

How to Select a Charity to Support

Why Associate With a Local Charity and Hold a Fly-in for Charity?

The best answer to the question is, "Because it is the right thing to do."

Organizations that associate with a charity are viewed positively as a community partner by the general public, media, and especially local business and government officials. In fact, there are numerous examples of local flying clubs that have lost their flying field only to have another field provided by local government officials, business leaders, or private citizens as a result of the community goodwill the club had created throughout the years.

Supporting a local charity is a great moral booster for your club, while creating teamwork and camaraderie among club members and their families. Through your charity work, your club will be presented with many new opportunities. You may be able to:

Create goodwill among members of the community. Increase positive awareness for your club and demonstrate RC flying. Create local networking opportunities. Allow for media coverage opportunities. Obtain product and food donations to raffle or sell. Increase your club membership.

Working with a charity is beneficial for clubs

In 2008 the AMA conducted a survey to learn more about club fundraising activity.

Of more than 2,400 clubs, 679 clubs responded to our charity survey request.

Of the 679 clubs responding, 191 are associated with a charity and have a fundraising event.

Of the 191 clubs with a charity fundraising event, the combined monetary and product donations amounted to \$409,420 in 2008. The largest one-day fundraising amount raised was \$27,000.

How to Select a Charity

The first place to look for a charity to support is within your club and the membership. There may be members who already have an association with a charity. This could be either through existing charity involvement such as being a board member or volunteer or a necessity such as a family member or friend with a medical illness or disability.

If you need to look beyond your club members for a charity, a good source is the Web site: www.charity-charities.org. Charities are listed by state, city, and town. Before deciding on a specific charity to support, the club members must be in agreement and must be comfortable with the charity, its mission, and values. It's important to get your charity involved with your club early so it can help with promotion, provide volunteer event staffing, and more.

The following are example listings of charity categories and actual charities supported by AMA clubs.

Examples of Charity Categories:

Armed Services
Arts
Children and Youth
Community Care and Services
Cultural
Education
Family Welfare
Health and Medical
Humane Society and Animal Organizations
Humanities
Law Enforcement
Organizations for People with Disabilities
Religious Organizations
Social Welfare

Example of Actual Charities Supported by Clubs:

Aviation Education Awareness Program
Civil Air Patrol
Children of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund
Church Organizations
Big Brother, Big Sisters
Humane Society
Domestic Violence
Boy and Girls Scouts
Food Pantry
Foster/Adoption Families
Goodwill Industries
Local Emergency Response
Make A Wish Foundation
Mayor's Scholarship Fund
Medical Expenses for a Person with Cancer
Ronald McDonald House
Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence
Special Olympics
Toys for Tots
Veteran's of Foreign War
YES – Youth Educated in Safety
Youth Camping Programs
Sources for Fundraising at Your Event.

Your club can also choose to support one of the AMA's charitable programs. The Academy accepts donations for education outreach, AMA scholarships, the Disaster Relief Program, government relations activities, the National Model Aviation Museum, and funds for continuing to update and upgrade AMA Headquarters.

Ideas for raising money

Admission is donation only.

Percentage from ticket sales if there is an admission charge.

Pilot and/or landing fees.

Food sales.

Cash donations during the event.

Food, clothing and toy drives.

Raffles with prizes such as donated RC products and products from local businesses.

Business and vendor sponsorships.

Actual Examples of How Two Clubs Hold a Charity Flying Event.

Kitsap Aircraft Radio Control Society # 839 - Port Orchard, Washington.

On September 13, 2008, we held an Open House requesting either cash donations and or nonperishable foods for admission. Donations were voluntary. We ended up giving the Saint Vincent de Paul store in Bremerton, Washington, \$1,944 in cash and several shopping carts full of food. This cash donation was from funds donated at the gate, sales of donated raffle items, and proceeds from food sold by the local Lions Club. Earlier in the year, the club made a \$500 cash contribution to the Port Townsend Aero Museum. The museum is heavily involved in bringing troubled youths into its renovation shop and teaching them how to rebuild and maintain light aircraft. The great majority of these kids have had their lives turned around and have gone on to respected positions in the aviation field including some that have become airline pilots. (Perhaps this would be a good story for Model Aviation.) Besides our continuing support for the museum, we are already planning a vastly enlarged Open House for the summer of 2009. Sincerely, Al Franklin President, Kitsap Aircraft Radio Control Society # 839 Port Orchard, Washington Taildraggers RC Club #4555 – Cartersville, Georgia.

We hold a three-day event in October called the “Georgia War Bird Invasion.” This is a three-day free fall festival. Our flying field is located on the campus of the Community Wesleyan Church. The church encourages us to host this event to help bring more recognition to its facilities. They do not charge us to use their property, but they want us to do this three-day event every year.

It is most unusual for an RC event but I believe it is the secret formula for keeping a flying field. We are surrounded by several subdivisions and not one person complains about our flying activities or noise. Why? It’s simple and I don’t know why more clubs don’t understand or haven’t discovered the value of creating partnership with a charity.

We treat every visitor as royalty. We will throw you out of the club if you do the snob routine. When you join our club you are committed to the neighborhood public relations.

This is how our club plans for the three-day October festival. We advertise in three local papers a week before the event. We place huge yard signs in the ground the week preceding the show. We distribute 6,000 flyers in the preceding months.

Some of the things we offer to the public are three days of Giant Scale war birds in action, carnival rides for all ages, and an oldies car show and motorcycle cruise-in. There is a new car and motorcycle tent sales as well as outdoor church services on Sunday (very popular for the pilots).

There are concession food sales onsite with a fantastic menu of prizes given away all day to the public and the pilots. Emcee announcements non-stop through the entire event. Saturday night there is a free live concert, with a free pig roast and refreshments.

I'm sure I'm forgetting a lot but this is what we do every year, and our neighbors love us!

We do not charge landing fees, parking, or any other fees. Everything is absolutely free to the public and the pilots. Where do we get the money? Well, being a non-profit event, with no one charity being favored, we get sponsors from local businesses. We charge \$200 for each sponsor and \$350 for each sponsor vender.

This year we raised more than \$4,500. I have already received a call from a huge car dealership that wants to take over the entire event next year. This is just our third year of running this event. We advertise our sponsors on back of the t-shirts we have made for the event each year.

How much work is this? Tons! Just ask me. As you probably would guess a small number of the membership helps out but the ones who do are the best. This is how you sponsor an RC charity event and keep the community loving you. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Peter Oparnica

President Taildraggers RC Club #4555

Cartersville, Georgia