

Taking the lead

Starting your own member-driven group



PVWC

Portola Valley Women's Club

The PVWC Board choose Yahoo Group as our forum for the PVWC because we wanted our membership to connect and to be empowered to create connections. We would like you to consider forming your own member-driven group or activity.

Our member-driven groups have provided our membership with more than just learning a new skill or an afternoon of enjoyment; they foster a feeling of connection to our community. In our modern world of fast-paced technology and mobile phones, personal friendship and community becomes even more vital to our sense of wellbeing. It's easy to start your own group.

What, when and how?

- Start a group that involves an activity you are passionate about.
- Try to get at least 2-3 other people to help you select times and places. The more people that are involved the less work there will be for you. Also, the most successful groups are those that have a list of active members at the onset.
- Think carefully about your time commitment and how much energy you want to invest. Start small. You will be surprised how quickly groups can grow.
- Think carefully about the time and date of activities. See the information below that addresses these issues.

Winning ideas for a small and intimate group of friends. All these ideas have come up multiple times when discussing possible activities with members:

- An informal monthly weight watcher type support group which would meet to discuss diet issues. This could be hosted at the PV Library or a local coffee shop.
- Start a hiking for wimps group. Select easy walks that end with a coffee time.
- A card or board game group. This could be hosted at the PV Library.
- Start a small dog walking group, taking walks in local parks, or visiting local museums.
- Begin a restaurant outing group. Everyone really wants this! Simply book a table for 6-8 people at a restaurant you have been wanting to try, and post the information on the PVWC. You will be surprised at how many women would love to join you.
- What about a baking group to try new recipes?

Go for it!

Feel free to post a message of your own. If you looking to connect with someone who shares an interest or activity, you can use the PVWC Yahoo Group page or email the entire membership directly using PortolaValleyWomensClub@yahoogroups.com. We do ask that you remember that the PVWC is strictly a social group and while we have many members who share their charity work, “for-profit”, political messages or religious topics are not allowed. Go ahead, post the idea and see what happens! You might be surprised.

How can the PVWC Board help you?

It easy to take the lead and the PVWC can support your idea and offer tools for success.

- If you have an idea, but you're not sure how to proceed, email us and let's chat about it. We know from past experience what works best and how to reach out to members.
- Did you know that the town library has a room that you can reserve for free? Start your own board game or card group.
- The PVWC Semi-Weekly Update is available for you to share your ideas. If you would like to include an article, email jenniferhammer@pvwomensclub.com.
- We can also assist with finding space for your group to meet. The PV Library, Town Center and even local businesses are all locations we have investigated.
- Unfortunately, all PVWC membership information is private, so although you are welcome to send a message to the membership in general, we can not supply you with a mailing list.

Please contact info@pvwomensclub.com if you need assistance with starting a PVWC group.

Tech Support for Your New Group

If your group is more than a few people, and/or is expanding in size, it's best to use a mailing list (like we do for PVWC) so that new members don't accidentally get left off of communications. the PVWC club's Tech Chair, is happy to set up a mailing list with your starting membership, and show you how to add people to it. Or if you're already comfortable with Yahoo groups, feel free to set up your own group. Please contact techsupport@pvwomensclub.com if you would like technical assistance.

Can I close the group to new members once we get too big?

Yes, once you reach what you consider is your maximum, you may close the group to new members.

Does your group need to be PVWC members only?

The PVWC attempts to verify each member's residency by using current members as a resource. We feel this is important since members welcome other members into their homes for events. However, members are allowed to invite their own non-PVWC guests to join their groups.

Do I need PVWC Board approval for my group or activity?

In general, you are free to manage your group as you want. We do ask that you follow these guidelines:

- Please, no political- or religion-oriented groups. The mission of the PVWC is to bring people together.
- No "for-profit" activities or groups. This doesn't mean you can't get a group of women to join Weight Watchers together, just because the company makes a profit. It does mean that no one in the group should directly or indirectly make a profit from the activity.
- While we do not need you to report, you can be sure we will be contacting you often to see how we can help and to feature your members in a PVWC Weekly Update.

What's the time commitment?

The time commitment is up to you. You should definitely start small to see what the time commitment is going to be. The PVWC Board can suggest some time-saving and time-management techniques.

How big should my group be?

Typically activities or groups that take place in a home are kept small in size. Our members have enjoyed an intimate environment and we have found that smaller groups promote community and foster a more positive experience. There are free rooms available at the PV Library once your group grows in size. See the information below concerning locations. If hosting an activity in your home, consider the following:

- How many people can you host/teach per workshop, given your home's space constraints?
- Think about how much room the students will require and how many tables, chairs, scissors, etc. you will need to provide.
- Will you need any additional items?

Can I charge a fee for an activity?

The PVWC has a strict policy of no membership fees in order to make sure everyone is included. However, if you are starting a group which is to raise money for a charity, or if the activity includes costs of materials or tickets, you may certainly charge a fee or specify a cost. While you may not profit from the activity or group, given the PVWC guidelines, you should also not have to cover any costs yourself.

When should I schedule my group?

Naturally this depends on the activity and your core members. We've found weekday afternoons are popular for workshops, but you'll find other people to participate no matter what time you want to meet.

Possible PV locations for activities:

PV Town Library

Any PV resident can reserve the small room in the library, which is already setup with tables and chairs for around 12.

PV Town Center

As an official club of Portola Valley, the PVWC is allowed to use the town facilities at no cost. A security deposit has to be provided and there is also a charge for insurance. This deposit is usually donated. The insurance can range up to a few hundred dollars depending on the size of your event. The town of Portola Valley has a lengthy contract that requires specific cleanup, safeguards and guidelines for facility usage. This document can be found on the PV town website. Any PVWC group that uses the town facility must adhere to this contract and be responsible for all guidelines mentioned in the document. It is up to the PVWC group, not the PVWC board, to ensure that all town requirements are met. In order to use the Town Center as a PVWC group, you would need to contact the PVWC Board and discuss your activity.