

FUNDRAISING PLAYBOOK



For Club Champions and Fundraising Leads 2025-26

EPIC fundraising is remarkably simple! It's not a traditional "fundraiser"... there's no committee to form, no cost of goods, nothing to sell or auction, and no tax-receipt headaches. The website does it all for you. Over 90% of the net donations after credit card and website fees goes back to your Club for your service budget. EPIC doesn't compete with fundraisers, it complements them, and it can be big!

Example: One club raised over **\$160,000** in the last two years.

There are a LOT of good ideas and resources here. Think of it as a big mouth-watering buffet... just don't load your plate with too much. Check it all out, then zero in on what looks best. You can always come back for more.



Fundraising Playbook

Quick Overview

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1. EPIC's Website Raises Donations for Your Club

There are two donation pathways:

A. Donations During Volunteer Sign-up

When your members and the community are signing up for your project, they're invited to make an online donation to your Club, explaining that contributions help expand the service your Club does throughout the year. Some community volunteers will give, as will some club members with encouragement.

Example: One Club raised over **\$47,000** in member donations, including \$10,000 each from two members.

B. Donations from Friends & Family Nationwide

Like a charity walk, but instead of walking, we're serving our communities worldwide. When your members sign up for your project, they instantly receive three tools:

Tool 1 – Personal Fundraising Page on the EPIC Website

A pre-built page – like GoFundMe – with preset donation buttons of \$25, \$50, etc. It's effective as-is, or members can personalize it. Donors receive automatic tax receipts, and members are notified so they can thank contributors. Members get to see their page during sign-up, so they know how nice and easy it is.

The screenshot shows a personal fundraising page on the EPIC website. The page has a blue header with navigation links: HOME, ABOUT, ROTARY MEMBERS, COMMUNITY MEMBERS, FIND A PROJECT, and social media icons for Facebook and Instagram. The main content area features the title "Pat McGuckin's EPIC Day of Service Fundraiser" and a description: "Donations supporting Rotary Club of Denver Southeast Foundation. In partnership with Rotary Club of Denver Southeast. Campaign Ends: Jul 17, 2025." Below the description are two buttons: "DONATE" and "SHARE CAMPAIGN". A photo of Pat McGuckin and his family is displayed. A progress bar shows "\$5,387 RAISED" and "FUNDRAISING GOAL REACHED!". The page also includes a section titled "ROTARY DOES A WORLD OF GOOD" with a paragraph of text. On the right side, there is a "LATEST DONATIONS & COMMENTS" section listing four donations: DAF GIVING (\$1,717.00), DAN AND LISA MC GUCKIN (\$1,000.00), LAURIE BROCK (\$150.00), and BOB & LORA LOUISE BROADY (\$250.00).

Donor Name	Amount	Time Ago
DAF GIVING	\$1,717.00	5 months ago
DAN AND LISA MC GUCKIN	\$1,000.00	5 months ago
LAURIE BROCK	\$150.00	7 months ago
BOB & LORA LOUISE BROADY	\$250.00	7 months ago

Personal Fundraising Page

Tool 2 – Email to Friends & Family

It's pre-written and ready to go, or members can personalize it. **Just copy, paste in an email, and send!** These emails can reach far beyond your local community and tap new circles of support.

Dear Friends and Family,

I'm reaching out to share something close to my heart – and to ask for your support. My Rotary Club is gearing up for the **EPIC Day of Service** on May 16, when thousands of Clubs worldwide organize projects in our communities for an immense collective impact.

This day also fuels the work we do year-round, by raising funds to support efforts like:

- Hands-on Service – home repairs for disabled seniors, pop-up markets and community gardens for neighbors facing hunger, and much more.
- Other Non-Profits – supporting food banks for families in crisis, housing for homeless veterans, literacy programs for underserved children, and much more.
- Youth Programs – Rotary service clubs in schools, foreign exchange opportunities, mental health services for young people, and much more.
- Global Projects – clean water and schools for remote villagers in Africa, disaster relief for Ukrainians, dental missions in Nepal, and much more.

In short, your donation truly supports real people, real projects, and real change.

If you're able, would you consider a gift today to help me reach my goal? It only takes a moment at [Your Page Link Will Already Be Filled In](#).

Thank you for believing in service, compassion, and community. Your generosity means the world to me – and to those whose lives will be touched due to your kindness.

With gratitude,

Your Name (already filled in)

Email to Friends & Family

Example: One Club raised over **\$21,000 in friends & family donations**, with two members raising almost \$5,000 each.

Tool 3 – One-Click Social Media Buttons

For members on social media, this is an effective way to reach the next generation of Rotarians. A button on the Personal Fundraising Page makes it easy.

Note: Community volunteers do *not* receive the three fundraising tools. We keep the fundraising request to Rotarians.

Donating and Fundraising is Optional

Some Rotarians are uncomfortable about asking for donations. A few questions may help them overcome their reluctance:

- Q: “When friends ask **you** for support, do you feel bothered – or glad to help?”
- Q: “Would it help to know that Rotarians often receive positive, appreciative replies, like: *“Great cause and happy to support in a small way”*?”
- Q: “Have you ever supported a friend by donating to a cause they’re passionate about? Could you at least ask them to support you for your worthy cause?”

Once members send their first email, the hesitation often fades.

C. How the Money Flows

All donations pass through EPIC Day’s 501(c)(3) foundation. The Foundation issues tax receipts and then sends your Club one big check after the EPIC Day. Over 90% of the money we receive after credit card and website fees goes back to your Club to boost your service budget. Note that everyone involved is an unpaid Rotarian volunteer; the fee simply covers the Foundation’s hard costs.

Club Fundraising is optional. But when the option exists, people give. There’s no reason to leave those dollars on the table.

2. Turn On Fundraising for Your Club

A. Just enter your Club’s 501(c)(3) Foundation info on the website

When you register your Club – or you can do it after registration – enter:

- Your Club’s 501(c)(3) Foundation Name
- Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Mailing Address (where we should send the check)

The website won’t allow donations to your Club until this information is entered.

Many Clubs are organized as a 501(c)(4), which is not the same as a 501(c)(3).

This information is not required if your Club doesn’t want to allow donations,

B. If your Club doesn't have a 501(c)(3) Foundation

EPIC can only forward donations to a 501(c)(3). Possible solutions:

- **Use your District's 501(c)(3) Foundation** as a pass-through. Enter its information and we'll send the check to them.
- **Use a local 501(c)(3) charity** your Club already supports. Enter their information and we'll send them the check.
- **Or handle funds locally:**
 - Accept checks/cash directly
 - Use ClubRunner or DACdb donation tools
 - Seek sponsors (details below)
 - Do a project that generates revenue (ideas below)

C. Clubs outside the United States

This year, EPIC cannot forward funds internationally. IRS reporting requirements are too difficult. Next year we plan to trial a reporting workaround in a few countries... stay tuned. In the meantime, your Club could:

- Accept checks/cash directly
- Use ClubRunner or DACdb donation tools
- Seek sponsors (details below)
- Do a project that generates revenue (ideas below)

3. Two More Fundraising Strategies

These do not rely on the EPIC website and can work for any Club, anywhere.

A. Revenue from your Project

Some projects naturally inspire on-site giving.

Example: The Cherry Creek Valley Club (CO) held a free electronics recycling day. Members spoke with drivers waiting in line, explaining their service impact and inviting donations. **They raised \$13,000.**

Caution: If growing membership is a high priority for your Club, be sure the project will appeal to, and have a need for, many community volunteers (who might decide to join your Club).



At a minimum, place a donation bucket at your project's check-in table and invite contributions.

B. Sponsors

Club Members who operate businesses may be willing to sponsor your Club. So might other entities. Sponsorship levels and pricing are entirely up to your Club. Offer recognition in return: signage, website acknowledgment, meeting mentions, and inclusion in local publicity. See page 10 for more.

Example 1: The sign at right represented **\$35,000** in sponsor funding!



Example 2: A health system sponsored one Club for **\$5,000**. The system's mental health initiative was a good fit for the proven benefits of people coming together in service.

4. Set Goals and Expectations

Success comes from consistent encouragement, clear expectations, and a few smart preparations. Aim high... ambitious goals can be motivating. Read the entire Playbook and you'll have a better idea of what might be feasible.

A. Sign-up Donations Goal

First, how often have your members already been asked to “donate” this year. That’s different from asking them to “purchase” something. Many fundraisers offer something in return, like a fun event or a raffle prize. A “donation” simply offers the satisfaction of doing good. Experiencing that satisfaction is a big part of why we all joined Rotary.

- If members are already “tapped out” by other fundraisers, expect maybe 10% participation at \$25 - \$100 per member. What goal does that equate to?
- Otherwise, 30% - 40% participation at \$100 is feasible.
- **Example:** Last year’s top Club achieved over 50% participation at \$400 per member on average. It was their one big “ask” of members for the year.

B. Friends & Family Fundraising Goal

Even if their wallets are “tapped out”, members can still send emails. Results depend on encouragement. A one-time ask might get 5% - 10% of members to send emails, with each member raising perhaps \$200. Regular reminders will get more members to act.

Example: Last year’s top Club had ~20% of members raise over \$1,200 each on average. Two members raised almost \$5,000 each.

C. Participation Goal

Consider a goal of 100% member participation in donating or fundraising or both. Every member can donate according to their ability, whether that’s \$25 or \$1,000. If they’re feeling tapped out, they can email their friends and family. 100% participation may seem unlikely, but setting the expectation can help Treat EPIC Day as an “All Hands On Deck” event to help get everyone engaged.

5. Get Your Club Excited

A. Introduce Your Members to the EPIC Day

As soon as Club leaders decide to participate in the EPIC Day, announce it to the Club at a meeting and in a follow-up email. Let them know what’s coming.

This introduction is covered in the [EPIC Club Playbook](#) and is typically led by the Champion. The Fundraising Lead should participate in the planning, since each resource below touches on Fundraising.

CLUB INTRODUCTION RESOURCES	
Club Introduction Slides coming in January	Even if you prefer not to use slides, these offer ideas for talking points. Ask members to Save the Date.
Postcard	Print and put on tables? Include in the follow-up email.
Flyer	Print and put on tables? Include in the follow-up email.
Club Introduction Email coming in January	Reach members not at the meeting, and make sure all have the link to visit www.epicdayofservice.org .

B. Make Fundraising Preparations

These ideas can help turbocharge your fundraising:

1. **Fun Challenge?** In one Club, members were assigned to one of two teams, based on last name. The challenge: who could donate and raise the most money? Each Team chose a Captain and a funny name. The losing Team had to sing a funny song honoring the winners at a Club meeting, with the Captain wearing a silly costume.
2. **Matching Fund?** If you have big donors in your Club, ask if they'd be willing to do a "match". Don't announce the match until the final push – it can be most effective with procrastinating members. For instance, a big donor could give \$1,000 early on and commit to matching another \$500 in donations from other members.
3. **Sponsors?** Identify any Club members who lead a business that might sponsor your Club's EPIC Day. Also identify other organizations that may be aligned with the EPIC Day and/or your Club's project. The EPIC Day can be a good fit for many organizations with social responsibility goals. In particular, the proven benefits of bringing people together in service may be a marvelous match for organizations involved in the mental health field.

In addition, many organizations encourage employees to perform community service. The EPIC Day offers off-the-shelf projects that employees, even in far-flung locations, can serve on together without having to organize them. This may be a good way to gain an organization's attention before asking about sponsorship.

Consider what you can offer in return for a Sponsorship. Some will want recognition:

- A sign at the project.
- Recognition on your Club's website (but not on the EPIC website... it's not feasible to feature all the sponsors of all the Clubs).
- Recognition in any local news coverage and/or ads your Club arranges.
- Recognition at multiple Club meetings.
- What else? Ask prospective sponsors and you may be surprised.

How much you charge is up to you. It's helpful to offer multiple levels at different price points. The level a Sponsor chooses will be less about what they get in return and more about what they're willing to spend. Levels could be named the usual, like Gold, Silver, and Bronze, or something more fun, like EPIC!, REALLY EPIC!, and REALLY REALLY EPIC! Who doesn't want to be REALLY REALLY EPIC?

C. Kick Off the EPIC Day with Your Club!

Once your Champion publishes the project on the website, you can do the Kick-Off any time. It's covered in their [Club Playbook](#). The Fundraising Lead should be included in the planning. If you've set up a fun challenge (page 8), now is the time to introduce it.

CLUB KICKOFF RESOURCES	
Club Kickoff Slides coming in January	Even if you prefer not to use slides, these offer ideas for talking points.
Signup Instructions Handout coming in January	Hand out at the Kick-Off and attach to the follow-up email.
Member Fundraising Handout	Hand out at the Kick-Off and attach to the follow-up email.
Club Kickoff Follow-up Email coming in January	Reach members not at the meetings, and make sure all have the link www.epicdayofservice.org .

D. Offer Regular and Fun Encouragement

This is essential to fundraising success! Rotarians are notorious for procrastinating. Don't be too concerned if the response is slow to develop. Update fundraising progress and recognize those who've acted, but don't show how much individuals have donated. If you set up a Challenge (page 8), who's winning? Change it up with different speakers addressing varied topics, and in emails with new messaging:

- We all joined Rotary because we want to give back. This is a great way to do it!
- If you have extroverted or funny members, ask them to do something. One member in a ringmaster's outfit invited everyone to the Big Show!
- If a member is talented at appealing to emotion, ask them to talk about a club project that really tugged on peoples' hearts.
- Address any discomfort about sending out friends & family emails (page 4).
- Announce the Matching Fund if you set one up (page 8).



CLUB ENCOURAGEMENT RESOURCES	
Encouragement Slides coming in January	Even if you prefer not to use slides, these can offer talking point ideas.
Member Signup Instructions coming in January	Once members finally get around to signing up, they often can't find these from the Kick-Off.
Member Fundraising Handout	Ditto
Club Encouragement Email coming in January	Reach members not at the meeting, and make sure all have the link: www.epicdayofservice.org .

6. Track Your Progress

Club Champions have access to the Club's Tools Page. Ask them to Add Permission for you to have access. The Club Fundraising Report on that page shows who has signed up and how much they've donated and raised. It's easy to track your Club's progress towards your goals, and to see who might need a little extra prompting.

7. Questions?

A. What about Cash or Check Donations?

If your Club receives cash or checks, deposit them normally, and **record the donation manually on your Club Tools Page**. It will be included in your Club's total and our collective total. The bigger the total, the more newsworthy it is for all of us.

If friends & family prefer to send a check, the website does offer the option to send it to the EPIC Foundation. We ask them to include your member's name so we can link the check to your Club and include it in your one big check from EPIC.

B. What if Members Can't Volunteer but Still Want to Donate?

At www.epicdayofservice.org, just click **SIGN UP** and follow the instructions.

C. More Questions? Use the [Contact Us](#) page on the EPIC website.

8. What Will You Do With a Bigger Service Budget?

What a fun question to ponder. Let's raise some money and find out!



The Denver Metro South and Englewood Clubs filled backpacks with meals for children facing hunger. The Englewood Club gave the Backpack Society an oversized check for \$2,000.