



KCNQ2 CURE ALLIANCE FUNDRAISING HANDBOOK

**STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE ON HOW
TO ORGANIZE A FUNDRAISER**

GET IN TOUCH

KCNQ2 Cure Alliance, Inc.
3700 Quebec Street/ Unit 100-118
Denver, Colorado 80207

CALL 1-303-887-9532

EMAIL info@KCNQ2Cure.org

STAY UP TO DATE!
VISIT KCNQ2CURE.ORG
TO LEARN MORE.

WELCOME & THANK YOU



Take a step towards delivering a bright future for people with KCNQ2-related epilepsy!

Creating your own fundraiser is a great way to make a difference in the lives of people with KCNQ2-related epilepsy. By giving to KCNQ2 Cure Alliance you'll ensure that important research projects are funded and that people with KCNQ2-related epilepsy have access to better treatment options, therapies and a community to turn to.

This handbook gives you all the information you need to set up and run a successful fundraiser. If you're looking for ideas on how to get going, tips on how to grow your fundraiser and the guidelines to follow for success – you're in the right place!

If you'd like to discuss things further, please get in touch with us!

**GOOD LUCK GETTING STARTED
AND THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

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WHAT KIND OF FUNDRAISER SHOULD I DO?



There are so many ways you can fundraise for KCNQ2 Cure Alliance. All it takes is inspiration and the desire to raise awareness of KCNQ2 while encouraging donations from friends and family. Your support in any amount helps bring us closer to a cure! Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Bake Sale***
- Barbecue
- Bingo
- Car Wash
- Cocktail Party
- Cook Off
- Craft Fair
- **Cycling/Bike-a-thon***
- Dog Wash
- Garage Sale/ Yard Sale
- Golf Tournament
- Karaoke Night
- Lemonade Stand
- Money Tree
- Music Concert
- Poker Night
- Read-a-thon
- Scavenger Hunt
- **Silent Auction***
- Talent Show
- Used Book or CD Sale
- **Walk-a-thon***
- Wine and Cheese Party
- Yard Sale

**See page 17 for details about this fundraising model*

HOW CAN WE HELP?



Organizing a fundraiser can seem overwhelming. Let us help you get started!

While the KCNQ2 Cure Fundraiser Handbook will provide you with a solid overview of the event planning process. We know that there will be questions and concerns throughout the planning process that may not be covered or addressed in great length in the handbook.

For specific questions, as well as support, please do not hesitate to reach out to us via email or give us a call. We all have hands-on experience in the planning and execution of various fundraising events.

KCNQ2 Cure Alliance will do our best to make sure your event is a success!

CONTACT US:

EMAIL info@KCNQ2Cure.org

CALL 1-303-887-9532

WE CAN OFFER:

- A Letter of Authorization to show that your event has our approval and is genuine
- Fundraising tips customized to your event
- Branded resources such as brochures, bracelets, balloons, and display banners
- Access to customized fundraising shirts
- Publicity for your event on our website, Facebook, Twitter, newsletter
- Help writing a media release
- Tax deductible receipts for donors
- Timeline for event planning
- Timeline for day of the event
- Connections to other families in your area who may be able to help.

WE CAN'T PROVIDE (UNFORTUNATELY):

- Funds/reimbursement for any expenses incurred
- Staff to help coordinate or run the event
- Applications for permits, licenses or insurances (these are the responsibility of the organizer)

WHERE TO START



HERE ARE THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN STARTING YOUR EVENT PLANNING

What type of event should you host?

The type of event that you decide to host will factor into your site selection. Most first-time event coordinators find holding a family walk is the easiest. Others have organized 5Ks, Camp Days and Burn Bootcamps, to name a few. See page 2 for more fun event ideas to consider.

Where and When?

When selecting your date, make sure to check for any conflicting events. These could be events in your town or neighborhood, other KCNQ2 Cure Alliance events or simply big local or national events that might effect your attendance and therefore the success of your fundraiser.

When considering locations, be sure to inquire if a Certificate of Insurance (COI) is required. If it is required and you have questions, make sure to contact us.

TIPS FOR CHOOSING YOUR VENUE

- If your event will be outdoors, make sure it is handicap accessible and has a paved path.
- If doing an event with a route, avoid sites that will require participants to cross streets. For these events, often police or other staff are required to keep participants safe when crossing.
- Is the venue large enough to accommodate your expected number of participants and is there adequate, free parking?
- For outdoor activities, are there adequate facilities including restrooms, shaded space, seating, electrical power and shelter (in case of inclement weather)?

WHERE TO START



What should your event include?

Start considering what optional extra activities you would like to include at your event. Things to consider are, for example:

Food and beverages

Raffle and/or silent auction

Kids' activities—face painting, balloons, games, costumed characters, etc.

Make a “wish list” that includes potential resources for in-kind donations. Remember to approach businesses for in-kind donations a minimum of 60-90 days before your event, as many require you fill out an application that must be reviewed and approved by the store manager.

For insurance purposes, we typically recommend to omit alcohol, bounce houses and dunk tanks at events.

Committee & Volunteers

You may decide to champion the planning and logistics for your event alone, while other coordinators will choose to recruit individuals and build an Event Committee. Your committee members and volunteers can be built with other local KCNQ2 families, as well as your own family and friends. Once you recruit committee members, be certain to have meaningful work or projects for them to take on, based on their interest, expertise and amount of time they can commit. Hand out assignments and get everyone motivated for the day. Make sure volunteers understand their roles and your expectations.

REMEMBER

There is nothing wrong with keeping your event simple, especially if this is your first time.

NOW LETS GET PLANNING



Consider assembling a committee and/or recruit volunteers for your event. Especially if you are planning a bigger event you will need those extra hands and minds to get everything done right. Don't be afraid to ask for help and make sure to recruit people you trust and that can put in the needed time to make your event a success.

When assembling a committee

- Create a committee roster, phone & email list
- Schedule regular meetings in-person or by phone
- Take notes at all meetings and distribute them to your committee within a day or two
- Allow enough lead-time to make sure you accomplish all of your objectives
- Put together a Google Doc folder where committee members can add information on what they are working on for the event

Pre-event tasks to assign to committee members & volunteers

- Assisting with event planning
- Attendance at planning meetings
- Soliciting sponsors
- Soliciting in-kind donations
- Community promotion & outreach
- Participant recruitment
- Event activity planning
- Soliciting donations for silent auction or raffle

Day-of tasks for committee members & volunteers

- Set-up and tear down of event
- Placing directional signage for event
- Registration & check in
- Greeting participants and assisting with questions
- Overseeing refreshment station
- Selling raffle tickets
- Overseeing silent auction
- Assisting with on-site activities

LETS GET PLANNING



Securing Raffle or Auction Items

Raffles and auctions are one of the most cost-effective and popular ways to raise money during a fundraising event. To make a raffle or auction successful, you must first secure desirable items. The best place to start is to survey your committee members, family and friends. Every supporter could possibly know of a business or individual that would have something of value to contribute to the prize pool.

When reaching out to local businesses, begin canvassing your community early on. Come prepared with a request letter, flyer, donation contract and 501c3 paperwork (the paperwork will be included in your starter packet). Every business is a viable option and it never hurts to ask. Remember, you are more likely to have success at businesses where you are a frequent customer. And don't let NO discourage you—another opportunity will always arise.

EXAMPLES OF RAFFLES

- 50/50 Raffle - Half of the money collected goes to a single winner with the balance going to KCNQ2.
- Single-Prize Raffle - Sell raffle tickets and offer one or more larger items as prizes in your drawing.
- Teacup Raffle - Items are displayed on a table with a small paper bag in front of each item. Participants drop purchased tickets in the bag of the item they would like to win.

PROMOTING AND RECRUITING



Getting the word out

Once you've picked a name, date, venue and theme for your fundraiser you'll need to start promoting it. If you're running a private event this could be as simple as calling, emailing or sending out invitations.

If your event is larger and you want to engage the public, think about some of the following options:

Set up an online fundraising page

Create posters or flyers and display them in local businesses or around the office

Set up a Facebook or Twitter page & write a blog so that people can follow your progress online

Create a YouTube clip to let people know what you're doing and why you're passionate. Create an event on Facebook and encourage your friends to share the link

Put an article in your school, company or club newsletter

List your fundraiser on public event site

Get in touch with your local radio station or community newspaper

AND HERE ARE A FEW MORE TIPS

Let people know why you're passionate! We all want to give more if we feel a connection to a cause. Whether it's by email, phone or speaking at the event, make sure people know why KCNQ2 is important to you.

Don't set your target too low. People will consider your target when they decide how much to give. If you reach your target quickly, bump it up a bit!

Be the first to donate. If you can afford it, make the first donation. When you ask others to give let them know you've started things off by donating \$X. They'll realize KCNQ2 means a lot to you and consider how much you donated when they make their gift.

Add in 'bonus' fundraisers. Consider getting some prizes donated and holding a raffle, a live/ silent auction.

Don't be afraid to ask twice. People intend to donate, but sometimes it gets pushed to the bottom of the list. It usually takes a reminder to get everyone into action, so don't feel embarrassed to ask again.

PROMOTING AND RECRUITING



Food & Beverage Donation

Local businesses might be able to help you out with food and drinks for your event. Below are a few companies to consider, but keep in mind, in most cases, applications should be submitted at least 90 days before the event.

- COSTCO & SAM'S CLUB often donate a gift card that can be used for water, fruit or other items needed for your event.
- WHOLE FOODS or local grocery stores will often donate granola bars or fruit. Applications for Whole Foods can be completed online.
- STARBUCKS will often donate brewed coffee for your event. Contact the manager of your local store for more details.
- EINSTEIN'S BAGELS or other bagel or donut store often will donate end-of-day bagels.
- PANERA will sometimes donate fresh bagels for fundraising events. You can talk to your local store, or fill out an online donation request.

Company Matching Gifts

Ask your employer if they will match donations made to your fundraising campaign.

Encourage your donors to apply for matching gifts from their employer. It is an easy way to double, sometimes triple, a donation.

Pre-events and building momentum

You and your committee may want to hold a "kick-off" event before your event to raise additional awareness and donations for your event.

You could also consider telling the story of your upcoming event in short video messages and share them on social media.

Make sure to use social media for the promotion of your event and encourage your team members, friends, family and your child's social circle to share and support your event as much as possible.

PROMOTING AND RECRUITING



Recruiting Participants

Friends, family, co-workers, neighbors, vendors, and local businesses are all great people to approach to ask to participate in, or to sponsor your event. Additionally, consider approaching your child's school and ask if they would support your event and include a flyer in their students weekly paper packets.

Make sure that if you have set up a committee or a team of volunteers that everyone promotes the event in their respective circles. People will be more inclined to attend if they know the people involved in the fundraiser.

It helps to personally recruit participants, in addition to sending out emails and posting flyers around your community. Encourage participants to pre-register and consistently encourage participants to set a fundraising goal to help you meet your event goal.

Consider asking a local business to donate a gift certificate that you will award to your top fundraiser as an incentive.

Registration Fees

Depending on the kind of event you are planning and if a fee is appropriate. Consider setting up pre-registrations and setting registration fees. Registration fees typically include an event t-shirt (which can be personalized for your event) and a KCNQ2 Cure bracelet or other promotional item.

TYPICAL REGISTRATION FEES MIGHT BE

\$25 for adults (pre-registration)

\$15 for children (pre-registration)

\$30 for adults (on day of event)

\$20 for children (on day of event)

You may choose to encourage participants to register early (for example set a deadline 3 weeks prior to the event) and incentivise early registration with the receipt of a t-shirt or similar.

DAY OF THE EVENT



Be prepared!

Having a detailed plan in place for the day of your event will assure that it runs smoothly. Set up a timeline, from set-up through tear-down, including where volunteers are needed. Make copies to distribute to your committee members or key volunteers so that everyone has knowledge of the event plans and can answer questions if you are otherwise engaged.

Plan your Event Layout

Make sure to visit the site the week prior to your event to assess the area. At this point you should make definitive decisions on your final layout for the event. It helps to make a map for your volunteers to use for set up.

Meet with Volunteers

Take the time to meet with your volunteers and make sure they understand their assigned tasks for the day. If you have volunteers picking up items the morning of, call them the evening before and remind them of the item, pick up time and location.

Walk the Route

If your event is a walk or 5K, make sure to arrive early enough to walk or ride the route and make sure there are no unexpected obstacles such as branches or sitting water. Post volunteers or signs near any obstacles to keep everyone safe.

Set-up & Clean-up

Make sure that the volunteers you recruit for set-up and clean-up understand that this is an active role that requires some manual labor—lifting tables, stacking bottles of water or carting boxes of shirts and supplies. When it comes time for clean-up, make sure to remove all litter and return the site to its original state.

Supplies Check-list

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Additional pens | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clipboards |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Money boxes & petty cash | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cord or string |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scissors, tape & a stapler | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Garbage bags |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Printed forms/ lists/ schedules | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emergency kit |

DAY OF THE EVENT



Event Day Registration

Depending on your event and if you have a registration process, registration will be one of the busiest times of the day for your event. Make sure you have enough volunteers and that the volunteers you choose are friendly, quick to respond, comfortable handling money, and do well under pressure. Offer one station for pre-registered participants and a second station for those registering the day of the event.

A few things to consider for day-of registrations:

- Have participant complete the on-site registration form and waiver
- Collect registration form, payment, and any pledge forms or donations they have brought.
- Make sure to add participant info to on-site registration and donation form
- Get t-shirt sizes if they are receiving shirts or give out other promo items, if available
- Thank participant for their support

Practice, practice, practice

Depending on the type of your event that you are hosting there will be many moving parts and key moments in the day that need to run smoothly. Make sure you run through the day multiple times and have your volunteers be prepped and ready.

Have the master of ceremonies, host and any key speakers run through their presentations the day or morning before the event.

Test the technological equipment and if you are using any online platforms for your donations and pledges, make a test pledge to your account to make sure it all works and it is easy to use.

The day before, make sure you have all your forms, paperwork, lists, equipment, first aid kit and everything else you need packed and loaded and ready to go.

The more prepared you are, the better.

EVENT WRAP-UP



Post-Event Logistics

VENUE CLEAN UP / BREAK DOWN: make sure you coordinate this properly with your team in order to fulfill your commitments to the venue.

FINAL VENUE WALK-THROUGH: be sure to do one final walk-through and check for anything that might be damaged or out of order. This will also ensure that you are not overcharged for damages.

LOST AND FOUND: we suggest having one committee member in charge of organizing and delivering items that were left at the event.

SILENT AUCTION & RAFFLE ITEM DELIVERY: Hopefully, most of your silent auction and raffle items were given to your guests. If not, assign a member of your team to gather remaining items and ensure winners receive their prizes.

FINAL VENDOR INVOICES: As you complete your event wrap up, always be sure to pay any final invoices from vendors.

Congratulations! You guys did it!

After the event is done, the clean-up is behind you and the donations are accounted for, here are a few more things to consider after the event is over:

- MAKE SURE TO THANK YOUR COMMITTEE AND ALL VOLUNTEERS
- SEND OUT RECEIPTS FOR DONATIONS (OR SUBMIT REQUEST FORMS TO KCNQ2 CURE)
- SHARE SUCCESS STORIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA
- THANK YOUR DONORS AND SPONSORS, AND REPORT ON THE IMPACT

Reach out to say 'thanks for participating' and include a summary of the campaign. Here are some ideas of what kinds of metrics you can include:

- How much was raised and if the goal was met
- How many people participated
- Who and what the funds are going toward

ALSO CONSIDER

Remind donors, sponsors and supporters of the need for their continued support and active engagement!

MANAGING DONATIONS



Your Costs

Any costs you incur and deduct from the funds raised must be fair and reasonable.

- Costs deducted from the funds may only include expenses directly related to the event such as venue hire, catering, etc.
- You can't claim personal time organizing the event as an expense.
- We encourage you to budget wisely and advise that your expenses should not exceed 30% of all funds raised.
- No costs may be incurred to be billed back to KCNQ2 Cure Alliance.

Collecting Funds

If you're fundraising through the KCNQ2 Cure Alliance website, people will be able to make direct donations. These funds will then be transferred to KCNQ2 Cure Alliance (please note that our donations platform vendor charges a small admin fee for all donations). Funds can also be collected by check.

Donor Receipts

If donors require receipts, complete the Donation Form included in your fundraiser packet, and return it to us. Once we receive this list and the funds we can send out receipts, if applicable.

Raffle tickets, entry tickets and auction items are not tax deductible.

We can issue a receipt for donated goods and services if the supplier gets in touch with us directly.

The receipt will state a description of the goods or services but we can't put a dollar value on it.

Sending In The Funds

Once your event is over, we ask that all funds raised will be sent to KCNQ2 Cure Alliance within 14 days of your fundraiser concluding.

The completed Fundraising Results Form and copies of receipts and invoices for all expenses deducted from the income must be sent in within 30 days of the fundraiser concluding.

SUMMARY/ CHECK-LIST



USE THIS CHECKLIST AND SCHEDULE TO HELP PLAN YOUR FUNDRAISING EVENT.

PLEASE NOTE: This is not a complete schedule! Your individual checklist will change depending on your specific event.

3 MONTHS OUT

- ☐ Reserve location ☐ Assemble a committee
- ☐ Set goals/draw up a schedule ☐ Set Budget
- ☐ Propose cash sponsorships to businesses

11 WEEKS FROM EVENT**

- ☐ Get city/police approval for event
- ☐ Create event page, registration form & waiver
- ☐ Propose to additional cash sponsors
- ☐ Announce event with a social media post

9 WEEKS FROM EVENT

- ☐ Get event insurance ☐ request forms packet from us
- ☐ Draft & sign written agreement with sponsors
- ☐ Email potential donors to announce event
- ☐ (if walk/run) Measure and map route

8 WEEKS FROM EVENT

- ☐ Propose food/drink sponsorships to grocers and restaurants
- ☐ Email potential volunteers about working at event
- ☐ start procuring in-kind donations (auction/ prizes)

7 WEEKS FROM EVENT

- ☐ Finalize food/drink (sponsors, donors and vendors)
- ☐ Contact schools & churches for volunteers

6 WEEKS FROM EVENT

- ☐ (if needed) Reserve portable toilets, fencing, etc
- ☐ Order T-shirts, promotional material & KCNQ2 Cure goodies
- ☐ Contact KCNQ2 Alliance about shipping banners, forms, etc
- ☐ Submit event to local publications (weeklys, magazines)
- ☐ Continued social media promotion

4 WEEKS FROM EVENT

- ☐ Finalize event day schedule (races, auctions, awards)
- ☐ Contact local news and radio stations
- ☐ source equipment, such as tables, tents, coolers, etc

3 WEEKS FROM EVENT

- ☐ Create volunteer schedule (set-up, during event, clean-up)
- ☐ Promote your event (coffee shops, street fairs, etc.)

1-2 WEEKS FROM EVENT

- ☐ Print registration form/ bidding sheets/ other forms
- ☐ Print list of pre-registered participants
- ☐ Heavy social media presence: encourage sharing
- ☐ contact participants/ sponsors/ donors & remind them of event
- ☐ promote on local news and radio (if available)
- ☐ Send schedule to all volunteers/ committee members

0 WEEKS FROM EVENT: HAVE FUN AND DON'T PANIC!

****This is a good time to get in touch with the KCNQ2 Cure Alliance, so we can help you out!**

FUNDRAISER EXAMPLES



WALK-A-THONS / BIKE-A-THONS

Walk-a-thons are events that usually consist of noncompetitive walks of 1 to 5 miles that raise money for charity. However, there are longer walk-a-thons, such as the Avon Breast Cancer Three-day where participants walk for 60 miles. Organizations have long favored walk-a-thons and other similar pledge events because they offer great opportunities for raising money and spreading the word about your organization, without heavy overhead costs. No matter what the scope of the walk, there are four major ways that a walk-a-thon raises money.

REGISTRATION FEES

The organizers of a walk-a-thon require all people who participate to register beforehand for two reasons, so that they can sign liability waivers in case they get injured and so they can collect registration fees. These fees, usually between \$15 and \$40, go toward the logistical expenses of the event, with leftover funds going to the charity. Registrants are invited to donate extra money when they sign up as well.

PLEDGES

People who participate in walk-a-thons usually collect pledges from friends, family and coworkers beforehand. They either ask them to donate a certain dollar amount per mile or to just give any amount they would like. They either write down the names and dollar amounts on pledge forms

and collect checks or cash to turn in on walk day or give out a link to a special website where people can donate via credit card. The organizers of the walk-a-thon often reward people who collect the most pledges with prizes, like items branded with the organization's logo or gift cards.

ADDITIONAL DONATIONS

The walk-a-thon can also get donations from people who aren't participating in the walk or sponsoring participants. This includes people who happen by the event and decide to give a few dollars on the spur of the moment or employees and volunteers for the organization who want to give. Also, donations can be accepted from people who give through the organization's website without affiliating with a walker.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

Walk-a-thon organizers can collect a lot of money by garnering corporate sponsors. Oftentimes, they offer organizations who donate a large amount the opportunity to have their name and logo on the T-shirt given to participants, recognition on signage around the course or a booth in the celebration village at the end of the walk. All of these can be great advertising for the business.

FOR MORE HELP AND SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO ORGANIZE A WALK-A-THON VISIT:

WWW.CLASSY.ORG/BLOG/9-WEEK-PLAN-ORGANIZING-5K-CHARITY-RUN

FUNDRAISER EXAMPLES



BAKE SALES

A bake sale is a relatively low-cost way to bring in money. Your group can hold a bake sale with little cash outlay. Chances are good the products will sell. Homemade goodies are hard to pass up, especially when they're reasonably priced and profits are going to a good cause.

But bake sales do more for a non-profit group than bring in funds. They heighten your group's presence in the community. A well-advertised bake sale reminds parents and other members of your community of the cause you are passionate about and will raise awareness for KCNQ2. Here are a few tips for organizing a bake sale:

GET HELP: Ask for help with organizing donations, handling publicity, setting up tables and/or the booth, selling goods, collecting money, and cleaning up.

DONATIONS: Be sure to organize a donation sign-up. Be specific about what baked goods will be needed for the sale, so you don't end up with all "chocolate brownies". Pass out individual sign-up sheets with a list of the needed items. Get names and phone numbers so that the person can be contacted. Be specific on how you want the goods packaged.

THINK BEYOND BAKED GOODS: Serve coffee, cold bottled water or lemonade along with the baked goods. Consider other additional items such as recipe cards.

CHECK YOUR LOCAL HEALTH CODES: Some states have health codes stating that everything must be individually wrapped. Also, each baked good donated should have an index card prominently attached that has the name of the dish and a list of non-obvious and/or outstanding ingredients (such as coconut, nuts, candied or dried fruits or strawberries).

TIMING AND LOCATION: Try to place your table and/or booth in a high-traffic area. To guarantee a heavy traffic flow, plan the sale around other coordinating events. For school affiliated bake sales, sporting events and theater productions would be the perfect time to host a bake sale.

PRESENTATION IS EVERYTHING: Set out nicely decorated and organized tables. Use tablecloths, but not in overpowering patterns. The baked goods should be your best decorations. Divide the baked goods according to type (cookies, cakes) and/or serving size (whole cakes, individual cookies). If you have several tables, separate them into just pies, cakes or even one just for chocolate goods.

COMMON BAKE SALE ITEMS TO TRY

- Brownies
- Chocolate Chip Cookies
- Sugar Cookies
- Fudge
- Rice Krispies Treats
- Bundt Cakes

FUNDRAISER EXAMPLES



SILENT AUCTIONS

Silent auctions are popular nonprofit fundraising events. They can be part of a larger fundraising event or a stand-alone fundraiser. During a traditional silent auction, items are displayed around the room, and supporters make donations by writing bids on sheets of paper placed next to each item.

For the silent auction, the organizers and volunteers will procure various items, such as vacation destinations, sporting or concert tickets, gift cards, various consumer goods and more. Each item will have a starting bid and a minimum bid increment, with the highest bidder winning the item at the silent auction's conclusion. Unlike a live auction, silent auction bids are submitted online, by text message, or on old-fashioned sheets of paper.

PLANNING

A successful silent auction needs two things: many auction items in a variety of price points and a guest list full of people willing to part with their money. To find the right items, involve your committee in soliciting donations. Many businesses, such as spas, jewelry stores and sports retailers, donate goods or services in return for a donation letter, and individuals often agree to offer items such as a week at a vacation home or a day on the lake on a yacht. Ask your committee members to invite as many people in their

networks as possible (using that personal connection makes people more likely to attend and bid generously). Prepare a marketing plan to promote the event to the community as well as through social media, newspapers and local professional groups. Make sure they know the importance of your organization's cause so guests arrive prepared to open their hearts and wallets.

SETTING UP THE AUCTION

Before the auction, prepare easy-to-understand bid sheets for each item. List the item description, estimated value and donor at the top of each sheet. Use the rest of the sheet for lines for guests to fill out that include their names and bid amounts. If you have a minimum bid -- usually 50 percent of the estimated value -- or minimum raise levels -- the amount guests must increase the bids by each time -- include that on the sheet. Put tables far enough apart so guests can easily walk between them; 6 feet between tables is usually enough. Arrange the items attractively, displaying items so they are easy to view from above. Some planners prefer to have one table for the highest-priced items. Small items, such as a bath gel selection, aren't likely to receive high bids, so group them together whenever possible to create a bigger item. For example, you might group bath gel with a spa gift card, cushy robe and fluffy slippers for a pampering basket.

HAPPY BIDDING!