

5 ALTERNATIVES

to lunch and a speaker

Local RTAs have long relied on monthly meetings featuring a meal and a program or speaker. Many units consider this the best way for members to socialize while remaining informed and involved. However, as demographics, lifestyles and society change, the luncheon program may not be as appealing or effective for all members. If your local unit is looking for some creative ways to recruit and retain members with different needs or interests, consider the following:

Book or Movie Club

These clubs are groups of people who meet to discuss a book or movie that all have shared.

Book clubs often meet in private homes, libraries, bookstores, online forums, and in cafes or restaurants over meals or drinks. Members generally decide at each meeting which book they will read for the next month.

Movie clubs may meet to view a current or previously released movie, and then enjoy a discussion of it over a meal or refreshments.



Painting Party

Painting parties consist of a group of people creating individual versions of the same project.

Parties are held in private homes or public meeting places with appropriate facilities. The host generally purchases the materials and prepares the space for whatever project the members have selected. Projects may include painting or art projects, crafts, stamping or scrapbooking, etc.

Members reimburse the host for their share of the cost and share the responsibility for refreshments.



Monthly Meal Prep

A meal prep gathering brings together a group of people to cook, package and freeze meals while spending time together.

Participants choose how they will divide the tasks—they may reimburse the host, who shops for all of the ingredients; they may purchase the ingredients for their dishes, which they show the others how to prepare; or they may simply prepare one or two dishes at home to bring and swap.

Whatever method the group chooses, members will enjoy time with others who are also interested in trying new recipes, preparing ahead while ingredients are available, sharing large quantities with others, and adding variety to their meal planning.



Tailgate or Watch Party

Tailgating is the name given to gatherings held in conjunction with concerts, sporting events or other large events.

Participants often gather in parking lots at stadiums and arenas to share a meal before attending the event individually or as a group, or watching/listening from the parking lot. Gatherings after events might include a post-game discussion over drinks or a meal in a nearby location.

For events that participants cannot attend, such as a televised game or event, members of the group may create a themed menu for a gathering in a private home, restaurant, etc. where the event is televised.



Game or Movie Night

A game or movie night is an opportunity for a group of people to gather for food and fun.

Participants can decide among themselves how the movie will be chosen, what game or games will be played, if games will be competitive or for fun only, and whether or not refreshments will be served (and by whom).

It may be held in a private home or public place such as a church, library or community center.

Photo Credits—Book Club: <http://www.concordtrinity.org/senior-adults/>. Meal Prep: <http://fitmommydiaries.blogspot.com/-2014/10/how-to-meal-prep-like-fitness-pro.html?m=1>. Painting Party: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/sudbury-painting-party-business-mary-ann-leclair-1.3365811>. Game Night: <http://www.meetup.com/The-QuadCities-GameNight-Group/events/191767962/>.

