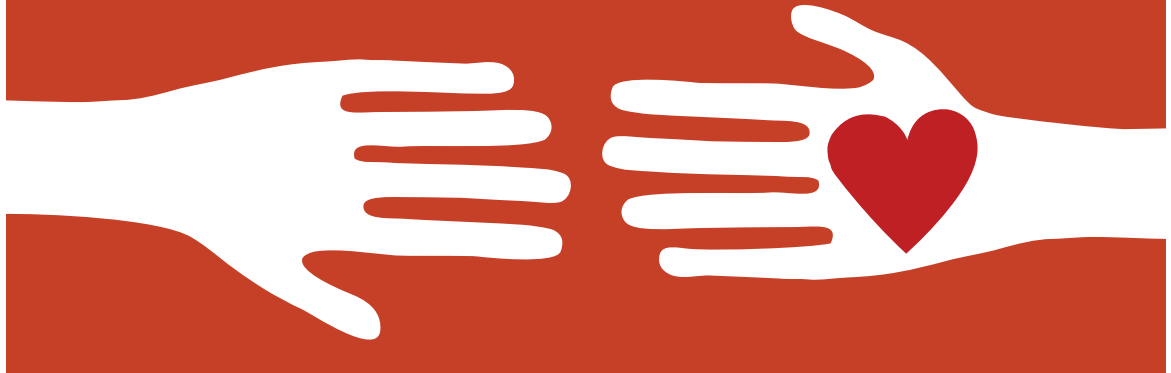


A season of giving...

Giving back, giving thanks!



What better time of year than November to pause and reflect on our good fortune. No matter where you turn, the need for a helping hand seems to be greater than ever. From feeding the hungry to clean water, animal shelters to health issues, there is no end to the number of causes worth supporting.

There's the *marketing with meaning* angle that many of us are engaged in through our employers. Businesses large and small understand the value of integrating their charitable giving activities into their strategic marketing plans. It generates good public relations and boosts employee morale. And research shows that consumers often make purchasing decisions based on these types of activities, and local officials often are influenced by the degree to which a company is involved in a community. Starbucks' "I'm In" campaign is a great example. It offered customers a free coffee beverage if they pledged five volunteer hours to their local community. The company raised 1.2 million committed hours in less than five days, and countless local charities benefitted.

But we thought a brief departure from "business as usual" might make for an interesting segue to the holiday season. For many of us in the marketing communications field, our individual time and talents are every bit as valuable to charitable organizations as our treasure. We offer a sampling of some worthy causes that are meaningful to us at Asset Communications, with the hope of inspiring ways that you can participate on a personal level.

THE STATE OF GIVING

According to a June 2010 report by *Giving USA*, a publication of Giving USA Foundation™, researched and written by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, corporate giving has been in decline since 2005, when it stood at \$15.8 billion in inflation-adjusted dollars. The organization's research reveals that giving dropped 3.6% in 2009 — this on the heels of a very challenging 2008 that saw contributions fall nearly 10%.

GIVING LOCALLY

When the Park City Foundation was established three years ago, Trisha Worthington, Executive Director, notes there were no other community foundations in the state. She's been educating local residents, other non-profit organizations, and local government and philanthropists about the benefits of community foundations — one of the fastest growing sectors of philanthropy in the United States — ever since.

If you want to make an impact in the place where you work and live, a community foundation may be your best source to turn to for guidance. "Our mission is broader than that of a non-profit organization," Trisha explains. "We promote philanthropy and partner with the nonprofit community to strengthen the greater Park City region. We look at the community as a whole, bringing together a wide range of diverse resources in an inclusive way." In addition to making grants that advance charitable activities, they also identify current and emerging issues, channel resources to address community needs, and help the region prepare for the future.

According to the Council on Foundations, community foundations serve tens of thousands of donors, administer more than \$31 billion in charitable funds, and address the core concerns of nearly 700 communities. "We are really catalysts," Trisha says. "We build and strengthen our community by harnessing the resources, interests and priorities of the community and non-profits alike. And we enable those with philanthropic interests to effectively support the issues they care about." Trisha tells of a family that lost a young son in a skiing accident, for example. Through the foundation, they are able to honor his memory by providing helmets to a local charity to prevent sports-related head injuries.

"By pooling funds," she says, "our asset development efforts have a greater local impact. Our grant making services help families make appropriate charitable gifts, and through our community leadership programs, our broad mission enables us to build relations and tackle problems effectively." If you'd

like to find a community foundation in your area, go to: <http://www.communityfoundations.net/page14122.html> and follow the prompts.

LIGHTING UP THE HOLIDAYS WITH HOSPICE OF THE TWIN CITIES

For anyone who has experienced the compassionate and tireless work of a hospice organization, you know how meaningful and comforting their services can be to families — especially at the end of life. Diane Hallock knows. A long-time friend and client of Asset Communications, Diane, Communications Director for Jeffrey Slocum and Associates — a Minneapolis-based consulting firm serving the institutional investment community — regularly contributes marketing communications skills to the **Hospice of the Twin Cities**, where her mother spent the last months of her life. But her volunteer work encompasses so much more than that.

"In 2007 as the holidays approached, I wondered what I could possibly buy my mother for Hanukkah," Diane recalls. "I was stumped; she was well past the stage of needing or wanting material goods. I just wanted to do something to bring her a little joy." One day, an idea occurred to her. Winter wonderlands and illuminated holiday scenes abound in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. "What if I rented a limousine to take her to see the holiday lights? The nursing home staff could help her in and out of the limo, and it would be her first opportunity in a long time to get out," she explains. So, along with her sister and several of her nieces, Diane bundled up her mom against the cold night air and took her for her first limousine ride to see the lights. Diane's mom died two months later. Her final gift to her mother was a lasting memory for the entire family.

Soon after, Diane realized she wanted to do something positive with her grief to honor her mother's memory and maybe help her heal. "I kept coming back to the night we saw the lights from a limousine. It was my last and best memory of my mother," she says. In 2008, Diane founded the Holiday Lights and Limos program. She rallied volunteers and lined up limousine services to serve 125 hospice patients, and their families in their first full year in operation. In 2009, they donated 500 tours. For many medically fragile patients, these outings are the last opportunity to share the joy of the season with family and friends.

"Some people mistakenly think that hospice only serves the elderly," Diane observes. "Last year a 50-year-old man receiving hospice services for advanced liver disease joined us. Jaundiced and near the end of his life, we put him in a

26-passenger limo bus with his family and friends to enjoy the holiday lights tour. He asked the driver if the bus could stop at a nearby nursing home where his dad lived. The limo bus stopped there, and the younger man was able to bid his father a final farewell. He passed away three days later."

The *Holiday Lights and Limos* program is now in its third year. The combination of Diane's passion, the tireless efforts of some 100 volunteers, and the generosity of many kind donors, including local limousine and transit companies, keep this beautiful tradition alive for hundreds of hospice patients and their families.



Obtaining donations from local transit companies in the form of limousines and wheelchair-adapted buses now means that whole families can travel in style around the Twin Cities area to share in the holiday spirit.

ONE OF OUR FAVORITE CAUSES: ANIMALS

Established in 1990, **Friends of Animals Utah (FOAU)**, a non-profit organization based in Park City, Utah, was just a small group of animal lovers lobbying for a new shelter and a way to save animals one at a time. Today, it's a full-fledged animal rescue and rehabilitation organization with an adoption center, Furburbia, a Rescue and Rehab Ranch, a dedicated staff and an active and tremendously supportive volunteer base.

"We are a no-kill group and are proud to be entering our 20th year. We just opened a great facility and are involved with many wonderful causes beyond adopting out animals," notes animal lover Christina Shiebler, Managing Director of Asset Communications. FOAU offers a Canines for the Cause

program that places trained shelter pets with Vets suffering from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It also offers spay and neuter clinics, community education programs, and an emergency preparedness program, which means that the shelter is in a position to receive pets during any sort of community-wide emergency.

"It's really hard for me to say no to animals, and good organizations that serve them," Christina says. A member of the board of trustees for four years, Christina and the Asset team have contributed hundreds of hours of time and talent to further the mission of FOAU. "It's so rewarding to have a skill set and a passion that together can do so much good. Even though it's never-ending, it's not work at all — it's pure pleasure," she explains. Whether it's a poster or an invitation for a special event, help with the organization's website, or raising money, Christina's in the middle of it. "From an early age, my parents taught me to be charitable; not just in my words but in my intentions and actions. It was how I was raised and how every member of my family lives. And the truth is, the more we give the more we receive in return. I have had the great pleasure of seeing our contributions make a difference right here in our community," she adds.

Like many non-profits, FOAU has been especially burdened with the double challenge of an economic downturn and a struggling job and housing market. "We've seen more homeless pets, and donations are harder to come by," Christina says. "The last few years have been a challenge as many owners can no longer afford to keep their pets, or have abandoned them entirely." If you have a soft spot in your heart for animals, your local shelter could use your help. Go to www.ASPCA.org to find one in your area. Your time and or donations are always welcome. There are many ways to give — and gifts of any size are welcome!



Christina Shiebler pictured with Tater, her 4-year-old adopted Rottweiler. "We can judge the heart of a man by his treatment of animals." - Immanuel Kant

ARE YOUR CHARITABLE LEANINGS MORE GLOBAL IN NATURE?

CONSIDER HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

For organizations with a global reach, or individuals with a heightened awareness of worldwide issues, a global giving effort may be appropriate. One such worthy cause is an organization based in the U.S. with a large-scale heart. The story is legendary: A midwestern farmer was ladling out rations of milk to hungry children during the Spanish Civil War when it hit him: "These children don't need a cup, they need a cow." Dan West returned home to form Heifers for Relief, dedicated to ending hunger by providing families with livestock and training so that they "could be spared the indignity of depending on others to feed their children." In 1944, the first shipment of 17 heifers left York, Pennsylvania, for Puerto Rico, going to families whose malnourished children had never tasted milk.

This simple idea of giving families a source of food rather than short-term relief caught on and has continued for more than 65 years operating in more than 125 countries. By giving families a hand-up, not just a hand-out, the non-profit empowers them to turn lives of hunger and poverty into self-reliance and hope.

Gifts of livestock and training help families improve their nutrition and generate income in sustainable ways. The organization refers to the animals as "living loans" because in exchange for their livestock and training, families agree to give one of its animal's offspring to another family in need. It's called Passing on the Gift — a cornerstone of the organization's mission that creates an ever-expanding network of hope and peace.

EXPECT MIRACLES

FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY RALLIES AGAINST CANCER

Mike Hecklinger, Vice President, Senior Account Executive for Asset Communications, had never heard of Mutual Funds Against Cancer (MFAC) two years ago. That's when he was invited by one of the organization's trustees to get involved in the Denver area. Now, the self-appointed ambassador is doing all he can to help raise awareness — particularly in the West — for this worthy cause.

Now in its 16th year, MFAC's Wine & Spirits Extravaganza in November and Expect Miracles Golf Classic in June are blossoming beyond the Boston area. The Foundation also underwent a name change to reflect its broader mission.

As of November 5, 2010, it is known as the Expect Miracles Foundation – Financial Services Against Cancer (FSAC).

The Expect Miracles Foundation was co-founded by Frank Strauss, of the Beacon Consulting Group in Boston, and the late Steve Katzin in 1995, with a golf tournament benefitting The Jimmy Fund. Mike explains that Frank's involvement with The Jimmy Fund began in May 1995 when his mother was diagnosed with leukemia. Co-founder Steve Katzin lost his battle to cancer in 2005.

Today FSAC is the leading advocate in the fight against cancer within the financial services industry. All proceeds benefit the Center for Applied Cancer Science (CACs), part of the Belfer Institute for Innovative Cancer Science at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. "The Center brings together the medical and academic fields with the pharmaceutical and business communities to provide an integrated approach to discovering new cancer drugs and better, earlier detection methods," Mike points out.

"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life, that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"We hosted our inaugural Expect Miracles Denver Wine Event at urban chic Mad Greens Restaurant on November 10," Mike notes. "I've really enjoyed being part of the fundraising for this event, which included gathering industry executives to attend a top-notch wine tasting," he explains. "After six months of planning, it was a thrill to see it all come together so successfully. Our generous event partners, Oppenheimer Funds and ALPS Funds Services, helped us to raise more than \$15,000 for the Foundation," he said.

Mike says one of the great benefits of being associated with the organization is its personal connection to the financial services industry. "Many professionals struggle with personal giving goals; but our industry can take leadership as ones that plan for individual and corporate giving," Mike adds. "I've been touched by the stories of hope and tragedy you hear from colleagues and associates. It's been an enriching experience for me. It's an opportunity to make business more personal through charitable involvement."

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE GIVING

GuideStar USA, Inc., a Virginia based 501-C(3) (www.guidestar.org), connects people and organizations virtually with information on the programs and finances of more than 1.8 million IRS-recognized nonprofits. Following are questions they suggest you ask before investing in a nonprofit organization. Your answers also can help you determine which charities to give to or evaluate the performance of the philanthropies you already support.

- 1 How are you collaborating with similar organizations on a local, regional or national level?
- 2 What are the main obstacles that inhibit the fulfillment of your mission? How are you planning to overcome them?
- 3 What are your annual goals, needs and results? How do they compare to similar organizations in your community?
- 4 How much turnover have you experienced of employees and board members in the last two years?
- 5 To what degree have you attracted new people and new ideas to your organization and board?
- 6 How well have you utilized your funding? Describe how efficiently you have fulfilled your goals of recent years in relationship to the amount of funds you have raised.
- 7 Most for-profit organizations have restructured themselves in recent years to become more efficient and productive. How, if at all, are you considering (or have you implemented) some version of this approach?
- 8 How efficiently is your organization run? To what degree have you assigned day-to-day management responsibilities to a tightly run executive committee instead of relying upon your full board?
- 9 Who are your main competitors and how do your results in recent years compare to theirs?

Holiday Lights and Limos
Hospice of the Twin Cities

www.hospiceofthetwincities.com

Or, if you'd like to support the program with a donation – large or small – contact:
Hospice of the Twin Cities
10405 - 6th Avenue North, Suite 250
Plymouth, Minnesota 55441
Phone numbers: 763.531.2424 1.800.364.2478



www.aspca.org



www.heifer.org



www.mutualfundsagainstcancer.com

Other giving resources

- <http://www.bbb.org/us/Wise-Giving/>: The BBB Wise Giving Alliance helps donors make informed giving decisions and advances high standards of conduct among organizations that solicit contributions from the public
- <http://foundationcenter.org/about>
- www.cof.org/: The council on Foundations includes information about community foundations and philanthropy