

= Fundraiser ( The Office ) =

" Fundraiser " is the twenty @-@ second episode of the eighth season of the American comedy television series The Office and the show 's 174th episode overall . The episode originally aired on NBC in the United States on April 26 , 2012 . " Fundraiser " was written by Owen Ellickson and directed by David Rogers . The episode guest stars Andy Buckley and Jack Coleman .

The series ? presented as if it were a real documentary ? depicts the everyday lives of office employees in the Scranton , Pennsylvania , branch of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company . In this episode , Andy Bernard ( Ed Helms ) crashes a fundraiser and ends up adopting twelve dogs . Dwight Schrute ( Rainn Wilson ) learns that an auction winner loses money . Nellie ( Catherine Tate ) learns how to eat a taco .

" Fundraiser " received mixed reviews from critics . According to Nielsen Media Research , " Fundraiser " was viewed by an estimated 4 @.@ 17 million viewers and received a 2 @.@ 1 rating / 6 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 , making it the lowest @-@ rated season eight episode of The Office to air . The episode ranked third in its timeslot and was also the highest @-@ rated NBC series of the night .

= = Plot = =

Angela 's ( Angela Kinsey ) husband , state Senator Robert Lipton ( Jack Coleman ) , throws a silent auction fundraiser for local animal rights activists and Robert ( James Spader ) buys two tables to seat everyone in the office . Newly fired Andy ( Ed Helms ) arrives and tries to get into an argument with Robert , telling him about a rock opera he has written with the villain being a character named Thomas Oregon . Andy runs into David Wallace , former CFO of Dunder Mifflin , and begins plotting his return to Dunder Mifflin , which later revealed in " Free Family Portrait Studio " , was to convince David to buy Dunder Mifflin back from Sabre , and get the manager position back . Andy interrupts Robert 's speech introducing the senator by volunteering to adopt the twelve dogs brought by the local animal society . Afterwards , members of the office ask if he is having a breakdown , and Andy sadly agrees that he is .

Dwight ( Rainn Wilson ) attends without understanding the concept of a silent auction , believing the purpose of the function is to guess correctly the market price of the objects . By the end of the night , Dwight has put exorbitant amounts on the items and ends up accidentally donating over \$ 34 @,@ 000 . He flees when he discovers his mistake . Meanwhile , Nellie ( Catherine Tate ) tries to talk with Darryl ( Craig Robinson ) by complaining about the food . She suggests they get a taco at her expense , offering thirty dollars to Darryl to go out and buy some . Darryl realizes she has no idea what a taco is , but appreciates that " she 's trying " to socialize with her employees .

Oscar ( Oscar Nunez ) talks briefly to Sen. Lipton about animal rights , and Lipton ( who Oscar suspects is gay ) gives Oscar his private cell phone number , asking Oscar to call him in the evening to discuss issues further . Oscar tells Pam ( Jenna Fischer ) and Jim ( John Krasinski ) that the Senator was hitting on him . Jim says Lipton was likely just schmoozing a voter , talks to Lipton himself , and also gets his number . Meredith ( Kate Flannery ) later gets Lipton 's number as well , resulting in Oscar thinking that the senator may not have been hitting on him . When Oscar is leaving , Lipton shakes his hand and caresses Oscar 's arm for long enough that Oscar once again believes Lipton was pursuing him .

= = Production = =

" Fundraiser " was written by Owen Ellickson and directed by David Rogers . The episode marks the ninth appearance of Catherine Tate as Nellie Bertram and her eighth consecutive appearance . She first appeared in the seventh season finale , " Search Committee " as a guest star , but starting with " Tallahassee " she was added to the cast as a recurring character . The episode also features the return of the character David Wallace ( Andy Buckley ) , former CFO of Dunder Mifflin . Wallace , who is also attending the fundraiser , reveals to Andy that after his firing , he sold his toy @-@

vacuum invention " Suck It " to the military for \$ 20 million .

= = Cultural references = =

The cold opening references several notable bands and musicians : the scene consists of Ryan complaining because he recently heard ? erroneously ? that notable musician Smokey Robinson died . Initially , Ryan refers to him as only " Smokey " , which causes Pam to believe he is talking about Smokey the Bear . However , Ryan , on the bequest of Pam , is only able to name one song that Robinson sung , " The Tracks of My Tears " . Pam , however , is later able to remember that he sang " Tears of a Clown " , and Jim references " I Second That Emotion " . After Jim proves that Robinson is both still alive and playing at a local venue , Ryan tells him that he will be unable to attend because the opening band is Paul Anka , and that is " not what Smokey would have ? does want ! " During his pontificating rant , Ryan mentions that popular music is not all about " Jason Mraz and The Beatles " , which shocks Dwight . Dwight lists of " Eleanor Rigby " and " Paperback Writer " and asks Ryan if he truly does not like those songs .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Fundraiser " originally aired on NBC in the United States on April 26 , 2012 . The episode was viewed by an estimated 4 @. @ 17 million viewers and received a 2 @. @ 1 rating / 6 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . This means that it was seen by 2 @. @ 1 % of all 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ olds , and 6 % of all 18- to 49 @- @ year @- @ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . The episode finished third in its time slot , being beaten by Grey 's Anatomy which received a 3 @. @ 2 rating / 8 % share and the CBS drama Person of Interest which received a 2 @. @ 4 rating / 6 % share in the 18 ? 49 demographic . The episode beat the Fox series Touch and The CW drama series The Secret Circle . Despite this , " Fundraiser " was the highest @- @ rated NBC television episode of the night . The episode was the 25th most watched episode in the 18 ? 49 demographic for the week ending April 29 .

= = = Reviews = = =

The episode received mixed reviews from critics , with critiques ranging from largely positive to very negative . Myles McNutt from The A.V. Club gave the episode a slightly positive review and gave it a B- rating . He wrote , " The Office is far from a profound show when it just throws its characters in a room and observes their behavior , but there ? s a certain charm to it . " McNutt noted that , despite feeling that the episode 's description of " Darryl teaches Nellie how to eat a taco " was a poor move on NBC 's part , he thought they " could have spent more time with Nellie learning how to eat a taco . " Craig McQuinn from The Faster Times wrote positively of the episode , noting , " For the first time in forever this is an episode of The Office that actually has a lot going on . Whether the stuff that ? s happening is actually meaningful or significant in any way is up for debate , but I actually enjoyed most of this episode . "

Not all reviews were positive . Dan Forcella from TV Fanatics gave the episode a mixed review and awarded it two @- @ and @- @ a @- @ half stars out of five . Forcella noted " It has been four episodes now since the super team returned from Florida , and The Office still hasn 't found its footing back in Scranton " , and he called the outing " another lackluster effort " . A review from CliqueClack was largely critical of the episode , calling it " worse than usual " and noting that the show had finally hit " rock bottom " . WhatCulture ! Reviewer Joseph Kratzer felt that the episode 's setting ? outside of the office building ? was detrimental to the episode . He wrote , " The thing is , I in no way felt like any of what occurred in ' Fundraiser ' needed to take place outside the Scranton branch and that ? s really why a sitcom should move locations for an episode ? because the story

couldn't function without it . But this time it just felt like a cheap way to liven up a clearly very boring , uninspired , weak episode of television . " Screen Crave wrote , " Those viewers of The Office that have scolded the show throughout the season for its varying degrees of sucking , are not likely to be changing their thinking after watching the latest episode . "

However , many reviews were extremely happy about the return of Andy Buckley , who portrayed David Wallace . A review from TV Equals noted that " I ? m not totally convinced that David Wallace ? s story is as simple as the one he tells , but maybe that ? s just because I ? d love any excuse for him to work his way back into the story lines for The Office . " Michael Tedder from Vulture called Wallace 's character " always @-@ welcome " .