



## High Plains Division

# *Team Captain Guidebook*

*2012*



## ***What is Relay For Life?***

Relay For Life is a fun-filled overnight event designed to celebrate survivorship and raise money for research and programs of your American Cancer Society. During the event, teams of people gather at schools, fairgrounds, or parks and take turns walking or running laps. Each team tries to keep at least one team member on the track at all times. Because cancer **never** sleeps, Relay is an overnight dusk to dawn event that goes from 12 – 24 hours in length.

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life represents the hope that those lost to cancer will never be forgotten, that those who face cancer will be supported, and that one day cancer will be eliminated. At Relay, every person in the community has a chance to celebrate, remember, and fight back. Every person who participates joins others around the globe as part of this worldwide movement to end cancer.

No matter why you take part in Relay, however, one thing is clear: with every step you take, you are helping the American Cancer Society save lives. With your help, we aren't just fighting one type of cancer – we're fighting for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. Each person who shares the Relay experience can take pride in knowing that they are working to create a world where this disease will no longer threaten the lives of our loved ones or claim another year of anyone's life.

## ***Team Captain Job Description***

***A Team Captain is a position designed to support the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life by leading a team to participate and raise funds.*** Team Captains are liaisons between the event committee and their team, leading the team by representing them at monthly update meetings. They coach and motivate their team to success. Team Captains organize and delegate the team's fundraising activities throughout the year – as well as their participation in activities throughout the night of the event.



## ***Team Captain's Checklist***

- Contact an American Cancer Society representative to get the local Relay For Life event information (when and where the event is to be held).
- Get your team together. Talk to everyone you know—in your company, congregation, neighborhood, clubs, school, and family—about Relay. This is how you'll form your team. Have a Co-Captain to help out with your team.
- Hold a team meeting to establish a team name and theme. Give purpose to your team – dedicate your efforts to someone who has been touched by cancer, for example. Continue to hold team meetings to keep your team informed and motivated.
- Get yourself registered and set up your Team page online.
- Turn in your team registration fee. Team members can pitch in to cover it, or you can ask a company to sponsor you. Ask your dentist, doctor, insurance agent, attorney. Be creative!
- Get each team member registered online as soon as possible. Encourage team members to customize their personal fundraising pages online.
- Have your team members set a goal for how much money they can raise. Remember to set a team goal and encourage each member to set an individual fundraising goal. To earn a t-shirt each team member is encouraged to raise a minimum of \$100. Follow up to see how they are doing – celebrate their progress! Be a leader and help your team reach its goal. Challenge other teams.
- Share fundraising tips and encouragement. Begin raising money as an individual or as a team; visit [RelayForLife.org](http://RelayForLife.org) - Relay Library for fundraising ideas.
- Attend team captain meetings.
- Stay in touch with your team. Plan your campsite set-up – include onsite fundraising ideas, decorations, etc. Let them know what to expect when they come to Relay For Life. Give everyone a job to do and encourage them to stay for the entire event.
- Collect all donations from your team members and turn in periodically (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> of each month)

**Tip: Tailor this Team Captain Checklist to help keep your team informed of contact information, upcoming events and meetings.**



Team Captain  
Checklist template



## **Characteristics of Successful Fundraising Teams**

### **Successful fundraising teams tend to have the following characteristics:**

1. They set ambitious, yet attainable goals.
2. Most use a combined approach of individual and team fundraising.
3. They do year-round fundraising.
4. They maximize on-site fundraising

**Tip: Use this Team Fundraising Action Plan sheet to help set an ambitious, yet attainable goal.**



Team Fundraising  
Action Plan

### **INDIVIDUAL FUNDRAISING:**

The most successful type of individual fundraising method is writing personal letters. Another option is on-line fundraising. This allows the team member to reach those people they know and to tell their story.

**Best Practice for letter writing or on-line campaign:** The most successful individual fundraisers know to include the following in their personalized fundraising letters:

- Who to send to? (Friends, family, co-workers, neighbors, fraternity/ sorority members etc)
- What to put in the letter? (Your story, your goal, the date of the Relay, the date you need their money, a self-addressed stamped envelope, and a thank you)
- When to send? (As soon as possible)
- Follow up: (let them know how much you raised, how the Relay did, tell them the ACS website and 800 number, and give thanks)
- On-line fundraising is a simple, effective way to reach your contacts, using minor amounts of time, no stamps, and no envelopes. On-line fundraising has proven to be very successful for any size team. Your Relay Event will have a website that will provide the tools to make your on-line fundraising easy and fun.

Again, letter writing or online fundraising is the best way to individually fund-raise. You can ask for support from all over the world. For those people who hate to ask for money, this reduces the pressure.

## **TEAM FUNDRAISING:**

Top teams utilize varied techniques to raise their funds. The key ingredients to their success relate less to the specific techniques they use and more to the way they execute them. Teams can make virtually any type of fundraiser successful by understanding their target audience and identifying something of interest to them, by publicizing the fundraiser heavily (the more people aware, the greater chance for success) and by undertaking the fundraiser with great enthusiasm – it is contagious!

Going back to number one on the list you need to have something of interest that your community will want to be involved in. If you know your audience would not be interested in a Bowl-a-thon, don't do it. Gear your fundraiser to match local interests. At the same time don't be afraid to try something new. Instead of a car wash, consider a dog wash. Instead of a bake sale, maybe do a mystery dinner. Other items to consider:

- What methods do you use to publicize your events? (Newspapers, radio, newsletters, email, team captains meetings, your local ACS office)
- **BE ENTHUSIASTIC!** The first three letters in fundraising spell what? **FUN!** If it is not fun, no one will be interested.
- What are some of your team fundraising best practices? Garage Sales, Food/Bake Sales, Auctions, Dollars for Casual Fridays.

Remember...it is not so much the type of fundraiser as the techniques used to execute it that will make your fundraising efforts successful.

In order to allow teams to be more creative and have more time to work towards their goal, it is recommended that fundraising be done year around. It helps to relieve some of the stress from a team during the final weeks of preparation for Relay. **The most successful teams fundraise all year long.**

Another very important way to raise more money for your team is **On-Site Fundraising**. This is an opportunity to promote team member participation, to keep team members involved at the event and to make it more FUN for your team. **The most successful teams conduct on-site fundraising.** Things to consider:

- What kinds of onsite fundraising have you done?
- What other types have you seen that were successful?
- What must you do to plan for on-site fundraising?



## **American Cancer Society Team Fundraising Guidelines**

When conducting a fundraising event for the American Cancer Society, please adhere to the following guidelines. Relay Team Captains should share this information with all team members.

- **Before You Start:** The American Cancer Society requests that teams carefully consider their fundraising efforts. During the planning of any event ask these questions:
  1. Is it ethical? Is it offensive to *any* group?
  2. What is the financial potential versus cost? Ideally, expenses should exceed no more than 25% of total donations raised.
  3. Do we have unanswered questions or any doubt? (Call your local American Cancer Society office)
  4. What is the risk to participants, if any? All activities should be free of potential injury to the participant.
  
- **Expense Planning:** Any expenses incurred during a team fundraiser are the sole responsibility of the team. If the team's activity will not be incurring any expenses, no issue...all checks made payable to and receipted by ACS. However, if expenses will be incurred two items kick in: (1) checks would need to be made payable to the team or person conducting the activity (as such, they are not a tax deductible donation), and (2) the team would need to open a bank account into which to deposit the checks and from which expenses can be paid. When holding a fundraiser where expenses are incurred, teams should ask the following questions before moving forward:
  1. How will expenses be paid? Where will funds for these expenses come from?
  2. Is the revenue worth the effort of volunteer time?
  
- **Handling of "American Cancer Society" Cash and Checks:** All cash and checks made payable to the American Cancer Society or Relay For Life must be turned in to your Accounting Chair for deposit.
  1. 100% of net proceeds must go to the ACS – funds cannot be shared with another organization.
  2. The not-for-profit, tax exempt status of the American Cancer Society may *not* be used by the team/individual in purchasing items or materials with which to conduct the activity.
  
- **Use of Logo:** Log into Brand Wizard to download Relay For Life and other ACS logos <http://www.acsbrand.org/acs/scripts/login/login.aspx>
- If the American Cancer Society or Relay For Life name and/or logo are used on any promotional materials (print or broadcast), the team/sponsor must contact the local American Cancer Society staff partner for approval of the use of the logo. Appropriate wording for any promotion is as follows: "Activity conducted by <team/individual>, net proceeds from (event name) will benefit the American Cancer Society via our Relay For Life." The American Cancer Society name and logo may not be used in any way that may appear as a trademark or endorsement of the sponsor's product(s).

- **Sales on behalf of American Cancer Society:** Laws governing sales tax and nonprofit status prohibit our Relay teams from product sales (i.e., pins, bears, pens). The selling of such items by teams, without the collection of sales tax, threatens the Society's nonprofit standing and creates a sales tax liability for the team/individual conducting the sales. It is acceptable to provide the donor with a token gift in exchange for their contribution. Example of how to word donation request - "Make a donation to the American Cancer Society & receive a token gift as a thank you." Wording should never contain the following: *buy, sell or purchase, etc.*
- **Acknowledgement Letters for Donated Items:** The American Cancer Society will gladly provide acknowledgement letters for items donated to the event. Team members are responsible for forwarding the donor's name, address, phone number, and the detailed description of the gift to the American Cancer Society within two weeks after your event. The acknowledgement letter from the American Cancer Society will state the description, not the value, of the donated item.
- **Small Games of Chance/Raffles:** Because laws vary from state to state, contact your local American Cancer Society staff partner prior to conducting any game of chance or raffle at your events. We ask all Relay teams to adhere to the state and local laws when planning fundraisers. Cash prizes should not be awarded under any circumstances. Any prize with a retail value of \$600 or more is considered by the IRS to be taxable income for the winner. As such, the American Cancer Society is mandated to file required paperwork with the IRS. Should a RFL team award a prize of this value, it is imperative that the team contact their staff partner *in advance* of offering the raffle and awarding the prize to ensure all legal requirements are fulfilled. Texas Hold 'em is not permitted as a fundraising event.
  - *All prizes should be donated.*
- **Insurance Liability:** The American Cancer Society cannot be responsible for insurance coverage liability or liquor licensing for any outside sponsored event. This will be the responsibility of the team/sponsor. Teams conducting fundraisers requiring insurance should obtain coverage from a local insurance agent/office-~~to~~. It is important that the team have this paperwork on file at the activity.

*The American Cancer Society greatly appreciates the hard work and effort put into raising dollars for our mission. We appreciate your understanding that adherence to all local, state and federal laws as well as protecting the name and reputation of the American Cancer Society are necessary to ensuring that our life-saving work continues.*



## *Relay For Life Darn Good Ideas*

### **On-site Fundraising** (Darn Good Ideas)

- Massage therapist can bring their table and do massages for donations.
- Fortune teller
- Food sales
- Donations for pallets of flowers or hanging baskets.
- Lap counting bracelets/necklaces: Have beads in a bucket and every time someone walks a lap they choose a bead from the bucket to add to their string. Charge \$5.00 for the string.
- Tie-dye shirts on site
- Wax hand dipping
- “Team Spring Chicks” – Take plastic eggs and place candy and a number in each. Sell 2 eggs for \$1. Egg numbers are pulled from a jar throughout the night for gift certificates.
- Messages to Heaven – Write a message on a piece of paper with the name of a person who has passed away. Put it on a balloon and release it.
- Sell hand warmers at cold events.
- Mario Kart Tournament – Make cardboard cars to sit in while playing.
- Purple Potty – Paint a toilet purple and fill it with pennies. People pay to guess the number of pennies for a prize. Put the toilet on wheels so it can be taken around the track.
- Relay Yard Sale
- Pirate Ship and Booty – Fill treasure chests with all sorts of things. The team can dress as pirates and decorate the site as a pirate ship.
- Sunscreen Massage – Get a lotion rubdown from the person of your choice.
- Banana Split Gutter – Get a big gutter and fill with ice cream and different toppings. Spoons cost \$2.00.

## **Individual Fundraising** (Darn Good Ideas)

- Have baked goods available every morning for a month.
- Put a personal letter in Holiday cards.
- Ask one person everyday for a \$5.00 or \$10.00 donation.
- Send letters/e-mails to co-workers and family members with why you Relay and follow up with a phone call.
- Sell t-shirts with different sayings for each month but only sell them for that month. Encourage people to wear them on special days.
- Place money jars around town.
- Have a Shush-a-thon – Ask people to pledge \$1.00 a minute to keep you quiet.
- Do the Seven Second Smile – When you speak to someone you have to smile every seven seconds.
- Put personalized messages on MySpace, Facebook and Twitter.
- Offer to do laundry/other jobs for a donation.
- Sell purple ribbons for a dollar.
- Construct a quilt out of old Relay t-shirts and raffle.
- Have Cap for a Cure Day – Students pay \$2.00 to wear a hat at school.
- Fill a 16.9oz bottle with dimes.
- Go Christmas caroling.
- Buy candy after a holiday and resale it at a higher price for each piece.
- Send luminaria forms out with Christmas cards.
- Send a letter on behalf of a pet with cancer.
- Sell homemade jewelry
- Provide dog day care
- In high school, get kids to donate \$1.00 for 15 minutes extra lunch during the year.

## **Team Fundraising** (Darn Good Ideas)

- Get a cigarette machine donated and charge \$1.00 per hit with a mallet/hammer.
- Make breast cancer awareness cakes and sell them at team captain meetings and at Relay.
- Paint the town purple – Get businesses to let you decorate their windows and put collection jars inside.
- Have a spaghetti dinner.
- Sponsor a golf tournament.
- Have a Jail and Bail on campus or at work. Collect money to have certain teachers/co-workers arrested.
- Sponsor a Dance, Dance, Revolution competition.
- Auction off various services.
- Sell gift baskets with items donated by local businesses.
- Have coin wars.
- Ask to have Relay night at a local restaurant.
- Sponsor sports tournaments.
- Have a Battle of the Bands
- Sponsor a Sock Hop
- Secure a donation from the local professional sports team to clean the stadium after a game.
- Have a Trivia Night – Teams pay to participate.
- Sponsor an Art Auction.
- Sell Valentine Grams – Bag of candy with a personalized note
- Stand-up Against Cancer – Have an annual stand-up comedy show.
- Make a “Wishing Well” – Ask someone to stand in a baby pool, posed like a statue. People can throw change into the pool
- Give Salsa dancing lessons.
- Offer “Lucky Leprechauns” – Ask people to dress like leprechauns the week of St. Patrick’s Day. For a donation they can get a photo with the leprechaun.
- Put up a sheet and have people pay \$5.00 to write cancer messages on the sheet and have the messages read every hour throughout the night.
- Have a Great American Smoke-Out Grill Out – Hand out info on GASO and Quit Line and sell hot dogs.
- Prepare a “Tree of Life” and sell ornaments with names of cancer patients on them. Conduct a lighting ceremony.

*NOTE: when holding fundraisers please take into consideration local and state laws.*



### ***Other Team Captain Resources***

In addition to the information contained in this guidebook, you can get continuous assistance from your **Relay For Life planning committee – most likely your Team Trainer or Team Development Chair** – and from your **Relay For Life staff partner** who works for the American Cancer Society.

In addition to these people, you can also visit [www.relayforlife.org/highplains](http://www.relayforlife.org/highplains) at any point in time to access the Team Captain e-training module, fundraising ideas, mission moments and a bunch of other helpful information, too. You can also access message boards to swap ideas with other Team Captains.

**Good luck to you and your Relay Team. Thank you for your commitment to creating a world with less cancer and more birthdays.**