

# OCSS News & Notes

DIRECT MAIL FUND RAISING TOPICS & EMERGENCY SERVICES NOTES

Volume Number 10

[www.ocsmail.com](http://www.ocsmail.com)

April 2009

## Treat Donors Like Members

By: Mary Woke

What do you do when you get a donation? You deposit it with other donations you received. What then? Do you just forget about the donor? Do you even remember his or her name or where they live? Is it important? If you ever want them to donate again – you better believe it is! So how do you remember them when there are so many?



Just like Self Magazine remembers me when my subscription is about to expire. They send a notice, and then a reminder, and another – and they keep “selling” their magazine by reminding me what I liked about it – and they give me deals on the subscription! When I finally sent in my order – I got a thank you letter. They invited me to get on their web site for even more opportunities. The editor of the magazine may not know my name – but “they” do know I am a member. (And there are many similar member related organizations: AARP, Wild Life, National Geographic, The VA, various Universities, etc., all membership type organizations. Many with Membership or Gift Clubs, i.e. Club names that have predetermined levels of giving, each with a specific name and specific recognition component, etc.)

So you may want to think or treat your donors like members. Think of a donation as a member’s yearly dues. If they do not donate the following year, personalize a follow up letter, reminding them of their previous donation. If they still do not respond, remind them again next year, or even sooner.

Sooner is usually better, if you want them back!

Explain how they helped your cause, and why it is important for them to donate again. Acknowledge each donation with a thank you card or letter, especially if it is a more generous donation. You may even want to send a newsletter (that does not focus on donations) to your donors at another time of the year (or periodically throughout the year) to keep them abreast of your accomplishments and goals. Those high-end donors should receive even more personal attention, with a phone call or personal thank you letter from an officer of your organization, hand signed. Think of some large organizations, like Ducks Unlimited or the Chesapeake Bay Foundation – you don’t just donate, you belong!

## Success Stories

By: Mary Woke

Something I read recently was “Donors are People who give to People to help People”. Somewhere else I read: “People like to read about People”. If these two statements are true, and if you think about them they do make sense, then don’t you think Donors would like to read about how their efforts helped People?

To inspire someone to give, you need passion, but to keep them giving, you need success stories. If you are a fire, rescue or EMS department without a success story, you need to seriously re-evaluate your goals! When preparing to write your flier, newsletter or getting the info together to send us, include your success stories. Along with listing items you purchased with donations; enlighten your reader with how that item was used to save a life or help someone out of a bad situation. Share your success story! Without them, it may not have been a success.

7501 Village Road • Sykesville, Maryland 21784-7427

(410) 781-6435 • 1-800-877-4627 • Fax: (410) 795-7261 • E-mail: [ocsinc@ocsmail.com](mailto:ocsinc@ocsmail.com) • [www.ocsmail.com](http://www.ocsmail.com)

## Philanthropy is Resilient

In a fundraising newsletter I was reading I came across the phrase, "Philanthropy is Resilient". As I review the success rates many of our clients' enjoyed over the past year, I have to agree with this concept. Some non-profits have seen a decrease in funds and donors, but that is to be expected as the economy has hit some folks a little harder than others. Even in, and sometimes especially in, a hard economy people come forward to help people. Not everyone has the passion, skill or time to volunteer, but that does not mean they don't want to help.

When donations drop a bit, the worst thing an organization can do is panic and stop asking for donations. A direct mail fund drive packet is not a mandatory invoice for payment, rather it is an information packet to explain your cause and give people an opportunity to take action. They will not support your cause faster next year, simply because you did not ask for a donation this year. If you want to cut costs, talk to us about alternatives. We can analyze your donation history and suggest target-mailing options, a more basic mailing packet or a mix of the two to reduce the risk of losing donors.

Instead of just soliciting funds, this may be a good time to focus on making more people aware of your organization's accomplishments and needs through a *newsletter* format. Retaining existing and cultivating your donors can be just as important as asking for financial gifts. Even if the economy has them down today, the more familiar they are with your organization, the more likely they are to donate more in the future.



By: Mary Woke

## Just for Fun



Little Johnny's at it again.....

A new teacher was trying to make use of her psychology courses. She started her class by saying, 'Everyone who thinks they're stupid, stand up!' After a few seconds, Little Johnny stood up. The teacher said, 'Do you think you're stupid, Little Johnny?' 'No, ma'am, but I hate to see you standing there all by yourself!'

The math teacher saw that little Johnny wasn't paying attention in class. She called on him and said, 'Johnny! What are 2 and 4 and 28 and 44?' Little Johnny quickly replied, 'NBC, FOX, ESPN and the Cartoon Network!'

## Word Rearrange

**DORMITORY:** When you rearrange the letters you get: DIRTY ROOM

**PRESBYTERIAN:** When you rearrange these letters: BEST IN PRAYER

**ASTRONOMER:** Look what you get when you rearrange these: MOON STARER

**DESPERATION:** This may not be the best fate for this rearrangement: A ROPE ENDS IT

**THE MORSE CODE:** When you rearrange this group you get: HERE COME DOTS

**SLOT MACHINES:** When you rearrange this of Letters: CASH LOST IN ME

## Quick & Easy Recipe

### Hot Dog Noodle Casserole

Prep: 20 minutes • Cook: 1 hr. 5 minutes



*This will Yield: 6 servings.*

Ingredients ...

- 1 (10-ounce) box frozen broccoli
- 1 (8-ounce) package egg noodles
- 1 (10.75-ounce) can cream of mushroom soup
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1 pound beef hot dogs, sliced
- 4 slices cooked bacon, crumbled

Preparation ...

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Cook broccoli according to package directions; set aside. Cook egg noodles according to package directions, drain, and set aside.
3. In a 9-by 13-inch baking dish, spread broccoli evenly across the bottom and top with egg noodles. In a large mixing bowl, combine soup, milk, sour cream, cheese, and hot dogs. Mix well and pour mixture over noodles. Cover dish with foil and bake until heated through and bubbly, about 45 minutes. Sprinkle top with bacon and bake just until bacon is heated, about 5 to 10 minutes.

## Shows

Thanks to everyone who stopped by our booth at past shows, so far this year. We appreciate your business and enjoy seeing you. Here is a list of shows we have scheduled for the remainder of 2009:

May 8th – 9th  
Delmarva Association  
Lewes Fire Department - Lewes, DE

May 9th  
South Carroll Business Association  
Liberty H.S. – Eldersburg, MD

May 15th – 17th  
Fire Expo  
Harrisburg, PA

June 15th – 17th  
MSFA Convention  
Ocean City, MD

June 17th – 19th  
Southeastern Assoc of Fire Chiefs  
Myrtle Beach, SC

July 15th – 18th  
SCSFA Conference  
Myrtle Beach, SC

July 23rd – 25th  
Firehouse Expo  
Baltimore, MD

August  
VSFA Convention  
Hampton, VA

September  
NJSFA Convention  
Wildwood, NJ



Please stop in and say HI to us at one of our next shows. We always enjoy speaking with you and your staff!

# Keep The Faith!

By: Don Stoetzer

I feel we have seen some dramatic efforts by the government and others to make the economic situation better, but only time will tell what will work and what won't? So for now, what we do know for sure is that for certain sections of the country and certain people, times are tough. I know that in our last two "E-mail Blast" Newsletters I included articles that dealt with poor economic conditions and fundraising efforts. I feel these current conditions warrant even more focus on this topic.

Using some of our actual experiences from our vast client database, featured information from various philanthropy magazines and their professional authors, along with some specific input by direct mail guru Mal Warwick in his article on *Fundraising in Tough Times*, Spring 2009 ... lets review some points to consider when organizing your next fundraising effort(s).



1. ***If it "ain't" broken don't fix it.*** Innovation and testing new ideas to generate or cultivate new donors is important, but during economic downturns it is generally not the best time to invest or promote new programs. For your organization analyze and continue what has been working for you. Strengthen your contacts with your existing donors. Spend time reviewing those solicitations that have worked best in the past and look at what times of the year that have produced the heavier responses. Stick with the tried and true approaches.

2. ***Renew Your Passion.*** It is time that you look within and build more reasons for why your mission deserves assistance from others. Mr. Warwick mentions, "Money doesn't materialize. It has to be earned." When times are stressed this point becomes even more obvious. People want to know during these times what you are doing to help your benefactors ... everybody is having some difficulties ... so don't concentrate on *your* problems, take the moment to *explain what you are doing to help them and others.*

3. ***Spend More Effort on Generous Donors.*** I think everyone has heard or understands the 80/20 rule – basically most things in life, i.e. effort, reward, output are generally not distributed evenly. It is a fact that some contribute more than others and some more often than others. It is never a good idea to treat all your donors or for that matter your complete database (i.e. donors and potential donors) in the same manner. Now is the time to drive this point home. You want to focus or segment *some* of your campaigns on the middle to upper ends of your donor base. You also want to incorporate or weight the frequency of their donations. (At OCS we maintain all of this data for our clients.) You should now consider targeting appeals to those groups that will have a greater propensity to contribute. This will also help to reduce your overall expenses.

4. ***Use that History.*** If you have the information on file, don't sit on it, use it. At OCS we have elaborate systems that maintain all the information, trends and history on your donors. This may not be the same for some organizations, but I'm sure that you know who gave what, recently. During these times the use of the generic "Dear Donor" letters may need to be shelved or let us say used less for a while. When you know how much a donor has given and how frequent, then incorporate that in your appeal. If the donor knows, you know a little about him or her, it is much better then being completely generic or static with all your donors, i.e. listing the same suggested dollar amounts for all and having all your pieces addressed to "Dear Friend" -- be more personal and lets start using that history.

5. ***On-line Presence.*** For those that already have a Web Site, try to keep it up to date. If at all possible, the site should have an outlet for receiving donations. But in addition, the site is also there to:

---

1) Inform the public about your mission and even more importantly show how it helps the community. 2) Provide the opportunity for participants to take part in your mission or volunteer. 3) To reinforce or support appeals that have been sent. 4) Attract younger supporters' interest. For those of you that may not have a site, on today's market a simple layout can generally be set-up fairly easy. If nothing else just create one page that gives your name, address, phone number, etc. along with some information about you and a couple pictures. You want something to appear, if someone "Googles" you.

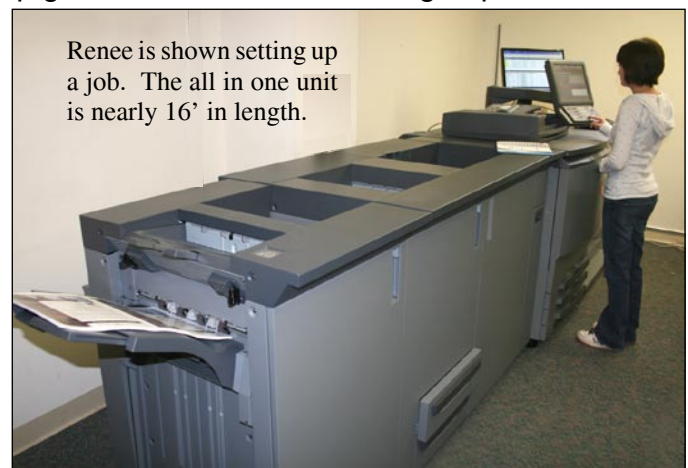
6. **Cut Costs with a Scalpel, Not an Ax.** In many businesses when times are rough, what is the first thing many cut? You know the answer, Advertising! Why not, it is not part of the physical operation – so lets cut it. So what happens? People don't read or hear about you, they don't get any specials ... so what do they do? They go somewhere else that talks about *their* services. If you want your business or *your* organization to continue, you must raise funds. And you can't raise funds if you don't "advertise" or *solicit*. But yet, you know that expenses are more of a factor during these times, than in times of prosperity. We have already gone over a few points to help you place your dollars where there is the biggest bang for your buck. But if you have to cut more consider some outreach programs or just cut back a little; if it needs to be done - now is the time to do it. You may also want to postpone a couple purchases you had planned. The point is, do not shrink from the task of mortgaging (or investing in) the fate of your future donors. You need to continue to foster and communicate with your donor base. If not, that base will shrink and when times start to recover you will be in a world of hurt!

7. **Donors Need TLC.** Your donors need to know you care! Many donate because they share in the organization's values; they feel you do make a difference and they want to be part of that; they know that the funds are used wisely; they know someone that was helped or they were helped by your efforts; and various other hot buttons. If all of a sudden information stops flowing and there is no feedback, they are then left in the dark! They may start to lose confidence in the organization and/or its leaders. No contact also means no appreciation and a loss of connection to the organization. So if that donor does not get that TLC they will feel deprived or disconnected and seek other avenues for their affections, i.e. donations!

Fundraising is very hard work. You must entice a person to give money away and in most cases for no physical reward. And it surely does not get any easier in times of scarcity. You want to insure that in these tougher times that you continue programs that will help preserve future growth and still provide income. I hope these points have given you some food for thought!

## New Equipment - Helps Production

Besides our mail inserting equipment, high speed on-line & ink jet printers, bindery units, three two-color presses, we have a color document printer. To keep pace with our clients' ever increasing requests for more full color pieces, heavier print stocks and more bound booklets we up-graded. Our new full color digital printer is faster, produces more brilliant colors, handles heavier stocks, produces collated bounded booklets as a single operation and everything is tied on-line to our graphic design software. The system also greatly expands our variable data capabilities. We have always handled personalized pieces for our clients. But now, we can not only personalize the letter with the specific address, but through special coding we can direct certain segments of the mailing to obtain specific pictures, have the person's name embedded in the graphics and much more. If you want to know more, just call or the next time you are talking with our Graphics department ask them to give you an overview.



Renee is shown setting up a job. The all in one unit is nearly 16' in length.

# Staff Updates

*There has not been any change in our staffing since our last newsletter, so we thought we would take this time to introduce you to a few familiar names. During the production of your job, you may have talked to some of these people who help coordinate various aspects of your direct mail campaign, printing needs, address concerns or system management tasks.*

## Office Manager -

**Audrey Wingo**, controls overseeing the general flow of the office. She focuses on scheduling, sales, general client services, quality control, booking trade shows and complete job coordination. Audrey works especially close with the customer service and sales personnel to assure overall customer satisfaction. She also assists Don, our President & CEO, and if you know Don - that is a job in itself! In the nearly two years with OCS she has been a great addition to our management team.



## Client Services / Sales Support Team -

**Sandy Kohlway, Joanne Galton-Nealon and Tanya Huurman** are all long term employees. They operate together as a team making client follow-up calls and emails, forwarding packet ideas and samples, initiating the charitable client agreement data, if needed. They assist with performing client meetings and working with you to determine your organization's current needs. They receive your mailing packet information and put your job into production. This valuable team also supports the outside sales staff by helping at trade shows, sending quote packets and samples and



making follow-up calls, answering questions of potential clients. Our clients often express their appreciation of our friendly staff and Sandy, Joanne and Tanya have played an important role in making OCS number "1" in customer service!

## Graphics Department -

**Jim Timberman** and **Renee Sharp** are the main Graphic Artists at OCS assisting with the layout and design of the mailing packet or other printed materials, offering expertise and professional suggestions. They work with the clients, sending



a mock-up before going to press and coordinating any last minute changes. Jim is our lead associate, starting with OCS in 2000. In addition to saying "Great Job"

to both of them, we would like to congratulate Jim. His wife, Erin, is due with their first child in August of 2009. No doubt Jim will make a great Daddy – Congratulations to Jim & Erin!

## List Maintenance Coordinator -

**Marsha Van Pelt** leads our Address List Maintenance department, coordinating with our clients to develop and update their mailing lists. Marsha and her team will contribute helpful updating suggestions and options. She works closely with her team of four associates to assure accurate mailing lists and the entry of various donor history data. If your address list needs updating, feel free to call Marsha to discuss the best approach to use. You will find her friendly, informative and eager to assist you.



*These are just a few of the many important members of our OCS family. They are all in key positions and are ready to assist you with your mailing, printing and fundraising needs. They work together as a team to provide you with consistent quality service!*

Copyright 2001 by Randy Glasbergen.  
www.glasbergen.com



"Potato chips aren't rubbery and blubbery like fat.  
They're crispy and crunchy like lettuce.  
That proves they're diet food!"

## Postscripts

By: Mary Woke

P.S. If your appeal is in a letter format, a postscript can help. A sentence or short paragraph expressing a new fact or thought *related to*, but not necessarily in the body of the letter, should call the reader to action. This action may be the main purpose of the letter (i.e. a donation or special gift), or even an important secondary cause (i.e. recruitment). Keep the postscript short, to the point and easy to read. It can even be in a form of a question.

A few examples:

P.S. Did you know that 100% of your contribution is used locally? By supporting our fund drive, you could be helping to save the life of a loved one, a neighbor – or even your own!

P.S. We are always looking for new members. If you have a few hours a week and would like to serve your community, give us a call. All training is provided free of charge.

P.S. Our Open House is May 1st. Come join us for some fun, demonstrations and refreshments. Take a tour of our station and see how your donations are put to work.



Did you know? You can retrieve archived copies of our OCS News & Notes from our website. Just one more reason to visit [www.ocsmail.com](http://www.ocsmail.com)

## Clients continue to make News

--- *Tigers Help Recovery in Iraq* ---

Over these past years of strife in Iraq, many of our friends and clients have served our country overseas. Here is some positive feedback on one of our contacts, Doctor or Major Freddie Zink. Major Zink is a veterinarian and is with the Powdersville VFD, a client of 18 years and Freddie has been our primary contact during all those years. He has also been with Powdersville since 1972. He recently served in Iraq for six months.

After the initial stages of the Iraq conflict the only tiger in the Baghdad Zoo was killed by a US soldier during an unfortunate incident in 2004. Ever since then the US Department of State and the US military had been trying to replace the tiger. Lt. Col. Robert Sindler, another U.S. Army veterinarian, said groups had tried to bring tigers to the zoo for the past five years, but things just never worked out. Then a turn of fate, two tigers from the Conservator in Mebane, NC looked like they would be a good fit and all the appropriate paperwork finally fell into place.

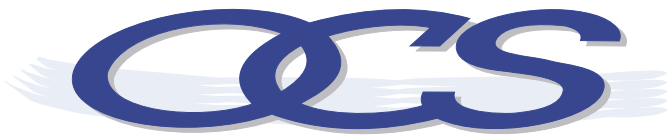
Maj. Zink, Lt. Col. Sindler and others were present to assist with the transport and final disposition of the tigers, Hope & Riley. The tigers are on permanent loan to the Baghdad Zoo, only to be returned if the Zoo could no longer care for them.



Lt. Col. Sindler (left) & Maj. Freddie Zink, who attended Clemson University, hold up a Clemson Tigers flag outside the cage of Hope and Riley



Photos courtesy of Lt. Col. Robert Sindler



7501 Village Road  
Sykesville, Maryland 21784-7427

1-800-877-4627 • Fax: (410) 795-7261

E-mail: ocsinc@ocsmail.com • www.ocsmail.com

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 43  
Sykesville, MD

*FUND RAISING - DIRECT MAIL - COMMERCIAL PRINTING - GRAPHIC DESIGN - SPECIALTY ITEMS*

## *Important Tips and More!*

**GO MAD**  

**Over Promotional Items** 

We offer a variety of items for your company. Promotional items make great gifts for donors, customers and members!

For more information call us at 1-800-877-4627 or visit our website [www.ocsmail.com](http://www.ocsmail.com)