



THE FUNDERS FORUM

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President's Message

Greetings LFA members!

A new year is upon us, and with the new year always comes new changes and opportunities for us in the wonderful world of fundraising!

I am both excited and humbled to be the new President of the Lakehead Fundraising Association. I joined this group when I first began my role with Children's Centre Foundation Thunder Bay, and it has been an invaluable source of information, resources and networks; I hope you feel the same!

I would like to thank all of you for being a part of this association – it always impresses me how so many fundraisers from a variety of sectors can work so well together and improve our community, each in our own unique way. I would also like to thank our fantastic Executive Committee members for their time and dedication: Gail Kromm and Christy Renner for continuing their respective roles as Secretary and Membership and Communications Coordinator; Lisa Cashin, our Past President; Charlene Snow, our Treasurer; and our newest team additions: Gloria Richardson, Vice President; and Rhonda Harrison, Program Coordinator. Thank you for your support of LFA.

I am looking forward to providing the best possible opportunities, professional development and experiences for each and every member of LFA. I am always open to feedback and comments, so please feel free to contact me if you have any great ideas or questions/concerns.

Best Regards,

Laura Meisner



Inside this issue

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <i>President's message</i> | 1 |
| <i>The Volunteer-Donor Connection</i> | 2 |
| <i>Fundraising Humor</i> | 3 |

Upcoming General Meeting

Next Lakehead Fundraising Association

General Meeting

May 27, 2010

12:00 to 1:30

More details in May's newsletter

The Volunteer-Donor Connection

Pre-publication excerpt from the manuscript of the 3rd revised edition of *From the Top Down: The Executive Role in Successful Volunteer Involvement* by Susan J. Ellis, © 2010, Energize, Inc.

As an executive, you do have to be concerned with the funding to keep your doors open. So while I have just stressed the importance of engaging volunteers for the benefits they bring as volunteers, consider this perspective as well: A check never writes itself. All contributions of money or valuables come from *people* who are *voluntarily* demonstrating their support of your cause. This implies a strong correlation between those who give time (to whom we refer as *volunteers*) and those who give money (to whom we refer as *donors*). Would your consideration of volunteers change if you were to start calling them “time donors”? Or speak of “fund raising” as “people raising”?

Do you regularly ask for a report on how many volunteers in your organization are also financial donors and vice versa? If not, why not? If yes, have you analyzed what this means? Are the databases for these two groups integrated or, at least, accessible to both volunteer administration and development staff?...

Asking Volunteers to Give Money, Too

Periodically the debate surfaces over whether it's appropriate to solicit money from volunteers. Those who are uncomfortable doing so have a sense that this might be “double dipping.” Despite research showing that people who volunteer are more likely to also give cash than uninvolved people, the reluctance to ask for money from volunteers keeps the development office and the volunteer resources office operating in distinctly separate spheres.

One stereotype is that volunteers don't have a lot of money. This, of course, is only understood for frontline volunteers, since those engaged in things like planning the gala dinner are conversely assumed to be wealthy enough to pay for anything requested of them. Beware all assumptions!...

But let's get back to “it just doesn't feel right” to ask faithful volunteers to give money, too. An organization can—and probably should—offer volunteers the opportunity to donate funds, but it has to be done in a way that is clearly different from soliciting people who are not already actively working for you. The key is to start by acknowledging that the prospective donor is a volunteer. It's true “recognition” to know this important fact. Nothing is worse than a volunteer receiving the same mailing sent to everyone, as if his or her service is invisible. Try the following sort of appeal:

We are so appreciative of the time and talent you share with us throughout the year as a volunteer. Thank you!

Please know that your volunteer contribution is of great value in many ways. Volunteers ensure that we can spend every dollar we have on needed services and still do more. We also know that giving us your time comes with various costs/ expenses to you personally. But because you are so familiar with our work, you know that it takes both participation and money to accomplish our mission.

How can we ask strangers to contribute funds and not give you the chance to decide if you want to add a check to the ways in which you already help us?

Of course, there's no obligation to give money. It's completely your choice.

Done properly, such a solicitation can (and should) feel like a thank you. Possibly this request for a donation should be sent only once a year, without follow up. The point is to include volunteers in your fundraising efforts, but not to guilt them into writing a check.

With April 1st just around the corner, we thought that it would be a good time for some fundraising humor



Top Ten Reasons for Becoming a Fund Raiser

Edited by Cindy Chamberlin, Ronald A. Knott, et. al.

From *Accent on Humor book set: The Wit and Wisdom of Philanthropy*

Recorded at Fund Raising Day in New York
by Steven M. Bernstein

- # 10-We were inspired by a Sally Struthers infomercial.
- # 9-For the glamour and the profit sharing plan.
- # 8-We take rejection well.
- # 7-What else can a liberal arts graduate do?
- # 6-We need to change jobs every 1.7 years.
- # 5-I thought if I raised money in the capital campaign, they'd name the building after me.
- # 4-We can use the word "athon" after almost any verb.
- # 3-We want everyone to have an opportunity to become our boss.
- # 2-Dinner at the Waldorf twice a week.
- # 1-My parole officer said that would qualify as community service.

Excerpted from *Accent on Humor book set: The Wit and Wisdom of Philanthropy*, Edited by Cindy Chamberlin, Ronald A. Knott, et. al., Philanthropic Service for Institutions, 1992 and 1996



Not sure how to use
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