host/hostess to each new member. This could be the person who recruited the new member or any other council member. Always have host/hostesses available and ready to introduce new members during the pre-meeting social.

During the Meeting--Personally introduce each new member at the beginning of your meeting. Take the time to tell something about the new member--this will be a special welcome, which will take very little time out of your meeting. You can use something as short and simple as the recommendation above for your newsletter or if time allows, tell more about the new member.

Use special ribbons or name badges to recognize new members, guests, and members at all your council meetings and functions. The Navy League's fulfillment company now carries three name badges for this purpose. The blue Navy League name badge is used for members, the red for visitors, and the gold for new members. All members will recognize and be able to welcome new members and guests.

Some councils provide a special red ribbon imprinted with "New Member" for the new member to wear on their name badge at their first meeting. This clearly recognizes their attendance.



Post-Meeting--If you really want that new member to return, follow-up with a postcard or short note telling the new member that you enjoyed having him/her at the meeting and that you look forward to their involvement.

Telephone Committee--Does your council have a telephone committee? A telephone committee is a task group that has as its principle purpose the task of calling new members to welcome them aboard and calling members who did not renew their membership to persuade them to renew. A telephone committee to call new members can be a very effective tool. The telephone committee can give a verbal welcome and remind the new member about the upcoming meeting or function.

THREE STEPS TO A NEW MEMBER'S RENEWAL

After a new member is recruited, there are three steps through which a member progresses:

Step 1: New Member Orientation

Many councils provide a new member orientation meeting. The amount of time you allow for this session will depend on the size and structure of your council. See the following page for a sample new member orientation plan. The real essence of this program is to initially inform new members of their benefits and opportunities as well as expectations for their participation.

A council can have a brief session for new members following each meeting which outlines the benefits, opportunities, and council activities. If new member surveys were not distributed earlier in the membership process, this meeting is a great place to ask members to complete the form.

Step 2: Involvement

Members who understand what is going on within the council and why certain activities are being sponsored will often be more responsive to getting involved. **It is very important to ask a new member to participate.** This will show acceptance and provide the immediate opportunity for involvement.

Once a member has expressed an interest in working on a council committee or activity, be sure to follow-up. The chairman of the event should call the member and tell them what to expect and when the activity begins. The new member should be immediately involved and encouraged to offer ideas and suggestions.

Step 3: Renewal

This step is much easier if the council has provided orientation for new members and then provided them opportunities to become involved. Members who feel an integral part of a council will certainly renew! **Don't wait until the end of the member's first year to ask them to participate--it will probably be too late.**

NEW MEMBER SURVEY

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

How did you learn about the Navy League: (Please circle appropriate answer)

1. Someone asked me.
2. Know someone involved.
3. Newspaper/other medias.
4. Former service member who had contact with the Navy League.
5. Received information in the mail.

Listed below are activities we support throughout the year. As a new member of our council, we need you to select the area or areas in which you have the most interest. We need your input to continue to offer more interesting and worthwhile events and activities for our members and community. (If your schedule does not allow full participation at this time, list your interests for future involvement.) ***Our council needs you!***

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Volunteer Now</i>	<i>Areas of Interest for future involvement</i>
1. Serve as an officer (circle one) Yes or No Position:		
2. Committees		
A. Retention		
B. Membership		
C. Sea Cadets		
D. Newsletter Editor (published monthly)		
E. Service Recruiting		
F. Program		
G. Scholarship		
H. Family Support/Active Duty Spouse		
I. Ship Unit/Facility Adoption		
J.		
K.		
3. Meeting Greeter (welcome members and guests at a meeting. Indicate preferred month: _____)		
4. Military Ball		
5. Fund-raising		
6. Social Activities:		
A. Golf		
B. Tennis		
C. Cruises		
D. Dances		
E. Other		

Do you have ideas for new or different program which will help us better educate the community about the need for a strong maritime defense or to offer involved support of our men and women of the sea services?
(Please describe on back)

Return to:

WELCOME LETTER

Dear:

Welcome to the _____ Navy League Council. As a member of our council, you support the national & worldwide mission of the Navy League as well as local projects.

We have programs and special activities which support the men and women of the sea services and provide information and programs to educate our community about the importance of sea power to our nation's national defense and continued well being. We have adopted ships/units, which give us an opportunity to provide direct, hands-on support to the men and women who work for our freedom.

It is important to our community and the nation to support our initiatives. This is achieved through annual local and national scholarship programs, support of Sea Cadets, and other youth endeavors such as NROTC and NJROTC programs, scholarships, and essay contests.

On a more personal note, membership in our council will offer you a networking opportunity with community leaders. You will enjoy the camaraderie of our members as we work together to fulfill the mission of the Navy League and to simply enjoy each other's company in different social settings.

All of these activities are achieved through the teamwork of our members. A new member survey is enclosed to find out your interests and to ask you to volunteer to help improve our programs. Please complete this survey and return in the enclosed envelope.

We hold monthly (quarterly, etc.) meetings, and our next activity will be _____, on _____ at _____ p.m. at _____. We would like to introduce you at this meeting.

We are happy that you decided to become part of the Navy League and look forward to working with you in future activities. Please call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Council President
or Membership Chairman

Enclosures: 1. Survey
2. Return addressed envelope

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION PLAN

If you have a large council, form a committee. If you have a small council, select 3-4 members to execute this program.

Objective: Orient new members in the mission of the Navy League, explain how it works, and explain your council's purpose and activities.

Scope: Provide all new members with sufficient information to be effective members and receive all benefits of membership.

When: As soon as a person joins.
Conducting a 15-30 minute session after each regular meeting is the optimum time. The next plan is to offer a special session quarterly for new members. This could also be held 30 minutes to an hour immediately following a regular meeting.

How: Have a well-planned session which explains:

- a. Mission and policies of the national Navy League.
- b. Mission and policies of local council
- c. Yearly activities
- d. Special activities
- e. How the new member can become immediately involved (Have new members fill out the "New Member Survey" during the session. Then next meeting or before, tell them the committees they are on and provide the name of the committee chairman.

The key is to find something for everyone who wants to participate.

More ideas:

1. Each quarter or twice a year, have a special social for new members who joined since the last social.
2. Name badges are great to bring attention to new members during council meetings. The Navy League's catalog offers three name badges:
 - a. Blue for members
 - b. Gold for new members
 - c. Red for guests.
3. Introduce new members during the pre-meeting social and also during the meeting. Assign a member to be the host/hostess for a new member during their first meeting. The host/hostess can be the person to introduce the new member around. Often that first meeting can set the tone for the new member's involvement. So make them feel immediately welcome.