



AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF ONTARIO
SOCIÉTÉ ONTARIENNE DE LA SCLÉROSE LATÉRALE AMYOTROPHIQUE

BOWLING TOURNAMENTS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

It is easy to get a lot of people participating in this event because most people have had at least some bowling experience. Participants simply ask family and friends to pledge either a flat amount, or a certain contribution per point achieved. A Bowlathon is not only the perfect opportunity for your volunteers to get to know each other, but it can also be very profitable, especially if the lanes and shoe rentals are donated. Ambitious chapters may wish to organize a more formal, competitive event, involving a sponsor, extensive promotion, or perhaps even celebrity and media participation.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

- ❖ Bowling lanes (two games, with five people per lane, will take about two hours)
- ❖ Pledge forms and instruction sheets
- ❖ Volunteers to recruit participants
- ❖ Coordinators for day of event
- ❖ Registration desk(s) and chairs
- ❖ Refreshments
- ❖ Prizes (e.g. for most original form, best dressed, highest score, etc.)
- ❖ ALS banner and posters
- ❖ Liability insurance
- ❖ Thank-you notes and tax receipts

PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES:

- ❖ Book bowling facility (you will need 1 lane for every 4-5 players); try to get lanes and/or shoe rentals donated
- ❖ In consultation with experienced bowler, agree upon format for event (e.g. structure of play, prizes, deadlines, registration procedures, etc.)
- ❖ Print pledge forms, instruction sheets
- ❖ Secure donation of refreshments
- ❖ Distribute pledge forms and information sheets to volunteers
- ❖ Have volunteers collect pledges, as well as recruit more participants
- ❖ Promote event to bowling community
- ❖ Motivate participants to collect pledges at meetings, over the phone, etc.
- ❖ Distribute pledge forms, instruction sheets at bowling facility; put up poster or sign advertising event
- ❖ Contact media to secure advance press and/or invite to event
- ❖ Confirm reservation at bowling facility

EVENT ACTIVITIES:

- ❖ Coordinators arrive early to set up registration tables, put up banner and posters, and confirm lane reservations
- ❖ Assign participants to lanes as they arrive; each lane requires one scorekeeper
- ❖ Participants' names and addresses recorded at registration table for future reference
- ❖ Play begins when a lane has enough bowlers
- ❖ Opening ceremony, welcome, and/or announcements
- ❖ Media photo opportunity
- ❖ Refreshments and munchies available
- ❖ Record scores on pledge sheets
- ❖ Award prizes

POST-EVENT ACTIVITIES:

- ❖ Return borrowed items
- ❖ Motivate participants to collect pledges
- ❖ Collect pledges and pledge forms
- ❖ Send thank-you notes to participants with reminder to continue collecting pledges
- ❖ Track progress of collection on large, colourful poster
- ❖ Reconcile accounting
- ❖ Issue tax receipts
- ❖ Media follow-up (e.g. press release with final \$ raised, thanking participants)

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Experienced bowlers should be involved in your event at the organizational level, especially if it is a major project.
- The proprietor of your facility should be enthusiastic about your cause; you will be depending on him/her for organizational and promotional support.
- When recruiting participants, focus on working with key people in bowling community and promoting your event through its existing structure. (e.g. instructors encourage students, team captains encourage team members, etc.)
- Provide speakers to make a short address to groups of potential participants, explaining why it is important for them to participate and what they will receive in return.
- Pledge sheets should keep track of contributors' names, the amount pledged, and the total collected. This is also a good opportunity to add to your mailing list by collecting contributors' addresses and phone numbers.
- Your instruction sheets should explain the rudiments of the bowlathon and outline the pledge options (per pin or lump sum), as well as sample pitches for collecting sponsors, the event date, location address and phone number, cost of participating, and names and phone numbers of the event's organizers.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS – CON'T:

- Although the traditional ‘a-thon’ requires the collection of sponsors before the event and the collection of funds after the event, this method can be ineffective; participants are often less enthusiastic about collecting funds after the fact than they are about collecting pledges in advance. Therefore, you may want to encourage participants to collect flat-rate cash pledges in advance. To facilitate pledge collection, establish a deadline.
- Consider securing the participation of local media personalities, celebrities, politicians, or community leaders to enhance media appeal.
- Implement a sponsorship incentive program: offer prizes to the individual/team raising the most funds; offer customized gift incentives on an incremental basis (e.g. 5 sponsors earns pin, 20 earns t-shirt, etc.)
- Don’t take the support of participating organizations for granted; take pains to acknowledge them in media releases, thank them personally, and/or award certificates of appreciation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

The ALS Society of Ontario, 265 Yorkland Blvd., Suite 300, North York, Ontario.
M2J 1S5 1(866) 497-8545