

THE ULTIMATE ACTIVITIES COOKBOOK

Sometimes we just need a new recipe, a new ingredient or a new approach to come up with a delectable project or a more appealing version of an old one. That is the purpose of this compilation of ideas. Just add your enthusiasm, your own special ingredients and then serve up.

Initiated by the Michigan Region of
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

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TO THE SPAGHETTI SUPPER AND BEYOND!

A collection of projects for

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Service Teams

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And Besides Spaghetti Suppers, There's . . .

IDEAS FOR FUNDRAISERS

NEW YEAR'S EVE DINNER

It's a great opportunity to fellowship....this was our 5th annual New Year's Eve dinner. We are a small church averaging 80-110 per Sunday. The dinner is attended by 60 people or more. It's a way of recognizing the holiday in a Christian setting. We start at 6:30 with a full course dinner prepared by several men of the church (one formerly owned a restaurant). Members contribute desserts. We place small baskets at the doors to take up a free-will offering to help cover costs. One year we posted "\$9.00 suggested donation" on the sign, but have not done that since. We felt it would inhibit some of our members from attending; however, we averaged just over \$9.00 per person attending at our last dinner anyway. Each year, our Thrivent congregational coordinators decide on a beneficiary for the fundraiser net receipts, as well as the Thrivent supplemental. This year, it was our new Pastor's Health Insurance fund. In previous years, it benefited our Pastor's special benevolence fund which she uses to help people that come to us for assistance. One year we used it to help pay for re-routing some roof drains into our parking lot storm drain and resurfacing the parking lot.

We just visit with each other before & after we eat; a crew stays to clean up, everyone else leaves to either go home or party in the New Year. We've never had any entertainment. It's between 7:30-8:00 when most people leave. Most years, a few couples get together at one of our houses for a couple hours after we finish cleaning up.

We also hold a Fish-Fry fundraiser each October. It is handled the same way. This brings a much higher attendance. There is no promotion of the events other than in our bulletins and newsletters. It is open to members, their friends and relatives. Keeping it strictly a "church supper" eliminates the need to obtain a food license from the county. – *Judy Killmer, Zion, Saginaw*

WEDDING SAMPLER

We had what we called a "Wedding Sampler." Our church orchestra played all different wedding songs and between, different traditions were explained with a mock wedding with bridesmaids, (in different dresses from different periods of time) flower girl and ring bearer, bride (in 56-year-old dress) walked down the aisle by her dad, a groom and groomsmen. We even had a reception with a wedding cake. In our large hall we had tables with wedding memories from all different ages and times in the past. We had about 25 wedding dresses, the oldest being from 1912. There were pictures, albums, headpieces, cake tops, centerpieces, and wine glasses. There was a door offering to help refurbish the organ. It was great fun and people got very excited about bringing their wedding pictures from the past, some from the late 1800s, some from the 1990s. – *Gail Klemm, Zion, Bay City*

BREAKFAST FOR THE "FAMILY"

To raise funds for a mission trip, a youth group served a breakfast fundraiser to their own church family once each month on a Sunday between services. Because they did this routinely, they became very good at all the tasks required: shopping, organizing, and executing. It became a turn-key enterprise. Many families go out to eat after church anyway, so why not have them contribute what they'd spend to your mission goals instead

of a restaurant? People got used to the breakfasts being the first Sunday and planned for it. A plate of appealing hot food was carried by an energetic cook throughout the church as enticement. They served a full hot breakfast and asked for a free-will donation.

DADDY-DAUGHTER DANCE

Here is a fundraiser that accomplishes much more than producing funds for your cause. A Daddy-Daughter dance. If you can make this a part of life in your church, it can be a great addition. The key is advertising early and passionately. Then have volunteers install a disco ball in the gym or fellowship hall ceiling. Buy picture frames for all the girls who come and arrange for a talented and personable photographer to take a photo of each girl with her daddy. A volunteer can make the soundtrack for the evening—great dance songs, especially those girls would like—some even feature daddies. Just serve a mixture of animal crackers, M & Ms, Mike & Ikes, goldfish, and peanuts (no mess!) Each girl will also need a corsage. All these are easy to do and the reward comes when you go and see all the girls dancing with their daddies.

EUCHRE TOURNAMENT

What's more Michigan than euchre? Hosting a euchre tournament is surprising simple and satisfying. Have some great prizes donated or buy some if you need to. Either include a meal or just snacks and beverages. Set up tables and have your rules ready to explain and hand out. Number the tables and provide scorecards

OUT FOR DINNER

This fundraiser is for groups of friends who might go out to dinner together but would like to raise funds for a cause they support. The organizer decides where the group will “go” for dinner. He secures menus from that restaurant to have available. Instead he invites the diners to HIS HOUSE for dinner. Each attendee brings a dish to pass, according to arrangement. As diners arrive, they are given menus and decide what they would like to order. Don't forget drinks! The group eats the potluck meal instead and has fun. Then they total up how much they would have paid for what they “ordered” not forgetting to include a tip. This money is put together and donated.

CATALOG FUNDRAISERS

Many catalogs support fundraisers. This could be a good fundraiser for a group that doesn't need to make a big amount and don't have much time or money to begin. The companies have their own terms and allow you to keep a percentage of what is ordered. They do support your efforts in special ways, as well. Lots of catalog companies do this—one of them is Gooseberry Patch—for information call 877-854-7400. This type of fundraiser could be a good one to add on, a supplement other efforts being done.

HAVE SOMEONE ELSE COOK YOUR DINNER

Here's an off-beat fundraiser for you to try called Have Someone Else Cook Your Dinner. If you have some great chefs in your group, see if they would be willing to help you with this one. Families pay for the “chef” to come and cook dinner in their own kitchen. The chef brings the food and recipes. If the family wants to “disappear” while the cooking goes on, that's fine. But if they want to hang around the kitchen, the chef will be happy to demonstrate and provide a lesson or two. This is being done with success and fun in other areas. It's a short-term commitment for a volunteer with a passion for cooking.

JEANS DAY

Make an arrangement with workplaces in your community to help you raise funds by offering their employees the chance to wear jeans to work one day for \$1. Companies who do this in places around the country raise a surprising amount with no work for anyone!

LAUGH OUT LOUD

More and more church groups are raising significant funds by sponsoring nights of laughter. They hire a Christian comedian and serve dinner for a charge. They also include a silent auction to raise more funds. These nights are lots of good, clean fun—good for fellowship as well as raising lots of funds. Trinity in Berrien Springs did a fundraiser like this in March.

VALENTINE FAMILY DINNER AND DANCE

A Valentine Dinner & Dance is a fund raiser for the Benton Harbor Lutheran Outreach Ministry. It is planned and led by the Christ Lutheran Board of Evangelism which has been charged with raising added funds to assist with this ministry. The idea is to have an event that would appeal to the entire family and since I had experience with 2 daughters' weddings in the last year, this idea came to mind. Our church has one man who does an excellent job as a DJ. (He did the music for both weddings.) As is true for most churches, we have many excellent cooks from which to choose. A more simple meal that might appeal to most is being prepared by our school cooks and will be served family style by the youth. We are also having a picture location so that couples and families can get a special Valentine picture. With a computer and printer handy we can actually print pictures for them on site. Whether or not many choose to dance, remains to be seen, but it will be a fun night with a good chance to visit. At this writing about 75 have signed up. We wanted to keep it affordable while still raising the desired funds so the suggested minimum donation is \$20 for families and \$10 for individuals. – *Dan Barz, North Berrien*

MALL COAT CHECK FUNDRAISING

Between Thanksgiving and Christmas, my nephew's basketball team went to the local mall every weekend. They had arranged with the mall management company for an area to have a coat check. Stores in the mall donated the temporary use of racks to hang the coats on and a secured area for people to leave packages, etc. They handed out a "coat check" ticket and shoppers left their coats, mittens, etc with them while they shopped. They asked for a minimum donation of \$1 for the service. They were able to raise thousands of dollars with very little upfront cost. The only thing they had to pay for were rolls of tickets that you can buy at any office supply store, and they even got a parent to donate that. It was a very easy and profitable fund raiser that the kids had to work to get the money for their program.

CARNIVAL FUNDRAISING

My helping hands club wanted to host a fundraising event that also included community involvement. That is why we hosted the WINTER CARNIVAL at one of the local elementary schools. First of all announce in your school what clubs would like to participate in such activity. From then on announce that the clubs participating will be able to keep whatever profits they make at the carnival. Hold the fundraising carnival in an open space or the gym or auditorium at school and place the booths all over the place with enough space for people to walk by.

The booths can consist of simply an arrangement of tables with poster boards on the side of your table advertising what your booth is all about. Advertise as well to the community!!! Get permission from local libraries, schools, and businesses to see if you can post up posters and flyers asking your community to drop

by. Our booths included friendship bracelets, pie in the face, face painting, tattoos, candy sweets, picture with Santa, etc. Be creative! If High School juniors like myself could achieve this then there are endless possibilities as to what YOU can do.

TACKY YARD

This works! Get a few people to dress up in ragged clothes. Find an old pickup truck and fill the back with yard junk. Some pink flamingoes, a toilet, car parts (preferably rusty but don't cut yourself!), whatever you might find in a cluttered messy lawn. Get some tacky lawn chairs and head out to the homes of your friends and neighbors when you know they are home. Then you pile all the stuff on the front lawn, sit yourself down and wave at passing cars and neighbors to draw attention. An added touch is an old guitar that you strum as everyone sings old country songs--loudly. In order for you to go away, the home owner has to make a donation to your cause. Trust me, they will!

DOG WALK FUNDRAISING

Call it what you will – Strut Your Mutt, Jog Your Dog, Canine Constitutional, Paws in the Park, Wag and Walk. A sponsored pet walk where the walkers (and their pets) solicit donations for how far they walk. Or, fundraising participants pay a set fee to enter and walk their dog. OR, bring homeless dogs who need walking. Remember the pooper scoopers. This could culminate in a pet talent show or some other event where you solicit additional donations. Use it to present spay/neuter message, or message of finding homes for all the homeless ones. Ask people to sponsor a homeless dog to see how many laps (limit of four?) he can do.

Very funny with puppies, who have their own agenda. Or, sponsor a dog who wants to walk his person? You could do a cute turn-around, with advertising that promotes "walking your person" and that explains that this is good for your "person's" health. Relays and races, booths for snacks, kennel rentals for dogs while people do their own things. Remember to try to get lots of vendors, even yard sale table type vendors, exhibits, dog wash and a vaccination clinic. Have a yard sale area where you rent spaces out-lined in chalk. Food booths for people and dogs. Organize an interesting route for dogs and their owners to walk around, with all participants sponsored. Take a synonym of walk and add something to it. Remember you can change the verb case.

Name ideas (some are just verbs you can add to): Paws Forward, Canine Cruise, Paws on the Pavement, Outward Hound, Bassett Waddle, Poodle Perambulation, Pooch Patrol, Walk and Wag, Million Mutt March, Mutt March, Samoyed Saunter, Canine Swagger, Puppy Parade, Hound Hike, Tramp with Your Pet, Pace With Your Pooch, The Puppy Path, Sidewalk of Many Dog Poops, Labrador Lane, Fido's Footpath.

DONATION CONTAINER FUNDRAISING

This is a straightforward cash collection fundraising at local merchants. Here's what you do. Save old coffee cans and cover them in bright color paper with your organization's name and logo prominently displayed. A catchy slogan never hurts. Visit all local merchants and ask if you can leave a can at their cash register. Don't forget to visit all participating local merchants once a week and collect all proceeds. Your organization gets 100% of the profit. **Donation Container Fundraising**

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Specify on the can where fundraising donations will specifically go. Example: "to purchase school supplies for under privileged children". This helps those donating feel like they can associate their donation with an ongoing program, and if it happens to be one that warms their heart, they'll be more likely to give!

There are several commercial companies who sell fundraising donation containers in different materials and styles. They look "nicer" but reduce your profits. However, the printed labels can help 'legitimize' your drive. People tend to believe printed labels mean what they say.

PUNKIN CHUNKIN FUNDRAISING

The Greenland (Maine) Women's Club came up with a unique way to raise funds for the Red Cross-Great Bay Chapter and dispose of left over pumpkins and jack-o-lanterns at the same time. Volunteers built a medieval-style catapult, called a trebuchet. One person would pull the long, catapulting arm to the ground, while two others pushed the 215-pound weight on the other end of the arm up in the air. The arm was then secured by a rope and the pumpkin put into a large sling. Another volunteer gave the rope a good yank, the trigger let loose and the arm swung the sling - and the pumpkin - through the air.

Most of the pumpkins destroyed were either left over from Halloween pumpkin sales or brought in by the bystanders. The club received a large donation from First United Methodist Church in Portsmouth, which hosts the annual Pumpkin Patch sale. This fun and creative way of disposing of jack-o-lanterns was a community event as well as a fund-raiser. The Greenland Women's Club collected a suggested \$5 donation per pumpkin.

SANTA LETTER OR BIRTHDAY NEWSLETTER FUNDRAISING

Letter From Santa Fundraising: Offer a personalized 'Letter from Santa' written on colorful holiday stationery and matching envelopes. Children just love receiving their own mail ... especially from someone as magical as Santa! Compose one or more standard letters using a standard word processing program. Develop an order form for personalization to be provided by purchaser. This could include the child's name, age, gender, hometown, address, good deed, accomplishment, grade in school, name and age of siblings, name of pet, etc

Purchase colorful holiday stationery. Keep the quantity low until you see how sales are going. Colorful Christmas stamps are also a must!

Take orders in advance. Get payment with the order. Set a cut-off date to make sure the letters will be delivered timely.

Pick the city you want the letter to be postmarked from and contact the postmaster there to make sure that they will open your bundle of letters and re-mail them for you. Some choices of cities could be North Pole, AK; Santa Claus, GA; Reindeer, KY; Christmas, FL, etc. You get the idea.

Set a price. Similar letters are available from a number of sources for \$4.00 to \$10.00. Since you are doing this as a fundraiser, your supporters will probably be generous but keep the price reasonable enough to generate good volume. This is not a big fundraising money maker but it can be fun. Sample Santa letters are included here as attachments.

BIRTHDAY NEWSLETTER

This is similar to the Santa Letter fundraising but requires you to purchase a 'birthday' software program which will produce a Birthday 'Newsletter' or 'Chronicle' with the recipients name and containing celebrity birthdays and events occurring on that date and world headlines for that year. Usually available for dates between 1900 and 2000. All you do is insert the recipients name and date of birth, and the software generates the 'Newsletter/Chronicle' for that day.

Programs are cheap (\$20 - \$50), simple to install, and require minimal computer knowledge. A color printer is preferred.

SCRABBLE TOURNAMENT FUNDRAISING

Scrabble is all about being fluent in the language and coming up with words that might be worth a lot of points. People have fun coming up with strange and exotic words no one else has thought of. Teams of four, six, or eight gather at different tables, each with a Scrabble board and all the letters available. Each team starts with the same opening word, and has 20 minutes to fill the board with high-scoring words. A judge sits at each table. Individuals pay \$35 to participate. Players can sneak a peek at a dictionary for an additional \$10 donation. Make extra fundraising money selling refreshments, raffle, auction, etc. Additional details and ideas available from the National Scrabble Association.

MAKE-BELIEVE TEA PARTY

This is an idea that was used by the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. No finger sandwiches, crumpets or fine china necessary! All you need are tea bags, invitations, envelopes and stamps.

The concept: Send an invitation for a "Make-Believe Tea Party" to your friends, neighbors co-workers, etc. Send a tea bag (inexpensive per tea bag if you buy them in bulk - or you can try to get the tea bags donated) in an envelope along with a classy, yet catchy, invitation explaining that they are invited to a "make-believe tea party" on a certain day (Mother's Day, for example) at a certain time (high noon, for example).

Explain that on that date and time, you will all enjoy a cup of tea (using the tea bag provided) in support of your cause (or in memory/honor of someone). Remind them that they can take part in this tea party while still enjoying the comforts of their own home!

Ask each "guest" for a donation in return for "attending" this tea party. Provide a SASE for their convenience. The tea bag is theirs to keep whether they make a donation or not, but the hope is that your efforts will encourage them to send you a donation. You can either ask for a donation of a specified amount as the "cost" for "attending" this tea party, or leave the donation amount open-ended and up to the individual.

Be sure to send a "thank-you" to those who make a donation.

CLEAN-UP FUNDRAISING

Clean up after Independence Day fire works displays, auto races, dog shows, etc. Often the organizers of these events will pay an amount of money to another organization for their volunteers to do the clean-up. Church youth groups have had fundraising success with cleaning up Fall leaves in yards for a donation to the organization.

TREE OF LIGHTS OR ANGEL TREE FUNDRAISING

At Christmas families in the community pay \$10 for a light that represents their lost loved one. The staff and families gather as a community outside and sing hymns, and the tree is lit - all the lights come on at once and it is beautiful. The lights on the Christmas tree are white. The community does this outside of the office at night. The tree stays lit until the New Year. Luminaries line the parking lot where people are sitting or standing. Families and staff find this very meaningful. People gather afterwards in the office or a church for cider and cookies. [This idea can easily be adapted by non-Hospice organizations to fit their mission.]

ANGEL TREE ALTERNATIVE FUNDRAISING

Each year as the Christmas holidays approach, our hospice sells lace angel ornaments which people can buy in memory of or in honor of anyone they choose. Those ornaments are then placed in Christmas trees at our office until a few days before Christmas. We then have an open house in which people can come and take their angels off the trees. It is a good time of sharing with the community as they gather together during the Open House. Refreshments are served. [This idea can easily be adapted by non-Hospice organizations to fit their mission.]

TREE FOR PETS FUNDRAISING

Our mall allowed us to put a Christmas Tree up in Center Court. For each \$5.00 donation, we would illuminate a light for your pet --- a red one for "in honor of" and a white one "in memory of". We asked for a picture of the pet and would hang it with a red or white ribbon. We had to put up an-other Christmas Tree because the first one because too full of pictures. We did not worry about the fact that we had 100 white lights on a tree, but 150 memorial pictures – you can't even the two out. We found that the public did not even pay attention to that. They were too busy looking at the pictures. On the weekend, my mother took her Golden Retriever, Chelsea, to the mall. She was dressed as Santa, complete with bells on her toes and a Santa Hat. The kids AND adults loved it. Of course, we had the fish bowl out and would average \$150.00 in donations a night. Also, we took thick foam board and put them on wreath stands. We had a red board for the honored pets and a white board for a memorialized pets. We listed their names on each board. We noticed that people liked to look at the names the try to find the picture on the tree. We were glad we wrote the names on the back. We earned over \$3,000 from the tree and fish bowl. It was a so fun..

THIS IS IMPORTANT! We did not have someone at the tree at all times. The only time someone was at the tree was on Friday and Saturday night when we took Chelsea out there. Twice a week, I went out there to hang pictures and write names on the boards. The public never paid attention to me, but take a dog out there and they flock around and dump money in the fish bowl. We had a stand out front of the tree explaining what it was for. We kept forms in that stand for people to fill out. They would simply put their name, the name of the pet, was it in Memory or Honor of, etc. Then they would send it to the address at the bottom (my house). The BIG BIG money maker on this was something we almost did not do. We told people that if they wanted to buy a light in honor or memory of someone else's pet, we would send that person a card. Many people made donations like that for Christmas Presents. When the person received a card, they turned around and made a donation either for their pet or someone else's. This brought out a lot of emotion in some people.

I saw several people who made a donation in memory of their pet just break down and cry when they saw the picture on the tree. We thought it would be necessary to have someone at the tree at all times, but we knew we could not do it. Turned out, we did not need anyone there except on weekend nights when the mall was really crowded. We also got the newspaper to print the form to fill out as a donation to us. We got a good response from that. Also, the local weatherman (a REAL popular guy) came out and did the weather from our trees twice. There was a huge response after that.

SITTING PRETTY FUNDRAISING

The Howell Area Arts Council, Howell, Michigan, holds an annual "Sitting Pretty" fund-raiser, in which the group auctions off hand-painted chairs. Proceeds benefit the arts council's community programs. For chair types, just about anything goes. They have had piano benches, a parade ladder, and even a toilet. Those who want to paint a chair for the fund raiser can simply make it colorful or choose a theme. Some chairs have had a Halloween or Christmas theme. Others decorate in a garden motif. The council has fun with the fund raiser and members continually collect old chairs in anticipation of it. The minimum bid is \$30.

COOKBOOK FUNDRAISING

Have members of your school or club submit (preferably printed) their favorite recipe and either their children's favorite recipes or someone else in their family. Have someone put the recipes together and make a recipe book. My mother's auxiliary club did this as a fundraising project and it was a huge success. Many of the children use the cookbook to this day and now we are now putting together a "revised" cookbook. The cookbook we made contains tried and true recipes -- one of which they like for adults and one which they know their kids eat.

The hardest part was having to re-type everything but I suppose people could email them in and the recipes could be cut and pasted into a word processing program. These were family recipes. For instance - my mom submitted a recipe that was from my great grandmother from Italy for homemade manicotti (how to make the shells and all). We were amazed at how many people were willing to share their family's recipe secrets! The fundraising cookbook was not hard cover - it was really just a "soft cover", the "cover" being just a thicker paper than what was inside. We went to a photocopy place to make the copies and stapled the pages together.
– *Liz M.*

CUSTOM CHURCH OR SCHOOL CALENDAR

To create your own fundraising town calendar, you need to sell "advertising". Sell individual calendar dates (squares) to recognize individual birthdays, anniversaries or other special events for \$3 to \$5 each. This will create additional sales interest for those who want to see their "event" on the calendar.

Collect volunteer artwork to feature in the calendar (one piece per page or a collage on each calendar page). Photos of church or school landmarks or a collage of pictures from special events in the life of the congregation or school year. The photos could be either current or historical, depending on interest.

Work with a local printer to produce the calendars (they may do this at a reduced cost in return for an ad!)

Once printed up, sell the calendars for \$10-\$15 on Sunday mornings, or at sporting events or school functions. Try to get local book stores and restaurants to display the fundraising calendars for sale.

The amount of money you'll raise depends entirely on the fundraising sales effort of your volunteers. Many community members won't hesitate to support a good cause! Profits can be quite high, depending upon how successful you are at "selling" calendar dates.

Be sure when selling the calendars to let people know how/where the proceeds will be spent.

Alternative: You could use winning entries from a photo competition for the calendar.

ROAD RALLY POKER HAND FUNDRAISING

Attracts classic car owners and others. Charge a registration fee. Registrants pick up clues to the route where they pick up one card from a deck of cards. Box lunches are provided at the end while waiting for all cars to return. The best poker hand wins the grand prize which could be a set of tires, detailing, tune-up and oil change, etc (hopefully donated). Other trophies and prizes are also awarded. It's a great fundraising idea and lots of fun. Be creative with the clues.

BUS PULL FUNDRAISING

A fundraising bus pull can generate plenty of good publicity and raise lots of money for your organization or a worthy cause. Pulls are done by teams that can compete in several categories. (The Variety Children's Charities of Memphis, Tennessee actually sponsors an annual pull with teams consisting of 20 members who pull a **155,000 pound Boeing 727 jet airplane** a distance of 12 feet!) but you can use a bus, a fire truck, a tractor trailer, or an earth mover — whatever would attract attention.

The plane pull categories include:

- **The Fastest Pull** - average time is 10 seconds, fastest is 5.237 seconds
- **Lightest Combined Body Weight** - team can compete again utilizing the lightest combined weight of team members who can pull the plane twelve feet within 3 minutes.
- **Top Women's Team**
- **Showmanship** - team with the best costume, theme, or creative idea
- **Most Improved** - Team with the best improved time from their last competition
- **Challenge Trophies** - Challenge your business competitors to a pull

But these would also work with an-earthbound vehicle! Use your imagination!

DINNER AUCTION

Our local Auxiliary hosts a Dinner Auction 2 or 3 times a year. We have raised a considerable amount of money for various organizations. We ask for volunteers to make a single dinner. We supply the take out containers to package them into. (Pork Chops, Mashed Potatoes, a vegetable and roll) We pick a night to hold the auction. Everyone brings their dinners on that particular night. We arrange all dinners on a table so the people can see what they are bidding on. Our "auctioneer" then starts the bidding. Most dinners start at \$5.00 ea. You would be amazed at how much a particular dinner could go for! At our last auction, a chocolate hot fudge cake went for \$27.50!

ADULT SPELLING BEE FUNDRAISING

Spelling bees can sometimes be torture for students. Why not consider an adult spelling bee for fundraising and to let the parents see how hard it can be? Most schools hold spelling bees so setting one up should be fairly easy. Each class can select three parents to represent them either individually or as a team. Set an entrance fee per team. The teams are responsible for getting sponsors to pay the fee (let them see what the kids have to go through). Allow multiple teams per class to raise additional funds.

Do you know what an engraver's needle beveled to an oval at the ends is called? St. Mary's Church, Franklin, Massachusetts, spelling team does. They correctly spelled "echoppe" to win the sixth annual Franklin Education Foundation Adult Fundraising Spelling Bee. Between the 40 spelling teams, silent auction, raffle, private donations and refreshment sales, the spelling bee raised approximately \$15,000. Contestants had to spell words from the 2003 Paideia booklet which are made for kids spelling but are uncommonly hard. The first few words in each round were fairly simple. If you are still up there after five or six words, all bets were off.

Want some specifics on adult spelling bees? Try the National Spelling Bee site!

WATER-SKIING/WINDSURFING/SAIL BOARDING FUNDRAISING

Requires goodwill of water sports center, also safety issues. Ask a local water sports center to give you a reduction on a morning or afternoon water-skiing (some will do this if it is for charity), windsurfing or sail boarding. Get sponsorship for the number of seconds you stay standing. If you know you are hopeless, get sponsored for the number of times you fall over. Please do this under trained supervision, not by borrowing a friend's equipment.

HOMEMADE LOLLIPOPS FUNDRAISING

Make homemade suckers and sell them for your next fundraising event. With a relatively small investment in ingredients, combined with a little teamwork and fun in the kitchen you can make and sell hundreds of handmade lollipops. The cost of materials for making 300 lollipops (including sugar, corn syrup, molds, flavoring, food coloring, sticks, sucker bags and twist ties) will be about \$40. Sell them for \$.75 each and your profit will be \$185.

Lollipop Recipe

1 3/4 cups granulated sugar
1 1/2 cups light corn syrup
1 cup water
2 teaspoons candy flavoring oil, any flavor
1/4 teaspoon liquid food coloring (any color)

lollipop molds - any shape
lollipop sticks
sucker bags
twist ties

Prepare molds by lightly spraying with non-stick cooking spray and inserting sucker sticks. In a large saucepan, mix together sugar, corn syrup and water. Stir over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Bring mixture to a boil without stirring. When syrup temperature reaches 260 degrees F., add color. Do not stir; boiling action will incorporate color into syrup. Remove from heat at 300 degrees F. or when drops of syrup from hard, brittle threads in cold water. After boiling action ceases, add flavoring oil and stir. Pour syrup into lightly oiled lollipop molds and allow to cool at room temperature (do not refrigerate). Remove from molds and wrap in individual plastic sucker bags and tie with a twist tie. Depending on mold size, this recipe will make about 30 - 40 suckers.

TIME & TALENTS FUNDRAISING

Instead of asking for donations from your members and supporters or selling a specific product or service, consider giving money away! This relies on your volunteers and supporters individual ideas, talents, dedication, and their willingness to do something special for your organization. Each individual raises funds in a manner that interests them. How does it work? Your organization provides a small amount of "seed money" to each participant - \$5 to \$20 - and challenges them to use the money and their ingenuity to raise funds.

This could include buying ingredients and selling baked goods, purchasing materials for handmade crafts to sell, gasoline for a lawnmower to cut grass, printing flyers advertising a personal service, buying an inexpensive product and re-selling it, etc. The possibilities are endless and encourage individual creativity.

The participants will conduct their individual fundraiser at a time and place of their choosing. No major planning, space needs, or clean-up effort required. Just set a starting and ending date, provide the seed money, and then get out of the way! Depending on the type of projects chosen, think of the human interest publicity you could generate for your organization.

You can expect the participants to multiply their seed money several times, regardless of their project. This probably won't be a big money maker but can be great fun. On the other hand, if 100 participants took \$10 each and just doubled their money (a very modest expectation), your group would net \$1000. Not bad for minimal planning and it can definitely be a fun fundraiser!

If your group is short on funds, consider asking each participant to provide their own seed money. Since the amount is small, most will agree. While this idea will work for any group, it is especially good for church group fundraising.

HAIRCUT FUNDRAISING

A barber shop in York, Pennsylvania held a six-hour Cut-A-Thon to help pay the medical bills of a seriously ill child.

POTATO BAR WITH MR. POTATO HEAD FUNDRAISING

We had a fundraising potato bar dinner open to the entire church. We had baked many potatoes and had all the fixins' to go with them. We also had salads and desserts donated by the parents of the youth. No set price; donations only. We also had one young man dressed in a Mr. Potato Head costume walking around making sure every one had everything they needed and his parts were Velcro so the little kids had a blast taking him apart and putting him back together! We made good fundraising dollars on this one.

Note: We heard from some Thrivent volunteers that their local Wendy's baked their potatoes FOR THEM for an event like this and donated the potatoes and the service!

CARDBOARD BOAT RACE FUNDRAISING

Many groups across the country have been raising funds for years with a cardboard boat race. The rules vary but most are very specific as to what materials may be used for the construction of the boat, allowing only cardboard, tape and paint. An entry fee is charged for each "boat". Life jackets are required for all participants. Some offer two categories - Fast and Funny. Boats are inspected pre-race to determine if they are "fast" or "funny". The funniest boat winner gets a prize regardless of speed or floatability!

SELL YOUR WARES FUNDRAISING

Our mothers' group at church hosted a "sell your wares" fundraising evening last November. Our members who normally sell items at home parties (e.g., Longaberger Baskets, Tupperware, Usborne Books, Avon, Tastefully Simple, Home Interior, Fabulous Finds, Pampered Chef, People Fit, Party Lights), set up vendors' tables in our church meeting room. They were available for two hours one evening for people to come in and do a little early Christmas shopping. The saleswomen had some cash-and-carry items, as well as catalogs for items to be delivered in time for Christmas. Each saleswoman donated her profits from the evening to the group's treasury. The fundraising event was hugely successful! *Source: Kate S.*

TEST DRIVE FUNDRAISING

BMW of Northwest Arkansas in Rogers, Arkansas offered folks a chance to test drive a BMW. For every mile driven, the BMW corporation donated a dollar to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. This is an easy fundraiser! Obviously the car dealers want folks to drive their cars in hopes they will make a sale. They do this every day from their showrooms. Since your organization will be providing free advertising and hopefully getting more "test drivers" to their dealership, a local car dealer in your area may offer something similar to BMW.

CARE PACKAGE FUNDRAISING

Student care packages fundraising is especially popular during the first week of classes or during major exam periods. Packages could include candy, chips, hot chocolate, cookies, mug, fruit, magazine, stuffed animal, joke item, etc. that would be appropriate for male or female students at colleges or other schools where the student lives away from home. Parents are always looking for ideas on things to send their kids when they are away from home. Send order forms to the parents who can order the packages as a surprise gift.

Make the fundraising care packages yourself or work with a commercial company that specializes in care packages and gift baskets. You will make the most money preparing the packages yourself but it will take more work. You could look at what commercial companies (just search for 'care packages' on the Internet) offer since they have a wide variety of options. Then you can use those ideas yourself.

BENEFIT SING FUNDRAISING

My group held a benefit singing fundraising event at our church this past December. We had local singers, made our own flyers to distribute at local businesses to promote it, and even managed to get one of our local Christian radio stations to advertise it for us too. Our local newspaper helped promote it for us as well. We didn't even ask for an admission price. We just took up a "love offering", and we also got some of the ladies from the church to provide food after the singing, for everyone that attended. We still managed to raise \$500 for the Relay for Life Cancer Fund. And best of all, everyone seemed to have a great time, with lots of food, fellowship, and great music.

POLAR BEAR PLUNGE FUNDRAISING

A number of communities host Polar Bear (or similar) plunges into frigid winter waters to support Special Olympics and other worthy causes. They are open to anyone willing to "bear" the elements for a good cause. The object is simple. Raise money then plunge into the cold water! The charities raise funds from entry fees, sponsorships and the sale of "Plunge" souvenirs. The success of these events shows there are plenty of generous (and maybe crazy) people everywhere.

More: You could call them a bunch of cold, calculating folks who care. Their mothers just call them "crazy." And they are increasing in number each year. Nearly naked souls run, walk and waddle across snow-covered Hampton Beach in Nashua, New Hampshire, in February for the Penguin Plunge to support Special Olympics.

Even More: The spirit of giving mixed with a brr-risk silliness on the Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, boardwalk finds thousands of participants in the annual Lewes Polar Bear Plunge fund-raiser for Special Olympics. Participants strip down to bathing suits and trunks for a dash in and out of the ocean on a cold February day.

And Many, Many More: Similar plunges are held in Ashtabula, Ohio; Boulder, Colorado; Point Pleasant, New Jersey; Louisville, Kentucky; Newport, Rhode Island; Annapolis, Maryland; Manhattan, Kansas; and Schenectady, New York, just to name a few.

LAKE ICE MELTING FUNDRAISING

The Golden K Kiwanis Club of Janesville, Wisconsin holds an annual Truck on Ice fund-raiser to benefit local charities. The contest involves determining when the shell of a Chevrolet Suburban placed on a lagoon will break through the ice and sink into the water. A clock installed in the vehicle records the exact moment at which the Suburban submerges, allows Kiwanis members to determine the fundraiser winners.

Opportunities to guess when the truck will sink are \$5 each or three for \$10. Tickets containing guesses for the fundraiser are stored in a sealed container.

2 An annual barrel-on-the-lake fundraiser is held to benefit the Alta Lake School in Whistler, British Columbia. Every winter, a barrel is placed out on a frozen Alta Lake and residents purchase tickets, filling in the date and time when they think the ice will melt and the barrel will fall in. When spring comes and the barrel floats past a certain point, the person who guessed the closest time wins. The proceeds are split 50-50 between the school and the lucky guesser.

SINGING CHRISTMAS CARD FUNDRAISING

Similar to a singing telegram, this fund raiser is easy because everyone can sing Christmas carols. Form singing teams of three or more, and assign each team a particular night to deliver singing cards. For each team, designate a captain who'll be the spokesperson when the team arrives to sing for customers. Have them dress in unique costumes and take along Christmas cookies to hand out. Advertise your service to your community and your church.

CAR SMASH FUNDRAISING

The New Haven Heritage Association held a Dash and Smash fundraiser which pitted three six-person teams against one another to see which could completely destroy a car, using only hand tools, in the shortest time. A police department team, a fire department team and a team from the New Haven Heritage Association vied for the fundraiser trophy.

Each was supplied with an assortment of hand tools, such as large bolt cutters, tin snips, sledge hammers, axes, wire cutters, pliers, wrenches and hacksaws, and they had to dismantle and smash a car into pieces small enough to pass through a standard automobile tire. Three donated dilapidated cars were stripped of all fluids and glass for safety. Bleachers were set up an admission fee charged for the event.

GIFT WRAPPING FUNDRAISING

Get in touch with a store or mall in your area and ask about setting up a gift-wrapping fundraising booth for their customers for Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day and/or Christmas. Just like regular gift wrapping stations, you can charge different amounts for different levels of wrapping. You will need to invest in boxes, tape, wrapping paper, and bows. You can either accept donations, or charge a fee per gift (depending on size, etc.). Usually the store will let you make announcements advertising your booth over their intercom while you are there gift-wrapping. Make sure you have enough people on hand to staff the booth during times advertised.

Remember that your "Wrap Staff" are representing your group and cooperating merchant and should act and dress appropriately. Do not waste gift-wrap material by creating "works of art" during down time. Even if you are using scraps, it gives the appearance that you are wasting supplies. Do not tape directly on the box you are wrapping. Some boxes contain collector's items that lose their value if you disfigure the outside packaging. Be safe. Don't use tape on the box.

TWO-BUCK LUNCH FUNDRAISING

Most people go out to lunch with other people from their office and spend lots of money on costly meals every week. Help them and help your youth group at the same time. Pick a week and make announcements to the offices in your area that you will be selling sack lunches. Have your group make enough lunches for all the offices in your area. Take about 20 lunches to each office (this number may vary depending on how many people work there). Put a flyer in front of the lunches explaining what you are earning money for and what comes in each lunch. Sell the lunches for \$2.00. (You could even sell them for \$3.00 if you feel like it's not too much.) Leave a box or something where they can put their money. Be sure to keep close count of how many lunches you leave and how much money is earned each day. This could turn into an ongoing

relationship between you and certain offices. Let them know that they are free to call with orders and you will provide lunches according to what and when they order.

DON'T COME EVENT FUNDRAISING

A don't come fundraising event is a clever way of asking for donations in a novel and humorous manner. First things first! This event will never actually happen -- other than on paper. You send invitations to supporters - and potential supporters - for a spectacular event with scrumptious food, exciting entertainment, and a glamorous guest of honor. The sky's the limit since the event won't actually occur. Let your imagination run wild!

Why in the world would you do this? Because it's a good way to raise funds and have some fun at the same time -- something that's nearly impossible to do when trying to raise money. Your only costs are the printing of the invitations, thank you notes and postage. If you can get some of this donated, that's even better.

Send the invitations to as many people as you want - overcrowding will not be a problem. In addition to your regular supporters, be sure to include local political leaders, businessmen and media personnel. You should also send press releases to the media outlets in your area. They are always looking for humorous current event items. Make sure you include information on how someone can purchase a ticket.

Okay ... so why would anyone buy a ticket to a non-existent fundraising event? Because there are a lot of very busy people who are willing to support a good cause but don't have the time, energy, and/or interest to go to one more rubber-chicken dinner. Purchasing a ticket to a don't come event lets them support a worthy cause while relaxing at home. Plus, they will appreciate your ingenuity.

You should make your invitations classy - printed on good quality paper. After all, the invitation is all they will get for their ticket purchase. Make it just like an invitation to any formal affair. You can use a standard good quality thank you card. Make sure that the invitations and thank you cards are hand addressed to make them more personal. Oh ... and since the recipient gets nothing for their ticket purchase, make sure you include a notice with their thank you card that their donation is fully tax deductible.

Variations: Have a don't come fundraising sporting event where members of your group 'don't play' the Harlem Globetrotters, Green Bay Packers, etc.; a debate between someone in your organization and President Bush, Arnold Schwarzenegger, or some other famous person on a 'nutty' topic; or? Be creative. Be humorous. Have fun. Make money!

DOG TREATS FUNDRAISING

We go to the local Dollar Stores and look for cute containers we can fill with dog treats. We really got lucky at "only \$1" when we found ceramic containers with paw prints on them (absolutely darling and only \$1 each - unbelievable!). Then we go to grocery store and buy some natural dog treats (the ones we get are heart-shaped and pretty unique) and put 10-15 depending on size in zip-lock plastic bags and put them inside the containers. We end up with less than \$2.00 in each container and we sell them for \$10.

We have lots of teens and pre-teens who are willing to do fundraisers for us, so we have them take about 25 of them and set up in front of different stores or during different community events. If the teens are pretty good at talking to people, they usually end up selling most or all of them, so it's a very easy \$150-200 bucks (net), plus it helps to get your name out to more people. We always give out brochures about our shelter while we are out there, so we get more bang for our buck. If you can get the biscuits and/or containers donated, you would make even more. – *Barb*

Option: Make homemade dog biscuits. Find a recipe online and put them in baggies to sell for a dollar. It cost us about 6 dollars for all the supplies and we made way more than that. Plus they sell great because its not your usual fundraiser.

MOM-O-GRAM FUNDRAISING

Make corsages for a special event such as Mother's Day, Homecoming, St. Patrick's Day, Valentine's Day, etc as a fundraising project. Take orders ahead of time and collect the \$10 payment in advance. Be sure to collect full particulars regarding the recipient's name and delivery address. Have small note cards available for purchasers to complete to accompany the corsages. A few samples for display at your table or booth will help promote sales. Advance orders and collections will allow you to purchase only what you need to make the number of corsages ordered and reduce the need for advance funds.

On the Saturday before Mother's Day (or the night before or morning of your chosen event) deliver the corsages with accompanying cards. For an extra charge, the corsage can be accompanied with a singing telegram.

Variation: *Breakfast in Bed Fundraising.* Make up baskets of bagels with cream cheese, a banana or orange, mug with a coffee and tea bag inside, and a Danish or muffin. You could also include a magazine or a rose. Take orders in the weeks beforehand. Arrange for pickups that morning or charge more for delivery.

CANOE JOUST FUNDRAISING

For a donation to support the Bowers Beach Fire Company in Bowers Beach, Delaware, teams participate in the annual Canoe Joust. The canoes don't exactly evoke the image of a charging steed – they glide a little hesitantly toward each other – but in a short time, the foes are within striking distance. A jousting must cleanly hit their opponent straight on; no swinging is allowed. While the jousting try to keep their balance atop their mid-canoe platform, the two paddlers on each team maneuver the boats around. Team members must wear helmets and life jackets

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT FUNDRAISING

Get sponsored to find different ways to get to and from work each day for a week. You could be sponsored for the number of days you succeed or for the number of different methods you find e.g. walking backwards, cycling, skateboarding, roller skating etc.

BABY WALK/TODDLE FUNDRAISING

Organize a sponsored walk or toddle for parents and babies. This can be combined with best dressed baby competition, toddler fancy dress or toddlers and teddies picnic.

BASTILLE DAY FUNDRAISING

Organize a French-themed evening on 14 July and sell tickets. French cheese, wine, garlic, French bread and pates are required.

PANCAKE RACES FUNDRAISING

Shrove Tuesday is the traditional day for this, but you hold a race at any time of year. You require some frying pans, some pancakes and competitors/teams who can be charged an entry fee. Hold the race in several heats, noting the team's times and keeping a league table. Teams can pay another fee to have another go and get a better time. This could be held as a relay race or even over some obstacles.

PARACHUTE JUMP FUNDRAISING

Some parachute jump clubs run charity events for novices to do a day's training and a single parachute jump. You will either pay reduced rate for the training/jump or your sponsorship money will be split between their chosen charity and your chosen charity. Pluck up your courage and have a go.

PLASTIC DUCK RACE FUNDRAISING

Will require permission of local authorities and river authority. You will need a net to catch the plastic ducks after the finishing line (to prevent pollution). Requires budget to buy plastic ducks, but they can be reused annually. Paint numbers on the side of each duck (waterproof pen). Entrants buy numbered ducks which are then dropped into a nearby river or brook; the first to cross the finishing line wins a prize for its owner.

POOH STICKS FUNDRAISING

Have Pooh sticks races using small sticks (collect ones which have already fallen off of bushes/trees) under a bridge. Sticks race down a river or stream. Have it as a knockout competition, each heat is the best-of-three tries. Charge an entry fee.

SOME IDEAS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

- Sell May baskets. Can be basket or paper cornucopia filled with live, paper or silk flowers. Add a cookie on a stick with a paper doily and create a handle.
- Join with other area congregations and sponsor a golf tournament, 10-k run/walk, walk and roll, bike rally, baseball, basketball, or soccer tournament, harvest fest, etc. Start an annual tradition that will help different causes in the area each year.
- Provide a "Gourmet to Go" specialty like stew, chili, or soup. Get containers and sell after church as a take home meal. Accompany with homemade breads and muffins. Ask merchants to donate the containers.
- Plant and garden sale. Include hand made bird houses, bird feeders, etc.
- Sponsor an herb fair and sell herbs and recipes for herb flavored dishes. Can also feature a cooking display on how to use herbs. Teach participants how to build their own herb garden.
- Sell logs of cookie dough for Christmas. This is also good for back to school and other holiday events.
- Sell Mix-in-a-Jar with recipe attached. Cornbread, cookies, soups, etc. People are often willing to donate canning jars.
- Cut and sell firewood
- Provide a photo day to capture family pictures, children and animals. Enlist the support of a good amateur photographer. Use as fundraiser. Can include finger printing.
- Strawberry Festival featuring shortcake, parfaits, sundaes, chocolate dipped, and strawberries with cream. Prepare a menu, and have people donate what they think the delicacy is worth.
- Summer Salad Take-Home Buffet. Have a master green salad mix and then have a table of fixings. People pay by the pound or container.
- Sell corsages or roses on Easter or Mother's Day. Don't forget something for Dad on Father's Day.
- Apple pie bake. Take orders a month in advance, and have people pick them up after church.

- Heavenly Strudel. The name says it all. Create National Strudel Day and have it ready to sell by the slice. Decorate with all kinds of apples. Sell apple crafts, etc.
- Sports equipment sale. Members donate used sports equipment. Sell at reasonable prices.
- Silent Auction baskets. Have each church group create and donate one basket. You maintain a list of themes to avoid duplication.
- Sell root beer floats after church on a hot summer day. These can also be made with sugar free ice cream and root beer.
- Lemon Day—sell everything made from lemons
- Sponsor a dinner-less dinner. Have a table set up after church and let people donate without having to come out to a dinner. Give each donor a recipe card with a great simple meal to make at home.
- Sell gardening kits—seeds, or small potting plants, garden gloves, fertilizer, potting soil, care instructions, small birdhouse, and birdseed. Buy in bulk to raise funds.
- Sponsor an art day. People of all ages bring their art for sale. Offer a workshop in matting and framing artwork. Donate funds for congregational need.
- Host a book sale of donated books. Have coffee and donuts. Proceeds benefit an early childhood center or school. Have children make bookmarks for sale.
- Provide a class in beginning needle work for all ages. Provide supplies. Ask for donation. Create a sample to donate to children's center.
- Sponsor Christmas ornament sale. Get donation from members of congregation and local stores. Sell Christmas cookies, cakes, and candies.
- Sell engraved bricks and place them in a walkway. People like to leave a lasting impression. Find an area to either build or replace a walkway or courtyard. Locate a supplier of engraved bricks on the internet. 500 bricks sold at about \$35 each yields approximately \$10,000 in profit.
- Tailgate tag sale. On a Saturday, rent spaces in your parking lot. Bakers, crafters, jewelry makers, etc. can sell their good out of the back of the car or truck. Appeal to parents by having an inflatable visible from the road.
- Picnic basket auction—put together the coolest looking picnic baskets and auction off to the highest bidder or offer suggested donation.
- Barbeque and cow patty toss. Make cow patties out of paper mache. Let dry in round cake pan, and paint brown! Toss across goal line or into an empty, clean toilet.
- Customized cookies—sell after church.
- Fruity fundraiser. Sell fruit tarts, pies, bar cookies. Use every fruit imaginable. Sell by the slice.
- Smoothie Sunday. Bring on the blenders and create favorite sippers for the way home from church or at any event where refreshments might sell..
- Pasta By the Pound. Get out the pasta makers and take orders. Accompany with pesto and sauce.
- Rice Pudding Rumble. Take orders or sell by the cup, bowl or gallon! A Lutheran favorite!
- Set up a Refreshment stand at an estate sale, a 4th of July parade, canoe race, a 3-mile run, anywhere there's a crowd!
- Conduct an old fashioned taffy pull. Fun for the entire family! Sell it by the bag for a fundraiser.

Kids Are Where It's At

FUNDRAISERS THAT TARGET KIDS

CHRISTKINDLMARKT

Kids like to buy Christmas gifts for their family members but can't shop alone. Until you organize a Christkindlmarkt, that is. Christkindlmarkt is a children's Christmas store, but you can certainly call it something else if the German thing isn't for you. Gifts that especially moms and dads, but also brothers and sisters might like are handmade by volunteers throughout the year. In addition to what is donated this way, suitable items can be ordered from companies. The project is well advertised so that kids can bring shopping money to school on the day of the sale. The store is set up in the school gym and helpers help the kids shop. The gifts are wrapped to take home. This is a great service as well as a good fundraiser.

YOUNG CHEF'S ACADEMY

If there is one thing that people will spend money for today, it is for their children's enrichment. Parents send their kids to camps and classes with enthusiasm. Near my house, there is a place called the Young Chef's Academy, subtitled a Cooking School for Kids. They offer weekly classes with new themes each week, weekend classes, birthday parties, private parties, field trips, mini camps, and unique cooking gifts for kids. Now who could teach kids to cook better than Lutheran ladies? Organize your own Young Chef's Academy, either as a one-time fundraiser or as an ongoing one. You could also use this same idea with sewing, woodworking, or any other skill or talent.

TRIED AND TRUE

Valley Lutheran High School students have been very successful selling packages of the ice cream Dippin Dots. This would work at tournaments, athletic events, etc.

Immanuel, Alpena sold \$25 stock certificates which entitled the purchaser to a postcard from the youth going on a mission trip and a dinner afterwards. I was visiting my in-laws and purchased one, and got my postcard.

As with most craft bazaars, they are on the wane. At Valley Lutheran we were losing traditional crafters, so we opened up a separate area to home party vendors—Avon, Home Interiors, Creative Memories, etc. Also, we opened up a classroom and will expand this for vendors to have workdays—for example, a Creative Memories consultant can use the room all day and invite her clients to scrapbook. If she charged \$10, we would get a cut and possibly sell them some food to from the luncheon. Often, scrapbook consultants hold these all-day sessions in their home, so perhaps church rooms could be used. We also had a lady from Stampin' Up there in a room.

Faith, Bay City youth group did a service auction—lawn mowing, a birthday tea party for little girls, homemade baked goods and dinners delivered, babysitting, dog sitting, etc. – *Lori Milroy, West Saginaw*

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Hold a Breakfast with Santa fundraising event in December. Sell tickets for \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. Serve pancakes, sausage, bacon, coffee, milk and juice. Servers dress as Santa's elves. Santa visits each table addressing the children by name (courtesy of name tags). Santa then retreats to his decorated throne where you sell pictures of the children with Santa. Use a Polaroid or a digital camera (with laptop computer and printer) on a tripod for consistently clear shots. Arrange a good backdrop and/or props such as a sleigh or reindeer.

Experiment ahead of time to determine the best lighting and distance for good photos. Get photo cards or envelopes to make sure the photos get home in good shape. Sing Christmas carols to help pass the time. Photos can be extra or included in the breakfast ticket charge, raise ticket prices accordingly. If included, tables for service could be assigned as participants arrive and photo sessions called by table number to avoid long waiting lines. You might also arrange a secret microphone on Santa, with the speaker in the parents designated waiting area to learn their child's secret wish for Christmas.

Other Options: Change the date and costumed characters, and you have Breakfast with the Easter Bunny, St Patrick, the Great Pumpkin, Uncle Sam, the Pilgrims, you name it. For Easter, you could also include a sale of flowers and spring plants or decorated eggs. You can sell appropriately decorated cookies, pies or cakes at any event. Many fundraising options.

STOCK IN THE YOUTH GROUP FUNDRAISING

The concept is to have the church "invest" in the spiritual future of the youth group. First, present a video commercial for the event you are fundraising for to the church on a Sunday morning. Then, explain that your group is "incorporating" under the laws of Heaven. Offer one share of stock for \$5.00/share/per month for the next six months. Have the ushers pass out stock option slips so people can sign up for their commitment. Include the name, address, phone number and a place to write number of shares and dollar amount.

When you get the commitments, prepare stock certificates—certifying how many shares the person bought. Make them just like the ones used for real corporations. Mail them out to each person with an introduction letter, payment statements and mailing envelopes for three months. You can do a second mailing for the last three months to serve as a reminder.

Then, after the fundraising event you are raising money for, hold a share holders dinner. Cook, serve and present to your share holders the benefits of their investment. (Be sure to include the cost of the dinner into what you need to earn.)

BALLOON-O-GRAM

Basically, a balloon-o-gram is a telegram with balloons. This youth group ran this fundraising event for many months so that it included many holidays (Mothers Day, Fathers Day, etc.). Anyone could order a balloon-o-gram at anytime. The deliverer would take a bunch of five to six balloons, a card and sing a song for the receiver. The cost for the balloon-o-gram was on a donation basis.

A telegram with balloons. A message with each balloon, or you could even have a color code: Red is love, Blue is Get Well Soon, Yellow is Friendship, Green ... well, I think of M&Ms, but maybe something calmer like Thinking of You or Just Saying Hello. Make up your own. Run this fundraising event for a while, including holidays. From February to Memorial Day would give you Valentine's Day, Easter, and Mothers Day, as well as birthdays. You need a delivery person who knows the area. A real estate agent is great! The driver takes a bunch of balloons, a greeting card, and maybe sings a happy song.

Variation: Lollipop Bouquets containing five lollipops: Charms, Tootsie Pops, Valentine Suckers, etc. Tissue paper is used to make the lollipops look like flowers. They are held together with a rubber band and a

gift tag is attached. Sell these bouquets by pre-order in the morning and during the lunches. They are purchased as gifts and are delivered on Valentine's Day. Great for school groups.

YOUTH AUCTION FUNDRAISING (IN COSTUME)

Auction off the youth to do jobs, i.e. 6 hours of babysitting, a day of house cleaning, a car wax, etc. Auction participants wear costumes or carry props used for the specific job being offered for auction. Some jobs can lend themselves to pairs of youth (i.e. window washing-inside and out). Pairs or groups (weeding gardens, cleaning/raking yard) may also be a good idea if you anticipate bidders who are not personally known to the youth.

YOUTH FOR RENT FUNDRAISING

This is a youth auction (as above) with a twist-- bidders get to specify the service rendered. The congregation, or audience, bid on an hourly rate for 2 youths. Once the final rate is established (usually around \$20 for 2 youths for 1 hour), the people sign up for date, time(s) and job. The youth group then matches 2 youths per job, based on the skills, if any, needed to accomplish the job and availability. Jobs range from house cleaning, babysitting, yard work, painting, packing, moving, etc.

UGLY TIE CONTEST FUNDRAISING

Allow the children and youth of your church to each decorate a man's neck tie. Use all sorts of tacky things to glue on the ties... buttons, lace, small toys, flowers, etc. Display the ties in a prominent location in your church. Put a jar or bucket beneath each tie. One penny equals one vote. The tie which receives the most votes at the end of a month is the winner. The pastor gets to wear the winner. My husband (our pastor) looked gorgeous this year with his tacky tie.

PUMPKIN FESTIVAL FUNDRAISING

Have a fundraising pumpkin festival in October or November with pumpkins for the children to paint. Cover a table with newspaper (tape it down with masking tape so it stays covered). Set out liquid tempera paints, paintbrushes and plastic yogurt containers filled with water for rinsing the brushes. Let the kids paint goofy or creepy faces on the pumpkins. Add in pumpkin baked goods including a pumpkin pie bake-off. Serve pumpkin pie along with hot beverages, games and other complementary activities. The result is fun and fundraising!

SMORES

Good for Cub Scouts at a fun night at school or other event. Have a toaster oven and lots of graham crackers, marshmallows, and chocolate bars. Sell smores for a dollar apiece made by the scouts. Have small paper plates and toaster oven proof pans for toasting the marshmallows. And oven mitts. You can also decorate the back side of the oven to look like a campfire and add flames to the top with wire.

FLAG SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE FUNDRAISING

This is an ongoing fundraising idea. Basically, it is a service where your group installs a nice national flag in the front yard of the subscriber on each of five or more patriotic days. The flags are put out early in the morning and retrieved in the evening. This is particularly appropriate for Scout group fundraising.

After subscriptions are sold, purchase the flags, aluminum conduit (for poles) and PVC pipe. That way you only buy what materials you actually need, although you may wish to allow some extra for last minute subscribers. The PVC is cut to about 14 inches and put into the ground as a receptacle for the flag pole which is about 5 foot long. The PVC should be 'planted' ahead of time. Be sure to keep a record of specifically where it is located on each property. Make sure the pipe and PVC are a reasonably close fit to keep your flag upright. You can add a threaded end on top and cap the PVC when not in use to keep out dirt and rocks. But be sure the top is below 'lawn mover height' to avoid damage. Use a hack saw to cut the poles and PVC to the desired lengths. Drill holes in the pipe to attach the flag with picture hanging or other sturdy wire for long wear.

The subscription cost for 1 year is \$25-\$50. The first year, expect to clear about half of the proceeds after paying for the flags and accessories. Renew subscribers annually. Subsequent years are mostly profit - allowing for the replacement of damaged or worn flags and receptacles. Advertise in local neighborhood papers, "sell" door-to-door, or set up a booth outside the local grocery or at sports events. Confine your 'sales' to a geographic area that's doable for your group. Split the coverage area and assign 2-4 person teams to each. That way you can get finished quicker and provide back-up coverage when a team member is out of town. Be sure to leave a contact number with your subscribers so they can refer friends and neighbors who want to participate. This fundraising project can raise funds and make your participants and supporters feel good.

HEARTS MARATHON FUNDRAISING

For this fundraising idea, your members play the card game "hearts" for 24 consecutive hours. (You could probably use any card game you wanted—as long as it was the same card game for 24 hours.) You solicit pledges per point accrued for each player. For example, someone signs up to pledge one penny per point and if the student earns 2,000 points during the 24 hours, the total pledge is \$20. This church says that staying up playing cards for 24 hours and still being nice to your fellow players is a test of your faith!

BAGGING FOR BUCKS FUNDRAISING

We have kids bag groceries for our organization at local grocery stores for fundraising tips. Have a coffee can sitting at the end of the checkout and give the kids some basic bagging lessons beforehand...no bread on the bottom, etc. It's a great time and the donations are pretty generous.

Grocery stores let us go into their stores and bag and carry groceries for tips. We make a flyer to hand shoppers at the door when they walk in explaining we are there to bag and carry groceries free of charge and if they choose to make a donation, please feel free to drop money in the decorated coffee cans provided at each register. The students bag the groceries and load them into the cart after the cashier has rung them up and offer assistance to load them into the customers' vehicles.

CAN & BOTTLE DRIVE

You start off about 1 or 2 weeks ahead of time by sending out or passing out flyers door to door telling the residents that you will be coming around on a designated date to collect cans and bottles for your fundraising project (i.e., a trip or charity). Then on that date that you designated you go door to door and collect the cans and bottles. You will need many cars (trucks are helpful) then take them back to a location to be returned.

IRON MAN MINIATURE GOLF TOURNAMENT

Reserve a miniature golf course for your youth group fundraising event. Have each student ask people to sponsor them per hole they play. (.10¢ per hole.) Then, run the tournament just like an Iron Man competition except you play on the miniature golf course. Play 100 holes in two hours or as many as you can do in two

hours. Kids can raise \$100.00 by just getting 10 people to sponsor them at .10¢ per hole. For the group in Tennessee, some students raised as much as \$700.00.

PLAY DOUGH FUNDRAISING

One idea I have is a play dough fundraiser. Make a bunch of play dough or various types of play dough (There are so many recipes out there and they all have something unique about them from smell (kool-aid), texture (cornstarch or salt), to tasting! Put them in empty frosting containers with a label on them with their color and type and a description of that type of play dough if necessary. – *Annie*

When you're children have run out of store-bought play dough or are in the mood to create something on their own, you may consider helping them make their own play dough. There are several simple and fun recipes for play dough that require just a few regular kitchen ingredients you may already have. Mix together one cup of flour, one-half cup of salt, one cup of water, two teaspoons of cream of tartar, one teaspoon of salad oil, and the food coloring of your choice. Cook for three minutes over low heat. Stir well and add food coloring. A way to make this play dough scented is to add powdered drink mix to the batch. It adds a bit of color as well as the scent of the flavor of the drink mix, such as grape, cherry, or orange. Store the play dough in a plastic container between uses. Another type of play dough that children may enjoy making is one they can actually snack on while cooking and playing called "edible play dough." Combine two cups of smooth peanut butter, two cups of rolled oats, two cups of dried milk, and two-thirds of a cup of honey. Add in optional tasty extras such as rice cereal, coconut sprinkles, chocolate chips, and red hots. Mix all of the ingredients until thoroughly combined. Cover a countertop or table with wax paper to use as a work surface for them to create their play dough masterpieces. Store the play dough in an airtight container between uses.

THON FUNDRAISING

The Valley Forge Patriot Band holds a **Fundraising wash-a-thon** every year. It is a pledge car wash where the kids receive a per car pledge or flat donation. Car wash is free – we just try to get the numbers up. Payout is based on the number of cars washed by the entire marching band.

MATCHBOX CHALLENGE FUNDRAISING

Ask children to collect as many different items as possible that will all fit into a matchbox; sponsorship can be raised per item collected.

RESTAURANT TAKE OVER FUNDRAISING

Youth group contacted a local restaurant and volunteered to serve as dishwashers, bus persons, and buffet servers during the winter season, which is a slow time due to less tourists. We negotiated an amount the restaurant owner would donate for the volunteer services. Each youth had opportunity to work approximately 2 hours. We volunteered for 2 evenings. In exchange for being allowed to work in the restaurant our group promised to bring him additional patrons on the evenings they volunteered so the project was mutually beneficial. The owner also allowed us to inform the general public of our volunteer status and set up a donation box by the cash register for additional contributions. Hard work but a great fundraising idea.

Online ideas specifically for schools

BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE FUNDRAISING

First, find a sofa to use. This fundraising raiser involves raffling off tickets for a student and two friends to win the best seat in the house. Tickets are sold throughout the week prior to a game. Before a volleyball, basketball, or football game announce the winner. The winner gets to sit on the sofa with two of his or her friends. Make sure the sofa is in an ideal spot to view the game. For halftime, order pizza and sodas for the winner and guests.

Alternative: it would also work to “sell” best seat in the house to parents or grandparents! for a band or choir concert, a spring musical or a play, any kids’ performance, or even a graduation. Keep the emphasis on fun.

KARAOKE NIGHT FUNDRAISING

We have a monthly fundraising event that both the kids and adults have really gotten into. We host Karaoke nights. Admission is \$5 per person and our parent guild supplies the punch and snacks for the evening. Sometimes we hold a competition and sometimes it's just a free for all. The machine is rented from a local DJ along with a library of 5000 songs for about \$100 per night. We normally raise \$500 to \$600 in an evening and have a great time doing it!

GAMES NIGHT

Why it’s good: “It’s held in the school and open only to school families, so parents feel safe letting their kids run around,” says Denbigh Dean of Elizabeth Simcoe School in Toronto. “The kids come for the games, the parents come for the fellowship.”

How it’s organized: Parents plan the games and activities — various ball tosses, volleyball, ball hockey, chess, make-and-take ceramics, mad science — and solicit donations such as gift certificates and theatre tickets for the raffle. A \$6 family admission pass covers most of the games, though special activities such as the mad science show cost a few dollars extra. Some of the older students volunteer to help at the booths. Parents and children pay either one or two dollars to play games that have special prizes, also.

Volunteer hours: 200-plus hours ahead of time, 40 hours during the event.

The take: \$1,600 to \$2,000.

Selling Points: There’s no limit to what you can sell to raise funds — just make sure you choose things that people either need or can’t resist.

STUDENT/FACULTY BASKETBALL GAME FUNDRAISING

Every year we host a student/faculty fundraising basketball game. Students sign up to play, and the coordinators (also students) decide fair teams based on athletic ability. The students play each other in 10-15 minute games in a tournament. The team that wins the tournament plays a team made up of teachers from the high school. The teachers seem to love it. They always plan practices beforehand and get excited about it.

Alternatives: Consider other sports or academic challenges but please take it easy on "the old folks".

COOKIE SALE FUNDRAISING

Students Against Destructive Decisions in Canadian, Texas, has a somewhat unusual cookie sale fundraising affair each December to earn money for a scholarship and other community activities. Each member of the group (75 students) bakes 5 dozen homemade cookies or candies. With that many members the variety is considerable--old favorites like chocolate chip and snicker doodles, as well as special Christmas cookies.

The selections are displayed on rows of tables. Each customer is given a plastic glove and a pastry bag and choose whatever cookies they want. Their purchase is weighed and they are charged by the pound (\$4/pound). We also purchase inexpensive Christmas plates of different sizes and pile them high with a nice selection of cookies & candy, cover them with plastic wrap, and make them available to people who don't want to take the time to go through and select their own. People jump on these platters, purchasing smaller ones for gifts to teachers, larger platters for Christmas entertaining. We have this function in the gymnasium foyer during a Friday night basketball game, so lots of people are there. Whatever cookies remain we put on Christmas plates, cover with plastic wrap, and sell at the local grocery store the next day. We never have any left, and there is little in the way of overhead cost, since the cookies are all donated. A local deli donates plastic gloves and pastry bags, and we borrow a baby scale from the local physician's office. We buy plastic wrap and cheap holiday plates. This year we cleared \$1200 on this fundraising project.

A KISS GOODBYE

Sell slips of paper attached to Hershey Kisses at the end of the school year. Students buy these papers for \$.50 or \$1.00 and write goodbye notes to their friends. Deliver the Kisses during homeroom period of the last week of school. Be careful when attaching the messages to the Kisses. An easy fundraising idea!

KISS THE COW (OR PIG)

First of all, each member of the youth group raising money would decorate a jar with his or her picture on it. People then put donations in the jar of their choice. (Contributing to the youth of their choice.) Next, all the money is counted. You hold a dinner for all those involved and the money counter announces who has raised the most money. Someone has to be responsible for getting a cow, a real cow to the church. The one who has the most money in their jar has to kiss the cow. You can also get well-recognized people to get involved. For example, your senior pastor, youth leader, etc. Have them decorate a jar of their own and the proceeds will go into the general youth fund. If they win, they have to kiss the cow.

Variation 1: Teachers and the staff at your school who agree to take part in the Kiss-A-Pig has a jar placed on his or her desk. Then students put pennies in that jar if they would like to see that person kiss the pig. If a student did not want to see that teacher kiss a pig they would put in silver coins and that would put them in the negative zone. The one with the most pennies (less silver) would have to kiss the pig. As a reward for the teacher, they receive a dinner for two at a nice restaurant.

Variation 2: Get people on your team to go on the auction block! Have people in your company, organization or social circles contribute money to the person that they would most like to see kiss a pig. The person with the most money in their jar will have to pucker up. While the two are lip-locked take pictures to sell to the friends and family members of the lucky winner.

LAZY BOY DAY FUNDRAISING

We ran Lazy-Boy Day for a fun activity and a way to raise some money. We set up a Lazy Boy chair in the cafeteria at lunch on Monday to Thursday to generate interest in an auction. On Thursday, just before the end of school, we auctioned off a special opportunity. That person got to spend all of their classes on Friday from the comfort of the Lazy Boy chair. Student council members brought the chair to the winner's first

period class and at the end of first period, student council members moved it to their next period class. It was a great way to raise a little money and have some fun at the same time. I've heard of schools where you get to keep the chair at the end of the day, but we just used an old chair from somebody's basement.

FUNDRAISING WITH FUNDRAISER INSURANCE

Here is a novel fundraising idea for your organization or project. It works particularly well if you normally have several labor intensive, or product sales type fundraisers during the year. Instead of having several small fundraising projects, determine your total fundraising needs and sell "Fund-raiser Insurance". For \$25.00 (or whatever per capita figure you need to raise), a person gets a certificate and wallet sized card that states that they are insured from all fundraising activities for 6 months, or whatever period chosen. (If you are a school or other children's group, determine the necessary amount per family.) If the person so wishes, they can purchase a policy for a year for \$50.00 (or other appropriate multiple amount). Give your members a break by allowing them to simply purchase insurance for the required amount and save the hassle of dealing with multiple fundraisers.

PENNY DRIVE FUNDRAISING

Here's an easy and fun fundraising idea suitable for any school or other organization with different classes or groups to set up some competition. It's called a penny drive. Each class or team competes against the all others. Each class decorates a large jar for their collections. The jars are set up in some accessible place, perhaps outside the school office. Be sure to arrange proper safeguards as necessary. The idea is to earn the most money for your class.

Dollars count FOR your class. Once the competition gets going, you can raise quite a bit of money in small change, adding pennies to your own jar or silver to competitors. It's great fundraising fun! Every class comes out a winner. Last place classes get ice cream cones as prizes. The Second place class receives a sundae with whipped cream, syrup, bananas, the works! The class in first place wins a pizza party and sundaes!

Variation 1: A school "penny war" with the classrooms competing against each other. Jars are placed outside of each classroom at the start of the day and end of the day, with someone monitoring of course. For every penny added to the jar a classroom would receive one point. Every nickel, dime, quarter, added and the class lost points according to the value of the coin. A dollar in the jar and the class lost 100 points. Kids are allowed to place coins and dollars in any jar they want, so they could make a classroom with the most points that day lose points by placing everything but pennies in the jar. Points are posted every day and the money collected in the office at the end of the day where student helpers wrap pennies, nickels, dimes and so forth. At the end of the nine week period, the class with the most points wins a popcorn/movie party. This can be done in elementary schools but for secondary, it works best if the competing classes are all homerooms. Easy way to raise money for the school, with no cash outlay.

Variation 2: You put one jar in a room for each grade. The jars are used to collect monetary contributions. For every \$.10 you award one link in a chain. Each link is a strip of paper cut out and then the ends are stapled forming a circle. Each grade must have a separate color, so that when you hang the chains they can see what grade is winning. It is a great way to make money and the competition level is usually real high.

Variation 3: Have the whole congregation bring in their spare change and keep track of it somewhere (maybe 5 gallon water jugs in the back of the sanctuary). Think of a way to get people competing for weight (pennies are better) and/or for amount (dimes are better). Allow people to put in bills, but take them to a bank and get change. Have a huge change counting party. (A goal may be 5 pounds of change per youth, or the ministers weight in change).

Variation 4: Divide your group into two teams. Give each team a large container and tell them that the group with the most pennies in their container one or two weeks before the event will be declared the winner.

The losing team must serve the winners at a special dinner in their honor. The two teams can get pennies from anyone (people in church, school, parents, friends, etc.). You could also do this with nickels, dimes or quarters.

MOVIE NIGHT FUNDRAISING

Many organizations rent a movie and hold movie night fundraising events. This works especially well if you have a large room and projection/large screen TV. Make money by charging a single price for the movie and refreshments; provide the movie free but sell refreshments; or charge nothing and just ask for donations. Make sure you select a movie that will be of special interest to your group. Allow plenty of time for socialization before and after the movie. Some groups have held all-nighters where movie-goers bring their sleeping bags and blankets and have a movie marathon.

CHILDREN'S COOKBOOK FUNDRAISING

Involve the whole school in writing a book of the children's favorite recipes. This is a hilarious and profitable fundraising idea. Ask each child in the school to tell you: 1) What they are going to cook; 2) What ingredients they will need; 3) How do they make their recipe; 4) How do they cook their recipe; 5) Draw a picture of what they want to cook. Write the children's responses down exactly as they tell them to you. Compile the recipes into a book and sell them to parents, friends, etc. *Sources: The Perpetual Preschool (Upland, California), Shelter Fundraising*

Alternate 1: We are a small nursery school in New Jersey and we did a children's fundraising cookbook with the children's drawings and stories about their families as well as the families recipes. We sold out in 72 hours. This had never happened to us before. What made the cookbooks so successful was the fact that they were full of wonderful drawings and quotes from the children. No parent could resist them. We found a company on the internet that specializes in fundraising cookbooks. We submitted the recipes and scanned in the drawings ourselves. The book was done very quickly and printed in about three weeks. This was a very easy fundraiser and very successful. – *Catherine K.*

PROM BOUTIQUE FUNDRAISING

The San Ramon Valley High School Drill in Danville, California, organized the area's first-time "prom boutique" which featured dozens of donated prom dresses and evening gowns on sale at bargain-basement prices. They collected once-used dresses for several months prior to the sale. While clothing stores charge anywhere from \$100 to \$500 for prom dresses, boutique shoppers did not have to pay more than \$50, with some garments priced as low as \$20. The event was advertised at high schools in and outside the Valley.

GAS STATION ATTENDANT FUNDRAISING

Ask a local gas station to let you pump customers' gas and wash their windshields. You can either ask for an unspecified fundraising donation or a set amount (you will do better without a set amount). Since most stations are now self service you will be offering the customers a welcome option. It's a win-win situation. It doesn't cost the station a cent and their customers get premium service. You'll get a few cheapskates but most customers will "treat you right"! You have no upfront cost. The gas stations already have the windshield cleaner, squeegees and paper towels. You just provide warm bodies and elbow grease. We use this fundraising idea at least twice a year and earn \$300 in three hours with just seven people! We are a small school and love doing this fundraiser.

SPIRIT CHAIN FUNDRAISING

This is a great fundraiser for high school students, but could be used with other groups. Have a competition within the different classes in the school (senior, junior, sophomore, freshmen) to see who has the most school spirit. Each class has two colors that their paper chain consists of. Sell each strip of paper for 25 or 50 cents. Keep the chains hidden and then at an assembly have class representatives bring out the huge paper chains that have accumulated over time. Which ever class' chain is the longest receives bragging rights for the rest of the school year. This is a great activity to do right before homecoming or other school functions when school spirit is high. The only thing you have to pay for is the paper and staples/glue/tape.

PAJAMA DAY FUNDRAISING

Students pay \$0.50 to \$1.00 on a designated day and get to wear their pajamas to school. It's a very easy fundraising idea. All you need is someone to go the classrooms and collect the money. Everyone at our school likes it so much that even the teachers participate! Consider having a contest for the ugliest, weirdest, etc. pajamas.

IDEAS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

- Christmas Kids-Make-It craft sale—add a meal—provide a kids' craft area. This is a great way for children to make something for family members, friends and teachers.
- Plan “after prom” activities for students. Offer door prizes and savings bonds. Plan games and activities for the kids.

Your Space is the Place

MAXIMIZING THE USE OF YOUR BUILDING

Church members sometimes overlook their primary resource when they're needing to raise funds—their buildings! In other areas of life, people pay a great deal just to have a *place* to hold events. We don't have to do that—take advantage of it!

SCRAPBOOKING MARATHON

We used the gymnasium of our Lutheran School to hold the scrapbooking marathon. Nothing like this had been done in our area, so we allowed some time to acquaint people with the concept. We explained that this was not an athletic event, but a time when scrapbooking enthusiasts can get together and work on their scrapbooks without messing up their homes or being interrupted. To get the word out I: wrote an article and submitted it to area churches for their congregational newsletters; prepared notices for Sunday bulletins; sent out a chapter activity card; had registration forms at all the church offices; had a notice in the local newspaper, made signs and put them up in grocery stores, doctor's offices, etc. Before I did anything, I asked a Creative Memories consultant, who happens to a Thrivent member, if she would like to partner with me. It was a good partnership! She helped me plan the day, spread the word over her website, and encouraged her customers to participate. Here are the steps we followed:

1. Check to see when the gym is available, and set a date and time. Ours was a 12 hour marathon, and we set the hours to be 10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
2. Set a registration fee. We set \$25 per person until the date that was one week before the event; after that date, it was \$30. Most people will make reservations early to save \$5.00 and that helps with the planning.
3. The registration fee included a place at the table to work on a scrapbook, snacks, lunch, supper, and a few prizes. We have two scrapbook stores in our area. One supplied a welcome packet and the other supplied a prize. Some prizes were scrapbooking related, and others were such things as a fruit basket, birdhouse, and a gardening basket. You are only limited by your imagination! The Grand Prize was a basket filled with Creative Memories supplies.
4. We wanted all the registration \$\$ to go to Thrivent Builds, so all the food and prizes were donated.
5. We had people donate time to work – usually 2-3 hour shifts. We needed help with setting up tables; working the registration table; welcoming and helping people bring their things in; people in the kitchen to keep snacks fresh and to serve lunch and supper; clean-up crew in the kitchen as well as a clean-up crew to put the tables away and clean up the gym at 10:00 p.m.
6. We set (2)8' tables back-to-back, and seated four people at it. (Each person had ½ an 8' table for workspace, and people enjoyed sitting across from others as they could visit and share ideas.)
7. We scheduled optional “workshops” throughout the day. These sessions were held in an all-purpose room across from the gym. (This room was where one could go to eat, also) The morning was a beginners workshop, and was well attended. During the afternoon four demonstrations or crop talks were presented. An agenda was given to each participant so everyone would know what to expect and at what time.
8. **KEEP THINGS SIMPLE.** Our lunch was homemade soup and crackers, with cookies for dessert. Supper was a spaghetti bake and Italian bread, a variety of salads and a variety of desserts. Snacks

were coffee and coffee cakes in the morning. In the afternoon cheese and crackers, cookies, and a party mix were added. In the evening we set out what desserts were not eaten at supper. We had bottled water for everyone. When that was gone we made pitchers of ice-water. Some brought their own pop, etc.

We had 49 registrations and made \$1,245. We had 30 people donate food and 9 people volunteered to work a couple of hours during the marathon. 5 businesses donated prizes, and 4 individuals donated prizes. I haven't broken it down by churches, etc, but 23 of the scrapers were Thrivent members. I really don't know if the others were Lutheran or just from the community. It was a good mixture. We had grandmas, daughters, and granddaughters. I didn't have any trouble getting volunteers. I made out a form that had everything I needed help with. I took it to Ladies League, Bible study, and my chapter meeting. I didn't have to do any additional phoning, and some ladies offered to do more than one thing. George Rausch from the board came and helped Ken take down the tables at 10:00, and our granddaughter that is 19 dry mopped the floor. The 8th grade students put the tables up, and Ken and one of his friends came and let us boss them around on Friday and moved the tables around until we liked the arrangement. My girls were a big help - they vacuumed the carpet in the all purpose room and put the tables back so we were ready for Bible class in the morning.

We used every table we could get our hands on. If there had been more people, we would have had to put more people at a table and it would have been more crowded. We had only positive remarks at the end of the evening, and many asked if we would do it again. I asked several if there was anything we could do to improve the day, and they said they didn't think it could get any better, so I guess it was a success!

The only change I might make would be in the food menu. The soup was good at lunch, but was kind of hard to serve in paper bowls, and I was trying to keep the clean-up at a minimum. – *Judy Vieregge, North Berrien Chapter*

MOM-TO-MOM RESALE

Most new mothers receive incredible items at baby showers these days. What happens to all that equipment when the baby grows up? Mom needs to pass it along to a new mom. It's a great service to the community and a great fundraiser to have a Mom-to-Mom Resale. Charge a mom who has items to sell an amount for a table, and charge a nominal amount to get in to shop. Then even serve refreshments or add a bake sale.

GRAMA, GRAMPA AND ME

Have a carnival but with a special feature—it's for kids to bring their grandparents to or for grandparents to bring their grandchildren to. Do some of the usual things like a cakewalk, a cookie decorating booth, crafts, games, dress-up photos but design them for your special crowd. If someone wants to come but his or her family members live too far away, encourage "adopting" a grandparent or grandchild for a day.

BULLETIN BOARD FOR HIRE

This is the perfect fundraiser for the right persons. Install a large bulletin board in a prominent place at church. Advertise that you will celebrate a special occasion for the donor on this board. Encourage church members to congratulate graduates, honor birthday celebrants, highlight special anniversaries, etc. on this board. People can be very creative when choosing reasons to celebrate—anything works! You passed your test! You're home! You've recovered! They hire you to decorate the board in a way that informs the church of the special event and pays tribute to the special person at the same time.

SPORTS TOURNAMENT

If there's one thing that's true about life today, it's that people are very involved in sports. Take advantage of your gym or outdoor property and host a sports tournament—volleyball, softball, 3-on-3 or regulation basketball, 3-on-3 or regulation soccer, etc. These can be for kids or adults or both. Find some “jocks” to organize the tournament, advertise it well, and “have a ball!” Between entrance fees and a concession booth, this could be a great way to raise funds AND to host the community at your place.

EQUIPMENT SWAP FUNDRAISING

Each year in Bend, Oregon, the ski season kicks off with the Annual Skyliners Ski Swap, a fundraiser for the Mt. Bachelor Ski Education Foundation (MBSEF). Attendees can sell and buy used and new alpine and cross country ski equipment, snowboards, winter clothing, ice skates and other winter recreational items. A 25% commission for each product sold and a \$3 admission fee benefits MBSEF. A similar event could be held in your area to defray equipment and uniform costs for most any sport or activity.

DARTS TOURNAMENT FUNDRAISING

Charge an entry fee for a knock out tournament.

PET COMPETITION FUNDRAISING

Requires a venue. People pay to enter their pets into one of a number of classes; each class has a winner which then goes on to a grand final. Because of health issues, you may only be able to have dog classes, but other pets can be entered using photos or videos. Have novelty classes such as waggiest tail, dog which looks most like its owner, dog and owner in costume etc. For photographs, you could have funniest face, fluffiest tail etc.

SCHOOL SPORTS DAY FOR ADULTS FUNDRAISING

Most people can remember junior school sports days. All the events should be ones guaranteed to slow down the fastest athletes e.g. three-legged race, sack race, wheel-barrow race, egg-and-spoon race (or potato and spoon race) etc. Get groups or local businesses to enter teams for a small fee and award prizes for each race or for the winning team. Could be part of a general fundraising day with stalls, sideshows, refreshments or barbecue.

TREASURE HUNT FUNDRAISING

Participants are sponsored to find/solve clues and/or objects on a set route on your premises. People are charged an entry fee for competing. They may have to solve additional cryptic clues to identify objects along the route (e.g. a weathervane, a commemorative plaque) and write down each solution along the way. Depending on the type of competition, the winner could be the first one to finish or the one who solves most clues.

TRUCK & HEAVY EQUIPMENT SHOW FUNDRAISING

Looking for something different? Hold a Truck/Heavy Equipment Fundraising Show. All you need is a large venue, preferably outdoors in a high traffic area, to bring in the drive-by crowds. You could raise a lot of money with this simple idea. Arrange for town workers and private citizens--everyone and anyone who drives or owns a large truck, tractor, earth mover etc. to park their vehicle in your field or parking lot on a

Saturday or Sunday afternoon. If you don't have a large enough venue, maybe a local mall will let you use a portion of their parking lot.

Rope off the area and charge admission. Kids of all ages love to see fire trucks, ambulances, dump trucks, and backhoes up close and personal. Some proud owners may polish up their vehicles for the occasion and be willing to stand by to answer the kids questions or even let them climb in or on the vehicle.

Approach city maintenance departments regarding the temporary loan of a garbage truck, snow plow, road paving equipment, etc. Ask local construction companies for a crane or cement mixer. Approach area farmers or farm equipment dealers for a tractor, combine or other equipment. You'll want to arrange for at least one eighteen wheeler, maybe even a moving van. Think delivery trucks, mail truck, UPS, FedEx. How about a Greyhound or other tourist bus? Is there a military installation or depot nearby? Ask the ROTC or National Guard to participate. You might even arrange for a helicopter. See how many different kinds of vehicles you can muster, the possibilities are endless!

Have a sandwich board by each vehicle, or a large sign or program passed out at the gate acknowledging the various donors and thanking them for their participation. You should also send an individual follow-up thank you to each with information on how much money you raised and how it will be used.

Besides the 'gate', you could sell refreshments and baked goods.

Post flyers and signboards around town and neighboring areas and send out news releases. Be sure to get your event included in the community bulletin boards or calendars of local newspapers and radio stations. If your charitable cause is unique or universal enough, you might even get a local radio to broadcast from your event. A great fundraising idea!

MONOPOLY® TOURNAMENT FUNDRAISING

Design your MONOPOLY® fundraising tournament to "fit" your organization and potential supporters. Most organizations charge an admission fee for individuals and/or teams. Don't forget the possibility of business supporters who can sponsor specific spaces on the board. Most fundraising tournaments are conducted on a set time limit basis. If you want to really do it right, contact the National MONOPOLY® Tournament Director at Hasbro.

MONOPOLY® Trivia: The longest MONOPOLY® game ever played was 1,680 hours - that's 70 straight days; longest game in a bathtub - 99 hours; longest game underwater - 45 days; and longest game played upside-d/own - 36 hours. The largest outdoor game ever played used a game board 938 feet wide by 765 feet long. The game required approximately a full city block! The largest indoor game ever played used a game board 122 feet by 122 feet in size. Parker Brothers prints about 50 billion dollars worth of MONOPOLY® money in one year. The total MONOPOLY® money in a standard set is \$15,140. Values on the MONOPOLY® game board are the same today as they were in 1935! The most extravagant MONOPOLY® board game set ever produced was the centerpiece of the 1988 MONOPOLY® World Championship held in London. Made with diamonds, rubies and eighteen carat gold, the set was valued at over \$1,000,000!

BABY SITTING

Our youth group will be babysitting in a gymnasium for Christmas shoppers and parents who want to go out Valentines evening. This allows parents to shop in peace and enjoy an evening out without the kids. For the Christmas babysitting fundraising we will watch Christmas movies, play games, have snacks, etc. Make sure your insurance covers this. Have plenty of adult supervision.

TRIKE-A-THON FUNDRAISING

Hold a fundraising "Trike-a-thon". It is exactly what it sounds like. Make it an athletic challenge where young children get donations per lap that they will ride on their tricycles on a given day or flat donations. Paint a special trike path in your parking lot or use tape on a gymnasium floor. Hold the ride on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon and invite parents and donors to attend to cheer on their child. Or it can be held during the school day and invite the parents to come at specific times to cheer for their child's class.

Variation: This can also be done as a fun contest for older children or even adults. It's really funny to watch. Maybe combine the two and end your fundraising Trike-A-Thon on a hilarious note with a race between parents using their children's tricycles!

Beyond!

IDEAS THAT ENHANCE A TRADITIONAL FUNDRAISER

Do these alongside an event you're already doing—on the side, in the back, around the perimeter, etc.

M&MS ARE MISSION AND MINISTRY

Purchase the little plastic flip-top containers of mini-M&Ms. Make new labels for the containers that explain that M&Ms stands for Mission and Ministry. Make sure you what you are raising funds for on the label. Using a commercial pattern available at fabric stores, make some M&M costumes. Have volunteers dress up in their costumes and sell these containers of M&Ms at any event where people are gathered. But then tell them one more important thing. The containers the M&Ms come in are sized perfectly to collect quarters. Ask people to collect quarters in their Mission & Ministry containers and return them to you when they're full (they hold \$10!) Periodically collect filled containers.

KEEP THE KIDS BUSY (FOR A FEE!)

Oriental Trading Company has a special division called Hands on Fun! Creativity for the Classroom. The Hands on Fun! Catalog features hundreds of craft projects for children to do in kits of 12. These are also featured in Oriental Trading Company's craft catalogs. The kits are simple, inexpensive, and include all you need to complete the projects without trouble. They are the types of activities that kids both like to do and can be proud of the product. As an addition to your next fundraiser, buy lots of these kits and provide a craft corner where the kids can pay for the opportunity to make a project or two. It's not much work for the volunteers and could add a good amount to the profits. Leftover projects can be saved to use for the next fundraiser. The kids will enjoy themselves, but the parents will appreciate this even more since they have more time to visit with others in peace.

AUCTIONS

A silent auction can be a great addition to any fundraising event. For the little work it adds, it adds to the success of fundraising significantly. One good idea that many churches do is to ask all the different groups in the church to donate one basket. For example, the choir would add one, the Sunday School teachers another, the Youth Group a third, etc. Here is one list of the types of baskets to try:

- Sports related basket
- Kids' toys basket
- Garden Basket
- Coffee Baskset
- Tea Basket
- Bath and Body Basket
- Car Wash Basket
- Stationary/Stamp Basket
- Books, books, books

- Wine Basket
- Knitting Basket
- Sewing Basket
- Scrapbooking Basket

AUCTION (SILENT OR NOT)

A fundraising auction can be combined with any event, a spaghetti or pancake dinner, cookout, cheese and wine tasting party, etc. or held on its own. Supporters donate their time, talent or treasures which are auctioned off to the highest bidder. Examples of time or talent include: x hours of yard work, housework, knife sharpening, a romantic dinner for 4, mystery supper for 8, water ski lessons, piano lessons, a room painted or wallpapered, knitting lessons, handyman for a day, homemade pies, baked goods, etc. Treasures can be handmade or not, crafts, decorative items, meals, trips, concert or sports tickets, golf green fees, and other items.

The key to a successful **live fundraising auction** is to have a good auctioneer, preferably one willing to donate their services. He/she does not need to be a professional or a fast talker, like at a tobacco or car auction. Some group member with the gift of gab and a sense of fun, knowledge of the expected audience and possibly of the donors, as well, can be very successful. A good auctioneer can generate bids for even the most unlovable object, and foster bidding wars for the popular items. It is important to let the auctioneer know the number and character of the items to be auctioned so ample time is allowed for the big ticket items, and everything is auctioned within the allotted time span. The auctioneer should be given a complete description of each item as it is presented for auction. (Small typed index cards are suitable for this purpose. Be sure to include the item number for easy reference.) Several helpers are needed to move items to and from the 'stage' or from where ever the items are auctioned.

Helpers are needed to register bidders and assign bid numbers at the start of the event. Card fans or large index cards can be used as bid numbers. Just be sure the numbers will be clearly legible to the auctioneer or helper. Each bidder (or couple, if desired) should be given their bid number and a listing of all items to be auctioned. Additional helpers are needed during the auction to record the winning bid number and amount on the master list of items; and to collect the bid amounts and distribute the items at the end. It can be helpful to prepare a separate index card for each successful bidder and maintain a running list of purchased items, identified by number and bid amount. These cards can be quickly totaled for easy checkout, with method of payment (cash or check), and delivery of auctioned items noted. The card totals should be balanced against the annotated master list and any discrepancies reconciled, hopefully before bidders 'check out'.

For a **silent fundraising auction**, each donation is displayed with a ruled sheet and pen/pencil. The bidder signs his/her name and telephone number and the amount of their bid. Other bidders sign below with a higher bid amount. (The minimum bid and raise amounts should be noted on the sheet.) Bids are closed at a set time for all, or can be closed by table in 15 minute increments. Announcements are made 5 minutes before closing to encourage 'bidding up' of the most popular items. Once closed the winning (last) bidder is notified and can collect his/her prize at a central collection table where payment is made. (Be sure to have plenty of help available to locate items and collect bids.)

CHRISTMAS CAROLS OR HYMN SING & PIE AUCTION FUNDRAISING

Have a hymn sing or Christmas Carols followed by homemade pie or cake and ice cream. The remaining pies/cakes are then auctioned off. A basket is placed by the refreshment table for donations for those who don't buy a whole pie or cake but still wish to help out with the costs of refreshments.

DINNER FOR A WEEK

Our cheerleading team got 7 restaurants to donate a dinner for 2 and auctioned off a week of eating out. You could have a great auction with just this one item.

USED BOOK SALE

Add a used book sale to a fundraiser that is already drawing a crowd. People are happy to donate their used book and buyers are happy with getting a book inexpensively.

GOAT INSURANCE

Hold a "goat insurance" fundraising event that people can't resist because they can't stop laughing. Flyers are mailed to your membership and/or other groups to announce that your organization will "raffle off" a donated goat. For \$10, a person can send in the names of three people. Letters are then sent to those three people, telling them they have a chance to win a goat. But, for \$10 they can buy "goat insurance" to protect themselves from being entered in the "raffle." The "winner" of the "raffle" does get the goat, but after the fun wears off, the goat's returned to its owner.

BALLOON BUST

Fill a couple hundred balloons with helium and slips of paper redeemable for prizes or cash, or (10 percent) 'Thank You Please Try Again'. The fundraising prizes can be a free Coke if Coca Cola is helping sponsor event. You could have an early bird prize about 'Guess The Number of Balloons'. That could go on for a couple of hours, then the prizes start to be drawn. Fill a room with these balloons, so patrons walk in and find them-selves in a latex obstacle course. They can pull one balloon outside, you write their name on it with magic marker. Then they put it back until the end of the night. During the day, have patrons guess how many balloons are in the room. The closest wins a prize at the end of the day.

Variation: Put money into 100 helium-filled balloons and sell them for \$10 each. Denominations: One balloon contains \$100, two-\$50.00, two-\$20, two-\$10, two-\$5.00 and the rest \$2.00. Sell all 100 and make a total of \$548.00.

FOR AN OUTDOOR EVENT—SLOW BICYCLE RACE

Charge an entry fee and award a prize for people to see how slowly they can complete a very short course. Really good entrants can practically make a bike stand still. Hold this is a series of heats.

TIDILY-WINKS TOURNAMENT

Charge a small entry fee for people or teams to see how many winks (counters) they can get into a glass or circle, with a prize going to one with the highest score at the end of the event. Alternatively, hold it as a knockout competition (best-of-three matches) or league table.

MARBLES AND FLOWERPOT CHALLENGE

Put a clay flowerpot upside down on a tray. You need a supply of marbles which will fit through the drainage hole in the flowerpot. Charge an entry fee for each person to try to put as many marbles as possible through the drainage hole using only a spoon (not allowed to use the free hand) in one minute. The one who puts the most marbles through the hole wins a prize.

BAKE SALE

Not just cakes and cookies - include preserves, guess-the-weight-of-the-cake competition, and other ways to WIN cakes.

TUG OF WAR

Organize a tug-of-war knockout tournament (each heat is best-of-three) or one-day league table contest between teams, charging an entry fee and giving a prize to the winners.

UGLY FACES

Entrants pay an entry fee to make their ugliest faces, to be judged by a panel. Ugliest face gets a prize. This could even be done by mail using photos submitted before a set closing date.

BOOT THROWING

Make sure people throw AWAY from the other events! Charge entrants to see how far they can throw a boot. At the end of the day, give a prize to the winner. This can also be run as a tournament.

WHEELBARROW RACE

At a fun sports day, have a 2-person wheelbarrow race where one person is the 'barrow' and the other is the 'barrow-pusher'. Or you use real wheelbarrows and teams enter to push each other a number of laps around a park or car park (will require permission). Charge each team an entry fee and ask teams to get sponsorship as well. You could have additional classes for costume, decorated barrows etc; with an entry fee and award for each class. Don't steal shopping trolleys (shopping karts), but you may be able to ask a local store if they have any dented trolleys (with all wheels present!) which you can borrow before the trolley is scrapped.

WORST HOLIDAY SNAPSHOTS/VIDEOS

Invite friends or colleagues to submit their worst holiday photos and videos. Charge a small entry fee per photo/video and get a panel of judges to decide on the very worst (you may need several categories). The worst ones can be displayed or shown to all entrants and a prize given to the winners.

YO-YO CHALLENGE

Get sponsored for the number of minutes you can keep a yoyo going or for the number of tricks you can perform in a certain time.

FACE PAINTING

You do not have to be an artistic person to paint a face. You simply have to enjoy interacting with people. Most people are happy with whatever you put on their face as long as you are nice to them. Since you must be in very close proximity to people, always start out by introducing yourself. "Hi my name is What is your name?" Next let the child know what you will be doing. Taking the time to let children know is well worth it. They are then comfortable and do not wiggle as much.

Keep the designs simple for obvious reasons. It is often helpful to also have the face-painting fundraising volunteers paint their faces beforehand so there are some real life examples of the faces. This is a great way

to practice before paying customers get there and a good bonding experience for the volunteers. The normal charge averages about \$2.00 but you need to decide what is appropriate for your target group.

Use powder based paint sticks because the paint is dry on the stick. You use a wet paintbrush to activate the paint. It dries quickly and needs few touch-ups. Best of all they do not melt. Set up to four painting stations - each with everything painters need:

- One water bowl with fresh water
- Three to four paint brushes of various sizes
- Two to three face sponges to cover the whole face with paint
- Towel for the painters lap
- Small mirror
- Red, blue, brown, black, white, grey, green, yellow, orange, and purple paint sticks
- Paper towel to put paint sticks on
- Face painting pattern book
- Wet wipes (to clean a child's face if they are dirty)

The best tables to use for face painting are the economical plastic shelving units you can purchase at any discount store. Most shelving units have four levels. You can break each level down which allows you to have four tables that are about two feet tall. Two chairs are set up at each station, one for the painter and one for the child (and an occasional adult).

On busy days in your fundraising event it is helpful to have one person who is in charge of the waiting line. This person will hand out numbers, collect money, and help people choose a face painting pattern. They can also help change out water in the paintbrush bowl and keep people entertained while waiting in line. On busy days this position is very important.

BLIND AUCTION

A blind auction is mostly about fun but can also raise funds for your group. It works best as part of an ongoing event such as a luncheon or dinner meeting. Here's how it works. Get as many people as you can that will be attending the event to bring a wrapped package. The contents could be humorous or something of actual value. Think of the possibilities! You can get rid of that ugly "xxx" in the back of your closet for a worthy cause.

Donors can weight the boxes with a brick to disguise the contents, have an oversize box for a very small present, or wrap boxes within boxes to increase anticipation. You get the idea! Announce that at least one of the boxes contains a '\$x' bill or something of value that is small enough to fit in all the boxes. The dollar value will depend on your group and anticipated bidding amounts.

As guests arrive they place their boxes on a display table so potential bidders can examine them and speculate on what they contain. Whether you use a live or silent auction fundraising, make sure everyone has time to pick them up and shake them before the bidding. Guessing the contents is much of the fun.

At the specified time, the boxes will either be auctioned individually or the results of the silent auction announced. If you have a live auction, make sure you have a couple of "valuable" prizes auctioned first to stimulate the bidding. Above all, make sure you allow time to let everyone to open their box in front of the group. That's where the fun is. – *Shanta P, Dallas, TX*

Alternative: Pound Auction. Have everyone donate an item. Each item must weigh in at one pound. Have each person donating wrap their items so that you are unable to tell what the item is. Then auction the fundraising items off. *Source: The Ornament Connection*

REVERSE RAFFLE

A fundraising reverse raffle is one where you don't want to win. Give a free ticket to everyone attending a regular organization meeting or special event. Tell them they are automatically included in the drawing for a special prize. If they don't want to be eligible for the prize, they can "sell" their ticket for \$1 to \$10 - depending on your attendees.

Why would they want to get rid of their ticket? Consider prize options/activities that can be completed during the event itself such as singing a song standing on a table; wearing a silly hat or mask; having their face painted; wearing a funny costume; or ????? Be creative!

You will find very few spoil-sports who won't go along. If nothing else, they will "sell" their ticket to keep from looking foolish. Your only expense is the raffle tickets (a double ticket roll, a single ticket roll that you tear in half or a board with the numbers for sale). All ticket stubs (or duplicate tickets or numbers, depending on your style of raffle tickets) are placed in a hat or other container from which one "lucky" number is drawn. The drawing is normally held early in the event to make sure that the "lucky" holder is present.

FUNDRAISING ALTERNATE

Offer a prize such as a goat, pig, donkey, etc. You can be magnanimous and offer to purchase the prize back from the lucky winner for \$10.

CENTER COURT TOSS

There are several fundraising techniques for basketball game halftimes but they can be adapted for other locations. Numbered, rubber stars are sold and then the holders of stars line up around the perimeter of the gym and toss the stars at the center of the court. The closest star to the center gets a prize or a percent of the take on star sales. The kids love it and there is no way to predict where the stars may bounce because of the 5 points on them. Variation 1: Tossing balls of a putty type density that do not bounce or bean bags into a bucket at center court. Variation 2: Tossing tennis balls (which obviously will bounce) into a deeper container such as a garbage can at center court.

MONEY TREE

Give every person or child in your class, club, or organization a plain unmarked envelope. The envelopes must be identical. Ask them to place a coin or note inside the envelope, seal it, and hand the unmarked envelope to the organizer who staples a corner to a cardboard tree. To play the game a paying customer (supporter) chooses an envelope (but is not allowed to feel before choosing). They win whatever is in the envelope. It could be a note, a penny, a dollar, or more!! Give it a go, its always a sell out. Easy fundraising idea!

FAVORITE PHOTOS

Use photos of babies, dogs, etc. – anything that relates to your organization. Entrants submit a photo (specify maximum size accepted), and may also submit a 3x5 card with a few sentences as a description to create more interest. Photos are mounted on a display board or inside a sponsoring merchant's window at a sidewalk fundraising festival. Each photo is numbered and a jar is numbered for each photo for votes. Votes are made with coins, dollar bills, or checks (made payable to your organization). The picture with the most "votes" (total money collected) wins a prize.

Prizes can be solicited from sponsors. The "votes" (money) goes to your organization. The most "votes" are obtained from grandmothers/fathers and aunts/uncles, so this fundraising idea works best in a smaller community or at an event with relatives attending.

CAKE WALK

You have people donate cakes. Usually these people would be the people who are involved in whatever the money is being raised for.

You put numbers around tables (usually 1-100, depending the area you're in). We usually tape the top of the number close to edge of the table and far apart enough for people to stand by their numbers. We have approximately 30-40 people show up most of the time for a cake walk.

You charge them .50 per number (usually we charge .25 because of the size of the crowd). They can buy as many numbers at once as they want. They stand by their numbers. You have a second copy of the numbers that are on the tables in a bag. Once the numbers on the tables have all been sold, (if all the numbers are not sold you just flip each one over until the next draw, and if one of those unsold numbers should be drawn, just draw another number) then you draw the number and the person who bought that number is the person who wins a cake.

You also have numbers put on each cake and a separate bag with these numbers in as well. Then you also draw a cake number. That is the cake they win. The number of cakes you have is the number of rounds you have. People line up to buy their numbers again after each cake is won. (They can choose different numbers on the tables each time) Have some fundraising fun!

GUESSING GAME

A guessing game is so simple than many groups never think of it and is appropriate fundraising for school groups, sports teams, civic clubs, adult work places - just about anywhere. There are many versions but the principle is the same for each. Participants are given the opportunity to guess something and they pay for each guess.

The simplest version is a large jar filled with virtually any item as long as it takes a lot of them to fill the jar. If you use candy, you could vary it by the season - red hots for Valentines Day, candy corn at Thanksgiving, multi-colored Hershey kisses at Christmas.

Once the game is over, everyone gets to eat the contents. You could also use pennies, dried beans, screws, soft drink tabs, paper clips, even confetti (really tough). Try to think of something that would be the most intriguing to your probable participants. However, unless the items are donated or loaned, keep them very cheap for obvious reasons.

Now that your jar is filled, you need to place it in a conspicuous place such as a display case at a school or break area at a business so everyone can see it. Place a sign next to the jar (and in all other areas you can think of) challenging participants to guess the number of "whatevers" in the jar. Your specific organization and target participants will dictate how much to charge per guess and how to collect for the guesses. Make sure your signage explains what the proceeds will be spent for.

Roll Up Your Sleeves

IDEAS FOR HANDS-ON SERVICE PROJECTS

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Locate a Habitat for Humanity house being built in your area. Find out what materials are needed. Get together at least 6 Thrivent Financial for Lutherans households interested in helping coordinate work, helpers, and supplies. And behold! A great sense of satisfaction and joy in helping build someone's home. – *Eleanor Dunlop, Trinity, Paw Paw*

IDEAS FROM THE HOME OFFICE

- Purchase prizes and create games for a carnival for kids with special needs.
- Put on a birthday party for shut-ins. Themes of party could be circus, western, safari, etc.
- Help the homeless or other needy people by making personal care kits with combs, toothbrushes, shampoos, compact mirrors, etc.
- Clean up trash along a river or in a park.
- Repair broken fences or other equipment at a park.
- Contact a local volunteer center to find out what is needed in your community.
- Provide Easter baskets for shut-ins.
- Make birdhouses and feeders; then take to an area care home. Place where residents can enjoy.
- Conduct a “trade your skills” activity and offer things such as landscaping, tailoring, fix-it work, wallpapering, canning, baking, car repair, etc. to help seniors.
- Create gardening kits for seniors—include seeds, small potting plants, garden gloves, fertilizer, potting soil, large print instructions, small birdhouses, birdseed.
- Build a wheelchair ramp for an accident victim or another needy individual.

Details, Details, Details. . .

TIPS FOR MAKING FUNDRAISERS AND HANDS-ON SERVICE PROJECTS BETTER, EASIER, SMOOTHER

Thrivent volunteers reported that stores will prepare their food for you for a nominal fee. This is a real time-saver and well worth it in some situations.

Almost every fundraising “expert” agrees that groups do better when they ask for a free-will donation rather than charging a set amount. Whether it’s a bake sale or a dinner, this rule seems to be in place.

It is common for us to have our bake sales at our own churches, and that seems to make sense. But I’ve been told that if you really want to increase your profits for a bake sale, you need to hold it away from church. The best location is anywhere men are by themselves! Forgive the gender stereotyping, but volunteers insist that if you can get men alone they’ll buy a homemade pie every time!

If you are doing a silent auction, ask GROUPS of people to donate baskets. Sample encouragement:

Do you belong to a card club? A breakfast club? A book club? A sewing club? A golf league? A bible class? Maybe you can be the catalyst behind getting some support by asking the members to collectively sponsor a basket.

Also, “gift cards” for services can also be included in baskets. Sample encouragement:

Do you sew? Do you baby-sit? Do you repair computers? Do you cut hair? Do you can your own jelly? Do you crochet or knit? Your services can be donated also.

Gift certificates for food, car washes, oil changes, manicures, massages, coffee houses etc. are also great ideas to include in baskets to make them more valuable and appealing.

Keep your fundraiser short. Too many group leaders think that more time is better, but that is often not the case. Keeping a fundraiser quick forces group members to participate because they can't put it off, while also making your job as the group leader much easier.

Offer a prize or incentive to the person that brings in the most money, or who works the hardest. Your volunteers don't need to receive external rewards for their participation, but adding a fun prize could make working on the fundraiser more fun. Fun is the only motive of this idea.

CAR WASH

Everything you could possibly want to know is available in a free 46-page booklet titled '*How to Run a Successful Car Wash Fundraiser*'. A complete step-by-step guide to preparation, the wash itself, and follow-up.

Chapter 1 - Preparation: Picking dates and times, rain dates, finding volunteers, pre-sale tickets, wash-a-thons, organizing (person in charge, publicity coordinator, location & site locator, supplies person, ticket sales captain, shift scheduler, post car wash person and environmental coordinator), agendas for meetings, picking a location, insurance requirements, ticket graphics, and hours for the wash.

Chapter 2 - Environmental: History, storm water discharge, what's in the water, choosing car wash products, water conservation, and using a pressure washer versus a garden hose. This was written for California residents so you may need to make some adjustments.

Chapter 3 - Presale/Donations: Motivation/pep talks, incentives, parent's help, teams, divide and conquer, overlap problems, other sales locations, and profits/goals.

Chapter 4 - Publicity: Public service announcements, local newspapers, cable stations, newsletters, faxing, and flyers.

Chapter 5 - Day of Event: Set up, layout, supplies, supervision, organizing washers, signage, public address system, donation cans, hot dogs, bake sale, pancake breakfast, traffic flow, flyers, cash, media, counting cars, and vacuuming.

Chapter 6 - Post Car Wash: Clean up, towels, announce your earnings, thank you letters, certificates, property owners, city hall, fixed site car wash owners, letter to the editor, collecting pledges, evaluation, and setting a date for next years car wash.

Because this is a 46-page document (884K - PDF format), try to get someone who has a cable modem to download it. <http://www.fundraising-ideas.org/DIY/images/carwash.pdf>

BAKELESS BAKE SALE IDEAS

Send this letter to your members: You are invited to NOT bake a cake, pie, cookies, or brownies. You do NOT have to find the recipe. You do NOT have to shop for the ingredients. You do NOT have to mix. You do NOT have to cook. You do NOT have to cut. You do NOT have to wrap. You do NOT have to wash dishes. You do NOT have to clean up your kitchen. You do NOT have to deliver the baked product. You do NOT have to stand in the heat/cold/rain to sell the baked product. You can write a check for \$10.00 to "*name of organization*" and stay home and enjoy doing something yourself or with your family!

THE BAKELESS BAKE SALE FUNDRAISING POEM

Many is the time I heard you say
I would rather give a "Dollar" than bake today
And so, we are asking you to help more or less
To make our Bakeless Bake Sale a big success.

Just send us the money that it would take
To Bake a loaf of bread or a beautiful cake
Or send in the amount of money it takes to buy
A dozen rolls or maybe a pie
We know you can help us if you will but try.

I am buying or baking the items marked below.

Items for Sale Items you Bake/Donate

___ Cupcakes: 2 for a dollar	___ 3 doz. cupcakes: \$4.00
___ Chocolate cookies: 6 for \$1.00	___ 3 doz. chocolate cookies: 6.00
___ Brownies 12 for \$3.00	___ 3 doz. brownies: \$8.00
___ Dutch Apple Pie \$5.00	___ 3 Home made pies: \$10.00
___ Strawberry Cheesecake \$7.00	___ 2 strawberry cheesecakes: \$15.00

BAKELESS BAKE SALE FUNDRAISING

Ashton Ladies Aid is having a Bakeless Bakesale fundraising event through the month of May. All ladies are asked to contribute the amount they would have spent on ingredients, plus an amount for their time and skill. You don't need to burn your fingers or dirty a mixing bowl. And everyone is asked to contribute what you would have spent for a couple of pies, a loaf of bread, and a plate of cookies. There are no calories in it. And it will help the Ladies Aid in all the good work done by this organization. Bring gifts to the church, or mail to xxxxxxxx.

Money Can't Buy Me Love

IDEAS FOR LOCALLY SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES

TALENT SHOW

Whatever happened to the old-fashioned Talent Show? What a shame for it to have disappeared. It's grand to sit back and enjoy the talents of the people in your community—especially the ones you didn't know they had. Kids and adults alike benefit greatly from both the chance to share their talents and to applaud for others'. Encourage GROUPS to perform—sing, dance, perform skits, etc. That involves more people. No tedious planning, no shopping, no cleaning up—just invest the time in recruiting your acts and making sure you have a big audience. Make sure you highlight what you're raising the funds for.

TASTE FEST

This idea includes a new spin to the usual canned food drive.

As part of a food drive, students were asked to bring in food goods that, in turn, allowed them to receive tickets. The tickets could be used to "purchase" delicious home-baked deserts like cookies, brownies, pie, and cupcakes. Divided by class standing, students gave canned vegetables and fruit, boxed goods, and other nonperishable items. Local businesses and bakeries, as well as students, donated desserts for the event.

This could be an addition to any food drive as an incentive and to add fun.

TREASURE HUNT

To secure actual items for a local women's shelter several church groups were willing to canvas nearby neighborhoods on a "Treasure Hunt". They took in food, toiletries, clothing and monetary donations. One church had a contest between their groups to see who could obtain the most "stuff". Any items not needed for the shelter were passed on to other shelters or sold in a fundraising garage sale for the shelter. People were more willing to give items than money to these strangers at their doors, but all was needed for the shelter.

IDEAS FOR NON-FUNDED ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (AND MAYBE SOME NOT-SO-YOUNG PEOPLE)

- Write a letter to someone in a veteran's hospital, nursing home, etc.
- Collect stuffed animals to donate to children in a homeless shelter
- Hold a mitten drive and trim a mitten tree; deliver it also
- Adopt a highway, beach, park trail, neighborhood park, camp ground area, etc. and pick up litter
- Read to younger children
- Recycle greeting cards to be used as note cards, gift tags, etc.
- Plan and perform entertainment for a nursing home, adult day care center, etc.
- Hold a used book exchange with book reports and/or reviews included
- Collect children's clothes, toys, shoes, etc. to donate
- Make picture albums for Alzheimer's patients

- Hold safe rollerblading, skateboarding or biking clinics
- Hold basketball, football, golf, etc. clinics
- Make Easter, Thanksgiving, or Christmas gift baskets
- Make “angel bags” for nursing home or hospital patients with little things they can use
- Build bird feeders and/or bird houses for seniors, shut-ins, or nursing homes or hospitals.
- Make up care kits for LCFS or community shelters, Lutheran World Relief
- Have a clown clinic and/or balloon art clinic
- Ask youth to bring 8-10 photos related to a specific theme, and let them make scrapbook pages with them
- Get photos of chapter activities from the events Director and let the youth scrapbook them. The chapter can supply the necessary accessories.
- Set up a mini Olympics/fitness clinic, with obstacle course, timed races, basketball throws, etc.
- Work on crafts that can be distributed to the less fortunate, nursing home residents or kept as a keepsake of your event
- Prepare a new song/skit to be presented in closing activities that day
- How to care for a pet class. Get a local veterinary technician/employee to bring some small animals and demonstrate how to hold, feed, what medical attention they need, behavioral training methods, etc.
- Face painting, someone teaching them how to do it and letting them paint each other’s faces and the younger children

Make homemade Christmas Cards. Children’s art, collage, art stamps. Also assemble a home made assortment of greeting cards and distribute to shut-ins, along with pens and a packet of stamps. Go to the home or facility to help them sign and address!

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 DJErdmann
 21 December 07*