

# BOARD LINES

A MONTHLY TRAINING NEWSLETTER FROM KEEP TENNESSEE BEAUTIFUL FOR TENNESSEE KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL LOCAL AFFILIATE BOARD MEMBERS



## 2012 GAC in Tennessee Begins March 1st

The 2012 Great American Cleanup (GAC) in Tennessee begins next month, which means Keep Tennessee Beautiful (KTnB) and its affiliates have a chance to extend its streak of achieving 100-percent participation from all 95 counties during GAC to six years in a row.

As we look to extend our streak to six, we want to improve volunteer numbers and demonstrate our impact in more communities.

In 2011, 143,053 volunteers spent 358,240 hours collecting 121,098,794 pounds of litter and debris.

These results were achieved, despite some affiliates (Keep Cleveland/Bradley Beautiful and Keep Greene Beautiful)

dealing with problems created from tornadoes that swept through the state in late April.

KTnB encourages all 95 counties to improve their efforts in 2012.



Image Courtesy of Keep America Beautiful

Make sure to do the following this year:

- Develop new partnerships and acknowledge them on your GAC banner(s)
- Work with new partners to reach new community members
- Create new GAC events

-Take photos of your events, and e-mail them to [emcdavis@memphis.edu](mailto:emcdavis@memphis.edu)

See *2012 GAC* on back



## Raising Funds During Turbulent Times

While painful, the current economic crisis presents an opportunity to do things differently and better when it comes to fundraising. Here are 10 strategies for raising funds in turbulent times.

**1. Fear not!** During the height of the Great Depression, Franklin D. Roosevelt said, the “only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” The same can be said today. In difficult times, people are attracted to leaders and organizations that appear confident and optimistic. Fortunately, there is more reason to be optimistic than you might think. A 40-year (1967 to 2007) study of charitable giving patterns conducted at Indiana University’s Center on Philanthropy found that in years with eight or more months of recession:

- total giving fell an average of only 2.7 percent
- individual giving (80 percent of total giving) declined an average of only 3.9 percent
- foundation giving (about 10 percent of total giving) dropped an average of only 0.1 percent
- corporate giving (5 percent of total giving) fell an average of only 1.6 percent

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These numbers, rather than exaggerated news reports, should guide your planning.

**2. Develop a clear and compelling case for support.**

According to the Giving Institute, “The most important step a charitable organization can take to raise funds during a recession or downturn is to ask people for contributions in a clear and focused manner.” This requires knowing exactly what it is you are raising funds for and determining what makes your organization and your programs different from others – in short, building a case for support that explains why potential donors should support your organization rather than another and why they should do so now. If you have strong numbers to share about the percentages of resources spent directly on programs and the results you’ve achieved, include them.

**3. Teach your board how to raise funds.** No one gets to sit back and watch this storm run its course. Every single board member must give – 100 percent participation in

See *Raising Funds* on back

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### BOTTOM LINE

“There is no better exercise for your heart, than reaching down and helping to lift someone up.” - *Bernard Meltzer*

**Continued from Raising Funds on front**

annual giving should go unsaid – and get. If your board has not been good at fundraising in the past, invest in board education and training. Now is the time to help your board members get over any discomfort with making the ask.

**4. Diversify your fundraising streams.** Just like your investment portfolio, your contributed income should be diverse. Relying too much on one foundation, or one donor could be fatal if that donor jumps ship. Nonprofits need a mix of major donor, foundation, corporation, and event income. If any one funder, donor, or event is responsible for more than 20 percent of your philanthropic support, you are at risk. Your fundraising strategy should include a mix of benefactors and fundraising methods.

**5. Keep your top donors very close.** Fundraising has always mirrored the old 80/20 rule – 80 percent of your income comes from 20 percent of your donors. Can your board name your organization’s top 20 percent donors? How do you engage your top 20 percent? Do they feel

**Continued from 2012 GAC on front**

For more information on how you can get involved in a GAC event, please call (888) 862-5326. Information will also be available online at [www.ktnb.org](http://www.ktnb.org) soon.



*Picture Courtesy of Lynsey Richardson*  
**Keep Union County Beautiful** volunteers drag an old barrel from an illegal dump site during the 2011 Great American Cleanup (GAC) in Tennessee. Tennessee volunteers cleaned a total of 205 illegal dump sites during last year’s GAC.

**StopLitter™**  
**TENNESSEE’S HAD ENOUGH**  
Sponsored by TDOT and Keep Tennessee Beautiful

**Need StopLitter gear? Click here!**

Keep Tennessee Beautiful’s mission is to educate and rally Tennesseans to take responsibility for improving their community environments through litter prevention, beautification and waste reduction. Located at The University of Memphis, Extended Programs Division, KTnB is sponsored by the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

properly stewarded? Now is the time to keep the top 20 percent very, very close.

Board members and staff must work together to make highly personalized requests to individuals and grantmakers. This includes visits, telephone calls, and handwritten correspondence. Thank them for their past contributions, let them know of the accomplishments they have made possible, tell them what you are doing to deal with the crisis, and explain why the case for giving remains compelling.

**6. Do not forget your small donors.** Build the wealth of your organization through small donors. Though the unemployment rates continue to increase, most Americans are employed and have the same income they did a year ago. They are in a position to give. Make personal contact with as many of your small donors as possible. They are not used to the attention; they will appreciate it and, if asked, may increase the size of their gifts.

**7. Revisit your planned giving program.** Very few nonprofits have an aggressive bequest program. More than 80 percent of planned gifts are bequests. Many large donors are short on cash flow now but they have assets, which they give away at death. Colleges and universities get 60 percent of million-dollar and above bequests. Why? Because they ask. Start asking!

**8. Reintroduce yourself to your lapsed donors.** Most nonprofits have a large number of lapsed donors. It is infinitely easier to get a lapsed donor to reinvest than to find a new donor. Many donors lapse because you do not steward them properly or they fall between the cracks when staff turn over. Have your board, staff, and key volunteers carefully examine your lapsed donor file and develop a strategy to reach out and reengage them.

**9. Increase your online presence.** If there is a lesson to be learned from the 2008 presidential election, it is this: It’s time to take the Internet seriously when it comes to fundraising. It is the future of philanthropy. Make sure your website is lively, interactive, and includes a “Donate Now” button. And if you have not already, start conversations and develop relationships with people interested in your cause through venues such as FaceBook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

**10. Spread the word.** If you ever needed your board members to be out in the community spreading the word about the meaningful work your organization does, it is now. Turn them into storytellers. The more your community members know about your organization and see your name, the more likely they are to contribute to your cause. And do not be afraid to acknowledge the ways in which the economy is affecting your ability to fulfill your mission.

Information courtesy of [www.boardsource.org](http://www.boardsource.org)

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