

## **Event Outline and Suggestions**

1. Form an organizing committee.
2. Decide on the event and the ancillary activities to improve the event or to create other sources for donations during the event.
3. Create a realistic and well researched budget including all projected expenses and revenue. Be conservative on the revenue and high on the expenses to allow for unforeseen expenses or problems.
4. Approve the budget organizationally and submit it to the FPMT IOF for review.
5. Reserve and secure the venues, services and supplies necessary for the event.
5. Create a work flow chart that defines all the activities and personnel to implement those activities from planning to completion including clean up, issuing thank you notes and completing any required reports.
  - Sub-committees maybe required to complete some of the activities. In other situations only a group leader will be required with a list of workers for the specific activity.
  - Examples of committees or areas to be covered include: Administration (accounting, thank you letter writing, printing, invitations); Public Relations (advertising, ticket sales, poster distribution, television and radio advertising when appropriate); Site preparation and clean up; Event operation (host and hostesses, ticket sellers, food servers, auction managers); Volunteer recruitment and management.
6. Prepare a calendar that outlines the planning and implementation of all the pre-event, event and post event activities in a timely manner. Follow the development of the event on the calendar and make sure that you are meeting your goals.
7. Implement the plan. Follow through. Do a Medicine Buddha Puja to assist with the process.

### **Examples of Activities to Augment or Enhance a Movie**

#### **Dinner or Food**

The inclusion of a dinner or a significant meal prior to or after the showing of the movie can increase the value of the event both socially and financially.

A donor could be found to provide or sponsor the food or dinner.

Different courses could be donated by different local restaurants in exchange for naming them in the advertising.

A high quality menu could be prepared by center members and offered.

Donors could be found to sponsor different courses of the dinner.

## **Auctions**

A silent auction can be run prior to the showing of the movie and the results announced at the end of the movie.

Items can be donated by center members and the local community.

Be creative in selecting items. Dharma items are always good.

Travel gifts such as airplane tickets or hotel reservations are very popular.

Dinner for four at a local restaurant is another popular item.

Pieces of Dharma art are very popular.

Other culturally appropriate items

A live auction can be very successful as well, especially after the showing of the movie.

## **Raffles**

Raffling off a major Dharma item or other attractive gift can be very productive. If the sales of the raffle tickets precede the event, it helps with the promotion of the event. Also selling tickets at the event can be very profitable as well. There can be an unlimited number of tickets sold or for a major item the number of tickets can be limited but the price of the ticket goes up significantly. For an item worth \$1,000, only 100 tickets are sold worth \$100 each.

## **Other Suggestions**

Other activities can include additional entertainment such as music, comedians, art displays (especially Dharma Art), dance or have entertainment provided by the youth of the center. It is also possible to combine the movie with other teachings, initiations or significant center activities.

Depending upon the culture, setting a fund raising goal such as \$20,000 or \$50,000 or the appropriate amount for the event can be helpful. This allows for donors that are able to donate significantly to feel that they are having a direct impact on the event. It is also important to publicize what the money will be used for at the center.

## **General Comments**

**Make this a successful and gratifying event for employees, volunteers and donors alike.**

1. Preparation and planning for an event are always the same amount of work. But it is far less stressful and far more enjoyable if completed early on with ample time allowed for completion of all the pre-event work and activity. Include activities in the event that your center or group enjoy attending or participating in personally. This makes the event much easier to promote and support as a volunteer or a donor.

2. Plan for problems and obstacles, they are always there. The more you pro-act verses re-act the easier and more successful the event will be.

3. Every activity usually requires more time and more people than originally designed. Build in extra time in the calendar and your planning phases. Have extra volunteers just to handle problems and last minutes issues that arise.

4. The night of the event have a small gift for everyone who attended and for all your volunteers. For example katas for the guests and tsa tsas for the volunteers can be very easy and pleasing. This makes it a very special night for everyone if the gifts are handed out when they leave. They will leave feeling special and gratified. Be sure all your volunteers leave with a small gift in their hand the night of the event.

5. Send thank you notes to everyone who donated to the event in any manner. This includes both donors and volunteers.

6. It is important to realize that events with deadlines have a certain emotional quality that can be experienced as stress or excitement. It is better to make it exciting that stressful. Match your volunteers to the correct job or responsibility based on their personality and willingness to participate.

### **Center Promotional Opportunity**

Use this opportunity to advertise and promote all your center activities from teachings and classes to other services such as hospice or community outreach projects. This is the time for the center to be radiating as the focus of attention. Rejoicing in all your dedicated work supporting the Dharma should be highlighted. Promote all the charitable activities you provide to the community. Avoid the perspective of being needy, but show all you have done and what you plan to do in the future.

This should be a wonderful celebration of the Center and Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

### **Tips for Venues and Promotion**

#### **Venues**

You will need locations that offer DVD projection for public screenings . Many independent theaters offer DVD projection systems.

Colleges, Universities, High Schools, Art Centers, libraries and hotels are all possible venues with public screening facilities. At campus locations, you can work with social study, religious study, art professors, teachers and student groups for access to campus facilities.

#### **Promotion**

Allow 6 to 8 weeks for an effective promotion. Press is free and a gift. Allow your local press enough time to plan for space for your event.

There will be an FTP website with text and photos for your local use to send to newspapers and other print press. You will need to **supply a brief cover letter** that includes your organization, your event, your date and times, your venue and why you are putting an event on. Also, be sure to include your contact information for any follow up.

Be sure to do a Public Service Announcement (PSA) for your local radio stations. A PSA script should have the who, what, when, where and why of your event and should be kept to no more than 50 words.

Use images from the FTP site to create a flyer or use the poster for your event. Distribute at public posting locations and any related events. Remember to distribute the information to your email lists and website. Also have user friendly local businesses supply a link to your website or to the FPMT Mystic Tibet webpage to advertise the event.

**Public Television for Public Advertising**

Most local public access television will accept DVDs for broadcast at no charge but need to be submitted by a local (that would be you). Use the trailer for advertising which is located on the FTP site.

**Exhibit for General Advertising**

If there is a bank, coffee house or book store that can provide an exhibit space, consider creating an exhibit from the images on the FTP site.