

Opinion



Passing the hat

It's time to coordinate fundraising resources

Money and people are the lifeblood of philanthropy. But the need for more and more dollars - often simply to keep operations running - can preoccupy the nonprofit sector.

Fundraising is fine if you're a big university or an organization that can afford a professional development staff or high-priced consultant. In well-heeled nonprofits, raising money is assumed to be part of the cost of doing business and is part of the mix of daily work.

In Charlotte, the Triangle and Winston-Salem, nonprofits contemplating big capital campaigns can submit their plans to volunteer review boards. The boards offer advice on the campaign itself and help schedule it. They also provide an early-warning system to civic and business leaders whose organizations eventually will be asked to help fund the campaigns.

But what of smaller nonprofits that have to make ends meet just like their larger counterparts but lack the resources or the know-how

to mount sophisticated fundraising efforts?

The reality is that smaller nonprofits must fend for themselves in a poorly regulated marketplace.

In the year ended April 30, 1994, 47 professional solicitors raised \$26.4 million for 325 "sponsor events" in North Carolina.

Sounds great. That's a lot of dollars for charity. The rub is that, on average, just under 40 cents of every one of those dollars raised actually found its way to the nonprofit "sponsor." The solicitors pocketed the remainder.

Some solicitors pocketed nearly 95 cents of every dollar raised. As the *Philanthropy Journal* went to press for this issue, state lawmakers were considering a bill that would require phone solicitors to identify themselves before making a fundraising pitch. The bill also would require a solicitor, if asked by the

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person being solicited, to disclose the percentage of dollars raised that would go to the solicitor.

That's useful information for people to have when they're being solicited. But it still does not help nonprofits handle continuing concerns over fundraising.

The *Journal* has suggested in several recent editorials that North Carolina needs an organization to help connect nonprofits, foundations, government, education and business. Members of our philanthropic community have not learned how to talk to one another, work together, avoid petty feuding or truly support one another.

Some thoughtful people say privately that something akin to a North Carolina Council on Philanthropy would run into powerful opposition from people who like to position themselves as supportive of the nonprofit sector as a whole - but whose true agenda includes

amassing political power within the sector.

In calling for better links between people and organizations, the *Journal* is not suggesting that more bureaucracy alone will set us free. On the contrary, stronger communication and mutual support simply will further each of our individual efforts.

Perhaps a good place to begin is with the pivotal issue of fundraising. Wise heads in the world of nonprofits, foundations and corporate grantmaking ought to be able to marshal the resources and expertise to help small and medium-sized nonprofits navigate the cold and sometimes turbulent waters of fundraising.

In providing such assistance, Tar Heel philanthropy can offer more enlightened stewardship of its collective resources and help nonprofits focus their attentions on providing services rather than on dialing for dollars. And in working together on nonprofits' fundraising needs, we can begin to move in the direction of a more tightly knit philanthropic community.

Ministry and money

Church fundraising a mixed blessing

I recently celebrated the 33rd anniversary of my ordination as a priest. I told my congregation that the church I was ordained into 33 years ago no longer exists.

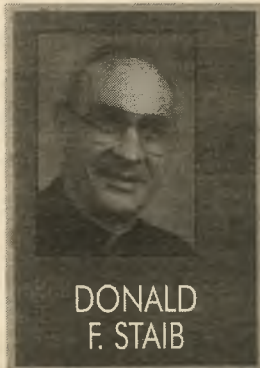
There has been that much change at the church. There also has been a lot of change in our culture. There has been a lot of change in me, too.

When I studied in the seminary in the 1950s, there were no courses on how to raise money. I guess church authorities assumed God and the congregation would provide. I don't remember ever having a thought on the subject while in school.

There was no position in the church called development director. But times have changed: My Diocese hired one a few years ago, and now my parish has hired a development director part-time.

I am most grateful to the person we engaged. He made it possible to go way over the goal for our recent capital drive. As

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DONALD F. STAIB

a result of this success, we will have a new million-dollar building and be able to make needed repairs to our old building. The next task of our development director will be to find ways to increase our weekly offertory.

But I am not yet comfortable with the idea of development directors in the church. It means I have been a failure as a preacher and minister of the Gospel. Having a director of development implies I cannot persuade people from the pulpit that they have a responsibility and a need to give.

I have not been able successfully to convey to people that our response to God for gifts to us is that we in turn must share our talents and treasure with the church and with less fortunate people.

Having a development director brings something else to the church: A professional person who has all the best contemporary worldly wisdom of getting

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Community connection

Reporting on people who do good

When my boss asked me to write a column to mark the end of my tenure at the *Philanthropy Journal*, I thought it would be easy. When I sat down to write it, I found out otherwise. I've learned so much in the past year that the task seemed overwhelming. Unfortunately, my editor knows where I live, and he's been hounding me for the copy. So here goes.

Last year at this time, I thought a foundation went under a house, a fundraiser's sole purpose was interrupting one's dinner, corporate giving was a misnomer and a nonprofit was a failing business. Actually, I knew what a nonprofit was, but I had no idea what an important role nonprofits play in

Katherine Noble spent the past year as the Z. Smith Reynolds-Josephus Daniels Philanthropy News Fellow for the *Philanthropy Journal of North Carolina*. She recently began working as a funding opportunity specialist in the Office of Research Support at Duke University.

North Carolina. So, I've learned a lot of new definitions.

I've also learned a lot about the people, many of them heroes, who give those definitions meaning.

In fact, one of the best things about working at the *Philanthropy Journal* was that I got to know so many caring people who have dedicated their professional lives to helping others. And I got to ask them lots of questions.

I could write my departing words as a journalist about any one of the many people, organizations or conferences I've reported on in the past 12 months. Instead, I'd like to say how lucky the state's nonprofit sector is to have the *Philanthropy Journal*, and how fortunate I've been to be a part of its first year.

When I started at the *Journal* in June 1993, I thought one of its primary functions should be to uncover and expose

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KATHERINE NOBLE

What made the job exciting was helping this struggling sector shape its identity, gain its focus and increase its strength through stories that educate and inform, and sometimes just remind members of the sector that they are doing good.

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An anniversary in print

Connecting people who care

ABOUT CHANGE

Americans enjoy. From the Federalist Papers to the Internet, our ability to talk openly to one another strengthens the American experiment.

Our mission at the *Philanthropy Journal* is to connect North Carolinians who care. Whether they toil in the nonprofit sector or in the commercial marketplace, whether they teach or govern, whether they raise money or give it away, philanthropists can feel alone and overwhelmed. Our job at the *Journal* is to strengthen the community of philanthropy by bringing its members closer together and by reaffirming the value of their work.

In addition to publishing the *Journal* each month, we've tried to fulfill our mission in other ways. We've invited community leaders in Asheville, Charlotte, Winston-Salem,

Greensboro and Wilmington to meet with us in each of those cities to talk about issues and programs there. The idea has been to learn as much as we can about what's going on in philanthropy throughout the state so we can do a better job of reporting on it.

And this fall, we will be sponsoring a statewide conference. Philanthropy '94, which will be held Oct. 21 at the Omni Durham Hotel, will feature speakers and workshops focusing on the issue of stewardship. It also will include presentation of the North Carolina Philanthropy Award to an individual or organization who has made a significant contribution to improving life in our state. The conference, to be held annually, also will give people a chance to meet and talk to one another.

The newspaper that rolls off *The*

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