



# COMMUNITY BUILDER

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## Summer Time Activities

Can you believe summer is already here? With all of the challenges we have been experiencing, it is time to start thinking about summer fun! So, let's look at some great ways to help our communities enjoy this incredible season with events and activities.

As with all things, planning is one of the most important aspects of a successful event. A strong foundation can be laid by examining the logistics of an event – first and foremost, volunteers! Easy, right? This is one of the most important hurdles to overcome. One of the best strategies to recruit busy residents is to provide them with finite opportunities to help. Rather than establishing an Activities Committee with no end in sight, set up a committee for just one event. Be clear on the goals and the deadlines. Establish varied activities for both adults and kids. Those without children may not be interested in helping with children's events, but would love to help for more grown-up activities. Give individuals the opportunity to decide how they will help and with what events, and you may find more willing volunteers. Teens are also a great resource for help. There are a lot of college-bound students who need volunteer hours. They know what they like to do, and with some adult leadership, they can begin to learn a few life skills and feel empowered to be a part of their community.



The next step is budgeting. It's important to know how much can be spent on events. In some cases, vendors welcome the opportunity to be involved with social activities in communities they serve. In larger communities, the landscaper, cable provider, or gate/access control company can be an excellent source of sponsorship. Local business owners, especially those in the community, may be willing to help. Some communities ask for a donation to participate so the event pays for itself. Every donation collected can help your events be successful without putting a strain on the association's budget.

There are a number of ways to host an event. In today's environment, consider how to host an event – virtually or in-person, making sure that we offer something for everyone, so no one feels left out.

Let's talk about virtual events. As with all things, it's important to look at the available infrastructure. How is the internet speed? What platforms are available to host or share? Once video and audio broadcast capabilities are reviewed, be sure that volunteers are set up and ready to hold a virtual event!

There are a number of events that work well on a virtual platform. Here are a few tricks for hosting them:

**Bingo!** – An all-time favorite game with tons of options on how to host; try [myfreebingocards.com](http://myfreebingocards.com) for free games with up to 30 players and nominal fees for additional. Don't just stop at Bingo. There are many games online that you can host in this fashion.

**Pet Shows/Trick Competitions** – have your residents submit short videos of their pets and judge the best. Facebook pages are easy ways to do this.

**Cooking Show** – have a resident submit a recipe and a video of them preparing one of their favorite meals. This is great for holidays and sharing those treasured family recipes.

**Crafts** – Like to create? Get a list of supplies posted and make a how-to video.

**Lawn and Garden Care** – Share some tips on how to take care of your lawn, trees or plants. Reach out to your landscape vendors for tips.

**Talent Shows** – get a mic, clear the dance floor and strut your stuff!

**Book Clubs** – set the reading list and host the discussion.

We're all excited to be able to host in-person events again. The key to success is planning first – consider safety, space, volunteers, and supplies. Most of the events listed virtually can be hosted in person or as a hybrid, so as many residents as possible can engage. However, when the community wants in person events, there are a lot of options:

**Fitness** – Walks/Runs and bike rides can be held almost any time, or you can team up with a local charity to benefit a good cause. Three-point shootouts and games of HORSE on the basketball court can be fun. Reach out to local professional teams to see if you can get a player to come out. Corn hole competitions or tennis serving for accuracy are fun ways to get people out and using the amenities. Consider a community Olympics. Friendly competitions can be structured to team street vs. street or Sub-division vs. Sub-division, using events like the ones mentioned, and old-time favorites, such as egg or balloon tossing.

**Community movie nights** on blow-up screens are great. Host a "dive in" at the pool or hold a competition to see who can create the best cardboard car for a drive-in experience? Remember to include different age groups when considering the movie and activities!

**Food Truck nights** with live music or **Karaoke** are great ways to bring the community together.

**Parades** can be held with either bikes or golf carts, or walking. Celebrate life or let the participants decorate for their special days such as graduation, promotion, beating a disease, getting married, having a child, etc. There is so much to be thankful for that all we need is a vehicle to spread our cheer.

Community Building events, like scavenger hunts in common areas, a "safari, where residents put stuffed animals in their yards and residents have to spot them, or sidewalk art competitions, are wonderful ways to bring residents together.

And let's not forget giving back... There is no greater feeling than when a community comes together to help those in need. Start at home. Is there a neighbor who is going through a tough time? Does someone need help mowing the grass or pressure washing? Form a GoFundMe account and help with repairs for someone in need. Support the community around you through blood Drives, food Drives, or backpack stuffing for children to help provide food over the summer.

Summer is an excellent time to rekindle that sense of community and bring more joy back to your neighborhood. Hopefully, you will find more than a few ideas inspire you, and encourage you to lead your association through a wonderful and exciting summer.

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Randy Miller is the Vice President for the Clermont, FL Office of Sentry Management. He has served Sentry for over 20 years and continues to grow in his role as a Market Leader. Randy's leadership style was founded in the United States Marine Corps for which he left the quiet life of North Carolina to see the world. He came to Florida in 1996 and married his wife, who travelled all the way from India. They have two children, a high school graduating young man and a budding young lady, who aspires to be a pediatric surgeon. He spends his time with family and his two English Bulldogs, Smokey and Bandit.



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