

II. FIRST ORGANIZATIONAL BANQUET COMMITTEE MEETING OUTLINE

1. **Regional Director** - Introduce yourself and have everyone else in attendance do the same. Pass around an attendance sheet to gather names, addresses and phone numbers.
 - a. Explain the mission of the Ruffed Grouse Society and a Sportsmen's Banquet.
 - Enhance habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock & other forest wildlife including deer and 43 species of neo-tropical songbirds.
 - b. The purposes of having a banquet:
 - To help **raise funds** for the Society and build esprit de corps
 - More members have been added to chapters via banquets than any other type of chapter function or recruitment program
 - Increase awareness of Society in the area (via publicity for and attendance at the dinner).
 - c. To support habitat work (cover any current work of interest to those attending). The RD can use his/her PowerPoint Presentation about RGS' mission and why it is important. Have "Management Area Projects" (MAPs) cards, Trilogy folder, membership forms, banquet program cover, placemat, etc. with you.
 - d. Support biologists to carry out habitat work on a local, state and national level - most state and national work is done by paid staff while local projects tend to be done by volunteers. **Try and arrange for a biologist to be part of the second meeting.**
 - e. Support research by biologists, universities and agencies.
 - f. Support educational programs – Coverts or landowner outreach via the land-grant universities' extension program to explain why proper forest management is important for grouse, woodcock, deer and 43 species of neo-tropical songbirds. The biologists also have a nice Power Point presentation to go with the start up meeting.
 - g. Banquets help RGS increase membership which translates into political muscle.
 - h. **According to board policy and the chapter's Charter and by-laws, all banquet-generated monies must go to RGS National. That is Board Policy and thus a part of the Chapter's Charter and by-laws.** RGS National's auditor recommends this accounting method. The auditor cannot document proceeds unless they have come through the National office's bookkeeping system. RGS may return a portion of those funds for a local project(s) and will hold them in escrow for *Drummer Fund* projects.
2. **Role RGS National will play in making the dinner a success**
 - a. Provides a "banquet manual" to assist the committees by providing a "living document" explaining what is involved in putting on a banquet.
 - b. Provides you with an RD who will act as a communications bridge between RGS National and your chapter, and will help you with your event months in advance and continue their support right up thru the night of your dinner. They may come to your city a day or two prior to the event to help with the last minute details and arrangements.
 - c. Uses banquet "worksheet" to design flyers that are then printed and mailed thus announcing your event 8 weeks before the banquet to all RGS members and to non-members in the particular zip codes surrounding the banquet city. Follow-up reminders will be done via e-mail reminders.

- d. Two press releases are put out about the local banquet from RGS National, one about 4-6 weeks prior to your event and another about two weeks prior to your event.
- e. Placemats (5,000 for each banquet) for distribution to area restaurants and posters are sent out to the banquet committee about 6-8 weeks prior to the banquet to push for the local banquet. **They must be distributed** in some fashion as that is part of RGS' agreement with its Corporate Sponsors who in turn provide merchandise for your event.
- f. RGS National orders all merchandise and provides a prize package tailored to the size of your event and buys your banquet merchandise at wholesale or below and doesn't mark it up. It is either shipped to RGS National and stored in the warehouse for future shipment to your prize chairman or drop-shipped by the vendor directly to that person. Some banquet merchandise is provided either free or at a substantial discount by Corporate Sponsors thus maximizing the return.
- g. A template for a radio/TV ad is sent to each committee so they can fill in their banquet-specific information and then take it to the radio/TV station to advertise (public service ads are free) the event
- h. Provides insurance for your event
- i. Acquires the necessary licenses/permits for your event
- j. Articles about RGS appear in National magazines and this creates awareness and thus increases banquet attendance
- k. Press releases about RGS activities are released to the National media outlets. This has heightened the public's awareness of RGS.
- l. Support local programs by the local chapter to create awareness of and interest in RGS – new program that encourages chapters to have more than a banquet and then keep \$2,500 for local projects.
- m. Trilogy brochure is handed out at sportsmen's shows to explain the relationship between grouse, habitat and hunting.
- n. Handles supplies, printing, ordering, shipping/postage for banquet flyers, posters, placemats, program covers, MAPs (Management Area Projects) cards, etc.
- o. Prints and sends posters to the committee announcing your event, if requested.
- p. Attends larger sportsmen's shows and hands out RGS-related literature to help build interest in RGS
- q. Maintains a website that announces your event as well as all the things that RGS is doing
- r. Recognizes your sponsors locally and nationally on the web and in the banquet program.
- s. Handles all the organizational accounting and bill paying for merchandise, etc.
- t. Files the necessary tax forms with the state and federal government for certain states
- u. Provides the tax-exempt status (donations are tax deductible and sales tax relief)

The costs incurred by RGS National of doing the things listed above are known as "administrative costs or overhead" and are accounted for by RGS as indirect costs. It is important to recognize that they exist, because they impact the amount of money that is available after they are deducted from banquet proceeds, for fulfilling RGS' mission.

3. Organizational Steps

- a. Select chairmen that are needed for having a chapter and multiple events.
 1. Ticket Chairman / Treasurer
 2. Prize Chairman

3. Banquet Chairman / President

At this point, it is very important that the RD take the time to explain exactly what is involved in putting on an event such as a banquet and that he/she and you go over the role of each chairman. The RD should explain the role RGS National will play in the event. Now it must be made clear to the chapter what role it is expected to play. **The main responsibilities include securing a facility, selling tickets, and getting sponsors and donated items, and setting up and helping at the banquet.** The RD should then read over basic duties of each of the committee Chairs and ask for a volunteer for each position. **If you don't have that commitment up front you won't have it later on.** If at all possible try to get a 2-year commitment from each chair with the understanding that chairs will then rotate. During the second year of the event the person who will become the chair the following year should begin to assume those duties by assisting the current chair.

4. Helpful suggestions:

- a. **Rule of "One-Third"** – If you use the rule of 1/3 (one sponsor at the \$250 level or higher for every three banquet attendees) your banquet will be successful before you open the doors the night of your event. If you follow it, you would, as an example, have 50 sponsors for a banquet where there are 150 total attendees.
- b. **Chamber of Commerce Membership List.** Go out and get a copy of the membership list for your local Chamber of Commerce. Take that list to a committee meeting and go through it with the committee. Someone from your committee will likely have done business with each business on the list. Ask each member to contact those businesses they have a relationship with and your success in getting that business to be a sponsor or donate merchandise will increase. Be able to explain why you are asking for their support, what the money/donation will be used for and how they will benefit (literature with their name on it - banquet program, donor cards, etc.).
- c. **"The Big Three":** How do you get your sponsors? When you establish your committee, think about what you are going to ask the committee members to do: sell tickets, get sponsors and obtain donated merchandise. Those are the **big three**. That being the case, it makes good sense to then structure your committee to represent a cross-section of your community, i.e. small business person, auto dealer, barber, professional (doctor, dentist, lawyer, accountant, etc.), executive from large company, teacher, farmer, blue collar workers, etc.

How do you increase banquet attendance? There is no substitute for direct contact. Going to see or calling a friend or acquaintance to ask that person to buy a ticket or become a sponsor is the most effective way to grow banquet attendance. Mailing flyers, putting out placemats and posters and doing press releases and radio/TV spots mainly serve to remind people of your event, but the committee's personal contacts will be necessary to generate the greatest ticket sales.

There are a few things, however, that might provide an incremental increase in attendance. For example, holding a raffle in your community that involves the entire community before your event and then announcing the winner at the event will generally increase attendance. **Selecting a local sportsman or sportswoman as your chapter's "Ruffed Grouse Society Sportsman or Sportswoman of the Year" and making the**

presentation at your event will likely attract the recipient's friends to attend and it will generate positive free press for your event.

Explain the new program providing a free meal to women and youth 16 and under who complete "BOW" outdoor program or Hunter Education course within 12 months of the banquet if accompanied by an adult who purchases a ticket and the new "Family/Household" membership.

5. Initial Meeting - Summary:

- a. Have your Banquet Chairman read the list of assignments, which he may delegate to other committee members and select necessary volunteers to carry out those tasks.
- b. Allow each chairman to read over his duties and specific instructions. See Specific Instructions for points to cover in the preceding pages. Answer any questions.
- c. Discuss date and location of dinner.
- d. Fill in as much information on worksheet as possible. Discuss ticket pricing for member and guest tickets (members and their guests need only pay for the cost of the meal). Explain the sponsor ticket pricing and the benefits of an RGS banquet sponsor to RGS and to the actual sponsor.
- e. Discuss "VIP" guests to be invited. Appoint proper person to invite each guest (usually Banquet Chairman, but some guests may be better known to other committee members). Keep this number to a minimum, as each guest is an expense that affects your net revenue.
- f. Set date and time for next committee meeting. This date should be approximately 12-14 weeks prior to their banquet date. The banquet worksheet is due approximately 12-14 weeks prior to the banquet so drop-shipped items can be ordered, ticket chairman's materials can be shipped and your banquet announcement can be prepared and sent by RGS National to the chapter's members 8 weeks prior to the banquet.

6. Regional Director's Follow-Up Checklist (take an active versus passive role in managing the event)

- _____ Worksheet forwarded to National Headquarters. List any peculiarities in writing on the worksheet pertaining to this dinner
- _____ Check to see if FFL (Federal Firearms License) of entity that will handle the guns has been forwarded to RGS National. Will the gun dealer be present at the banquet to do the background check or are the guns going to be returned to the gun dealer for the winner to come in and pick-up at the place of business the next day?
- _____ Check on any information that may have been missing from the worksheet and inform RGS National via email by revising the worksheet on what remains to be done with these items.
- _____ Three weeks before dinner check with Banquet Chairman on the following:
 - _____ How are ticket sales going (may want to suggest that another committee meeting be held)?
 - _____ How are prize solicitations going?
 - _____ Have raffle ticket sellers and auctioneer been arranged?
 - _____ Have set-up workers been arranged?
- _____ Ten days prior to dinner check with Banquet Chairman on his Specific Instructions items "a" & "b" above (if items "c" & "d" were not taken care of last time you checked ask about them again).
- _____ One week prior to dinner check with Ticket Chairman regarding item number 1 above.
- _____ Also review the procedure for tickets to be picked up at the door. If items 3 & 4 were not taken care of last time you checked, ask about them again.

7. Ticket Chairman: – the primary jobs of the ticket chairman are to maintain ticket sale records, and, along with the rest of the committee, sell tickets and solicit sponsors and donations.

Stress to the committee that a combined ticket sale effort, obtaining banquet sponsors and donors is needed for a successful event. Explain that the most successful way to sell tickets is via personal contact with people they know. **Word of mouth and a phone call are the keys to successful ticket sales.** When it comes to sponsors and donors, try to work with businesses known by committee members. For example, have your committee get a copy of the membership directory for the local Chamber of Commerce. Use that directory at a committee meeting by going through the list of businesses and assigning members to contact those businesses they have dealt with for sponsorships and donations. Suggest two-man teams as being most effective in personal visits. Be sure to explain to the sponsors what they get in return (their name in the banquet program, announced at the podium, etc.).

Stress the importance of accurate record keeping. A head-count will have to be given to the RD 48 hours* prior to the dinner. (*Some facilities have longer or shorter times.) Tickets can be paid for via cash, check or credit card. The banquet flyers mailed from RGS will feature the cards accepted. RGS National will handle the credit card payments. Checks and cash should be deposited into the chapter's checking account established in concert with the RD. During the fall of 2007, people will be able to buy tickets on-line by going to the RGS web-site. Those ticket sales will be communicated to the ticket chairman in advance of the ticket deadline. Once the tickets are sold, the RD and ticket and banquet chairs will construct a seating chart. Make sure each ticket stub has the proper contact information filled in for the individual or family/household.

Stress the importance of having a competent, honest person or persons handling the Money Table at the dinner. The person(s) at this table may be selling banquet tickets, raffle packages, raffle tickets, and collecting auction payments and that money is often in the form of cash. It must be properly accounted for and the tickets stubs filed in.

Stress the importance of closing the checking account as soon as possible after the banquet. Official results of the dinner cannot be documented until RGS National receives all monies. There are circumstances where a balance of the banquet proceeds has to remain local to keep the local account open.

Because RGS uses money in-hand to “sweep” against its line-of-credit to reduce the interest paid, when a chapter holds money at the local level following its banquet RGS pays more interest on its line. That reduces money available for projects. Extra bookwork for RGS National is created when there are outstanding banquet accounts (which in the long run costs the Society, and thus the chapter, money that could fund local projects).

8. Ticket Chairman's Basic Responsibilities: (See list below). Some chapters elect a Treasurer and ask that person to assume many of the following responsibilities.

- a. Open checking account in concert with your RD. This may be done by the chapter Treasurer.
- b. RGS will ship you self-adhesive address labels, a local RGS membership list, donor decals and receipts, two explanatory letters, a sponsor list and committee list form. Please pass the decals and receipts along to the prize chair.

- c. You will receive placemats, both the 5000 for restaurant distribution and the quantity for your banquet (two different placemats). Divide the 5000 among the committee to disperse at local restaurants (this must be done to satisfy our Corporate Sponsor agreements) or inserted into a publication like the *Penny Saver*. Provide the banquet quantity to the RD when he/she arrives for the banquet as one placemat will be placed at each table setting (this must be done to satisfy our Corporate and Local Sponsor agreements).
- d. Make all deposits (ticket sales, raffles, etc.) and withdrawals (banquet night change, facility, meals, local expenses, RGS prize invoice, etc.) necessary for the banquet.
- e. Record all mail orders for tickets and mail out the tickets requested.
- f. Keep records of all tickets distributed to committee members and keep records of all of the tickets they've sold. Be sure to collect and record all ticket membership stubs.
- g. Keep a list of reserved tables and give to your Banquet Chairman to prepare "reserved" table signs.
- h. Keep the list of new/renewed sponsors on the form provided and give to RD when requested. It is important to clearly transfer all the details (name, complete addresses, phone, email, whether they want to be anonymous and whether they want the annual print or ticket(s) for the national sponsor drawing) from the order form to the list as this is what is used to renew/create their sponsorships.
- i. Coordinating with the RD to handle the raffle ticket and auction monies after the dinner.
- j. Obtain necessary change from the bank for use at the dinner.
- k. Work at the registration desk the night of the banquet to handle any ticket monies coming in and any tickets being picked up at the door.
- l. Be available following the dinner or the morning after the dinner to complete the final accounting.
- m. Provide a check for any remaining proceeds to the RD to forward to RGS National.

9. Ticket Chairman – Specific Instructions

You will receive a check from RGS National to use as your opening deposit in a temporary checking account (for some chapters the recipient may be the chapter's Treasurer). Open the account under the title of "The Ruffed Grouse Society/The name of Your Chapter". For example you could use: "The Ruffed Grouse Society/Greater Pittsburgh Area Chapter." Open the account with Banquet Chairman's name, your choice of chapter officers' names and RD's name also on the signature card, but require only one signature on a check up to a certain amount, e.g. \$500 is a generally agreed-upon number. You will need approximately 40 checks to cover all of the banquet expenses.

It is your responsibility to make all of the deposits into this checking account including ticket money, cash donations and any other receipts. Likewise you are responsible for paying any bills associated with the banquet.

Many of the orders for tickets (accompanied by the purchasers' checks or credit card numbers) will come in through the mail as a result of a mailing that will be made to all of the chapter members, last year's attendees and to people pulled from Cabelas' and Orvis' mailing lists. **People may be able to purchase tickets on-line by going to RGS' web-site.** Those names will be communicated to you prior to the closing date. You will then record the orders on a ticket registration form (sample attached) and mail out the tickets. Be sure to complete the membership information requested on the ticket to the best of your ability, before mailing the tickets. Labels will be provided from RGS National that can be used on the membership portion

of the stub, after confirming that the information matches the information provided on the order form. If the order is for more than one ticket, complete stubs only for the members, guests and spouses/significant others and in the appropriate box, and return these to the buyer with a note to have attendees complete the "information requested" portion of the ticket and turn it in at the banquet registration table. It is very important that this be done because it will enable RGS National to follow up with those tickets in order to service them as members.

You may receive some telephone orders. Take the order by phone and record the name and number of tickets ordered on your ticket registration form. Obtain a credit card number. Mail the tickets or put the proper number of tickets in an envelope and mark the buyer's name on the envelope and the amount of money to be collected (if no credit card was obtained). You should not count these tickets in the meal count to the facility until you receive the money in hand. It would be best to only count on the tickets that you are sure to collect from if they are unable to attend the event.

If you have received money for tickets but there isn't enough time to send them out - handle the same as you would a phone order with three exceptions:

- a. Record the money in the money column on your ticket registration form
- b. Mark "paid" on the outside of the envelope along with the name of the buyer. These envelopes can then be alphabetized by the buyers' names and it will be easy to distribute the tickets at the registration desk.
- c. Place a phone call to the buyer to let them know their tickets will be at the door.

As each person picks up his or her tickets, make sure their contact information is complete and put the money in the same envelope that you took the tickets from. These monies can then be recorded on the ticket registration form. This system saves much time and confusion at the registration table the night of the dinner.

On the ticket registration form there should be a column for recording the name of committee members who have tickets to sell. Be sure to fill this column in when distributing tickets to committee members along with the numbers on the tickets that you give them. Make sure they understand that they must record to whom the tickets were sold and return the list to you with the money for each ticket (completed Membership and Door stubs and payments will suffice). You can then record each ticket that they've sold as you would a mail order. It is best to have committee members return unsold tickets to you at least 4 days prior to the dinner. **IT IS MOST IMPORTANT** that you keep an accurate accounting of all of the tickets sold either by mail, on-line or by other committee members. Your count of ticket sales will be used by the "arrangements coordinator" to give the number of meals to be served guarantee to the banquet facility, 48 hours prior to the dinner. Inaccurate record keeping can result in a loss of dinner profit if more dinners are guaranteed than are actually sold. Likewise, much confusion and embarrassment can occur if too few dinners are guaranteed and not enough meals have been prepared to serve everyone who attends.

Make a list of reserved tables for people purchasing a table of tickets, typically 8-10 depending on the facility's tables and what is placed on the banquet flyer. Provide this list to the Banquet Chairman so that he or she can prepare table reservation signs.

Recruit an individual to coordinate and handle all of the raffle ticket sales and receipt of auction monies at the dinner (Money Table). The RD will explain everything to this person in detail the night of the dinner, using the **Money Table Procedures and Instructions** in this manual. This person should understand that he/she will be busy working with the money at the Money Table the entire evening. Have this person arrive ½ hour before you start serving cocktails.

The day before the dinner get a check cashed at the bank for use as change at the dinner. Your RD will work with you to determine the amount and denominations of change needed.
REMEMBER - BANKS ARE CLOSED ON SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS.

Your assistance will be needed at the registration desk the night of the dinner. Since you have handled the ticket sales and are familiar with tickets to be picked up and money to be collected, the registration will go much smoother if you are there to oversee matters. **Be sure to complete and collect all ticket stubs as all attendees will now become members.**

Your RD will arrange with you to be on hand following the dinner or the morning after the dinner to help you with the accounting. Your assistance will be needed to pay all the bills and make the final bank deposit from the banquet's fund-raising activities. Thus the ticket chairman and/or Treasurer will need to be there, with the balanced checkbook, to pay the bills and all checks for outstanding bills should, if possible, be written at this time.

Most of the proceeds from the dinner will be sent to RGS National the day after the banquet by the RD. However, some money will remain in the checking account for a time to ensure all checks are covered as well as any bills that may come in. As soon as all of the checks that you've written have cleared the bank forward any remaining money to RGS National via your RD. This should only take 2 to 4 weeks from the date of the banquet. For auditing purposes it is most important that RGS National receive all of the net proceeds from your dinner. Any monies needed by the chapter can be requested from RGS National, but they must first be recorded and documented by RGS' National Headquarters.

10. Ticket Chairman's Checklist – Following is a partial checklist that can be used by the ticket chairman to help make certain that all bases have been covered.

- ___ Checking account opened or Treasurer contacted
- ___ Recruit individuals to handle the Money Table (banquet and raffle tickets and auction monies at the dinner) and if necessary, to assist at the Registration table
- ___ Collect ticket stubs (make sure contact information is completed) with money and maintain membership, including guests and spouses/significant others and their children
- ___ Sponsor list
- ___ Keep list of reserved tables
- ___ Ticket count given to “arrangements coordinator” and RD 48 hours prior to dinner
- ___ Tickets to be picked up at the door in envelopes with buyers' names and amounts to be collected recorded on outside. All envelopes should be alphabetized.
- ___ Change for dinner attendance obtained (day before dinner)
- ___ Provide RD with Membership and Guest Lists and Ticket Stubs at the dinner
- ___ Forward any remaining proceeds to RGS via RD

11. Prize Chairman: Read over basic duties of Prize Chairman and ask for a volunteer
(Will need a UPS Street Address for Deliveries)

- a. Stress to the committee the importance of a combined effort in soliciting prizes to make the banquet successful. Solicitation in pairs to businesses you know or do business with is often the most effective way to get donations, and letter requests to some out of state companies can be effective. In your letter be sure to indicate your local shipping/ mailing addresses for donations.
- b. Stress to your committee the importance of completing donor receipts. These are used to create cards placed by the donated items at the banquet to recognize your donors to the attendees. Make an announcement from the podium pointing out the donor cards and asking if anyone happens to work in one of the stores or businesses that has donated to be sure and reference seeing their name and item at the banquet, and then thanking them publicly for their support. Asking attendees to patronize the donors and to personally thank them for their donations will help with future solicitations.
- c. Stress the importance of having complete names and addresses of donors - not only for the donor list in the program but also to send thank-you and **IRS confirmation** letters after the banquet. Let the committee members know that it is their responsibility to thank their donors. RGS National needs the contact information for the donors so letters documenting their charitable contributions can be sent thus satisfying IRS requirements.
- d. Review what is considered a "fair price" for framing (\$50-\$70 print avg.). Stress the importance that all pictures be framed. Any prints ordered from RGS National will arrive already framed.
- e. Be aware of the need for a Form 1099 for prizes with a value greater than \$600.

12. Prize Chairman's Basic Responsibilities -

- a. Find a local gun dealer who will accept delivery of any firearms sent by National.
- b. Get a signed copy of their Federal Firearms License (FFL) and forward it to RGS National at least eight weeks ahead of your banquet. RGS National must have your dealer's FFL on file in order to ship your banquet guns to him.
- c. Recruit others to assist in soliciting as many prizes and cash donations as possible for use in the raffles, auction and for door and table prizes.
- d. Collect and record all prizes and cash donations solicited by all committee members. Fully completed donor receipts are the best way to keep a record of the donation and donor's name and address so this information can be sent to RGS National.
- e. Accept delivery on all merchandise shipped from RGS National and outside vendors.
- f. Furnish the Banquet Chairman with an alphabetical listing of all donors for use in printing the banquet program.
- g. Have all prizes and artwork collected and stored together at least four days prior to the banquet.

13. Prize Chairman – Specific Instructions

- a. Guns. RGS National will order rifles and shotguns for your dinner from the manufacturers or major distributors unless you can beat RGS National's prices. In order to do this, RGS National will need a signed copy of a local gun dealer's FFL. **Be sure that the FFL does not expire prior to the date of the dinner. It will be needed at least 8 weeks prior to your dinner date to ensure enough shipping time.** The guns will be shipped directly to the gun dealer issuing the FFL. Check with dealer on federal and state registration of guns and make appropriate arrangements to complete registrations.

Arrangements made for the “sponsors’ gun drawing”. This needs to be done in advance of the event because the committee can determine how many sponsors are needed in order to have a drawing and for what grade (cost) gun(s). For example, the committee may decide that there will be a drawing for one gun for every 10 sponsors or one gun of a higher value for every “x” number of sponsors (leave to the discretion of the RD and the Committee to do the math and come up with a selection that both offers an incentive to potential sponsors and the optimum return to RGS). This information generally goes out in the flyer eight weeks before the event so it needs to be decided well in advance.

- b. Donations. You and the other committee members should solicit as many prizes and cash donations (to pay for prizes supplied by National) as possible. A supply of “Donor Receipt” forms and Donor decals will be shipped by RGS National and should be distributed among the committee members to use when soliciting. The complete name and address of the donor should be recorded for each donation. One of the copies is given to the donor and the other copy must be returned to you. This will aid you in completing a detailed donor listing. Your copy, or a copy of it, should be provided to the RD to forward to RGS National so that donation letters enabling the donor to get a tax credit from the IRS for the contribution can be mailed.

One donor decal is to be given with the original copy of the donor receipt when a solicited prize is received. Attachment B is a list of items that have been solicited by other committees. Hopefully, it will give you and the other committee members some idea of the wide range of businesses you can approach.

Posters will also be shipped by RGS National. When soliciting donations be sure to carry some with you and ask each business if they will put one on display.

RGS National will be ordering some items for your banquet that have proven to be valuable additions to the fund-raising activities. These items will be shipped directly to you from RGS National or drop-shipped from the supplier, normally via UPS, so please furnish a daytime street address. A list of all of the items ordered will be sent to your RD for preparation of the banquet program. Please check each item as it arrives to make sure it is in good condition (no broken glass, etc.). If not, contact your RD.

Each time a prize has been solicited, update your donation list with a description of the prize, its value and record the name and address of the donor. This list will be used by the RD in preparing the banquet program.

- c. Program. The RD will be printing a program for the dinner. A list of the people or companies who have donated (both locally and nationally) should be printed in the program. It is your job to furnish the RD with a complete list of the donated items, their values and who donated them. This list will be needed the week prior to the banquet, depending on the deadline the RD has set for creating and running the program. If some donations come in too late for the donated item listing and the donor to be included in the program, the information can be announced from the podium at the dinner.

The final program will need to be taken to the local printer. One copy, enclosed in a very attractive program jacket supplied by RGS National, will be given to each person attending the dinner by placing the banquet program enclosed within the program jacket

or cover on each chair (this must be done to satisfy our Corporate sponsor agreements).. This encourages interest in the auction and advertises your donors and sponsors and RGS' Corporate Sponsors.

- d. Regional Director's Support. Your RD will be involved in helping you succeed from the start and will arrive in your city 2 or 3 days prior to the banquet. He/she will assist you in many ways as described at the beginning of this section and including providing you with a complete program listing of the prizes you have collected (i.e. listing of auction, raffle and door prizes). He/she will also help you "tag" the items so that they will be easy to distribute at the dinner. In order to do all of this in a minimum amount of time, all of the prizes (including artwork and local donations) should be collected and stored in one place by the time the RD arrives.

14. Prize Chairman's Checklist

- Federal Firearms License obtained from gun dealer and sent to National – ASAP
- Copies of Form 1099
- Services of a local framer obtained and address given to banquet chairman (if applicable)
- Prints taken to local framer (if applicable)
- Donor receipts, decals and posters and placemats distributed to committee
- Alphabetical list of donors prepared
- All prizes and artwork stored
- The names and contact information for all donors is recorded and a copy of that information is given to RD, along with the other related banquet materials, to be sent to RGS National so that the appropriate tax letters for the RGS can be sent to the donors.

15. Banquet Chairman - Overview: Read over the duties of the Banquet Chairman and ask for a volunteer.

- a. Stress the importance of obtaining all of the information on the worksheet (see the Banquet Worksheet section of this Manual). RGS National cannot do ticket printing, ordering or anything else pertaining to the banquet until it receives all of the information on the worksheet.
- b. Review the importance of having an adequate number of workers available for items “d” through “g” on **Banquet Chairman’s Basic Responsibility** – Number 16 below.
- c. Discuss recruitment of raffle ticket sellers. Get commitments from committee members if possible. Emphasize the fact that they should not wait until the last minute to obtain the services of ticket sellers. Start looking now.
- d. Stress the importance of starting on the program now. There is no need to wait.
- e. Review items “h” through “j” of the **Banquet Chairman’s Basic Responsibility** (#16).
- f. Re-enforce the fact that the success of the banquet depends on the combined efforts of the entire committee. **The three Chairmen cannot do it alone.**

16. Banquet Chairman’s Basic Responsibilities:

Some items may be delegated to other committee members. Naturally, if you choose to delegate any or all of these duties, it is still your responsibility to see that they are properly carried out.

- a. Pick a date for the banquet with your **RD** and make arrangements with a banquet facility. It is important to pick a date that will maximize your attendance. Some facilities require getting a deposit check prior to the event. You will be able to request a check from your RD who then proceeds thru the National office.
- b. Work with the RD handling your banquet to obtain all the information to complete the banquet worksheet.
- c. Oversee and coordinate the work of the Ticket and Prize Chairman and act as liaison with your RGS RD. (Ticket and Prize Chairman checklists included for your use in coordinating their activity).
- d. Recruit individuals (either from the banquet committee or the membership at large) to help set up the prize displays the day of the dinner. You will need at least four workers.
- e. Recruit individuals to pass out prizes at the dinner.
- f. Recruit individuals to oversee awarding of auction prizes at the dinner (examine receipts at the close of dinner before buyers take their items).
- g. Recruit individuals to work at the registration desk at the dinner.
- g. Recruit raffle ticket sellers for the night of the dinner
- h. Handle publicity for the dinner.
- i. If necessary, obtain the services of an auctioneer well in advance of your banquet.

17. Banquet Chairman – Specific Instructions

- a. In this manual is an example of a banquet worksheet. You and the RD working on your banquet must complete a banquet worksheet. Without this information the RGS’ National Headquarters cannot do its part in making your banquet a success. This information is needed to print dinner tickets, send mailings to the chapter members and order guns and merchandise for your dinner. Please see specific chairman instructions for more details.

- b. It is your responsibility to ensure that the Prize and Ticket Chairman are making satisfactory progress. Periodically check the status of prize solicitations and ticket sales. Make sure that the Prize Chairman is keeping an accurate record of each prize he/she has received. Also check to see if the Ticket Chairman is keeping an accurate record of all ticket sales. If prize solicitations and ticket sales seem slow, you may want to call a meeting of the committee and try to motivate the committee members to personally sell more tickets via phone or personal contacts and solicit additional prizes.
- c. At least four individuals will be needed to help set up the prize displays the day of the dinner. They should be available starting at 8:00 AM the day of the dinner or the night before if the facility will allow access. Time will be allotted for changing of clothes for the dinner, etc. Your RD will be there to help the committee with the set-up and offer his/her advice concerning the arrangement of tables, displays, etc.
- d. Several people will be needed to distribute prizes and show each auction item around the room as it comes up for bid. If your banquet is large (250 people or more) you may want to take digital photos of the auction items and project them onto a screen so that everyone can see them as they come up for bid.
- e. Throughout the evening, but especially at the end of the evening, auction buyers, both silent and live, will be paying for their purchases and picking them up at the Money Table. Two individuals, one per auction, will be needed to examine the buyers' receipts (receipts provided by the RD) and make sure they receive the proper items and that no items are taken without payment.
- f. Since the Ticket Chairman is familiar with tickets to be picked up at the door he/she should work at the Registration Table throughout the cocktail "hour". You will also need one additional person working at the registration desk for each 100 people attending the dinner. This is to ensure everyone gets the door prize stub from their dinner ticket into the "door prize bowl," completes their membership stub and places it in the "membership stub bowl". If you are short of individuals to work at the desk, registration may be slowed, creating frustration among dinner attendees.

Note: The individuals needed in items "c" through "f" may all be the same people. However, if too much work is given to too few people, no one will enjoy themselves. It is much more pleasant for all involved if the work can be divided among an adequate number of people.

- g. Banquet Accounting: Either after the banquet or the following morning, the RD and the Committee will meet to go over the accounting for the banquet. If the meeting occurs the following morning, it is critical that there be a "chain of custody" for the money. This is usually accomplished by having a keyed bank deposit bag. The money is placed in the bag and then the bag is locked. One person, either the RD or a designated committee member, takes the bag and the other takes the key. This is done to protect both parties.

Completing the banquet accounting is a very important process as the outcome will result in a determination of the net proceeds credited to the chapter's banquet. A form documenting those proceeds will be sent to RGS National and the cash will be deposited in the chapter's account for use in paying any outstanding bills. Once that is done the

balance (minus the amount needed to keep the account open) will be sent to RGS National.

- h. Arrangements: The date of the dinner will probably be determined by three criteria:
- 1) Consensus of committee members' opinions
 - 2) Dates that your RD will be available
 - 3) Date the banquet facility is available. If you have not inquired about available dates with a banquet facility prior to your first meeting, it's best to pick two dates so that the individual making the arrangements will have an alternate choice of dates should the desired facility not be able to accommodate your first choice.

You, as arrangements coordinator, are responsible for giving the facility the final guarantee (approximately 5 less than tickets sold) after consulting the ticket chairman and RD.

- i. Choosing a facility: When choosing a facility please take the following into consideration:
- 1) Look for a location that would be able to handle an area for dinner, raffles, prizes and displays. It is best to have all of your events in one room. But if you can not have one main room make sure that your Live Auction, WI-Auction (Silent) and any other card raffles are located where people will be sitting down having dinner, make sure there is ample space for display tables, bars and sufficient tables to seat expected attendance, with room for banquet participants to move around and view prizes.
 - 2) Cocktail-display area available starting at 8:00 AM the day of the dinner or the night before, if possible. This is **MOST CRITICAL** as it takes several hours to properly set up and display prizes. It is best to get in the day or night before for ease of set up
 - 3) Dinner tables must be setup and clothed by noon the day of the banquet to allow for distribution of materials
 - 4) There should be one bar per hundred attendees during the cocktail hour and at least one bar should be kept open until close of the banquet. A cash bar is best.
 - 5) An adequate sound system and acoustics, including microphone availability, in both cocktail and dinner areas is important

- j. Menu: One of the steps the committee must take is to choose a menu for their banquet. Consideration should be given to cost of dinner, including tax and gratuity. This information will be important in determining the price of your dinner ticket. Try to pick a menu that will leave a "good taste" in the mouths of your attendees, but please don't be extravagant – remember, the goal is to raise money to help RGS fulfill its mission on behalf of grouse and woodcock. RGS has already made an investment in the success of your banquet.

- k. Attendance: Set and agree upon an attendance goal. It is important to determine the number of dinner tickets you expect to sell so that you may take this into consideration when choosing the facility that will serve as "host" for your banquet. Overcrowding can

spoil the evening for everyone, and a room that is too large for the crowd will not serve to create the atmosphere of excitement you are seeking.

- l. Tables for registration and display: Display and registration tables need to be arranged. Make sure facility has an adequate number of tables for display purposes. A minimum of 12 eight-foot tables (or equivalent) is usually needed. They should be covered with tablecloths and, in some instances, banners featuring RGS National and/or its Corporate Sponsors may be draped over the front of some of them.
- m. Lighting: Adequate lighting is important. RGS banquets generally have much framed artwork, engraved guns, bronzes and other attractive merchandise. Poor lighting can greatly reduce the price these items bring at auction.
- n. Parking: Adequate parking must be provided.
- o. Raffle ticket sellers: Raffle ticket sellers will be needed at the dinner. Experience has taught us that the best sellers are personable women, who are not shy. You will need at least four sellers for the first 100 people attending and three sellers for each additional 100 people (if RGS National has a special raffle going on, there should be one extra person assigned to that raffle). You and the other committee members may have to pool your resources to obtain the services of raffle ticket sellers. Whenever possible it is desirable to recruit unpaid volunteers (maximizing the profit of your dinner). However, if volunteers cannot be found, you may consider paying women to sell tickets. Note that in some states this is illegal. Most often they are offered \$50 for the night, but in situations where you hire an outside agency, they may require a percentage of the raffle ticket sales. They are also provided a free meal. You will want to require the ticket sellers to stay and help pass out prizes and help with the auction. Have them arrive at least ½ hour before the cocktail hour.
 - A. Following are suggested recruiting possibilities:
 - 1) Friends and relatives of committee members.
 - 2) Real estate sales women (they are usually excellent raffle ticket sellers since they are in the business of selling and are not usually shy).
 - 3) Students from a local secretarial school, modeling school or college. (These girls often welcome a chance to make some extra money).
 - 4) Secretaries from a business supporting your dinner. Often a bank that buys a table of tickets or a large business of any type that has a large secretarial staff will be able to recruit women for you.
 - 5) Flight attendants
- p. Program printing: Your RD will handle the program printing but will need assistance in finding a local printer that will possibly donate the printing or provide it at a reduced cost (they can write it off as a charitable contribution).
- q. Individuals will need to be available the day of the dinner to stuff the banquet programs into the banquet program covers or jackets shipped from RGS National along with the prize package.

- r. **Publicity:** Whenever possible it is helpful to have someone handle publicity for the dinner. This person is responsible for working with RGS National's publicist to make certain that the press releases get to all local newspapers. Sometimes an interview or Public Service Announcement (PSA) can be arranged with a local paper or TV/radio station and an article done on the Society and the banquet. It is often helpful to invite the outdoor writer of your largest local newspaper, as a guest, to the dinner. This will usually result in an attractive write-up on the dinner and create interest in future banquets. The Society's publicist will gladly assist you in preparing press releases for your banquet. RGS National has also provided a template for a radio or TV spot featuring your banquet. Ask your RD to help you fill in the blanks so you can take it to your local radio or TV station.

- s. **Auctioneer:** If one is needed, someone must be in charge of retaining the services of an auctioneer. The auctioneer, if possible, should be a volunteer. Usually you can find a local auctioneer who is interested in wildlife and is willing to donate his/her services. If at all possible, find one who is familiar with wildlife art. Since wildlife art is usually the major component of the auction you will realize greater proceeds if your auctioneer is familiar with what he/she is selling. In any case, the auctioneer should arrive at the start of the cocktail-session, if not sooner, so that the RD has time to discuss the items that will be auctioned and familiarize him/her with RGS auction procedures. If the auction merchandise is going to be photographed and viewed on a screen, the auctioneer needs to be familiar with that process. Offer him/her a free dinner.

18. Additional items that the Banquet Chairman is responsible for:

- a. Calling a wrap-up meeting after the banquet – this meeting should include: a victory celebration, review of accounting from the dinner (i.e. how much was sold in raffle tickets, what brought the most money at auction, etc.), and how can the dinner do even better next year.
- b. You should consider choosing the following:
 - 2) Date and place for next year's dinner.
 - 3) Next year's Banquet Chairman. If the date and place are chosen, then the new Banquet Chairman should call the establishment and reserve the date immediately. Remember to check the calendar for holidays or other events that could affect your banquet.
 - 4) The new chairman should also consider setting a date for the first meeting for next year's dinner (approximately 4 months prior to dinner). Committee members can then recruit additional committee members to help with the next dinner.

19. Banquet Chairman's Checklist

- Worksheet completed and forwarded to RD
- Arrangements made with banquet facility
- Publicity handled for the dinner
- Services of an auctioneer obtained
- Raffle ticket sellers recruited
- Individuals recruited to work on set-up the day of the dinner
- Individuals recruited to pass out prizes at the dinner
- Individuals recruited to oversee awarding of auction prizes at dinner
- Wrap-up meeting (after banquet) planned

For ease in following up with your chairs:

10. Ticket Chairman's Checklist – Following is a partial checklist that can be used by the ticket chairman to help make certain that all bases have been covered.

- Checking account opened or Treasurer contacted
- Recruit individual(s) to handle Money Table (banquet and raffle tickets and auction monies at the dinner) and if necessary to assist you at the Registration table.
- Collect ticket stubs with money and maintain membership, guest and sponsor lists
- Keep list of reserved tables
- Ticket count given to “arrangements coordinator” and RD 48 hours prior to dinner
- Tickets to be picked up at the door in envelopes with buyers' names and amounts to be collected recorded on outside. All envelopes should be alphabetized.
- Change for dinner attendance obtained (day before dinner)
- Provide RD with Membership and Guest Lists and Ticket Stubs at the dinner
- Forward any remaining proceeds to RGS via RD

14. Prize Chairman's Checklist

- Federal Firearms License obtained from gun dealer and sent to National – ASAP
- Copies of Form 1099
- Services of a local framer obtained and address given to banquet chairman (if applicable)
- Prints taken to local framer (if applicable)
- Donor receipts, decals and posters and placemats distributed to committee
- Alphabetical list of donors prepared
- All prizes and artwork stored
- The names and contact information for all donors is recorded and a copy of that information is given to RD, along with the other related banquet materials, to be sent to RGS National so that the appropriate tax letters for the RGS can be sent to the donors.