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# Grassroots Fundraising Journal

**In This Issue:**

# Writer's Guidelines

*The **Grassroots Fundraising Journal** is happy to consider articles for publication. Please submit copy **typed, double-spaced**. If computer-generated, please submit highest quality printing possible (no dot matrix print-outs, please). Please do not submit material typed in all capital letters.*

*Articles will be considered for publication during the nine months following submission. When an article is accepted, you will be notified in which issue of the **Journal** it will appear. The **Journal** provides three copies of published material to the author and pays $75 per article after publication.*

*If you want unpublished articles returned, please provide a self-addressed envelope with adequate postage.*

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# In This Issue




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# Take Advantage of December

*by Kim Klein*

There is a popular myth in fundraising that December is a hot time to raise money and that people give away more, if not most, of the money they are going to donate in a year during this last month. Many grassroots organizations' boards and staff deride themselves every December for not "taking advantage of December," acting as if they know what that means but secretly wondering what they might have done differently.

Like all myths, this one has elements of truth. Those elements are:

• December *is* a hot month to raise money. In this way, it is strikingly similar to the other eleven months of the year.

• Some people do give away most of the money they will donate in a year in December. Often, these are very wealthy people who are waiting to see how the stock market has done and which stocks they should donate to get the best tax advantage. Self-employed people with incomes that vary widely from month to month may also wait until year's end to get a clear sense of their financial picture.

• December does present some unique opportunities for fundraising.

There are also some serious fallacies built into the myth of December as the best fundraising month. They include:

• December is a very competitive month to raise money, particularly among social service agencies, as the needs of the poor, homeless and hungry tend to be highlighted at this time of year. December fundraising also competes with the consumer gift-buying frenzy, as major religious and cultural holidays fall during this month.

• For every person who waits until December to make their major giving decisions, a hundred more have already given away all that they are going to give. This often includes wealthy people. In fact, very few people of any income bracket or level of giving give all their charitable gifts in any one month. Most people give away money as they are asked for it and as they have it. People who are very thoughtful about giving and give systematically deliberately spread their giving over the whole year in order to be able to give away the amount they want without causing themselves a cash-flow problem.

• In terms of the amount of fundraising work that can be accomplished, December is a short month. Little actual work gets done between December 15 and New Year's, and this year Hanukkah is December 8, so the drop off in work will start even earlier in some communities. That is not only true for nonprofit groups, but also for all the vendors that make our work possible, such as printers, repairpersons, computer technicians, and so on. Many people take vacations during December, and for those still working, there are holiday parties to attend and last-minute gift shopping over long lunch hours. It is simply hard to concentrate on work during the last two weeks of December, so any fundraising plans your organization has for December need to be carried out during the first two weeks.

Of course, if your organization wants to take advantage of December by selling special holiday cards or calendars, or by running a year-end major gifts campaign, you will have to have been planning for these activities since September or even earlier. The following suggestions are for those groups that either did not get around to such planning, or didn't know what to plan, or would like to augment their plans during December.

## *Six Things to do in December*

1) *At the very beginning of December, send a letter* to all of your current donors asking them to consider making a contribution to your organization as one of the gifts they give. You promise to send the recipients of this "present" a nice card in time for the holidays, telling who gave the gift and describing whatever benefits the gift brings, such as a newsletter or discounts. The letter to your donors might read:

Dear Friend,

If you are like me, you are both excited and apprehensive about the upcoming holiday season. Seeing friends and family, giving and receiving presents, eating wonderful, rich food and celebrating any one or more of several holidays that fall this month are fun and exciting things we look forward to. On the apprehensive side, there is seeing friends and family, giving and receiving presents, eating wonderful food. . . . And, on top of all that, there is getting ready for it!!!

Here at (*name of your group*), we have an idea that may help you with the getting ready part, and will certainly help us. Instead of racing around looking for presents, consider giving a donation in the name of a friend or family member to us. We will send that person a lovely card telling them about your gift. We will also send them our quarterly newsletter and other benefits of membership. Next year we will ask if they want to renew their membership. They will receive no other solicitations unless they make their own gift to (*name of your group*).

Your gift can be of any amount. We suggest that you give what you might have spent on a present. You can give as many or as few gifts as you wish.

A donation to us is a perfect gift for:

- someone who wants to make the world a better place
- someone who "has everything"
- someone who borrows your copy of our newsletter.

In a month focussed on both giving and buying, isn't it nice to be able to give a gift that really makes a difference? Thanks for thinking of us. Please fill out the enclosed form and return it to us by the date indicated.

Sincerely,
Board Chair

The donor fills out a form such as:

I would like to give the following people a gift in the form of a contribution:

Name ____________________

Address ____________________

City ____________________

ZIP ____________________

Your relationship to this person: ____________

Which holiday are they celebrating? If you do not wish to specify, we will use the generic "holiday season."

Hanukkah/Christmas/Kwanzaa/other ____________

* * *

I would like to give the following people a gift in the form of a contribution:

Name ____________________

Address ____________________

City ____________________

ZIP ____________________

Your relationship to this person: ____________

Which holiday are they celebrating? If you do not wish to specify, we will use the generic "holiday season."

Hanukkah/Christmas/Kwanzaa/other ____________

Total enclosed: $ ____________

Make check payable to: (*name your group*) and send to: (*address*).

Your gift is tax deductible.

The card or letter to the recipient of this gift might say:

Dear Mr. Smith,

Your sister, Sarah, has given $25 to (*name of your group*) as her Hanukkah/Christmas/Kwanzaa/holiday present to you. Sarah may have spoken to you about our group, but let me just tell you a little more.

We . . . (one short paragraph describing the group. Be brief.)

In 1994, we plan to expand/build/continue/reach out to (name one or two plans and describe them briefly).

You will begin receiving our quarterly newsletter in January. You are also entitled to free admission to our spring auction, which normally costs $5. We will send you two free tickets sometime in March.

Please feel free to come by our office. From all of us at (*name of your group*), we wish you happy holidays and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

(Note—if you have a recent newsletter, send that along with the card or letter.)

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***One organization had three donors spend $300 each on 12 gifts of $25.***

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While only about 5% of your donor base will take advantage of this offer, many of the donors that do respond will give several gifts. In one organization, three donors spent $300 each on 12 gifts of $25. Also, long after December, donors will call to see if they can use the form for birthdays, weddings, memorials, and anniversaries.

The names of the people who receive these gifts should be put into your donor base and solicited for renewal next year.

2) *Have an Open House.* Invite all your donors, funders, press, and anyone else who has helped your organization in the past year. Make a simple and inexpensive invitation in the form of a flier that people can hang on their refrigerator or in their office to remind themselves about it. Hold the Open House from 6–8 p.m. so people can come after work.

Be sure that volunteers from your board or staff are assigned to circulate and talk with people. No one should come to this Open House and stand alone. There should be someone to greet them at the door and then "roving greeters" who go up to people and introduce themselves. You should try to meet as many people as you can and learn their names.

As you walk around greeting people, carry a small notebook and once you finish talking with them, discreetly go off and write down their name and some notes about them. If the person you are talking with expresses a desire to see more information or to be kept informed of something, take out your notebook and ask them to write their name and number so that you can do that. People will be impressed with your efficiency.

Afterwards, all the "roving greeters" and the people who greeted people at the door should get together and make a list of all the people's names they remember. Each person who came to the Open House should receive a short postcard thank-you from someone they talked to:

> Dear Jill,
>
> Thank you for coming to our Open House. It was great to talk with you. Please feel free to stop by or call any time.
>
> Sincerely, Jane Burke, Board member.

If the person has asked about something specific or expressed specific interest in some issue your group addresses, mention that in your note.

> Dear Harry,
>
> Thanks for coming to our Open House, and for your interest in our plan to work with children of people in prison. You'll see an article about this in our next newsletter, but if you want to be more involved, please feel free to call or write to me here. Thanks again.
>
> Sincerely, . . .

Obviously the purpose of an Open House is not to raise money. However, it is a fundraiser in the cultivation sense. If the people who come have a reasonably good time and feel taken care of socially and listened to, they will feel a greater investment in your group. It also provides good practice in a relatively non-threatening setting for board members to talk with people they don't know well and ask them questions about their interest in the group.

You may get some interesting feedback that you can put to use. For example, an organization in Chicago was told by someone at their Open House that their newsletter always had at least a dozen typos, and that this person found reading the newsletter annoying for that reason. She was a professional proofreader and offered to proofread the copy before it went to the printer if they would send it to her. Previously, anyone who was in the office at the time it came back from the designer read it. Since most people are not good proofreaders, this was not a secure way to guarantee finding typos. Since this person took over proofreading, several people have called or written to say how much more they enjoy the newsletter without the typos, showing that many people had noticed, though they had not complained.

In another instance, a person who had donated $10 as his first (and to that date, only) gift came to an Open House and saw the age of the computers the group was using. He owned a computer store and was able to get three computers free and a printer for cost.

If you have T-Shirts, books or other products that you normally sell, you can display them for sale as holiday gifts at the Open House. Have wrapping paper and ribbon available so that people can get their purchases wrapped right there. If you are really ambitious, you can sell baked goods at this same table.

3) *The chair of the board or the executive director should send cards* to board members, volunteers, staff, and anyone who has been closely involved and helpful with your work this year, thanking them for what they have done—a foundation program officer who went out of his or her way, the computer repairperson who didn't charge to fix your printer when you used cheap labels and jammed it, the people at the Senior Center who get your newsletter ready for mailing each time. Handwrite these cards. Two scribbled sentences that are personal are 1,000% preferable to a flowery word-processed letter. Then the director should remember to thank the board chair and vice versa.

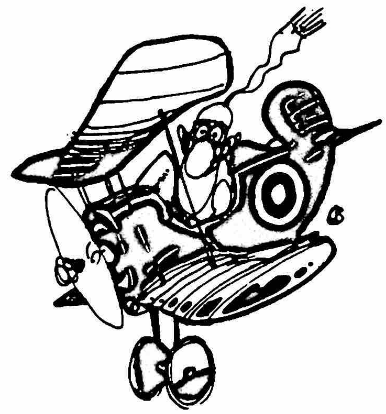
4) *Plan for January fundraising.* Outside of direct mail, little fundraising goes on in January and you can take advantage of the lull between the frenzy of December and gearing up for intensive fundraising that starts taking place in February.

5) *Clean up your office,* clean out your desk and get caught up on filing, data entry and prospect research. All of this helps with fundraising and if you missed doing this in August, you will not have another chance until next August, by which time you will be buried in paper and monumentally behind.

6) *Take your own vacation.* Spend time with family, friends and pets. Come back after New Year's rested, refreshed and ready to take advantage of January.

You may have noticed that this article actually offered only one real way to raise money out of six suggestions. But all of these suggestions will help raise money in the long run because they are building the organizational culture that leads to successful fundraising. Good fundraising, like good health, is not something you do—it is something you have, and it is something you have because of carefully cultivated habits and ways of thinking about and participating in your work.

December is a good time to reflect on how you can create or promote this organizational culture in your group. That will do more to raise money than any set of strategies. ■



# The First Staff Person

*by Dianne Russell*

It's a big step. Your organization has been active in the community for a couple of years. You feel you want to do more. But you're not sure your all-volunteer group is able to carry the full load of what's needed to grow—research on program issues, outreach to community leaders, help raising money, coordination of program work and evaluating progress. Your group wants to realize its goals and it has decided that hiring staff is the only way to make it happen.

*Hiring and working with staff is one of the most difficult transitions.*

The big step, hiring and working with staff, is one of the most difficult transitions any non-profit organization can make. Because of the relationships created between board members and the staff member, it can be difficult to sort out basic tensions around ownership and a clear definition of roles. Sticky questions arise, such as: "Whose job *is* this?" "Do we have to be so formal about the hiring and review process?" "Won't the staff person just take care of the program and fundraising now?"

This article is written to help volunteer board members examine their motives for hiring staff, explore typical issues that groups face in the transition, and consider suggestions for how to make the transition smoother and more productive for both staff and board.

If your organization is about to take the big step and hire staff, this article may help you head off possible problems. If your group has already hired staff, this article may shed some light on some of the typical pains and strains associated with the transition. Even better, I hope you find some ways to ease the pain!

## *Why Groups Hire Staff*

Understanding why your group wants to hire or has hired staff is critical. In order to sort out the issues or problems your group is having, the board of directors needs clarity on the evolution of making this transition in the organization. Why, how and when did you decide that staff was needed? The answers to these questions strongly affect the dynamics and issues in your group.

Many organizations follow the scenario given in the opening paragraph of this article. For example, the activity of the "Shiloh Area Land Trust" had developed to the point that it was just too overwhelming for an all-volunteer board. They had been working together for a couple of years and had completed their start-up phase—incorporation, defining the mission of the trust, and setting the geographic scope and other criteria that focus the group's land conservation priorities. When the Shiloh Trust was ready to begin their land deals and build community support for the land conservation program, the volunteer board felt a strong need for a "coordinator" or even an "executive director."

On the other hand, some groups, like the "Black Fork Conservancy," decided to hire staff after only six months of incorporation but following two and a half years of organizing. Because of the work load and need for constant attention, the founders of the Black Fork Conservancy believed the land trust would not be able to meet even its basic mission and goals. They hired staff prior to the start-up phase and their executive director played an integral role in the development of the Black Fork Conservancy's plans.

Other possible catalysts for hiring staff might include the following:

1) You develop a specific, targeted program and receive funding for staff to conduct it over a given period of time;

2) the board of trustees or directors wants to be removed from the "hands-on tasks" of the organization, preferring to provide oversight and direction to the program; and, less common but perhaps a fantasy for many;

3) a large chunk of money is offered by a donor or a foundation if your group will add staff.

Another, less tangible, motive for hiring staff is also common and goes something like this: "We won't be taken seriously if we're an all-volunteer group. We need to be professional and we need staff to be a player." Themes such as this are more suspect than are more concrete reasons. It reminds me of children saying, "Well, everyone does it, so I need to do it." If your board of directors or trustees hired staff because of such a "theme," you might want to step back and take a closer look at your reasons or criteria for doing so.

## *Issues in the Transition*

There are issues and tensions inherent in the transition of hiring a first staff person. So if your group is experiencing some stresses and strains, don't believe that it's some fault of your own. Hiring staff deeply affects the basic dynamics about the group's agenda, who is invested in the work, who makes decisions, and who gets the nitty gritty work done.

This section takes a closer look at the examples of the Shiloh Area Land Trust and the Black Fork Conservancy introduced above. I'll explore how organizational dynamics are affected for the two most common scenarios that occur with hiring first staff: the extremes of board domination of the staff, or board abandonment of the staff. Although these are indeed extremes, successfully negotiating between them is difficult and rare. I'll also outline a few other common issues that arise for organizations hiring their first staff.

**Board Domination**—The Shiloh Area Land Trust began with a volunteer board. After three years of organizing and activity, they decided to hire an executive director. They felt they had made great progress without staff, but the effort and details involved in maintaining the membership list, managing the fundraising and membership drives, and keeping the books up to date were more than the volunteer board members could handle.

During the Shiloh Trust's next year and a half, the new staff person and the board have found themselves confused and frustrated and moving forward in a halting way with the group's programs.

### *Why, how and when did you decide that staff was needed?*

Given its history, the Shiloh Trust's founding board has a strong sense of ownership and definite opinions about what programs the group should do and how they should be done. They say, "The staff person is great, but she really doesn't understand the community like we do. *We've* built relationships with landowners, real estate professionals and lawyers in town. Keeping on top of the day-to-day details such as answering letters, doing research and keeping our books is really the best role for our staff."

In their enthusiasm for having a new staff person, many of the Shiloh Trust's board members check in on the staff person two or three times a week. Without coordinating with each other, the board members make requests for brochures, correspondence and updated financial reports. One retired board member drops in every day at 10 a.m. to "see what came in the mail today."

From the Shiloh Trust staff person's point of view this involvement is a two-edged sword. On the one hand, she understands that the board's investment is vital to making the trust effective. On the other hand, the staff person says, "I feel like I'm just pushing paper clips! Conserving land, meeting landowners and community members and program development are my highest priorities, but the board won't let me do it. They're wasting my talent and skills, and I wonder if they really trust me."

Karl Mathiason with the Management Assistance Group in Washington, D.C. developed the term "leading board." Mathiason observed the dynamics created when a first staff person was hired, and noticed that the board tended to play a leading role in setting and conducting the group's program, often because they'd always done it in the past.

In the extreme, this "leading" tendency can turn into domination and control of the staff. Because the board held on to the program and decision making and didn't share ownership with the staff, the Shiloh Trust board ran the risk of taking too much power and control away from a new, eager staff person.

For the Shiloh Trust's board this dynamic is a natural one. After all, they've poured hours and hours of time into conceiving, creating and making real a dream of land protection in their community. Personally and collectively they've put energy and sweat into making it happen. As much as any artist has a sense of ownership of his work of art, the Shiloh Trust board members truly own the land trust they founded.

The end result: the Shiloh Trust staff person feels disempowered. In addition, the board wonders if they're getting their money's worth.

Staff caught in this position have said to me, "They only want me to serve as their 'helper,'" or, "I feel like I'm trapped in this box away from the members, the community and the exciting program activities," or "The board has me on a short leash. When they call, I obey, and never mind what ideas I have for the organization."

Staff with boards that dominate tend to either confront the board because of their frustration, or quietly find a new job after the first six months. Boards that dominate staff, by not sharing ownership and decision making, lose valuable resources—a staff person and the money invested.

**Board Abandonment**—The Black Fork Conservancy was incorporated for six months after two and a half years of groundwork, when they decided to hire staff. As a land trust in a small town, everyone on the board of trustees had put in a lot of hard work figuring out their role in the community and educating land owners about conservation options. Three of the Conservancy's trustees have already closed on a major land deal that included 100 acres adjacent to the Black Fork Creek.

Given the potential for an estimated 500 more acres over the next three years, the Black Fork Conservancy's board decided to hire staff. Even though they as volunteers could continue to do some of the program work, they thought a staff person could better manage the complicated legal and real estate work that would be needed. After three years of exploratory work, and attending many conferences, many board members are now unable to give the time they think is needed to conserve the land fast enough.

The staff person hired is very capable and knowledgeable about the community and land transactions. She seems energetic and able to communicate with others and manage a thousand tasks.

Soon, the Black Fork Conservancy president is having problems with attendance at board meetings and board member commitments for tasks. He says, after a particularly frustrating meeting, "The trustees who used to jump right in and take over a project are now hanging back. They say they've gotten too busy, or have other commitments. But it seems like they don't care as much any more."

Meanwhile, the Black Fork Conservancy staff person has jumped into her work with both feet. But she's confused about the lack of activity on the board. She says, "I had heard such terrific things about the Conservancy's trustees, but they seem so unwilling to help. At the last committee meeting I attended, when it came time to assign tasks, they turned, in unison, to me to get things done."

Over time, the Black Fork Conservancy's staff person's confusion turned into frustration. Her workload became overwhelming and she felt angry. Either the Conservancy needed more staff or the board of trustees needed to do more; she just couldn't keep up with the pace. The board understood she was working hard, but also knew they couldn't afford to hire more staff.

The dynamic detailed above of "Let the staff do it!" is also a natural thing to happen. After all, the Black Fork Conservancy's founding board of trustees worked hard for three solid years to get the land trust off the ground. Their gains were many, but the intensity of their efforts had taken a collective and personal toll. Board members were tired and ready to hand over the work, especially to someone so capable and hard working as their new staff member.

*Find another nonprofit that has been through the process.*

If the Black Fork Conservancy's situation, however, remains unconfronted, the board and the staff will miss the possible goal of conserving those 500 acres of land. They will also end up frustrated and angry that board expectations of the staff and staff expectations of the board go unmet. The group's program and activities will either stagnate or begin a downward spiral as the staff person drowns in work and the board members excuse themselves from working on the program and the problems.

**Other General Problems**—There are two other general issues that arise from organizations hiring their first staff person: the board acting as a true employer, and who gets hired.

Because volunteer organizations are generally informal in the ways they work together, they often have difficulty switching gears and becoming formal in hiring someone. The necessary formality involved in being an employer seems foreign to board members.

The first-time board-as-employer will avoid the jobs of interviewing, hiring, providing supervision and regular job reviews, as well as negotiating salary and benefits. They'll say things to themselves such as, "Do we really need to be this formal? Can't we just trust the staff person to do a good job? Do we really need personnel policies?"

However, without the structure provided in tried-and-tested ways of hiring, supporting and evaluating staff, both board and the staff suffer. The dynamics described in "board domination" and "board abandonment" greatly worsen without the opportunities to talk that reviews naturally provide. Even without extreme dynamics, small problems that aren't given constant attention will mushroom into big problems.

The informality of a volunteer group often leads them to hire one of their own board members or volunteers. They say to themselves, "Well, he really knows the community and the technical aspects of the work. He'd be great. Why should we bother with a long, drawn-out job search?"

Even if a board member or volunteer is the person that's right for the job, this scenario sets the organization up for some rocky times. Without a job search and a serious hiring process, charges of favoritism and questions of the person's qualifications will be raised, even if not in public. Hiring someone who is a peer also makes the job of the board to be the employer even more complicated and difficult. Just how do you handle a job review with a friend?

*Goals and objectives, with due dates, are what performance should be evaluated against.*

## *Guidelines for the Transition—There Is Hope*

There is hope for both the Shiloh Area Land Trust and the Black Fork Conservancy and the difficult dynamics they and other groups find in hiring staff. For groups that don't exactly play out those extremes, but who know the echoes of the problems, there is hope to avoid these extremes.

The eight guidelines below are offered to help you make the big step of hiring staff, as well as find a way through the transition that will follow.

1. *Recognize it's a difficult transition.* Prior to staff arriving on the scene, your volunteer board and volunteers had developed their own way of doing things, their own dynamics. Adding any new person will change the dynamic. Add someone who gets paid and needs supervision (money and feedback are both difficult to talk about) and you should expect many challenges.

2. *Clearly understand why staff were hired.* The board's reasons for hiring staff will have a big impact on their expectations of that staff person. Ask the question, "Why do we want staff?" Have an honest discussion with each other. Make notes and try to reach a group consensus on your answer. At least understand the differences among the group.

3. *Conduct an open and thorough hiring process.* The first step is to have a written job description based on the "Why do we want staff?" discussion. Recruitment and the hiring process should be driven by the job's needs and not by friendships. Having candidates internal to the organization are fine, but they need to compete with others from the outside.

4. *Negotiate roles for the board and staff.* As you move into this uncharted territory you need a rudder. Written expectations—both of the staff and of the board—are that rudder. List all the possible tasks and programs that must be done for the organization to work. Then decide who will have primary and secondary responsibility for each area.

5. *Staff member and board set specific, time-oriented goals.* Once the general roles are negotiated, staff and board need to develop a "road map" or work plan for at least the next three to six months. Goals and objectives, with due dates, are exactly what performance can and should be evaluated against.

6. *Conduct frequent staff reviews.* Especially in the first year, a review every two or three months can build open communication and trust. The review focuses on performance of agreed-upon objectives and welcomes discussion of how the staff are feeling about their job and dynamics. The conversation must be a two-way street—the board should ask about how the staff member sees their performance, too.

7. *Identify lead board members as liaison with staff.* Avoid having every board member call the staff with individual needs. Identify a lead board member—maybe the president or vice-president, or the chairperson of a key committee—who acts as a filter for individual board member requests for staff time.

8. *Reach out for help.* Given that the transition to staffing can be difficult, get some support and help from outside of your organization. Find another nonprofit that has been through the process. Ask them what they learned and if they'd be willing to give you ideas. Or find a person in the community who can act as a coach or facilitator for important meetings or decisions.

## *Summary*

Hiring a first staff person is one of the biggest steps your organization can take. Negotiating between the extremes of board domination and board abandonment is particularly tough. But even though the transition is difficult, when done for the right reasons and with the necessary attention it can work well. And the benefits to your organization's goals can be well worth the effort. ■

*Dianne Russell is the associate director of the Institute for Conservation Leadership in Washington, D.C.*

*Fundraising is borrowing phrases from boxing, football, war and, sometimes, seduction.*

# Clean Up Your Language

*by Kim Klein*

A few weeks ago I was talking with the development director of a medium-sized organization with a budget of $500,000. He is reputed to be competent and efficient at his job. He is warm and friendly and I believe he probably is good at many parts of his work. However, he used language that I found offensive and degrading to the process of fundraising. Had he been the only person ever to use such language, I would not take the time to write an editorial about it. But I find that the language he used has crept into the vocabularies of a lot of fundraising professionals and even into the vocabulary of board members, activists and grassroots staffpeople.

The offensive words and phrases are:

"We could hit him up for $1,000."

"Sure's she got the money. Just stick the knife in a little further. Tell her some sob story. She'll cough up big time."

"I just kept pounding him with the facts until he surrendered. I got $200 out of him."

"We're in the foreplay phase. I'm working her up slowly and I hope she'll give big."

I am sure you get the idea. Fundraising is borrowing phrases from boxing, football, war and, sometimes, seduction. But donors are not enemies or objects. They are not to be tricked out of their money or coerced or "seduced" into giving. Some of these phrases are in common use, such as "Hit her up for a gift." Some are more obviously offensive, such as "Twist the knife." All reflect a hostile mentality that is demeaning for both the donors and the solicitors.

Asking for money for a worthy cause ought to be a dignified interaction between the parties involved. One party—the solicitor—presents the cause, answers questions and asks for the money. The other party—the prospect—gives or doesn't give. But no one is physically hurt or defeated or rejected by the outcome. One person says what he or she wants and the other says what he or she is willing to do. It is simple and straightforward and, in the scheme of things, no big deal.

*Asking for money for a worthy cause ought to be a dignified interaction.*

When I have challenged people on their language, many have said, "It's just a saying, it doesn't mean anything." But language means a lot; it reflects how a person thinks and how they relate to other people.

So let's make a New Year's resolution to clean up our language. In doing so, we will return to the values that motivate us to do this work in the first place—compassion, respect for the rights and well being of all living things, and the firm belief that the world can be a better place because of our work. ■

# Free Software

Many computer software companies donate computer software to nonprofit organizations. Here is a partial list of companies that provide free software to all types of nonprofits. For application forms, contact the company's corporate giving or public affairs department. For a more comprehensive list of companies that award computer software and hardware grants, see *The Nonprofit Computer Sourcebook,* published by The Taft Group, (800) 877-Taft, and *The Directory of Computer and High Technology Grants,* published by Research Grant Guides, (407) 795-6129.

Some other companies with equipment and software grant programs include: *Atari Corp.,* Sunnyvale, CA; *Control Data Corp.,* Minneapolis, MN; *Data General Corp.,* Westboro, MA; *Digital Equipment Corp.,* Maynard, MA; *Hewlett-Packard Co.,* Palo Alto, CA; *IBM Corporation,* Purchase, NY; *Lotus Development,* Cambridge, MA; *Motorola, Inc.,* Schaumburg, IL; *NCR Corporation,* Dayton, OH; *Pitney Bowes Inc.,* Stamford, CT; *Prime Computer, Inc.,* Natick, MA. ◘

| Contact | Available Software |
|---|---|
| *Borland International*<br>1800 Green Hills Road<br>Scotts Valley, CA 95067<br>(408) 439-1800 | dBase III Plus<br>Base IV<br>Sprint<br>Framework IV<br>Quatro Pro<br>Paradox 3.5 |
| *Broderbund*<br>17 Paul Drive<br>San Rafael, CA 94903<br>(415) 382-4400 | SoftwareCompanion<br>Graphics Lib.<br>Kid Pix<br>PrintShop |
| *Claris Corporation*<br>5201 Patrick Henry Drive<br>Santa Clara, CA 95052<br>(408) 987-7000 | FileMaker Pro<br>MacDraw<br>MacWriter<br>AppleWorks 3.0<br>Appleworks |
| *Gifts in Kind America*<br>700 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 300<br>Alexandria, VA 22314<br>(703) 836-2121 | Lotus<br>Microsoft<br>Computer Associates<br>Egghead Discount<br>Aldus |

| Contact | Available Software |
|---|---|
| *Microsoft Corporation*<br>One Microsoft Way<br>Redmond, WA 98052<br>(206) 882-8080 | Word<br>Works<br>Excel<br>MS DOS |
| *Novell, Inc.*<br>890 Ross Drive<br>Sunnyvale, CA 94089<br>(408) 747-4048 | Netware Lite<br>Netware 386 |
| *Software Publishing Professional*<br>3165 Kiser Road<br>Santa Clara, CA 95051<br>(408) 450-7331 | Write<br>Professional Write Plus<br>Harvard Projects Manager<br>Professional File<br>Harvard Graphics 3.0 |
| *The Software Toolworks*<br>60 Leveroni Court<br>Novato, CA 94949<br>(415) 883-3000, ext. 520 | Multimedia PC<br>CD ROM |

Information compiled by: *Nonprofit Management Strategies*

# Book Reports

*United Arts Fundraising in the 1990s*
James L. Shanahan
American Council for the Arts
1 East 53rd St.
New York, NY 10022
$14.95 plus $4.00 shipping

*United Arts Fundraising in the 1990s* by James L. Shanahan, a new study funded by the Knight Foundation and released by the American Council for the Arts, provides compelling evidence that united arts fundraising does increase total funding for the arts, at a minimum greater than the rate of inflation.

In addition to increasing total funding support for the arts, Shanahan further concludes that an "effective united arts fund helps to expand the resources available to the arts rather than potentially forcing arts organizations to compete for a greater share of a fixed pool of community resources in the form of donations and volunteers."

*United Arts Fundraising in the 1990s* examines the experiences of five communities with united arts funds, communities as diverse in their arts system approach as they are in their structures and experiences. The five communities are Cincinnati, OH; Charlotte/Mecklenburg, NC; Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN; Seattle/Tacoma, WA; and Charleston, WV.

United arts funds exist in 66 communities, of which 61 are members of the Coalition of United Arts. Figures from the Coalition's annual survey indicate that the constituent communities raised a combined total of $87.4 million in 1992. Shanahan points out that the United States has more than 200 urban areas with between 50,000 and 500,000 people that potentially could benefit from the information in the study.

*United Arts Fundraising in the 1990s* underscores the American Council for the Arts' commitment to fostering informed decision making. It is the first of three publications scheduled by the arts policy program for 1993.

Dr. James L. Shanahan is the Director of the Center for Urban Studies at the University of Akron. He is an urban economist specializing in cultural economics. Shanahan's many studies focus on the economics of public support of the arts and the role of amenities in economic development.

Illustrated with thirteen in-depth tables and charts. For credit card orders call (800) 321-4510. ■

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The presidential election of 1992 offered a striking look at the new ways media will be used in politics. While social change advocates may not be invited to play saxophone on Arsenio Hall or to chat with Larry King, they still can take advantage of the wide open field of mass communications.

In order to arm organizations with the know-how they need to craft a successful media campaign, the Washington, D.C.-based Benton Foundation has produced a series of guides, called "Strategic Communications for Nonprofits." Following is a summary of each of the nine books:

### Media Advocacy: Reframing Public Debate

This handbook shows nonprofit organizations how to recognize a good story and how to market it to print and broadcast outlets. It details the basic principles of media advocacy and illustrates a variety of strategies for gaining access to the media and for framing the debate. Also included is "A Case for Paid Media," a special report on the benefits of paid media, with examples from public interest campaigns.

### Talk Radio: Who's Talking? Who's Listening?

Talk radio can be used beyond simply responding to issues as they come up. Radio producers often are eager for controversial information with a personal hook, to get listeners involved. This report surveys the problems and innovative strategies in using talk radio to air your agenda and to build recognition for your group.

### Op-Eds: A Cost-Effective Strategy for Advocacy

Placing opinion pieces in your local newspaper is an inexpensive tool that should be part of an overall media campaign. This bulletin outlines how to develop an op-ed strategy, including guidelines for writing and placing the articles. It presents case studies of successful op-ed campaigns that effectively shaped public policy debates.

### Strategic Media: Designing a Public Interest Campaign

Too many nonprofits operate as if mailing press releases and holding occasional news conferences are effective means of rallying public support. Good media coverage is achieved only through sophisticated strategies, including carefully crafted press lines, targeting of reporters, and examining polling data and research to determine how best to frame the issues.

This workbook can be used as a blueprint to get started or as a source of new ideas for those who already have a working media relationship.

**Electronic Networking for Nonprofits: A Guide to Getting Started**

This guide is designed for nonprofit groups who want to improve communications with other organizations and exchange information electroncially. It describes the technical basics of electronic networking and outlines criteria for choosing a network.

**Voice Programs: Telephone Technologies and Applications**

Voice programs can help nonprofits increase public outreach, motivate volunteers, leverage fund raising campaigns, improve services to the public and target grassroots organizing efforts. This publication offers techniques and advice for planning, implementing and managing a variety of voice programs. Included is "A Guide to Telemedia" which describes how to take advantage of toll-free 800 or pay-per-call 900 number telephone services.

**Cable Access: Community Channels and Productions for Nonprofits**

This handbook has been designed to encourage nonprofit organizations to take advantage of the cable access facilities in your community. It presents a framework for understanding and using cable access, provides tips on getting involved and offers case studies of effective nonprofit uses of cable access for public education, community organizing, fund raising and issue advocacy.

**Using Video: The VCR Revolution for Nonprofits**

The new realities of increasing VCR penetration and dramatically decreasing cost of videotape duplication are explored. The report summarizes the findings of a survey of how nonprofits are using video, particularly in communicating directly with members. It highlights successful examples of video distribution by nonprofits to market their image and issues, expand their audience and increase their financial base. An essay, "Environmental Battles and the Video Revolution," describes how video can be used to organize around environmental issues.

*To order, contact the Benton Foundation, 1710 Rhode Island Ave., NW, 4th fl., Washington, DC 20036. $50.00 for the set or $7.00 each, except for "Strategic Media," which is $10.* ◘

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