Hunt Club Cares Garage Sale - Sat June 3 2023

The relaunching of the *Hunt Club Cares* Garage Sale after 3 years can be fairly described as a partial success. We raised over $300 for our charity partner, had over 30

vendors participate, and we managed to relaunch the event with the HCCA hosting in for the first time. We did however face numerous challenges that limited the scale and success of the event. Should the HCCA wish to host this event again next year, we have a wealth of lessons learned for making the Garage Sale a success in 2024.

Central Hub

We did not manage to secure a Central Hub, which was a feature that many vendors and shoppers expressed they would have preferred. The main challenge with a traditional garage sale in the neighbourhood is that there is not enough density of participants to attract a large crowd, especially in the less central areas like Quinterra. Having the focus be on the Central Location would allow for shoppers to go between booths on foot, and would be a bigger draw.

The Community Centre, Metro Parking Lot, McCarthy Church, and Riverside United Church are all potential options. Connections need to be established early, we did not reach out until too late in the process, and partners were unhelpful (the Community Centre claimed to be booked, and Rio Can offered the rear parking lot). With more time and established relationships a better location can likey be secured.

A Central Hub also helps with the issue of vendors wanting to join from outside the neighbourhood- we simply request that they participate at the Central Hub, rather than be included on the map.

We should still include participants who wish to sell from their home (see below).

Recommendations:

1. Secure a “central hub” space for vendors to set up, allowing shoppers to go between vendors on foot, and creating a focus for the community event.
2. Encourage vendors to participate from the central location, but continue to support traditional garage sales from people’s homes.
3. Rebrand as the *Hunt Club Cares Community Marke*
4. Bring in outside food vendors such as an ice cream truck.

Home Vendors

Vendors may still wish to sell from their garage rather than the central hub. We can continue to allow for participation that way while addressing challenges faced this year.

As mentioned, driving traffic across disparate homes in the neighborhood was a challenge. Printing and displaying a large poster map (as well as providing maps as handouts) will help, as more people will be at the Central Hub that we can direct.

We distributed signs for vendors to display at their homes when collecting donations, but vendors were unsure of what to do with the sign. We should spend the effort instead to coordinate signage across the neighbourhood.

We left registration open quite late in order to maximize participation, but this made generating the map and placing signs difficult.

Recommendations:

1. Rather than distributing signs to participating homes, set up signs according to a central plan after receiving all registrations, maximizing the value of our stock of signs.
2. Encourage vendors to pay by e-transfer.
3. Have a volunteer circulate to sites (see organization below) to make contact with vendors (and potentially receive more donations).
4. Display a large map at the Central Hub in addition to handing out printed versions.

Organization

We did not have sufficient volunteers to properly organize and run the event. Everyone who participated was very helpful, but we did not have enough people available for enough time. Directors were pulling double duty with other HCCA affairs, and it was not possible for volunteers to both participate in the sale and help out. The last issue would be resolved with the Central Hub, but the HCCA needs to ensure that it has enough volunteer power before committing to holding the event.

We should also combine with the Riverside Park Community Association’s own garage sale to drive additional traffic to both. The Central Hub would be a key selling point to the RPCA. It would also help with volunteer recruitment.

We had an HCCA Booth at the Community Centre to give out maps of the garage sale and membership forms, but the membership forms are not helpful to inform interested residents about the HCCA. We should develop a flyer to give to interested residents rather than forms.

Our weekend selected (the weekend after the Gleber Garage Sale) seems ideal. The HCCA would need to decide whether to proceed rain-or-shine or whether to select a rain date. Both have drawbacks, as either rain would drive traffic away, or the confusion of putting on the event on a different day would also drive traffic away.

Recommendations:

1. Merge with the RPCA Garage Sale if possible.
2. Designate a Director (or member) as Event Coordinator, and make this their main if not only duty for the year.
3. Have at least 3 additional volunteers for organization and set up.
4. Begin planning and outreach to partners in January at the latest.
5. If (2) - (4) aren’t possible, consider postponing, canceling, or merging with the Fall Festival.
6. Volunteers are needed for coordinating with partners, coordinating vendor registration, putting up signs, set-up at the Central Hub, manning an HCCA Booth, making contact with garage vendors during the day, and take-down at the Central Hub.
7. Proceed rain-or-shine, and communicate this clearly to vendors to supply their own rain protection.

Fundraising

The HCCA Committed to funding the overhead for the event, leaving all revenue to go towards charity. The total spending was close to (but not as much) as revenue raised. The HCCA will need to consider how much it wants to spend on the event, or if spending should come out of revenue. Our recommendation is to direct all revenue towards charity to give confidence to vendors and donors.

The HCCA may still wish to limit spending. The Magnet Sign was the biggest item, and while it did draw vendors and shoppers, it could be removed if costs need to be reduced. Merging with the RPCA is another way to reduce total costs.

The Interval House was our choice of charitable partner, and we feel this is a good cause to support and an excellent one for a Community Association in particular, so this arrangement should remain.

We also had at least one other garage sale “piggy-backing” on ours- i.e. hosting their own garage sale without paying us. This is likely inevitable as we can’t tell people not to have a garage sale, but the central hub may be an attractive enough option for them to dissuade this. Sylvie Begin (real estate agent in Quinterra) has put on garage sales in the past, we could approach her as a potential sponsor.

Vendor fees were only $10- increasing these would drive up money raised, but we should avoid this until vendors can be more confident that they’ll make more sales. It will be better to solicit additional donations on the day of the market.

Recommendations:

1. The HCCA (and potentially RPCA) should pay for all overhead costs so that all revenue can go to charity.
2. If cutting expenses, the Magnet Sign can be cut, but it is a worthwhile expense.
3. Coordinate with corporate sponsorship strategy.
4. Reach out to Sylvie Begin as a potential sponsor.
5. Continue our relationship with Interval House.
6. Keep vendor fees at $10.