

Special Events That Raise Gobs of Money +
Deepen Donor Relationships

Planned Giving Council of Cape Cod

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Who am I? Anne Garnett

- Current consultant - contractor. Former executive director, fundraiser. AFP-RI *Fundraiser of the Year* (1997).
- Passionate about my organizations, their missions & goals.
- Envisioned & executed lots of events for Save The Bay, Roger Williams Park Zoo, Aquidneck Land Trust, Preservation Society of Newport County.
- Had fun. Had challenges. Had surprises. Recruited celebrities.
- Raised lots of \$\$\$. Engaged lots of people. Learned a lot.
- These events helped to save land, the bay, historic buildings & endangered species.
- Have MMA from URI in fisheries – specifically shark biology.
 - Perfect background for fundraising.

FREE INFORMATION

- Virtual Handouts ... available as PDF.
 - Copy of this powerpoint as a PDF
 - Some interesting info from your friends at the IRS & elsewhere.
- I will email both. **SOON.** Just sign up.

GROUND RULES

A “Fast-paced, interactive” session means a **CONVERSATION** not a **LECTURE**.

- Have questions? **RAISE YOUR HAND!**
- Comments & creative solutions? **CHIME IN!**
- Additional questions? **SEE ME** after lunch. **CALL** me. **E-MAIL** me. Or even **HIRE** me.

NOW, A BIT ABOUT YOU ...

- What type of **cultivation** events are you doing?
- Who is planning their **1st** fundraising event?
- Who has executed an event that netted:
 - **\$150K or more? \$50k? \$25k? \$10k? Less?**
- What **types of \$\$ events** are you doing?
 - Athletic? Auctions? Dinners & Galas?
Combos? The “Non-Event” Event? Other?

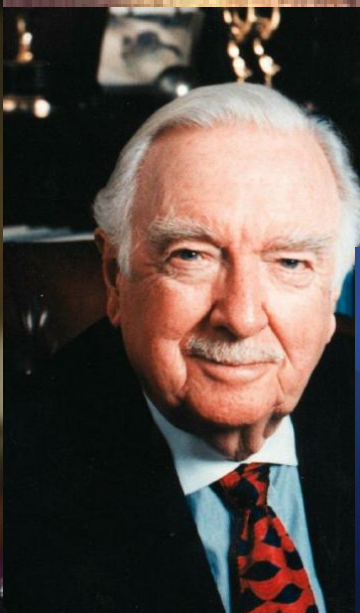
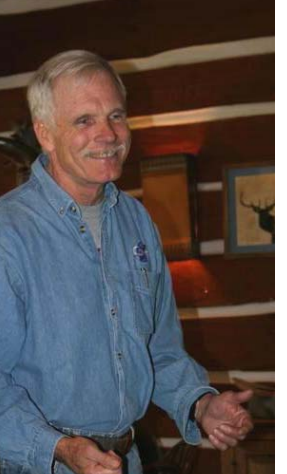
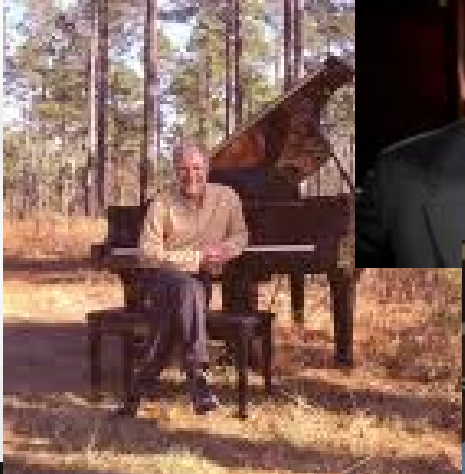
Some more...

- Who has recruited celebrities to support your event?
 - Politicians & elected officials?
 - Non-political?

Did they **DONATE?** What was **THEIR ROLE?**

Was it **WORTH** it?

Ah... Celebrities ...



politicians? Elected Officials?



LET'S GET SOME THORNY ISSUES OUT OF THE WAY

- Events are **RISKY**.
- **External** Risks
 - The Weather. The News.
 - Competing Events + **FREE, PRIVATE PARTIES**
 - Liability issues. Liquor. Injury.
- **Internal** Risks
 - Events can be **TIME & RESOURCE** sinkholes.
 - Budget & volunteer management. Challenges.

ROI for FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES In general

- **Direct Mail Acquisition** Cost 115% ROI 15%
It costs \$1.15 per \$1 raised
- **Special Events** Cost 50% ROI 50%
It costs 50¢ per \$1 raised
- **Planned Giving** Cost 25% ROI 75%
It costs 25¢ per \$1 raised
- **Direct Mail (Prior Donors)** Cost 20% ROI 80%
It costs 20¢ per \$1 raised
- **Foundations / Corporations** Cost 20% ROI 80%
It costs 20¢ per \$1 raised
- **Major Gifts – Face 2 Face** Cost 5-10% ROI 90-95%
It costs 5-10¢ per \$1 raised

Source: James Greenfield, *Fund Raising: Evaluating and Managing the Fund Development Process*

The IRS

- What constitutes a “tax-deductible” gift?
- What is FMV? *A quid pro quo* contribution?
- Proactively disclose FMV of your event tickets in the SOLICITATION & in the TY... Please.
- IRS Pubs. 526 & 1771 provided in the “**virtual handout**” pdf.

WHY DO WE DO SPECIAL EVENTS?

Fundraising events “may” ...

- **Build** excitement & awareness for your NPO.
- **Engage** new friends as well as old, including:
 - Your Board & key volunteers
 - Donors – current, lapsed & prospective
 - Volunteers – current, lapsed & prospective
 - Your staff & their networks
- **Generate** positive PR & earned media.

(**RISK** ... can also be the reverse!)

Fundraising events “may” ...

- **Be fun** – provide an enjoyable activity for volunteers & attendees.
- **Serve** to cultivate new friends
- **Help** deepen relationships – essential for major gifts.

Events “might” generate money –

... through the event **AND** as a result of the event!

How so? An example.

- The story of Save The Bay & Alletta ...
... it started with a **clam**.
- Program “**auction**” items (bid for class programs, bus costs, etc)
- Other examples?

HOW DO WE MAXIMIZE REVENUE???

- **BEGIN** with the end in mind.
 - ... First, you need a Vision & a Plan. And GOALS.
 - ... A realistic budget and spending rules.
 - ... Clear “chain of command” – OWN the OUTCOMES.
 - ... Negotiate event dates to minimize log jams.
 - ... Allow enough TIME to execute properly.
- **RECRUIT volunteer Leadership** – to help fulfill the vision & **own the event & it's outcomes.**
 - ... **Accountable**, Creative, **Connected** & Committed.
 - ... Detail-oriented. Patient, Calm & Diplomatic. **Chutzpah.**
 - ... Have **BIG** event experience! A successful \$\$ track record.

WHAT DO PEOPLE WITH \$\$ WANT TO DO WITH THEIR LIMITED FREE TIME?

Ask your donors this question! **Hint:** family, experiences.

Get ideas. **People** magazine. The Chronicle. Social networks – people & internet.

Match the Event ...

... to your mission & values. Be creative!

... to your human resource capacities – staff & volunteer.

... Successful events **BUILD OVER TIME.**

Honoraries + Celebrities?

- Does the event call for a prominent Honorary Chair or MC or celebrity?
- Whom do you know / are 6 degrees away from?
- Celebrities **can elevate** the stature of the event; build “buzz” & in so doing help sell tickets. **Pros & Cons.**
Hidden costs. Wonderful surprises.
- Be careful with politicians – especially in election years!!! **Why?**
- Your stories?

Sample Event Gift Table

- Assume **3-5** qualified prospects for level
- For **3 \$25,000** gifts, need **9-15** prospects
- For **5 \$10,000** gifts, need **15 – 25** prospects
- For **10 \$5,000** gifts, need **30-50** prospects
- For **10 \$2,500** gifts, need **30-50** prospects
- For **20 \$1,000** gifts, need **60 – 100** prospects
- For **40 \$500** gifts, need **120-200** prospects
- For **700 \$100** ticket buyers, **2100 – 3500** prospects.

To raise **\$310,000 ...**

- ... requires a prospect gene pool of **2,364 – 3,926 households**
- ... willing solicitors for the \$500+/= gifts
- ... staff to coordinate details
- ... time, money to cover event costs
- ... luck

LEVEL	# Gifts Needed	\$ Raised	# of Tix per Level	# to Feed	How?
\$25k	3	\$ 75,000	20	60	F2F – corp spon
\$10k	5	\$ 50,000	10	50	F2F – advance; invite, too
\$5k	10	\$ 50,000	6	60	F2F – advance; invite, too
\$2,500	10	\$ 25,000	4	40	F2F – advance; invite, too
\$1,000	20	\$ 20,000	2	40	F2F – advance; invite too
\$500	40	\$ 20,000	2	80	F2F – advance; invite, too
\$100	700	\$ 70,000	1	700	Invitation
TOTAL	788	\$310,000		1,030	

Proven Revenue Strategies

CORPORATE SUPPORT .. It is there. Really.

- **OBTAIN** Corporate Sponsorships to underwrite your event.
... Save The Bay's 25th Anniversary Weekend.
Three \$25k sponsors covered the costs.
- **Be strategic.** Do your homework. Leverage your connections. Timing is everything.
Remember those “connected” Committee members?
- **Work with corporate prospect to tailor the \$\$ & sponsorship benefits to their needs. Samples:**
 - Speaking opportunities? Ability to have lots of tickets (within reason)? Collateral top billing? # of impressions?
 - **Hint:** every square inch of athlete's uniforms have LOGOs.
 - Employee involvement? Access to your donors?

The TIERED Ticket Structure

- **Build** a TIERED ticket structure ... not just one ticket price. Extra lines of type yield BIG \$\$.

But first....

- **Develop** an exhaustive invitation list!! Breadth & depth. (see gift table)
- **Personally Solicit targeted \$\$ prospects in advance ...**
so prospects may COMMIT to a specific sponsorship level in order to be listed in the INVITATION as well as in the Program & other collateral.
- **Who asks?** The Committee, your Board + key staff **personally solicit** these advanced gifts & corporate sponsorships.

Add an Auction or Raffle

- **Zoobilee** raises \$300k+ each year for the Zoo.
(www.rwpzoo.org)
- Corporate sponsors? **YES\$**. Advance asks? **YES\$**.
- **Raffle? YES\$**. Over 25k invites are sent to Zoo members. A Raffle sheet is in each invitation. Raffle revenues pay for the cost of the mailing! (**Don't forget the permits!**)
- By adding a **silent auction** of 100% donated items & services, ALT's Festa Verde raised \$20k of the \$200k raised.
(www.ailt.org)
- Charity Buzz and other businesses help non-profits run auctions ... for a price (30% of the gross)

INKIND DONATIONS

- **ID + solicit** inkind donations for as many REAL budget line-items as possible.
- **Balance** benefits to a) *actual amount* of savings realized in the budget; and b) tiered ticket levels. Focus. *Avoid budget creep.*
- **Obtain** Inkind gifts. A great way to engage your vendors & suppliers in your work.
- **Send Tys** for inkind & cash gifts within 48 hours receipt of gift.

The Committee

- Roles, responsibilities + relationships to...
... the Board. ... to staff
- \$\$\$\$. Getting beyond the color of the napkins.
- Leveraging relationships – corporate, social, and vendors.
- Recruiting + motivating volunteers.
- **AVOID BUDGET / SPENDING CREEP...**
(you know... "we are doing so well, we've made our goal.
Let's spend some more to make the party truly memorable.
STOP THIS. Use the \$\$ for the mission.)

Strong Communications.

- **Develop** a media + marketing plan. Tie to event timeline.
- **Leverage** prominent committee members and/or celebrity involvement. Local print; radio / TV interviews. Create buzz...
- **Invite** select media to the event, if they did a pre-event or post-event story.
- **Go viral.** Leverage social networks – Facebook; Tweets. Texts. Evites. **Examples:** Haiti, Hurricane Katrina, Gulf Oil Spill, and now ... Japan.

Engage. Your Guests. Your Volunteers.

- **Prepare** to cultivate at the event.
- **Assign** Committee / Board / others to help cover “important” guests.
- **Debrief** – for cultivation purposes. **FOLLOW UP!!**
- **Debrief** after the event – for **improvement** purposes & build excitement for “next year’s” event!!

THANK. SINCERELY. OFTEN.

- **Recognize** publicly.
 - donors. Volunteers. Committee. Staff.
 - In collateral. Newspaper ads. *RI Monthly* ad example.
- **Hold party** for volunteers to celebrate.
- **Give presents** to those who **made it happen.**
- **Send** personal notes & calls. Remember.. **7 times.**

Speaking of Thank You's . . .

- **THANK YOU** for coming today.
- **THANK YOU** for your active participation.
- **HERE's** to your **VERY SUCCESSFUL EVENTS!**

Need help?

Get in touch. Here's how.

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