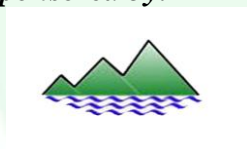


# Come Home Year Planning Guide

---

*March 2008*

*Sponsored by:*



**Marine and Mountain Zone**



## Table of Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. Acknowledgements</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Getting Started</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>I. Pre-Planning Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. Selecting a Sponsor</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>III. Selecting a Chairperson</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>IV. Selecting a Date</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>V. Selecting a Venue</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>VI. Selecting Proper Insurance</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Committee Structure</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>I. Role of Committee</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. Purpose of Sub-Committees</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>III. Concept of Event Coordinator</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>IV. Selecting Committee Structure</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. Recruiting Volunteers</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>I. Volunteer Coordinator</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>II. Recruiting Process</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>III. Job Description</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>IV. Volunteer Application Form</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>V. Volunteer Appreciation</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5. Financial Management</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>I. Preparing Budget</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>II. Securing Sponsorships</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>III. Best Practices for Fundraising</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>IV. Merchandising</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>V. Financial Monitoring &amp; Controls</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>VI. Reporting</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>6. Event Program</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>I. Event Planning</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>II. Identifying Activities</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>III. Monitoring Activities</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>IV. Implementation</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7. Wrap-up Activities</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>I. Prepare Post Event Analysis</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>II. Prepare Reports</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>III. Send out Thank You</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>IV. Final Media Release</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>V. Compile a Resource Kit</b>	<b>14</b>

<b>8.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>I. Come Home Year Must To Do List</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>II. Come Home Year Not To Do List</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	
	<b>a) Volunteer Application Form</b>	
	<b>b) Budget Format</b>	
	<b>c) Event Program Copies</b>	



## **1. Acknowledgements**

In April 2007, the Long Range Regional Economic Development Board and the South Western Marine & Mountain Zone Corporation sponsored a meeting among four of the Come Home Year Planning Committees; namely, the Codroy Valley Come Home Year Committee, the Bay St. George South Come Home Year Committee, the Cape Ray Come Home Year Committee and the Stephenville Come Home Year Committee. The meeting was facilitated by Mark Felix, Economic Development Officer from the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development. The purpose of the meeting was to share ideas and work together as a region to do joint marketing for all four events. During the initial meeting, it was decided to have representatives from each Come Home Year Committee to attend a workshop to identify best practices for planning a Come Home Year event. These ideas would be compiled in a Come Home Year Planning Guide.

The Come Home Year Strategic Planning Workshop took place from November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 at Hotel Port aux Basques in Port aux Basques. This workshop was sponsored by the Long Range Regional Economic Development Board and the South Western Marine & Mountain Zone Corporation and funded by the Department of Innovation, Trade & Rural Development's Community Capacity Program. We would like to thank the following people for attending this workshop and contributing their ideas in order for this Planning Guide to be compiled: Lynn MacArthur, Phyllis Baird, Barbara MacNeil, Mary Anderson, Terri Luedee, Wayne Muise, Esther Carter, Paul Traverner, Ivy Traverner, Anne Osmond, Wayne Wheeler, Rosa Dollard, Cynthia Downey, Sheila Hawco, Brian Button, Kris Parsons, Gerard Merrigan and Cathy Lomond. A special thank you to Mark Felix for planning and facilitating the workshop.

Finally, a thank you to the Come Home Year Planning Guide Steering Committee, who compiled, edited and published this guide. Members include: Sheila Hawco, Lynn MacArthur, Mary Byrne, Barbara MacNeil, Anne Osmond, Sylvia Hulan and Mark Felix. We hope this Planning Guide can aid communities as they plan and prepare for similar Come Home Year events.

## **2. Getting Started**

### **I. Pre-Planning Stage**

The pre-planning stage involves talking about hosting a Come Home Year event for your community. A best practice during this stage of planning is to talk to other communities who have sponsored a Come Home Year event and to follow the suggestions contained in this Come Home Year Planning Guide. Speak with previous CHY Committee/Chair/Organizers.

## II. Selecting a Sponsor

Come Home Year events are major activities for any community to undertake and it is important that the event have a dedicated sponsor. Town Councils, Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Committee or a community Come Home Year Committee or a combination of these organizations can make an official sponsor for your event. The role of your sponsor is to guide the process of planning and organizing a successful Come Home Year event. As well, the sponsor may have to provide some up front money to get the process started and cover expenses until revenues are collected during the event.

## III. Selecting a Chairperson

An important part of any Come Home Year Committee is selecting a strong Chairperson to head the committee and take on the responsibility for planning and organizing the Come Home Year. Some communities have their committee co-chaired allowing the job to be divided between two people. Characteristics of a good chairperson are as follows:

- Strong leadership skills.
- Able to delegate tasks.
- Experience in planning and chairing meetings.
- A person well liked by the community.
- A person able to draw on their volunteer networks to assist with the event.
- A person with great attitude and ability to cooperatively work with others.
- A person able to complete tasks within time frames.
- Experience in planning events and activities.
- Honest, loyal, dedicated person.
- Time to dedicate BEFORE and DURING the event

It is important for the sponsor to identify approaching the right individual to Chair a Come Home Year event and that person should possess many of the above characteristics. Once the Chairperson is identified, the best approach is to meet informally over a lunch to present the concept. Once the person accepts the position, you are ready to move forward in the planning process.

## IV. Selecting a Date

A key to planning any successful Come Home Year is selecting an appropriate date and allowing sufficient time for planning such an event. Dates to stay away from include early in June when school is open and late in August when parents are planning for their children's return to school. The two weeks that the Marine Atlantic Ferry is operating at full capacity for the tourism season. Which is usually the last week of July and first week of August each year. The best practice for selecting your date is to allow for a minimum of two years in advance notice. That enables your committee to communicate to people who are away and will need that time frame to plan their holidays around your Come Home Year event. As well, your committee can have lead time to do fund raising activities prior to the event to ensure revenues are available to cover some of the

Come Home Year expenses. In the date selection process, you should consult with other community organizations to make sure the Come Home Year does not interfere with already scheduled activities. Another important part of selecting the date is determining the length of the Come Home Year event. Best practices suggest that 7-10 days of activities is work enough for any volunteer Come Home Year committee to organize.

## **V. Selecting a Venue**

Another key component of any Come Home Year event is selecting an appropriate venue to host most of your activities in. Factors that influence the venue location include:

- The capacity of the building in people, washrooms, kitchen area.
- The location of the building.
- Is their adequate parking?
- Is the building(s) available during the time required?
- Does the building have third party liability insurance?
- Any restrictions to using the building need to be identified up front. For example, selling of liquor, smoking policy, cleaning policy, signage restrictions, etc.
- Who controls the keys to the building?

Best practice is that any outdoor activities have a Plan-B – poor weather option of moving, if possible, the event indoors.

## **VI. Selecting Proper Insurance**

One of the most critical tasks in planning your Come Home Year event would be to make sure that your committee is properly insured. If you are holding your event at an insured location than the facility insurance will cover the event but you should still check out whether your group needs additional insurance. However, if you are holding your events in a non insured location than liability insurance will have to be purchased by your organization. One of the best practices would be to look around your community and see if there would be another organization that would be willing to have you as a rider on their insurance. The most important thing to remember about insurance is that even though this is a big expense for Come Home Year Committees it is one of the most important items that have to be extensively checked out early.

### **3. Committee Structure**

#### **I. Role of Committee**

The role of the Come Home Year Committee is to plan, organize, coordinate and implement a first class Come Home Year celebration for your community that would generate economic opportunities for local businesses and non-profit groups. As well, the Committee should be able to utilize the resources of the community and enhance the “community spirit” before, during and after the Come Home Year event.

a) **Chairperson – Co-Chairperson – Secretary**

The chair/co-chair is responsible for making sure each meeting is conducted accordingly and that matters are dealt with in an orderly, effective manner. The Secretary duties are to record minutes from each meeting and report at next meeting.

- To ensure the committee is managed effectively.
- To provide support and supervision to the committee.
- To represent the committee as its figurehead.
- Secretary will record all minutes of all Steering committee meetings.

b) **Finance Committee:**

This committee will oversee all financial aspects of you event. The duties include; supervision and auditing of all ticket, merchandise, bar sales, fundraising, assisting all committees with budget preparation and preparation of financial reports for meetings and most important final financial report upon completion of event.

- Committee should consist of at least three people.
- Monitor all funds raised for event – record- report.
- To require a budget accept request from all other committees requiring funding to carry out a particular event, should include purpose and amount required.
- Establish a float for use during each event.
- Purchase from float as required and always keep float the same.
- Establish sub-committee for event.
- Arrange one committee and two/three subcommittees for each day, responsibilities; pick up cash from various venues (two people) – record cash received – preparing deposit book.
- Ensure all deposits are made daily by two people, after all is verified and signed off.
- Suggestion – have a separate sub-committee to order merchandize.

c) **Special Events:**

This committee will oversee all of the main events required for the event. (Excluding opening/closing ceremonies) The committee will have a large chair and co-chair and a large number of volunteers to oversee each event. The committee should meet once a month starting off and then bi/weekly / weekly. Minutes to be kept of each meeting.

Duties:

- Choose a Theme for the evening (or not)
- Work together with the Entertainment committee to decide on entertainment for the night (music)
- Collaborate with volunteers to decide on decorations and ensure they are on schedule throughout.

- Collaborate with Steering committee and Finance committee to ensure we have the funds necessary as ensuring that there are no conflicts in the schedule from other activities (such as recreation).
- Collaborate with the Steering committee to ensure there will be enough volunteers available for each event.
- Collaborate with Communications committee in setting up the schedule.
- Keep Steering committee up to date on progress throughout.

The Special events committee will be responsible for the Children's committee as well as other special events such as; Heritage Day, Haunted House, etc.

**d) Communications Committee:**

Consist of chair/co-chair and a number of volunteers. Will oversee all aspects of communications for the event and be responsible for the following three sub- committees;

**e) Finders Committee:**

- Compile a list of names and addresses of all ex-patrician
- Create a computer data base for all ex-patrician
- Designing, sending correspondence and invitations to all potential guests.

**f) Media Relations and Marketing Sub-Committee:**

- Media/Public relations Strategy.
- Marketing and promoting all aspects of the event.
- Arrange all advertising of events.
- Issue press releases on behalf of the committee.

**g) Website Sub-Committee:**

- Create and design a Web site for the event.
- Update Website with current information on regular basics.
- Create an e-mail data base for all ex-patrician.
- Create and maintain links to third website chat forums.

**h) Entertainment Committee:**

This committee will oversee all aspects of coordinating, scheduling and booking entertainment for the events. Members of this committee will be Chair/Co-Chair and volunteers.

After the entertainment needs are determined:

- Budget each specific event.
- Solicit and prepare proposals for the booking of Sound System, Bands, Discos, and other entertainers as required.

- Schedule and supervise all aspects of the Entertainment during the event.
- Have all entertainers sign a contract.

**i) Recreation Committee:**

This committee will plan and organize recreation events for the whole event. Sub-committees required and a large number of volunteers. This committee will be responsible for; adults and children's recreation events (ie:) soccer, hiking, softball, golf. A budget will be planned and submitted to Steering committee and finance committee.

**j) Ceremonies:**

This committee will be responsible for planning, organizing, scheduling and supervising all aspects of all Ceremonies during event, including the Opening Ceremonies, Closing Ceremonies, Parade, Ecumenical Church Service. A sub-committee will be set up for each of the above events.

- Plan a format, schedule and/or agenda for the particular event.
- Determine the requirements for each event. Ie: MC for event, refreshments, guest speakers, tables, chairs, decorations, special guests, etc.
- Prepare a budget for each event and submit to Steering committee and Finance committee.
- Fire works if applicable should be carried out by a Certified Technician.

**k) Logistics Committee:**

This committee will oversee logistical planning and support required for the event. Committee required having sub-committees and a large number of volunteers.

Duties:

- Provide Infrastructure to accommodate staging for Entertainment, Shelter for the spectators (maybe tent), Canteens, Bar, Vendor Booths, and required event props.
- Provide all labor, tools, material, equipment and transportation to construct and maintain the facilities.
- Provide utilities such as water, electricity and fuel (for the reefer and generator).
- Materials required: tables and chairs, extension cords, tarps, complete tool boxes, rope, staplers, battery operated drills, reciprocating saw, nails, screws, tape, spare bulbs, hand soap, toilet paper and paper towels, mops and buckets, brooms, garbage bags, garbage containers (both wet and dry to separate recyclables).
- Contract out security and provide schedule; normally 24 hours around the clock (usually two during quiet hours and at least four during peak hours). After hours security (2:00 a.m. – 08:00 a.m.) can pick up the garbage and clean the grounds.
- Garbage pick up (maybe a contractor) must be arranged during off duty garbage days.
- Provide janitorial staff to clean building, especially constant monitoring of the washrooms.
- Parking attendants must be available including a designated roped off area for parking.

## II. Purpose of Sub-Committees

The purpose of sub-committees is to allow for additional human resources to organize and plan the Come Home Year event. Sub-committees are more action oriented and focused on a particular task that needs to get accomplished. Two best practices for sub-committees are:

- 1) Sub-committees need to be linked to the main planning committee for information sharing and coordination. Usually this is accomplished by having the Chair or another sub-committee member participating as a member of the Come Home Year Committee.
- 2) Each sub-committee needs to have a clear Terms of Reference as to exactly what is to be accomplished by the sub-committee and how their works fits into the overall planning of Come Home Year.

## III. Concept of Event Coordinator

Organizing and planning a Come Home Year event takes a tremendous amount of time and effort; especially, if it is left entirely up to community volunteers. Communities should consider the concept of hiring an event coordinator to assist with the day to day planning activities of a Come Home Year event. This type of work experience is a good fit for most government subsidized employment programs that community groups can apply for in order to obtain funding to hire a full time event coordinator. The best practice is to have the Come Home Year Committee meet several times and plan the overall event before hiring a person to assist with implementing the plan.

## IV. Selecting a Committee Structure

The size of your community and the number of Come Home Year activities will influence the structure of your planning committee. Smaller communities will require fewer sub-committees and may only require one planning committee. A best practice is to consult with other communities on how they structured their committee and the overall effectiveness of the structure. The following is one suggestion for a committee structure.



The best practices for any Come Home Year Committee is to establish your planning committee as soon as possible and to conduct several planning sessions to get everyone's input into the actual Come Home Year activities. In one of the planning sessions, it would be a good suggestion to invite a speaker or presenter from another community who recently organized a Come Home Year event for their community.

## **4. Recruiting Volunteers**

### **I. Volunteer Coordinator**

The key ingredient to any successful Come Home Year event is a strong volunteer base. In order to ensure effective coordination and communication, a person needs to be recruited as the volunteer coordinator. This person is responsible for the following activities:

- a) Designing a volunteer recruiting strategy.
- b) Identifying in consultation with the Steering Committee, the number and type of volunteers required.
- c) Designing a volunteer application form.
- d) Developing a volunteer database.
- e) Screening volunteers.
- f) Identifying volunteer needs during the event. Ie: meals, cold water, protective clothing, etc.
- g) Organizing volunteer appreciation activities.
- h) Developing adequate identification system for volunteers. Ie: Nametags, tee-shirts, vests, etc.

### **II. Recruit Process**

In order to recruit volunteers successfully, it is important to identify up front what type of volunteers you are looking for and the type of skills required to get the job done. There is nothing more frustrating for the committee and individual volunteers to be placed in a position where the task to be completed surpasses the skill of the individual. The following are some recruiting strategies that can be implemented:

- a) Use the media and have a general meeting for volunteers.
- b) Approach not-for-profit groups to get involved.
- c) Approach people on an individual basis.
- d) Recruit friends and family members.
- e) Make presentations of the event at public meetings and indicate the need for volunteers.

The type of volunteers required for a Come Home Year event are: bartenders, drivers, stage hands, clean-up crew, decorating, administration, heavy lifting, handling cash, security, food preparation and entertainment coordination. One of the keys to effective volunteers is to match the job task with the volunteer list and to have a volunteer orientation session to ensure all

volunteers are familiar with the entire event plan and to present how important their role is in implementing the plan.

### **III. Job Description**

The volunteer coordinator in consultation with the Steering Committee should develop a detailed job description for each of the job types required. For example, bartenders, are they expected to order the beer, set-up the bar, clean-up after the event, handle cash or just serve drinks? A job description clarifies volunteers' roles and responsibilities and eliminates confusion and people interrupting other volunteer's jobs. As well, a good job description ensures a better match between the job required and the skills of the volunteer.

### **IV. Volunteer Application Form**

A best practice for volunteers is to have a volunteer application form, which can be completed by the person wanting to volunteer. An example of a volunteer application form is attached in the Appendices of this guide; however, the type of information that needs to be collected is as follows:

- a) Complete contact information including mailing address, email and telephone numbers.
- b) Time(s) the person is available to volunteer.
- c) Special skills – bartender's course, first aid, valid driver's license, typing, etc.
- d) List the types of jobs requiring volunteers on the form and have the person select their area of interest.

### **V. Volunteer Appreciation**

A key aspect of maintaining and recruiting volunteers in the future is how your committee appreciated and thanked your volunteers. Everyone remembers how they were praised and appreciated or how they felt unappreciated. It is important to identify up front the volunteer perks and how the volunteers will be thanked. This will clarify what your committee is prepared to do for the volunteers and do not leave this task to the last minute or after the event is over to plan because it usually does not get done in an appropriate manner. It is important to understand that every volunteer can not participate at the same energy level or contribute the same amount of time to your event. However, each volunteer's effort contributes to the overall success of the event. As a result, stay away from individual recognitions and make all the appreciations to the collective group of volunteers. The volunteer coordinator in consultation with the Steering Committee needs to identify and decide on the volunteer perks and thank you efforts. Some best practices from other Come Home Year events include:

#### Volunteer Perks

- Free admission to activities
- Discount on merchandise
- Free tee-shirt or at cost tee-shirt

- Name placed in for prize draws (name entered for each hour volunteered)
- Provide meals and drinks

### Volunteer Appreciation Activities

- Public thank you
- Individual certificate or thank you card
- Host a volunteer party
- Host a volunteer appreciation night during the Come Home Year event
- Share profits of the event with service type organizations that assist

The key is to always thank your volunteers and maintain a volunteer registry for future reference.

## **5. Financial Management**

### **I. Preparing a Budget**

It is critical that the Finance Committee start preparing a detailed budget outlining expenses and revenues as soon as possible. In addition, financial protocols need to be established to outline spending limits, signing authority and financial controls during the event. A sample of a budget is attached in the Appendices and a good budget should:

- a) Detail the expenses and revenue for each day of the Come Home Year event or/and Detail the expenses for each separate EVENT within the CHY.
- b) Detail the projected income and rationale for the projections.
- c) Allow for fundraising activities to take place and then a deadline for these activities to end, in order to make any necessary budget amendments.
- d) The goal of the Committee should be to develop a balance budget that is realistic and practical for your community.

A best practice to use once a budget is completed and accepted by the planning committee is that all expenditures be monitored and strict controls for approval required for expenditures outside the budget.

### **II. Securing Sponsorships**

The Finance Committee needs to develop a sponsorship package, which outlines the benefits of sponsorship. What advertising the sponsor receives and what perks the sponsor receives for different levels of sponsorship? As well, some sponsors are more comfortable with an in-kind sponsor and this need to be considered when deciding on the sponsorship package. Some of the most common sponsors that can be approached are:

- Town Councils
- Government Departments
- Beer / Liquor Companies

- Local Businesses

It is important to identify the groups to approach and send a letter requesting the sponsorship. A best practice is to have someone on the Planning Committee who knows the sponsor and follow-up with a visit or phone call. The key to a successful sponsorship campaign is to demonstrate and convince the sponsor how the Come Home Year event will benefit them directly and indirectly.

### **III. Fundraising**

Fundraising is an important aspect of Come Home Year event and time should be set aside to allow fundraising activities prior to the event to ensure revenue is in place to start the Come Home Year activities. As well, early fundraising events are an excellent opportunity to promote the event and get your community excited about hosting the Come Home Year event. Some of the best practices and more successful fundraising activities are:

- a) Kitchen parties
- b) Duck race
- c) Ticket sales
- d) Pandora's Box
- e) Loonie Auction
- f) Cook book sales
- g) Local talent shows
- h) Selling meals – dinner theatre
- i) BINGO
- j) 50-50 draws

In addition, the Finance Committee needs to identify fundraising activities during the Come Home Year event that will ensure a constant supply of revenues for the Steering Committee.

### **IV. Merchandise**

Identifying the best procedures for purchasing and selling Come Home Year merchandizing is a very important task. Once Come Home Year's Committee has decided to purchase and sell merchandise a sub committee should be set up for this purpose. If the Committee does not want to purchase and sell merchandise than a private business should be given the opportunity to purchase and sell official Come Home Year merchandise. Some best practices include:

- a) Find out if there are other events happening in the area
  - cost sharing
- b) Get the best deals by ordering in bulk
- c) Keep cost low
- d) Screen Printing
- e) Set up merchandise committee
- f) Decide if you would like pre-orders for merchandise
- g) Have copy rights for your Come Home Year Logo

- h) Decide if you want to order merchandise or give the opportunity to local retail stores order and sell the merchandise

Towards the end of the Come Home Year celebrations there should be a sale on the remaining inventory. Then if there is still merchandise remaining it should be used as “give away” prizes for local events or charities.

## V. Financial Monitoring and Controls

It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee to establish the financial controls and monitoring procedures for the Come Home Year event. These procedures should be recommended to the Come Home Year Steering Committee for approval. When handling Come Home Year revenues; especially cash, it is important to ensure accountability and good cash control procedures maintains good financial management. Some best practices include:

- a) Establishing a separate Come Home Year bank account.
- b) Deciding on signing authority and ensuring two signatures per cheque.
- c) Deciding on spending limits for staff members, executive and committee.
- d) Deciding on protocol for approving expenditures outside the budget.
- e) Compiling a realistic budget with sound revenue projections.
- f) A good practice is to sell bar tickets separate from the actual bar. This will allow a more efficient bar service and better cash control. Beer and liquor tickets are printed in advance and assigned to a volunteer to sell. At the end of the night, the cash can is counted and compared to the tickets unsold.
- g) Anytime cash is counted, there should be two people present and signing off on the amount.
- h) When cash is being picked up, there should be a sign off sheet on the amount given, to whom, time and date with two copies.
- i) A security person should be available to escort the people picking up and depositing cash.
- j) Arrange for after hours bank deposits.
- k) Arrange for cash can floats and be prepared to have lots of change available for each Come Home Year event.
- l) Be very selective in the people you have handling cash transactions and dealing with the overall financial management of our Come Home Year event.

The best practice for financial monitoring is to have tickets pre-printed for all Come Home Year events including bar tickets. Assign a specific number of tickets to each seller and at the end of the event, monitor the cash compared to the number of tickets sold. It is not a good financial practice to just have volunteers collect cash at a bar or at the door for entrance fees.

## VI. Reporting

It is very important to ensure a financial statement is compiled and presented to the Steering Committee. This is the responsibility of the Financial Sub-Committee Co-Chairs, who prepare and present income statement outlining revenue and expenses to the Come Home Year Steering Committee. It is very important to ensure revenue is clearly identified as individual amounts and

not all lumped in to one total. In the event of a surplus, the Come Home Year Steering Committee will have to decide where the surplus will be spent or donated. The same holds true in the event of a deficit position. The Come Home Year Steering Committee will have to decide on what actions to take to eliminate the debt.

## **6. Event Program**

### **I. Event Planning**

Once the Come Home Year Steering Committee is in position, it is important to organize a full day planning session aimed at preparing the event program. The program is the key to the Come Home Year event and it will outline the number of days, the activities during each day and the expected entertainment required. Copies of several Come Home Year event programs are attached in the Appendices for examples and ideas. The best practices for event planning is to have a variety of activities for all age groups and to develop a good communications strategy for informing the community, general public and visitors on your Come Home Year activities.

### **II. Identify Activities**

The Steering Committee can solicit the community on the types and variety of activities that can take place during the Come Home Year event. Some of the more common activities include: opening and closing ceremonies, Newfoundland day, parades, heritage day, fireworks, school reunions, Halloween party, family day, street dance and other theme nights. A best practice for planning and organizing events is to seek out the support and assistance from existing community groups to take on the responsibility for planning one of the activities. This shares the workload and gets more people involved in your Come Home Year event.

### **III. Monitoring Activities**

If your community is thinking about a Come Home Year event every 5 to 10 years, then it is important to monitor how successful each Come Home Year activity was. The activity should be monitored in terms of safety, attendance, participation, audio quality, audience reception and a view of improving the activity for future events. This information would be valuable in post event analysis.

### **IV. Implementation**

With the event program completed and all activities outlined, it is important to have an implementation plan. Detailed Written Plan for each day and each event within that day and coordinated with Steering Committee; all plans should be submitted for review well in advance and after finalized placed in a master binder for all to see – especially important if a key person cannot perform their duty – illness, death, etc – the master binder with complete step by step guide will allow someone less familiar with that event or day to step in and help out. This plan outlines the detailed tasks by day and how that needs to be completed. For example, when

buildings need to be open, by whom and what supplies need to be in place. A sample copy of an implementation plan is attached in the Appendices as a guide. The best practice for implementation is to have a clear communications strategy and always be prepared for the unexpected.

## **7. Wrap-Up Activities**

### **I. Post Event Analysis**

Within four weeks after the Come Home Year event, a post analysis meeting needs to take place with the Come Home Year Steering Committee. Members would have the opportunity to discuss all the positive things that occurred and what worked really well. In addition, time would also be used to discuss the challenges and recommendations for future Come Home Year events.

### **II. Prepare Reports**

Two key reports should be prepared. Namely; a detailed financial report and a narrative report on the overall event. Each report should have a recommendations section for future events. All Steering Committee members should receive a copy of the reports and it is a good idea to share the information with your major sponsors and other organizations that assisted with the planning of the Come Home Year event.

### **III. Send out a Thank You**

It is critical to forward thank you letters on behalf of the Steering Committee to all sponsors, volunteers and groups that contributed to the Come Home Year event. Nothing concludes a successful Come Home Year event better than a special thank you. Certificates with the Come Home Year logo would be a good suggestion.

### **IV. Final Media Release**

As soon as possible after the Come Home Year event, a final media release is required to indicate the overall success of the event. Remember this is an excellent opportunity to publicly thank your sponsors, volunteers and the Steering Committee.

### **V. Compile a Resource Kit**

To assist with the planning of a future Come Home Year event for your community, it is important to compile a resource kit. This resource kit should include:

- a) Electronic copy of all Come Home Year information.
- b) Sample of all Come Home Year merchandise.
- c) Sample of all letters, proposals and correspondence.
- d) Copy of volunteer registrar.

- e) Copy of event program.
- f) Copy of final report.
- g) Copy of financial statements.
- h) Copies of all Come Home Year meeting minutes.

## 8. Conclusion

Planning a Come Home Year event takes time, commitment and dedicated volunteers. However, the excitement of meeting family and friends who are living away from your community makes all the effort worthwhile. We hope that this planning guide can provide you with some direction and support as you prepare for your Come Home Year event. If you require further information, feel free to contact any of the resource people that have agreed to be available to assist with inquiries. Finally, we would like to leave you with a quick list of Come Home Year must to do list and a Come Home Year not to do list.

### I. Come Home Year “Must” To Do List

- Consider contracting out security
- Listen to all ideas
- Make sure everything is listed in order
- Get a good sound system
- Raise money
- Hiring bands have signed contracts
- Strong committee – make sure all stay on tasks
- Committee in place
- Committee’s responsible for their work
- Utilize the volunteer groups
- Getting many volunteers – more the better
- Good process for financial management
- Keep box of records and information for the next event
- Signing in of visitors – keep list for future
- Make sure there are at least two (2) people working together on cash
- Have a one night break

### II. Come Home Year “Not” To Do List

- Do not overwork committee members
- Do not discourage volunteers
- Do not chair twice
- No need for so many theme nights
- Never say it can not be done
- Do not “single” people out – volunteers

