



San Antonio Northeast Rotary Club
Chartered May 19, 1987 - District 5840 - Club #24625
www.sanortheastrotary.com



the Nor'easter



Rotary
Club of San Antonio
Northeast



CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT



August 25, 2026

Salsalito Cantina Mexican Restaurant
14535 Nacogdoches Road, San Antonio, TX 78247
Social at 5:30 p.m. - Meeting from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.



Rotary's Four Way Test of the things we think, say or do:

1.) Is it the TRUTH? 2.) Is it FAIR to all concerned? 3.) Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS? 4.) Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

Our speaker this evening is Susannah Zani, Regional Sales Manager - South, with African Travel. Susannah is a versatile professional with over 29 years of progressive experience spanning customer service, training and development, sales, and product planning for African Travel, Inc..



Susannah in
Maasai Mara,
Kenya

Her love of Africa began at age 17 when she spent her senior year of high school in South Africa as a Rotary Youth Exchange Student. She is passionate about understanding different cultures, committed to sustainable travel practices, and has an unwavering commitment to offering high quality experiences at reasonable price points for her clients. Thanks go out to Anne DuBose for arranging for Susannah to visit with us this evening.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

September 1st Kristy Benitez,
Teaching School in Rural Alaska

September 8th **NO REGULAR MEETING ***

* Instead of our weekly meeting, we will hold a service project at the Alzheimer's Association main office on **Wednesday, September 9th**. See additional details below.

San Antonio Northeast Rotarians will be volunteering at the San Antonio and South Texas Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association on Wednesday, September 9th, from 5:45 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Volunteers will be calling those that have participated in the Walk to End Alzheimer's before and remind them that this year's walk will take place on Saturday, November 7th, 2026 at Six Flags Fiesta Texas. The Alzheimer's Association is located at 1100 Northwest Loop 410, Suite 302. Alzheimer's Association Walk Manager Anna Schragin at the Alzheimer's Association will be providing dinner for all volunteers. Please contact Russell Sturgeon if you have any questions.



Birthdays & Anniversaries

We do not have any birthdays or anniversaries to report this week.



At the start of tonight our Happy Bucks pot stands at \$118. That means if your ticket is drawn tonight and you pull the joker out of the deck, you will leave with at least \$59.

RECAP FROM OUR LAST MEETING

We had a good turnout at our meeting last week. Dan Clark presented Club President Dan Hernandez a Rotary club banner that he received when visiting the Mechanicsville, Virginia Rotary Club. Dan presented one of our club banners when visiting the Virginia club. Jan King's ticket was drawn last week, but unfortunately she did not draw the joker. Our friend Brian Purcell, aka the Texas Highway Man was our speaker last week. He gave us a very interesting presentation on the rules of the road.



10 ideas to maximize engagement during membership month

by Lee Ann Searight, Membership Resources Specialist

In August, we celebrate our members during Membership Month and recognize their contributions while engaging with prospective members. Here are 10 ideas we hope will inspire an exciting August for you and your club:

1. Print "What is Rotary?" business cards for each member of your club and have a contest to see who can hand out the most in six months.
2. Share the "Proud Member" graphics (Available for members of Rotary and Rotaract clubs!), then choose a day in August to post it on your social media channels. Remember to include information about how people can connect with your club, attend a meeting, or take part in a service project.
3. Review and update your club information on My Rotary and consider using the optional "Notes" field to include relevant information about accessibility, costs, dress code, or club culture so prospective members can find you easily and know what to expect!
4. Set aside a meeting in August to host a Thank-a-thon. Write short notes to new members, donors, businesses in your community, alumni, and anyone who has partnered with your club in the last year. It's a great way to appreciate these supporters and strengthen bonds.
5. Choose one meeting for your club members to make a list of people they'd like to invite to an upcoming service activity, meeting, or special event where prospective members can meet current members to learn about your club and how to get involved.
6. Remind members about all the ways they can make connections, participate in meaningful service, become a leader, expand their perspective, and design their own Rotary experience beyond the club. Consider sharing the "Designing Your Rotary Experience" resource.
7. Recognize Rotary and Rotaract club members for Rotary awards. Learn the different nomination deadlines and requirements for each award, such as the Sylvia Whitlock Leadership Award, which honors one member annually who is actively working to advance women in Rotary.
8. Feature members on your club's social media channels throughout August. Select an engaging photo along with a story about why they joined, why they stay, and how they find meaning within the club and beyond. Learn more tips on how to best use your social media channels on the Brand Center.
9. Make meetings memorable! Watch a speech from the Rotary International Convention. Or start a meeting with a short "Personal Perspective" from a current member.
10. Consider how to reinvigorate your club experience in a way that prioritizes the needs of clubs members, increasing engagement and overall satisfaction.



Rotary International staff write thank you cards to some of Rotary's new members – an annual tradition



We are about two months away from the San Antonio Northeast Rotary Club’s 16th Annual Bowling and Silent Auction Fundraiser which will take place on Saturday, October 24, 2026 at Astro SuperBowl starting at 12:00 noon. As in years past, funds raised from this event will go to awarding a scholarship to a graduating senior at James Madison High School, supporting the James Madison Interact Club’s Food Pantry, and sending two students to Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA).



16th Annual Halloween Bowling Fundraiser

Cost is \$25 per bowler, consisting of 3 games or 3 hours, whichever comes first. In addition to bowlers, we are also looking for silent auction items. Club members are encouraged to reach out to local businesses and request an item for our auction. Finally, we are also looking for sponsors for our fundraiser. There are multiple levels of sponsorship. For forms and additional information, please check out the San Antonio Northeast Rotary Club’s website at www.sanortheastrotary.com Please contact Dan Clark at danclark@ibc.com or (210) 799-4474 if you have any questions.

With the silent auction being part of our bowling fundraiser, we thought we would share some ideas regarding types of silent auction items from excerpts from an article by Linda N. Spencer, Lead Content Strategist and Copywriter at funds2orgs.

It doesn’t matter if you’re part of a nonprofit fundraising team, community organization, faith-based group, or school PTA, the right silent auction ideas can amp up any event into a great one. This guide will take you through what you need to know to ensure that any event is a winning proposition for your organization.

Knowing how to host a silent auction and ensuring you have the best item ideas that drive bidding is key to any successful auction. In other words, it’s an opportunity for your organization, and you don’t want to miss it. It’s essential to ensure the following for any successful silent auction:

Items & Experiences Attendees Won’t Forget - The idea behind a successful silent auction event is to have competitive bidding. While you can hold a silent auction online or in person, the right items are essential. It’s also important to ensure that there is a broad array of items that will allow most people to participate. If you have premier items, a final evening event with the right auctioneer can drive up bidding. Still, this person has to come up with silent auction item ideas that consistently drive higher bids.

- 1. Private Wine or Whiskey Tasting** - Creating private tasting experiences is one of the top silent auction ideas because they’re shared experiences. We know people want to spend time with others. Partner with a vineyard, distillery, or upscale restaurant to offer an evening for the winner and 5 others for a private tasting.
- 2. Cooking Class with a Local Chef** - Another fantastic experience is a cooking class with a local chef in their kitchen. Think of a pasta night (including truffles) or a farm-to-table experience. Reach out to local culinary schools or beloved restaurants for silent auction bidding that can go into the hundreds.
- 3. Weekend Getaway Package** - Think of a boutique hotel, lovely B&B, or lakeside cabin. These experiences are usually top earners at silent auctions. Pair an evening stay with a restaurant credit or spa for a complete escape package. Connect with local hospitality companies for a donation.
- 4. VIP Sporting Event Tickets** - A professional or college basketball, soccer, or football game will draw serious bidders in this list of silent auction items. And if you can get from a sponsor parking, food credits, and team merch bundles, you’ll get higher bids.
- 5. Private Art or Music Lessons** - If you know a respected artist, musician, or instructor, this one on our list of silent auction ideas for fundraisers is a great experience. A package for a few sessions with a photographer will also play well for your auction.
- 6. Behind-the-Scenes or VIP Access Experience** - VIP access and behind-the-scenes are always a great draw. Think of a local performance theater, after-hours at a museum, or an art gallery. Exclusive access always provides great allure for a fundraiser because it’s an opportunity bidders might not otherwise have.
- 7. Custom Photography Session** - A package of professional headshots, a lifestyle shoot, or family portraits is another high bid for our silent auction ideas. These are easy to display and explain, and they have universal appeal. Look for a talented photographer to donate a session in exchange for visibility.
- 8. Golf Outing for Four** - If you have a recognized golf course in your area, then a round of golf will be a high-ticket item for your auction. Ask the course to donate, along with parking, lunch, and a caddy, and it’ll show strong interest in corporate marketing efforts.
- 9. Dinner for Two at a Sought-After Restaurant** - Is there a waitlist at a new or beloved restaurant? If so, add this to your list of silent auction ideas items. Ask the restaurant to donate a tasting menu or private dinner for a curated dining experience that will be a great prize for the winner.
- 10. Spa Day Package**—Another winner for the list of top silent auction items is a spa day. Ask a local business again for exposure to donate a massage, facial, mani-pedi, and even lunch into a luxurious self-care package that any bidder will love.

Silent Auction Gift Basket Ideas That Wow Crowds - Do you know the backbone of amazing silent auction ideas items? Gift baskets. There’s a reason for it. They’re flexible, visually appealing, and you can create them at almost any price point. Baskets typically generate a lot of competition, especially when packaged with a story in mind. The following are some of the best ideas to get you started with gift baskets.

- 11. The Spa Day Escape Basket** - For this gift basket, consider wonderful self-care. Create baskets for silent auction bidding that include high-end bath salts, a plush robe, and face masks. If you want to spruce it up, add a scented candle or two, wine, and a gift certificate for a spa massage.
- 12. The Backyard BBQ Basket** - With good weather, you’ll have lots of BBQ chefs in the crowd who will want to bid on this gift basket. To create the basket, consider items such as BBQ sauces, a quality grill set, a gift card to a meat shop, craft beers, and grilling cookbooks. Make it festive, and it’ll win over the crowd.
- 13. The Family Game Night Basket** - In a digital world, there’s something to be said about board games. Create a gift basket with several popular and even old-school board games, include a deck of cards, popcorn, and even a streaming service gift card. This is a great silent auction item for a school or school group!
- 14. The Coffee Lover’s Dream Basket** - Many people are coffee lovers, and here’s an opportunity to give them something to bid on. Think of specialty roast beans, a quality grinder, a French press, or other coffee preparation equipment. Coffee is a culture, and this silent auction item will raise more than it costs.
- 15. The Gourmet Foodie Basket** - The chances are that some people will love a gourmet foodie basket. For this silent auction item, think of adding artisan crackers, a charcuterie board, truffle oil, imported cheese (or a credit), and specialty chocolate. If you add a restaurant card, it’ll increase the item’s value.
- 16. The Outdoor Adventure Basket** - For outdoor hikers and sports enthusiasts, this basket will support their adventures. In preparing this item, fill the basket with a portable speaker, a GPS, sunscreen, first-aid supplies, trail snacks, and even a hydration bladder. For added value, add 2 national park passes.
- 17. The Book Lover’s Retreat Basket** - You’ll likely have book lovers who will bid for this silent auction gift basket. In creating this basket, curate the top bestsellers or award winners. Add a throw blanket, teas, and a reading light. You can also add an independent bookstore gift card.
- 18. The Pet Lover’s Basket** - Pets also deserve love, and their owners will love bidding on personalized grooming products and a certificate for a local pet spa or vet. You can also add doggie bandanas, cat toys, and other pet supplies to increase bidding on items.
- 19. The Date Night in Basket** - A gift basket for a quiet date night is also a winner, especially for busy parents who don’t have much time for themselves—or each other. Think of a charcuterie set and a bottle of wine. You can add scented candles, a spa retreat, cozy socks, or a blanket.
- 20. The Wellness & Fitness Basket** - For a wellness basket in this list of silent auction ideas, consider adding a yoga mat, a fitness tracker, and even a month’s membership to a gym. For health organizations, this silent auction may attract a lot of bidding, so consider having two baskets with different health items for bidding.

Unique Silent Auction Themes to Excite Attendees - To round out our silent auction items, we have a couple of other themed ideas. Work with a creative person to ensure they’re packaged so each theme tells a story. Use photography, baskets, and other creative approaches to deliver themed items that everyone will want to bid on.

- 21. Around the World** - For this silent auction item, show a table or basket that’s filled with, well, the world. Add a dinner package at an Italian restaurant. Include a Japanese spa day and a wine tasting at a French winery or restaurant. This is a winner for organizations with diverse communities.
- 22. A Night at the Movies** - On a table or in a basket, include marque signage and other items that evoke a night at the movies. You can include a couple of streaming subscriptions, cinema-style décor, and local theater movie tickets.
- 23. Farm to Table** - On our list of themed silent auction ideas for health-conscious and environmentally aware communities, include a table, a digital option, or a basket of vouchers to a farmer’s market. Include artisan preserves and perhaps a reservation and credit at a farm-to-table restaurant.
- 24. Decades Music Night** - Most people enjoy music, and you can set up several baskets or tables of themes through the decades from the 60s to the present day. Add items that include records, a record player, and small era-appropriate décor to bring back nostalgia.
- 25. The Great Outdoors** - For organizations with outdoor-oriented communities, offer digital tables at an event or baskets that include national park passes and gear. You can also include local hiking, kayaking, and nature photography experiences to connect people to nature.