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## **Investment Disciples**

### **3rd Place**

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When my husband retired as rector of Holy Cross Episcopal Church in Redmond in 2001, I suggested to a few people that we look into forming an investment club as a way of keeping in contact with each other in a way that did not have the dynamic of a priest and his congregation.

I was retiring from a career as an accounting manager at the same time and had long wanted to be part of an investment club, but didn't know how to find one. Within the month, the Puget Sound Chapter offered a class on starting an investment club, and several of us went. Within a few months, we were up and running – nine couples from Redmond, Woodinville, Snohomish, Sammamish and Seattle (Washington).

We decided to meet on Friday evenings in each other's homes for a potluck supper before our meeting. The food is completely unorganized, except the host couple provides drinks and dessert. Sometimes our lack of planning shows--three pork tenderloins one time, three servings of chicken wings another and five salads once. We are probably one of the few investment clubs in the area that starts with a prayer, but that's who we are!

Over the years, people have come and gone. Every December we have an abbreviated meeting and then a party to which all our alumni are invited. At each regular meeting, someone presents an education segment, a new stock is introduced and our entire portfolio is reviewed. Although we came in third this year, we won the contest in 2007 (with a 46% return for the year). That year the prize was \$400; we also had a lot of realized capital gains that year so we donated 10% of our profits (by transferring appreciated stock) to a charity: Washington CASH, which is a microlending and business education agency.

New members must agree to attend BetterInvesting classes, because we try to follow their principles. We require every stock being presented to have an SSG and for the SSG to be updated quarterly if we buy the stock. We try to find small- and mid-cap stocks to purchase because we find they have more upside potential.

We feel our club has been successful: Not only have we made real money, we have strengthened our friendships and enjoyed years of fellowship with each other.