
American Medical Association Alliance RPS/MSS Guide

Divine Diversions on a Dime ~ Fun and Thrifty Activity Guide

You asked for it & we happily deliver - - Ideas for economical RPS/MSS events and parties.

Some are old favorites, and others are hot off the Alliance presses. Hopefully these ideas will springboard your own creative ideas & will inspire plenty of good times in your Resident Physician Spouse and/or Medical Student Spouse Group.

Consider combining many of these ideas to create one super event!

For example, consider starting a book club featuring foreign authors and pair with a dinner featuring foods from the author's homeland or if you invite a speaker to present a topic to your group, schedule your speaker to arrive shortly after your smoothie party is in full swing or plan a BBQ after your group volunteers at a community center to celebrate your hardwork!

Celebrate your members by utilizing their know-how!

Your groups are composed of intelligent, well trained individuals, many of whom possess special training or skills that can be passed on to the group as a fun, educational, and economical activity! As an added bonus you will learn a lot more about that member & facilitate leadership skills!

Another way to take advantage of what you have is to host an "exchange." Invite members to bring CDs/DVDs they no longer watch, baby clothes that no longer fit, or costumes they've already worn and exchange and barter your goods amongst the attendees. This also works well when members exchange cookies, recipes, or household tips. If members have veggie, herb or flower gardens, consider exchanging these items.

Utilize your community!

Many businesses are delighted to have the opportunity to direct market to you by attending a meeting or bringing you to their business to teach a class or make a presentation. Take advantage of this! The business will often charge nothing or a minimal fee to cover supplies knowing that you are likely to solicit their business more often or buy something the night of the event! Do not be afraid to ask local business & large chains - both are willing and happy to advertise right to you!

Likewise, training schools and classes are an excellent resource for inexpensive events and teachers. Training schools are also great for discount services that members might not be able to afford otherwise. For example, whereas a spa day may be out of the question at a chic salon, a spa day at a cosmetology school might fit a RPS/MSS budget, and allow for some much needed relaxation!

Be a tourist in your own town! Contact local visitor and/or convention bureau for inexpensive ideas. Visitor and convention bureaus often have coupons and discounts for museums, events & restaurants around town.

Give back to your community!

Volunteer work is not only satisfying, it doesn't have to cost a cent! Explore your community for creative projects geared toward your members' interests. Many people would like to volunteer, but just need a ready outlet. By making a project a group activity you can do this! Additionally, your group will reap the benefits of building team spirit by working together to help others!

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Utilize Training Programs

Dine at the local culinary school

- Invite (hire) a chef-in-training to teach a cooking class
- Schedule manicures/pedicures at a cosmetology school
- Attend a training class at Home Depot or Lowe's
- Schedule a bargain massage at a school of massage

Take Advantage of Customer Service

- Contact your local visitors/convention bureau for activities/coupons for events/venues in your area
- Contact a department store personal shopper about hosting a presentation of the latest styles
- Ask a green grocer or farmer to give a presentation on organic foods
- Contact your local grocer about hosting a cooking class or presenting new products
- Ask a Mexican Restaurant to teach the group how to make guacamole or salsa
- Ask a local kitchenware store about presentations on products or recipes (example: Williams Sonoma cooking classes)
- Attend a booksigning or guest speaker event at your local bookstore

Priceless Activities That Don't Cost a Penny

Visit a retirement community

- Visit the Children's Hospital and read to the kids
- Honor your local VFW or military organization
- Volunteer at a soup kitchen

Ask a nonprofit if they need unique help, for example Habitat for Humanity takes pictures of all of their events - volunteer to assemble a scrapbook, or build a picnic table for the new home

Conduct a book/magazine drive amongst members and donate to a shelter, retirement village, hospital waiting rooms, local library, etc.

- Collect and donate used cell phones to a domestic abuse shelter
- Plant flowers for or deliver home grown flowers to a shut-in neighbor
- Prepare dinners for new mothers within the group
- Conduct a clothing/food drive for a charitable organization
- Donate a stethoscope to World Scopes (www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/9608.html)
- Donate Blood
- Pick up trash at the park your child's favorite park
- Contact your state and county alliance regarding their charitable events and programs

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A Night on the Town

Listen to a local band
Attend a university concert
Attend a community theatre play or movie
Play games at Chuck-E-Cheese/arcade
Go to the Circus
Go to a karaoke bar or rent a karaoke machine
Attend a wine class
Attend a summer festival
Attend a benefit (auction, concert, etc)
Attend a matinee movie, concert, or play
Visit a comedy club
Visit a planetarium
Attend an open mic night
Attend happy hour
Visit & tour historical landmarks
Visit the zoo
Meet for coffee
Meet for dessert only
Meet for bagels
Pick fresh fruit or veggies
Visit an apple orchard/Take a Hayride/Host a Bonfire
Explore an ethnic neighborhood or store
Visit a winery/Brewery
Make mini-bets at the local horse or dog track
Play laser tag/paint ball
Go bowling
Visit a pumpkin patch
Visit an aquarium

Touchdown Days and Homerun Nights

Organize a Softball/Soccer League
Flag Football
Host a homerun derby/Hit at the batting cages
Sledding/Ice Skating
Roller Blading/Skating
Canoe trip/ Fishing
Attend a minor league game (baseball, hockey, etc.)
Attend a college sporting event
Attend a pro sporting event & sit in the "cheap seats"
Miniature Golf/Driving Range
Visit the batting cages
Host a free throw contest
Horseback Riding
Swimming/Bicycling/Golfing/Volleyball
Skiing (water/snow)
Indoor "Mountain" Climbing
Hiking
Host a clinic to teach members any of the above techniques

Shake Your Groove Thang

Start a walking/running group
Learn how to hula, swing dance, salsa, tango, belly dance, etc. (buy a video or hire student teacher from the local university)
Attend a community folk dancing class
Learn Yoga/Pilates
Contact gyms about group membership discounts
Host a dance-a-thon

Ideas for Sub-Groups Geared Specifically Toward Members' Individual Interests

Moms & Tots
Play Group
Ladies Night Out
Guys Night Out
Wine Enthusiasts
Sports Fans
Young Professionals
Expecting Mothers
Nature Lovers

Foodies
Political Pundits
Fashionistas
Crafters/Scrappers
Foreign Language Buffs
Weekend Warriors
Book Club
Helping Hands
Mile Club

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Where's the Party

Wedding Album Party - members bring their wedding album & 15 minutes to tell your wedding story

- Poker Night
- Decade Party (40s, 50s, 70s, 80s, etc.)
- Card Night (Bunco, Spades, Euchre)
- Derby Party
- Bowl Parties (Super Bowl, Rose Bowl, etc.)
- Final Four Bash
- Oscar Party/Emmy Party
- H.S. Grad Party (Bring items that were big the year you graduated - tv, music, etc)
- P.J. Party
- Makeover Night
- DVD Night
- Poetry Jam
- Hawaiian Lau
- Cinco de Mayo
- Music Award Party (MTV, Country Music, etc.)
- Western Night
- Pumpkin Carving Contest
- Christmas in July
- St. Patrick's Day Party
- Harvest Party
- Easter Egg Hunt/Paint Eggs
- Caroling Party
- Mardi Gras Party
- Casino Night
- Beach Party
- White Elephant/Dirty Santa Party
- Game Night
- Bling-Bling Champagne Party (dress up like the see & be seen crowd & sip champagne)
- Weekly Trash TV Party (Reality TV, the OC, etc.)
- Starlet Night (Video tape performances, watch & laugh)
- Family Tradition - members share favorite family tradition
- Mystery Night/Mystery Dinner
- Celebrating Me - members share 1 accomplishment in the last month & the group celebrates everyone's accomplishments
- Stargazing Party (bring out the wine & telescopes)
- Talent Contest
- Pet Talent/Beauty Contest

Delish Party Ideas

Invite each member to bring a dish, drink, or ingredient to contribute to the party

- Wine Tasting
- Progressive Dinner
- Potluck
- Talent Show
- Kid's Talent Show
- Death By Chocolate Party
- Mimosa Party
- Appetizers Only Dinner
- Pizza Making Party
- Oktoberfest
- Tailgate Party
- Backyard BBQ
- Make your own Sushi Night
- Fondue Party
- Tea Party
- Gingerbread House Building
- Brunch
- International Dinners (Indian, Asian, Cuban, etc.)
- Smoothie Party
- Mom's Best Party - Bring your mom's best dish
- Cookbook Party (Bring your favorite cookbook & dish)
- Crawfish Boil / Clam Bake
- Holiday Parties
- Supper Club
- Block Party
- Desserts First - Dinner Last Party
- Tapas & Sangria Party
- Chili Cookoff (Award prizes for best, hottest, etc.)
- Old Fav's Party - Mac 'n Cheese, Hotdogs, Tater Tots, Little Debbie Snack Cakes, etc.
- Chili Cookoff (Award prizes for best, hottest, etc.)
- Soup Bar Party (4+ different soups)
- Friendship Soup (everyone brings an ingredient)
- Taste Test Night
- Taste Test Night - Blind fold & identify or vote on sodas, frozen pizzas, french fries, etc.
- Frap' - Latte - Chai - Café Party
- Quick Meals Recipe Swap Night
- Cake Decorating Party

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Get Smart ~ Be Healthy

- Host an Alliance speaker, from the Speakers' Bureau
- Invite an accountant to discuss tax issues relevant to residents
- Invite a young investment banker to discuss 401Ks, stocks, etc.
- Invite a young banker to discuss on-line banking/loans/etc.
- Invite a young insurance agent to discuss insurance plans for you, your spouse, and your family
- Invite a police officer to teach personal safety techniques
- Invite an ob-gyn to discuss what to expect when you're expecting
- Invite a young gynecologist to discuss breast cancer issues, etc.
- Ask a member who speaks a foreign language to teach the basics
- Invite a real estate agent to discuss property, housing, etc.
- Invite a young lawyer or contact a law school to discuss legal issues related to medicine or the importance of wills/living wills
- Attend a university guest speaker or presentation
- Start a book club
- Invite a personal trainer or nutritionist to discuss exercise/diet
- Pull out the lap-tops and train one another on using excel, word, power point, etc.
- Ask a member who plays an instrument to give basic instruction

Time to Play

- Newlywed (Marriage) Game Night
- Quiz Show
- Charades
- Home Video Contest
- Digital Camera/Video Scavenger Hunt
- Who Am I? (Each member tosses 5 random facts about themselves into a bowl to be exchanged amongst attendees who must match the fact to the person)
- Baby Picture Identification Game
- High School Picture Identification Game
- Old school board games night (play monopoly, life, clue, etc.)/ Old school games party (3-leg race, water balloon toss, etc.)
- Win, Lose or Draw
- Video Game Tournament

Don't Buy . . . Exchange

- Cookie Exchange
- Plant Exchange
- Garden Exchange
- Baby clothes/equipment Exchange
- Clothing/Party Dress Exchange
- Recipe Exchange
- Photo Exchange
- Cd/DVD Exchange
- Book/Magazine Exchange
- Costume Exchange

Explore the Arts ~ Get Crafty Together

- Plan a tour of several local art galleries
- Attend an art opening
- Make-your-own Candles
- Make-your-own Jewelry
- Make-your-own Soap
- Scrapbooking
- Visit a photo gallery
- Cardmaking
- Attend First Thursdays at your local art museum
- Inquire about group membership to the local art museum
- Invite a mother/grandmother to teach knitting/crocheting/ cross-stitching/sewing/quilting
- Stamping

Do you have a great idea to add to this list? E-mail Nicole L. at mcclainliechty@yahoo.com and we will add your ideas!