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## Love Thy Reader | About Donor Communications | *from Tom Ahern*



If you had more money ... you *could* do more good.  
If you do better communications ... you *will* have more money.

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"Weird? You don't know the  
half of it..."

### Cartoons from the NGO cubicle

Jessica Castillo tipped me to  
this highly RELAXING  
[blog](#) that makes fun of  
working in the nonprofit  
world.

Funding incredible new ideas....

### The Awesome Foundation

In this [video report](#) from the  
BBC, see what kinds of  
\$1,000 projects a grassroots  
foundation created by MIT  
students in 2009 has  
helped bring to life. The  
trustees of the Awesome  
Foundation each contribute  
\$100 a month and meet  
monthly to read grant  
applications. Grant awards  
have no strings attached.

Stand amazed...

### The humble shopping bag as super messenger

Jameel Khan collected a  
truly mind-blossoming  
collection of shopping bag  
designs, some by charities,  
for a showcase on Instant  
Shift. [Enjoy!](#) Scouted by Jim  
Rattray. Thankee, sir!

From Gail Perry...

*Maybe it's the desert air....*

# Selling the unspeakable



I fall in love easily with the surprising.

And I am not alone. The human brain  
*adores* new information. When it runs  
across something interesting, your  
brain spurts dopamine, for goodness  
sake.

For those of you who do not know dopamine by  
reputation, it is called the brain's "reward drug."  
Pavlov's dogs had salivation bells. Humans have  
dopamine. I like dopamine. You like dopamine. We all  
scream ... for *dope-ameen!*

Dopamine rewards us. It makes us happy! And eager!

## Now for something completely different

When [see person above] [Laura Alexander](#), co-pillar

### Tips for a successful monthly giving program

A good monthly giving program works miracles: it can dramatically lower your organization's fundraising costs, while stabilizing your charitable income stream. Donors enjoy the convenience of monthly giving, too. Learn how to bring this miracle to your agency, in this "[18 tips](#)" blog posting by Gail Perry at [Fired Up Fundraising](#). Suggested by Tom Belford, [The Agitator](#).

"Next up in the auction..."

### A week in France

It's become quite the popular item for charity auctions: a week's stay at our house in France, located in the fascinating Languedoc region, bordered by the Mediterranean, extending to the Pyrenees. The charity agrees to cover the rental fee, then auctions the week for whatever it can. There's no risk: if the house doesn't make its bid price, we cancel the deal. Six weeks were auctioned this year through various charities. To view the house, go [HERE](#). To inquire about details, email Simone Joyaux at [spjoyaux@aol.com](mailto:spjoyaux@aol.com).

## Joinme?

¶ [Linked In](#): 912 connections  
¶ [Twitter](#): 821 followers  
Twitter name: thattomahern  
¶ [E-news](#): 7,149 subscribers  
¶ [Facebook](#): 180 friends

The 9 adjectives fundraisers should never forget...

### Reminder Jewelry



In 2012, the NY Times

of a rapidly [growing](#) fundraising [consultancy](#) in Tucson, Arizona, told me about the "poop" annual appeal she'd written, I **begged** her shamelessly, with all the cunning I had --

"Laura, I think I see a little mud on your left front whitewall. Do you mind if I clean it off with this heirloom linen handkerchief left to me by my sainted great-grandmother?"

-- to let me *share* it with *you*.

Laura graciously said **yes**, for the benefit of all charity-kind ... as did her wonderful, risk-taking client, the [Watershed Management Group](#).

## And so without further adieu, for your entertainment: The "poop letter"...

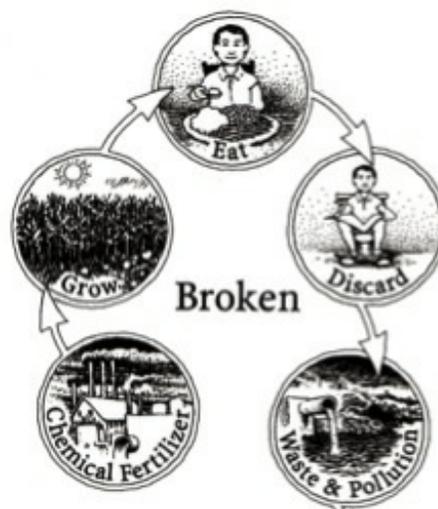
November 14, 2012

«Postal\_Greeting»

Did you know that one of the most wasteful things you can do with water is poop in it?

Toilet flushing not only wastes more water than any other household activity (including using your washing machine), it also wastes another useful natural resource: your poop.

Composted human waste ("humanure") is rich in nutrients and supports fertile, healthy soil.



That's why Watershed Management Group is developing and promoting an inexpensive, safe

quoted "philanthropy" psychologist Jen Shang. In her research, Dr. Shang had discovered that Americans describe a "moral" person, a "good" person, using primarily 9 adjectives: *caring, compassionate, friendly, fair, generous, hard-working, helpful, honest, kind*. As a copywriter, that's gold. I consult this list of adjectives pretty much every day. As a copywriter, though, I could only afford silver. So I had a silversmith hand-stamp a bracelet for Jen (a colleague), displaying her 9 adjectives on the links. If you want one, I presume you can order it from the same [silversmith](#), whom I found on Etsy.

### Working on....

Mld

What's new on [SOFII](#)?

### Need a good idea

#### RIGHT NOW?

Then review this freshly updated [list](#) of SOFII's **latest** exhibits. SOFII stands for the *Showcase of Fundraising Innovation and Inspiration*. This big-hearted, mostly volunteer, London-based nonprofit collects and annotates examples of **SUCCESSFUL** donor communications from around the world ... and then gives you **FREE** access. I'm there often.

Could they take the heat? Well, they came into my kitchen...

### Enter a GALLERY of FRANK critiques ... solely for your error-avoiding, idea-stealing pleasure

Brave people send me samples of their donor comms, for a **free, nitty-gritty** - and **public** - critique. Find out exactly what they did wrong or right, and learn from their mistakes or victories.

Available as [downloadable PDFs](#) with pop-up comments. I won't be critiquing for

and practical composting toilet that can be built and installed by any homeowner.

We've even gotten a permit from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to pilot, test and research the use of composting toilets in urban Tucson.

We're also training a group of "Soil Stewards" who are learning to take responsibility for the health of their soil - possibly the most overlooked resource in the watershed.



Illustrated from *The Humane Manifesto* by Joseph J. Levin.

That's the kind of on-the-ground, critical thinking and innovation you've come to expect from WMG - but we can't do it without you.

As a WMG supporter -- if you are the kind of person who likes simple, affordable, sustainable, community-based solutions to the challenges facing our local and international communities -- please, make a gift to Watershed Management Group today!

Thank you.

[signature]

Lisa Shipek, Executive Director

P.S. Get the straight poop on composting toilets and even learn how to build one at <http://www.watershedmg.org/soil-stewards>.

## Did it work?

Laura doesn't know yet. Anyway, that's not the point.

awhile in 2013, due to other commitments.

### Joyaux Associates

International expertise at down-to-earth prices. Fund development, board development, strategic planning. [Lots of free resources](#), too!

### Where will Tom speak next?

Check upcoming events on Tom's international [speaking CALENDAR!](#)



[Ourhouseinfrance.com](http://Ourhouseinfrance.com)

### My blog

### My website

The point is: charities have become too timid.

It wasn't always that way. Consider this mid-1940's Oxfam ad (reprinted from [sofi.org](http://sofi.org))...

United Nations Relief Works Agency Photo.

## Help Relieve GREAT SUFFERING

Thousands of uprooted victims of conflict are in desperate need. In Europe, the Middle East and beyond they eke out a pitiful existence. Clothing is needed quickly if great suffering is to be alleviated among children, old people, the sick, and the many families without a breadwinner. Even the little you can do may kindle fresh courage in despairing hearts.

An Arab refugee baby. If funds from international sources cease many babies such as this would be left to die.

## HELP A STRICKEN FAMILY

**SEND US YOUR DISCARDED CLOTHES** | **GIVE 10/- TO SEND FOOD OR CLOTHING**

Men's, women's and children's clothing and footwear are urgently needed—do not wait to repair. Kindly enclose your name and address to enable us to acknowledge. Please send to: Oxford, "C.H.," c/o Davies, Turner & Co., 30a, Bourne Street, London, S.W.1.

Donations will enable us to send food and medicines to those suffering great distress, and to pay for the transport of donated clothing. (10/- sends 35 garments, £10 for 700, 2/- sends enough for one child.) Remittances to: Hon. Treasurer, C.H. Relief, Barclays Bank, The Old Bank, High Street, Oxford.

**OXFORD COMMITTEE FOR FAMINE RELIEF**  
(Regd. War Charities Act, 1940)

**SUPPORTERS INCLUDE:**  
Rev. Roland Brown | Dr. Maude Royden-Shaw  
Rev. Dr. N. Micklem | Rev. H. R. Mozley (Chairman)

This ad makes 2 clear and compelling offers: (1) Help Relieve Great Suffering; and (2) Help a Stricken Family.

Zero confusion. Zero jargon. Total emotion. And it's all about values: "Are you so callous you can ignore this?" is the rumbling question between the lines.

That's what successful fundraising does: plug into donors' pre-existing values.

General Stonewall Jackson, conspicuously (though not universally) successful on the battlefield, advised, "Never take counsel of your fears."

It is sound free advice from history for today's timid boards and CEOs and fundraisers.

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Back issues of this newsletter? [Here...](#)

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# New designs all the time....

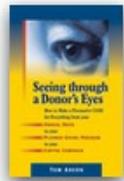


Wear your heart on/*near* your sleeve

*Writer-wear*©. *Advice-wear*®. *Reminder-wear*™.

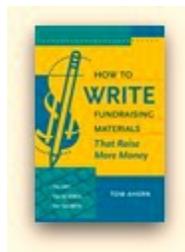
**Photos illustrate the message. PICK your very OWN colors, sizes and styles!** Statement T-shirts (and the occasional iPhone sleeve) for the wordy wise.

[Click here to see for yourself!](#)



How to write a case for support. Read the Kool-Aid.

See what Amazon reviewers say...



How to write fundraising materials your donors will love.

See what Amazon reviewers say...

**100**  
**DONORS**  
in **90 DAYS**

Takes the  
Guesswork  
out of  
Finding new  
Donors

*click here*



**Movie Mondays for  
Fundraising Professionals**

Free weekly videos to help you fundraise

Click 

See you next Monday!

**'Til next time...  
donor communications  
true believers!**

