



FUN FESTIVE FUNDRAISING IDEAS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is a time for giving. Why not harness that generous spirit and turn it into donations for your American Legion Auxiliary unit? Here are some fun and festive fundraising ideas that can help bring your unit together for the holidays while making some money to help support local veterans, military, and their families.

1. Gift wrapping for good

Contact your local holiday shopping destination and ask if you can set up a gift-wrapping booth nearby to raise money for your ALA unit.

What You Need:

- Tables for gift-wrapping stations
- Wrapping and tissue paper
- Ribbons and bows
- Gift tags and pens/markers
- Gift boxes and bags
- Multiple pairs of scissors
- Large supply of scotch tape
- Credit card swiper to collect wrapping fees/change for cash donations

When you have all your materials, pick a day (or a couple) that will be busy with holiday shoppers. Have volunteers that are wrapping experts do the gift-wrapping, while other volunteers help customers pick out paper, collect donations, and restock supplies.

Charge per gift based on the size (it may be best to have a few size ranges). Keep a donation box out so customers can give more if they choose.

Try making the booth extra festive by handing out candy canes and playing holiday music. It may help draw more people to your booth!

2. Christmas tree recycling

Even if Christmas is over, the gifts can still roll in. Advertise around town that you will be collecting donations in exchange for your unit picking up and disposing of Christmas trees.

What You Need:

- A large truck
- Lots of hardworking volunteers

Set a date, go pick the trees up, and collect your earnings. If you have the space (and permit) you could have a large bonfire to celebrate your success or find a local place that will help you recycle the trees.

3. Polar Bear Plunge

Depending on where you live, this fundraiser might be easier in January or February – the colder the better! Try organizing a Polar Bear Plunge to raise money for your unit.

Just pick a local body of water, get permission to host an event, and have supporters donate to jump into the cold water. It's that easy!

Encourage participants to raise money on their own by asking friends and family to sponsor their plunge. You can raise even more money by having other activities on the beach before the main event.

Tips for all ALA fundraisers

Here are a few things to keep in mind for all fundraising events:

- Be ALA branded — wear ALA shirts and use as many ALA branded items as you can. Always bring brochures/pamphlets to your events so participants can learn more about the American Legion Auxiliary and tell supporters where their donations are going.
- Get the word out —there is nothing more important than telling people about your event. Use social media, post fliers where you can in your community, and tell everyone you know. If they don't know it's happening, they can't show up and donate.
- Take pictures — designate a volunteer who is good with technology to take photos of your event, with the hope of sharing these photos on social media, and spreading the word about your event, and your unit. [For tips on taking good photos, check out this blog post.](#)
- Thank participants — be sure to follow up with each guest and thank them for donating to your unit. It goes a long way and may even make them want to donate again in the future.

Share your holiday fundraising events with us! Email ALAMagazine@ALAforVeterans.org or tag us on social media @ ALAforVeterans.