
National Deer Association

2023



EVENT GUIDE

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2023

NDA – PO Box 160, Bogart, GA 30622

T: 800-209-3337 F: 706-353-0223 E: info@deerassociation.com

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“United for Deer”

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Welcome to the NDA Team

This guide will provide you with the resources needed to successfully host a National Deer Association (NDA) grassroots fundraising event. The funds raised at your event will be used to support important local and national white-tailed deer projects and programs. Memberships gained from the event will introduce many new people to the benefits of Quality Deer Management and help advocate for deer and deer hunters. In addition, the new NDA members will join thousands of others who are committed to ensuring the future of wild deer, wildlife habitat and hunting.

Much of NDA's annual income and memberships are a direct result of grassroots fundraising events. These events, by policy, are conducted for the exclusive benefit of NDA and cannot be combined with meetings or fundraising efforts by other organizations.

Fundraising Basics

Fundraising allows us to continue mission work at both a national and local level. NDA wants to maximize the most out of every dollar raised to make sure we are putting as much of that dollar back into ensuring the future of wild deer, wildlife habitat and hunting. The Branch needs to have those same goals.

The goal for fundraising should be a net to gross ratio (difference between money raised and money left over after all bills) of 50% or higher. If you spend a dollar, you should make two dollars minimum. Net to gross ratios of 50% and higher are key and the higher the net to gross the better.

Please see the Policy & Procedure Guide for a full breakdown on how fundraising income is distributed between the National organization and the Branch.

Event Forms

Every NDA event is required to have at a minimum of these two forms completed and submitted to their local regional Director prior to the event:

1. **Event Information Form** – This form documents the Branch name, type of event, date, location, ticket information, and more. **This is required for NDA events.** That includes fundraising and mission related events.
2. **Request for General Liability Insurance** – This form is required for any in person event requiring insurance.
 - a. Certain types of special events will require special insurance. Please consult your Regional Director for more information.

Both of these forms can be obtained from the Branch Portal or your Regional Director.

Planning a Successful Fundraiser

Many new groups are reluctant to host a banquet or other event because they lack event-planning experience. Thousands of successful banquets and fundraisers have been held by people just like you! You are not alone. Your NDA Regional Director will help make your experience enjoyable and successful.

Start with Fundraising/Banquet Committee

A successful banquet/fundraiser depends on the organized efforts of your Fundraising Committee. The two most important roles of the Fundraising Committee are to sell tickets & solicit prizes and underwriting dollars.

Generally, most successful Fundraising Committees require a minimum of 6-10 active members. Too few committee members place undue stress on the Branch President/Fundraising Chairman and his/her committee members. It also makes it difficult to retain committee members and recruit new volunteers. Different committee members can provide different skills. Some may be great at selling tickets, some at soliciting donations, some at organizing event activities, and others at working the day/night of the event. Regardless of their skills and time commitment, take advantage of all contributions – they will make a difference.

The composition of your Fundraising Committee will greatly affect the success of your event. Look for community leaders, people with influence in their community. Don't be afraid to ask people to volunteer. You will never know if you do not ask!

Banquet/Fundraising Chairman:

Remember that your Branch President does not have to be the Banquet/Fundraising Chairman. Letting the President handle the year-long, on-going matters of the Branch with another volunteer handling just the annual fundraising is often the best way to avoid undue stress and burn-out.

- With committee participation, selects event date, venue, and ticket price
- Appoints sub-committees.
- Personally invites sponsors to the event. Solicits new sponsor memberships from potential sponsors.
- Convenes a wrap-up meeting to report on success of the event and assures all reports have been submitted.

Fundraising Sub-Committees

Treasurer/Finance:

- Responsible for all financial aspects of the banquet including paying bills, having sufficient change at the event, arranging for credit card machines, collecting and organizing membership information, and submitting the Event Financial Report (EFR), memberships, copies of receipts, and late credit card payments to the NDA National Office within 30 days.
- Payment for banquet items may be made by cash, check, money order, or credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express and Discover). Credit card machines will be provided by NDA National Headquarters.
- All checks, cash and credit cards shall be counted jointly by this sub-committee immediately following the banquet. It should be comprised at a minimum of the Branch President and the Branch Treasurer.
- The day after the event, the membership information should be sent to the National Headquarters by the Regional Director or a designated volunteer.
- Once the EFR is completed, it and all corresponding proceeds should be mailed to the National Headquarters, with an additional copy of the EFR sent to your Regional Director. One of the requirements to be eligible for future banquet incentives, the completed report, membership information, copies of receipts and proceeds must be submitted within 30 days of the event.

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Tickets:

- Responsible for printing tickets, distributing tickets to Fundraising Committee members, tracking ticket sales, developing target lists, and motivating Branch members to pre-sell tickets physically and online.
- Incentivize attendees to purchase ticket early by advertising Early Bird special or include an Early Bird raffle.
- Assists the treasurer in preparing final membership lists.
- Contact members who did not purchase a banquet/event tickets and encourage these members to renew their support.
- Work with Director of Grassroots Support to keep track of online ticket sales through NDA's website.

Arrangements:

- Responsible for securing the facility, making food and beverage decisions, securing physical needs (sound system, tables, chairs), coordinating set-up and decorations, background music, and obtaining the auctioneer and security officer, if needed. Also ensures Branch compliance with NDA policy on the use of alcohol.

Auction & prizes:

- Responsible for soliciting prizes, coordinating raffle ticket sellers, conducting the live and silent auctions and the display set-up, and coordinating raffles. Works with the finance committee on a prize budget and ensures compliance with local raffle and/or gaming laws.
- It is important to find experienced raffle ticket sellers. Many large cities have companies that provide professional ticket sellers that work on commission. Consult your Regional Director for suggestions.
- Includes firearm purchases- responsible for working with a local firearm dealer, and/or the NDA National Office, through your Regional Director, to obtain firearms. Also responsible for providing a copy of the local firearm dealer's FFL when the Branch is purchasing a NDA gun.

Marketing:

- Responsible for promoting the banquet, printing, and distributing event fliers, and coordinating any mailing or e-blasts.
- Submits location, date, time, and contact information to your Regional Director for posting on www.deerassociation.com.

Sponsor Member:

- Encourage all members to become NDA sponsor members.
- Works with committee to host a separate sponsor event at another season of the year.
- Responsible for procuring sponsor items for a special sponsor membership upgrade table and raffle.

Fundraising Opportunities

NDA Branches are no longer required to hold a traditional banquet. Though the traditional banquet has the “proven track record” to be a reliable fundraising event, there are alternatives to the traditional banquet model. NDA recognizes the need to diversify our fundraising opportunities to be more efficient in raising much-needed funds for deer conservation. NDA believes that Branches should have more flexibility in how their Branch wants to fundraise that best fits their skill set and community needs. Below we will provide several ideas for alternative fundraising that your Branch can utilize. Branches still have the option to host a traditional Banquet if that is what they would like to do. These are just suggestions, but the templates

below have been shown to be productive fundraising opportunities. Please contact your Regional Director for more information regarding new fundraising ideas.

Branch fundraising tool kits are available from your Regional Director or the Branch Portal with in-depth directions and other helpful information to help your Branch host a successful fundraiser.

A mission event such as a field day, educational speaker presentation, hunting heritage or youth events can also offer an opportunity to raise additional revenue by recruiting members or offering a limited product line for a raffle or silent auction. Your Regional Director is your resource for assisting with additional fundraising opportunities.

Fundraising Event Ideas:

Traditional Banquet

- Tried and true method that many Branches are familiar with

Gun-A-Day Raffles

- Options available include monthly (30 guns) or weekly raffles (52 guns)
- Have a set budget for firearms/and prizes

Gun Raffles

- Many different options here from small raffles to large raffles
- Branches have been successful doing small 1-gun raffles all the way up to 15-gun raffles and everything in between

Large Item or Package Raffles

- Branches have successfully raffled off campers, a “Hunters Dream” package full of hunting related products, ATV/UTV’s, etc.

Online Auctions

- Online auctions are a great way to fundraise
- Work with local businesses and NDA to provide good quality items.
- Great items for auctions include unique products, hunts, fishing charters, family vacations or experiences, NDA branded items, and other items that are not necessarily available to buy from a store or company

Online Virtual Events

- Hosting an online event is a great way to interact with members in your community
- Sell “entry” tickets or chances for prizes to be able to gain access to the online event.
- Draw winners throughout the event to keep people logged into the event
- Additional “flash” raffles during the event that participants of the event can have exclusive opportunity for joining the event

Banner or “Winners Choice” Raffles/Sweepstakes

- Work with NDA to put together a banner of firearms and prizes
- Pull a set amount of winners
- Winner gets choice of any product on the banner of prizes

Golf Outing

- Golf outings have a proven track record of being great fundraisers
- Can also still hold an auction and raffles to increase profits
- Non-hunters will participate in a golf outing for a chance to win cash or great prizes
- Attractive event for businesses to sponsor

Sporting Clay Tournament

- Very similar to a golf outing but with guns!
- Often brings in hunters who may not necessarily be aware of NDA and its mission

These are just a handful of options for your Branch to consider. Please contact your Regional Director to discuss these options as well as others for your Branch.

NDA Policies Regarding Grassroots Fundraising

Firearms

Under no circumstances can a firearm be given to a winner/buyer until all legal requirements are satisfactorily completed. When possible, make sure a licensed firearm dealer is present to complete the required paperwork.

All firearms are required to be fitted with keyed trigger locks or plastic tie wraps. Do not allow careless handling of firearms and never have any ammunition present at the event.

Alcoholic Beverages

Be sure to become familiar with all local and state regulations covering alcoholic beverages. Secure any necessary license or other documents well in advance of the event.

No alcohol may be sold by the Branch itself. It is recommended that the Branch secure the services of a licensed bartender or caterer that provides this service.

If alcoholic beverages are provided free at the event. There must also be other complimentary non-alcoholic beverages available.

A means to identify those who are legal age to drink should be in place. The use of wrist bands or hand stamping is recommended. Whoever is designated to check ID's cannot themselves be under the legal drinking age. Post readily seen “We ID” signs in all appropriate areas.

Make at least two or more public announcements throughout the Branch function that transportation is and will be made available, to any person that requests it.

Event Financial Report

Within 30 days of the banquet, the Branch Treasurer must submit the EFR to the National Headquarters along with the event income and membership information. Copies of all receipts for banquet expenses must also be turned in. Please consult your Regional Director for assistance when completing the report.

The EFR, memberships, copies of receipts, and payment must be submitted within 30 days to qualify for any possible banquet/fundraising incentive programs. Please make sure that one copy of this report goes to the National Headquarters and one copy goes to the Director of Grassroots Support.

NDA Incentive Programs

The Incentive Program is in the process of being reviewed and updated. The Event Guide will be updated when the new program is approved.

NDA Banquet Ticket Price

All NDA banquet tickets must include a one-year NDA membership for new members or a one-year membership renewal for existing members in the ticket price. The ticket price selected should cover the cost of the membership, food, facility, and other items provided free to attendees. Your ticket price is essentially an “event admission price”.

For non-traditional events, membership should still be incorporated into your event. Each event may look different as how to do this. Consult your Regional Director for suggestions and ideas.

State & Local Laws

Charitable gaming laws vary by state and even sometimes by county. The Branch should make every effort to make sure they are adhering to state and local charitable gaming laws. In states/counties where a raffle license is required, the Branch should apply for the appropriate documentation to legally hold charitable fundraising events.

Your local Regional Director is your major resource to assist you with your event planning!

Fundraising Tips

- **Picking a date** – Be sure the date of your fundraiser does not conflict with another significant community event in your area. Check organizational websites, with local leaders, and perhaps the area Chamber of Commerce before you finalize your event date. Remember that your Regional Director can help you with suggested days/dates as well.

- Donations – Donated goods and services are a great way to increase fundraising profits. While sporting goods stores and related businesses are obvious places to approach for donations, do not limit your efforts. Pursue donations from jewelers, taxidermists, golf courses, sporting clays, resorts, hardware stores, outfitters, hotels, restaurants, bookstores, banks, car dealerships, etc.

Some companies may be unable to donate products, but willing to underwrite the cost of a fundraising items such as print or firearm in return for advertising exposure. Underwriting is an excellent way to have your entire fundraiser expenses paid for before the event actually starts!

Make sure all potential donors / underwriters understand that any donation, less any goods or services received, is tax-deductible under the NDA's nonprofit status. Offer to display the company's banner or distribute their brochures at the event. Make sure the company's name is listed in the event program (if applicable) and that they are thanked verbally at the event. Emphasize that their product/services will be exposed to many of the area's most serious sportsmen.

Donated hunts add a unique flavor to events and can greatly increase profits. Solicit outfitters by emphasizing that their actual out-of-pocket cost will be minimal, and it will easily be offset by the tax-deduction. The donation also exposes the outfitter's services to numerous potential clients.

All hunt donations should be clearly specified in writing prior to the event. This will prevent confusion and make it clear to both the hunt donor and hunt winner what is and what is not included. A hunt donation form is available from your Regional Director if one is needed. It is also available on the Branch Portal.

When obtaining hunt donations, the Branch should make every effort to confirm the outfitter/donor is reputable and able to fulfil obligations of the donation. All sales of donated hunts at an event are final. If a situation arises where the donated hunt is not able to be honored, those circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If a refund is deemed necessary, the EFR will need to be re-done with the refund reflected and the Branch will be responsible for their portion of the refund.

Check with your Regional Director about any outfitters or hunts that may be available from the NDA National Office.

- Banquet or Event Tickets – Banquet or event ticket templates are available through your local Regional Director. Or, often you can offer a local printing company the opportunity to include their name of the ticket and in the program in return for donating or discounting printing costs of your own tickets.
- Auctioneers – look for a professional auctioneer. Auctioneers providing their own spotters are a bonus. If not, select people with outgoing and exuberant personalities – this is an essential part of the entertainment value of the auction.

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- **Committee Assignments** – Assignments include: auction set-up, raffle set-up, lighting and sound set-up, table set-up, registration, ticket collector, cashier (cash and credit), food preparation and serving, bar supervision, raffle monitors, auction spotters, auctioneer helper, emcee, etc. Draw a diagram of the room layout showing locations of tables, bar, raffles, live & silent auction items, food lines, etc. Communicate the layout of the room to your team.
- **Firearms** – The number of firearms used for fundraising is often the largest contribution to your banquet's expense/profit net. In general, no more than 4-5 guns (including rifles, shotguns, handguns, muzzleloaders and bows) for each 100 attendees are appropriate. The demographics of your area and underwriting income may allow for a higher number of guns to be used. Your Regional Director will assist you with firearm selection and the suggested number of firearms to use at your banquet.

There is no value in using guns as door prizes. Even if they are donated, using them in an auction or in a raffle will provide you with additional profit. Door prizes given away do not. In general, firearms do not do well as a stand-alone live or silent auction item.

- **Publicity** – most radio stations provide limited free airtime to nonprofit organizations. Find popular local radio stations to announce the event.

Publicity prepares potential ticket buyers, but rarely “closes the sale.” Most tickets will be sold through person-to-person contact.

Use the social media tools such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to advertise your event and the online ticket sales links.

NDA National Headquarters creates an event on the NDA website, creates an online ticket sales link to it and creates up to two e-blast notifications of your event to your area.

- **Live Auction** - Your Regional Director will work with you on the order of auction items. Unique hunts or other one-of-a-kind items make great live auction items. Although commonly used. Framed prints are still some of the best moneymakers.

Do not give auction items to the high bidder until they are paid for.

Don't interrupt the live auction with speeches, raffles or entertainment. Once started, let the momentum build! Someone knowledgeable should describe high-value or unique items.

Never use “plants” in the audience to artificially drive-up bids. Eventually this will be discovered and lead to substantial mistrust and a loss of Branch credibility.

- **Silent Auction** – Bid forms will be provided by the National Headquarters. Work with your Regional Director for setting minimum bids and using the proper bid form. Close

your auction in sections to minimize the RUSH. Stagger your closings by – least to most productive items.

- **Raffles** – Innovative raffles are a great way to get attendees excited and willing to spend money. Calculate your raffle structure, be sure it is profitable.

Use professional ticket sellers to increase raffle sales (generally, 10% of sales plus travel). Ensure they dress appropriately for a family event.

When possible, have a neutral person such as the auctioneer; a child, or a prominent guest draw the winning tickets. **Never allow someone entered in the raffle, especially a Branch officer, to draw the tickets.**

Six Point Plan

Our Six Point Plan

1. **The Value of Volunteers** - Volunteers are the lifeblood of a successful Branch. Your Regional Director is a great source for year-round recruiting strategies to find new committee members.
2. **Advanced Ticket Sales** – The #1 way to achieve event success! Sell with a smile and sell early! There is no substitute for “face to face” or personal asks when it comes to tickets sales. Remember that recruiting Sponsors is also critical to event success.
3. **Begin with a Budget** – From cutting unnecessary costs to having the right merchandise, it all can make additional revenue when part of your plan.
4. **Donations and Underwriting** – Part of your plan must include donations and underwriting to cut your costs quickly and efficiently. Trips and services with local influences are always great donations. Look for that sponsor to underwrite your artwork or a Whitetail Collection item.
5. **Make it FUN** - People come back when it is FUN! Remember that lights, music, and food, all play a role in how enjoyable your event will be, especially for those attending for the first time. There is no better advertising than people sharing with friends how fun your event was.
6. **Always say THANK YOU** – From event attendees, to your underwriters, to the team of volunteers, a “Thank You” can go a long way!

Sample Letters, Forms, and Standard Tools

Copies of letters, forms, and other documents can be found on the Branch Portal. These forms are available for your Branch to use and be personalized for your specific Branch. Please consult your Regional Director with any questions regarding these documents.