

## Online fund drive gathers \$95,000 for Napa County charities

JANUARY 05, 2014 5:00 PM • [HOWARD YUNE](#)

Forty local nonprofit agencies teamed up last fall in hopes of gaining fundraising strength — online and in numbers.

On Tuesday their two-month campaign, the Napa Valley Give!Guide, ended with donors sending in \$95,209, according to Hilary Zunin, president and co-founder of Napa Valley CanDo, the community service club that organized the donation website.

The sums channeled to local charities varied wildly, with several groups collecting four-figure amounts while others barely covered the \$250 required of charities to appear on the Give!Guide site, [napavalleygiveguide.org](http://napavalleygiveguide.org). But an organizer saw the results as promising enough to begin planning for a follow-up fund drive later this year.

“I think it’s safe to say we’re thrilled to have nearly \$100,000 of donations and a new way of donating, and we’re already looking at what we can do to make next year’s campaign broader and stronger,” said Zunin, whose group also provided 10 volunteers to put up the website and choose the nonprofits.

Organizers called the Give!Guide the first collective fundraising effort by such a broad range of Napa County charities, and the first to focus on online donations in relatively small amounts. Zunin said the campaign, which opened Nov. 1, was modeled after a similar project sponsored by the Portland, Ore., alternative newspaper Willamette Week, which garnered \$1.9 million in 2012. Visitors were asked to donate at least \$10 to one or more of the charities, and the Give!Guide page tracked the number and quantity of gifts.

In a time when donations by smartphone and tablet are increasingly common, providing small nonprofits a common virtual front door can help those without the knowledge or manpower to stand out online on their own, according to Zunin.

“Some of these groups don’t even have a Facebook page, and if a group isn’t social media-savvy, they’re going to be missed,” she said Thursday. “We wanted to give them a way to be introduced to new or younger or impulse donors.”

Locally, Napa Humane was the Give!Guide’s most popular target, garnering 105 gifts totaling \$10,897. More than half the funds directed to the humane society came from new donors, according to executive director Jane Albert.

Despite the benefit to her own group, Albert said, the Give!Guide’s most fruitful work came from shining a light on far less known charities able to share an online stage with their larger peers.

“People may have gone to the guide to support Napa Humane, but then they learned about other organizations serving children or seniors or the arts,” she said. “A high tide floats all boats,

and supporting one of us really supports all of us, and that was one of the most exciting parts of this campaign to me.”

One of those smaller recipients was Rohlffs Manor, an apartment complex for low-income seniors on Fair Drive.

Though its final sum of \$1,410 pales next to Napa Humane’s, those funds will help the center restore at least two of the adult education classes it had canceled due to funding reductions by the Napa Valley Unified School District, which had partnered with Rohlffs on the classes. The center expects to bring back an exercise class by early February, with a current-events program also likely to return, resource coordinator Meryll Gobler said last week.

By making donations easier and more approachable, the Give!Guide can give small local services a valuable boost, said Gobler.

“I think this will become an institutionalized thing for Napa County — for people who can’t afford to lift a paddle at the wine auction, for those who can afford \$10 and \$15 and know it’s going to make a difference,” she said.