
Newsbreak



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From the NFPB Chair

The theme of the 2001 NFPB Conference is "Rekindling the Flame." When Conference Chair Kitty Conners first asked me what I thought about this as the theme, I didn't pause for a second. I knew she once again was on target with her thoughts and plans for a stimulating annual event designed especially for the volunteers and those who coordinate volunteers — the social capital of public broadcasting.

This year's conference promises to provide new ideas and an opportunity for all of us to share our successes (and challenges) with our colleagues and peers.

Another thought has occurred to me. After 31 years of service to public broadcasting, the National Friends of Public Broadcasting must constantly "rekindle the flame." The Corporation for Public Broadcasting is providing us the chance to take a closer look at ourselves.

During the next year, we are going to closely examine what we do and how we do it. We are going to rethink the services we provide, and possibly reinvent this organization. Whatever determination is made during this study, we feel strongly about our survival. We know that our place within the public broadcasting industry is important. In fact, it is crucial! At the digital crossroads, the public broadcasting arena needs more than spectators.

I personally hope that NFPB continues to represent and serve not only public broadcasting but also the volunteers whose hearts and hands support and serve their stations.

If your embers need stoking or refueling, join me and other *social capital* in Dallas from October 4-7 for a wonderful opportunity to avoid burnout. Let's get together and "rekindle the flame."

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In the Spotlight . . .

In the annals of NFPB and WETA, one of the women who shines through with her spirit and fervor for public broadcasting is Trustee Emeritus **Elizabeth Campbell**. In the last issue of *Newsbreak*, Juliet Spall wrote in glowing terms of Mrs. Campbell's influence in her career as mentor and friend. Below is a picture of Mrs. Campbell and Juliet at the station's holiday celebration. Thanks for the great photo, Juliet!

conjunction with the PBS Development Conference. The agenda will include election of new Trustees and other business pertinent to NFPB. We hope to see all individual and station representatives there!

NFPB Annual Meeting Notice

All NFPB Members are invited to attend the 31st Annual Meeting of the National Friends of Public Broadcasting. It will be held Thursday morning, October 4, at the Adam's Mark Hotel, 400 N. Olive St., Dallas, Texas.

The NFPB Conference is held in

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NEWS FROM THE STATIONS

A Tribute to a Loyal Volunteer

South Texas Public Broadcasting (KEDT) has been very fortunate in having a volunteer like **Roger "Red" Frank**. Red first volunteered at our PBS station in 1991. Having been recently widowed, he was looking for something worthwhile to occupy some of his time. He first worked at the odd jobs that most volunteers do, and then was given the task of making copies of some of the PBS tapes for the educational department. That was when he found his role at the station.

Red now has his own little corner with desk, shelving, etc. surrounded by video tapes and the necessary equipment for his job. Some have been processed and are ready to send back to the schools. Others have just arrived along with requests for copies of selected programs from the Educational Catalog. Red works seven days a week, averages seventy hours, and has worked over 4,000 hours each year for the past seven years. He even attends the station's weekly staff meetings.

Red is a retired elementary school principal, who was one of the first to make use of television in the local schools. He even had an in-school news program with students as the anchors. His experience working with teachers has created a relationship with teachers and the station that would be impossible to duplicate anywhere. He is the recipient of many volunteer awards, both local and state, too numerous to mention, for his efforts at KEDT benefitting the school children of South Texas.

We are proud to have a volunteer like Roger "Red" Frank, and proud to know a man dedicated to helping others.

— Linda Montoya, Auction Manager
South Texas Public Broadcasting System
Corpus Christi, TX

Christmas in August

Last year WETA and the U.S. Air Force Band celebrated their 25th seasonal concert entitled "Christmas In August." The late WETA FM veteran announcer, Bill Cerri, was a native of New York State and found summers in Washington, DC to be close to unbearable. That mind-set, coupled with the growing commercialization of the Christmas holidays, spurred Bill into creating an imaginary holiday in August when listeners could escape (at least mentally) into the coolness of winter and reflect on simpler times when Christmas trees were not on display right after July 4th in the stores! Holiday music is featured throughout the day on WETA FM and listeners are encouraged to bring a picnic supper and enjoy the free evening concert outdoors.

Christmas In August concerts are held at the Sylvan Theatre at the foot of the Washington Monument the last Friday evening in the month of August, and broadcast on WETA FM live. WETA volunteers help collect the non-perishable food brought to the concert to benefit a local charity called S.O.M.E. (So Others Might Eat).

In addition, the volunteers help with crowd control or, as it is called, the "Munchkin Patrol," when Santa and Mrs. Claus appear to dispense candy canes and listen to children's Christmas wish lists. The concerts are free to everyone and usually the evening is a hot and humid one, so volunteers do not have an easy job, but WETA's "Christmas Elves" never say no when the inevitable call comes, and seem to enjoy the whole adventure every year.

— Juliet Spall
WETA Volunteer Coordinator

REKINDLING THE FLAME

The National Friends of Public Broadcasting will be hosting three awesome sessions at the Development Conference in October. The NFPB theme this year is *Rekindling the Flame*. If you feel over worked and like your job is a chore, let us help you put the spark back into your volunteer program and special events. NFPB is made up of people throughout the United States who work or volunteer at PBS television and public radio stations. Join your colleagues to hear what other stations have done to solve the same problems you may be having!

Back by popular demand — *Brainstorming with Seasoned Volunteer Coordinators* is your chance to pick the brains of the **best-of-the-best Volunteer Coordinators** from throughout the PBS system.. Find out how they have kept their sanity and still have a wonderful volunteer program. Special Events Coordinators, this should be on your agenda, too!

Two sessions will be presented by **Mary Beth Harrington**, Director of Agency Relations, Volunteer Center of Dallas County, TX: *Putting the Spark Back in Your Volunteer Program* — Is your volunteer program or special events starting to fizzle? Are volunteers burned out doing the same old projects? Volunteer management today means being flexible and adaptable to the changes in the volunteer climate, but sometimes we all need a little spark. In this workshop, discover the major trends in volunteerism, effective ways to work with all generations, and ideas to motivate and retain your current volunteers. You'll leave this workshop fired up and exploding with new ideas! *Power Up!* — Before we can successfully manage others, we must first manage our own lives. Increase your energy and enthusiasm. Learn to have fun in the midst of an ever-changing workplace with this interactive workshop.

And don't miss the CATS session. Hear what is happening on the Hill with **Diane Papedo**, APTS Volunteer Coordinator and Advocate Extraordinary.

Come early and take part in the NFPB Welcoming Reception on Wednesday evening, October 3 (the day before the conference starts). Here is your chance to get to know your mentors, catch up with old friends and/or make some new ones.

The NFPB Annual Meeting will be Thursday morning, October 4, with the Annual Trustees Meeting that afternoon. The first PBS General Session will start on Thursday afternoon.

— Kitty Conners, NFPB Conference Chair

Especially for Managers of Volunteers Programs

Save Time Brainstorming Via Fax and E-Mail

What can you do when an important project needs brainstorming — but the key participants work at different locations? Use fax and e-mail to get the job done. Here's how: Outline the project, then fax or e-mail that document, along with a routing slip to the first person on the list. That person provides input and faxes it to the next person. Then when you receive it back, you can take appropriate action. (This might be a unique way to get other station staff to get creative in using volunteers!)

— adapted from *Indispensable You! Simple Things You Must Do to Keep Your Job Today (and Tomorrow)* ...printed in **The Motivational Manager**

Helpful Web Sites

Here is a list of URLs that might be useful. Some are design related, a few are computer or technically useful.

www.versiontracker.com - A great resource for the latest info on Mac software and hardware drivers. Set up a free account and they'll e-mail you daily with links to the most recent versions of your applications and shareware.

www.creativepro.com - Information on fonts, graphics, print, stock photography ... you name it. Visit this site regularly for articles that will keep you in the know. Sponsored by Extensis. [handy web site if you design volunteer and promo brochures]

www.fontsite.com - This site gives you a way to retain your ego and look like a typography wizard. No more asking that person with all the answers just to get a response that starts with "Duh...".

www.dictionary.com - It sounds almost too simple [but extremely useful!].

— from *Fineline Digital Group Addendum*, Indianapolis IN

Overcoming an Undermining Associate [or Volunteer]

What do you do when someone who reports to you subtly undermines you with snipping jokes or sarcastic comments. When he/she tells his jokes, you probably hear the uneasy laughter of the people around you at the time. They know what you know: You've been undermined. Which is precisely what the joker had in mind.

When you've been a victim of a snip attack, you must follow a strategy that maintains your leadership standing in front of your colleagues/[volunteers] and curbs future attacks. Here's strategy that works:

1. Show that you won't stand for being put down. When a snipping joke is made, remain calm and let everyone know that you are happy to discuss legitimate criticisms.
2. Keep your tone light — and your message crystal clear. Turn the tables and ask your sarcastic associate/[volunteer] to be more specific. And if he does come back with specific complaints, don't be defensive. Reply factually to each one.
3. Talk to your underminer privately. Maintain a light, good-humored tone, but let him know two things:

While you enjoy a joke as much as the next person does, you feel that his sarcasm crossed the line; and

You were offended and would appreciate his not making those kinds of remarks again.

Next, ask if you've done anything to offend him. The question might put him on the defensive. Still it's possible that he will tell you what's bothering him, giving both of you the opportunity to resolve the problem.

— *Working with Difficult People*, Murial Soloman (Prentice-Hall, New Jersey)

What Do You Enjoy?

Ask volunteers what they enjoy about their work. Too often, conversations center too much on mistakes and problems. When you ask "What did you like about that last project?" you encourage volunteers to become conscious of how to get satisfaction from their work. And they may think of ways to do their jobs better.

— *Practical Supervision*, Professional Training Associates, Round Rock TX (printed in *The Manager's Intelligence Report*)

Esteem Audit for Supervisors

Unless you can say "yes" to these statements, you're not doing all you can to boost self-esteem among your [volunteers]:

My [volunteers] know that I'm genuinely concerned about them.

I show the same respect for new [volunteers] that I do for the long-time [volunteers] I supervise.

I don't allow long-time [volunteers] to mistreat new [volunteers].

I try hard to make sure the assignments I give [volunteers] challenge them.

When I realize [volunteers] are having trouble with a task, I resist the urge to jump in and rescue them.

I offer [volunteers] informal — and consistent — feedback on their performance.

If I feel I must criticize, I focus my criticism on how [volunteers] performed the task, not on their personality.

I recognize and reward [volunteers] not only for their length of service but also for their contributions to the organization.

— *Smart Staffing: How to Hire, Reward, and Keep the Best People for Your Growing Company* by Wayne Outlaw, Upstart Publishing Co. (Chicago) as printed in *Communications Briefings*

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When You Feel Downtrodden and Unappreciated Remember This Parable . . .

There was a farmer who owned an old mule. The mule fell into the farmer's abandoned well, and the farmer heard the mule braying loudly in his unfortunate predicament. After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer deeply sympathized with his "old friend" but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. Instead, he called his neighbors together and told them what happened. They each helped haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put the poor creature out of his misery.

Initially, the mule was hysterical, but as the neighbors continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back, a thought struck him. He decided that every time dirt landed on his back, he should shake it off and step up! So he did this, blow after blow.

No matter how painful the blows were or how distressing the situation seemed, the old mule just kept right on shaking it off and stepping up. Soon, battered and exhausted, the old mule stepped triumphantly out of the well.



Don't Know About NFPB?

Ask for an NFPB Membership brochure. Contact Dorothy Pacella, NFPB Membership Chair. E-mail: pacella@thirteen.org. Phone: (212) 560-2708. Fax: (212) 560-2091. NFPB is a support system for volunteers and coordinators of volunteers. You're not alone — others share your concerns and problems . . . and many have solutions to share! Take the first step. Contact Dorothy!

Last Tidbits . . .

Follow this brainstorming rule: "We'll dismiss an idea only if the group can't think of three ways to make it work."

Source: people@work, Texas Professional Training Associates Inc. (Round Rock TX)
printed in *Communication Briefings*

Rescuing Broken Toys

Do your children have Fisher Price toys they no longer use because small parts are missing? Instead of throwing them out, contact the Fisher Price Consumer Affairs Department at (800) 432-5437 and ask for their "Bits & Pieces" catalog. This catalog includes replacement parts for many of the educational and recreational toys the company manufactures. You might find the perfect part to make that much-loved toy work like new again.

As long as you're going to think anyway — you might as well think BIG!
— Donald Trump