

SUBSCRIPTION CHAIRMAN'S CAMPAIGN HANDBOOK

To the Subscription Chairman:

This campaign handbook belongs to you. It is designed for your use in preparing for your annual subscription campaign – in recruiting, organizing, instructing, inspiring and thanking the volunteers.

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Basic Information

for the Subscription Chairman

1. The annual subscription campaign, headed by the Subscription Chairman, is the Association's most important promotional activity and involves everyone on the board and anywhere from 50 to 300 volunteers, depending on the size of the Association. During the campaign, the Association raises the funds to finance the ensuing concert season.

The campaign is a pyramidal organization—volunteers report to captains, who report to division chairmen, who report to a subscription chairman.

Three fundamental principles must be stated that are intrinsic to the organized audience plan and have been verified by thousands of successful campaigns:

- A. A COMMUNITY CONCERT ASSOCIATION IS A SUBSCRIPTION ORGANIZATION. This SUBSCRIPTION characteristic is one of its basic strengths. The words "buy," "sell," "tickets," should be avoided and never be used in any publicity. The correct words and phrases are "solicit subscriptions," "join the Association," "collect dues," "enroll members." Correct terminology is important in cementing the SUBSCRIPTION concept. (Single-event tickets are only sold if the cost of a single ticket is more than the 50% of the price of an adult subscription). This prevents the erosion of the existing subscription base over several years due to selective concert tickets being purchased by a potential subscription buyer.
 - B. IN ORDER TO "SELL OUT THE HOUSE," THERE MUST BE A MINIMUM OF ONE ACTIVE VOLUNTEER FOR EVERY TEN AVAILABLE SEATS. A gala dinner, complimentary to the volunteers, has been found to be the best way to launch a successful campaign.
 - C. THE ENTIRE CAMPAIGN IS GEARED TO AND COMPLETED BY A PREDETERMINED DEADLINE, by which time all members are enrolled and the volunteers' task completed. A short intensive campaign is attractive to volunteers, and becomes the focal point for all promotion and publicity; indeed it develops enthusiasm, and a sense of urgency to reach the sold-out goal, and establishes the budget in advance of the concert season.
2. The Subscription Chairman has several duties to perform throughout the campaign and beyond:
 - A. Supervise the organization and management of the subscription campaign.
 - B. Select the co-chairman and Division Chairmen and direct their activities.
 - C. Provide a complete list of Volunteers, Captains, Division Chairmen, and Co-Chairmen to the Dinner Chairman and Publicity Chairman well in advance of the campaign.
 - D. Distribute volunteer packets at the dinner if no renewal period is used, or arrange for distribution of packets at the renewal campaign.
 - E. Be present at Campaign Headquarters during the subscription campaign to assist in getting daily reports from volunteers and generally oversee the conduct of the campaign.

Your goal is a sold out house!

Keys to success are these:

A. Full complement of workers

Recruiting active workers from all parts of the community equal in number to one-tenth of your auditorium's seating capacity.

B. Campaign deadline

Gearing the entire campaign to a deadline, which should be by Saturday of the final campaign week. By the end of the day, all members for the following season should be enrolled and the workers' task completed. For the goal to be achieved by the deadline, a sense of urgency must be developed with the workers and the public, everyone understanding that the financial security of the Association depends on the subscription association being fully subscribed well in advance of the concert season.

1 **A short, intensive campaign** is attractive to volunteers. It gives them a sense of achievement quickly. It also provides the focal point for all publicity and promotion.

2 **A Six Week Time Table**

Actually the recommended campaign time table (see page 11) begins six weeks before the last day of the campaign, although the workers are not actively involved longer than about three weeks, the period from kit distribution to the final deadline.

7. Campaign (Headquarters) Week

The final week of the campaign is the most intensive. This final week is called Campaign Week. Some associations call it Headquarters Week because a central campaign headquarters is established in a public location as a check-in point for workers and for the public, and as a place from which the campaign committee can direct the last hectic days of the drive.

The Subscription Campaign Organization

Subscription Chairman (for duties, see page 1)

Subscription Co-chairman

Assists the Subscription Chairman in the organization and administration of the campaign.

Duties of Division Chairmen

1. Secure five or more team captains and generally assist the Subscription Chairman in the administration of the campaign.
2. Keep in daily contact with captains for progress reports during the campaign.

Duties of Team Captains

1. Secure five or more volunteers and encourage them to attend the campaign dinner or kick-off meeting.
2. Fill out and use the "Captain's Report Sheet" in getting daily reports from the volunteers during the campaign.

Duties of Volunteers

CONTACT AND SECURE ALL RENEWALS EARLY IN THE CAMPAIGN AND ENROLL AS MANY NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS AS POSSIBLE BEFORE THE CAMPAIGN CLOSES. IT IS ASSUMED THAT EVERYONE IN THE ORGANIZATION ACTS AS A VOLUNTEER DURING THE CAMPAIGN INCLUDING OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN, DIVISION CHAIRMEN, ETC.

Duties of the Dinner Chairman

1. Engages a room for the dinner meeting that opens the campaign. (A good restaurant or private club is used for the most successful dinners, although churches or other facilities can be used.) The dinner meeting should be scheduled for a Saturday night.
2. Selects the menu, supervises the arrangement of the dining room and seating at the head table, and welcomes new volunteers while presenting name tags.
3. Mails dinner invitations to volunteers using the list provided by the Subscription Chairman. Accepts reservations for the dinner and calls those volunteers who do not reply to the dinner invitation. (Every effort should be made to get all volunteers to the dinner as it is vital to the success of the campaign.)

Building a Volunteer Worker Organization

1. Start with a meeting of your co-chairman, division chairmen, and captains. Prepare for the yearly meeting by asking captains to check with their volunteers from last year; and report to the meeting those who will work again. Plan the recruitment of new volunteers. Your volunteer organization should be complete, with ranks filled, and your goal reached for the total number of workers, by the beginning of the six week campaign period. Naturally new volunteers can be added right up to the kit distribution meeting (and beyond!), but returning workers should be in place so that kits can be prepared with each person's renewal cards inserted.
2. Volunteers should be recruited from all parts of the community including:
 - a. Clubs, churches, private and public schools, colleges, business firms, and all residential areas.
 - b. There should be workers from all *musical* areas of the community: choirs, music schools, private music teachers, and music clubs, etc.
3. Insert in concert playbills an invitation to members to become workers and tell them of the opportunity to earn subscriptions.
4. Check the member roster for potential new members.
5. Place responsibility on the officers and directors to secure a minimum of two or three new workers.
6. Use the excitement of coming attractions and the promise of earned subscription to attract new volunteers.
7. Make personal contacts to secure workers in minority group areas.
8. The subscription chairman and co-chairman should contact experienced volunteers for suggestions for potential new volunteers.
9. Secure a minimum of two couples as volunteers in each surrounding town. Each town should also be represented on the Board of Directors, making the area towns feel a part of the organization.
10. Use the Welcome Wagon list as a source of workers among newcomers.
11. Ask ministers to volunteer, and recommend volunteers within their congregation.
12. The subscription chairman and division chairmen should organize coffees for interested people in order to enlist them as volunteers.
13. Call on the Chamber of Commerce for assistance in contacting industry and downtown business. If your association is not already a member of the chamber, join immediately!
14. **Remember the Community Concert formula—one worker for every 10 seats in the auditorium!**

Instructing and Directing the Volunteers

1. Important **Dinner Meeting** for all workers must be organized for two or three weeks before the end of the campaign. This is a time to be creative with theme decorations. It should be a festive meeting for inspiration, instruction, and FUN! Entertainment adds to the exciting atmosphere. Lively reports from workers who have had success in getting new members. Drawings! Report on publicity received and what is planned. Patron Chairman report. Subscription Chairman—introduction, instructions, thank yous. Live on Stage representative informs the workers, in detail about the contracted attractions and shows the video of those attractions. Campaign deadline is stressed.

a. Give out packets. Every worker's packet must contain:

(1) Renewal Cards (fully completed with subscribers' names, address, phone, previous worker)

(2) 12 new subscriber application cards

(3) Prospect subscriber cards

(4) One of each available artist circular and at least ten invitation brochures

(5) Workers' Instruction Sheet (Example page 15)

b. Instruct volunteers on all campaign information

c. Stress importance for turning in majority of subscriptions on Thursday at Headquarters

d. Present contracted attractions

e. Stress deadline for closing campaign—Saturday of campaign week

2. Constant follow-up with workers through team captains throughout the campaign week, and repeated requests to turn in maximum subscriptions by the **Saturday deadline**.

3. To help control and accelerate the campaign's progress during the campaign week, plan:

a. A check-up meeting on Thursday when workers bring the majority of returns to Headquarters, are given prospects, encouragement, and ideas for securing new members. Headquarters Committee should check non-renewals, reassigning some to other workers for re-approaching.

b. Alternatively, designate check-up day or days (Thursday, or Wednesday and Friday) when workers are asked to bring to headquarters all subscriptions thus far collected, or at least report by phone to headquarters or to the team captain, but all must be received by the Saturday deadline.

4. Inspire worker pride and build morale at all times! Take a personal interest in each worker—invite workers to call headquarters often, and to come by and visit during headquarters.

5. Seek workers' opinions on possible attractions and artists for the series.

Subscription Renewal Letter

It is recommended that a renewal letter such as this be mailed, enclosing the invitation brochure, to all members at the beginning of the six week campaign period (see calendar page 12). subscribers will respond more readily if a return addressed envelope is enclosed.

RENEWAL LETTER

Dear subscriber:

It is now time to renew your subscription in the _____ Community Concert Association for the 2010-11 season.

The enclosed brochure describes the concerts already scheduled, and I think you will agree we can look forward to one of the most exciting series of attractions of recent years. All are famous for magnificent performances. All are known to bring audiences to their feet!

This year's subscription campaign will be held from _____ to _____, but we urge you to respond promptly. This will assure you of your subscription and help to ease the task of many volunteers who give their time to bring these fine concerts to our community.

We ask you also to consider a donation of tax deductible support beyond the subscription fee by becoming a Patron. The extra funds are attributed totally toward enhancing the quality of our series, while maintaining the subscription dues at an affordable level for everyone.

Sincerely yours,

President or Subscription Chairman

Worker Follow-Up to Renewal Letter

One week after the mailing, the packet pick-up dinner meeting is held. The subscription chairman has placed in each worker's packet the renewal cards of his/her previous members. The workers are asked to call and secure the renewal of those subscribers immediately.

Letter to Prospective Subscriber

(Invitation Brochure Enclosed)

Dear (prospective subscriber):

Your name has been suggested to us as one who is interested in the quality of artistic life in (name your city or area). Permit us to introduce to you the (name of Association) which is celebrating this coming season its ___th consecutive year of unrivaled presentations. Consider for a moment some of the great names in music that have been offered to our members over the years: (name four or five major attractions of former seasons) and the many wonderful young artists who have become the stars of tomorrow!

The attached brochure describes the concert schedule for our gala 2009-2010 season. The series includes (names of attractions scheduled for next season). I know you will agree that we can look forward to some truly wonderful musical evenings. All are famous for magnificent performances, and will bring audiences to their feet.

We hope that you will become part of our exciting artistic tradition, and join your friends and neighbors in sharing these concerts, all scheduled in the (name of auditorium).

Because our non-profit organization is entirely supported by volunteers, we can continue to present quality attractions at the most AFFORDABLE PRICES.

We ask you also to consider a tax-deductible donation beyond the subscription fee by becoming a patron. These extra funds are attributed totally towards enhancing the quality of our series while maintaining the subscription dues at an affordable level for everyone.

We hope that you will join us for a memorable season of musical enjoyment.

Sincerely yours,

President and/or Subscription Chairman or Patron Chairman

Letter to Request Active Participation of all Board Members

Dear Board Member:

All organizations need to renew themselves periodically if they are to grow and to remain viable. Your _____ Community Concert Association is in the position where the need to increase and revitalize its subscription base is of paramount importance. Therefore, it seems to be a most appropriate time for us to begin using the Community Concert subscription-gaining techniques that have proven so successful throughout the country.

In this system, each Board Member automatically becomes a Team Captain responsible for a specified number of workers. Each year the Team Captain alerts and informs his team members regarding the subscription campaign and acts as a "sounding board" between them and the Association.

Our plan is to have each Team Captain head a five-member team. Two present workers will be assigned to you. (They are listed below and should be contacted by telephone as a matter of course). Three new workers then need to be enlisted by you. Complete the enclosed "worker cards" as soon as you recruit your workers and return them to (name and address) by (date).

Just what does a worker have to do? Simply encourage family, friends, associates, and neighbors to enjoy the great entertainment value that subscription in the _____ Community Concert Association represents. Each worker will be supplied, of course, with all of the necessary information, brochures, application forms, etc. Do not forget that workers can earn their own subscription according to the formula by which a free subscription is earned for every _____ subscriptions secured. In addition, every worker will be invited to the annual Campaign Dinner (complimentary) which kicks-off the campaign. The subscription campaign runs from _____ to _____.

I look forward to your enthusiastic participation in this as in all activities of your Board. If we all pull together we can make the coming season one which will continue to enhance the tradition of service and success that the _____ Community Concert Association has so long enjoyed.

Sincerely yours,

Letter to Prospective Worker

Dear _____:

It has been suggested that you may be interested in becoming a volunteer with the _____ Community Concert Association. We warmly invite you to join us in this thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding activity.

Volunteers work only during the annual subscription drive (dates of drive), which culminates with Drive Headquarters open _____ to _____. At that time, they assist in promoting the coming concert series by obtaining subscriptions.

Special incentives are offered to encourage each volunteer to sell ten or more subscriptions. For every ten subscriptions secured, the volunteer receives one earned subscription.

Also, all active volunteers are invited to be guests at a "kick-off" banquet held on the opening date of the campaign. It is a lively, beautiful affair, when volunteers can become acquainted with other music-lovers and concert-goers, the officers and board members of the association, and the Live on Stage Representative. Instructions and helpful suggestions are also offered at this gathering.

Please give this invitation your thoughtful consideration, remembering the value of Community Concerts as a cultural asset to this area, and the fact that it can continue only through the efforts of our active volunteers.

I will telephone you soon to receive your answer. I hope that you will join us.

Sincerely yours,

Subscription Chairman or Captain/Division Chairman

Sample Captain's Instruction Sheet

_____ Community Concert Association

As a Team Captain you will play a most vital role in the success of our subscription campaign. For the campaign to succeed, each Captain must adhere to the deadlines and responsibilities listed below.

1. LIST OF WORKERS – You have been given a list of workers who worked last year. Please ask these people to work again this year and then seek additional workers until you have a minimum of five workers on your team.

1. KICK-OFF DINNER – The Kick-off Dinner will be held on _____, at _____, at _____ p.m. Each of your workers will receive a written invitation to the dinner. Call all of your workers who have not responded to the RSVP by _____ and urge them to attend the dinner. Offer them transportation and remind them of the drawing for free subscriptions. Be sure to deliver the packets of anyone who is unable to attend to them the next day. The purpose of the dinner is to create enthusiasm and it is essential that all of the workers attend.

2. CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - dates and times of headquarters

You will be requested to keep in touch with your workers throughout the week, getting reports on subscriber renewals and new subscribers from them. Relay these reports to Headquarters. Remind your workers of the Check-up Day on _____ and the drawing for free subscriptions. On Friday, _____ call all of your workers and remind them to check in at Headquarters before the campaign closes on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. If some of your workers will not be able to get to Headquarters on Saturday, please pick up the subscriptions they have in hand and turn them in yourself.

Suggested Campaign Calendar

The six-week suggested timetable shown on the campaign calendar on the next page assumes that much preliminary work will already have been done. The tasks below should have been completed prior to the beginning of the six-week campaign.

1. Invitation brochures and renewal letters printed. Allow printers a minimum of two weeks. It is the responsibility of the local Association to provide a suitable layout to the printer.
1. Renewal cards completed.
2. Mailing lists prepared, envelopes/brochures addressed, return envelopes ready.
3. Publicity calendar prepared. Feature stories researched. (See Press Handbook)
4. Headquarters location reserved and telephone ordered (if one is not available).
5. Facilities booked for campaign dinner and menu selected. Each Association will adapt this six-week format to fit its own situation.

Suggested Calendar for Six-Week Campaign

Subscription

Publicity

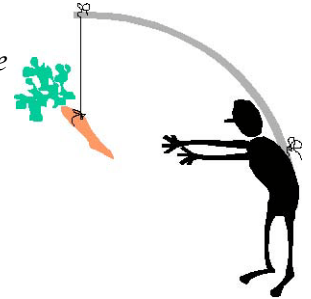
Other

	Subscription	Publicity	Other
1st Week	Continue Worker Recruitment Mail Dinner Invitations Prepare information for worker kits		
2nd Week	Sort renewals and prospects for placement in worker kits Mail members renewal letters and invitation brochures	Prepare public service announcements Prepare window cards and posters	Call workers who did not respond to dinner invitations
3rd Week	Prepare worker record sheets to give to Division Chairmen Prepare worker kits with help of Division Chairmen Kick-off Dinner on Saturday evening, distribute worker kits		Place yard signs
4th Week	Mail prospects the Invitation Brochure	Announce season attractions Start PSAs Distribute window cards and posters Newspaper ads begin	
5th Week	Prepare information for Headquarters Week Check-in with Division Chairmen about campaign results	Continue PSAs and news stories Continue newspaper ads and start speakers bureau appearances	
6th Week Head- quarters Week	Headquarters Opens Stress urgency to close Saturday	Continue press coverage PSAs continue Continue ads	Remove yard signs on Saturday

Tips and Tools for Volunteers

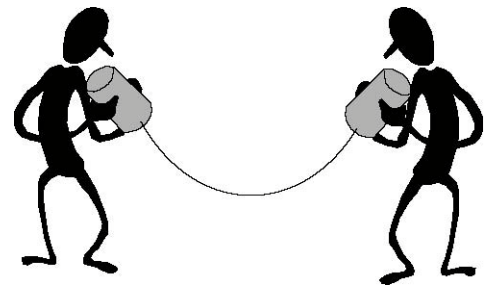
Sources

1. If you are a previous volunteer, your **NO. 1 SOURCE** is your list of subscribers already sold. Ask of them “Do you know anyone else you would like to see join?” or “Would any of your friends like to join?”
2. **People and firms patronized by you and your family**—Doctor, Dentist, Lawyer, Druggist, Grocer, Clothier, Hairdresser—and all the people working for them! Enclose an “invitation brochure” when you pay your bills, then follow up!!
3. Your minister, school and music teacher, old and new neighbors, friends, relatives, families where there are adult or children musicians. Service clubs, philanthropic and religious organizations. Co-workers.



Personal and Telephone Contact

1. **Eye to Eye** contact is the **BEST** method by far! You can read faces, detect sincere interest or disinterest, show your enthusiasm for the coming season’s concerts—turn **negatives** into **positives**. It is easier for you to collect for your sale. Too often leaving it to the prospect to “mail it in” loses a subscription. **Zero in**—your prospect might “forget” or “change his mind” or “procrastinate.”
2. **Be enthusiastic on the phone.** Sound friendly. Don’t be strange or distant. You do not have to know your prospect well. A suggested technique:



“Have you heard about the marvelous concerts we have booked for next season?” If the response is no, “May I tell you about them, it won’t take but a few minutes?” Mention the concert first that you think is of the most interest to that person as a way of feeling him out. Then mention the remaining concerts. Use good judgment and emphasize the attractions according to the taste in music of that individual, the husband, wife or children. With our wide variety of concerts, there is entertainment there for everyone.

Please do not say: “Do you want to buy (or join) Community Concerts (AGAIN) this year?” This is an open invitation for a **NO!** **If you are excited**, you’ll excite. **If you excite your prospect**, you’ll make a sale.

Handling Disinterest, Complaints, Etc.

Reasons and Excuses I don’t think I want to buy a subscription because: “We never know about the weather.” “My husband is out of town so much.” “We were members last year and didn’t attend.” **AND THE LIST GOES ON!!**

1. Ask them to reconsider from a community support standpoint. The only way we can have culture the community deserves is by support from everyone. Suggest giving a subscription as a gift to a father, mother or other relative or friend. If they buy and cannot attend all concerts, let a friend use their subscription in the hope the friend will join the next season.



2. Ask if the family attends picture shows. Point out that our subscription fee is \$5.83 per adult per concert, less than the cost of a movie plus drink and popcorn...that by becoming a subscriber, they are making it possible for live music to be a part of their lives.
- 3 **Listen** carefully and respond to each contact on an individual basis. If there are criticisms of last year's or this year's season, hear them out. If we have let anyone down, ask them to take this in good spirit, don't hold it against us at renewal time, that we have a great season planned for next year. If you are a good listener, you will hear the critic's gratitude, thus leading to a renewal or even additional sales.
- 4 **Report remarks in writing** on the back of the subscription card or attach a note regarding the reason for reject or state the criticism. This is helpful to the Subscription Chairman and also to the Board when making concert selections.
5. **Why don't you have people like Pavarotti and Perlman?** We are able to present a wide range of great attractions within our budget, but the prices of such superstars as these are prohibitive. Fees for such artists would be MORE than our entire budget. We bring such names when they are NEW on the horizon and AFFORDABLE.

Renewals and Rejects

A quote about renewals: *"We should not give in to the concern about annoying people with persistent efforts in this connection. We must school ourselves to think that the only sin we can commit in our renewal is the sin of omission."*



1. **Contact your renewals immediately!!!** Renewals will be credited to you, including renewals by mail. If a subscription is not renewed, return the card to headquarters with the reason for refusal written on the card. This allows the office to either reassign that reject or to make the contact itself.
2. **Reject cards** are in your kits. These are dropouts from previous years. We have tried to give previous volunteers your rejects. New volunteers also have reject cards. Dropouts often are ready to try again. They may not come back of their own accord—it is strange, but they wait to be asked. If approached properly, they can be brought back into the fold. For example, new parents may have dropped out with the birth of their baby, but are ready to join now. Another example, during one season for various and sundry reasons the prospect could not attend, but now the picture has changed. **Invite them back—don't hesitate to ask!!**
3. New volunteers, where possible, are given prospects.

Remember FOLLOW UP – ENTICE – EXCITE – TALK IT UP – FOLLOW UP PUT MUSIC IN EVERYONE'S LIFE – SELL – LISTEN – FOLLOW UP TURN NOS INTO YESES – BE POSITIVE – FOLLOW UP

Volunteer Instructions

Pricing

Adults	\$45
Students	\$10
Family (2 adults and all dependent children living in same residence)	\$100
Grandparent Package (2 adults and up to 4 minor grandchildren)	\$100

No senior discounts...we are already "discounted" at the adult price!!

Basic Procedures

1. Note cash, check, or credit card on subscription card.
Post-dated checks are acceptable, but dated no more than 30 days. **(Attach a post-it note on the subscription card explaining it is post-dated.)**
2. Do NOT write in the box in the upper left corner.
3. Give receipt stub to subscriber. If a new subscriber, please include Bonus Concert info on the back.
4. Paper clip all checks or money to the renewal and new member cards. **DO NOT STAPLE!**
5. All children's names must be listed.
Sign the subscriber cards—we cannot give you credit if we don't know who solicited the subscriptions.
6. Check names, address, phone numbers on ALL renewals. *Be sure to get the phone number!*
7. If declining to subscribe, please note the reason (e.g. moved, lost interest, illness) and turn the card into Headquarters.
8. Turn in **ALL** subscriber cards to headquarters, regardless of their intention to renew.
9. **For all rural patrons, please verify their new 911 address is on the subscriber card. The post office will not deliver to rural route addresses soon.**

Headquarters

Your association's contact info

(your dates) April 16 and 17 – 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. April 18 – 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Points

- 1 point for attending the Packet Pickup Kickoff Dinner
- 1 point for every adult subscription sold 2 points for every family subscription sold
- 1 point for bringing majority of subscriptions to Headquarters the first day

12 points = 1 Free adult subscription

(If you sell enough for two free subscriptions then you can receive enough student subscriptions for any children in your family)

No points will be earned after the close of Headquarters

Suggested Order of Dinner

- 1 Welcoming remarks by the President of the Association, who serves as Master of Ceremonies.
- 2 Invocation by a local minister, priest or rabbi.
- 3 Dinner.
- 4 Introduction of the Subscription Chairman or the Secretary, who explains the campaign procedure, reviews the volunteer's instruction sheet in the packets, describes volunteer incentives and gives the volunteers any other information needed.
- 5 Introduction of and remarks by the Community Concerts Representative.
- 6 Meeting opened to questions of the Subscription Chairman or the Representative. Note: An eventful, colorful dinner is very desirable. For instance, the Dinner Chairman may choose a theme to be carried throughout the menu, decorations, drawings, prizes and entertainment.

Duties of the Appointments Chairman

- 1 Arranges for short talks or announcements, prior to the subscription campaign, by local speakers before clubs and organizations.
- 2 Arranges for the Community Concerts Representative to be the FEATURED PROGRAM for as many clubs and organizations as possible during the subscription campaign.
- 3 Places a brief announcement in all church and other organization bulletins prior to the subscription campaign.

Note: This can also be coordinated by the Publicity Chairman.

Subscriptions Charged to Credit Cards

More Associations are contracting with local banks or PayPal to use Visa/MasterCard and other charge card systems. Simply asking for a credit card number makes the collection of subscriptions easy, and very much to the advantage of the volunteer worker (instant collection), the member (instant gratification), and the your Association (instant cash!)

THE SYSTEM IS SIMPLE!

The worker will ask if the person wishes to charge their subscription. He/she will ask for the card number, expiration date, and note this information on the renewal card or new application card.

When renewal or new member application cards, showing a credit card charge, are turned in to Headquarters, the HQ Secretary processes a credit card charge. Or the member may renew online through the use of the concert association's website. Most banks will charge non-profits a nominal fee of 4% (sometimes less) for this service.

Your local bank will advise you of the charges, the contractual details and procedures to be followed in establishing a credit card arrangement for your Association.

Typically

- ⊙ The bank will charge for an imprinter, and provide, without charge, charge slips (in triplicate), VISA/ MASTERCARD stickers and logos. Or you may use the PayPal payment processor online.
- ⊙ The Association checking account must be at the same bank as your credit card account. PayPal will allow you to set up a direct payment into your bank account.

-The experience of other Community Concert Associations is that the number of subscribers charging dues to credit cards will be from 15% to 25% of the total, but that it is important to have charging available for the convenience to the members, and particularly to the volunteer workers who love it because it makes their job so much easier. So much time is saved in follow-up, eliminating calls to verify that dues have been paid, or personal collection of a check.

How to Increase Your Subscriptions: Mailing Invitation Brochures to Prospect List

Mailing an attractive “Invitation Brochure” to a large list of likely prospects is an effective way to get your message before a new public, to reach out beyond the circle of acquaintances known to your workers. Then, to divide the list among the workers for follow-up calls can increase your subscriptions dramatically.

Important Note!

A prospect mailing with worker follow-up is by no means a substitute for the regular subscription campaign when workers renew members and enroll as many new subscribers as possible among people they know. The prospect mailing should be made during the period of the campaign but after the regular mailing of the brochure to the subscribers.

BUILDING YOUR PROSPECT MAILING LIST: It makes sense to look for lists with a good chance for success. Evaluating lists to acquire is as important as finding them. Below are suggestions of non-commercial sources for lists:

1. TRADING LISTS WITH OTHER ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

Fruitful lists are those used by other arts organizations. Trading is common among cultural groups, although some groups will accept cash only. When lists are shared it has been proven that each participating organization benefits. For example, if Community Concerts, the symphony, the theatre series, and the art museum, traded lists, all will find new customers from each other’s lists. A much wider public becomes aware of concerts, plays and art exhibits. Attendance at all events increases. No longer does Community Concerts need to be “The best kept secret in town.”

2. EVALUATING

When negotiating a trade or buying or renting a list, make sure the list you get is as good as the list you give or the money you pay. Below are factors useful in evaluating lists.

- Number of households
- Accuracy of address, zip codes, telephone numbers
- A clean list. A good list is regularly “cleaned” of errors and duplicates, and updated with changes of names and addresses. About 25-30% of names/addresses change annually on typical lists. A list not cleaned for more than a year is of little value.
- An active list. A list of active subscribers is better than a list of lapsed subscribers. (However, a list of former Community Concert members, if it meets other evaluation criteria, could be valuable. They were once interested, and might be interested again.)
- Demographics. Arts groups sometimes have demographic information, such as age and professional and economic level on their lists. Compare it with what you know about your own audience.

Other factors in list trading:

Format – First get your list in order. It is unlikely that arts organizations will trade lists of mailing labels for a stack of handwritten index cards. Lists should be traded in typed form on mailing labels, arranged by zip code.

Usage – Arts groups will often allow a list to be used only once. (Each follow-up mailing for a single campaign would count as a use.) You are on your honor here, but it is best to be straightforward about the number of times you wish to use the list. Sophisticated organizations will plant “dummy” names throughout a list so they can monitor use. However, you “own” every name that responds to your appeal. **A Computer Note** – If you get permanent rights to a list, and you have a good computer system, try to get a computer file rather than hard copy. It must, of course, be compatible or adaptable with your system.

Be sure you can use the kind of labels you receive! For example, Cheshire labels are cut and applied by machine only. Large printing and mailing houses use Cheshire labels almost exclusively because they require little handwork.

3. OTHER SOURCES OF NAMES

- Many arts councils maintain arts mailing lists for their subscriber organizations. They may also offer computer training, list maintenance and mailing services. Your Association may have to become a subscriber in order to enjoy these services.
- The Chamber of Commerce gives or sells lists of professional and business people.
- Capture names of community leaders from programs, annual reports, and the society, business and news sections of your newspapers. Such people should get your material, whether they become subscribers or not.
- “Welcome Wagon,” school and college faculty, service clubs and any social clubs lists are valuable sources.

Important Note!

THE BEST PROSPECT “LIST” OF ALL is the one every worker makes for himself or herself during the subscription campaign - personal acquaintances they plan to contact. These will be names of friends and relatives, names from their Christmas card list, fellow employees, members of the choir, church, club, and other groups. These names would not need to be on the main prospect mailing list, but workers will find it helpful to mail brochures personally to people they know, adding a personal note before making the contact.

WORKER FOLLOW-UP

To be sure of satisfactory results on your mailing, divide the list among your workers for follow-up calls, giving them guidance on a positive sales approach. The calls can be made from home or in a group setting, and should be made within a week or ten days after the brochures have been received.

A response range to a “cold mailing” of new names is .5% to 1.5% (Each response is usually an order for two subscriptions.) With follow-up phone calls, response will go up to 5% to 8%. Therefore, the worker follow-up to a brochure mailing is of utmost importance to the success of the project.

SPECIAL THIRD-CLASS BULK MAILING

If your Association has applied for and received tax-exempt status as a nonprofit organization under the IRS code 501(C)3, you may take advantage of the money-saving Special Bulk Rates to non-profits. You must, however, apply for a third-class bulk mailing permit even if you have the IRS tax-exempt status. (Even without tax exemption, you can save money with third-class bulk commercial mail.) There is an annual fee, and the mailing must include at least 200 pieces. Postage must be prepaid by any of the following methods: meter, pre-canceled stamps or permit imprint.

The preparation and packaging requirements for bulk mail are precise, and you must be acquainted with them before you mail. The Post Office has instructions, and your Postmaster will answer questions you might have.

Letter to Former Subscriber

Dear (Former Subscriber):

We missed you this season as a subscriber of the _____ Community Concert Association, and I am writing to let you know that we would welcome your return as a subscriber for the coming 2009-10 season. It promises to be an excellent one, with the following outstanding artists and attractions already engaged:

(list names and descriptions of your hold attractions, taking material from the circulars and bios provided to the Publicity Chairman)

This year's campaign will be held from _____ to _____, and we wish to give former members, like yourself, the privilege of joining in advance of the solicitation to the general public. As a bonus you will receive with your 2010-11 subscription admittance to the remaining concert of the present series, including (name and describe the remaining concert the former subscriber may attend, along with the date and location of the concert).

You will be mailed a receipt that will admit you to the concerts. Subscriber cards for the 2010-2011 series will be mailed prior to the first concert in the fall.

We urge you to respond promptly! Not only will this assure you of your subscription, but you will also help to ease the tasks of the many volunteers who give their time to bring these first-class, international artists and attractions to our community.

Sincerely yours,

Subscription Chairman or President

Adults \$ _____ Community Concert Association Students \$ Address

Family \$

Check in the amount of _____ for _____ adult (s) _____ student (s) Name

Address

Telephone ()

Thank You Letter to Volunteers

Dear _____:

Another Community Concert campaign is history and we are basking in the sweet fragrance of success. We are still tying up a few loose ends—tallying your worker's sheets, getting next year's subscriber file in order, and making a few calls to straighten out names, addresses, etc. We feel certain that when all the paperwork is finished, and all the earned subscriptions totaled, that we will be at the sell-out figure of _____.

It is difficult for me to find adequate words to say thank you to every division leader, captain, and volunteer worker who has made this campaign the biggest and best of them all. Your enthusiasm and cooperation made my job seem easy and the best evidence of your dedicated work is our beautiful increase in subscriptions for the _____ season. (Insert a short description of advances in new subscriptions, renewals and this campaign). You deserve credit for making the _____ season a reality.

Many thanks again for your continued interest and investment in our Association. It has been a delight working with you.

Sincerely,

Subscription Chairman

