

I grew up here in Southampton and am quite happy to call this town home. Over the years though, while I live in this community, I began to feel I wasn't part of the community. This Town and its organizations provide some great opportunities, yet I wasn't part of them. About a year ago I decided I wanted to get involved and give something back, and low and behold, the following week I was invited to attend a Kiwanis meeting..... "come down and see what we're all about, and dinner is on us", how could I refuse a free dinner.

I enjoyed what I heard, their mission to help children, meeting new people, and reconnecting with some I've know forever. As it turns out, I had to enjoy three free dinners before I was even eligible to join.

Originally, I was concerned about the time commitment to be a member, but it turned out to be less than I thought. It's recognized that we all have busy lives, and therefore there was no pressure or expectation that I come to them all. Meetings are the first three Thursdays at 7 pm, usually at the Public House or Villa Paul. Frankly, it seems that the reason they have three meetings is to accommodate those who can't come regularly. I'm on the board of directors now, so I make it to 2 meetings each month, but there are a number of members that can only make it to 1, and still others that miss several months at a time.

I've only been a member for a little over a year now, and I really do feel more connected to our community. As a member of Kiwanis I help guide our group in making big and small decisions, but all help our community in much needed and profound ways.

While the meetings are important, the events or activities are the most important to attend, and are the backbone of our club. As my father in law likes to point out, many hands make light work. Things we need our members to work on or participate in are our carnivals, our golf outing, stuffing food boxes, police awards, bike rodeo, etc. etc. These are the events that help us raise our funding, or are the activities at which we give it to the causes that we believe in, (+- \$50,000 per year).

We don't have a club house, or large overhead, so all the money that we raise goes right back out to children and their families that need some extra support. I'm proud to be part of an organization that helps to fulfill the needs of our community. Think you might be interested? Give us a call, we'd be happy to buy you dinner!