



# Four Winds Nature Institute

*Community-based Natural Science Education and Research*

## **Fund-Raising Suggestions**

Schools pay for Four Winds programming in different ways. We encourage *Nature Program* schools to include one third of the annual fee in the school's operating budget in support of the volunteers. In some schools, the whole fee is paid by the school, but in others some outside funds must be raised. This can be done through a simple letter-writing campaign requesting support from townspeople or local businesses, through grant-writing, or fundraisers.

Various fund-raising companies offer a variety of environmentally-friendly products from t-shirts to cleaning supplies that give a certain percentage to environmental causes, a certain amount to schools and some, of course, for the company itself. General Mills Company offers the Box Tops for Education program.

Bottle drives or collecting used ink cartridges for recycling are effective, as well as auctions, yard sales, and raffles in which the items to be sold have all been donated. One city school raised their program fee by holding a huge rummage sale in their gym -- everything cost just 50 cents. Another good way to increase community awareness of your Four Winds program is to coordinate a community-wide local foods potluck supper, host an open mic as entertainment, then collect a cover charge to go toward the *Nature Program*. This is a wonderful way to invite the whole community for a fun gathering, a chance to visit with friends and raise money for the program as well. Or get folks together for a Winter fest and sled-a-thon (find sponsors for each sled run!).

Other ideas include an order-ahead pie sale with delivery on the day before Thanksgiving, a Mothers' Day brunch, Christmas tree pickup and disposal, sale of homemade bluebird houses, or a student service day. In some towns, the Conservation Commission contributes to the program either in fees or in supplying willing volunteers. You might just write a letter to parents asking them to donate \$5 or \$10 toward the program fees. Some schools sponsor runs, walks, bike-a-thons, and read-a-thons in which the students or parents collect pledges for their efforts. And be sure to ask the principal or school board to include a portion of the Four Winds cost in the school budget.

### **More Fundraising Ideas for the *Nature Program***

- Host a Mother's Day community-wide pancake breakfast;
- Plan an order-ahead volunteer-made pie sale with delivery the day before Thanksgiving;
- Organize a Gear Up for Gardening plant sale in the spring;
- Partner with a local restaurant – volunteers wait tables, restaurant donates a portion of the evening's income to the *Nature Program*.
- Have older students build and sell bluebird houses;
- Make and sell lunches at Town Meeting;
- Collect bottles and cans at the town transfer station as donations for the program;
- Organize a pizza dinner. Take orders ahead of time and contract with a local pizza maker to sell you (or donate) ingredients. Then volunteers assemble, cook, and deliver the pizzas;
- Ask local businesses to make a donation in support of the *Nature Program* in each classroom;
- Hold a raffle of services donated by volunteers – computer assistance, gardening advice, hair cuts, party planning, catered lunch, firewood hauling, etc.;
- Organize a 5K run or cross country ski race with the entry fee going to the *Nature Program*;
- Get local quilters or crafters involved, ask them to donate quilt squares or handmade items for an online auction;
- Create and sell a community calendar with photographs or drawings of nearby nature taken by students or volunteers.

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[www.fourwindsinstitute.org](http://www.fourwindsinstitute.org)