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## From the President's Office

Dear Friend:

My GuideStar colleagues and I extend our sympathies to all affected by Hurricane Katrina. If you are with an organization that is involved in the recovery efforts, take a moment to add "Hurricane Katrina" to the keywords listed in your GuideStar Information Form (GIF). Adding them will ensure that your organization comes up when donors search our database using "Hurricane Katrina" in their search criteria. You also will appear in "Hurricane Katrina" searches donors perform on our partner sites, which include Network for Good, JustGive, and the Schwab, Fidelity, and T. Rowe Price donor-advised funds. [Click here](#) for more information.

Americans are already responding openheartedly to this tragedy, and I am certain they will continue to do so. Every year when I receive the latest statistics from *Giving USA*, I am reminded of the generosity of the American public. Last year, individuals donated nearly \$188 billion to charity; that's three-quarters of all charitable giving for 2004. So it has been for at least half a century: individual donors large and small drive American philanthropy. ... [Read more](#)

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## To Audit Committee or Not to Audit Committee, That Is the Question (Along with "How?")

*The Final Report of the Panel on the Nonprofit Sector calls for "a sector-wide effort to educate charitable organizations about the importance of the auditing function." Here is GuideStar's contribution to that effort.*

You've agreed to serve on a charity's board. You arrive at your first meeting ready to learn how to promote the organization's mission, pitch in with fundraising, and help recruit volunteers, only to find that what the board *really* needs to do is set up an audit committee. Great—the closest you've ever been to an auditor was when you passed the IRS building during a trip to Washington, D.C. And your fellow board members don't know much more about auditing than you do. What's a board member to do?

For one thing, relax. Help is available. ... [Read more](#)

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## Promoting Your Not-for-Profit through Public Relations

"Public relations? Promotion? Ewwwww. We're a nonprofit; we're above such things." Do these statements describe how you feel? If so, you may want to

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adjust your thinking. Instead of "public relations," think "getting our message across." Sound better? Then read on.

Public relations is vital to the success of not-for-profit organizations. No matter how important your cause is, you should not expect that everybody will know about it or even about your organization. Proactive communications is essential to success. From building awareness and credibility to supporting fundraising efforts, a well-executed, strategic public relations program can make the difference between achieving one's goals or falling desperately short of them.

In fact, not-for-profits stand to benefit a great deal from successful PR programs. The following tips and tactics will illustrate how easy it is to launch your public relations—no matter how large or small your organization. ... [Read more](#)

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## Tapping into Social Networks, or, Creating a Funding Treasure Map

*Avast, me hearties! There's treasure where you least expect it—hidden in your very own organization! Find out how to map your way to these riches, and how they can lead you to additional resources to sustain your nonprofit.*

If nonprofits truly believe in their missions, they should be thinking about how to be self-sustaining in their funding. Many of the dedicated, smart people who really care about the missions of their favorite nonprofit organizations eventually ask the same questions: "How much money would it take to endow the operational funding gap here? How much would it really cost to achieve financial sustainability for this organization?"

This clear focus ultimately will take the suffering out of funding operational needs and allow the organization to focus on its mission—be it curing disease, cleaning up the environment, or improving the life of one person. ... [Read more](#)

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## How Nonprofits Have Responded to Sarbanes-Oxley: August Question of the Month Results

*From audit committees to protections for whistle-blowers, nonprofits are adopting Sarbanes-Oxley-style practices. Find out what kinds of organizations are making these changes and what they're doing.*

A Newsletter reader wrote, "I would like to see articles on voluntary implementation of Sarbanes/Oxley by nonprofits—what are nonprofits actually doing—also, articles on states implementing SOX law impacting nonprofits such as has been done in California and 4 other states." Last month we addressed the second half of his request (see [Nonprofits, Sarbanes-Oxley, and the States](#)"); this month we look at the first half. ... [Read more](#)

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### September Questions of the Month

Have you personally taken or do you plan to take action in response to Hurricane Katrina? If you are associated with a nonprofit, has your organization taken or does it plan to take action to respond to Hurricane Katrina?

[Share your answer](#)

### Stats of the Month

Amount of chlorine bleach needed to sterilize one gallon of water:

**1/8 teaspoon if water is clear**  
**1/4 teaspoon if water is cloudy**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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### Is Your Nonprofit Helping Hurricane Victims?

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