

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY RELAY FOR LIFE



High Impact Fundraising Best Practice Guide



Overview

The objective of this fundraising guide is to provide you with a range of high impact fundraisers that have been successfully implemented across the nation to support Relay For Life events. These high impact fundraising ideas can be adopted by Relay volunteers at any level – from Event Leadership Team (ELT) members and Team Captains, to participants and survivors.

Points of Consideration

As any event level fundraisers are being planned, we urge staff and Event Leadership Teams to strongly consider the overall benefit this will play in the success of their Relay For Life event. To determine the overall benefit, consider the following:

- **Time:** Does this fundraiser take time away from focusing on the growth and implementation of your local Relay For Life event?
- **Recruitment:** Will this fundraiser provide you opportunities to recruit teams, survivors, sponsors, potential Event Leadership Team members?
- **Fundraising:** Have you set a goal for this fundraiser? Is that goal and the reality of that goal worth the time that will be spent planning and promoting this event?
- **Promotion:** Does this fundraiser give you the opportunity to promote and ultimately grow your local Relay For Life event?
- **Mission:** Is there the opportunity to incorporate mission, spread awareness and educate members of the community who might not otherwise be exposed to the American Cancer Society?

When considering your answers to these questions, if you find that an event-level fundraiser is taking time away from the main focuses of an Event Leadership Team and that it does not provide opportunity to recruit or promote for the local Relay For Life, perhaps this fundraiser does not have a big enough return on investment. While we certainly don't want to discourage you from engaging in event level fundraisers, keep in mind that if coached correctly, a new team can raise \$1,000 on average (and that's just in one year!). So, even if your fundraiser brings in \$5,000 toward your Relay event, if you could have spent that time recruiting and developing 10 new teams, your time would be better spent doing that and raising an additional \$10,000. Please consult your Relay staff partner if you have questions or need assistance in determine which, if any, event level fundraiser may be a good fit for your community!



Table of Contents

American Cancer Society Programs: These programs are affiliated with the American Cancer Society Relay For Life program; and therefore have resources available at the national level. These were designed to be owned externally by the host. Staff should focus their efforts on recruiting and training hosts and can certainly help support the programs along the way.

Coaches vs. Cancer.....	3	Relay Recess and Relay Field Day.....	6
Bark For Life.....	4	Matching Gifts.....	7
Corporate Relay For Life Events.....	5	Luminaria Night.....	8

Added Events: These are team-like fundraisers that can be implemented by Event Leadership Teams or committees, with staff support.

Glow for Goal 5k.....	9	Murder Mystery Dinner.....	23
Golf Tournament.....	10	Event-Level Yard Sale.....	24
Auction.....	11	Back to School Waterfight	25
Characters for a Cause.....	12	Texas Roadhouse Luncheon.....	26
Fools on the Roof.....	13	Girlfriends Gala	27
Small Fry Tri.....	14	Santa Dash	28
Relay night at a sporting event.....	15	Purple Plunge.....	29
Purses, Pouts & Pearls.....	16	Santa Calls.....	30
Cow Patty Bingo	17	Festival of Trees	31
Stick a Fork in Cancer.....	18	Obstacle Course.....	32
Faces of Cancer.....	19	Bunco Tournament.....	33
Celebrity Waiter.....	20	Strike Out Cancer.....	34
Holiday Boutique	21	GROW Relay!	35
Skate For Life	22		

Other Initiatives: These fundraisers are mostly driven internally. While some could be Event Leadership Team-driven, staff should partner up internally to implement these.

Online Campaigns.....	36	C-Note Campaign	39
Test Drive Campaigns	37	Sponsor Save the Day	40
Call Blitz.....	38	Cupcake Challenge	41



American Cancer Society Programs

Name of Fundraiser: Coaches vs. Cancer

Description: Coaches vs. Cancer is a nationwide American Cancer Society initiative designed to leverage the community leadership of coaches. Coaches vs. Cancer events take place in many forms and for all sports. Fundraising and awareness happens differently at each event, but the common thread is that the events all take place during a game or tournament for that sport. The program is a great way to engage new constituents in the fight against cancer and get them involved in our Relay For Life events.

You can utilize the summer and fall to approach local coaches and booster programs by scheduling fall/winter Coaches vs. Cancer events. You can also work with coaches, summer travel or club leagues, and recreations centers to schedule Coaches vs. Cancer tournaments during the summer months.

It is important to cast a wide net when it comes to Coaches vs. Cancer. If your community's football program is incredibly popular, it is wise to approach them and the cheerleading team to do a coordinated event. However, do not rule out other possibilities such as a Coaches vs. Cancer event at a regional bowling tournament, a Coaches vs. Cancer event for a travel soccer team, or even a young professional kickball tournament.

Average fundraising potential: \$500-2,500

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, community events, communications team

Suggested external partners: Local school district, booster clubs, travel/club leagues, rec centers

Successfully implemented in: New England, Eastern, California, Midwest, East Central, High Plains, Mid-South, Lakeshore

Links to resources: coachesvscancer.org

Resources on [Brand Toolkit](#)

Promotional materials and collateral on print on demand



American Cancer Society Programs

Name of Fundraiser: Bark For Life

Description: The American Cancer Society Bark For Life program is a fundraising event honoring the life-long contributions of our canine caregivers. It presents an opportunity for people to be empowered through their canine companion partnerships and to contribute to cancer cures through the mission of the American Cancer Society.

Families and their dogs come together for a few hours during the day and complete a one-mile walk to honor the caregiving qualities of their canine "best friends" and cancer survivors. Activities include:

- Doggy games
- Top dog & dress up contests
- Team and community fundraising
- Music and Food
- Special dog guest demonstrations by groups such as: therapy, police or rescue dogs

Average fundraising potential: \$2,000-45,000

Suggested internal partners: Communications team, community engagement

Suggested external partners: Local veterinarian offices, pet stores, law enforcement dogs, rescue groups, volunteers within your Relay network that are passionate about their pups!

Successfully implemented in: East Central, New England, Eastern, Midwest, California, Florida, High Plains, Mid-South, Lakeshore

Links to resources: [Introduction to Bark For Life](#) (overview, available resources, timeline, committee positions, recruitment, and tips)

[Sample Email Templates](#)

[Registration Form](#)

Promotional materials and collateral on print on demand



American Cancer Society Programs

Name of Fundraiser: Corporate Relay For Life Events

Description: Does your Relay event have a large corporate team? Perhaps there is a company within the community that you would like to see get involved? Have you and your Event Leadership Team ever considered asking a big company in the community to host their own Relay For Life event?

There is flexibility with a corporate event, and it can be an exciting way to engage hundreds of people who might not otherwise attend a Relay For Life event. A corporate Relay For Life event can take place inside a company's building or in their parking lot. It can also take place during work hours, making promotion and building event attendance even easier! Much like the Relay Recess or Relay Field Day program, there is flexibility with the length of a corporate event. This gives the company the ability to truly own the event and make it work for its employees.

A Relay For Life event hosted by a company also provides them with the opportunity to personally recognize its employees who are survivors and caregivers. It is recommended that staff and volunteers target larger companies with employees of 200 or more to truly make the biggest impact possible!

Average fundraising potential: \$5,000-20,000+

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, hospital systems, corporate relations

Suggested external partners: National Corporate Team Program partners, chamber members, Team Captains, Event Leadership Team members, and survivors

Successfully implemented in: Lakeshore, Midwest, High Plains

Links to resources: [Corporate Relay Guidebook](#)
[2015 Corporate Team Engagement Toolkit](#)



American Cancer Society Programs

Name of Fundraiser: Relay Recess and Relay Field Day

Description: The Relay Recess and Relay Field Day programs are very customizable models that engage elementary schools and middle schools, respectively, in the Relay For Life movement. These programs are a great way to engage students, parents, teachers, and school administration in the fight against cancer by providing information about cancer education, physical activity, fundraising, and community service.

You can utilize the summer and fall months to approach local school districts about hosting a Relay Recess or Relay Field Day event. It is also a fantastic program to bring to summer camps.

Average fundraising potential: \$1,000-10,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, community events, communications team

Suggested external partners: Local school district, summer camps, pre-schools

Successfully implemented in: New England, Eastern, California, Midwest, East Central, High Plains, Mid-South, Lakeshore

Links to resources: [Official Information on relayforlife.org](https://www.relayforlife.org)

[Relay Recess Coordinator Kit](#)

[Relay Recess Resources on Brand Toolkit](#), including sell sheets for schools and parents, fundraising incentives, example activities, permission slips, and more!

[Relay Field Day Coordinator Kit](#)

[Relay Field Day Resources on Brand Toolkit](#) including sell sheets for schools and parents, implementation guides, fundraising incentives, and more!

Promotional materials and collateral on print on demand



American Cancer Society Programs

Name of Fundraiser: Matching Gifts

Description: Matching gifts are a great opportunity to increase the value of a donation. A matching gift is when an individual makes a donation and works for a company that offers a matching gift for that donation. The match ratio may vary and is determined by each company. Some companies will match an employee's donation one to one, some will match three to one. Some companies may even match an employee's fundraising total.

Each company determines their own matching guidelines, including, what time of year they send in their portion of the match, what paperwork needs to be filled out by their employee and what type of employee is eligible for the matching program (full time, part time, retiree, etc.). Sometimes there is also a minimum and a maximum donation amount that the company will follow.

Building a strategy around matching gifts could make a huge impact in fundraising totals. Determine what companies in the community match gifts, ask questions, and find employees who work for those companies. There are also resources available to search matching gift companies online.

Summer and fall are good times to look into what matching gifts are set to come in for your events. Follow up with the appropriate volunteer regarding the status and any additional paperwork that may need to be completed.

Average fundraising potential: \$5,000+

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, corporate account support, corporate relations

Suggested external partners: Team Captains, Event Leadership Team members, Relay participants, survivors, Relay event sponsors, chamber members

Successfully implemented in: Lakeshore, California, Florida, East Central, High Plains, Mid-South

Links to resources: [Matching Gift Sell Sheet](#)
matchinggifts.com/acs/ to find out if a company matches gifts



American Cancer Society Programs

Name of Fundraiser: Luminaria Night

Description: A luminaria ceremony doesn't have to happen just at a Relay For Life event. Hosting a luminaria night in your community's downtown is a great way to keep the spirit of the Relay movement alive even after your event takes place. Not only is this a great fundraiser, but it's a good way to continue to engage survivors and caregivers year-round. It also may help you attract new Event Leadership Team members, Team Captains, and participants for the following Relay event.

A good strategy is to try to incorporate this luminaria ceremony into an already popular event in your community, such as a summer festival, the Fourth of July fireworks, or a big sporting event in the fall (see Coaches vs. Cancer).

Average fundraising potential: \$500 +

Suggested internal partners: Communications team

Suggested external partners: Team Captains, Event Leadership Teams, Relay participants, survivors, and caregivers, Relay event sponsors

Successfully implemented in: Lakeshore

Links to resources: [Luminaria Ceremony resources on Brand Toolkit](#) including flyers, brochures, luminaria labels, and more.
[RFL Ceremonies Toolkit](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Glow for Goal 5k

Description: GLOW 4 Goal is a 5k run and walk that takes place at night. Participants light up the course with glow in the dark T-shirts, and wristbands. After the race, participants are treated to a post-race party with food, a DJ, and prizes. Bring the Relay For Life feel to the event by having the finish line, lined with luminaria bags!

Average fundraising potential: \$5,000-10,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, communications team

Suggested external partners: Local race timing company, community volunteer groups or students needing service hours, Relay For Life committee members, athletic centers/gyms, running groups, young professional groups

Successfully implemented in: East Central Division (originated in Belmont County, OH), Midwest, California, Mid-South

Links to resources: [GLOW 4 Goal Guidebook](#)
[GLOW 4 Goal Committee Structure](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Golf Tournament

Description: Work with your local golf course to host a golf scramble. This kind of gathering could provide some unique opportunities to network with members of the community in a completely new way! A group of volunteers working to plan this event could look to community businesses to donate prizes and awards.

Average fundraising potential: \$4,000-15,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, communications team

Suggested external partners: Golf course, golf associations, media, Event Leadership Team, fundraising teams, Relay sponsors

Successfully implemented in: Great West, Eastern



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Auction

Description: An auction is a great way to engage your Relay teams and participants in together in fundraising. Task each team with securing a valuable item for a community auction! Whatever their item sells for, you can credit directly to their team! Find an auctioneer to donate their time and a space, and you're good to go!

**Raffle and auction laws vary by state and Division. Before implementing an event like this, work with your legal department to ensure you are in compliance with state laws.*

Average fundraising potential: \$5,000-20,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, communications team, Making Strides event manager (if you want Making Strides teams to participate, too)

Suggested external partners: Relay sponsors, teams, and participants

Successfully implemented in: Eastern, California



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Characters/Mascots for a Cause

Description: Doesn't everyone want to meet princes and princesses? Or maybe the school district mascot or a local professional sports team mascot? Purchase a ticket for \$25 and receive a complete kids meal (could be a breakfast, lunch, or dinner), an autograph book, and an opportunity to take photos with your favorite characters/mascots.

** Before implementing an event like this, work with your legal department to ensure you are in compliance with copyright laws.*

Average fundraising potential: \$3,000-6,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement

Suggested external partners: Relay teams

Successfully implemented in: Mid-South



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Fools on the Roof

Description: Fools on the roof is a jail and bail concept where “fools” (participants) agree to go up on a roof in a public location and pledge to raise a certain amount of money during a set time before they’re allowed to leave the roof. Participants raise money both ahead of time, and onsite by calling their contacts for pledges.

The “fools” capture their donors contact information, and then those individuals will be invoiced for their pledges. The event brings great awareness to fundraising for the American Cancer Society and the local Relay For Life event by getting media coverage, and integrating with high profile community members. Each “fool” can raise anywhere between \$500 and a few thousand, with community “celebrities” always bringing in a bulk of the funds.

Average fundraising potential: \$5,000-15,000

Suggested internal partners: Communications team

Suggested external partners: Relay Team Captains, sponsors, National Corporate Team Partners, local celebrities, public figures

Successfully implemented in: East Central

Links to resources: [Fools on the Roof Registration Form](#)
[Fools on the Roof Flyer](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Small Fry Tri

Description: Open to children ages two to five. Children will run, bike (can bring their own bike, tricycle, or scooter with helmet) and then run to the finish through a sprinkler, fire hose or splash park! Parents and siblings are encouraged to help the children complete the course. This is not a competitive event as all children will receive a T-shirt and medal. The key to a successful event is getting sponsors. You will spend half of the registration fee on the cost of the T-shirt and medal.

Average fundraising potential: \$2,500-8,000

Suggested internal partners:

Suggested external partners: Pediatric doctors, pediatric dentists, orthodontists, daycare providers, pre-schools

Successfully implemented in: Mid-South, East Central

Links to resources: [Example Small Fry Tri Flyer](#)
[Small Fry Tri Registration Form](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Relay night at local semi-professional sporting event

Description: This event is an opportunity for fundraising and recognition. Ask your local semi-professional sporting team to host a Relay For Life night. You can typically purchase a set number of tickets at half price (or have a sponsor cover the cost) and then sell them for full price. Additionally, these teams will often order custom Relay For Life jerseys and auction them off, which can raise quite a bit of money. Incorporate recognition by inviting survivors to attend for free (their guests can purchase a ticket).

Average fundraising potential: \$1,000-15,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, communications team, Making Strides event manager

Suggested external partners: Relay Event Leadership Teams, teams and participants, sponsors, survivors, caregivers, local semi-professional sports teams

Successfully implemented in: Eastern

Links to resources: [RFL Night with Brooklyn Cyclones Sponsorship Opportunities](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Purses, Pouts & Pearls

Description: An entertaining evening out for young women that promotes healthy living and raises funds. Gather up the girls and come out for an exciting occasion of:

- Purses: Fun and engaging games of Bingo with ultimate prizes, famous-maker purses!
- Pouts: Silent auction and raffle baskets, featuring items to pamper your lips. There will be gift to take home, featuring a special lipstick or gloss.
- Pearls: A mix of pearl and gemstone jewelry from local merchants and hand-crafted, custom-made pieces by area artisans available for raffle and in the silent auction.
- A large silent auction, featuring embellished baskets to fulfill any girl's dreams. The practical and the exquisite, the adventurous and the ordinary make up tables of items competing for the highest bid to aid the Society's offering of free programs and services to cancer patients.

Each entry to the event includes: a ticket to the event (\$45 general admission ticket or \$30 additional for a VIP ticket (limited to 100)) an extraordinary buffet of nourishing and healthful foods, full cash bar, a swag bag of items as our parting gift, entertainment and music that will make you want to get on your feet, a card for the first bingo game, and the opportunity to participate in purse bingo, multiple raffles, and the grand silent auction.

**Raffle and auction laws vary by state and Division. Before implementing an event like this, work with your legal department to ensure you are in compliance with state laws.*

Average fundraising potential: \$5,000-20,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, corporate relations

Suggested external partners: Boutiques, hair/nail salons, women's organizations

Successfully implemented in: Mid-South

Links to resources: [Sample Event Program](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Cow Patty Bingo

Description: A cow is turned loose on a fenced-in area which has been marked off in numbered squares. Chances on each square are sold, the amount based on the size of the squares and the cow determines the winner by making the first "deposit" on one of the squares. The winner can receive up to 50 percent of the proceeds.

**Raffle and auction laws vary by state and Division. Before implementing an event like this, work with your legal department to ensure you are in compliance with state laws.*

Average fundraising potential: \$2,000-10,000(dependent on size of squares and grid)

Suggested internal partners: Event support coordinator

Suggested external partners: Relay teams

Successfully implemented in: Mid-South



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Stick a Fork in Cancer

Description: Stick a Fork in Cancer is a dine-out campaign where local restaurants donate a portion of their sales on a given day or week. This can be done at all levels, including the event level with only five to 10 restaurants all the way up to the Division level. The point is that multiple restaurants are on board during this set period of time. This coordinated effort makes promotion through social media and media partners more focused.

Average fundraising potential: Market Level- \$5,000-15,000

Suggested internal partners: Communications team, community engagement, entire market team, corporate partners

Suggested external partners: Local restaurants, local grocery stores, Relay sponsors, Relay Event Leadership Team

Successfully implemented in: Florida, High Plains

Links to resources: [Stick a Fork in Cancer Strategy- FL](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Faces of Cancer

Description: The “Faces of Cancer” campaign features local cancer survivors who have inspired others and made significant contributions in the fight toward recovery. The honoree’s picture and written testimony of survivorship will be printed on a story board displayed at a high traffic, high visibility location for about a month.

This campaign culminates at an event where all honorees (and sponsors) will be recognized. Tickets to the event and sponsorships are the main source of revenue.

Average fundraising potential: Market level \$20,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, corporate accounts team, Making Strides event manager, communications team

Suggested external partners: Nation Corporate Teams Program partners, former and current sponsors, lapsed National Corporate Teams Program teams, hospital systems, large to mid-sized companies, smaller businesses, oncologists/physician offices/OB/GYN practices

Successfully implemented in: South Atlantic



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Celebrity Waiter

Description: This is a fantastic event designed to bring the “celebrities” in the community together to have fun while raising money for a great cause. Celebrity waiters are recruited by Relay For Life volunteers to wait on a table of ten guests. Waiters will be asked to seek donations for ten “dinner tickets” to the dinner at \$25 each. Waiters choose their guest list and each guest is encouraged to “tip” the waiter for items needed to enjoy their dinner. You will also be asked to encourage your invitees to bring “tips” for your services. Tips are the primary way funds are raised at the event. Guests will also be asked to bring a centerpiece for the table that will be auctioned off during a live auction after dinner. They will be also be encouraged to come up with a table theme and be creative. It adds to the overall fun of the evening!

Average fundraising potential: \$2,500-20,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement

Suggested external partners: Relay Team Captains, Relay sponsors, National Corporate Team Program partners, local celebrities, public figures

Successfully implemented in: Mid-South

Links to resources: [Celebrity Waiters Best Practices](#)
[Celebrity Waiters Planning Guide](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Holiday Boutique

Description: This event was successfully held during the holiday season (between Thanksgiving and Christmas) and served as a holiday boutique/craft sale for the local community. Volunteers were able to rent a venue at a discounted cost (a church and a town hall) for this event. The Event Leadership Team invited Relay For Life teams to have a booth with holiday gift items to sell. Many chose to sell cookies, baked goods, crafts, and other festive projects found on Pinterest. For groups/vendors that were not a Relay For Life team, there was a \$75 charge per booth rental. This is a great event to get the Relay For Life teams, participants, and community together during the holiday season. The event had information about the American Cancer Society, the local Relay For Life event, and information about joining our Event Leadership Team. This event capitalizes on the holiday spirit everyone is in during this time of the year, while helping the local community get some of their holiday shopping done while helping fight back against cancer at the same time!

Average fundraising potential: \$1,000-3,000

Suggested internal partners: Community manager

Suggested external partners: RFL Team Captains and participants, venue (*church, town hall, golf country club, or other large venue that will donate their facility for free or at reduced cost*), other local craft vendors

Successfully Implemented In: Midwest



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Skate For Life

Description: This is a fundraising event planned by youth and organized to engage the youth market in the fight to end cancer! It took place in St. Cloud, Minnesota, for the first time in August 2015. The Skate For Life event was planned and organized based on the Relay event. It included an opening ceremony, a honorary survivor, a luminara ceremony, and a closing ceremony. The volunteers were able to recruit a youth emcee, as well as a youth honorary survivor, to help connect with the attendees. The event was four-hours long, and only cost \$10 to attend. The \$10 allowed participants to skate, play games, enjoy music, and win door prizes. Parents were welcome and encouraged to come too! The planning volunteers decorated the roller rink in a birthday-theme, and had lots of information on the American Cancer Society available. It was also a great opportunity to promote our larger community Relay For Life event, and recruit teams and Event Leadership Team volunteers. This event raised an impressive \$2,500 in its first year! This event did a great job bringing Relay For Life and the mission of the American Cancer Society to a part of the community, and market, that had not previously participated in the the Relay For Life event, bringing in new dollars, and new participants!

Average fundraising potential: \$2,500-5,000

Suggested internal partners: Relay community manager, senior market manger (where available)

Suggested external partners: Local roller derby team, ice skating groups/clubs, hockey teams, current Relay participants, Relay Event Leadership Team members

Successfully Implemented In: Midwest

Links to resources: Relay For Life resources were primarily used, just modified or updated with Skate For Life event information and details.



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Murder Mystery Dinner

Description: This event was hosted at a local museum and was the fundraiser of a large team that also brought in the help of other Relay teams. A script was written and members of the team played the actors. Two shows were done and the seating capacity was 100 for each show, resulting in a total sale of 200 tickets. Between shows, a silent auction and other fundraising activities took place to help increase the overall funds raised. The location was free and hosted by local museum, allowing opportunity to incorporate the theme "A Night At The Museum," where the characters in the murder mystery were museum exhibits that were coming to life to figure out who had murdered the museum curator! The food for the dinner was donated from a local store and prepared by members of the team. The sound equipment was donated by a local church. Expenses were minimal. Members of the crowd enjoyed their dinner and the two-hour entertainment for \$20 a person.

Average fundraising potential: \$4,000 - 10,000

Suggested external partners: Historic community locations that set the right scene. Theater groups and local high school students.

Successfully Implemented In: Lakeshore

Links to resources: Tons of great themes, scripts, and how-tos can easily be found online



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Event-Level Yard Sale

Description: This is a twist off of the traditional one team yard sale fundraiser. All members of the Event Leadership team donated items as well as asked friends and relatives for items to be donated. Since they had so many items donated, they did not want to take the hours it would require to price all of the items, so they made it a "free will donation." People were allowed to pay whatever they wanted for the items they picked up. Knowing that it was going to charity, most people paid more than what they normally would have for the items. A slip of paper was handed to person that bought items to let them, letting them know that their donation was supporting the American Cancer Society along with information about our event in case they wanted to get involved. This yard sale was held in a church parking lot on a very busy street in the community so that they did not need to spend money on advertising.

Average fundraising potential: \$1,000-1,500

Suggested internal partners: Event Leadership Teams, Team Captains, and greater community

Suggested external partners: Getting a high profile location to host the event with a large parking lot. This could be a church, a school, a bank, etc.

Successfully Implemented In: Lakeshore



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Back to School Waterfight

Description: This event is a great warm weather activity centered around water. "Water olympics" were held for different age groups and sections were roped off for ages 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, 10-12, and 13+. For younger children, there were kiddie pools and sponges in the 2-3, 4-5 sections, and for older children there were water balloons. Other fun activities included a bounce house, inflatable obstacle course, face painting, popsicles, and activity buckets (for purchase). The activity buckets contained water guns, sponges, and other small water toys.

The event was run with the help of Relay volunteers from several area events. Fundraising dollars were split between the events who had representation.

Lowes Home Improvement store donated the caution tape to rope off the areas and five gallon buckets to hold the water/water balloons. Sunscreen was also sold as a fundraiser for \$1, and door prizes donated from several family fun places were raffled (see poster for details). Walmart gave gift cards that we bought the balloons, sunscreen, and popsicles with.

Average fundraising potential: \$2,500

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement field staff from all areas, communications staff

Suggested external partners: Schools (private and public), daycare centers, media, Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, birthday party centers, city parks and recreation departments, and faith-based organizations

Successfully Implemented In: High Plains, Lakeshore

Links to resources: [Back to School Waterfight Poster](#)
[Back to School Waterfight Postcard](#)
[Volunteer Registration Form](#)
[Child Registration Form](#)
[Stop Sign for Activity Sections](#)
[Day of Event Registration Forms](#)

Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Texas Roadhouse FREE Lunch

Description: The Kenosha Wisconsin Texas Roadhouse location hosts a free lunch for the community, with suggested donations and tips benefiting the local Relay For Life program. Patrons who eat at the location decide how much they want to pay for the lunch and can choose to donate \$2 for their meal or \$15. Texas Roadhouse generously provides this event with the following:

1. Unlimited FREE food and drinks from noon – 3 p.m. This includes pulled pork sandwiches, french fries, and soft drinks. The estimated value of each lunch is \$6.99.
2. Ten Texas Roadhouse staff who volunteer their time to help. The staff are on site to greet customers, run credit cards, and cook.
3. The opportunity to come into the restaurant as early as needed to decorate everything purple!

The Relay For Life event provides 10-15 volunteers (Event Leadership Team members, Team Captains, etc.) to serve food and assist with to-go orders. This event allows the funds to be credited to participant/team fundraising totals. For example, one of our big teams, Walgreens, places 100 to-go orders for all of their Kenosha locations, each person donates \$5+ for the lunch, and then all of the funds will go towards their team fundraising total. Anyone who places an order to go, or stops in to eat, receives an envelope with the following information: team name to credit, participant name to credit, and amount – so that we can track who the funds are going to. If they are not having the funds go to a specific team or participant, the funds will go toward the server's Relay For Life team. Any credit card donations run through the Texas Roadhouse computer system is totaled, and a check is mailed to the local American Cancer Society office a few weeks later. This event also serves as a great opportunity to provide all customers with information about their local Relay For Life. There are also extra survivor shirts on site for any survivors that attend.

Average fundraising potential: \$1,000-6,000

Suggested internal partners: Community managers, senior market manager (where available)

Suggested external partners: Texas Roadhouse (or other local restaurants), Local Media (Promotion), Kohl's Cares (Volunteers), RFL Event Leadership Team, RFL Teams, and RFL Participants

Successfully Implemented In: Midwest

Links to resources: [Texas Roadhouse Press Release](#)
[Texas Roadhouse To Go Form](#)
[Promotional Flyer](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Girlfriends Gala

Description: It's a typical gala with a unique twist—a ladies night! Attendees are encouraged to wear an old prom or bridesmaids dress that they thought they'd never wear again and come out to enjoy the festivities. VIP and general admission tickets can include activities like dinner, dancing, photo opportunities, basket drawings, bachelor auctions, etc. Another option to avoid the expenses of a formal dinner is to host the event later in the evening and provide sweet and savory appetizers rather than a full dinner.

Bachelors are required to work with local businesses to cover the cost of their date. They can also help sell tickets and promote the event.

Average fundraising potential: \$4,000-10,000

Suggested internal partners: Distinguished events managers, community engagement partners, communication team

Suggested external partners: Individual sales consultants (for baskets), young professional groups, Relay teams, Relay sponsors

Successfully Implemented In: High Plains

Links to resources: [Girlfriends Gala Bachelor Auction Program](#)
[Girlfriends Gala Flyer](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Santa Dash

Description: Santa Dash is a fun run/walk 5k with a Christmas theme. Instead of giving out the traditional race T-shirt the gift is a dated commemorative christmas ornament. Ornaments are purchased at discount for 50 cents. At the end of the walk/run, Santa greets the racers, and participants are able to get a picture with him. Cookies and hot cocoa are provided, and participants have tons of fun with the festive touches.

Average fundraising potential: \$1,500 - 5,000

Suggested internal partners: Relay staff (coordinate out of your office and promote to all Relay events, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer, and Walk & Roll).

Suggested external partners: Event Leadership Teams, running clubs, service organizations (such as Lions Clubs), local group that has santa suit, local coffee shop to donate hot cocoa, bakery for cookies, and local government and police to identify and create event routes

Successfully Implemented In: Lakeshore

Links to resources: [Santa Dash Flyer](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Purple Plunge: Freezin' for a Reason

Description: The Purple Plunge is a Relay feeder event in which teams come together on a date in the winter and jump into the water. Participating teams raise money just as Relay teams do leading up to the event. Also during the event itself there are several other fundraising and mission components such as a silent auction, raffle (if permissible in your state), costume contest, luminaria sales, mission moment, and award ceremony. There was a \$20 registration fee. Teams raised an average of \$1,400.

Average fundraising potential: \$25,000

Suggested internal partners: Risk Management and COI, IT/Website team and Community Engagement

Suggested external partners: Village or city (to get approval for event site and by board if needed), local fire department, local police department/explorers (for traffic control), terrain company (to cut and remove ice from the lake), local restaurants (to host "registration nights" leading up to the event, and to host you on the day of the event for the pre/post-plunge location), local sponsors (monetary, in-kind for T-shirts, warmers for the outdoor changing stations, tarps for outdoor changing stations, silent auction/raffle items, and 20 x 20 tents). We kept about 99% of our sponsors, in-kind sponsors, restaurants, fire/police department, and silent auction/raffle donors local and from within our Relay territory to help generate a community feel and support. It really and truly felt like a local community owned/run event (and it definitely was).

Successfully Implemented In: Lakeshore

Links to resources: [Purple Plunge Flyer](#)
[Purple Plunge Tips and Policies](#)
[Purple Plunge Press Release](#)
[Purple Plunge Sponsorship Packet](#)
[Purple Plunge In-Kind Sponsorship Packet](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Santa Calls

Description: A great way to engage families in your community in fundraising around the holidays is by doing Santa calls and letters in your community or market. Brochures are distributed to daycares and elementary students by local volunteers and electronically. The campaign runs from September through November, and the calls are made in early December by volunteer Santas who donate their time. The fundraiser gives families the option to purchase a call, letter, or both for their children. Three offices in Pennsylvania work together on this fundraiser and have sold calls all over the US!

Average fundraising potential: \$6,000-10,000 per market

Suggested internal partners: Relay For Life and Making Strides Against Breast Cancer staff

Suggested external partners: Relay For Life and Making Strides Against Breast Cancer volunteers (for distribution support)

Successfully Implemented In: East Central

Links to resources: [Santa Calls Registration Form](#)
[Santa Calls Sample Brochure](#)
[Santa Calls Sample Scripts](#)
[Santa Letter Templates](#)
[Santa Calls Volunteer Registration](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Festival of Trees

Description: A community favorite, Festival of Trees is a weekend long holiday event taking place the week before Thanksgiving. The committee purchases 3 and 6 foot artificial Christmas trees, wreathes, and garland, and volunteers from families and businesses or organizations in the community will offer their time and talents to decorate their item in the theme of their choice. There have been trees and wreathes decorated in movie or sports themes, and community members go all out to show their spirit. Trees, wreathes, and garland are dropped off early in the week of the festival, and the committee will set everything up in a holiday display. There is a preview night on Friday that is open to the public, so those interested can view all of the available trees for purchase, and it is held in conjunction with a bake sale and silent auction for the garland and wreathes.

The Festival of Trees formal program is held on Saturday, and couples pay \$50 admission which gets them into the event to bid on trees, as well as a buffet dinner which is sponsored by a local business. An auctioneer donates his time, and live auctions all of the 3 and 6 foot trees as well as some of the large, nicer wreathes.

On Sunday, winning buyers can come to pick up their purchased items. It is also a kid's day, and community children can come in and have their photo taken with Mr. and Mrs. Claus and do holiday crafts. The weekend's activities are held in community center that donates their space free of charge, and the only major expenses to the event are the trees, wreathes, garland, and invitations. The event always receives great publicity from their local newspapers and has become an annual tradition that many look forward to every year.

Average fundraising potential: \$20,000-25,000

Suggested internal partners: Communications team

Suggested external partners: Event Leadership Team members (Team Ambassadors, Sponsorship and Logistics leads)

Successfully Implemented In: East Central



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Obstacle Course

Description: Teams or individuals can participate in one of three obstacle courses—one easy, medium, and hard for a flat fee. Get local inflatable companies to donate inflatables for the easy and medium courses and work with a Crossfit or other gym to put together the difficult course. From here, other fun activities can be added to make the event a full day of outdoor fun. Many of them can be run for free or little cost.

Average fundraising potential: \$2,500-5,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, health systems partner

Suggested external partners: Large employers, high schools, running groups, athletic centers and gyms (for the course and participants), rental companies (inflatables)

Successfully Implemented In: High Plains

Links to resources: [Registration Form](#)
[Volunteer Form](#)
[Runner's Map](#)
[Sponsorship Packet](#)
[Shirt Order Form](#)
[Promotional Poster](#)
[High Risk Activities Waiver](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Bunco Tournament

Description: Bunco is a game that anyone can learn quickly and is a great way to socialize. Many communities have bunco groups. This makes it a great fundraiser! Host a large bunco night with good food and drinks, a great prize for the winner, and anything else you might add to raise more money. Foursomes can sign up together, or two at a time. Then you just need someone who can organize the crowd and the night will run itself!

Average fundraising potential: \$800-2,000

Suggested internal partners: Communication team

Suggested external partners: Individual consultants for baskets or prize for the winner, firehouse or restaurant for the host, bunco groups

Successfully Implemented In: Eastern, East Central



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: Strike Out Cancer

Description: This bowling event is held annually, and is more than your average night at the lanes. Each team that sells tickets to the event gets a credit back to their fundraising. There are two bowling heats and it's held on a Sunday because of leagues. The heats are at noon and 3 p.m. The cost is \$10 for adults per heat, and \$5 for kids. The bowling alley requires the event to pay them a \$500 flat fee for the day and all sales beyond that are donated back to Relay. Volunteers focus on getting lane sponsors at \$25 per sponsor for each lane. If a sponsor gives \$50, they'll get two lanes and last year, all 30 lanes. The event also has a raffle with about 10 gift baskets, a 50/50, and luminaria table. Ask the bowling alley if you can bring in food to set up a bake sale.

Average fundraising potential: \$3,000

Suggested external partners: Relay For Life teams and sponsors

Successfully Implemented In: East Central

Links to resources: [Event Flyer](#)



Added Events

Name of Fundraiser: GROW Relay!

Description: Do you or someone you know (in most cases men), put down their razor during the month of November in the name of men's health awareness? This fundraising best practice and social phenomena challenges men to go the whole month of November without shaving, blending the type of grassroots fundraising done for our Relay events to not only raise a lot of money, but to bring in new people to the fight against cancer! The concept of this fundraiser is to make personal asks to groups, clubs, teams, or friends and ask them to commit to putting down their razors for a month to raise funds and awareness for the American Cancer Society. These personal asks are made by existing Event Leadership Team volunteers, who become a mentor/ambassador for that recruited team for the entire month of November. The volunteer who recruits the team identifies a Team Captain and helps them sign up their team on the Relay For Life website (the same website as the local event), as well as helps coach and mentor them on how to get everyone else signed up online. The volunteer mentor/ambassador stays in contact with the team throughout the month and encourages the team to grow, raise awareness, and fundraise! At the end of the month, there can be a big celebration event that includes voting on best, worst, or most creative beard, as well as recognizing top fundraising teams/individuals, and promoting more information about the upcoming Relay For Life event and how they continue to stay involved and make an even bigger impact.

Average fundraising potential: \$1,000-100,000

Suggested internal partners: Relay community manager, senior market manager (where available)

Suggested external partners: Event Leadership Team, teams, participants, fire stations, police departments, service clubs, and other male focused groups

Successfully Implemented In: Lakeshore, Midwest.

Links to resources: [GROW Relay Tracking Form](#)
[GROW Relay Mission Information](#)
[GROW Relay Social Media](#)

Other Initiatives

Name of Fundraiser: Online Campaigns

Description: It doesn't matter what time of year it is, Relay For Life websites and social media pages are crucial tools that can have a high impact on fundraising dollars. In the summer, your online tools are a great way to keep your participants engaged in the Relay movement and informed about upcoming fundraisers. Do this by keeping your websites and social media pages updated with upcoming events, add photos, highlight award winners, and all around just stay active! Note, year-round fundraisers can benefit from the Mobile Fundraising App!

In the fall, your online tools are a crucial tool for recruiting new teams and encouraging early fundraising. Be sure to educate your Relay Team Captains and participants about the tools at their fingertips. Just because you know all of the resources available, doesn't mean a new participant does! Additionally, fall is a great time to run challenges! Fundraising and team building challenges add fun competition to your Relay For Life activity, and bring out the competitive side of our dedicated cancer fighters. Use the guidebook below to steer your strategy, communications, and reporting efforts. This information has been collected to ensure that your challenge reaches its full potential and best engages participants.

Suggested internal partners: Digital support specialist

Suggested external partners: Online lead, social communications lead, marketing lead

Successfully implemented in: New England, South Atlantic, East Central, Lakeshore, Midwest, Eastern

Links to resources:

- [Relay Online Event Management Center Guide](#)
- [RFL Online Challenge Guidebook 1 Page Chart](#)
- [RFL Online Challenge Guidebook](#)
- [RFL Online Media Wall Updates Guide](#)
- [RFL Online How to Update Sponsorship Page Guide](#)
- [RFL Online Create, Animate, Upload Sponsor Logos](#)
- [RFL How to Add a News Feed Announcement](#)
- [RFL How To Highlight Online Fundraising at Meetings](#)
- [RFL How To Cyber Relay Cafe](#)
- Relay Nation Group: [Online and Social Communications Lead](#)
- [Online Engagement Challenges](#)



Other Initiatives

Name of Fundraiser: Test Drive Campaigns

Description: Team up with a car dealer in your area to create a test drive campaign wherein every person who test drives a certain type of vehicle during a particular day, week, or month will earn a donation to the American Cancer Society.

This fundraiser can be implemented at the local event level or even at the Division-level depending on the opportunities in your area.

Average fundraising potential: Market level \$4,000-6,000

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement,

Suggested external partners: Media, Relay Event Leadership Team members, and teams

Successfully implemented in: Great West, East Central



Other Initiatives

Name of Fundraiser: Call Blitz

Description: Reach out to your Relay participants who are on the verge of hitting the next fundraising level! For example, participants who are between the \$100 Hope Club level and the \$250 Bronze level of fundraising, or your “almost All-Stars” or “almost Grand Club” members. Personally call them to thank them for what they have already done, and encourage them to hit that next level of incentives! Remember to use mission as the motivator for continued fundraising!

Staff: Pick a day and time when you are going to hold this call blitz, then log into your dashboard at relayrewards.org and check and see when your current incentive certificates are going to be sent. Try to hold this call blitz before they are scheduled to be sent. If you are unable to do that, you can change the send date of your certificates to be sent after your blitz. For more or if you have questions, contact relayrewards@halo.com.

Average fundraising potential: Depends on the size of your event.

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, senior managers, senior directors

Suggested external partners: Halo Branded Solutions, Relay Event Leadership Team

Successfully implemented in: Eastern

Links to resources: [Call Blitz Rules and Details](#)
[Individual Incentive Flyer](#)
[Relay Rewards Program Info and Admin Details](#)



Other Initiatives

Name of Fundraiser: Letter writing or C-Note Campaign

Description: Draft a letter to send to American Cancer Society constituents with a “limited time offer” for unlimited memorials or honoraria for the rest of the year for a donation of \$100. The C-Note campaign is designed to make the donation easy and convenient for the giver. It generates a larger response if the letter is signed and backed by a well-known individual or celebrity in the community such as mayor, police chief, sports figure, or survivor.

Average fundraising potential: \$5,000-20,000

Suggested internal partners: Event support coordinator

Suggested external partners: Highly recognized individual within the community

Successfully implemented in: Mid-South, Florida

Links to resources: [Sample C-Note Letter](#)



Other Initiatives

Name of Fundraiser: Sponsor Save The Day Campaign!

Description: A sponsor is an already invested stakeholder in your community's event. If your event did not finish near goal, consider composing a letter to your sponsors letting them know where the event has finished and asking them to help "save the day" by working to close the fundraising gap. Possible asks include:

- A match on the dollars raised by their employees who participated in the event.
- If they are a company with a lot of foot traffic, would they be willing to sell, cupcakes, feet, suns or moons throughout the rest of the year to help close that fundraising gap?

Average fundraising potential: \$1,000-5,000+

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, hospital systems, corporate partners

Suggested external partners: Team Captains, Event Leadership Team, Relay participants, survivors, Relay event sponsors

Links to resources: [RFL Sponsor Post Event Thank-you Letter](#)
[RFL Sponsorship Cover Letter](#)



Other Initiatives

Name of Fundraiser: Cupcake Challenge

Description: Many local businesses and teams already utilize the Relay For Life die cut cupcakes, suns, moons, and feet as a tool for fundraising. But imagine the impact if local businesses were in competition during a set period of time to sell the most cupcakes?

Volunteers can be involved by recruiting their employers, family businesses, and others in their network to get involved. Reward the businesses for their participation by providing recognition on the Relay For Life website, social media, and in local newspapers. Find a prize that speaks to the local businesses. Perhaps its signage and recognition at the next year's Relay For Life event!

Consider approaching businesses with a high volume of daily foot traffic such as, pharmacies, gas stations, restaurants, banks, and movie theaters. When staff/volunteers deliver the materials prior to the challenge, consider delivering the paper cupcakes with a real one! Set a goal with your volunteers in terms of the number of businesses you want to be a part of the challenge! The more businesses the bigger the impact!

Average fundraising potential: \$500-3,000+

Suggested internal partners: Community engagement, hospital systems, corporate partners

Suggested external partners: National Corporate Team Program partners, Team Captains, Event Leadership Team members, survivors, and all local businesses

Successfully implemented in: Lakeshore

Links to resources: [Cupcake Goal Sheet](#)
[Cupcake Fundraising Flyer](#)

Die Cut Cupcakes are available for purchase through Society Mart