

Wellspring Faith In Action

Annual Potato Bake Fundraiser

Wellspring has hosted their annual potato bake fundraiser very successfully for four years in succession. We have people in the community that look forward to it since it is a different meal from what other organizations do as fundraisers. Seniors really enjoy the salad bar and the baked potato with all the trimmings. By combining the event with a silent auction, we have been able to increase our profit by 50%. We accept free will donations for the meal.

Advertising and community awareness are very important. We are able to utilize the free community calendar in our local paper for our activities so we always include the potato bake fundraiser information there. Our county churches are always very helpful and kindly include the information in their church bulletin announcements and church newsletters. Our community resource channel includes the information about the event in their announcements as well as our community digital sign that flashes community event information. To finalize all of our advertising, we place an advertisement in our county wide shoppers guide.

We hold the event at our American Legion. Because supplemental funds are provided by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, we are able to use their food license which saves us the expense of purchasing that. We have developed a specific list of items and food that we purchase each year and have very little waste as a result. We have a diagram of how our food is laid out on the buffet table and refer to that each year as well. Our volunteers bake bars which are served as dessert.

Volunteers are given specific duties to take care of. The day before, we meet at the legion to wash and wrap the potatoes. We also cut up the vegetables for the salad bar. The day of the event we set the tables, bake the potatoes, heat the toppings and set up the buffet. Certain people are delegated to serving food, stocking the buffet, making and serving coffee, clearing, and washing dishes.

The silent auction is all pure profit since all items are donated. Theme baskets such as movies, books, homemade jellies, baby clothes, and holiday items are donated by board members. Quality homemade items are profit makers. A separate volunteer organizes the silent auction for us. She also organizes silent auctions for other fundraisers such as the "Relay for Life." She brings a kit with everything she needs. She has the bidding sheets, bidding numbers, pencils, etc. Having a separate volunteer to handle just this is a necessity.

This event, along with our annual Minnesota Faith In Action donation mailer, is our largest fundraiser of the year. Our profit, including matching funds from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and donations from other service organizations, is usually about \$2,500.00. Since we are a very small program in a small county, this is a successful event for us.

