

# HOSTING AN EVENT BENEFITTING THE SHELTER ASSOCIATION OF WASHTENAW COUNTY (SAWC)

We have benefitted from the generosity of individuals and organizations that organize a fundraiser to benefit the SAWC. Fundraisers may include concerts, lemonade, bake and garage sales, car washes, golf tournaments, sports events, charity auctions, and more.

If you are interested in hosting your own third-party event to benefit SAWC please call us at 734-662-2829 ext. 226 or email [hughesmi@washtenaw.org](mailto:hughesmi@washtenaw.org). We are here to help make your event a success and outreach opportunity.

## EVENT OVERVIEW

### What is a third-party fundraising event?

A third-party fundraising event is conducted by an individual, group or organization in the community with proceeds to benefit SAWC programs and initiatives.

We encourage sport and social groups, civic organizations, churches, schools, businesses and agencies to support the areas of greatest need, interest or specific program of your choice.

### Where will my donation go?

Raised funds will support our programs and services and will directly impact the clients we serve. If you have a passion for a specific area, we will work with you to ensure your donation goes directly to that area. Funds will not be given directly to our donors but will support them to end their own homelessness, gain access to bus tokens and in some cases help them overcome barriers to housing.

### How will SAWC support your fundraiser?

- Provide consultation on fundraisers and events
- Provide a letter of authorization to validate the authenticity of the event and its organizers
- Provide and approve use of our logo, provided certain criteria are met
- Coordinate check presentations
- Promote event on social media, press releases
- Assist you with marketing materials
- Attendance by a staff member

# GETTING STARTED

1. **Form a planning committee.** Bringing together a group of enthusiastic and dedicated people who share an interest in raising money for a great cause will increase the probability of a successful event.
2. **Brainstorm.** Gather members of your planning committee to brainstorm ideas for your fundraiser. The more people participate now, the more committed they'll be later.
3. **Choose the “right” event.** The type of event you choose should fit the size, interests, talents, goals and time availability of your planning committee.
4. **Identify your target audience.** Consider who is most likely to attend and support the type of event you have selected.
5. **Develop a budget.** Try to identify all the expenses involved with your event (invitations, postage, rental space, signage, food and catering, promotional materials, website, advertising, etc.) Then think about possible sources of funds, and people and companies you know who may be able to donate products (food, equipment) or services (like design, printing, photography) to reduce your costs. This will help keep your costs down, which is something everyone will appreciate. We encourage you to maintain fundraising costs at 20 percent of your budget. (See Budget Template at the end of the toolkit.).
6. **Develop an event timeline.** A timeline is important in planning a publicity strategy for your event.
7. **Schedule the event.** Select a time that is appropriate and convenient for those who will be attending. Be sure to check local community calendars for conflicting events.
8. **Open a bank account.** You may find that you will need to establish a bank account to accommodate incoming revenue and expenses. This can be done by visiting a local bank and creating a business account under your event's name.
9. **Collect all funds.** We ask that all event proceeds designated for SAWC be forwarded to the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County within 30 days following the conclusion of your event.
10. **Say thank you!** Sending thank-you letters, notes or e-mails to everyone who participated in or supported your event shows your appreciation and reinforces their goodwill about supporting SAWC.

# EVENT IDEAS

(Not limited to)

- Restaurant Promotion Sales
- Cocktail Party
- Garage Sale
- Golf Outing
- School/ Sports Team Fundraiser
  - Penny Wars
  - Read-a-thons
  - Raffle baskets at sport events
  - Concerts
  - Sport Pledges
  - Academic Pledges
  - Bottle Drives
  - Car Washes
  - Bowl-a-thon
  - Teacher dunk tank
  - Pie throwing contest
  - School Fairs
- Trivia Night
- Charity Raffle
- Car Washes
- Casino/ Bingo Nights
- Concerts
- Races/Walks
- Bowl-a-thons
- Card parties

# PUBLICITY TIPS

## Create a Timeline to Maximize Publicity

A timeline is important in planning a publicity strategy for your event. Keep this timeline in mind as you put together a publicity plan:

- **2-3 months before the event:**
  - Identify your target audience based on demographics, interests and location, and develop a targeted media list.
- **4-6 weeks before the event:**
  - Distribute media materials (i.e. media alert, Facebook posts, etc.).
- **2 weeks before the event:**
  - Make follow-up calls and send e-mails to media who received the information.
- **1-2 days before the event:**
  - Email and/or fax a media alert with the basic information about your event (who, what, when, where and why) to the TV news assignment desks and photo desks at the daily newspapers. \* See *Media Alert Template at the end of the toolkit*.

## TAKE LOTS OF PHOTOS

Document your event for publicity, to share with family and friends and to remember event details if you choose to mimic event again. Photo suggestions:

- Write out a targeted shot list in advance to make sure you get photos of everything and everyone you want
- Take candid and close-up shots that capture the different aspects of your fundraiser
- Include kids in the photos, if applicable
- Capture images of your sponsors
- Include three to four people in a photo for the best publicity shot

## AFTER YOUR EVENT

### Send in Your Donation/Proceeds

- Mail a check to: SAWC, P.O. Box 7370 Ann Arbor, MI 48107
- Checks should be made payable to Shelter Association of Washtenaw County
- Include a short note explaining your fundraiser.
- Once we receive your donation, an acknowledgement letter will be sent to you for tax purposes.

### Send us Photos

E-mail the best 3-5 photos from your event to: [hughesmi@washtenaw.org](mailto:hughesmi@washtenaw.org)

## Logo Use

As stated in the guidelines, use of SAWC logo is allowed for up to 30 days after your event. Remove logos from any materials after this time.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How long does it take to get my Fundraiser Proposal approved?

Proposals will be approved within 5 business days of receipt.

### Do I need to create a 501c3 (non-profit) organization to host a fundraiser at SAWC?

No, anyone can host a fundraiser for Carilion Clinic with our approval. Staff can provide an authorization letter confirming the organizer's intent to raise funds for Carilion Clinic.

### Can someone from SAWC help me plan my event, and attend and/or speak at my event?

We are happy to provide guidance for your event, but we do not have the staff to handle the organizational and administrative tasks associated with third-party events. We do our best to attend events supporting SAWC and in most cases will send a representative to your event

### Can I use SAWC's name and logo?

Once your fundraiser is approved, we will provide you with SAWC's logo for your marketing materials. We must review everything with our name and logo before it's printed or distributed. This includes the use of the SAWC logo on your website or your company's website.

### Can SAWC provide insurance for my event?

Because SAWC is the beneficiary and has no direct involvement with running the fundraiser, we cannot provide insurance for third-party events. The event organizer is responsible for obtaining insurance for the event.

## Can SAWC help me get a permit for my event?

The organization and execution of the event is the responsibility of the event organizer. The event organizer must obtain any necessary permits or licenses.

## Can I use the SAWC's Tax Exemption number?

Because SAWC is not hosting your event, it is considered a third-party event. For this reason, you will not be able to use SAWC's IRS 501(c)(3) charitable classification, federal tax ID number, or tax-exempt certificate.

## Will each of my donors get a receipt?

SAWC cannot issue charitable tax receipts for donors or sponsors who make payments directly to your third-party event. If your donor wants a receipt, please be sure the check is made payable to the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County and leave the check in its original form before sending it to SAWC. Please note that there are complex regulations around the distribution of charitable tax receipts. This includes donations of money, in-kind items and services. Issuing an inappropriate receipt can put our charitable tax status in jeopardy so please **do not promise** any kind of receipt. For more information about charitable tax receipts please contact SAWC.

## How do I open a bank account for my event?

We recommend you open a non-interest bearing checking account, or benefit account, at a local bank. The account must be opened in the third party's name. It cannot be opened using SAWC's name or financial information.

## Can I pay myself back for expenses I've incurred?

We recognize that some coordinators need funds to run an event and pay expenses. However, SAWC **cannot fund or financially support** community fundraisers. Coordinators are responsible for covering all expenses and **cannot be reimbursed** SAWC. For these reasons, as you start to collect money you may want to keep some funds on hand to help pay your expenses. This amount should not exceed 30% of your gross revenue. In your planning process, make sure to develop a budget reflecting the type of event you are having and the

many costs related to the event. After the fundraiser is complete, please send us all checks addressed to SAWC as well as a one lump sum check from your checking account.

### **Can we have a check presentation at SAWC?**

ABSOLUTELY!!!! We can arrange for a check presentation to be held at SAWC. Please contact Michael Hughes at [hughesmi@washtenaw.org](mailto:hughesmi@washtenaw.org)

### **Should I send a personal thank you letter or card to my donors?**

Definitely! It is important to thank everyone who was involved with your fundraiser!

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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