

fun-raising

Picture this: Summer cheer camp is looming on the horizon, and your squad needs to raise mucho moola in order for every member to be able to attend (and be stylin' in the trendiest camp attire!). Sound frighteningly close to your squad's situation? Rest easy—smart spring fundraising is the way to go when you're crunched for some cheer camp dough.

When choosing a spring fundraiser, there are always the old standbys like candy drives and carnivals, but we've got a seasonal suggestion that will be a blast to carry out and a breeze to accomplish. Put the petal to the metal with a spirit garden!

If you're saying, "Huh?," here's the scoop: Your squad sells decorative paper flowers to students, faculty and team supporters. With each donation made, a flower is posted in the "spirit garden" on the walls of your school or gym bearing the name of the person who donated. (You've probably seen similar fundraisers done for charity at grocery stores



you're feeling especially festive, hold a decorating party at your coach's house for some bonus squad bonding time.

Now the fun part comes in—making the paper flowers! Set a goal for the number of flowers that the squad hopes to sell and divide that number among each team member. (Each person will probably be responsible for making about 20 to 30 flowers.)

When designing the look of the flowers, you can either use a simple stencil so that all the flowers look the same or let the creativity run rampant with individual-looking flowers. A few other ideas to consider in the planning process:

- * Assign each squad member a color so that it will be obvious who has sold the most flowers at the end of the

flower power

by Jen Jones

and restaurants. Other popular items that have been used include shamrocks and stars.) After all those April showers, it'll no doubt be a welcome change to see some flowers!

PLANTING THE SEEDS

To prepare for the spirit garden fundraiser, your squad may have to channel your inner Picassos. OK, so it's not quite that artistically demanding, but you'll definitely need some arts and crafts supplies, creativity and a few willing and able artists.

After you've gathered the essentials (like colorful construction paper or craft foam, scissors, glue and markers) set a time for the squad to gather and make the flowers. This can be done during practice or after school. If



fundraiser—highest seller is given a bouquet of real flowers to recognize her hard work! Ahh, the sweet smell of success.

- * Select three different types of flowers, ideally flowers of differing sizes. Give each flower a dollar amount (i.e., daffodils are worth \$2, daisies are worth \$4, sunflowers are worth \$6, etc.). With this approach, you give buyers the chance to donate more and get proper props for their generosity.

- * Same idea, different approach: designate each team level (i.e., peewee, midget, junior prep) with a different flower or color and challenge each class to a spirit competition. Whichever class

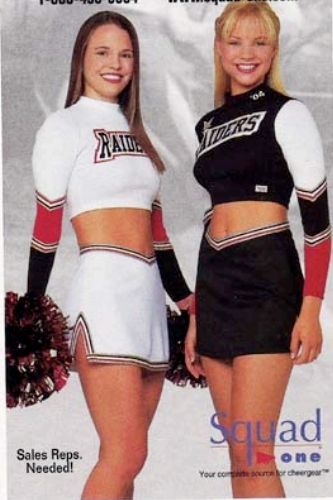


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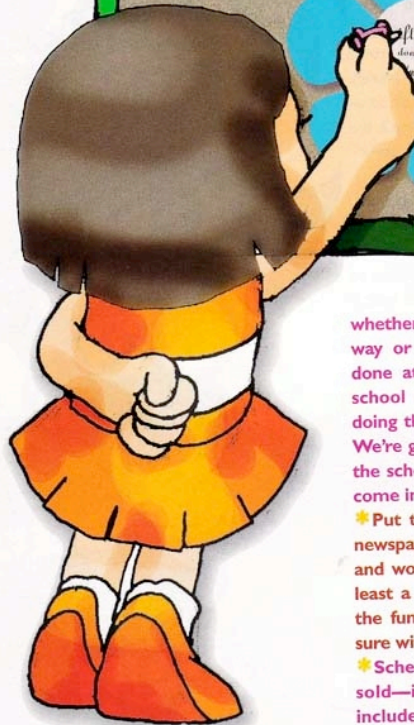
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sells the most flowers wins. If a team competition doesn't float your boat, you can also do a "girls vs. boys" twist. Either way, a competition is sure to rake up some interest.

In making the flowers, it's important to make sure that they are big enough to allow room to write in the name of the person who bought the flower and any other information you'd like to include (such as amount donated, a personal message or team member who sold the flower).

Within a few hours, your squad will have landscaped a spirit garden that's sure to plant the seeds for a plentiful pocketbook!

WATCH 'EM GROW

Now that you've got a garden of flowers ready to sell, it's time to put the wheels in motion. Here's a handy-dandy checklist for what needs to happen before your squad starts peddling the paper posies:

★ Choose a place around your school or gym that the flowers will be displayed—

whether it's the gym walls, the main hallway or a prominent bulletin board. (If done at school, make sure to let your school administrators know you'll be doing this and that they're A-OK with it! We're guessing that anything that makes the school a prettier place will be a welcome improvement.)

★ Put the word out through the school newspaper, daily announcements, flyers and word of mouth. Be sure to allow at least a few weeks of promotion so that the fundraiser can get maximum exposure with all the advertising fit to print.

★ Schedule times for the flowers to be sold—ideal periods of time would include lunch break, homeroom, study hall, game halftimes and after school. Each squad member can sign up for a shift that fits into her schedule. Remember—the more time you put in, the more your budget will bloom.

Once your squad has nailed down the details and is ready to launch the spirit garden fundraiser, start selling and have fun with it! (Fundraising can be fun, believe it or not.)

As customers buy the flowers, let them fill in their own names with a magic marker and a personal message or "Go Team!" sentiment if they'd like to. Hang up the flowers in the designated display areas so that everyone can see your works of art and the names of the people who were cool enough to donate to the cause. The school or gym will be beautified and full of flower power in no time! And, more importantly, your squad will be well on its way to a sizzling summer at cheer camp.

The fundraising potential for the spirit garden is up to you—with enough effort and enthusiasm, your squad budget will smell like a rose in no time! 🌹