



T: 919.857.4699
F: 919.833.8819

19 E. Martin Street
Suite 300
Raleigh, NC 27601

www.ncconservationnetwork.org

NC Conservation Network

Tip Sheet: Tips for a successful house party

Created by: Peter Lane, Institute for Conservation Leadership
August 24, 2009

Tips for a successful house party

As summer cools down and fall blows in, it's the perfect time to think about house parties as fundraisers for your organization. In helping, here are some tips from the [Institute for Conservation Leadership](#) (ICL) for how to host a successful house party:

- 1. Find an enthusiastic host.** The ideal host has made a significant gift or is willing to ask guests to join him or her in doing so. He or she also will provide a mailing list of friends and acquaintances—not just people who are current donors. Your superstar host will also provide food and drink!
- 2. Plan, plan, plan.** Give yourself at least six weeks to get everything together. Plan on a 2-hour event with a short presentation and ask at the 30-40 minute mark. Make sure you cover all the details in your planning such as parking, knowing who will welcome guests, having enough chairs, recycling bins, and trash cans or tables for disposable items or dishes that will need to be washed.
- 3. Invite 3 to 4 times as many people as you want to attend.** The ideal house party will have 12-30 guests. If you want 20 guests, invite at least 60 people.
- 4. Make a direct and compelling ask.** Mention amounts and avoid words like "support" and "help." Make eye contact and let them know what their gift will enable your organization to do. Guests can give a gift of any amount and no one should find themselves embarrassed by not giving a gift at all (the person who doesn't make a gift may make a stock donation next month!). Nor should anyone be expected to pay in order to attend the party.
- 5. Keep it educational and fun.** House parties are an opportunity to educate people about your organization and the work you do. But don't forget to make it fun: good food, time to meet old and new friends, and a cordial, no-pressure atmosphere.
- 6. Say thank you** and do the follow-up. Have someone stationed at the door to thank guests for attending and write thank you notes.

Future Tip Sheet Ideas?

Contact Nicole Stewart, NC Conservation Network
nicole@ncconservationnetwork.org or 919-857-4699 x105