

**Event:** Fundraiser/Awareness for Tree Fresno, highlighting Tree Fresno and the role of the tree in an urban landscape.

**Funds:** I plan to donate a portion of our fundraising earnings to CAUFC. Earnings for those who have not run a fundraiser like this are likely to be meager this first year. The key is to build a partnership with your local team, not lose money, have fun, and get people to the ballgame.

**#1 Step:** Contact the community liaison person (different titles for different teams) and ask if they work with non-profits to organize fundraisers... then make an appointment to sit down and discuss what is possible.

Non-profits can usually get much more recognition from the home team and participation from supporters on games held on weeknights.

The goal of home team is to get more people in seats for each game. They also will do their best to help non-profits generate revenue through an effective collaboration.

In the case of Fresno, our focus is the month of April: 4/20 Earth Day and/or 4/24 Arbor Day

- Your home team may not be playing at home on your chosen date. You will need to be flexible.

In April, the Fresno Grizzlies are playing at home on these dates (schedule posted on their website):

Homestand 1: April 14 (Tue) -20 (Mon)

Homestand 2: April 29 (Wed) and 30 (Thu)

Observation: The team is in town on Monday, April 20 for Earth Day. The Grizzlies offered us an opportunity to become involved with this special event of THEIRS which brings several thousand students to the ballpark. We have been invited to share information about trees on this day. This is solely an educational event, not a fundraiser. Game is held during the middle of the day.

Though we are going to participated (happily) on 4/20, we are selecting a second date in which to orchestrate our fundraiser. Right now, we are looking at before 4/20, a date during Homestand 2 (see above) to celebrate Arbor Day ... or we may even choose a date later in the season, according to what is already scheduled at the Grizzlies. For instance, June 5 is Ag Night. We are looking for theme nights which are already booked that would be compatible with TREES. We do not want to choose a night which would overshadow us too much, like "Pokémon." Those bigger nights are typically scheduled over weekend nights.

### **Non-Profit Fundraiser Event Options That Have Been Done Before with the Fresno Grizzlies:**

#### **Fundraising Tickets**

The Grizzlies used to offer us a ticket for a cost of \$6, which we sold for \$12.

Effective ways to begin selling tickets would include enlisting board members, star volunteers, and companies (who already support you) to take on a goal of selling a certain number of tickets. The Grizzlies asked us to buy tickets outright. We then sold them out of our office. In some cases, the team may allow you to return tickets which are not sold (1-2 days before the game). Clarify (very diplomatically) this option from the beginning. I would recommend buying a minimum number of tickets

based on your ticket selling strategy... like 200. Then, when those are sold, purchase more as you move along.

My organization always has a point person who can be trusted to handle tickets and payments (no credit card).

Our organization can promote the event and availability of tickets on social media and via Constant Contact, and out in the community (tree plantings, events).

### **Tree-themed Jersey (pre-bids)**

Inquire about the possibilities of a jersey auction to benefit your organization. This is common in the major and minor leagues. Special jerseys are featured for theme nights. In the case of the Grizzlies, we were too late to request for this year... so we will push (now) for a jersey auction for next year.

Jersey auctions are a real revenue generator. In the past, I have secured “pre-bids” for several random (not big-named) ballplayer jerseys. Ex: Ask 10 of Tree Fresno’s major supporters agreed to agree to donate \$250-\$1,000 for an individual jersey to benefit our organization. Typically, there are 25-30 jerseys auctioned, most of them signed by a player. Big-named ball players, like Buster Posey, will auction for a good amount (say: \$1,500) but others will go for a pittance. On the jerseys not being bid up, we use the pre-bid (and make a bid) to get more \$ for our organization. It pays to organize “pre-bids” so that you don’t have a poorly performing auction.

### **Activities Featuring TREES**

One of the things that makes minor league baseball better than the major leagues is the fact that they conduct lots and lots of activities on the field, which include participation from fans and community organizations.

This year, the Grizzlies just happen to need 2 trees planted. Yay! We plan to do this during our fundraising game with the mascot, a big giant lovable yellow bear named Parker, and possibly a player. This activity will be videotaped for future use.

We are currently brainstorming ideas of other games on the field to suggest to the Grizzlies. Undoubtedly, they will also have ideas.

### **Video Board Recognition**

The Grizzlies will recognize Tree Fresno and typically will donate recognition for our sponsors (ex: companies who have purchased lots of tickets, offered a jersey pre-bid, donated to Tree Fresno) – For the video board, our organization is in charge of securing company logos, videos, etc.

### **Sponsored Promotional Item**

We are planning to secure a sponsor to offer free water-wise seedlings/saplings to the first 500-1000 fans. We will ask recipients to post photos of their trees after they are planted. We will have a sticker on the seedling for Tree Fresno with the website.

### **Information Tables on the Concourse**

Our table will offer opportunities to volunteer (sign up!) and our typical set up that we have for distributing Tree Fresno information. We no longer rely on paper materials. We have “spin the wheel” and we post QR Codes, and the website address for more information.

The home team and our organization can coordinate to invite “related theme” organizations to join us for our game. Ex: air quality, fire safety, wildfire (CalFire), compost, recycle, water, irrigation, tree nurseries, our sponsors, environmental clubs from area schools, health institutions (Kaiser, Valley Children’s Hospital etc.) and others.

### **First Pitch**

Make a request for a First Pitch. In our case, since we have an outgoing and incoming CEO, we are requesting that the outgoing CEO make a pitch to the incoming CEO (“catcher”). The First Pitch could go to a major sponsor or your CEO, board member, or star volunteer.

### **Game Announcer Box**

Sometimes the game announcer will mention our organization and some related facts between plays on air. In some cases, a guest announcer joins on air for a few minutes. You need to prepare for this opportunity. In the past, I have supplied the announcer with some interesting and “catchy” points about my organization, which he could thread into his dialogue.

### **Advertising Pre-Event**

Ideas: The team mascot and/or baseball player/coach and/or team president can be filmed on a volunteer planting in March (before the game) ... Tree Fresno has two plantings, to include volunteers, with one being our local fair. Partnering with the fair could offer the Grizzlies a cross-promotion opportunity. The other planting is on a commercial property in South Central Fresno (HWY 99 and Cedar) – filming at this location could offer a sponsorship opportunity for this company. Perhaps they could sponsor the give-away seedlings/saplings, while at the same time bringing attention to their new, environmentally-friendly (compost and recycling) facility.

### **Media Partner**

Ask any of your radio, TV, media partners, design partners to step up for your organization to promote this event. Locally, we work with ABC 30 (TV0 and radio: KJWL/KYNO (PSAs), Q97 (Greg and Dre in the Morning Show) – Morning show announcers (like Dre) will invite guests (like you) to ask about why we should care about trees in our cities, etc. Could be great on the morning of the day of your game.

### **VIP Event**

If your board members, sponsors, or you are inclined, you can organize a special section or suite, or activity at the ballpark to recognize VIPs.

### **Be Gracious in Your Interaction**

Work in collaboration with your home team. They have lots of experience and lots of ideas. Each team functions differently. Don’t insist on anything, but ask to see what is possible. Bring ideas to the table.

Always keep in mind that the home team is interested in getting people/fans to the ballpark.