



Society Strategies

Federation of Genealogical Societies

P.O. Box 200940 Austin TX 78720-0940

Series Set I Number 4

Update 2002

Set I Strategies for Societies Projects for Fundraising

by Sandra Hargreaves Luebking

Supplemental Page

This strategy paper, written some years ago, is an FGS *Classic* that contains ideas and strategies still relevant today in society management.

The paper contains ideas for fund-raising activities for societies, presenting the different experiences of several genealogical organizations.

The information on page 4 which directs the interested person on how to obtain copies of this paper is incorrect. The FGS office no longer reprints the SSS papers, and has phased out paper copies of the SSS papers altogether.

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FEDERATION OF GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES

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The FGS *Society Strategies Series* consists of papers which offer suggestions and instructions for innovative and effective management for genealogical and historical societies. The Federation holds a copyright to this material. A list of sets and ordering information appears at the end.

Set I Strategies for Societies Projects for Fundraising by Sandra Hargreaves Luebking

INTRODUCTION

Few organizations can meet their service and growth goals through membership fees and interest accrued from savings. Fund-raising is a way of life for most societies yet good projects are hard to find. The best projects are those proven successful by other societies.

Society fund-raising ideas appear regularly in the *FGS FORUM*, the quarterly newsletter of the Federation of Genealogical Societies. Here are some of the great ideas already published in or submitted to the Society Spotlight column. (The citations are to the past issues of *FORUM*.)

“Adopt-a”... Projects (Boosters)

“Adopt-an-Oregon-County for the 1920 census” helped fund the purchase of microfilm reels most desired by members of the Genealogical Forum of Oregon, Inc. The society provides a pull-out page with their newsletter, *The Forum Insider*, whereby a member becomes a foster parent to a roll of population or Soundex film. Society members make their selection and return the page with the cost of the film. [4:1 (Spring 1992) p. 14.]



“Adopt-a-Book” project began in 1987 in Dallas, Texas, after cuts in city funding left little or no money in the budget to bind soft-bound books. Softbound books and periodicals cannot be placed on the open shelves in the Genealogy Section for patrons to use. As a project of the Dallas Genealogical Society, members contribute to bind a book of their choice. Donations to “Adopt-A-Book” can honor volunteers, such as was done for Adrienne Bird Jamieson, in whose name DGS contributed \$1,000. [3:4 (Winter 1991) p. 16.]

Community Events

Other innovative fund-raising projects take advantage of community events. The Charlotte County Genealogical Society, Port Charlotte, Florida, enters the county museum's Symphony of Trees event in November wherein theme Christmas trees are decorated by organizations and put on display at the museum. Later, the trees are sold to the highest bidder. The tree-designer group makes a nice profit if their theme and artistic talent appeals to the bidders. Those who bid for the

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trees include retail or service—industries, such as banks, travel agencies and restaurants. Specialty shops for brides, babies, sports gear, and medical equipment also participate in the bidding. Even owners of professional buildings, offices and hospitals actively take part in this annual event. Some of the themes are: state flags, costumed dolls, birds, sports and sport figures, Grandma's attic, toys from the past, transportation through the ages (eg. canoes, buggies, Conestoga wagons, ships, trains, etc.) and military history. If your community does not have such a program, you could develop one and invite other area groups to participate. [3:3 (Fall 1991) p. 20.]



The “World's Largest Ever” Garage Sale, sponsored by a group of car dealers and a newspaper want ads section, is the setting for a sale booth of the Skagit Valley Genealogical Society, Conway, Washington. Space is rented to non-profit groups and all earnings stay with that group. The event has outgrown garages and is now held at the Skagit County Fairgrounds. In 1991 the Society realized over \$530 for its day's selling of donated items and homemade caramel apples. This idea could be “sold” to any large community booster group. The event sponsors enjoy a lot of community exposure.



Raffles and Lotteries

Fund-raising is never dull at the Orange County California Genealogical Society. They

hold a Salt Lake City Lottery at their Spring Seminar, awarding a trip with embellishments to that genealogical mecca for researchers. Supporters (members and non-members) purchase raffle tickets at \$1 each (discounts for quantity purchases), for the grand prize of a week in Salt Lake City, train transportation, hotel room (double occupancy), banquet with a prominent speaker, classes prior to trip and professional help in the Family History Library. To learn more about how this lottery works, write OCCGS, P.O. Box 1587, Orange, CA 92856-0587. [3:1 (Spring 1991) p. 21.]



A train and a child's profile are the symbols of the Orphan Train Heritage Society of America, Inc. A quilt depicting these symbols, designed and created by OTHSA director Iva Flo Jackson Hill, was raffled as part of OTHSA's 1990 fund raiser. A ticket holder did not need to be present to win. OTHSA, 4912 Trout Farm Road, Springdale, AR 72764. [2:2 (Summer 1990) p. 8.]



More than twenty volunteers worked for two years to complete the Washington Centennial Quilt, which joined squares depicting nine historical houses in the towns of Colfax, Walla Walla, Dayton, Medical Lake, Chewelah, Davenport, and Latah. The quilt was displayed at various fairs and club meetings to generate interest. This project earned over \$1,450 for the Eastern Washington Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 1826, Spokane, WA 99210-1826. [2:2 (Summer 1990) p. 8.]

Sales of Products

The Genealogical Society of Hispanic America raised money by selling Hispanic Cookbooks. The cookbook included many Southwestern recipes submitted by members

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and their families. Project coordinator was Felix Zamora. [3:3 (Fall 1991) p. 20.]

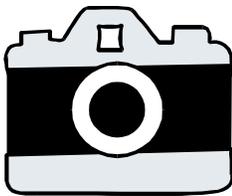


The annual Fall Luncheon and Book sale of the California Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 77105, San Francisco, CA 94107-0105, sells duplicate books from the society's collection or out-of-field volumes donated specifically for the fund-raising event. Almost 200 books were auctioned at the 1990 sale, some rare, some published more recently, but all in excellent condition. [3:1 (Spring 1991) p. 21.]



Calendars are a successful sales item for the Sioux Valley Genealogical Society of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Each year members prepare a calendar with pictures and daily historical tidbits from events occurring one hundred years earlier in their local area. An entry from 16 June 1889, shows that "William McKeesick was appointed Indian agent at Sisseton Agency." The calendar, which includes an early map of the southern half of Dakota Territory, sells for \$5. Quantity discounts encourage other area groups to purchase large numbers for their own fund-raising sales. [2:4 (Winter 1990) p. 20.]

Service Projects that Raise Money



A Photo Session, promoted by the Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County, California, lets members have photos copied for \$2.50 each. The society says the service has "saved 5,667 precious photographic memories for posterity." The profits help subsidize society workshops, seminars and the organization's newsletter. The rules are simple: an appointment is made two days in advance of Photo Session. On the day of the session, members wait while their pictures are copied

and returned to them unharmed, then leave a SASE for the mailing of the 35mm black and white negative. The Society's address is P.O. Box A, Modesto, CA 95352-3660. [3:2 (Summer 1991) p. 22.]



A different slant to fund-raising but still related to photographs is the transferring of recent or ancestral pictures to a china mug. This unique item is available for \$11.95 plus tax. "Put A Mug on a Mug" is the cry heard at the Southern California Jamboree when the Conejo Valley Genealogical Society of Thousand Oaks, California, hosts this unusual opportunity. CVGS even offers a special pedigree chart that can be filled out and transferred to the mug. The mugs make great gifts, great memory savers, and a great fund-raiser. [3:2 (Summer 1991) p. 22.]

Auctions

The Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society conducts five annual consignment auctions or fairs which feature out-of-print and used books. A catalogue describing the sale items is available to potential buyers who then mail bids on items they desire. Auction information is available from the society, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602-1499.

Research Help

The Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society offers assistance and direction for their members' problems. Inquiries received by the society must include (1) a self-addressed stamped envelope; (2) a \$3 check made to the society; (3) a family group sheet for the immigrant ancestor and/or a multi-generation chart; and (4) a one-page write-up with questions limited to one ancestor. The submitter is also asked to indicate sources already investigated.

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Information that is received is profiled against a group of members who do research in the same geographical area. Members who come closest to the request profile then give the submitter information or suggestions for problem solving.

This project is described in *Der Kurier*, Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society [9:4 (June 1991) p. 67.] An increase in charge, with fund raising in mind, could significantly increase society coffers.

Members Donate

Members of the Austin Genealogical Society bring genealogical books, maps, periodicals, and miscellaneous items to the society for selling at monthly meetings. Some items are marked with a price. To purchase other items, the buyer contributes whatever amount she or he wishes to donate to the society. This opportunity is offered during the social hour and most purchases are made before the meeting starts. The exchange not only generates revenue, it gets folks to the meetings on-time-even early! The funds

earned go to the Texas State Library in Austin to purchase genealogical books. The contact address for AGS is P.O. Box 1507, Austin, TX 78767-1507.

And a Fund-Saving Idea



In order to save postage costs, the South Suburban Genealogical and Historical Society of South Holland, Illinois distributes quarterlies to members at their meetings. With their quarterly, members are given their mailing label, which is removed from those prepared for the current issue's mailing. With an average of 50 people attending meetings this reduces postage and speeds delivery of some copies.

A Reminder

If your society has developed a successful fund-raising idea, be sure to submit it to the FGS FORUM Editorial Office, P.O. Box 271, Western Springs, IL 60558-0271, Attention: Spotlight.

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