

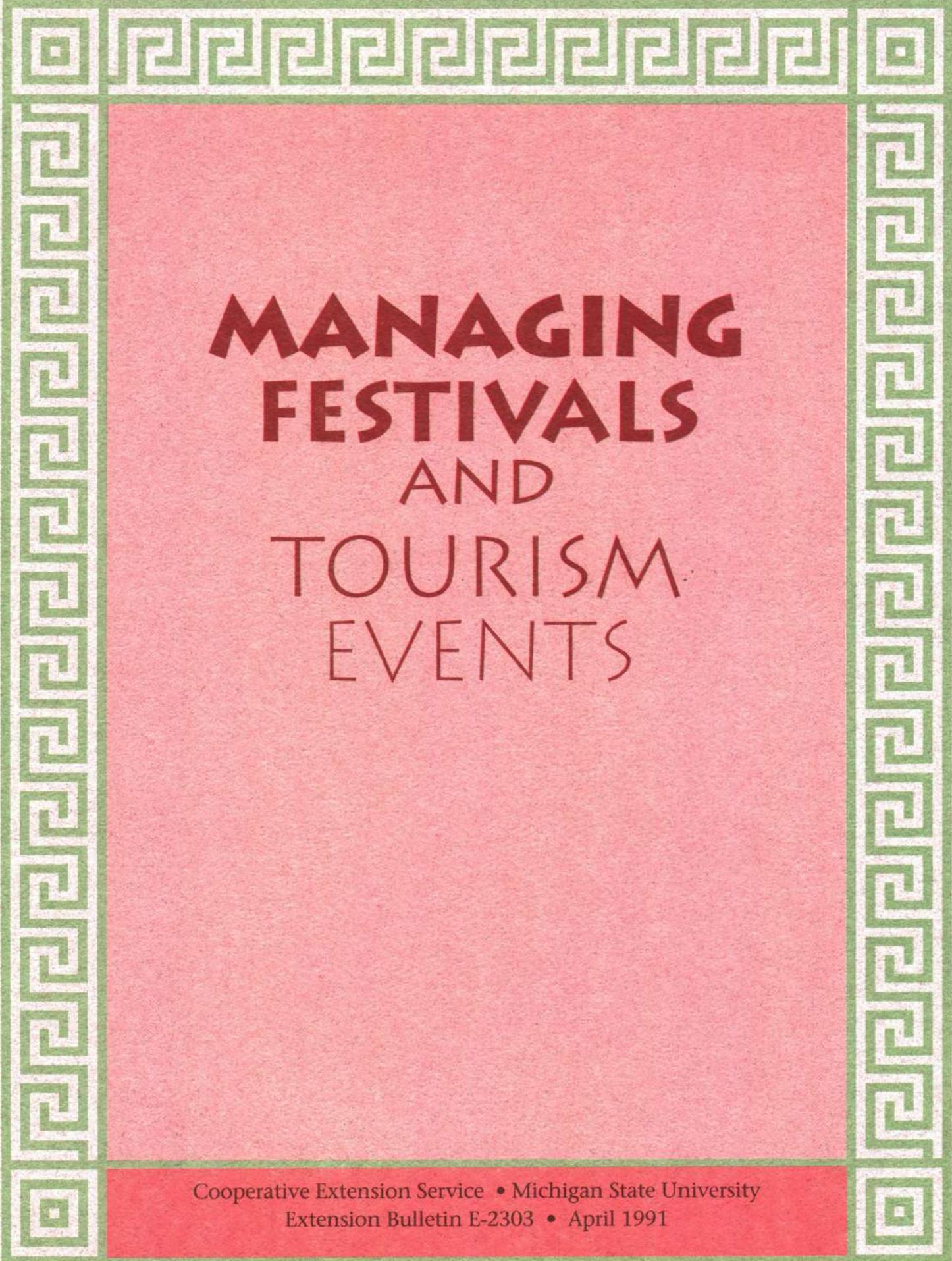
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Phil Alexander, Regional Tourism Agent  
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**MANAGING  
FESTIVALS  
AND  
TOURISM  
EVENTS**

Cooperative Extension Service • Michigan State University  
Extension Bulletin E-2303 • April 1991



# MANAGING FESTIVALS AND TOURISM EVENTS

BY: PHIL ALEXANDER

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## INTRODUCTION

Festivals and special events are important components of Michigan's tourism industry. They not only offer communities an opportunity to celebrate whatever they wish, they also provide attractions for visitors from nearby towns and states.

It is difficult to determine the exact number of festivals and special events taking place each year, but it is easy to see that festivals are becoming more popular as more and more communities organize all kinds of special events throughout the year. Some communities host numerous celebrations.

This booklet is designed to assist both the planners of a new event and established festival organizers looking for new ideas. It's also for volunteers who need to see how they fit into the overall picture. While it cannot cover everything, this booklet does address topics common to most festivals. Though not intended to be the ultimate authority and end-all reference book, it does raise many questions for the reader to ponder. Mostly, however, it is a reminder that successful festivals don't just happen. They are the products of careful planning, attention to details, and a good deal of hard work.

It is essential to note that this Extension bulletin is a compilation of numerous publications listed in the bibliography as well as comments provided by the individuals listed in the Acknowledgments section. *Managing Festivals and Tourism Events* is based on and adapted from "Building A Festival: A Framework for Organizers" published by the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"No one of us is as smart as all of us" and "Why reinvent the wheel" are the two thoughts that guided me through the production of this bulletin. Here is the list of people who "wrote" this festival booklet.

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# I. PLANNING

## *Failing To Plan Is Planning To Fail*

### WHY A FESTIVAL?

Festivals and special events are staged for many reasons. Besides being informative and enjoyable, they provide a number of important benefits to the community. Here are a few popular reasons to consider when planning or justifying a festival:

1. Festivals encourage a sense of community pride and cohesiveness. It's not often that everyone in town gets invited to the same party. Festivals provide a rare occasion for the whole community to relax and have fun.
2. Festivals may have certain educational values. For instance, important historical events can be taken out of the classroom and brought to life through skits, costume contests, reenactments, and other commemorative events.
3. Festivals are ideal occasions for artists and craftspeople to demonstrate and exhibit their skills.
4. Festivals provide a showcase for new ideas in music, art, drama, and sports.
5. Festivals focus on the broad spectrum of the state's culture.
6. Festivals stimulate travel to a community and the surrounding region. This encourages the community to grow and prosper by attracting dollars in the form of tourism, and in some cases, new industry.
7. Festivals can also be used to celebrate a holiday, season, or an historical event; or
8. To raise money.

The key to the success of a festival is that goals and objectives must be identified and defined. An undefined or vague purpose is a near guarantee of festival failure. "To cele-

brate the town and its people" is most often quoted as the purpose of an unsuccessful event. While this is permissible as an umbrella goal, festival organizers need to clarify more specifically the measurable objective(s) of the event.

*Tip: When things get tough, nothing keeps you going better than a strong sense of purpose.*

### WRITING OBJECTIVES

An important step in planning a successful festival or community-wide event is to write objectives or goals for the project. The list of objectives should basically outline what is going to be done, who is going to do it, who will benefit, and what specific results are desired.

Having a written list of objectives will help planners keep within the boundaries of their goals and will help recruit individuals and groups who identify with the planners' specific aims. The list of objectives also is an important evaluation tool—a yardstick by which to measure the event's success. Objectives provide a focus for the entire planning process and should be determined before moving ahead with the project.

If you have multiple goals, list them in order of importance so your perspective will not be lost. By setting priorities, you increase your chances of accomplishing the most important goals. If you don't set priorities, you can spread yourself too thin in an effort to reach every objective, and odds are you will wind up meeting none of them.

Your strategy needs to address long term goals and immediate plans—both at the same time. Do not put these off until the last minute.

Planning includes a realistic budget. Even

though this will be a task for the finance committee, each committee needs to submit their individual budget.

## ON SETTING GOALS ...

Alice was looking for directions and was startled to see the Cheshire Cat sitting on the branch of a tree.

"Cheshire Cat," she said, "Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where," said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

*From Alice's Adventure in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll*

## CHOOSING A THEME AND NAME

It's not good enough to hold a plain generic festival anymore. The event must have a theme—a main idea or concept to provide a solid base for a variety of interesting and promotable activities. Develop a theme that gives your festival a unique identity and prevents it from being a carbon copy of other festivals. The theme should be indigenous to the community's personality, legends, natural beauty, or other attraction.

- The theme gives the event an overall focus.
- The theme gives the participating groups a common point from which they can develop a cohesive program of activities.
- The theme gives the event structure.
- A catchy theme makes publicity much easier.

Whatever the theme, it must be something to which the local community can relate and that is either unique or has enough interest to attract visitors. Because festivals seldom are instant successes in drawing tourists from outside the region, planners need to ensure that the theme and activities of the event will attract local residents as well.

Festival themes can be categorized into several general types:

- local history
- ethnic or cultural
- agriculture
- aquaculture
- holidays or seasonal events
- arts, crafts, and hobbies
- music and drama
- industry
- natural resources.

*For more information regarding theme development, refer to Extension Bulletin E-1957, "Creating a Promotional Theme."*

A festival's name should be one of its best selling points. It needs to be catchy, memorable, and tied in with the festival's theme. The name also needs to be short, but that may not always be the case.

There's something to be said for choosing an unusual or even bizarre name; people certainly

seem to notice it. The “Irons Ox Market and Flea Roast” resulted when the words “market” and “roast” were transposed. No doubt this festival owes a good deal of its success to a rather uncommon title.

One last thing to remember about names: try to pick one that can be used year after year. It's one way of helping the festival become a local tradition and establish good public relations over time. Also, by sticking with the same name, many of the festival's signs, banners, and other promotional material can be used again. Do not overlook these money-saving strategies.

*Tip: Don't hesitate to contact other established festival organizations who have already worked their way through the rules and regulations and know how to avoid the detours and pitfalls. Usually they are more than willing to share their expertise and contacts.*

## DATE AND TIME

Timing is another important element to consider when planning a festival. What time of year should the event be held to best meet the objectives and purposes for which it was organized? On what dates will the event least conflict with other local programs or those of nearby communities? What other local/nearby programs could be incorporated into (rather than in conflict with) a new festival? Three nearby community festivals may be more attractive to tourists than one. How long should the event last—several hours, one day, several days or more?

Choose your date well in advance! Any successful event should be planned at least a year in advance, if possible. Lists of festivals and special events are available from the Michigan Travel Bureau, Michigan Association of Fairs and Exhibitions, and the regional tourist associations. The sooner you choose your date, the sooner you can start spreading the word about your event.

The weather is a key factor and one which you cannot control. However, by playing the averages, festival organizers can pick a time with a reasonably good chance of acceptable weather. Look over the weather trends and plan accordingly.

From the beginning, set an alternate “rain date” or alternate indoor site in the event that bad weather forces a change. Likewise, a lack of snow for winter festivals also requires a contingency plan.

The purpose, theme, name, and date are crucial items for any festival, but the committee's work is just getting started once these matters are settled. The budget must be drafted, entertainment planned, and publicity coordinated. The same goes for security, food and beverage sales, and sanitation facilities. These topics and others are discussed in the following pages.

Remember the 5 Ps of Planning: Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance.

First decide what you want to accomplish, then organize.

## II. ORGANIZING

*There's no such thing as a festival that's too organized.*

**G**ETTING THE RIGHT INGREDIENTS together to put on a successful festival is no easy task. It takes preparation—months and months of careful planning and organizing.

Whether you call it a steering committee or board of directors, this group's primary function is to set ground rules and choose officers and committee chairpersons capable of completing the project. The board is responsible for, among other things, drafting workable by-laws and periodically reviewing and updating them if necessary.

Once you have established your general guidelines and focus, start planning specifics. It may help to draw an organizational chart to show the chain of command and to visualize the various departments making up the festival.

### SYSTEM OF SUCCESSION

*A problem with most festivals is passing on the lessons and experiences from one year to the next. One solution is having the project vice-chairperson assist the chairperson one year,*

*then move up to chairperson the following year. It's a great method for making each festival better than its predecessor. Change is good for everyone and refreshing for the spirit of the festival.*

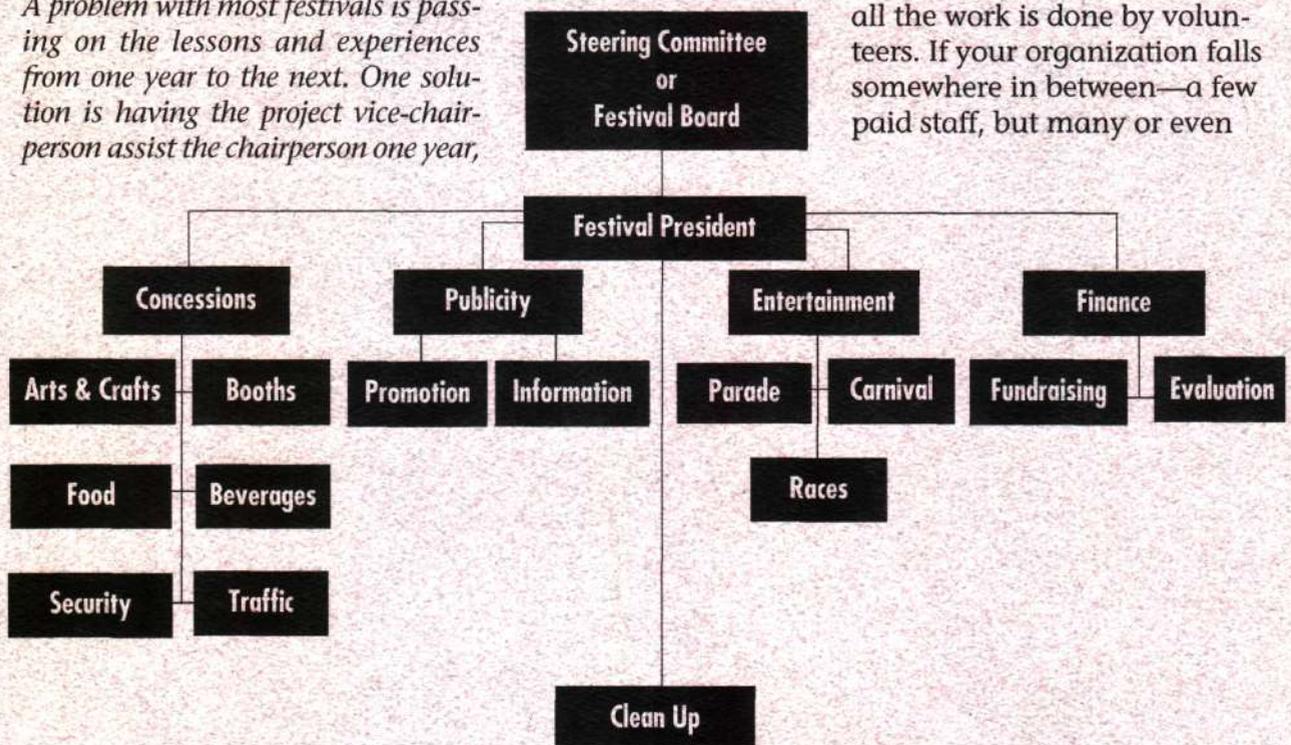
### A LOOK AT BOARDS

by: William Mulligan, Jr.

*The Practical Historian Vol. 2 # 2 & 3*

Here are some frequently asked questions about boards. Who should be on them? How should they be selected? How long should individuals serve? How do you referee disagreements?

Before any question can be answered, you need to consider the type of organization you have. Boards should operate differently when there is a full-time professional staff carrying out the work of the organization than they should when all the work is done by volunteers. If your organization falls somewhere in between—a few paid staff, but many or even



mostly, volunteers—you'll want a board somewhere in between. There is no one type of board that is ideal for all organizations.

Let's start with the most common situation—the volunteer organization. If anyone is paid, it is a token sum and the work of the organization is carried out by volunteers. In this situation, you want what is best described as a working board. The board should be made up of the more active and involved members—the heads of the committees, for example. Who knows more what needs to be done than the people who face the challenge every day? Also, having separate groups of bosses who sit on the board and make policy and volunteers who do the work nearly always causes trouble and, in fairly short order, a shortage of volunteers. In a volunteer organization, even one board member who doesn't back what he or she says with time put in can cause trouble. If you count on volunteers to do the work, count on volunteers to make the policies and run the organization.

Once you decide that active members should be on the board, many other questions are easily answered. Board members should be elected by the full membership to serve a fixed term. Terms of the board members should be staggered so that at least some carry over to the new year for continuity. One successful method is to have three-year terms with one-third of the terms ending each year. How long should people serve is always a tough question. In theory there should be a limit to the number of consecutive terms anyone should serve. In practice it can be difficult to fill the seats on the board of a small organization. What happens is that

over time people become "indispensable." Then, when they want to pass on the reins, there is no one willing to try to fill such large shoes. Or, worse, they come to see themselves as "indispensable" and the organization declines as they lose energy.

The way out of this is to not let anyone become indispensable, either in the minds of the members or in their own. Limit everyone to two consecutive terms, no exceptions. After a year, people can stand for election for another cycle of two terms, etc. During that year off, new leaders will be able to try their wings.

There are a few exceptions to these general points. If possible, find a lawyer willing to serve on your board. There are many small matters that a lawyer can quickly evaluate during a meeting and save the group endless and needless worry. Try not to take advantage of them if a major problem develops, but this is one situation when you can have someone on the board who may not otherwise be active in the group and gain far more than you will risk. If there are several lawyers in your community, rotate the position informally much as you would other seats.

You might consider other professionals—insurance agents, accountants, etc.—who can bring useful expertise to the board. However, never let these professionals make up a majority of the board or serve as president. Make sure the president is one of the more active volunteers—remember, the best leaders lead by example.

Conflict on boards can be a real source of trouble. The problem is less with the fact of conflict than with most people's desire to avoid it. One or two people can often get their way on a board, even quite a large

board, just by being difficult. No one wants to make trouble or cause a scene, so they get their way, even though they may be a small minority.

This type of person can cause real trouble for an organization. First, if decisions are made to keep the peace rather than for the good of the organization, small problems will accumulate and grow into major problems. Second, people will stop coming to board meetings because there is no real discussion. Why should they give up an evening at home with their family? Third, eventually you will begin to lose your volunteers. The more active and involved they are, the sooner you will lose them. Though an extreme case, if there's no real discussion people feel no commitment to implement the decisions. They simply find other things to do that give them more of a sense of involvement. In the end, the organization declines and finally becomes either a small clique around one dominant person or it disappears for lack of interest.

Many people feel that the best way to deal with this problem is to wait for the person's term to expire and then not reelect that person. Or, if he/she is reelected (they almost always are), limit the number of terms a person can serve and then never reelect that person. This sounds good, but it never works for the same reason these people are able to dominate and control a meeting—no one wants to say "I won't nominate you." No one wants to say anything negative or be accused of playing politics because it will divide the group.

People have to accept the fact that there is nothing wrong with disagreement or with debating options and then deciding among the options available. To disagree is not to misunderstand, it is simply to see another way of doing what needs to be done—or even seeing something entirely

different that might be done. The solution is to stand up for alternative views and resist the domination of the bullies, because that's often what they are. If no one stands up, they will slowly, but surely, destroy any organization.

To repeat, a volunteer organization should have a board made up of the most active volunteers, elected by the membership for fixed terms, serving for a limited number of consecutive terms.

What about an organization with paid staff? Well, it is a very different situation. There is a separation between the day-to-day work of the organization and the responsibility of the board. This is very important to maintain. Board interference in day-to-day operations can create an array of problems almost too numerous to catalog here. If there is a paid staff, the board must let them do their jobs. If they aren't doing their job, the board should communicate its concern to the director only and the director should deal with the situation. If he doesn't, it's easy—get a new director. If the board involves itself in the day-to-day operations, no one will be sure who is in charge, morale will decline sharply, and the organization will lack direction (and soon need a new director anyway).

In organizations with a paid staff, the board should limit itself to three things: selecting the director, establishing policies, and providing the resources necessary for the organization to function properly.

*[Reprinted with permission]*

But that's not all. Some of the board members (and the more the better) must have strong connections within the community. These are people who can go out and quickly round up all kinds of donations—lumber,

sign space, printing, advertising copy, food and drinks for volunteers, staging supplies, sound equipment, and many other necessities for a first-rate event.

To be sure and represent all facets in the community, a reasonable balance can be maintained if the board membership includes the following:

- large corporations
- privately owned businesses
- professional groups
- ethnic groups
- service clubs
- schools
- churches
- local government
- any other group having a separate identity in the community that can provide moral and financial support.

This list looks more cumbersome than it is; remember, a single board member might represent two or more of the categories listed. Also, use this list when selecting committee members so that groups with little or no representation on the board will have the opportunity to participate in festival activities and functions.

Communication is important to the overall success of an event. Keep board members informed about what various committees are doing and make sure they have a voice in overall planning. Likewise, keep committee members and other volunteers informed of board decisions, changes, progress reports, and meeting dates and times.

For more information on this topic, refer to Extension Bulletin E-2145, "Building

Stronger Community Groups: Pitfalls, Principles and Characteristics." Your local Extension Office also has a variety of training materials dealing with leadership development, parliamentary procedure, and team building.

## **BRAINSTORMING**

*Brainstorming is a good exercise for a festival committee or any other group trying to get things done. The word refers to an idea generation technique where any and all possible suggestions are flushed out and the wilder, the better. Participants meet in a face-to-face setting and offer solutions for an identified need (e.g., getting good publicity for an event). Everyone is urged to be creative and to expand upon the ideas of others. All of these thoughts are promptly recorded and displayed on flip charts during the brainstorming session, thus encouraging even more ideas. Later, each suggestion is evaluated. Some—maybe most—will be discarded, but a surprising number will offer fresh insights for solving problems.*

## **COMMITTEES AND VOLUNTEERS**

Just as a festival cannot be put together in a few weeks, it cannot be produced by two or three people. Special events must be planned not only for the whole community, but also by the whole community. For this reason, festival planners should strive to interest and involve a large number and variety of people to utilize their time and talents.

The one ingredient that experienced organizers find most essential to the success of a festival or special event is community involvement. All other matters discussed in

this handbook—planning, objective setting, fund raising, publicity, evaluation—are important, but involving the community is often the secret weapon that spells the difference between success and not quite making it.

Try to get local government (city, township, county) involved as much as possible.

You can recruit workers in many ways—personal phone calls, talks to various local clubs, discussions with elected officials, or appeals at public meetings. A festival or special event becomes a civic celebration when a whole cross section of the community is deeply and personally involved in its planning and execution. When recruiting volunteers, be sure to address the question “What’s in it for me?”

Provide some kind of job description for committees so they will know what you expect. Recruit volunteers who share the festival’s goals, have a genuine interest in the event, are dedicated and committed to get things done, have a healthy respect for deadlines, and the time to spend on their assignments.

Also consider recruiting college and university students who are studying for careers in tourism, public relations, art, or journalism and are looking for hands-on experience. They can provide extra help and inspiration.

Don’t overlook the importance of involving

the youth in your community. As tomorrow’s leaders, their interest and commitment may decide the future of the festival. One festival schedules various athletic teams—dressed in their uniforms—to work an entire shift. Not only does this get students involved, it shows the public they are willing to contribute to their community’s festival. The students have fun, too!

### **COMBATING CRITICS:**

*Special events, especially downtown festivals, often draw criticism from local businesses because streets are sometimes blocked and festival-goers seldom buy anything except the arts, crafts, and foods offered at the festival. A festival can be a promotional tool for future local business. Stores can advertise sales, then hand out festival “rain checks” for the same sale prices good for two weeks following the festival date. This is a good technique for bringing regional residents back into a downtown which may be suffering from shopping mall competition. The festival brings them in for fun and exposes them to the possibilities of downtown; the sales bring them back as shoppers, thus confirming those possibilities.*

—Recreation, Travel and Tourism Institute  
Clemson University  
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## III. FUND RAISING AND THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

*If you think breaking even is all right, you are doomed for failure*

**T**he themes for festivals cover a wide range, but most of these special events have an underlying purpose: to make money. While this commercial aspect may bother some purists, there's no getting around the fact that festivals are excellent fund-raisers. All kinds of good causes can be helped. In addition, some of the money generated can be set aside towards next year's event.

For many groups, the question is simply: What's the best way to raise money? There is no quick answer. What might help is to look at some of the fund-raising techniques used by other festival promoters.

**1. Selling Booth Space** This is one of the most popular (and effective) fund-raising ideas, particularly with arts and crafts shows. No two groups seem to do everything the same, however. Many just sell a designated space and let the exhibitor provide everything else—display tables, backdrops, and chairs. Some groups supply these things and still others include electricity or even a tent over the booth. These different factors (along with projected attendance) influence booth fees as does the size and location of the spaces. In short, booth fees vary greatly from festival to festival.

Most groups collect these fees well in advance, usually at the time an exhibitor applies for space. They've also found that a strict refund policy is a good idea. It's one way to insure that exhibitors reconsider before cancelling at the last minute.

**2. Percent of Sales** Several organizations don't stop with making money from rental space; their contracts with exhibitors stipulate that a certain percentage of sales—

frequently 10 to 20%—be returned to the festival organization. If the "cut" is kept reasonable and the crowds show up, exhibitors don't seem to mind sharing their proceeds.

This approach is not without its problems. Bookkeeping headaches can be expected, along with occasional doubts about the accuracy of sales reports. Its success for raising money, though, is beyond question.

**3. In-Kind Donations** Encourage in-kind donations of materials, supplies, and services instead of money. Assess each in-kind contribution and keep a record of what the cost would have been if you had paid for it out of pocket.

**4. Food and Beverage Sales** People at gatherings consume vast quantities of popcorn, hot dogs, cotton candy, and drinks. Most festival organizers do not need to be reminded of this. Their job is to figure out how to make the most of this demand.

Promoters can handle the food/beverage matter in two ways: a) selling the refreshments themselves; or b) allowing someone else to sell food and drinks on a concession basis. Many groups lean toward the former, but unless they have the necessary equipment and a good crew of tireless volunteers, they may be better off to work with an experienced concessionaire.

Organizers must know that the food and beverage business is closely regulated by the Michigan Department of Health. Selling hot dogs, for instance, involves much more than placing a hot frankfurter in a steamed bun. Requirements governing the floor, walls, doors, ceiling, and windows of concession

stands exist and must be followed (for details, see the chapter on food and beverages).

**5. Souvenir Sales** Festival goers are frequently on the lookout for souvenir items. A lot of people have an apparent need to remind themselves (and friends) of their participation in certain festivities, so they purchase ball caps, T-shirts, plastic cups, souvenir programs, and other mementos. To take advantage of this element of human nature, festival organizers need to keep several things in mind:

*The Target Audience:* A key thing to remember is that different groups have different tastes. What may sell exceedingly well at a typical "funfest" may not move at all during an arts and crafts fair.

*Ordering the Souvenirs:* Unless a silk screen machine is in their possession, most groups have to order their commemorative souvenirs. Many of the firms handling this sort of merchandise can be found under "advertising specialties" in the yellow pages of a larger city's telephone directory. While these companies can supply a wide range of items, they are governed by certain practices: 1) Minimum orders are a necessary part of business; 2) Camera-ready art is strongly recommended. If the specialty firm has to prepare the artwork, costs go up and so do the time requirements; and 3) Production takes time. Depending on the item ordered, delivery may take from 10 days to six weeks.

*Paying for the Merchandise:* Even though the group may be able to sell dozens and dozens of shirts at a 100% markup, paying for them can be a problem. Here's why: for the organization that is a first-time customer, the wholesaler will very likely require that 50% of the costs be paid at the time of the order,

with the remainder due within 10 days of delivery. Established customers may be able to work out better deals.

**6. Races** Many groups are cashing in on the jogging/running craze by sponsoring 5 or 10K races. For a modest entry fee (\$5 to \$10), runners participate in these events and in return, expect two things: a well-organized race and a commemorative T-shirt or hat.

**7. Admission Fee** This method can work provided two requirements are met: a) the grounds are somehow enclosed so that admission can be effectively controlled; and b) the festival's attractions are clearly worth the price of admission. If these conditions can't be met, it's probably unwise to consider an admission charge. Most festivals don't bother with entrance fees.

**8. Parking Charges** The same rules apply here that govern admission charges. Again, few promoters find this method worth their time.

In summary, festivals are good places to raise money but don't let any of the events be overcome by commercialism.

## **LOTTERIES, RAFFLES AND BINGO**

Rather than take up several pages in this booklet to list the many rules relating to various gambling events, contact the appropriate state agency listed at the end of this publication. You may need more than one license or permit, so be sure to check into this matter very thoroughly.

Two points to keep in mind. When in doubt, ask! Secondly, it may take six months to a year to get final approval, so plan in advance.

## CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

*by: Eileen Frye, Heart of Illinois Fair*

*Reprinted with permission by Ward Sound and Lighting*

First—present a confident and positive attitude when giving your proposal. Do not be apologetic about the festival or “sell it short!” You have a very marketable commodity that you are offering to the potential sponsor. You are not soliciting or begging for help—you are prepared to offer a company an opportunity to showcase their product to thousands of festival goers during a short period of time in a productive manner.

It is important to have a fact sheet or brochure to present to your prospective sponsor:

- How many years has the festival been in operation?
- What is your attendance during the period?
- What attractions do you offer at the festival?
- What will the sponsor receive for their dollar?
- Do you offer gate admission tickets to the sponsor to be used in promotion?
- Do you have an advertising program that will include the sponsor?
- How about space for a display of the sponsor's product?
- Do you have a variety of events to offer?
- Are they priced realistically?
- Is the sponsorship package that you are presenting compatible to that company?

- Can you be flexible?
- A company could be interested in a facet of the festival that you had not considered.

We have found that the best approach in securing sponsorships is to start at the local level and begin your campaign early. Advertising budgets are prepared before the start of the calendar year. In order to participate in their budget, you need facts and figures listed for presentation before that budget has been allocated. It is a selling market and does require effort on your part.

When you have secured a sponsorship package, you should then prepare a contract to be signed by both parties. This can be a simple document but must clearly emphasize the basis of your agreement. It is also important to state when payment is to be made by the sponsor. We usually ask for one-half of the contract price approximately 3 to 4 months in advance, with final payment to be made two weeks before the start of the festival. It is also helpful to mail a statement to the company a week or so before the last payment is due. This serves as a reminder and eliminates misunderstandings.

It is very important to fulfill all that you have proposed to do. Never—but never—fail to provide every facet of your agreement. It may seem insignificant to you, but the sponsor has a right to expect everything that had been discussed in your initial approach. We make certain that the sponsor is happy with his or her commitment. It is important that sponsors feel that you have a strong sense of concern for the project and are anxious to see that they are satisfied and happy to be a part of the event.

When the festival has ended—and it was a

tremendous success, be certain that a thank-you letter is sent to each sponsor specifically commenting on their area of involvement. As for their comments and criticisms, we can all learn by listening!

I believe that you will find after the first year of a sponsorship program it becomes much easier to make your program a success. Satisfied companies are your best source of public

relations and information for other companies. Everyone wants to be involved in a successful venture and each sponsor—whether soft drink or other entity—wants to participate in the action where their peer groups are already established.

A sponsorship program benefits everyone: the festival, the sponsor, and the community.

*[Reprinted with permission]*

## IV. PROMOTING

*If they don't know, they won't come*

**O**RGANIZERS OF EVEN THE most successful events cannot afford to sit back and hope that crowds will continue to show up year after year. The results of inaction could result in no crowd at all. To avoid this disaster, appoint a publicity/promotion committee and make certain that its members develop an effective promotional strategy early in the planning process.

Extension Bulletin E-1939, "Developing a Promotional Strategy," defines promotion as the activities people use to communicate with others about their product or service and to convince them to use it. Everything you do communicates something about your festival.

Remember, you are not selling a product, you are selling the benefits of the product. The benefit you are selling is entertainment! A festival is essentially show business. Consider these benefits as part of the entertainment package when creating the image for your festival:

- Excitement, fun, happiness
- Relaxation
- Social interaction
- Prestige, ego satisfaction
- Education

Members of the publicity committee need to be aware of the following concerns: 1) Much of what is promoted—entertainment, for example—will be arranged by other committees. Therefore the publicity people must have a good working relationship with everybody helping with the festival; 2) With so much to do, timing will be critical in many instances. Establish a timeline; 3) Be sure local and regional people whom the media are likely to contact for what is going

on know exact times, dates and your media contact's name and telephone number; 4) Supply the local tourism sector (motels, service stations, restaurants) with printed maps and schedules so they know times and directions to events and can pass that information on to their customers and guests; 5) Media representatives are serious about deadlines. Make certain that press releases and other informational materials are in the hands of reporters on time; and 6) Don't be shy about calling in to or volunteering for local talk shows; 7) This committee should evaluate the effectiveness of methods and ideas used and suggest changes as required.

*Tip: A good way to stretch your advertising dollars is to get businesses or organizations to co-sponsor your ads. For example, a company might incorporate you message in some of their billboard advertising or cosponsor radio or TV ads.*

Here are some examples of promotional methods used by festival organizers. Most of this promotion can be done at little or no cost. What's required are two things that money can't always buy—creativity and imagination.

- Billboards
- Marquees
- Posters and Banners
- Placemats in Local Restaurants
- Brochures/Direct Mail
- Public Service Announcements — Radio, Television, Newspapers
- Print Media — Newspapers, Magazines
- Electronic Media — Radio, Television, Local Cable TV Station
- Calendars of Events
- Inserts — Bank and Utility Billings

- Parades at Other Festivals
- Chamber of Commerce Publications
- Bus Signs
- Speaker's Bureau — Presentations to Groups/Meetings
- State Travel Bureau — Seasonal Guides/Calendars of Events
- Displays at Highway Welcome Centers
- Employee Publications/Newsletters
- Individual Promotional Items/Novelties
- Bumper Stickers, Buttons, Mugs, etc.
- Travel Writers
- FAM (Familiarization) Tours
- Logo Design

### **BROCHURE DESIGN TIPS**

If your marketing strategy determines that brochures are an effective way to reach your target audience, then carefully design the best brochure possible. First answer these three questions: 1. What do you want the brochures to do? (Set your purposes and objectives.) 2. Who is your audience? 3. How will you reach your audience? (Decide on a distribution system.)

#### **Points to Consider in Designing a Brochure**

- Keep it simple and uncluttered.
- Have more open space than type.
- Be different, if possible.
- Full color is best but most expensive.
- Build an image through pictures and factual information.
- Remember your target audience.
- Stick to one selling message.
- The quality of your brochure reflects the quality of your festival.

If using a brochure, always include a map with directions to your community and the location of events once the visitor arrives. Also, include how to get more information, a telephone number and the mailing address. For more information on developing a brochure, refer to Extension Bulletins E-1605, "Creating A Travel Brochure That Sells," and E-1931, "Developing Brochures."

### **TIPS FOR PREPARING A MEDIA RELEASE**

- Only one person from your organization should be in contact with the news media. This avoids conflicting reports and confusion. Your media contact person must be someone who is easily reached by telephone during working hours.
- The most important rule of journalism is accuracy. Write everything down and double check dates, times, names, and places.
- Be brief and to the point. Stick to facts. Avoid fancy adjectives and unfamiliar terms. Use active verbs and avoid changing verbs into nouns.
- Make sure there is some tie-in between the information in the release and the readers, listeners or viewers. Make it of interest and important to them.
- Type media releases, double-spaced on 8 1/2" X 11" white paper. Include the contact person's name, address, and telephone number. Also, include the current date and date of release or For Immediate Release. If your story takes more than one page, write "More" at the bottom of the page. Number the following pages. Indicate the end of the story with  
"###."

Get your story to the media as soon as possible. Know their deadlines and, whenever possible, let the media know about your event in advance.

Write news releases in inverted pyramid style as shown at right. Indicate the most important news at the top, the lesser in the middle, and the insignificant at the bottom. This format allows the news editor to chop the release almost at any point and still retain the essential information.

## Inverted Pyramid

Who What When  
Where Why

Important  
Details

Misc.  
Info.

### NATIONAL FUDGE FESTIVAL FUN RUN

June 15, 1990

For Immediate Release

Contact: Dan Smith  
123 W. Main  
Cocoaville, MI 44444  
Phone: (609) 555-1313

National Fudge Festival Fun Run

Cocoaville: Runners of all ages are invited to participate in the Second Annual Fun Run on June 30. The starting time is 11:30 a.m. at the city park. This event is sponsored by the National Fudge Festival.

The race route is a combination of city streets, gravel roads, and grass-covered park paths. The route includes moderate hills and crosses two bridges.

Medals will be awarded to the top three winners in each of the six divisions for both men and women. There is a \$5 entry fee which entitles all entrants to receive a specially-designed Fudge Festival T-shirt and a one pound box of fudge.

Registration forms are available at the city library, Bob's Sport Shop, and the Chamber of Commerce information booth.

For further information, contact Dan Smith, 123 W. Main Street, Cocoaville, or call (609) 555-1313.

###

### Sample Media Release

*(Print on your festival's stationery which includes address)*

123 West Main • Cocoaville, MI 44444 • 609 555-1313

# V. OPERATING

## *Making Your Festival Festive!*

### **ENTERTAINMENT**

Festivals are supposed to be fun and for many people that simply means one thing—entertainment. But entertainment committees often find their jobs to be anything but simple. Fortunately, there are several general principles for keeping matters from getting out of hand.

- 1. Be sure to have some excellent workers on this committee.** People just wanting to pad their resumes should look for other assignments.
- 2. Begin planning early for entertainment.** Many performers are booked months in advance and are unavailable on short notice.
- 3. Know your audience and plan accordingly.** A clown is probably more suitable for a group made up primarily of children, just as a symphony concert would be more appropriate for adult gatherings.
- 4. Put variety in the program.** Nearly every community and certainly every region, has enough talent to provide a wide range of entertainment. Barbershop quartets, ballet and modern dancers, martial arts groups, gospel singers, and square dancers are some that come to mind quickly. Other performances—like hot air balloons and magic shows—can be brought in from nearby locales.
- 5. Don't overlook sponsors.** Many groups looking for exposure perform without charge, but others require a fee. If the committee decides on a paid performance but does not have the necessary funds, one answer might be to seek a sponsor. In many Michigan towns, local businesses frequently underwrite the costs of the featured entertainment.
- 6. Let festival-goers participate in their own entertainment.** Get them involved in

events like tug of war, pet shows, kite flying contests, parent/child sack races, tricycle riding derbies and countless others. The closer the ties between the entertainment and the theme, the better.

- 7. Be creative.** People seem to be especially attracted to unusual performances and often-times, the zanier the better.

The items listed above are some of the more general things to consider when developing an entertainment program. There's more to it than that, though. Lots of details must be nailed down, too:

- 1. Staging:** Make sure that the entertainers know what kind of accommodations to expect. Will they be performing on a wooden stage, flatbed trailer, the lawn, or under a tent?
- 2. Lighting:** Evening performances may require artificial lighting. Will entertainers bring their own systems or will lights be provided?
- 3. Sound:** Musical groups usually furnish their own sound equipment, but other entertainers may expect it to be supplied. Remember, a system consists of more than microphones, amplifiers, speakers, and the wires tying it all together; a dependable operator/troubleshooter makes the sound system complete.
- 4. Dressing Rooms:** Some performers entertain in their street clothes and others change into the appropriate dress before reaching the festival grounds. Still others—especially some of the costumed characters—will require dressing rooms.
- 5. Performance Contracts:** As noted earlier, some entertainers perform for free and others must be paid. Always sign contracts with those in the latter category, specifying what services will be performed and at what cost.

It's not a bad idea to sign a similar agreement with the free entertainers so that the deal is spelled out and fully documented.

**6. Scheduling:** Determine early on how much time will be allotted to entertainment and how much is to be reserved for each performance. Make certain that each act is fully aware of the schedule and stick to it.

**7. Emcees:** Somebody needs to be designated emcee—or master of ceremonies. Use someone who is comfortable in front of large crowds. Local disc jockeys, television personalities, or legislators may be able to help out. If the entertainment program runs a full day, spread out the work among several emcees. Above all, give them complete information about the performers they'll be introducing and ask them to review the material ahead of time.

**8. Publicity:** In many instances, entertainment is the major draw for the festival. Work closely with the publicity committee to ensure that promotional efforts fully reflect the entertainment program that is on tap.

And finally, have some solid contingency plans. Build in a bit of flexibility. Things seldom go exactly as scheduled.

## PARADES

*by: Sheri Rich, Parade Chairperson—Shepherd Maple Syrup Festival with additional comments from Kalamazoo CVB and Ward Sound*

A parade can be a colorful and exciting addition to a festival and an event that attracts out-of-town people to your community. The key to creating a parade that people want to watch or participate in year after year is organization.

With foresight, your parade can be a suc-

cessful mix of music, marching units, cars, festival queens and more, carefully blended to please both the eye and ear. Without organization, the event could be a disappointing combination of music groups spaced too closely, unattractive entries, animals accidentally placed too close to loud vehicles that could frighten them, and so forth. Organization will reduce this sort of mistake.

What follows is a suggested method for organizing a parade that can be altered to suit each festival's needs.

1. Select a parade chairperson and a small committee that has the authority to make parade policy. A high level of enthusiasm and the ability to carry out responsibilities are extremely important for committee members.

2. Settle on a parade budget. Some possible costs include flowers for VIPs, postage, photocopying costs, long distance phone calls, and paying for a band or banners.

3. Select the parade time and route. Will your parade be your festival's "kick-off" event or "grand finale?" As you organize your parade, be sure to drive the route. What will people see? Check out street width and clearance for tall units. Will you need streets closed and traffic control? Be sure to inform your local police department of parade details.

4. Talk with your local police department about acquiring a parade permit. Apply for your permit early.

5. Set an entry deadline. Leave enough time between the deadline and parade day to create the lineup order and then mail out lineup information to the participants. Advertise the deadline in newspapers and on radio stations' community calendars.

6. Decide on parade guidelines. For instance, some parade officials do not allow "for sale" signs to be displayed in car windows. Will your parade be for the locals or will it be designed to attract people from other cities and states? Will you allow units from outside your community to participate? What is your policy on allowing politicians and/or candidates for political office? Will items such as candy, gum, pencils, etc. be allowed to be thrown from a float? (See *Sample A, page 26*)

The theme of your parade should determine what units to include. Will it have floats? If so, determine what kind of floats and how big. Will it have clowns, animals, or children on bicycles? Remember, variety keeps the spectators' interest.

7. Ask potential participants to complete an entry form that includes their name or the organization's name, contact person's name, complete mailing address and telephone number. Also ask what the entry is. One way to do this is to offer a list of possible entry types like queen (car or float), antique car, float, marching unit, horses (how many?), marching band, car, musical and other. Also ask for a brief description of the entry.

Include the deadline on the entry form along with the names and numbers of people to call if the entrants have questions. It is a good idea to also include the parade guidelines on this sheet. (See *Sample B, page 27*)

8. Keep track of entries by recording each one on a 3X5 card so all entries can be organized alphabetically. Include all the information that was on the entry form.

9. Set up the lineup. This is very important so take time to do it right. One method is to cut pieces of business card size paper. Write the name of each entry on a piece of paper. Use a highlighter to mark the musical entries. On a large table lay out all of the cards so you can

quickly look over them and begin lining up your mock parade.

If you have a lot of entries, don't feel overwhelmed. Pull out all your highlighted music groups and divide the parade into units with each one beginning with music. For example, if you have three bands you would have three units.

Band x x x x x Band x x x x x Band x x x x x

Now you can fill in with a nice blend of entries that might look something like this (VFW color guard, police cars and fire trucks have been added to the front of the parade).

**Unit One** (1) VFW (2) Police Cars (3) Fire Trucks  
(4) Band (5) Queen (6) Mayor  
(7) Parade Marshall (8) Car

**Unit Two** (9) Band (10) Scouts (11) Float  
(12) Queen (13) Car

**Unit three** (14) Band (15) Car (16) Float (17) Horses

Ideally, there would be many more entries between the bands. The above serves only as a model. Once organized, each unit can be assigned a number which will make lineup easier.

### Some Tips:

- Start with a big opening, something spectacular, your showiest band with police cars and sirens and banners telling what parade it is.
- Don't place similar entries next to each other.
- Spread out musical entries evenly.
- Put marching groups that include small children close to the front so they don't have so far to walk.
- Keep noisy entries away from animal entries.
- Put horses at the end and make sure there's

someone to follow directly behind them to clean up messes. Marching units don't like to follow horses!

- Place fire trucks near the beginning so they can leave quickly in an emergency.
- Look over the mock parade lineup and visualize the parade. Does it "look" right?
- Design the parade route so that it circles back to the starting point. This allows participants to return to their awaiting vehicles, prevents participants who have completed the route from flowing back through the parade while still in progress, and allows you to establish one central command post.
- Make the parade more special by providing boutonnieres and corsages to the day's VIPs—the mayor and his/her spouse and the parade marshal. A parade marshal is usually selected by the community because of outstanding community work or service.
- Contact Shriner groups; they often have very entertaining parade units. They do accept donations.
- Invite other local festival queens to participate.
- If the parade is to last 50-60 minutes, it should have 60-70 entries including 5-7 musical groups.

10. Send out lineup information to entrants that includes their lineup number and when and where to line up.

11. On parade day, have extra people to help line up the parade. If possible, have the lineup crew wear identifying clothing such as caps or

hats that say "parade". Make sure each crew member has a copy of the lineup order and have them spread out on the lineup route to direct entrants. Parade officials along the route with walkie-talkies can help keep things moving smoothly and the walkie-talkies come in handy in case of an emergency.

12. A videotape of the parade is a great way to analyze areas that need improvement.

13. Ask for criticism after the parade and set new policy for future years. With one parade under your belt, next year's event will be even better.

14. After the parade, send thank-you notes to participants and crew.

15. Remember, the more fun you have with the parade, the more fun your spectators will have.

## **CHOOSING A CARNIVAL**

*by: Donald Bark, Sandwich Fair*

*Reprinted with permission by Ward Sound and Lighting*

Choosing the right carnival is one of the most important things a concessions manager will do. The carnival is a very visible aspect of your festival. People are attracted to a bright, colorful, clean-looking, well-run carnival. A carnival with a good safety record is a must.

When choosing a carnival, you should visit other festivals and fairs and talk to their boards. Ask questions about their carnival's safety record, the success of the fair while this particular carnival has been playing

there, what kind of relationship exists between the carnival owner and the board, how does the carnival handle its personnel on the grounds, is the carnival clean, equipment in good repair, are the rides up-to-date? Carnival games, sometimes called hanky-panky games (high pressure games designed to prevent a person from winning), should not be a part of your carnival. Spend time looking and watching the overall operation of a carnival before booking them into your fair or festival.

## FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Festival-goers are difficult to categorize. Some are retired; others are still in their strollers. Some come to watch people; others are much more interested in the arts and crafts. But there's one thing that seems to hold true for nearly everyone in the crowd: an inordinate desire for food and beverages.

Like the other committees, the one handling food arrangements needs to get to work promptly. An early order of business is to become thoroughly familiar with requirements issued by the Michigan Department of Health. This festival booklet cannot possibly address all the points covered by the manuals, but it can quickly summarize their point objective: to keep people free from disease.

The food regulations don't end with what can and cannot be served. They also cover such things as handwashing facilities, wastewater disposal, and permissible tableware. In addition, there are specific requirements concerning the construction

of concession stands. Floors are to be of certain cleanable materials; walls and ceilings must keep out bugs and the weather; doors must be self-closing; and counter-service areas must be designed "to restrict the entrance of flying insects." There's even a minimum standard for screening materials: at least 16 mesh to the inch. To make sure their food service arrangements are in order, many festival organizers involve the county sanitarian in their planning from the onset.

Beverage sales also are governed by state regulations. In addition to those of the Health Department, the Liquor Control Commission has certain rules that must be followed if "spirituous" drinks are to be sold. Nonprofit organizations, for example, can obtain an "on-premises retail beer permit" if they meet certain requirements. Since the permit application takes several weeks to process, submit all the paperwork (and the fee) well in advance of the festival date.

Important as they are, government regulations are but one part of the food/beverage picture. There are also several other things to consider. One concerns variety. Just as the entertainment program is improved with a mixture of performances, refreshments serve a wider and more appreciative audience if the selections are diverse. In fact, several very successful events owe a great deal of their popularity to the tempting dishes made available to a hungry public.

An earlier chapter noted that the food and beverage business can be handled either by the festival organizers themselves or by concessionaires. The decision on which to go with

is influenced by the amount of start-up funds available, food service equipment, and volunteers. One piece of advice, however, applies to both alternatives: ask for bids. If the festival promoters are selling the food, bids are a way to get the best prices on buns, hot dogs, soft drinks, and other foodstuffs. If concessionaires are to be used, solicit bids to find one offering the best return (percent of gross) to the organization. And, have everything—menu, hours of operation, location, and the financial arrangements—clearly spelled out in any contracts with vendors.

## **LEGALITIES AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

The complexity of your festival will probably determine which permits and licenses you need. Put one person in charge of tracking them down. Licensing raffles and other types of gambling were mentioned earlier in this booklet. The need to obtain necessary permits associated with the sale of food and beverages and to follow health department regulations was also discussed earlier.

Festival organizers may want to consider registering with the state as a nonprofit corporation. Reasons for doing this include protecting individual board members from lawsuits against the festival and registering as a nonprofit corporation may be required for certain permits and licenses.

A separate and additional consideration is to apply to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for tax exempt status. The IRS has prepared Publication 557, "Tax Exempt Status For Your Organization," that will answer most questions about filing requirements.

Risk management involves identifying and eliminating or reducing potential claims through an in-depth risk assessment. Insur-

ance policies can be purchased to cover known and unknown hazards such as weather conditions (wind, rain, hail), fire, personal injury, property damage, general liability, concessionaires liability (you can have a policy to insure them), theft, workers compensation, and performer "No-Show." This is not a complete list. Consult legal council and/or an insurance representative for further details.

Do not overlook security plans. Chances are, police protection will not be needed. However, if some incident should arise and law enforcement officials are miles away, a situation could get out of hand very quickly. Because of this possibility, local governments frequently have regulations addressing police patrols at public events.

Liability insurance is a critical issue for most festivals. The risk of accidents or damage with almost every aspect of your festival opens it up to litigation if an accident occurs, no matter how insignificant it may seem. Review and update your liability insurance policy on an annual basis. You may wish to require additional coverage for some events and you may require certain vendors or entertainment to carry their own separate policy.

## **ROYALTIES: PAYING THE PIPER**

*[Reprinted with Permission]*

Almost all published music is protected by copyright and enforcement of these copyrights is growing more stringent. Organizations like ASCAP (American Society of Composers and Publishers) are beginning to police festivals and similar special events to ensure compliance with the law.

While most professional musicians are already covered by dues to ASCAP, most amateurs are not. If they perform any music which has been previously published and/or recorded, royalties must be paid or the performer and the festival are liable to lawsuits. The same holds true for playing recorded music. Royalties must be paid regardless of the nonprofit status of the festival or its organizers, a change enacted in the 1978 revision of the copyright law. Ignorance of the law, once considered an excuse by the courts in music copyright matters, is no longer acceptable.

## **LOCATION / PHYSICAL FACILITIES**

Lumped together in this chapter are many of the other matters that must be attended to to make your festival a success. A few words about the site: it must be large enough to accommodate the crowd, but not so big that there are vast distances between the various areas of activity. City parks are commonly used as are county fairgrounds. Some groups have even had success with downtown areas, particularly around courthouse squares.

Location is another consideration when it comes to site selection. Not only should festivals take place fairly near their prospective attendees, these events need to be easy to get to. Areas along the route with potential bottlenecks—narrow roads, one lane bridges, and the like—should be avoided. Likewise, property subject to flooding is not the best choice for a festival. And, of course, there's no getting around the fact that festival-goers arrive in vehicles which somehow must be parked. If 10,000 people show up and they average three to a car, the little over 3,000 vehicles must be parked. It's no won-

der that the sole responsibility of some festival workers is arranging for parking. Among other things, their plans should include handicapper spaces.

Once the site is chosen, sketch it out on a big sheet of paper. Draw property to scale if possible and include roads, trees, sidewalks, drainages, fire hydrants, power lines, and any other important characteristics. When the "base map" is completed, identify tentative locations for restrooms, a first aid station, concession stands, exhibit and entertainment areas, and whatever other features the festival will include. There are several rules to remember:

1. Locate restrooms so that they are convenient for the crowd, not just where they can be conveniently set up. Keep the restrooms in clusters. It's confusing if the men's facility is at one end of the festival and the women's is at the other. Make sure they are clearly marked "Men" or "Women." It has been recommended to have more restrooms designated for women than men.
2. Remember electrical needs when pinpointing stage locations and arts and crafts areas.
3. Establish some distances between entertainment and exhibits. Otherwise an artist may be unable to explain her techniques because of loud music.
4. Provide benches and even picnic tables in some shady spots for those visitors who may need to sit and rest awhile.
5. Consider visitors with special needs. How accessible is your festival to people with physical handicaps? Just as important as structural features is your attitude in dealing with handicappers. Be sure to accommodate them.
6. Consider establishing an information

booth. It's a great place to answer questions, distribute programs, and handle lost-and-found items.

7. Put some serious thought into the physical arrangement of booths, stands and stages. Traffic—human traffic—must somehow flow between these attractions. Minimize points of resistance.

8. Finally, after everything is placed on the map, take the plan out to the actual site. Visualize what is going to go where. Be certain that the property can accommodate each item that has been mapped.

9. Cleanliness is a must and cannot be stressed enough. Provide an adequate number of trash containers, conveniently and appropriately placed and be sure to monitor and empty the containers on a regular basis.

### ***Lost People?***

*Knowing that few things are more terrifying for a child than being lost in a crowd, some festival organizers have devised a way to quickly reunite families. It's the "Lost People Tree"—a small tree decked out with clear Christmas tree type lighting—where counselors are stationed. Children*

# Sample A: PARADE GUIDELINES

*(The following was adapted from an actual set of parade guidelines.)*

## 1995 National Fudge Festival Grand Parade Rules and Information

Parade Date:	July 21, 1995
Formation Time:	3:00 P.M.
Starting Time:	4:30 P.M.
Entry Deadline:	July 1, 1995

***We extend a hearty welcome and best wishes!  
To make sure that the parade is safe and fun for everyone, please read and follow  
these rules and regulations.***

1. Commercial Vehicles: Vehicles and equipment that are purely commercial will not be accepted.
2. As soon as you arrive, report to "Parade Central" at the Cocoaville Administrative Office Building parking lot located at 5th and Elm. Upon reporting, you will receive your entry card and be assigned a position in the parade.
3. At 3:00 P.M., place your group at the assigned position. When the parade begins, your entry card will be collected by the lineup chairperson. No group will be admitted without an entry card.
4. The parade route begins at the corner of Old 27 and Fourth.
5. Floats, displays and other entries may be no taller than 13 feet, 6 inches, so they will clear overhead wires.
6. Safety Regulations
  - A. The death or injury of anyone is not worth the festival!
  - B. Nothing may be thrown or passed out from any unit. Excited children could be trampled or pushed under vehicles.
  - C. You may not leave vehicles to shake hands or mingle with the crowd along the parade route. This rule also applies to marchers in the parade by order of the City Police.
  - D. Adequate safety chains must be used on all towed units and displays.
  - E. Drivers of self-contained units must be able to see out of those units safely.
  - F. Dangerous acts, fireworks, weapons discharge, and sudden loud noises are not permitted near animals.
  - G. Alcoholic beverages may not be consumed by participants in the parade by order of the City Police.
7. This year's parade is expected to last 1½ hours. Prepare yourself for this length of time. Make sure you and your animals remain comfortable.
8. Bad weather information will be broadcast as quickly as possible.
9. To help keep the parade interesting, do not stop along the parade route.
10. For more information, or if you have questions, call 517-555-1313.

# Sample B: ENTRY FORM

*(The following was adapted from an actual entry form.)*

April 1995

Dear Friend:

Once again the community of Cocoaville is preparing for its annual National Fudge Festival. Last year's parade was an enormous success and was enjoyed by over 20,000 people.

For the past 25 years we have consistently sought to improve, expand and modify our parade. It is now one of the top parades in Michigan!

This year's Grand Parade is Saturday July 21. We extend a special invitation to your organization to take part in this year's event and help lend prestige and excitement to the whole affair.

Please fill out the application and return it as soon as possible. Applications must be returned by July 1, 1995.

We eagerly await your reply and hope you can take part in the upcoming festivities.

Sincerely,

*National Fudge Festival Committee*

- Yes, we will participate in this year's Grand Parade
- We regret that we cannot attend this year.
- Please send us an invitation for next year.

*Type of Unit Being Entered:*

- Marching band
- Convertible
- Marching group
- Riding band
- Drill team

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

- Float w/music
- Float w/o music
- Float constructed by entrant
- Float is rented

*Name and address of organization*

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*Phone* \_\_\_\_\_

*Please add information that may be used by media broadcasting on parade day:*

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## VI. EVALUATING

*who have become separated from their parents are taken here and so are adults who have lost their children. It's a great success.*

**T**he management process consists of five main elements: planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. This final step, controlling, includes evaluating and is addressed in this chapter. Most organizations concentrate so much of their energy and effort on the other four elements of management that when it comes to evaluating, it is often overlooked or avoided.

Evaluating loops the management process back to the planning stage. It measures the proposed goals and objectives against the actual outcome or results. What did you do, who did it, how was it done? What worked, what didn't and what do you recommend for next year?

You may also want to find out more about the visitors to your festival and ask for their opinions on various topics. Make sure you have a reason or use for each and every question and that the information you collect is useful for making future decisions.

### FESTIVAL IMPACT STUDIES

Recreation, Travel and Tourism Institute  
Clemson University

*Reprinted with permission*

Festival assessment or analysis has historically been accomplished in a cursory manner. As long as promoting agencies generated the money they wanted, everyone was happy. More and more, however, organizers are

looking for more formal studies of festivals. These studies can assist in determining prime markets and how to reach them with limited advertising budgets, and in determining economic impacts of festivals.

So called "input-output" studies to account for every dollar brought into a community by a festival and every dollar taken out are tedious, expensive, and generally not really necessary. Clemson University, in South Carolina, has developed a simplified procedure for assessing the economic impact of local festivals and other special events which should satisfy all but the most fastidious of accountants.

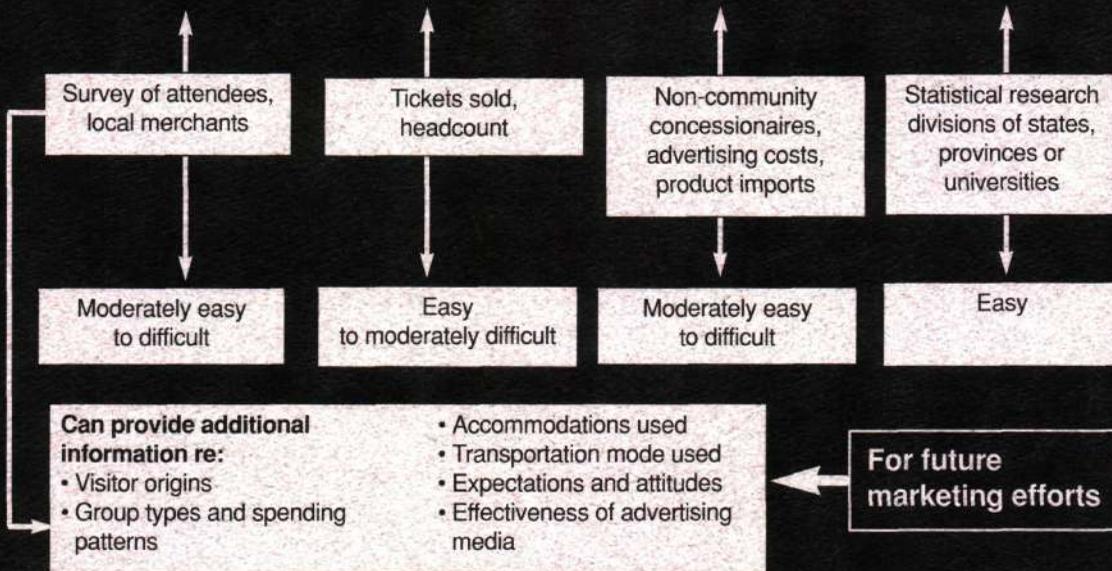
### ECONOMIC IMPACT FLOWCHART

The flowchart on the facing page is relatively self-explanatory; a few items bear further discussion.

Some state tourism offices provide both financial and technical support to festivals as part of their mission to attract out-of-state visitors; but before they commit funds, they want to see convincing evidence that the event really does draw from across state lines. Evidence that often influences funding comes from economic impact studies that show proof of positive economic benefit.

Festival survey instruments (questionnaires) should be kept to a minimum length. Festival-goers do not want to spend a half-hour being interviewed or filling out a questionnaire. Usually, local residents can be exempted from many of the questions asked of non-residents. Properly setting up the questionnaire makes this difference easy to implement. Examples of question-

$$[(\$ \text{ per capita spent } \times \text{ total } \# \text{ attending}) - \$ \text{ leakage}] \times (\text{economic multiplier}) = \text{Net}$$



## ECONOMIC IMPACT FLOWCHART

naires can be found at the end of this chapter.

One final note on such surveys; they should be dated and times noted. While most information sought is in the form of averages or totals, time lines are also important for future festival planning. For example, if spending appears to decline dramatically after certain hours or on certain days (and this can be double-checked with vendors), then planners may consider curtailing festival operations during these times or shifting the festival to other days of the week. Group or individual types attending the festival may also change during various hours or days of the

event. This knowledge helps schedule entertainment or other attractions within the festival. This information can be especially useful and even critical if the event attracts group tours.

*[Reprinted with permission]*

### LIFECYCLE

Recreation, Travel and Tourism Institute  
Clemson University

*Reprinted with permission*

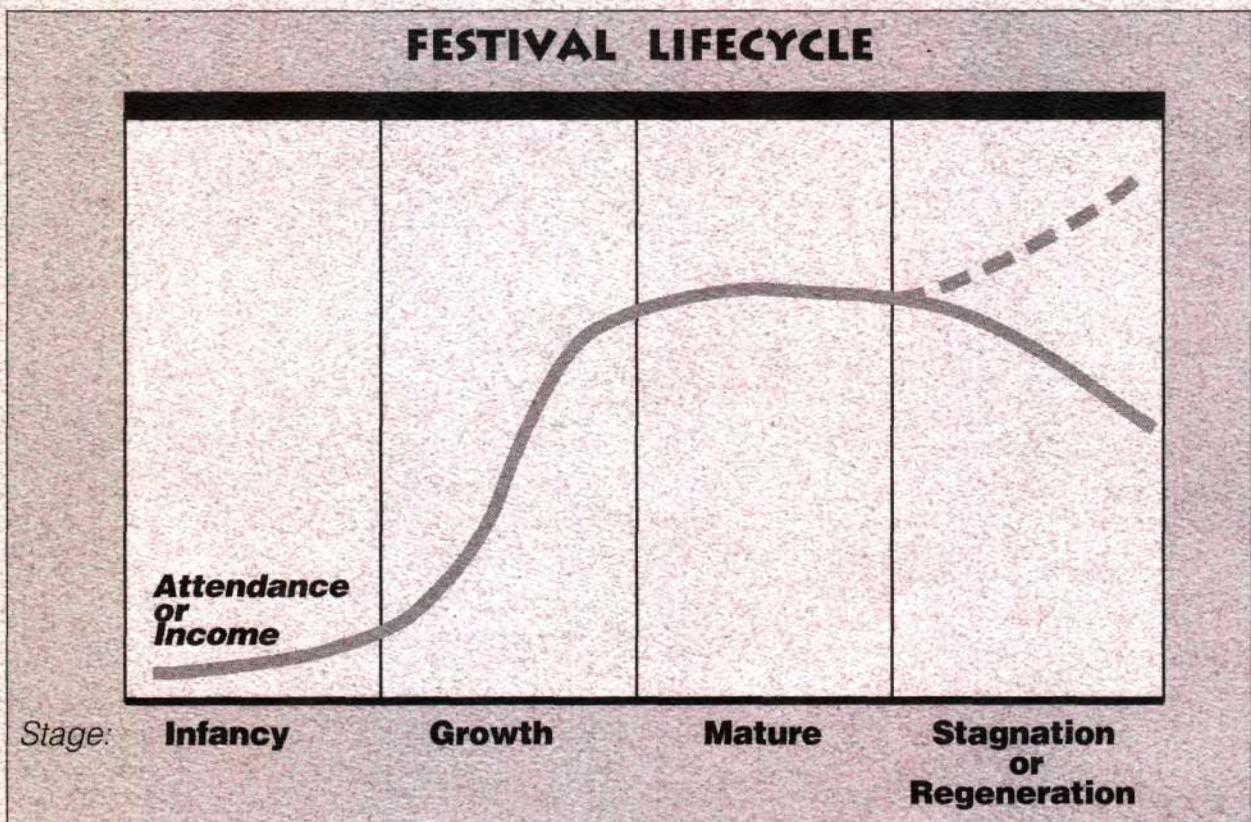
It has been known for some time that products have lifecycles. This is why product marketers are continually offering the

public “new” and “improved” versions. More recently, it has been discovered that tourist destinations—especially resorts—appear to experience similar lifecycle fluctuations. Festivals are no different. The simplified diagram below illustrates the typical lifecycle pattern.

If a festival is strictly local in nature, it must invariably saturate the local market, unless the locality is experiencing real population growth. If the population is stable or declining, festival attendance will follow suit, and either stabilize or decline. Even if attendance stabilizes, yearly cost increases caused by inflation, if not matched by local population's salaries, will cause festival net income to decline. Thus the term “stagnation” on

the diagram. Locally marketed festivals usually reach this point within five to six years after their initiation.

To counteract this cycle, festival operators must either 1) expand the promotional efforts beyond the local population and/or 2) improve the product, i.e., add to or redesign the festival. Either usually calls for additional funding and certainly for creative thinking. Either or both efforts should begin before the event reaches its “mature” stage. A “ho-hum” reputation is difficult to overcome and more costly than prevention. Three relatively inexpensive ways to expand a festival's market are through radio and television public service announcements (PSA's), travel writers and familiarization (FAM) tours.





## Sample Festival Questionnaire: Spring Jubilee

(The following was adapted from an actual questionnaire.)

Day:  Fri.  Sat.  Sun.

Time:  A.M.  P.M.

1. Where do you live? *city state* :

*zip*:

2. Are you staying overnight in the Cocoaville area?  yes  no

If so, where are you staying?  friends/relatives  hotel/motel  campground

3. How many people are in your group?                      Adults                      Children (12 and under)

4. How much do you plan to spend at the festival?    \$

5. How much do you plan to spend in the area other than on the festival site?    \$

6. How long do you plan to stay at the festival?

7. How did you learn about the festival? (Check as many as apply.)

- newspaper       radio                       television                       brochure                       poster  
 magazine       word-of-mouth       other (describe):

8. Do you have any comments or suggestions to improve the festival?

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**Thank you.**

This questionnaire expands on the previous questionnaire and attempts to determine what advertising and promotion was most effective. Length of stay (question 6) on site was necessary to determine daily turnover rate. Attendance was estimated based upon this factor times an average number of participants on the town square at any one time.

## VII. CONCLUSION

**E**VEN AFTER THE LAST VISITOR leaves, the festival is not over—at least not for its organizers. Some late details must be handled.

One matter that must be taken care of promptly is to extend thanks to individuals, firms, and organizations that helped with the event. A personal note mentioning specific contributions is strongly recommended; the mass produced “thank-you” doesn’t really carry much sincerity. Including a photograph of the person “caught in action” or a sponsor’s contribution is a nice addition to the thank-you note.

Many organizers also prepare a festival notebook including a complete report from

every committee. By featuring all kinds of information—budgets, telephone numbers, outlines, news releases, contracts, and even a list of mistakes to avoid—these notebooks pave the way for next year’s festival crew. It’s also a great way to preserve festival histories and traditions.

The festival board should continue to meet with the finance committee to make a final accounting of all revenues and expenditures. Be sure to pay bills as soon as possible.

Finally, it may be a good idea to schedule an after-the-event party to reward everyone that helped with the festival. People have a chance to relax and share the experiences of a long and interesting day.

### A FINAL WORD

Throughout this pamphlet it has been suggested to observe other festivals and talk to the organizers for new ideas and solutions to problems. Refer to the bibliography at the end of this publication for a list of resource materials that will be quite useful to most festival planners, organizers, and workers.

In addition, consider contacting other civic or volunteer organizations such as 4-H, Scouts, Jaycees, or YMCA to get a different perspective on organizational skills and working with volunteers. You may also find that materials prepared by the Michigan Commerce Department or the U.S. Small Business Administration can be adapted for

your uses. Running a festival has some close similarities to running a small business.

We welcome your comments regarding this bulletin on festival management. Please let us know if the ideas presented here have been helpful to you or if you have discovered additional tips that you would like to share. Thank you.

Phil Alexander  
District Extension Tourism Agent  
200 Livingston Blvd.  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
(517) 732-6484 ext. 272

# TWELVE WAYS TO KILL A FESTIVAL

1.

Rest assured that everything will fall into place.  
There's no need to organize.

2.

Begin your planning tomorrow.  
These events are a piece of cake.

3.

Ignore health department regulations.  
After all, the inspector was once on your bowling team.

4.

Give everybody equal authority.  
There's no need for leadership.

5.

Assume that publicity is under control.  
The local newspaper is sure to provide front page coverage.

6.

Draw up rigid plans. Flexibility is for gymnasts,  
not festival organizers.

7.

Forget the idea of a simple event. Get your money's  
worth and start out with a week-long festival.

8.

Demand help from local businesses and organizations.  
They owe you some cooperation.

9.

Don't worry about extra help.  
You and your six helpers can handle any crowd.

10.

Move the festivals date around from year to year.  
There's no reason to establish a traditional time for it.

11.

Discard receipts, invoices and other records.  
These things just get in the way.

12.

Let somebody else worry about start-up money.  
Spend your time auditioning the entertainment.

# HELPFUL INFORMATION

## ORGANIZATIONS

### Cooperative Extension Service

Contact your County Extension Office listed in the white pages under County Government

### Michigan Association of Fairs and Exhibitions

P.O. Box 241  
Allegan, MI 49010  
Phone: (616) 673-3030

or

Sue Bila  
Festival Administrator  
16381 S. M-52  
Chesaning, MI 48616

### Michigan Bureau of Lottery

Phone: (517) 887-6800

### Michigan Council for the Arts

1200 Sixth Street  
Detroit, MI 48226-2461  
Phone: (313) 256-3731

### Michigan Department of Public Health

P.O. Box 30035  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Phone: (517) 373-1320

or

Contact your local District Health Department

### Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Recreation Services  
P.O. Box 30028  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Phone: (517) 373-1660

### Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

P.O. Box 30050  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Phone: (517) 373-2167

*Includes Travel Information Services and Welcome Centers*

### Michigan Department of Treasury Sales, Use and Withholding Division

Treasury Building  
Lansing, MI 48901  
Phone: (517) 373-2923

### Michigan Liquor Control Commission

Phone: (517) 322-1345

### Michigan Travel Bureau

P.O. Box 30226  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Phone: 1-800-5432-Yes or (517) 373-0670

### Michigan Travel, Tourism & Recreation Resource Center (TTRRC)

Michigan State University  
172 Natural Resources Building  
East Lansing, MI 48824-1222  
Phone: (517) 355-1822

## REGIONAL TOURIST ASSOCIATIONS:

### West Michigan Tourist Association

136 E. Fulton Street  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
Phone: (616) 456-8557

### Upper Peninsula Travel & Recreation Association (UPTRA)

P.O. Box 400  
Iron Mountain, MI 49801  
Phone: (906) 774-5480

*Also: Contact your local library for additional resource materials. Many provide inter-library loan services making materials not found in your library available from other libraries.*

# COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE PUBLICATIONS

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:

- E1223 Group Leadership: Leader Options
- E1224 Group Leadership: Who Needs More Members?
- E1225 Group Leadership: How Involved Will People Get?
- E1226 Group Leadership: Ways To Streamline Meetings
- E1227 Group Leadership: Elements of Sound Decision Making
- E1228 Group Leadership: The Process of Evaluation
- E2145 Building Stronger Community Groups: Pitfalls, Principles, and Characteristics
- NCR018 Committees: A Key to Group Leadership
- NCR048 A New Look At Parliamentary Procedure
- NCR228 This Meeting Will Come To Order- Parliamentary Procedure
- NCR314 Express Yourself (Without Turning Others Off)
- NCR315 Influencing Others
- NCR316 Local Boards-Working Together
- NCR317 Why We Don't Agree & What We're Going To Do About It
- NCR318 Building A Local Team

## TOURISM AND RECREATION:

- E1322 To Promote Your Community-Tourist Hospitality School
- E1381 Tourism: Greeting The Guest
- E1605 Creating A Travel Brochure That Sells
- E1931 Developing Brochures
- E1937 Tourism & Its Significance in Local Development
- E1938 Managing Tourism Information Systems
- E1939 Developing A Promotional Strategy
- E1940 Information and Traveller Decision Making
- E1957 Creating A Promotional Theme
- E1958 Developing A Tourism Organization
- E1959 Tourism Marketing
- E1992 Feasibility Analysis in Tourism
- E1999 Pricing Tourism Products and Services
- E2004 Tourism Planning
- E2005 Selecting Promotional Media
- E2064 Courtesy Is Contagious

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- Small Town Tourism Development, Dr. Richard L. Howell, Recreation, Travel & Tourism Institute, 263 Lehotsky Hall, Clemson University, SC 29634-1005, 1987/88.
- Fair, Festival & Event Promotion Handbook, Ward Sound & Lighting, 5565 Rt. 36 East, Decatur, IL 62521, 1987.
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- "A Look At Boards," The Practical Historian, William H. Mulligan, Jr., editor, 636 Everett #1, Negaunee, MI 49866, Volume 2, Number 2 & 3, August/November 1990.
- "Festival, Fair and Event Marketing," Glenn M. Kreag, Extension Recreation Specialist, University of Kentucky, Research and Education Center, Princeton, KY 42445.





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