

Public Relations, *continued*

Once the brainstorming activity is completed, develop a list of all the school's successes and consider how to communicate them:

✍ Develop a speech on "What's Right with Your School" and present it to numerous groups. Start with audiences that are supportive of your message, such as the PTA. Even supportive groups need to hear this data so they can share it with others. Then move on to civic organizations such as Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs, the Chamber of Commerce, and a Realty Board. These organizations contain many of your community's opinion leaders -- people who need to know what you do well.

✍ Have a short column in each school newsletter, titled "What's Right" and list three to four successes. Suggest this concept for other publications associated with the school. The athletic booster clubs could run a section on sports successes in their newsletters, the parent group could cite accomplishments in parent involvement, etc.

✍ List your successes on placemats and offer them to civic organizations for breakfast or luncheon meetings.

✍ Write an op-ed article featuring your successes and submit it to a newspaper in your community. (See NMSA's book Practical Pub-

lic Relations for information on placing op-ed articles.)

✍ Prepare a short article on your accomplishments and try to get it published in newsletters done by other groups -- senior citizens, religious groups, local businesses, feeder schools, etc...

Celebrating your successes is a great way to inspire the school family and communicate your value to the broader community. Keep in mind that it's okay to suggest to the community that some areas need to be improved and provide practical suggestions that can help with the improvement. That approach will add credibility to your positive data.

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THE SENSE OF A GOOSE

From Chicken Soup For the Soul, Part II

Next Fall, when you see geese heading south for the winter, flying along in "V" formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in "V" formation, the whole flock adds at least 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

Lesson: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily, because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone -- and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those people who are headed the

same way we are.

When the head goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point.

Lesson: It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs, whether with people or with geese flying south.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson: What messages do we give when we honk from behind?

Finally -- and this is important -- when a goose gets sick or is wounded, and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly or until it dies; and only then do they launch out on their own or with another formation to catch up to their group.

If we have the sense of a goose, we will stand by each other like that.