



**MARINE  
RAIDER**  
FOUNDATION

## THIRD-PARTY EVENT PLAYBOOK

A Guide to Hosting Successful Fundraising Events

### Welcome, Event Host!

Thank you for your willingness to host a fundraising event for the Marine Raider Foundation. Your support makes a direct impact on the lives of Marine Raiders, their families, and the Gold Star families of those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

This playbook will guide you through every step of hosting a successful third-party event—from planning to execution to follow-up. Whether you're hosting an intimate dinner party or a larger community gathering, you'll find everything you need here.

### Why Third-Party Events Matter

Third-party events are essential to our mission because they:

- Require minimal to zero cost from the Foundation
- Expand our reach into new networks and communities
- Build authentic connections with new supporters
- Generate net revenue equivalent to major foundation-hosted events
- Allow passionate supporters like you to make a direct impact

### Event Ideas & Formats

The best events are ones you're excited to host. Here are proven formats that work:

#### Backyard BBQ or Cookout

**Cost:** Low (\$200-500)

**Guest Count:** 20-50 people

**Revenue Potential:** \$3,000-\$8,000

**What to do:** Host a casual gathering in your backyard. Provide food and drinks, share the Marine Raider Foundation story, and ask guests to donate. Consider a suggested donation amount (\$100-250 per person).

***Pro tip:** Invite a Marine Raider or Gold Star family member to share their story—personal connections drive donations.*

## Happy Hour Meetup

**Cost:** Free-\$200 (many military-friendly venues donate space)

**Guest Count:** 15-40 people

**Revenue Potential:** \$2,000-6,000

**What to do:** Reserve space at a local bar or restaurant (preferably military-friendly). Guests cover their own drinks. Give brief remarks about the Foundation and pass around donation cards or a QR code for mobile giving.

***Pro tip:** Keep remarks brief (5-7 minutes). People came to socialize—inspire them, don't lecture.*

## Intimate Dinner Party

**Cost:** \$300-800

**Guest Count:** 8-20 people

**Revenue Potential:** \$5,000-15,000

**What to do:** Host a seated dinner at your home or a private dining room. Invite high-capacity guests. Share the Foundation's mission over dinner, followed by a direct ask. Consider a suggested donation of \$500-1,000 per guest.

***Pro tip:** Quality over quantity. Smaller, more engaged groups often raise more than larger casual events.*

## Other Creative Ideas

- **Golf outing or scramble** – Partner with a local course
- **Workout challenge** – CrossFit, 5K run, or fitness fundraiser
- **Brewery or winery tasting** – Partner with a local business
- **Poker night or game night** – Buy-in goes to the Foundation
- **Sporting event tailgate** – Gather fans before a game
- **Virtual event** – Zoom gathering with national reach

# Planning Your Event

## Step 1: Connect with the Foundation

Before you begin planning, reach out to the Marine Raider Foundation team:

Sarah Christian, Director of Operations

**Email:** [schristian@marineraiderfoundation.org](mailto:schristian@marineraiderfoundation.org)

**Phone:** (951) 551-9309

Jes McAndrews, CEO

**Email:** [jmcandrews@marineraiderfoundation.org](mailto:jmcandrews@marineraiderfoundation.org)

**Phone:** (646) 354-0361

We can help you with marketing materials, provide donation processing support, and give you talking points to help tell the Foundation's story.

## Step 2: Set Your Goal

A clear fundraising goal helps you stay focused and gives guests a target to rally around. Consider:

- How many guests will you invite?
- What's a reasonable suggested donation per person?
- Do you have any major donors or sponsors lined up?

**Example goal:** *"I'm hosting a backyard BBQ for 30 people with a suggested \$150 donation. My goal is to raise \$5,000 to support Marine Raiders and their families."*

## Step 3: Pick Your Date & Venue

- **Timing:** Give yourself 6-8 weeks to plan (or 3-4 weeks for a simple happy hour)
- **Venue:** Your home, a friend's space, a restaurant private room, or a military-friendly business
- **Avoid conflicts:** Check major holidays and local events

## Step 4: Create Your Guest List

Think beyond your immediate circle. Your event is an opportunity to introduce new people to the Marine Raider Foundation. Consider inviting:

- Friends and family
- Business contacts and colleagues
- Veterans and military supporters
- Neighbors and community members
- People who care about supporting those who serve

## Step 5: Send Invitations

Whether you use paper invites, Evite, or email, make sure your invitation includes:

- Date, time, and location
- Brief description of the Marine Raider Foundation
- Purpose of the event (fundraiser for MRF)
- Any suggested donation amount (if applicable)
- RSVP deadline and contact info
- Link to [marineraiderfoundation.org](http://marineraiderfoundation.org) to learn more

**Sample wording:** *"Join us for a backyard BBQ benefiting the Marine Raider Foundation. We'll share food, drinks, and stories while supporting the Marines who serve at the highest level. Suggested donation: \$150 per person."*

## Running Your Event

### Event Day Checklist

- Set up donation station:** QR code for mobile giving, donation cards, or a laptop for online donations
- Display Foundation materials:** Impact Report, Fact Sheet, or a poster with photos and impact stats
- Prepare your remarks:** 5-to-7-minute story about why you support the Foundation (see script template below)
- Have a backup plan:** Weather contingency for outdoor events
- Greet every guest:** Thank them for coming and briefly mention the cause

### The Ask: Sample Script

The most important part of your event is asking your guests to donate. Here's a proven structure:

#### 1. Welcome & Thank You (1 minute)

*"Thank you all for being here tonight. I'm so grateful you took time out of your busy lives to join us. Tonight isn't just about great food and good company—it's about making a difference for some of America's most elite warriors and their families."*

#### 2. Tell the Marine Raider Foundation Story (2-3 minutes)

*"The Marine Raider Foundation exists for two reasons: to support Marine Raiders and their families during times of crisis, and to honor and care for Gold Star families who've lost a loved one in service to our nation..."*

Share 1-2 specific examples of impact (the Foundation can help provide examples):

- A family supported after a training accident
- The annual Gold Star Family event that honors fallen Raiders
- Crisis response when tragedy strikes

### 3. Why You're Involved (1 minute)

*"I support the Marine Raider Foundation because [share your personal connection or reason]. These men and women operate at the highest level, and when they need help, we need to be there."*

### 4. The Ask (1-2 minutes)

*"Tonight, I'm asking you to join me in supporting this mission. Our goal is to raise [X amount]. Every dollar goes directly to assisting Raiders and their families. You can donate right now using the QR code [point to it], donation cards on the table, or online at [marineraiderfoundation.org](http://marineraiderfoundation.org)."*

### 5. Close Strong (30 seconds)

*"These warriors stand ready to go anywhere, anytime, to defend our freedom. The least we can do is stand with them and their families. Thank you for your support."*

## Tips for a Successful Ask

- **Be direct.** Don't be shy about asking for money—you're asking on behalf of heroes.
- **Lead by example.** Announce your own donation first.
- **Suggest amounts.** "Donations of \$100, \$250, \$500, or any amount make a real difference."
- **Make it easy.** Have multiple ways to give ready (QR code, cards, laptop).
- **Follow up.** Thank people as they donate and remind them as the event winds down.

## Collecting Donations

### How Guests Can Give

The Foundation will provide you with tools to make giving easy:

- **QR code for mobile donations** (guests scan and give via phone)
- **Online donation link** ([marineraiderfoundation.org/donate](http://marineraiderfoundation.org/donate))
- **Donation cards** (guests can write checks or pledge)
- **Cash/check** (you can collect and deliver to the Foundation)

## Handling Cash & Checks

If guests give cash, please convert cash to a check or money order. If guests give a check, please:

1. **Have checks made payable to:** "Marine Raider Foundation"
2. Keep a list of donors and amounts for tax receipt purposes
3. Mail or deliver donations to the Foundation within 1 week of your event
4. The Foundation will send tax receipts to all donors that provide either a mailing address or email address

## After Your Event

### Post-Event Checklist

- Send thank you notes** to all attendees within 1 week
- Deliver donations** (cash/checks) to the Foundation
- Share photos** on social media and tag the Marine Raider Foundation (links to our social media pages are below)
- Report results** to the Foundation (total raised, attendee count, any stories)
- Follow up with guests** who expressed interest in getting more involved

### Sample Thank You Note

Dear [Name],

*Thank you for joining us at [event name] and for your generous support of the Marine Raider Foundation. Because of donors like you, we raised [X amount] to support Marine Raiders, their families, and Gold Star families. Your contribution makes a real difference in the lives of those who serve at the highest level. If you'd like to stay connected with the Foundation's work, visit [marineraiderfoundation.org](http://marineraiderfoundation.org) or follow them on social media.*

*With gratitude,*

*[Your name]*

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Do I need special permission or insurance to host an event?**

Not usually. Simple gatherings at your home or a public venue don't typically require special permits. If you're hosting a larger event or selling alcohol, check local regulations. The Foundation can provide guidance.

### **Can the Foundation send someone to speak at my event?**

Possibly! Depending on location and availability, we may be able to arrange for a Foundation representative to attend. Contact us as early as possible to request a speaker.

### **What if I don't raise much money?**

Every dollar helps, and every event introduces new people to our mission. Even a small gathering that raises a few hundred dollars makes a meaningful impact. Plus, you're building awareness and relationships that may lead to future support.

### **Can I use the Marine Raider Foundation logo on invitations?**

Yes! Contact us and we'll provide high-resolution logos and brand guidelines. We just ask that you share any materials with us for approval before printing/sending.

### **Are donations tax-deductible?**

Yes. The Marine Raider Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. The Foundation will provide tax receipts to all donors. Donors should consult with their tax professional to determine how much of their donation is tax-deductible.

### **What if I want to do this annually?**

That's amazing! Many of our most successful third-party events have become annual traditions. Let us know your plans and we'll work with you to make each year even better.

## **Questions? We're Here to Help**

The Marine Raider Foundation team is here to support you every step of the way. Whether you need materials, guidance, or just want to brainstorm ideas, don't hesitate to reach out.

### **Contact Information:**

**Email:** [info@marineraiderfoundation.org](mailto:info@marineraiderfoundation.org)

**Phone:** (951)551-9309

**Website:** <https://www.marineraiderfoundation.org>

**Social Media:** [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#)

**Thank you for your commitment to supporting Marine Raiders  
and their families.**