**Holding a Bowling for Rhinos Event**

**Fundraising**

Fundraising takes on many facets. The conventional one used for Bowling for Rhinos is bowling! Tips and advice for organizing a bowling event are listed in the following paragraphs. However, you may choose to have "Recycling for Rhinos" where you gather recycling and donate the total raised each year. Or "Rocking for Rhinos", "Rummage for Rhinos", "Running for Rhinos” events where you organize your fundraising in a completely different manner than what is explained below.

**BFR Getting Started**

In order to hold an event your chapter will require a Federal Non-profit Tax ID and sanctioning by AAZK. To be sanctioned to hold a BFR event your AAZK chapter will first register your event online at AAZK.org under the Bowling for Rhinos tab, and then pay the $25 Registration Fee. Upon completion of registration, you will receive a link to the Event Kit which includes: sponsor sheets, the AAZK BFR Financial Spreadsheet, a BFR Donation Tracking Form, sample thank you letters, and information about our conservation partners.

Once sanctioned by AAZK, contact local bowling allies to inquire about holding a fundraiser at their establishment. The proprietor may offer anything from a free event hosting to free lane rental in exchange for shoe rental. You can then either add a flat donation fee above any bowling rates or let the bowlers’ collect sponsors. It’s a good idea to create and distribute a rule sheet so the bowlers know who to make checks out to, when to hand in money, etc.

**Planning for a Larger BFR Event**

A Bowling for Rhinos event can get bigger and more complex from there. For a larger event, plan 4-6 months ahead. Form a committee within your AAZK chapter (even if it ends up consisting of only 1 or 2 people), contact several venues to find the best deal and set your date. This will allow ample time for your event to get in newsletters, calendars, and media. Find some local talent to volunteer to do the artwork for an event T-shirt. T-shirts are free advertising and education, and most fund-raisers usually give T-shirts to the participants, but this is not always the case. T-shirts may also be sold through fundraiser platforms to raise more money for your BFR event. Keep your list of names and addresses from the sponsor sheets of previous years to invite them again. If your event is on a weekend, you will probably generate greater public involvement.

Decide if you want to package a deal for your bowlers that covers the cost of bowling, a donation and maybe a T-shirt and/or meal. This is the most popular method of fundraising. Have bowlers turn in their money and sponsor sheets the night of your event. Have a few people to work the registration table so the event runs smoothly. Contact local restaurants, movie theaters, and hotels to see if they could donate items or prizes for your event. These can be raffled or auctioned (check local regulations on raffles or auctions) in a silent auction, given as door prizes or awards for different categories like high and low scorers and this makes the event more exciting. Invite local celebrities from radio and TV stations. After the event, write thank you letters for donation items and celebrity attendance.

**Expenses**

Prominently advertise that 100% of all event profits go towards conservation. All profits from the event are submitted to AAZK Bowling for Rhinos. Event holders will cover any expenses for this event by charging a set fee for bowlers which covers all fees charged by the bowling facility (lane rental, shoe rental) and anything else the event holder provides (shirts, food, etc.) On top of the fee to cover expenses you can then build in a flat donation (preferred) or ask bowlers to obtain sponsors. Silent Auctions, raffles or sale of merchandise are pure profit.

**BFR Fees**

Bowlers collecting sponsorships will need to collect the money before the bowling date because the money is due the evening of the event. Donations above the bowling fees are tax deductible Event holders should offer bowlers receipts for their donations, again specifying only that donations above fees are tax deductible.

**Event T-shirts**

An excellent opportunity to raise additional money is the creation of a BFR Event T-shirt. They can be given away to bowlers in the fee package and/or sold separately. Create a design (an artist friend, volunteer, design contest, etc. is helpful at this stage) and locate a local T-shirt company and negotiate a fair price – mentioning the BFR event is a worldwide conservation fund raiser. Try to negotiate a free or reduced price in exchange for logo placement on the shirt. Other local sponsors of your event can be added to the shirt.

**BFR fundraising guidelines**

* BFR Event holders will be sanctioned by AAZK. To register your event go to AAZK.org, select the Bowling For Rhinos tab, and look for the Event Registration Form. The form is generally available starting in mid-March. You can also contact the BFR team at BFR@AAZK.org
* A $25 Sanction Fee to cover administrative and banking fees is require for every event

Check can be made out to "AAZK – BFR" and mailed to:

AAZK

8476 E. Speedway Blvd. Suite 204

Tucson, AZ 85710-1728

* All profits and event financial forms are due to AAZK by November 15th.
* Sanctioned event holders will have access to AAZK BFR Event Kits upon completion of event registration.
* Form a BFR committee
* Locate a bowling alley (food supply and t-shirt company if going big)
* Advertise your event in calendars, local news stations, fliers, etc.
* Solicit for auction items or prizes
* Contact the BFR team at BFR@AAZK.org if the information packet does not answer your questions
* Each year AAZK Members are awarded five international trips generously donated by Lewa Wildlife Conservancy and the International Rhino Foundation. To be eligible for any of the five trips chapters must:
	1. Fill out the Event Registration form by May 1st
	2. Submit the $25 Registration Fee by May 1st
	3. Submit all funds by November 15th
	4. Submit financial forms by November 15th
	5. Nominate a member for the trips. There are two types of trips available
		+ The Anna Merz Rhino Champion Award is meant to recognize a member who has dedicated 3 or more years of time and energy to BFR. Nominations for this award are made with the Event Registration Form. Winners of this award will travel to Kenya courtesy of Lewa Wildlife Conservancy.
		+ The Rhino Champion Awards, also known as the fundraiser trips, are awarded to chapters based on how much money they raise. The nomination form for these trips is included in the Event Kit and must be completed by November 15th. The two chapters that raise the most money will be awarded two of the trips. The rest of the chapters are entered into a lottery. Chapters earn one ticket for completing registration prior to May 1st, and an additional ticket for every $1000 they raise. There are four trips in total, two to Kenya provided by Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, and two to Indonesia provided by the International Rhino Foundation.

**BFR Fundraising Tips for Success**

* Set a date early so that it can be advertised in as many newsletters, social media outlets, fliers, etc. as possible. Info should be placed in zoo newsletters, zoo volunteer newsletters, zoo society communications, and zoo maps or fliers, etc.
* Check with your Chamber of Commerce prior to setting date to find out events that could

conflict. Once you choose the date, inform your Chamber of commerce.

* Talk to your zoo volunteers at an organized luncheon to let them know they can join the

event or sponsor someone (have your forms ready).

* Put registration fliers in an area where volunteers may see them- i.e., in their reporting area
* Talk to your Zoo Society or other organization that monetarily assists the zoo
* Collect door prizes or Auction (raffle) items 4-6 months in advance in person with letter

of donation request in hand and acknowledge any donation in writing with donation receipts provided in BFR event packet.

* Send out invites to previous bowlers (addresses listed on sponsor forms from prior year)
* Look for “Rhino-centric” companies in your community and ask for donations and solicit

them to participate in bowling.

* Advertise that your event is open to the public
* Seek help from your facilities Special Events and graphic departments, graphics, etc. to

market your event.

* Advertise the list of prizes when soliciting bowlers for the event.
* INVITE LOCAL CELEBRITIES to bowl at your event (especially TV/radio- free

advertising)

* With permission from your facility post info next to rhino/elephant exhibits about your

upcoming event and how to join!

* Send out communication to friends and family seeking donations. – they can donate on

the web (aazk.org) and credit the donation to an individual or event.

* Look through the BFR Event Kit for helpful information about our Conservation Partners and rhino conservation
* Log on to the AAZK web page (aazk.org) as an AAZK Member and take advantage of

the promotional video posted on the BFR Resources page.

**Other Helpful Ideas**

If bowling doesn't seem to work in your community, try “Wii Bowling for Rhinos”, "Rock n' for Rhinos", "Rummage for Rhinos", “Run for Rhinos”, “Cueing for Rhinos” or “Recycling for Rhinos” (or create a new idea). Some chapters even donate money to BFR without holding an event. All goes to help conservation worldwide under AAZK’s Bowling for Rhinos Program! Print an information sheet about BFR, the sanctuaries, that donations are tax-deductible, tips for collecting, etc. to give out to any potential bowlers. Print up a flier with a registration form about your event and with facility permission, place it in zoo maps, zoo restaurants and post at community libraries and schools, etc. Remember, anyone can join the Bowl-a-thon so don't limit yourselves to only zoo staff or volunteers. However, be sure it is clear that only National AAZK members are allowed to win the trip. If you have a potential winner, ask them to join AAZK.

**Matching Gifts**

Many of your bowlers work at corporations which have matching gift programs. This means that when they donate to BFR, the company they work for may match their gift to BFR. This is a very simple program and can double your money with little effort. Follow these steps:

* When someone pledges or donates to BFR, ask if they are employed by a company with a

matching gift program?

* If they don't know they can find out by asking their Human Resources or Financial

office.

* They can obtain a matching gift form from their personnel office and complete it.
* Send the completed form to Ed Hansen at Ed.Hansen@aazk.org and AAZK will do the rest!

AAZK chapters or facilities, no matter how large or small should investigate holding a Bowling for Rhinos event. AAZK is here to provide any assistance you need to make your Event successful. Feel free to contact the Bowling for Rhinos Team at BFR@AAZK.ORG if you have any questions.