

handshake at best, so it is important to arrange for some of the candidate's colleagues to be there as well. Members of Congress do this for one another. "Four to six other members is usually acceptable," says Drape.

Name tags are an important detail at large cocktail receptions. Put the name of the PAC or company as well as the individual's name on the tag. Members of Congress meet so many people that it is helpful to connect the name of the individual with a company.

A \$25-per-person cocktail party in a private home is one of the easiest events to organize and takes the least amount of time, whereas a big, \$1,000-a-plate Jefferson-Jackson day dinner, while netting more, requires more planning and staff time.

Small dinners or receptions with high price tags can be held at homes of lobbyists or friends to cut costs. In-kind contributions, such as the time spent organizing an event, don't have to be counted in the total amount spent. This enables a lobbyist to organize and host a fundraiser in his home and give the guests up to \$1,000 in food and drink without having to be listed as a contributor to the campaign. For example, former Representative Lloyd Meeds, now a lobbyist, held a \$1,000-a-plate dinner for Representative Robert Duncan (D-Ore.), Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, at his home last year. Transportation PAC representatives attended heavily.

"The food is not important, but
the speaker is."

One of the highest priced campaign fundraising events in Washington would be one like the dinner for about 40 held at the Metropolitan Club at \$1,000-a-plate for Senator Howard Baker. "It cost \$60 to \$80 a head with cigars," says Drape. Whatever you do, "don't serve chicken at *any* dinner," she says. "The connotation of rubber chicken..." If it's a sit-down dinner, call the other members of Congress who have agreed to attend at 5:30 that evening to confirm and to remind them. "Have one important person at each table. Go with ten people per table, rather than eight, if there aren't enough important people to go around," she adds.

If you are planning a large event, recruit sponsors early. They provide the seed money for the event. "Charge them more than the regular ticket

price—enough to cover the cost of the event," (up to \$1,000) says Crone. "There's no such thing as too many sponsors. Go to the leadership of the audience to which the fundraiser is targeted."

Crone doesn't believe in lavish food at cocktail receptions or seated dinners. "The object is not to poison the people or let them go away hungry," she says. Remember to always use a union caterer in an urban area to avoid unnecessary conflicts.

People will walk away from a fundraising dinner talking about the VIP speaker or whose hand they shook, not the food. Outside of Washington, any big name politician is a celebrity. Representative Mo Udall (D-Ariz.) raised close to \$50,000 at his birthday party in Tucson last year. Bob Strauss was the featured speaker. Senator Birch Bayh's (D-Ind.) birthday party featuring Senator Ted Kennedy was equally successful.

Regional, Ethnic and Other Themed Events

Fundraising events should always be fun. Themes give them flavor. It can be as simple as regional or ethnic food and music, such as the annual event held for Representative Jim Santini (D-Nev.) which evokes visions of the old Wild West with a banquet of buffalo, quail and venison. A Louisiana official holds an annual gumbo/jumbo shrimp Cajun party; a Kentucky candidate regularly has a ham and bourbon fundraiser. This type of menu takes no more effort and is frequently less expensive than the standard boring fare. Invitations and decorations carry out the theme, as in Congressional candidate Karen Burstein's New York Block Party or Rich Jalovec's Urban Cowboy party.

One of the most successful fundraisers of this kind is the annual "Fry for Guy" held for Rep. Guy Vander Jagt (R.-Mich.) each August on the shores of Lake Michigan. "The mammoth size of the event is why I have no opposition," jokes Vander Jagt. "It's fun, and people look forward to it." Although it has never rained, a covered pavillion is reserved just in case. At \$60 a ticket (which admits one or two), 2,200 people attended last year. They feasted on fried bratwurst, played country fair games (such as throwing baseballs at bottles), listened to a western band, and took home a favor (this year a set of glasses with the congressional seal and the candidate's name). Last year, it was a tote bag saying "Fry for Guy," which people carried all over the district. Expenses usually run about \$20,000 for the event.