

**2nd Edition**

**New ideas in *italics.***

**FUND-RAISING IDEAS FOR ROTARY CLUBS AND DISTRICT 6840**

The items below are obviously not all inclusive. They are meant to be ones that don’t usually come to mind first.

Thanks to all the Rotary clubs, districts, and best practices communications that contributed to this list.

Things to Remember

* What We’re Talking about: You raise funds by charging an entrance fee, getting sponsorships, getting donations, selling merchandise or services, etc.
* Net: Don’t forget to take into consideration the expenses of the fund-raisers. Net revenue is the key.
* Criteria for Going Forward: Many fund-raisers have PR or membership benefits. Be sure to consider that when determining what you want to go forward with.
* Consider partnering with an Interact or Rotaract club.

Here are some ideas that you may or may not have heard of.

**Food**

1. **Go Without I.** A club gives up breakfast/lunch/dinner for a day that it would ordinarily have its meeting. The savings go towards a donation. This works best with a large club with a relatively expensive menu. It can be done once, once a month, once a quarter, etc. If a club doesn’t have a significant food cost, the members give up a meal outside of Rotary and donate the amount to the fund-raiser.

2. **Go Without II.** Provide all club members with a small money box or container of some sort, asking them to give up one 'treat' item per week and contribute whatever that treat would cost to the moneybox for a specific purpose. After 12 months, hand in the money boxes on some meaningful date. Open up the boxes and count the funds. Make the donation in some visible way. The whole process can become a media event.

3.  **Themes I: Cook-off.** Take the standard cook-off idea but make it special. For example, do a quarterly cook-off around some theme like Chili, Jambalaya, Gumbo, BBQ, etc. Have the last cook-off be an “anything goes.” Partner with a radio station or cable access to get additional visibility. Assemble a cookbook of the recipes to sell. Identify what project will be the recipient of the funds raised.

4. **Themes II:** **80 Sips around the World**. Hold a wine-tasting with wines from countries and other areas in the U.S. that your club has partnered with. Or do a “**Taste of …”** and do foods from those countries.

5. **Themes III: A Seven-Day Food Festival**. Have seven days of a food festival with each day being its own special theme. Partner with other clubs or organizations so that the burden is less.

6. **Themes IV: Signature Dishes.** Have a “Gourmet Night.”Restaurants share their signature dishes.  The club sells tickets for $40 and attendees can enjoy foods from a variety of restaurants. Incorporate a wine raffle, a spinning wheel for prizes, a silent auction, etc.

7. **Pancake Breakfast or Spaghetti Supper**. - $10 per plate and free for local public servants, or military, or …. This is relatively easy to do.

8. **Sell Drinks.** Partner with a local event and sell the drinks. You get a portion of the revenues and/or all the tips.

9. **Countdown.** E.g. the Crawfish Countdown in northern Mississippi. This can be used with many different kinds of special events. You buy a ticket to eat the food [Restaurants can take part]. Then, start drawing tickets of the people attending. The last ticket drawn wins something. As they get to the end, people try to buy tickets from those folks remaining. At the Crawfish Countdown 2,000 people take part at $50/ticket. The food itself is bought at a discount. A team of volunteers prepares it.

**Service**

1. **The Match Game.** Designate some portion of club fund-raising, e.g. 50/50, drawdown, happy dollars, fines, etc. to a pool that will match club donations for projects during the year. This allows club members to direct where the money will go. Engagement!

2. **Auction I/Service.** Interact/Rotaract/Rotary club members are auctioned off for a half-day of yard work, washing cars, professional services, etc.

*3.* ***Auction II/Service.*** *Collect items for an on-line auction. Partner with a local non-profit, e.g. a local educational foundation. All proceeds go to the non-profit. A good cause will increase the bids over a general fund-raising on-line auction.*

4. **Service above Self-a-thon**. Get donations for every hour of service a club member does.

5. **Celebrate The Rotary Foundation:** Celebrate the impact of The Rotary Foundation. Hold a birthday party or some other event where the price of admission is $26.50.

6**. Area of Focus Fundraiser:** Poll the club to see what Area of Focus they are most passionate about and plan an event. Bring in a subject-matter expert to speak at the event. Use Rotary’s [Event Planning Guide](https://www.dropbox.com/s/6fboqxfa9kb8i4m/Event%20Planning%20Guide.pdf?dl=0).

7. **Pennies for Polio** (contact Tom Green): <http://www.directory-online.com/Rotary/Accounts/6860/Pages/uPAGES/Pennies_for_polio.htm> . Organize club members to go to school district superintendent to get support to send letter home to parents to raise funds. Might work best with those classes that are studying Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Health.

8. **Paul Harris Society**. Give Paul Harris Society members DDF funds to do its own international project. This should generate more engagement of the Paul Harris Fellows. More may attend the Paul Harris Society event and perhaps attract more donors as well.

9. **Rummage Sale/Flee Market/Swap Meet/Garage Sale**. These can become major community events. Partner with a non-profit that has a suitable venue so that there won’t be a fee. Or partner with a for-profit that wants to work with you and/or the non-profit you support. Charge booth fees and get sponsors. All net revenues go to the non-profit.

10. **Used Book Sales**. Gather books from your members. Proceeds go to buying books for a local library.

*11.* ***Facebook.*** *Post your service project on Facebook and ask for contributions.*

*12.* ***Mardi Bras for a Cause.*** *The Rotary Club of Princeton, WV, has a party to raise funds and new undergarments for victims of domestic violence.*

 **Special Days**

1 **Renewal of Vows**. Have couples renew their vows in a mass gathering event with lunch/dinner. People pay to attend. Sell sponsorships. For a district fund-raiser, the venue is at a destination location. Reserve hotel space.

2. **Holiday Cards** denoting “A gift has been made on your behalf to” The Rotary Foundation, your club, etc.

3. ***Birthday.*** *Do a Facebook fund-raiser on your birthday.*

##### 4. *Calendar. The Rotary Club of Carpinteria Morning produces a yearly calendar. Twelve featured pictures are acquired each year by having a public photo contest. Many local businesses buy 100 or more of them each year and give them out for PR. The Club prints their business name on them etc. if they buy more than a 100.*

**Sports**

1. **The Last Night Marathon**. New Year’s Eve. 26 miles. Runners start at 9p; walkers at 5p. Finish by midnight for a special gift. Sponsorships and donation/mile. Proceeds go to a relevant charity. Major media possibilities.

2. **5K**. Do it in conjunction with local running club. The running club handles registration and logistics. The Rotary Club sells sponsor logos for the back of T-shirts.

3. **Sports Pool.** Create a pool that is a season long or for a specific period of time. Guess the spread between winners and losers for one or more of your favorite teams. The winner gets half the pool; the other half goes to the club, etc. If no one gets the exact spread with game one, the pool is carried over to the next game and the spread is now for two games. If no one guesses the exact spread ever, the final pool is divided among those who come closest.

4. **Walk/Bike the District**. Pick two locations that will require at least one overnight stay. Can be a major PR event.

5. **Miniature Golf Tournament**. Do it the same weekend as a major golfing event.

6. **The Polyethylene Triathlon**. Frisbee, Whiffle ball, and hula hoop.

7. **High School Basketball Tournament.** Participants come from schools with Interact Clubs. Or just a tournament from your District high schools. Monies come from sponsorships.

8. **Regatta**. Choose an appropriate body of water, e.g. Lake Pontchartrain near New Orleans. Funds come from sponsors and people paying for a boat trip around the venue. See the Rotary Club of Sydney Cove regatta.

**The Arts**

1. **Dance Contest.** Dinner, sponsors, tables, etc., perhaps like “Dancing with the Stars.”

2. **Art and Collectibles Auction.** These are always more fun if you have an auctioneer, a cash bar, and live bidding.

3. **Jazzy Jars**. (contact Wendy Taylor): <http://allevents.in/decatur/twilight-rotary-november-meeting-jazzy-jars-silent-auction/1133590356718892>. Local individuals and group pay $5/ canning jars and decorate them with the jazz theme. They are auctioned off at a ticketed event. This can also be done without a jazz theme with stools, chairs, Christmas trees, etc.

4. **Sweaters**. Have a contest for Ugly Sweaters. To enter you have to donate a sweater – not the ugly one - to a charity.

**Gambling**

1. **Reverse Raffle**. Every ticket in the raffle pool is drawn and the winner of the raffle is the individual whose ticket number corresponds with the final ticket drawn from the pool. After each ticket is pulled, players can buy tickets from other players with half the price going to the pool.

2. **Mall Roulette**. Have a roulette wheel at the local shopping mall made up of donations from Mall businesses to raise funds for Rotary.  It’s a promotion opportunity for new members as well as donations.

3. **Rotary Club Challenge.** Get a bunch of clubs to come together to play a game for The Rotary Foundation.  Indoor games such as Chess, Scrabble, etc. The 1st play is free. To have a rematch you pay $10 to challenge a winner to a rematch.  Bet on the outcome. Give trophies were given to winning clubs.  This could be done at the District Conference.

4. **Speakerless Meetings.** Use club meetings, when a speaker has dropped out with short notice, to play bingo.  Sell cards for $5 each.  Use the proceeds for winnings or have prizes on hand for such occasions.

5.  **Las Vegas Night**. Sell sponsorships, have silent auction items and door prizes.  The gamers can play Texas Hold'em, Craps, Roulette, Blackjack and bid on horse racing.

6. **Bingo**. Partner with a local restaurant and bar for Bingo on Monday nights. Half the proceeds go to Rotary and the other half to the winner. One club plays seven games starting at 6 p.m. Rotarians volunteer to sell bingo sheets for a $1.00 and will be calling numbers. Restaurant sells a lot more food and drinks on what was a mediocre night of business. Participants love the idea of the funds going towards charity. See if Rotarians can be the wait staff with tips going to the fund-raiser.

*7.* ***College Theme Car Raffle.*** *Get a car donated for a raffle. Get the car dealer or a car detailer to donate services to detail the car with the colors/logo/mascot/etc. of a popular college team and watch the ticket sales climb.*

**Other Rotary-related**

1. **Radio Take-over**. Develop a relationship with the management of a radio station. Find out how much it would cost to take over the station for 24 hours/12 hours, whatever. Find sponsors for the Rotary day. The net is your fund-raiser. Have a phone bank to take pledges for a specific cause or project.

2. **Rotary Pin.** Have the club secretary randomly determine at club gatherings who will be singled out to see if they are wearing their Rotary pin. If they are not wearing it, the person pays a fine.

3. **Rotary Tour**. Put together a Rotary tour somewhere in the world to highlight Rotary-ish things. Tour to Chicago. Tour to first cities: Chicago, Capetown, etc. or tour the International Convention area.

4. **Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner with the Official/*Celebrity***. Invite Government official(s) *celebrity/author* to be the focus of a fund-raiser. Get sponsors and charge for attendance. Talk about Rotary topics.

5. **Add-ons**. At any event you hold, ask people for a donation for The Rotary Foundation or some other charity you support. It can also be in addition to the cause you are having the event for. OR … ask for a donation of some item that is appropriate for some local charity or cause, e.g. one canned good for the local food coop, or a book for the local library, etc.

6. **Giving Circles**. Get a group of members to each contribute an equal amount to generate $1,000. One of the donors is chosen by chance to receive a Paul Harris Fellowship.

7. **Website Sponsorship**. Seek sponsors for the club website giving a discount to members’ companies.

8. **Direct Mail.** Do a direct mail solicitation to friends of club members for a service project. Have club members sign the letters personally.

9. **Celebrity Phone Greeting.** Get a local celebrity to agree to record a phone greeting for home phones for a donation.

**Miscellaneous**

1. **Cutest Dog Contest**. Plus other awards, e.g. best costume.

2. **Estate Sale.** With tact, discover what estate may be a candidate for liquidation. Approach the family. After the family has selected the belongings they want to remove, hold an estate sale. Split the proceeds 50/50 with the estate. See the RCO Moss Point, MS.

3. **Online sales.** Online sales may be the right idea for small clubs as well as large clubs. Some clubs use Rotary-themed items. Partner with other clubs. Some clubs work with groups or businesses already on-line and get a percentage of sales coming from referrals. It's very easy to promote a (Club supported) business and link, rather than having to receive, sort, and distribute stock. It's a matter of encouraging them to make it part of their routine.

4. **Percentage of Sales**. Work with a Rotarian’s business and ask for a percentage of sales related to a special Rotary day, e.g. Paul Harris birthday, the anniversary of the club’s founding, etc.

5. **Trivia Night**. A lot of fun and brings a community together.

6. **Pie in the Face.** The Rotary Club of Edgewater, Mississippi/USA, held a FUN raiser for The Rotary Foundation, and it was quick and easy. They raised just under $3,000 in a month with no effort.  It’s called “PIE IN THE FACE FOR THE FOUNDATION.”  Fifteen members of the club are given brightly colored gallon plastic jugs with their picture on one side and an explanation of the project on the other side.  Each person with a jug has a month to get others to donate to their jug.  The person who raises the most money will get the privilege to throw a pie on the face of any of the other 14 participants.  It is a race to see who can raise the most money so that they will be ensured not to get the pie and also be able to throw the pie in another member's face.  All the amounts are kept secret until the night of the big event, which is not at the regular meeting.  Beer and wine are served.  They start the event with a Rotary Foundation speaker.  Then, all the totals are read off.  They also raise money that night as members auction themselves off to the highest bidder so that the highest bidder will throw a pie in the face of the person being auctioned.  Great fun!