



**Christmas Bureau  
of Edmonton**

A Christmas Tradition for 70 years

# **How Can Edmonton Help the Christmas Bureau?**

## **Fundraising Ideas**

# Introduction to Fundraising

There are several ways your organization can fundraise for this year's Campaign. In the booklet you will find ideas that will help you partner with the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton. Participate in an existing fundraising event or organize your own fundraiser, all are fun ways to raise money to help the less fortunate families, seniors and singles in our community.

There are four key components to fundraising for the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton:

1. Motivation
2. Planning
3. Support
4. Having Fun!

These four components will ensure you have a successful fundraising campaign. We encourage you to be innovative and creative in developing new fundraising activities this year. The more creative you are, the more successful your fundraising campaign will be.

## Getting Started

Following are some tips that you can follow to assist in the start-up of your fundraising activities:

- Learn about the cause and educate your employees/audience about the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton (read our Fast Facts Backgrounder)
- Determine the number of people/staff/clients who can assist you in raising funds
- Invite someone from the Christmas Bureau to visit you and your team
- Ask questions and call our team for advice, feedback and support

## Now That You're Ready

Following are some steps that can be used as a guideline to organizing your event:

- Form a Planning Committee
- Establish Goals
- Brainstorm Ideas
- Select an Event
- Identify your Audience and Potential Reach
- Schedule the Event
- Create a Budget (both financial and volunteers)
- Promotions and Publicity around the event (posters, website, newsletter etc.)
- Collect the Funds (tax receipts will be issued to your list of \$20+ donors)
- Present to the Christmas Bureau (in person or by mail)
- Thank your participants and volunteers
- Celebrate your success

# **Fundraising Events and Activities**

Holding a fundraising event is a great way for your organization to have fun and improve morale of those involved. Every person enjoys helping others. It is also a great way for your organization to receive exposure. Following are examples of fundraising events your organization can use to generate funds for the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton.

## **Paper Christmas Trees**

This is one of the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton's simplest fundraisers. These little Paper Christmas Trees are sold for \$2.00 or more to help feed Edmontonians. They can be offered at retail locations, special events and community activities and at workplace venues for employee or public fundraising. Paper Christmas Trees are generally signed by the purchaser or their children and affixed to a display area at the retail or workplace location.

## **Implementing a Paper Christmas Trees**

- Place the Paper Christmas Tree at cash registers/check out stations and have your cashiers ask customers if they would like to donate to the Christmas Bureau and receive a Paper Christmas Tree for a suggested donation of \$2.00 or more.
- This contribution becomes a direct donation from your store to the Christmas Bureau
- The purchaser can sign the paper tree and have it displayed prominently in the store. Paper Christmas Trees can be hung on walls, windows or ceilings to generate maximum awareness and thank your contributors.
- To increase Paper Christmas Tree sales, consider making Tree sales a part of your special events, store and community activities or employee competitions.
- Paper Christmas Trees create a win-win situation for everyone involved. Your store generates significant community awareness while raising money for Edmontonians in need; consumers feel good about helping local families; and most importantly, your generosity makes it possible for individuals in your community to receive a Christmas with hope and dignity. Paper Christmas Trees can soar as high as your imagination can take them . . . so have fun! Families in your community will thank you!

## **A-Thons**

There's no limit to the type of "a-thon" fundraisers possible. Participants are encouraged to collect donations from friends, family and co-workers in support of their participation. Venues are usually generous when asked to donate time, space and services for a charitable event. First aid and volunteers can help make the "a-thon" fun and safe for everyone!

## **Types of A-Thons**

- A walk-a-thon is a perfect, highly visible event for families, employees, the elderly and student groups. Map out a designated walking route; make sure to plan first aid, washrooms, refreshments and volunteers.
- A bowl-a-thon is a great way to raise funds and have fun at the same time. Rent a few lanes at a bowling alley and then bowl a set number of games. Prizes could be awarded for the bowling, as well as the top fundraiser.
- In a swim-a-thon, each swimmer who competes must complete a set number of laps during a designated day. The public pool is the perfect setting for schools and community events.
- During a skate-a-thon (whether on ice or roller skating) participants skate for a set time or number of laps. If the rink is willing to donate food and service, a concession stand could help raise additional funds.
- A dance-a-thon is an all-around great idea: its fun, good exercise and lots of dancing music! It isn't all about exhausted dancer draped over each other; offer food, entertainment and activities. Fitness facilities and dance studios might be interested to gain exposure in their communities.

## **Sales and Concessions**

Keeping in mind people will buy **anything**, consider the possibilities when you offer them something of value & tell them the money is for a good cause! Remember that planning & preparation will be necessary depending on what you are selling & where. Strike a committee & assign people to obtain the merchandise or product, sell the merchandise, track costs & revenues, secure a site and take care of the clean up.

## **Bake Sales**

Everyone is familiar with a bake sale. To make it more interesting and profitable, try the following:

- Select a site (your business, the mall, a sporting event, etc.)
- Design an entry form
- Create categories (most extravagant, most imaginative)
- Solicit entries from your employees, families, friends, community and church groups
- Collect entry fees
- Have judges to announce winners
- After the judges announce the winners, the baked goods will be sold to raise funds

## **Cook Books**

Your selling point with a cookbook should be that most of the recipes it contains are original rather than clipped from other sources. Give considerable thought to design and illustrations. Theme your book (Food for Children, Decedent Desserts) and collect recipes from your team. The price of your cookbook will be determined by the cost of production, promotion, distribution or selling. You can sell your cookbooks to your employees and friends, at fairs, trade shows and other events and as gifts.

## **Concession Stands**

There is an opportunity to sell foods and refreshments at any event where people gather. Consider taking over the refreshment stand at a sports event or other affair, either one time or as a regular concession staffed by your employees. You need a location with lots of traffic, and preferably one with the necessary equipment already installed. If not, try to use your own equipment (BBQ's, coolers); depending on what food items you are selling. With most concessions, volume is the key to profit. Make sure the foods that you are selling are appropriate to the venue.

## **Book Sales**

A book sale can be a popular and profitable team event. Have your team bring in books from home to sell to each other, clients and friends with the proceeds going to the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton.

## **Garage Sales**

Just like a traditional garage sale but it can be held in your building. Have your team bring in items they don't use anymore to sell to each other, customers and friends. This is an inexpensive way to generate a donation since the only requirement would be tables for the items and staff volunteering their time to run the tables.

## **Bumper Stickers**

Have bumper stickers made up by a local company (if they know the purpose of the idea they may even donate printing). These can have sayings such as "Support the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton" or "I support the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton". These can be sold for three or four dollars each and besides drawing proceeds they will encourage others on a wide spectrum to support the foundation as well.

## **Social Events**

Social Events are not only a good way to raise money, they are also an excellent way to help your members get to know each other better and to introduce new members to your organization. Your event can be formal or informal, limited to members of your own group or open to the entire community. Prices should be geared to the kind of event being held and the audience you wish to attract. If you're not interested in creating or organizing your own event, piggy back onto an existing event to expand their reach and provide an additional fundraising opportunity.

## **Fairs, Carnivals, Picnics, Barbecues**

These types of large events are the perfect opportunity to increase public awareness by involving the community. Booth, tables and kiosks, staffed by members of your organizations are an excellent way to promote your business and generate funds through donations.

## **Customer Appreciation Day**

If you have a large customer base, a customer appreciation day is a great way to promote your organization and raise funds through donations or raffles. Allow your employees to use their creative talents (music, sport skills) to generate fun and excitement. You can also incorporate food sales (maybe a BBQ) and raffles (company products you would like to promote).

## **Dinners or Banquets**

Dinners can be large or small, depending on the amount of time and resources (human and monetary) available to you. Big dinners can be at halls or hotels, where speakers and entertainers can add value to your meal. Try to get your location donated, or ask the location to sponsor your event. Small dinners can be very profitable. Many sports teams sell tickets to spaghetti dinners. Members of the team, friends and families will then prepare and deliver the dinner. Once again, the most profitable approach is to get food and supplies donated.

## **Dessert Tasting Parties**

Tastings can be held at halls or hotels, depending on the size. Try to get the location donated or try to get the location to sponsor the event. Local restaurants, cafes, etc. will probably be willing to donate for tastings as these could also be beneficial to their business. People pay a small fee to try the different desserts and concessions to go with the desserts like coffees or teas can also be sold.

## **Chef's Galore!**

Find a location with excellent space and viewing possibilities, such as a country club. Establish 7-10 chefs that will donate time and food (possibly different ethnic foods). Put together an auction committee and have a silent auction. Sell tables at \$500.00 per round table of 8-10 people. The event can be a formal night out with an opportunity to taste several different types of food (maybe even different cultures of food) and to donate money to the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton.

## **Celebrity Roast**

Have a roast for your manager, an executive in your organization, or local sports celebrity. A roast is an event where friends and family of the roastee tell funny and interesting stories about that person. The key to a successful roast is having good speakers who can humourously deliver their messages. The individual to be roasted must be a good sport. Tickets are sold to the event, with the possibility of including a dinner, which will allow you to set a higher ticket price.

## **Dances**

Dances can be exciting and fun, especially when they have a theme. Popular dance themes are masquerade balls, square dances, barn dances and disco style dances. Dance demonstrations, dance contests and dance instructions can be featured as part of your event. The kind of entertainment you select, whether live or recorded, will determine your audience and a ticket price.

## **Auctions**

An auction is not only a great way to raise funds, it is also a lot of fun for everyone involved. People are interested in auctions because they think they may get a bargain. It is an excuse to buy something they want but would not necessarily buy otherwise, and they get caught up in the excitement generated by the auctioneer. A fun atmosphere and competition gets people spending. The majority of the work for an auction is done prior to the event. Ask your team to secure prizes and solicit volunteers. Select a location where you have enough room to display your items and accommodate a crowd. Make sure you widely promote your event, well in advance especially at the location you will be using. You should sell tickets in advance, which sometimes can include a meal or a drink. Provide your auctioneer with an accurate list of items, and let him/her know what your fundraising goal is. You should have volunteers for taking tickets, delivering items, collecting payment, spotters for the auctioneer and setup of the auction item tables for viewing.

There are many varieties of auctions; one example is a Silent Auction. This is an auction where there is no auctioneer. Bidders write their bids on bid sheets placed next to the item. A closing time is established for all bids, at which time the last bidder is successful. Make sure you assign minimum bids to all items, and have an assigned increment for raising bids on higher value items. Both silent and live auctions can be a lot of fun and involve the community in your event. Items that can be auctioned include one-of-a-kind or limited editions, jerseys, helmets, pucks and/or balls signed by professional athletes, getaway packages, once-in-a-lifetime experience such as lunch or a round of golf with a celebrity, “Bachelor/Bachelorette” auctions, etc. Themes can also work well for auctions, such as Black-Tie Auction, the Celebrity Auction, Food Auction, the Chinese Auction, Photography Art Auction or a Wine Auction.

## **Tournaments/Contests/Games**

These are activities that will appeal to all ages and groups, and will bring out the fun, competitive side of people. These events are fun to watch. People will pay a fee to participate because they want to help a great cause, they like to compete, and they may win a prize. These events will attract spectators, which help you generate funds in other areas such as concession stand food sales.

## **Tournaments**

Use any of the following activities to wrap an event around:

- Basketball
- Tennis
- Croquet
- Fishing Derby
- Pool
- Rope jumping
- Darts
- Cards
- Board Games
- Trivia

## **Golf Tournament**

Golf tournaments to raise funds for charity are extremely popular. Revenue is raised through entry fees, hole sponsorships, paying to play with a celebrity, silent auctions, etc. The event registration fee should cover the costs of green fees, carts if appropriate, lunch and a door prize ticket. Sponsoring holes or the general operating costs of the event can involve companies.

## **Contests**

- Dunk Tank
- Bean Bag Toss
- Bingo
- Water Balloon Relay
- Corporate Olympics

## **Games**

- Frisbee
- Kite Flying
- Essay
- Eating
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Coloring
- Guessing
- Treasure Hunt

You can hold competitions between cashiers, front end vs. sales floor, or stores/branches within the district or region. Track progress daily to build and maintain excitement. Challenge managers/supervisors or district managers etc. Prizes can be awarded based on a number of criteria (i.e.. dollars raised, highest participation, best costumes, etc.)

## **Sporting Events**

Organize a sporting event with your organization. This could be an exhibition game against the local media or police force. You could also try to use local sports figures to generate fans and media interest. Charge admission and have concessions.

## **Entertainment**

The type of entertainment event you have depends on your imagination. The key to any entertainment event is good publicity and advance ticket sales. Having committed volunteers prior to and on the day of is a must. Some examples of entertainment include:

### **Fashion Show**

A fashion show can take many different formats, and can take place in a mall, auditorium, nightclub or even private club. Use your contacts in clothing and retail merchandising. Use celebrities in your community if available to create excitement and visibility. Using children to model is also very entertaining. Key people will include your models, backstage dressers, a commentator, concession stand volunteers and a clean-up crew. Using themes such as children's wear, swim wear or fall seasonal wear are also very effective.

### **Concert**

Getting well-known entertainers is the key. By having a popular performer, you will attract a larger audience to attend and therefore be able to charge higher ticket prices. The best-case scenario is when the talent is willing to donate their time. If not, you should certainly be able to obtain a discount, especially if you are providing good exposure for the entertainer (or get a corporate sponsor to help underwrite the cost of the performance).

### **Antique Car Show**

Get a location confirmed. Charge exhibitors a fee to come and display their car. Charge an entry fee for spectators. To generate additional funds, you can incorporate raffles, draws, and concession stands. You could also charge a fee to vote for your favorite cars, and then present "people's choice" awards to the exhibitors.

### **Talent Shows**

Talent shows are fun and entertaining for everyone involved. Funds are generated through ticket purchases, although donations can also be taken. Try doing something interesting. A unique idea is to have staff write a play and have the management team act it out. Use the creative people in your organization to take a lead "role" in this.

## **Themes**

### **Christmas Bureau Day**

Declare one day as Christmas Bureau Day and donate all or a portion of the proceeds from the day to the Christmas Bureau. As an alternative, select a specific product or product line and donate all or a portion of the proceeds from sales during the month. Be a leader in your community and convince other organizations and groups to partner with you in the campaign for a set day or time period.

### **Super Bowl Party**

Everyone watches the Super Bowl, whether a sports fan or not. Have a party, charge admission, and have people bring lots of food. Do pools and raffles to raise additional funds. To make it more interesting, dress as your favorite player or make it mandatory to wear football clothing for entry. The same idea can be adapted for the Stanley Cup Playoffs, the Grey Cup and World Series.

### **Jail and Bail**

The “arrested” have to call friends to raise funds to be set free. As an alternative, put a manager or assistant manager at the front of the store and have them solicit customers for a donation to “get out”. They must raise a certain amount of money to “post their bail”.

### **Go to Jail**

Find a local hotel to act like a “prison” for staff members to come serve a term (a few hours) as an ‘inmate’. On a certain day, these appointed or volunteer staff members sit in “jail”, which is a hospitality room, and they call to ask fellow co-workers, friends, family members, etc, to put up bonds to bail them out of jail. Have a set limit or time period as to when the “jail birds” can be released. The bonds can then be donated to the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton. Ask local radio stations to get involved and then people in the community can help out calling in and donating pledges to release the “prisoners”.

### **Television Party**

Take advantage of a popular television program to provide a theme for a party. Charge admission and include a meal. In order for a guest to enter, they must dress as one of the characters in the show. Have a cash bar and food on hand to generate additional funds. Have best dressed and look-alike contests.

### **Rent a Manager**

Employees donate funds to have their manager do a specific job for one hour. Employees may pool their funds and decide on the job as a group to make it more interesting. Managers must be willing to participate for it to be successful.

## **School Specific Ideas**

### **Spirit Chains**

Homeroms can sell paper links (use school colors) for 10 cents each (or any price) and the links are assembled in a giant chain. Homeroms then compete for who has the most school spirit by building their chains as long as they can. Decorate classrooms or the gym with the paper chains. Provide incentives for the winning class, like a pizza or popcorn party. If necessary this can be paid out of funds collected as a project expense.

Same idea can be used with traced hands using a theme of “joining hands to help kids” or with paper shoes to “walk” around school walls to aim for a “Miracle Mile”. Kids can write their names and a brief message on their purchased pieces.

### **Loonies Drives**

Set up a huge container in the school where students will be able to see it frequently. Students and staff can drop loonies in whenever they like during the designated fundraising time. At the end of the project (before donating), the loonies can be used for counting exercises for younger grades. For instance, counting by twos, fives, etc.

### **Fly on the Wall**

Divide each grade into homeroom classes. Each homeroom must designate a student as the “fly” and a small group of 5 or 6 students as the “architects”, however there can be more than one group per class. One grade at a time gathers in the gym, chooses a space on the gym wall and is then given 3 rolls of duct tape. Teams are given 10 minutes to find a way to secure their “fly” to the wall, at least 15 inches off the ground, with only the use of the duct tape. Students are encouraged to collect pledges for each minute their “fly” stays on the wall. Ensure that there are teachers present to monitor the competition, and limit the time to one hour. The goal is to be the highest off the ground to win bragging rights!