Superheroes at Work!

Have you ever thought “It would be fun to do a Service project with another Chapter”? Well at AEC 2016 in Memphis, TN you will have the opportunity to do just that. And this time can be used towards your 2016-2017 Service hour commitment too! There are two opportunities in which to participate:

Friday, April 29th from 9am – 11am at Youth Villages Inc. Friday, April 29th from 4:30 – 5:30pm with Girl Scouts at the Hilton

Be on the lookout for a constant contact message coming soon with how to sign up and more about what work you will be doing with the children on with each of these projects. If the schedule doesn’t work out for you to give of your time, we will have ways for you to give items or money for Youth Villages.

75th Anniversary Plans Underway

In November of this year, the National Association of Junior Auxiliaries will turn 75 years old! What started with 10 Chapters in Mississippi and Arkansas has grown into 95 Chapters across the Southeast! Thousands of acts of charitable service have been rendered over these 75 years, and thousands of Junior Auxiliary members have been touched by those they have served. It is a privilege being a part of this wonderful organization and something to celebrate!

The celebration kicks off at AEC 2016 with the opening of a Time Capsule that was filled by the Chapters and sealed at AEC 1991, 25 years ago! This will take place Friday night, April 29 at 5:30pm, at the NAJA After-Hours Reception in the Memphis Hilton Lobby Annex. We think this will be pretty cool, so make sure you attend to see what your Chapter placed in the Time Capsule 25 years ago. Check future Newsletter for more 75th Anniversary plans.

JA 411 Booth

NAJA SuperHeroes Assemble!

On Friday and Saturday afternoons, NAJA Superhero Representatives and CSCs will be available to help you in your quest for JA knowledge. We will have manuals and sample forms on hand as well as ideas to elevate your JA Chapter to a SUPER level. If you need help with the Connect with Kids resource or navigating the NAJA website, we can assist you. Bring your questions, earn an Education Hour and sign up for our FANTASTIC drawing!

The Budget: Your Chapter’s Plan for Success

Chapters should plan for the upcoming year by preparing a budget of the expected expenses and revenues of the Chapter’s operation. The budget is a map that shows what your Chapter plans to do and how it will do it. Preparing and approving the budget requires your Chapter to agree on goals and objectives and the means required to achieve them.

The budget process begins in March or April when the Finance Committee drafts a proposed budget for consideration by the Board of Directors. The budget becomes final after approval by the entire Chapter. Preparing a budget begins by collecting expense and revenue estimates from each officer and committee chairman. The estimates will fall into these categories: administration, service projects, and fundraising. The amount you plan to spend will determine the level of fundraising activities your Chapter must plan to undertake.

Chapters should have procedures in place to handle unbudgeted expenses and requests by committee chairmen for additional funds. Generally the Chapter board would review and approve requests for unbudgeted items and additional funds. During the year, the budget should be reviewed for any unexplained variance between a budgeted and actual line item of revenue or expense as this may be the first red flag signaling a more serious problem that needs to be investigated.

It’s a common myth that nonprofits have to have a break-even budget (i.e., revenues = expenses). If your Chapter does not have one year’s worth of operating expenses in reserve, then you should plan to generate more revenues than expenses to build a reserve fund that can be used in future years. If your Chapter has a reserve fund equal to more than one year’s operating budget, then you can budget expenses greater than revenues. You can choose to make one-time expenditures for something needed in your community or increase the budget for current projects such as scholarships.

Here are some tips which will help you prepare your budget:

- **Involve officers and committee chairmen in the budgeting process.**
- **Set up your budget line items according to the Statement of Cash Balances.**
- **Be conservative and realistic about your projected revenues and expenses.**
- **Keep notes to document the assumptions you’ve made in developing your budget or the source of an estimate.**
- **Emphasize building a reserve fund for emergencies and unexpected opportunities.**

The effort given to build a realistic budget with input and approval from all officers, committees, and members provides a foundation for a successful Chapter. For additional information and a sample budget see pages 16 and 17 in the Treasurer’s Manual.