

# FOS Community Event Toolkit



## What is a Community Fundraising Event?

A community fundraising event is conducted by an individual or organization within the community that benefits Friends of Strays.

## Who can conduct a fundraiser on behalf of Friends of Strays?

Individuals or organizations can host independent fundraising events to support Friends of Strays. These can be private foundations, schools, former adopters, families, and community organizations. In fact, anyone in the community can host an event to support any number of projects or areas of need for Friends of Strays.

## How will this toolkit help me?

This toolkit is a guide to make planning and executing your fundraising event as easy as possible. The guide will help you create a timeline, plan a budget, organize your event and even help with suggestions for getting publicity for your event. You can use as little or as much information as you need for your event. It's all up to you.

## Where in Friends of Strays will my donation go?

There are many projects and special funds that may be designated to receive the proceeds of your fundraising event. If you have a passion for a specific area, we can help you direct your donation there. A few examples of where your donation can help are:

-  Jean Bomonti Spay and Neuter Fund for Dogs
-  Jean Bomonti Spay and Neuter Fund for Cats
-  Adoption fee sponsorship
-  Save a Life Fund
-  Emergency Medical Fund
-  Medical Device Fund
-  Building Fund
-  Animal Care Fund

*If you don't see your specific area of interest here, just ask!*

## How we can help

We are grateful for the support of the community in helping Friends of Strays' dedication to the care and adoption of homeless pets in Pinellas County. Below are ways in which Friends of Strays can help you with your fundraiser:

-  Offer advice and expertise on event planning and fundraising
-  Acknowledge direct contributions to Friends of Strays
-  Provide and approve use of our logo as appropriate
-  Assist in directing contributions toward areas of special interest or special need within Friends of Strays
-  Provide letter of authorization to be used to validate the authenticity of the event and its organizers
-  Coordinate check presentations, if appropriate

## While we are here to help you be successful, there are some services we cannot provide:

-  Friends of Strays tax exempt number or certificate
-  Insurance or liability coverage
-  Funding or reimbursement of your expenses
-  Mailing list of donors and/or vendors
-  Friends of Strays letterhead
-  Publicity (newspaper, television, radio, etc.)
-  Guaranteed attendance by Friends of Strays staff
-  Friends of Strays branded give away items
-  Friends of Strays posters or banners

## Let the Planning Begin!

### Below are ten steps to help get your fundraising event off the ground:

- 1. Form a planning committee** – Bring together a group of people who share an interest or passion in raising money to support local animal shelters like Friends of Strays. This will increase the success of your event.
- 2. Brainstorm** – Brainstorm fundraising ideas with your committee.
- 3. Choose the “right” event** – The type of event you choose should fit the size, interests, talents, goals, and time availability of your planning committee.
- 4. Submit Event Proposal to Friends of Strays** – Print and complete the attached event proposal document and submit via email to Claire Wray (claire@friendsofstrays.com).

5. **Identify your audience** – Consider who is most likely to attend and support the type of event you have selected.
6. **Develop a budget** – Identify expenses and possible sources of funds, including in-kind products and services you may be able to get donated. This will help you keep your costs down, which is something everyone will appreciate.
7. **Develop an event timeline** – A timeline is important in planning a strategy for your event.
8. **Schedule your event** – Select a date and time that is appropriate and convenient for your audience.
9. **Collect the funds** – We ask that all proceeds be forwarded to Friends of Strays within 30 days following the conclusion of your event.
10. **Say thank you!** – Sending thank you letters, notes, or emails to everyone who participated in or supported your event shows your appreciation and reinforces their goodwill about supporting Friends of Strays.

## Fundraising Ideas

Below are some ideas for fundraising events that you might consider. Think of something you enjoy doing and add a fundraising component to that. This way you are not starting from scratch and will be doing something you love!

-  Bake sale
-  Coin drive
-  Garage sale
-  Golf outing
-  Holiday-themed party
-  Luncheon
-  Restaurant or retail promotion
-  School or church fundraiser
-  Walk-a-thon, dance-a-thon, etc.
-  Raffle
-  Ice cream social
-  Car wash
-  Soccer, volleyball, softball, basketball, bowling tournament

## Publicizing your Fundraiser

This section will give you tips and tools to help maximize the publicity of your event through the media.

Note: All media materials must be reviewed and approved by Friends of Strays before distribution.

### Create a timeline to maximize publicity

A timeline is important in planning the publicity strategy for your event. Keep this timeline in mind as you put together your publicity plan:

-  **Three to four months before the event:** Identify your target audience based on demographics, interests, and locations, and develop a target media list (newspapers, radio stations, social media, etc.)
-  **Four to six weeks before the event:** Distribute media materials (i.e. media alert, Facebook posts, etc.)
-  **Two weeks before the event:** Make follow up calls and send emails to media who received the information.
-  **One to two days before the event:** Email a media alert with the basic information about the event (see following template) to the tv news assignment desks and newspaper photo desks.

## Boilerplate Language

Please use the following language in media alerts or outreach materials to help educate the public about Friends of Strays:

Friends of Strays is a non-profit organization founded in 1978 in St. Petersburg, FL, dedicated to the care and adoption of homeless pets.

The organization is funded by individual contributions, wills, bequests and business partner programs. Friends of Strays provides services to the neediest section of our pet population, the homeless animals of Pinellas County. These services include sterilization, medical treatment, socialization and daily care until each animal is adopted.

The primary goal of Friends of Strays is to stop the reproduction of homeless cats and dogs who are abandoned and left to roam, unable to care for themselves. We are active in programs which educate the public about humane treatment and care of animals.

## Make your fundraiser a lasting memory

Photos are a great way to capture your event, whether to share with family and friends, or with the media. Below are some tips on how to capture those special moments at your fundraiser:

-  Try to take candid shots that capture various aspects of your fundraiser
-  Write out a targeted shot list in advance to make sure you get photos of everything and everyone you want
-  Try to include kids and pets in the photos if appropriate
-  Capture images of your corporate sponsors if applicable
-  Share photos with Friends of Strays via Facebook or Instagram
-  Don't try to include too many people in one photo. Generally, three or four people in a photo makes the best publicity shot
-  Don't forget to take a few close up shots

## It's a Wrap!

The proceeds from your fundraising event will have a lasting impact on the cats and dogs we care for every day in our shelter. We are grateful for your support! After your fundraiser, all you need to do is drop off or send your donations/proceeds to us at:

Friends of Strays, Inc.  
2911 47th Avenue North  
St. Petersburg, FL 33714  
727-522-6566

### Remember:

-  Checks should be made payable to Friends of Strays, Inc. Please include a note explaining your fundraiser and include pertinent contact information for the organizers
-  Send us photos of your event
-  Start planning your next fundraiser! Think of what went well and what could be improved for your next event and gather your planning committee for another brainstorming session
-  Attend other fundraisers and events to stay active and engaged with Friends of Strays. Like us on Facebook for upcoming events and additional ways to support our work

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Can I use Friends of Strays' Tax Exempt Number for purchasing items for our event?**

Because Friends of Strays is not hosting your event, it is considered to be a third-party event. For this reason, you will not be able to use the Friends of Strays 501(c)3 charitable classification, federal tax ID number, or tax-exempt certificate.

### **Can you help me get a permit for my event?**

The organization and execution of the event is the responsibility of the event organizer. The event organizer must also obtain any necessary permits or licenses.

### **Who will provide insurance for my event?**

Friends of Strays cannot provide insurance for third-party events. The organizer is responsible for obtaining insurance for the event.

### **What can I give people who made donations for tax purposes?**

Third-party event organizers cannot use Friends of Strays' tax exempt status in conjunction with the event. However, Friends of Strays can provide an authorization letter confirming the organizer's intent to raise funds for Friends of Strays.

### **Will each of my donors get a receipt?**

Friends of Strays will not issue receipts for donors or sponsors who make payments directly to your third-party event. If your donor requests a receipt, please be sure the check is made out to Friends of Strays with a notation referring to your event before forwarding it to us.

### **Can someone from Friends of Strays attend or help me plan our event?**

Because of the large number of events and the limited number of Friends of Strays staff, staff members are generally not able to attend and plan third-party events. We are happy to provide guidance for your event, but we do not have the capacity to handle the organizational and administrative tasks associated with third-party events.

### **Can we have a check presentation at Friends of Strays?**

Yes! We can arrange for a check presentation at Friends of Strays. Please contact us to make arrangements.

### **How long does it take to get my fundraising event approved?**

Proposals will be reviewed/approved within seven business days of receipt.

## Templates

To help simplify your event, we have provided templates suitable for any fundraiser.



Budget Template



Media Alert Template



Thank You Letter Template