

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – REPORT

We held a meeting by conference call on 3/13/15. In attendance were Brian Sayers, Al West, Randy Miller, Matt Bartelme, Sara Sankowich, Mary DiCarlo and Karen Lindell.

We focused our attention on the following items:

- I. Special Events update: Tour sponsor, Auction sponsor and Tour rider recruitment is underway. The separation of Arbor Fair/ITCC, ISA Conference/TREE Fund Auctions and STdT on the 2015 calendar may negatively impact participation in and revenue generation from our summer fundraising events.
- II. Heritage Oak Society campaign updates:
 - a. Trustee solicitation update: Trustees were invited at the December retreat to join HOS. Randy Miller and Brian Sayers have joined. Steve Geist and Mike Robinson are considering the opportunity. We plan to suggest again.
 - b. Other prospects? No information available from call participants.
 - i. Brian suggests asking each Trustee to submit the name of one “hot prospect” for follow up by the committee. These might be wealthy tree care clients or industry colleagues who can identify a “hot prospect”. These might not be current donors to the TF.
 - ii. Karen/Mary emphasized untapped potential of existing donors, especially “LYBNT” donors (last year but not this).
 - c. HOS priorities: (delegated to the Planned Giving subcommittee)
 - i. Create a timeline for campaign task completion
 - ii. Review edited version of archival TREE Fund Planned Giving Campaign documents (edited and distributed to committee by TF Staff)
 - iii. Create a compelling case statement
 1. Include no more than 5-6 key ideas, each distilled to its essence (1-2 sentences p/idea)
 2. Keep a conversational tone, using content contributed by committee members to keep it relevant and accessible to our donors and volunteers. Capture the passion of our TREE Fund champions.
 3. Ask each member of the conference call to come up with one or two “pithy” sentences answering the question, ‘Why Should I donate to the TREE Fund?’

III. Institutionalized gratitude:

We consider this an extremely important part of our Development program. So far

- a. Thank you letter updates are in progress
- b. A poster listing all 2014 donors of \$500+ is included in the “traveling TREE Fund booth” materials
- c. A listing of \$2,500+ contributors is on the website
- d. Major contributors (sponsors and donors giving \$2500+ in the past 30 days) are recognized by name (not amount) in the monthly TREE Fund Bulletin)
- e. Impact Communications campaign:
 - i. Our annual communications calendar includes 3 eblasts/year that focus on the impact of TREE Fund programs (not fundraising)
 - ii. An impact message is our lead Bulletin item each month
 - iii. Impact messages are integrated into our social media
 - iv. These also appear in our blog on treefund.org. Blog posts are written in conversational style and are searchable by keyword.
 - v. Our website is due for an overhaul and modernization (in 2016). Karen will look for ways to better showcase our impact messages on our website in the meantime.
- f. Willing Trustees have been assigned a list of donors to thank. Will Nutter has reported completion of his assignment. Deb has ‘nudged’ the others. Better reporting is needed.

But to improve this aspect of our fund raising we should consider the following:

- g. Brian believes we need a more visible show of gratitude, and cited TV ads recognizing supporters of local charities. We don’t have the budget for TV ads, but Karen suggested that we include a celebration of our donors (with cake!) at the TREE Fund booth during the ISA reception Sunday night. A raffle for all individuals who donated \$50 or more in the past year would be fun. We’d need a splashy prize.
- h. Karen will research how other, similar organizations thank their donors

IV. To further increase awareness of the TREE Fund,

- Matt Bartelme suggested adding an infographic to our website, illustrating the progress of current research projects and showing just how much is going on “behind the scenes” at TREE Fund.
- Matt Bartelme suggested working to get the TREE Fund added to the rosters of charities eligible for payroll-deduction donations at Fortune 500 (and other) companies.

V. Finally, our to-do-list

To Do	By Whom	By When
Create a Planned Giving campaign timeline	Al West, PG task force	3/31
Distribute historic PG docs to committee members	TREE Fund staff	3/31
Identify key print materials to support PG interviews/asks	PG task force	3/31
Create print materials for PG campaign	Mary/Karen	4/30
Pen a pithy answer to “why should I donate..?” for our case statement. Send to Mary	All	3/31
Create a case statement for TREE Fund	Mary	4/15
Create info graphic for website	Karen	4/30
Submit to Mary suggestions for companies to ask to add TF to their payroll-deduction-eligible charities list	All	4/15
Write a feature-length impact article for e-blast to TF audiences	Mary	3/31
Develop/promote TREE Fund donor recognition event at ISA Conference	Mary/Karen	5/31