



# Thoughts on Feeding the Hungry and Volunteerism

Volume One, Number Ten  
December 2008

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## The Burden of the Holidays

The holiday season is always a tough time for those who work in the anti-hunger network. Knowing that someone might go hungry is disheartening, but knowing that they might go hungry during the holiday season is even harder to swallow. Each of us already works hard, but during this time of year, we work even harder. We hold special events to try and reach more people. We search for more donated food than usual to have special dinners, pack holiday boxes and make sure our pantry shelves are full.

While the season may call for a little more from each of us, we all need to take a minute to give back to ourselves. Pour yourselves some eggnog, kick off your shoes and warm up by the fire while you take some time out to read the following humorous, heartwarming and provoking thoughts on the work we do each and every day to make sure that no one goes hungry.

## Remembering Why We Do What We Do

A daughter had just helped her 90-year-old mother through the strain of moving from the family home into a new unit in a senior apartment building. The daughter was trying to tidy up all the arrangements and tactfully said: "Mum, what about Meals on Wheels?" To which her mother replied: "No, dear, I don't think I could volunteer for them anymore."

*Participant at Australian Volunteer Conference  
Submitted by Susan Ellis, President, Energize, Inc.*

A teenager brought home her new boyfriend to meet her parents, and they were appalled by his appearance: leather jacket, motorcycle boots, tatoos and a pierced nose. Later, the parents pulled their daughter aside and said "He doesn't seem very nice." "Mom," replied the daughter, "if he wasn't so nice, why would he be doing 5000 hours of community service?"

*Submitted by Rhoda White, Director of Volunteer Services,  
Visiting Nurse Service of New York*

*The Food Bank Poem  
by Michael Silverstein*

A lot of folks have found new banks  
With cans on shelves instead of tellers  
These banks don't handle cash or checks  
Instead they dole out hunger quellers

When making a withdrawal here  
With other patrons you take care  
To never look directly 'cause  
They get embarrassed when you stare.

Recession angst has taken hold  
Economists don't see no traction

# Strengthening Alaska's Anti-Hunger Network

In Washington they huff and puff  
On main street there's no good reaction

For those who've felt the downside's pinch  
Their game plan now is parsimony  
And many pray their new bank crew  
Won't soon run out of Rice-A-Roni.

## *At the Zoo*

*Posted [CyberVPM](#) by Sandy Leonard. Source Unknown*

A man was delivering penguins to the zoo when his van broke down on the highway. A fellow stopped to see if he could be of assistance. "Oh, I'm in some real trouble here" said the first man. "I've got to take these penguins to the zoo today, and now I'm not sure I'll get there."

The helpful fellow volunteered to put the penguins in the back of his car and take them to the zoo. The man with car trouble gratefully accepted this offer and promised to get to the zoo as soon as possible.

A little later, the man was on the road again and went immediately to the zoo. He looked everywhere but did not see the helpful fellow or any of the penguins. In a panic, he drove back into town. Just as he was wondering what in the world to do next, he saw the "volunteer" walking across the street with all the penguins waddling along behind him.

He ran up and said, "What are you doing here? I thought you were going to take the penguins to the zoo!" and the volunteer replied, "I did, and we had such a good time there, we decided to come into town for ice cream."

*Moral:* When working with volunteers, clear instructions and good training is always necessary.

## *A Toast*

*By Susanne Hartgroves, Unpublished, Cottonwood, CA, 1996*

Raise your glasses in the air  
and give three rousing cheers  
To all of the extraordinary  
super volunteers  
They always share their time  
with enthusiastic hearts  
They appear from out of nowhere  
to do their special parts  
Whenever there's a project  
or a task to be completed  
You can always count on them  
they never are defeated  
Their smiles are genuine  
and their attitudes are winning  
Surely they must be the ones  
who keep this old world spinning  
So if there is a job to do-  
don't shrink back in fear  
Just seek out the expertise  
of a volunteer

**Next Month:  
Planning a  
Successful  
Food Drive**

