

PWP/SPARKS Orientation Outline

Sam Cancilla, VP of Membership, 12/17/2006

Welcome and Introductions

Who is PWP?

- We aren't a dating club though some of our members do date and even get married. We aren't a replacement for psychological counseling though we do offer support. We're not a social club or swinging singles though we do offer some social activities and some of our members can swing dance. We are a group dedicated to helping single parents function in a couple-oriented world. We are folks like you who will understand if you have to leave early to pick up your kids.
- Open to any parent who is single by reason of death, divorce, separation, or never having been married. Custody of the child is not a factor.

History/Structure of PWP.

- Started in NYC in 1957 by two single parents, one custodial, one not.
- Largest international nonprofit membership organization devoted to the welfare and interests of single parents and their children.
- 200 Chapters in the United States, some as small as 25 members, some as large as 1500.
- Chapters are organized in Zones and the Zones report to PWP International. Each has their own board of directors.
- 55% female, 45% male nationwide.
- 85% of members are separated or divorced, never married are under-represented.
- All chapter members are verified as single parents.
- Benefits of Intl org: Advocacy, International Convention, Organizational Awards, Scholarships, Single Parent Magazine, Members-only forums, library on website.

Our Chapter.

- SPARKS - Single Parents in Albuquerque Raising Kids, only chapter in NM.
- Part of Zone K which also includes TX(7), Louisiana(2), Arkansas(1).
- Current membership numbers, female/male ratio.
- All volunteer, board of directors elected yearly.

Procedures

- Dues are \$40.00/year. We accept check or cash. A limited number of scholarships are available should the dues be a hardship. We do require scholarship recipients to become active in the group by hosting events.
- Prospective members must attend an orientation, either formal or informal.
- Joining requires an application filled out and signed in our presence.
- If not sponsored by a member in good standing you need to provide us the name and mailing address of someone who can vouch that you are indeed a parent and are single. We will mail them a verification letter which they must sign and mail back.

- We will add you to the email or snail mail list upon receipt of your application. You'll be a provisional member until we receive verification.
- Once we receive the Verification letter your name is sent to PWP International and you are issued a membership card. The card will let you into events in other chapters and to the members-only area of the International website.
- If verification of your singledom is not received within 30 days you'll receive a reminder letter. If verification is not received within 60 days we will refund \$30.00 of the \$40.00 you paid and drop you from the mailing list. You will no longer be able to attend further PWP events.
- Felony conviction, esp. relating to sexual or child abuse will likely keep you out.

About our group – show public version of newsletter

- Kids events – monthly birthday party (bowling, Putt Putt, Planet Fun, Swimming). Other monthly family and youth events, Easter Egg Hunt, Mothers/Fathers Day picnics, Christmas Party. We pay up to \$10.00/kid for each event.
- Adult events – monthly birthday happy hour and Newcomers party. Other events as sponsored by members. In the past we've held fund raising dances and staffed food service booths at concerts/sporting events.. We ask newcomers party attendees to donate \$3.00 unless they are a newcomer or it is a hardship.
- Programs and Education event each month, museums, art, rockets, self defense.
- Attendance rules – normally won't allow prospective members to Family and Youth events but are often welcomed at Adult-Only.
- We don't give out contact information to members except that board of directors info is published on the website and they may have access to full contact info if required.
- The email list is a members-only Yahoo Group. It is possible for a member of the group to access your email address via the Yahoo Group site.

Expectations – from you

- Respect others privacy – use individual emails with caution, think before posting material that others may find objectionable. We reserve the right to moderate your emails to the group.
- Respect others boundaries – if you want to date within the group make sure you can take no for an answer. Folks who are pushy in this area or who exhibit signs of sexual harassment will not be tolerated.
- RSVP for events if requested.
- Alert us to change in status, phone number, address, email address.
- Get involved, attend events, offer help, serve on the board.

Expectations – from us

- Monthly newsletter of the events, emailed or snail mailed.
- Access to the board for questions, concerns.
- To provide a safe environment for you and your children.
- To pay for kids events up to the specified limits.
- Timely processing of your application.
- To help you in any way we can.