

Pan Ohio Hope Ride Top 15 Fundraisers Fundraising Tips

Below are some tips from some of our past Top 15 Fundraisers for the American Cancer Society Pan Ohio Hope Ride. We hope they help you in your fundraising campaign to reach and go beyond your individual rider fundraising goal!

Rider: Chris Zanotti:

- I ask everybody personally in some fashion, even if it is an instant message or text. I then file away those that said yes for follow up in a few weeks if a donation is not received.
- I ask everybody.....I mean everybody. If the money went in my pocket, I would be very shy. However, it is for a great cause!
- I do not get many large donations.....but I do get a lot of donations in total.

Rider: Craig Moore

- I typically email a long list of family members, friends, and others who I have met over the years. I send two or three mass emails, usually only a few weeks before the ride, and have been amazed by the results.
- In addition, I have found it easy to ask for donations. Face it, we are all related to or know someone who is a cancer survivor or has passed away from the disease. So, strangely, cancer provides a tragic communal link between all of us. Hearing the amazing stories about the people I've met during the rides (especially stories about Jim Bond and other survivors) resonates with people. The stories help to increase the level of interest and willingness to donate and to inspire folks to someday ride the POHR on their own.
- In the past, I have asked my donors to provide the names and relevant information of the people they've lost to cancer or would like me to ride for -- so that I could, in essence, take them along with me on the trip. One year, I put the information on wristbands that I bought and attached to the handlebars of my bike. I have attached a photo.

Rider Pat Purdy

- I host a fundraiser each year at my house with food donated by our family and friends. The fundraiser is open to all where a Chinese Auction, a 50/50, rubber ducky race, and more raffles occur to raise money.
- At this fundraiser we also have a grand prize raffle of a vacation package and two secondary prizes – tickets are sold year long and the raffle culminates at the fundraiser party.
- I have also started implementing change collection cans this year where I place them at several retail stores.

Rider: Steve Troxel

- I'm kind of new to this project so I'm enjoying reading about ideas for raising funds. Last spring our family went through a very trying ordeal with our 12/13 year old daughter having an advanced stage of ovarian cancer. I run an email ministry so it was natural for me to send out updates and general thoughts, religious and otherwise, throughout the process. The result was that I had a large number of people who felt a connection to our story. I was asked to join this ride toward the end of our treatment process so when I told people what I was doing there was a good outpouring of support.
- All that to say that I will be trying to re-establish a connection with a story. I believe this to be effective because, as has already been noted, so many people have been affected by cancer in one way or another.
- I also plan to send out more personal notes to friends and family.

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Rider: Jim Bond Sr.

Retail Opportunities:

These are stores that we shop in that donated to support my ride:

- Car dealers, when buying or leasing
- Home improvements, such as window replacement, drive way seal coating, tree trimming
- Appliance dealers and furniture stores when we are repeat customers
- Locally-owned restaurants, specialty, gift, garden centers and clothing stores
- Eye glasses retailer
- Chain stores we frequently visit, where a store manager or franchise owner/operator can be reached, such as Honey Baked Ham store

Service Provider

These are service providers we use that donated to support my ride

- Doctors, dentist, teeth cleaning technician
- Bank and savings and loan managers, other bank employees
- Tax return preparer and financial/investment broker/advisor
- Auto and home insurance agency
- Car repair and oil change shop owner/operator/employees
- Carpet and rug cleaners
- Tailor
- Golf course owner/operator and people we golf with

In addition, Jim also asks for POHR donations from:

- People asking us to donate to their charitable cause
- High school and college classmates contacted at reunions and other events
- Members of our church; the weekly church newsletter agrees to publish an article I submit on why I ride in the POHR; donations come without further asking

Online Requests

1. Another option beyond sending emails from the POHR site, I find it more personal to send solicitations from my email.
2. I send virtually all initial solicitations "Dear Friend" and use bcc rather than personalizing each email. Briefly, I say why I am riding (patient access to leading treatments at major cancer centers by staying for free at Hope Lodges) and a link to my POHR page.

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3. I send individual emails to each donor within a day or two of their donation, thanking them and adding a personal note in many cases.
4. After about 4 weeks, I send a reminder to those not responding to the initial request. **My 1st year, I did not send any reminders—big mistake— now each year, several people thank me for the reminder and donated.**
5. After another 4 weeks, I review the non-responders and send another reminder, but this one is shorter, personalized, and I forward the original email request.
6. The week of the POHR, I send one last email, titled “5 days to the POHR”.
7. Each of the above reminders produces a batch of donations.

Off-Line Requests

8. For people whose email I do not have, I send a snail mail request with the same content as the email, except I give my home address to mail a check payable to the American Cancer Society, and I enclose a POHR brochure and a **stamped, return envelope addressed to me. These manual donations comprise about 1/3 of each year’s donations.** How much do I enjoy the daily mail deliveries this time of year?
9. For the snail mail request above, I print the same letter (word doc) for everyone, and manually write in a name on each letter. I do not send reminders for these manual solicitations.
10. Similar to internet donors, I send a thank you postcard a day or 2 after receiving the donation, and often add a personal note. Postcards are made from a POHR picture last year.
11. In my solicitations to service suppliers or places we buy items (see my previous Services and Shops fundraising list), I mention how I value our ongoing relationship.
12. A month after the POHR, I send online donors a recap of the event, including their collective donations in support of my ride. For off line donors, I send a recap in the next year’s manual request mentioned above.

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Rider: James Bond Jr.

- *** Step 1: Ask everyone you know to join you in riding the POHR.** Most will politely decline but acknowledge how they admire you for riding. That's when you hit them w/ donation request so they feel still like they're part of the event (which of course they are!)
- *** Connect your donation ask to the Hope Lodge's mission and the emotional stories we hear at the kick-off every year.** Our friends get hit up with solicitations year-round for great causes tied to walking/running/cycling. Make the Pan Ohio Hope Ride stand out from the pack!
- *** Think about people you know and how they could help with incentives to donate.** One year a friend gave me a pair of Lollapalooza music festival tickets and I gave them away to one of my donors.
- *** Create your own unique incentives sure to get attention from your friends/co-workers.** Who remembers the OSU grad who rode wearing a michigan jersey for a day if someone paid him \$500?!? Not only did he get the \$\$ but then he sold the jersey on ebay after to collect additional donations. Brilliant!! Last 2 years I promised my donors I will sport ridiculous epic facial hair if my goal was met.

- Another example I just saw on Facebook:



- *** Personalize your thanks to donors so they always return (or decide to ride).** I take plenty of pics along the POHR. Some are intentionally designed to end up on a friend's FB page as constant reminder of how they shouldn't miss out.

Rider: Patrick Surdy

- I have developed a large list of contacts over my 20+ years of working. This is a list that contains many very kind and generous people. I email this list several times and am consistently overwhelmed by their generosity.

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Rider: Rick Benning:

- My tactic may not be applicable for the average rider, but I'll throw it out there. I'm blessed to have my own company doing décor for special events. We're approached quite frequently by friends, acquaintances, churches and charities throughout the year for our services. I'm quite aware that our standard "corporate" prices are not always attainable for the average person or organization (I couldn't afford myself :). I attempt to help these people out by asking for a donation in exchange for my services such as decorating for a small wedding, school dance, family gathering etc.. I do have to be careful how often I offer this incentive (I have to keep myself and the company standing), but I have found that over time, I have developed a loyal group of supporters. In many ways, I view these as small (and often easy) fundraisers throughout the year.
- As crunch time approaches, as we are nearing, I send out personal handwritten notes along with invitations to a "free" pasta dinner the night before we leave for Cleveland. This is an event to thank everyone for donating, as well as serves to build a "family" of supporters. We have been fortunate the past few years that Springfield Regional Hospital has supplied food for this dinner!
- I always follow up with a custom designed and personalized thank you note that I try to get out by the end of September.

Rider: Chris Meadows

- I am in a unique situation. Being the executive chef of the Morgan House in Dublin, I am afforded with a venue to host our main fundraisers for team 6-pack. The owners are very supportive of my endeavors. We host 3 main fundraisers at the restaurant.
- The first is a Murder Mystery Dinner. We already host public shows every weekend. The Murder Mystery Company donates their actors and team members staff the restaurant for the event. I also get the food vendors to donate the food so that all of the proceeds will go the team and Pan Ohio. This event was April 26th and raised over \$2300.
- Our second fundraiser is a car wash held in the parking lot of the Morgan House and staffed by some of the kids of our riders. This year will be the 5th time for this event and it has averaged over \$400 each year. It also gets the family's of the riders involved in the fundraising experience.
- Our "big" fundraiser is the "Cooking Up A Cure" event, again held at The Morgan House. This is an outdoor festive involving about 15 different local restaurants and businesses offering samples from their business. Admission is \$25 and the food is free. We also have live entertainment, raffles and a big silent auction. Last year we drew close to 300 people and made around \$10,000.

Rider: Ben Blanquera

- I ask everyone early and often. What that means is that I send out personalized emails about every 6 weeks to my contacts. I find that many times emails get stuck or aren't noticed and I just need to be persistent.
- I also have identified a local foundation that contributes every year.



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Rider: Brian Bortz

- Almost all of my fundraising is done on Facebook. I send out a few e-mails but not many. I find every opportunity I can to sneak my link into a post or comment. Some of my most successful fundraisers so far:
 - Pampered Chef online party (I have an amazing consultant and that makes a huge difference) - also did Thirty-One gifts
 - Tee-spring t-shirt campaign (they weren't great to deal with, may still launch another, not sure, but the good thing is no payment up front)
 - Dine-out at a local restaurant (try to find one that donates based on everyone, not just people who come with a flyer)
 - "Sponsored" posts (for example, I got people to donate based on the number of birthday wishes I got, or the number of likes on a post about my mom's 10 year cancer-free anniversary)
 - Online auction posts (was most successful the first time I did it, not sure what variables play into that)
 - Shaved my beard when I reached the top 10, will stay shaved as long as I'm top 15 (most people say I look so much younger and if possible I tell them to donate and it will stay off)
 - One obstacle - I teach at a private school. Tuition and fundraising keep us going, so I can't directly ask parents to donate. I have a number of parents who are FB friends though (at their request), and many of them see my posts and donate.