

## So, You Decided to Organize a Rally

Deciding to become a Rally Master or a Rally Host is very rewarding and a task that guarantees the future existence of our club. After all the main purpose of our club is group socializing and traveling in our motorhomes to various destinations.

### Rally Master vs Rally Host

The Rally Master is the person or couple that is in charge. The Rally Master can recruit other persons or couples to assist in ideas, planning and executing the rally activities. The Rally Master is responsible for the rally budget, payments and final expense report (with receipts and contracts or agreements) which is given to the Club Treasurer within 30 days after the close of the rally. The Rally Master has the final say in all decisions made and the final responsibility for all monies collected and dispersed for rally expenses with the exception of refunds. The Rally Master will send all recommendations for refunds to the Vice President of Planning and the Assistant Vice President of Planning for their joint approval. Remember your rally must be self-supporting.

If the rally makes a profit of more than \$5.00 per attendee, the total overage is to be reimbursed to the attendees by the Treasurer subsequent to the rally. All overages of \$5.00 or less per paid attendee will not be refunded.

A Rally Host is a person or couple that has agreed to help the Rally Master in any task or activity as directed by the Rally Master. A Rally Host should always get approval before taking any action that would affect any scheduling, budgeting, expenditures, etc.

First you must decide where you want to go, what do you want to see or do while there and what accommodations are available. These are things to consider:

- Is there an RV resort or park that will fit the need? At most rallies' there are 10 - 15 coaches. Are you planning on providing any meals during the rally? Do you need a meeting room, clubhouse, BBQ grill or kitchen? Is there a fee for using of the facilities? Be sure to ask the RV park or any venue you want to visit for their Group Rate. The group rate may vary according to the number of coaches/people attending. Some parks have an extra fee for pets.

How many coaches do you want at your rally. It is often necessary to limit the number of registrations you will accept. Maybe, you are only able to accommodate a limited number of coaches or people at a venue you will be attending.

Once you have chosen an RV Park, you need to put together a "game plan". Investigate things to do and places to see. Then start emailing or calling to discuss possible dates, prices, etc. Ask what the latest date is you can reserve spots or tickets needed for their venue. Do you need to pay a deposit to hold the reservation? When is final head-count and payment due for the group?

The best way to communicate is via email. Make sure you keep a copy of all correspondence. This provides a record of all details discussed. If you talk to them via phone, you can recap your conversation to the person via email. You can begin the email with something like: "I would like to recap our conversation. This is my understanding of the details, please let me know if I have covered everything. (Then list prices, dates, what they agreed to provide etc.) This documentation can prove invaluable as time passes. It is not unusual to have a contact person leave the employment of a business you were dealing with. If you have not signed a contract, these emails will definitely help in finalizing negotiations or details of your visit.

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Food - Decide if you (the rally hosts) will be providing any meals during the rally. This could be at the RV clubhouse or at a restaurant. If you have tables and chairs in the clubhouse, you may choose to have a potluck. Potlucks work best if they are held on the arrival day. Most people prepare their dish-to-share at home. Remember, everyone is relying on their RV refrigerator to be working at a cool enough temperature to keep the food safe for consumption. Nothing will destroy your rally faster than a group of people suffering from food poisoning. If you choose to have the group eat at a restaurant, but do not plan on paying for the meals with rally funds, be sure to clarify this in your write-up (i.e. Not part of Rally cost or pay on your own). If you do decide to furnish a meal at a restaurant, it is best to find something that is the same price for each person. Buffets or places that offer "2 for \$20" type dinners work well for a group.

Venues and entertainment activities: Ask if they offer Group Rates or Senior Rates. Many places do. If you are going to a museum or other tour, ask if they have guides or docents for groups. National Parks offer free entry to those with a Golden Age or Senior Passport.

### **Budget**

When you are trying to establish a price for the rally, consider these things- Ask what the cost would be for a group of 18-26 seniors. Tell them you want an all-inclusive price...cost plus all taxes and gratuities. Some venues have price breaks depending on the size of your group. When you are setting the registration price for your rally, play it safe. If they have one price for up to 15 people and a lower price for 30 over people...use the 15-people price when you figure your budget. There is no way of knowing how many Drifters will sign-up for your rally. Also, ask if they expect a price increase before your rally begins. Many times, they will honor their initial quotation, especially if you have it documented by email conversations or written contracts.

When you have an itinerary for each day of your rally, figure out what the cost would be for each couple (2-persons/ 1-coach). Remember, if there is tiered pricing offered, use the highest price you may have to pay. It is easier to spend extra money or return monies not used than to set a registration price too low. The Rally Master is responsible for all income and expenses. The Club Treasurer cannot pay for anything that is above the amount collected for your rally.

Be sure to include all incidentals in your final figure. Are you providing dishes, glasses, napkins, decorations, printed materials or gifts/prizes etc. for which you wish to be reimbursed?

Now add it all together. Add on a little extra if you anticipate pricing changes.

So, the cost of your rally is going to be \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Now you need to put together a registration form.

Look over the list of expenses. Do you need to pay these up-front or maybe you will need to pay for one night for each coach to secure the reservations at the RV park? See what, when and how much you will need to pay. The deposit you ask for on your registration must cover all prepayments you are obligated to pay before the final rally payment is due. Now set a date for when the final payment is due. Asking for final payment four to six weeks before the rally begins is a reasonable guideline. It is a good idea to send a reminder email for payments due about one week before the due date. Unfortunately, some people do not get their payments in by the dates published on the registration form. Then it becomes the Rally Master's responsibility for contacting the couple and reminding them of the missing payment.

Now type up a Registration Form for your rally. Look at some of the past registration forms used for other rallies. This will serve as a guideline for your form. Be sure to include the (small

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print) “Tucson Drifters Rally Deposits and Cancellation Policy”. This statement is important because all couples that register are affected by this ‘no deposit will be returned’ policy.

**TUCSON DRIFTERS RALLY DEPOSIT AND CANCELLATION POLICY:** A non-refundable Rally Deposit must accompany rally registration. Refunds will only be granted after Rally completions, and all records are reconciled. Any refunds will be exclusive of Rally Deposits, early funds required by venues, and any discounts lost by the reduction of participating attendees.

Also, if you have decided to limit the number of registrations; you should add that notation to the registration form and write-up article for the newsletter. You can also have a “stand-by” list of couples that want to attend the rally if there is any space that becomes available.

Next write up an article about your rally. This is a “sales article” for getting couples to sign up and make a deposit to the rally. Currently, the newsletter chairman compiles all the information for the newsletter. You need to submit your rally article and your rally registration form to the Newsletter Chairman by the third week of each month. The Newsletter Chairman then sends out the newsletter during the fourth week of each month. Please send all articles and forms in a Microsoft word document format. The Chairman does not want to retype your information; but he may have to change sizing etc. to fit the newsletter format.

Prior to the rally, the Rally Master may request the Treasurer to issue checks for site fees, catering services, etc., or for reimbursement of expenses paid by the Rally Master.

A week or two before the rally begins, you should call or email all venues to verify your group is on their schedule and verify any monetary obligations.

Go to the rally and have fun! Don’t be afraid to ask questions or ask for help. The Drifters are always there for support and backup.

Most RV parks offer the rally or group rate to anyone coming in a day early or staying over one extra night. Ask the park what they offer for discounts. You can then share this information with those attending your rally.

When the rally is over. Send the Club Treasurer your final expense report backed up with the contracts and receipts.

Good Luck and Thanks for Hosting a Rally!

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