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EARTHLY PURSUITS at RECYCLING FOR NEWAYGO COUNTY



Nonprofits, especially small ones like Recycling for Newaygo County (RNC), rely on fundraising events to help sustain the services we provide. From simple backyard barbecue to extravagant gala, charitable organizations are always seeking fun, stimulating, rewarding, and profitable ways to bring in needed funds.

As you know, in 2015 RNC introduced our *Recycling Festival*, featuring a duck race, games and crafts out of recyclables, pony rides, auction, and so on. Two years in, we continue to improve on it, and are already planning for the 2017 Festival. We'll keep you posted on next year's details.



In addition to a fundraising event, the *Recycling Festival* is a chance each year for RNC to bring the topic of recycling out into the community while throwing a great party in the park for kids of all ages!



Many of you recently received a call from RNC volunteers campaigning for badly needed funds to keep recycling sites open around Newaygo County. Thank you to the many who have responded in big and little ways. And thank you to all who contribute throughout the year. Every dollar makes a difference.



Some of you have encountered our volunteers out surveying and promoting RNC membership at collection sites. Did you know that only 10% of users contribute to our efforts? Please invite and encourage your friends and neighbors who recycle at RNC sites to join our ranks. Information about how to become a member is available on our website, www.recyclingfornewaygocounty.org, and there is literature at each collection site. Look for it in the clear plastic boxes installed on one of the posts of the RNC signs at each site.



Now, about those Earthly Pursuits! Have you ever been invited to a house party to raise money for a worthy cause? If you enjoy hosting, would you consider giving one? Or perhaps another type of event would engage your personal talents and draw a crowd?

One of our favorite members and supporters, Kathleen Morrison of Morrison Orchards in Fremont, has come up with a great idea. She suggests we invite RNC members to throw small house parties and other events as individual fundraisers, and she already has a good idea what hers will be!

We've eagerly embraced the idea, and call the initiative *EARTHLY PURSUITS*. We expect these pursuits to raise a spectrum of dollar amounts based on the host and the host's social circle, and community interest in public offerings.

HOUSE PARTY



How it works: First and foremost, *the idea of a party must be fun for the host as well as the guests*. It could be a dinner or cocktail party, with live or piped music, or none based on the party concept. The guest list consists of friends and acquaintances you are comfortable inviting into your home. About mid-way though the party, an RNC representative makes a short presentation, and then you invite your guests to take out their check books.

A great house party does not require a large or luxurious house. It does require an enthusiastic host who is willing to invite your own friends and make them comfortable, and who is prepared to lead the planning process from recruiting helpers to writing thank you notes after the event is over.

A house party hosted by you to raise funds for an organization whose work you support can be a fun and simpler alternative to a large, volunteer-intensive event. It's also a great way to help in a bigger way if your own charitable giving capacity is limited. And held in a private home with any number of guests, an intimate party hosted by a supporter and enthusiast is a perfect setting to draw attention to RNC's value and need.

TALENT OR ACTIVITY

An event featuring a talent of yours or others, or an activity-based event big or small, may suit your style better. You might teach an art class, host a winetasting, put on a performance, a costume party, a whodunit dinner, a

board game tournament, even a golf tournament. If you are not big on hosting or organizing functions but love to bake, how about a raffle for homemade delectable desserts delivered monthly to the winner for a year? Or a handyman-for-a-day raffle.

While a house party would likely be limited to people you know for safety reasons, public or online events could be promoted among RNC friends, members, and the public.

How to draw a crowd: House party, event, activity, all will fare better with a little enticement, for example, a nice meal, cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, a visit by a local celebrity, live music or other entertainment, an activity that is relevant to the organization...

How many to invite? You may assume that a large percentage of invitees will be no-shows, so invite three or four times as many people as you would like to show up.

How are funds raised? Ticketing for event admission or the sale of goods/services/raffle tickets would be handled by RNC. At a house party, donations are generally invited and collected by the host following a short—20 minutes max—presentation by RNC at about the mid-point of the party. The presentation should be compelling and engaging, with inspiring stories.

At a non-admission based event, it is perfectly acceptable to announce a fundraising goal for the night and let the guests know how much of a contribution it would take from each of them to meet that goal. After the donations have been made and people get back to socializing, add up how much was raised, and announce it before guests begin to leave. Thank guests as they leave, and send them thank you notes after the party is over!

Fair warning to guests: Note that invited guests should be told up front that this event is a fundraiser so they are not surprised during the party. Make sure it is on the invitation with language such as “benefit”, “fundraiser”, and even, “please remember to bring your checkbook”.

Earthly Pursuits is not for everyone, but maybe it's for you. Do you love to host a party? RNC is a perfect excuse. Do you want to show off your talent? So do we. Talk to us about your ideas. Our Earthly Pursuits are in sync, to make an environmental difference in our little part of the world. Call Linda, our director, at 231.924.5822 to discuss.

