

Volunteer Opportunities for Young People



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Volunteer Activities for Young People

Thank you for your interest in the Volunteer Activities for Young People program.

In the following pages, you will find different ways in which you can get involved. Each step by step activity is designed for young adults or groups of young adults to get involved. Whether it is raising money for our organization's programs or collecting food for feral cats, your efforts will go directly towards saving the lives of precious animals.

While working on your volunteer activity, feel free to contact our Program Director Stephanie Montemerlo at Stephanie@ourcompanions.org or 860-242-9999 ext. 302 for assistance.



Hat Day Fundraiser

Volunteers can raise money for Our Companions by organizing a Hat Day Fundraiser at your school. Students can purchase a sticker that allows them to wear a hat at school for the day.

Before you get started, you will have to get permission from your school and find a student council, activities board advisor or other teacher to help you. We will provide the necessary tools to get started.

1. Contact Our Companions to notify us that you are planning a fundraiser for us.
2. Talk to your Student Council or Activities Board advisor or another teacher and have them help you get permission from your school to participate in the fundraiser.
3. Schedule an appointment to pick up the “Hat Pass” stickers from our offices in Bloomfield.
4. Create posters to hang all over your school. It should describe what the fundraiser is for, how to obtain a sticker, and what the sticker entitles someone to.
5. We suggest selling the “Hat Pass” stickers for \$2.00 each. Once purchased, a date should be put on them so they can be used only for one day.
6. When the fundraiser is over, you should count the funds raised and report the total to your school. Be sure to let your school know how much money you raised for Our Companions!
7. At that time, please call Our Companions to schedule a time to drop off the donation.
8. When the donation is dropped off, please provide us with the names and addresses of people we should recognize and thank, including the teachers or administrators that helped you.



Dance Fundraiser

Volunteers can raise money for Our Companions by having students bring in items as part of their “ticket price” to a dance. Students would purchase a ticket to a dance at a reduced cost if they bring in an item(s) to the dance.

Before you get started, you will have to get permission from your school and find a student council or activities board advisor or other teacher to help you. We will provide the necessary tools to get started.

1. Contact Our Companions to notify us that you are planning a fundraiser for us.
2. Talk to your Student Council or Activities Board advisor or another teacher and have them help you get permission from your school to participate in the fundraiser.
3. Once you have permission decide what items you will be collecting. Possible options include:
 - **Towels for pets awaiting adoption in kennels and foster care.
 - **New dog and cat toys to help pets battle boredom while in kennels and to have a new toy to take “home” when adopted.
 - **Food and edible treats for dogs and cats in foster care.
4. Decide on a price per ticket for the dance. Then decide on a “discounted” ticket to offer students if they bring in one of the above items to the dance.
5. Discounted tickets should be a different color than traditional tickets. This will help teachers and students identify which students should have items with them when they enter the dance.
6. Have boxes or bags available to collect the items at the dance.
7. Call Our Companions the next week to let them know you have items to be picked up or dropped off to them.
8. When the donation is dropped off, please provide us with the names and addresses of people we should recognize and thank, including the teachers, students or administrators that helped you.



Penny Wars



Volunteers can raise money for Our Companions by organizing a Penny Wars Fundraiser at your school. Students will be divided into either homerooms or teams to raise money.

Before you get started, you will have to get permission from your school and find a student council or activities board advisor or other teacher to help you. We will provide the necessary tools to get started.

1. Contact Our Companions to notify us that you are planning a fundraiser for us.
2. Talk to your Student Council or Activities Board advisor or another teacher and have them help you get permission from your school to participate in the fundraiser.
3. Work with your teacher advisor to decide how to divide up your school into teams. For elementary schools, it might be by homeroom or grade. For middle and high schools, it could be by grade, team or academic department (English, Math etc.).
4. Work with your teacher advisor to decide how to award the “winning” team. This might be an ice cream or pizza party, extra recess, or novelty items.
5. Collect large containers to collect the pennies. A great idea is to find the large water cooler containers that are often delivered to schools or businesses. Once empty, these containers are great for penny wars because they are clear and students can see the containers filling up!
6. Make posters advertising the start and end date for the competition. This is typically a week or two. The posters should also describe what the winning team receives.
7. Make sure to announce the Penny War in both newsletters and overhead announcements so students and parents are aware of the competition.
8. When completed, count all money and announce the winning team and when they will receive their prize.
9. Call Our Companions the next week to let them know you have a donation that you will be sending to them. Your teacher advisor can assist you in obtaining a check for Our Companions for the total amount raised.
10. Please provide us with the names and addresses of people we should recognize and thank, including the teachers, students or administrators that helped you.

Bake Sales

Volunteers can raise money for Our Companions by having bake sales at various school sponsored activities. Students, teachers and parents would donate baked goods to sell and all proceeds would go to Our Companions.

Before you get started, you will have to get permission from your school and find a student council or activities board advisor or other teacher to help you.

1. Contact Our Companions to notify us that you are planning a fundraiser for us.
2. Talk to your Student Council or Activities Board advisor or another teacher and have them help you get permission from your school to participate in the fundraiser.
3. Talk to your student council members and other classmates to locate people who would be willing to donate baked goods. Make sure you have a large number of people before scheduling your bake sale.
4. Decide at what events you will sell baked goods. Options include: dances, sporting events, open houses, and at your church or synagogue after masses. Consider holding multiple bake sales throughout the year.
5. Make the bake sale fun by possibly selling homemade dog and cat treats or "human" snacks shaped like paws, bones, or animals.
6. Be sure to include information at your bake sale about Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary. We can provide you with materials to share.
7. Make signs and announcements about the bake sale and why you are holding it to encourage people to support your cause.
8. After each event, count all proceeds and work your teacher advisor to obtain a check for Our Companions for the total amount raised.
9. Be sure to let your school or religious community know how much money was raised.
10. Please provide us with the names and addresses of people we should recognize and thank, including the teachers, students or administrators that helped you.



Car Washes



Volunteers can raise money for Our Companions by holding car washes at various school sponsored or religious organization activities.

Students would volunteer to wash cars with all proceeds going to Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary.

Before you get started, you will have to get permission from your school and find a student council or activities board advisor or other teacher to help you.

1. Contact Our Companions to notify us that you are planning a fundraiser for us.
2. Talk to your Student Council or Activities Board advisor or another teacher and have them help you get permission from your school to hold a car wash.
3. Decide where and when you will hold your car wash. Options include holding it at your school on a weekend or before or after school sponsored activities such as sporting events, concerts, or open house. Also consider holding it at a church or community building (library, town hall) if you can get permission. Ideally, you want to hold it where you can attract the most people.
4. Try to get donations from parents, teachers and businesses for soap, sponges, hoses, towels, and other necessary materials.
5. Make sure that whatever location you choose has easy access to a water source and adequate drainage.
6. Decide on a price and time for the car wash. Consider setting a rain date just in case Mother Nature does not cooperate.
7. Make posters and flyers to post in and around your school, religious buildings, stores, and community buildings with permission. Be sure to include all important information such as date, time, location, and a description of Our Companions who is the beneficiary of the event.
8. Establish a schedule for the day of the car wash, consider putting people on 1 - 2 hour shifts. Make sure that you have an adequate number of volunteers throughout the day.
9. If possible, offer customers information about Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary if they are interested. We can provide you with appropriate materials.
10. Once the car wash is complete count and organize all proceeds. One person should be in charge of holding onto money until it is delivered to Our Companions.
11. Please provide us with the names and addresses of people we should recognize and thank, including the teachers, students or administrators that helped you.

Building Cat Shelters

Volunteers can assist Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary by building shelters for feral cats (unsocialized cats that live outside).

Before you get started, locate a teacher or community or religious leader who can assist you with this fundraiser. This is a great activity for Boy and Girl Scout Troops especially. It is also a great activity for certain after school groups at your school.

1. Contact Our Companions to discuss your interest in building the cat shelters. We will provide you with the plans for the shelters.
2. Work with an adult to determine how you will obtain the materials for this project. You can seek donations from school or religious groups, hardware stores, or large retailers such as Lowes and Home Depot.
3. Determine what tools you will need for the project. Work with parents, troop leaders, teachers, or other adults to locate the appropriate tools and also a location where you will build your shelters.
4. Generate a list of kids or adults that will work on the project. Make sure you have enough people involved so that the task is manageable for you.
5. Decide on a schedule of when you will hold “workshops” to build the shelters. Depending on how complex the design is and the skill level of the people helping you, you may want to consider scheduling multiple days or times to work on the shelters.
6. Keep in touch with Our Companions throughout the project so that we can assist you if you have any difficulty.
7. Once you have completed several shelters, contact Our Companions to arrange a time to drop off the new shelters.
8. When the donation is dropped off, please provide us with the names and addresses of people we should recognize and thank, including the teachers, students, troop leaders, youth group leaders or administrators that helped you. Be sure to include a list of any businesses that donated materials as well.



We say “thanks!”

Tag Sales



Volunteers can raise money for Our Companions by holding tag sales at various school sponsored or religious organization activities. Students would solicit donations of quality household items to sell, with all proceeds going to Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary.

Before you get started, you will have to find a teacher or other adult from the community to help you in organizing this activity.

1. Contact Our Companions to notify us that you are planning a fundraiser for us.
2. Work with an adult to determine who in your school, community or religious group would be willing to donate items for a tag sale. You should also seek donations of folding tables, price stickers, and cash boxes for use the day of the tag sale.
3. Brainstorm ideas about where and when you will hold your tag sale and where items will be collected and stored prior to the day of the tag sale. Be sure to choose a place that has plenty of room for tables, plenty of parking and is clearly visible and easily accessible for people. You may also want to select an alternate indoor location or rain date in case of bad weather.
4. Make flyers or posters announcing the tag sale and requesting donations of good quality items to be sold. Flyers and posters should be distributed throughout the community in order to reach as many people as possible. Make sure to provide people with a name of who to contact if they have donations. Also be sure to indicate that all proceeds will be given to Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary. You may want to have people provide their names and addresses when they drop items off, so that you may send them a thank-you note following the tag sale.
5. Once items are collected, decide on a price for each item and mark it clearly on a sticker or price tag.
6. Prior to the day of the tag sale, be sure to design a schedule of volunteers to be sure you have adequate help throughout the day. Make sure to include set-up, clean-up, and adequate help at all tables.
7. You may want to consider holding a bake sale or car wash in conjunction with the tag sale.
8. Once the tag sale is complete count and organize all proceeds. Decide who will be in charge of holding onto money until it is delivered to Our Companions.
9. Call Our Companions to schedule a time to deliver all proceeds. At this time, be sure to provide us with the names of all adults and children who assisted with the tag sale.

Flower Sales

Volunteers can raise money for Our Companions by selling flowers at school. Students and teachers would order flowers for others in the building to be delivered on a **certain day with all proceeds would go to Our Companions.**

Before you get started, you will have to get permission from your school and find a student council or activities board advisor or other teacher to help you.

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- 1. Contact Our Companions to notify us that you are planning a fundraiser for us.**
 - 2. Work with a teacher or advisor to determine when you will be selling flowers. You might want to consider June which is Adopt-a-Shelter-Cat month or October which is Adopt-a-Shelter-Dog month or May 1st which is Be Kind to Animals Day.**
 - 3. Research the cost of the flowers you will sell and determine what you will charge in order to make a profit. Most schools have flower sales at other times throughout the year and may have certain store they typically buy from.**
 - 4. You may want to consider designing a poem or picture to go along with the flower sale letting people know that a flower was purchased for them because they are special and animals were helped because of them. Be creative!!**
 - 5. You may also want to consider attaching a tag to each flower that indicates that the proceeds will go to help Our Companions in their honor.**
 - 6. Design a schedule of when flowers will be sold, when they will be delivered and who will be responsible for selling, organizing, and delivering flowers. Great times to sell flowers are before and after school and during lunch waves.**
 - 7. Make posters to put up all over your school and be sure to announce the flower sale during morning or afternoon announcements every day 1 week prior to and during the sale period, (usually 1 week).**
 - 8. Once the flower sale is completed, calculate the proceeds minus the cost of the flowers. Contact Our Companions to work out a time to deliver the donation.**
 - 9. Be sure to announce to your school community how much money was raised to get them excited for another flower sale during the next school year.**
 - 10. Be sure to provide us with the names of all teachers, students, parents, or administrators who helped with the flower sale.**

Grocery List Fundraiser

Volunteers can support Our Companions by designing grocery lists and getting customers to purchase additional items for donation. Volunteers would get permission from local grocery stores to sit outside the store and offer customers the opportunity to pick up extra items for donation.

We will provide you with a list of items needed and educational information about Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary to distribute to people entering or exiting the store.

1. Contact Our Companions to notify us that you are planning a fundraiser for us.
We will provide you with a list of items needed to help our organization.
2. Find an adult in the community; an adult from your religious organization, your troop leader, a teacher, or parent who is willing to assist you with this fundraiser.
3. Choose and contact area grocery stores. Tell them about the fundraiser and ask their permission to set up a table outside of their store. You may want to consider doing it at several different stores.
4. Choose specific dates and times that you will have volunteers working the table. You should consider doing this on multiple dates and at various times of the day to connect with as many people as possible.
5. Make sure to decorate your table in a creative way that will get people's attention. Be polite and respectful but assertive in getting people to listen to you.
6. Provide people with information about Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary and about the fundraiser you are doing.
7. Have multiple copies of grocery lists to give to people as they enter the store. Encourage them to purchase as few as 1 or many more items, whatever they are comfortable with doing. Make sure they know that every little bit helps!!
8. Make sure to have boxes or bags to collect items as people exit the store. Also be sure to have an adult with you at all times.
9. When you have finished your fundraiser, contact Our Companions to arrange a time to drop off the items.
10. Make sure to have a list of people who helped you with this fundraiser to provide to us, including adults and children who donated time and the stores who allowed you to set-up a table.



Can and Bottle Drives

Volunteers can raise money for Our Companions by holding can and bottle drives at schools, churches, synagogues, and other community buildings in your town with permission. Once cans and bottles are collected and redeemed, all proceeds can be donated to Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary.

Before you get started, you will have to find an adult from the community (parent, troop leader, youth group leader etc.) to help you in organizing this activity.

1. Contact Our Companions to notify us that you are planning a fundraiser for us.
2. Work with the adult helping you to determine when and where you will allow people to drop off cans and bottles and how you advertise.
3. Contact community businesses, schools, and agencies as they may allow you to establish drop-off points in their buildings.
4. Decide how long your can and bottle drive will last.
5. Create posters and flyers to place throughout your community. Remember to make them eye-catching and interesting and be sure to include information about Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary including the website so people can learn more about us.
6. Work with an adult to design a schedule for when you will pick up cans and bottles from each drop-off point (daily, weekly). You will also need to determine where the cans and bottles will be stored until redeemed and who will be responsible for redeeming them. Someone will also need to collect and keep all the money raised until the final day of the drive.
7. Once the drive is completed and all cans and bottles have been redeemed, contact Our Companions and arrange a time to drop off the money raised.
8. When you drop off your donation, be sure to let us know who assisted you with this fundraiser, including names and addresses of the people and businesses who helped and those that allowed you to have drop-off points in their buildings.



Feral Cat Food Drive

Volunteers can collect unopened bags, boxes or cans of cat food which will be distributed to area shelters, rescue groups, feral cat caretakers, and pet foster homes.

Before you get started, make sure to get permission from the school, grocery store, church, club or any place you wish to hold the pet food drive. Be sure to provide start time and end time. We recommend keeping the collection going for about one month.

1. Contact Our Companions to let us know that you wish to plan a pet food drive. We can provide the necessary materials to help you get started.
2. Schedule a time to pick up food collection containers and a sample poster. Advertise, advertise, advertise!
3. Place the donation boxes in a strategic location, you may wish to choose more than one location. You will want to be sure to collect the food from the box daily or weekly.
4. When the drive is over, estimate the amount of food collected so that you can let your school, company, or group know how well the food drive went.
5. Sort the cat food between kitten food, cat food, canned and dry food.
6. Call Our Companions to let us know that you have finished your pet food drive and would like to schedule a drop off time at our offices.
7. Be sure to provide Our Companions with the names and addresses of the volunteers that assisted with the food drive so that we may acknowledge them.
8. You may also provide us with photos of the food collected and the volunteers!
9. Thank you!



Thank You!
Your Friends at Our Companions

