

Fundraising Guidelines for Pinnacle Events

American Heritage Girls recommends Troops conduct a maximum of three fundraisers a year to allow ample time in your program year for a balance of program emphases, faith, service, and fun. It is preferred that Troops include a line item in their yearly budget which is reserved for larger events (ie. Convention, a bi-annual High Adventure trip, etc.). This allows for Troops to save over a number of years for those pinnacle events. With this method, income from a Troop's three fundraisers would cover the cost of these more occasional events. If a Troop has not had the opportunity to plan ahead or finds that savings are running short, the Troop can elect to offer an additional fundraiser to cover the cost of this special occasion.

Why should a Troop fundraise versus passing along event costs via Troop dues?

Fundraising allows Troops to offset costs to families, build life skills (such as entrepreneurship, commitment, communication skills, and teamwork) in the girls, and gives the girls ownership over their experience in the Troop.

When fundraising:

- AHG abides by all local, state, and federal laws regarding inurement/private benefit.
- Inurement is illegal (per the Internal Revenue Service).
- In the context of American Heritage Girls as a tax-exempt 501(c)3 with members, inurement has typically played out as "girl accounts" where Troops maintain individual girl (or member) accounts that receive a benefit (money, proceeds) from the Troop's fundraisers. These types of accounts are not permitted.
- Inurement/private benefit to members may jeopardize the non-profit status of the Troop's Charter Organization or the parent organization (AHG, Inc.).
- Fundraising must benefit the group as a whole (Troop or Unit). Troops can still conduct fundraisers to fund Troop operations, but cannot allocate proceeds to individual members.
- Money earned by girls through AHG fundraisers is the property of the Troop/Charter Organization and doesn't belong to an individual member (girl or adult).
- Money earned must be used for AHG activities.
- Money donated to the Troop may not personally benefit an individual member.
- Be wary of crowdfunding options and their terms or conditions (example: GoFundMe).

So what can members and Troops do?

- Set goals as a Unit or Troop (cast vision for all girls and adults in your Troop to attend the pinnacle event).
- Seek Charter Organization support for adults to attend; share how attending the event will make a difference in the life of the Troop. For example, attendees of the National 25th Anniversary Convention will experience, through the theme CHOSEN, an eternal difference in their lives as they realize their own God-given worth, recognize their identity in Christ, and experience the unfailing love of our Heavenly Father—all while having FUN!
- Plan your family vacation around the event. Registered Girl and Adult Members can attend the event while the rest of the family explores the surrounding areas!

- Plan fundraisers that benefit the whole Troop or Unit. As you're planning for the next year, consider your overall Troop budget including Troop operations, planned activities, Program Support Fee, etc.
 - In your Troop budget, set a goal for fundraising for pinnacle events and use these funds to cover an expense everyone will have, such as travel.
- Cast vision for a group goal! How much does the group need to earn? Get girls involved in brainstorming ideas for fundraisers. Consider AHG's preferred fundraising vendors for options.
- Though AHG's vision is for every girl to attend every event, that may not be the reality. Few Troops will have every Girl Member attend any given event. For that reason, offer secondary events for those girls who choose not to or can't attend the big event. Those may not have the same monetary value, and though, they afford everyone a great experience every year. When fundraising, assume everyone eligible to attend will go to the event. If that turns out not to be the case, scheduling alternate activities provide fairness.
- For families seeking to raise funds outside of Troop fundraising activities, consider asking for monetary donations to fund the expense of the pinnacle event as a birthday, Christmas, or other special occasion gift.

Does my Troop need to include fundraising for a pinnacle event as one of the three fundraisers for the year or can this be an additional fundraiser?

It is preferred that Troops include a line item in their yearly budget which is reserved for larger events (ie. Convention, a bi-annual High Adventure trip, etc.). This allows for Troops to save over a number of years for those pinnacle events. With this method, income from a Troop's three fundraisers would cover and/or offset the cost of these more occasional events. If a Troop has not had the opportunity to plan ahead or finds that savings are running short, the Troop can elect to add an additional fundraiser. The funds raised must be purposed to cover everyone participating in the event rather than being separated into "girl accounts". AHG's desire with limiting fundraising is to make sure that girls have plenty of time for the faith, service, and fun that is AHG.

Can multiple Troops fundraise together?

Yes, if the funds raised are purposed to cover everyone going rather than being separated into "girl accounts". Examples include: Paying for transportation for everyone, renting a bus, or paying for meals on the road.

If you have additional questions or concerns, please email them to events@ahgonline.org