I gave at the office

Ever since the campaigns for victory gardens, war bonds and conservation during World War II, the Ad Council has been signing up agencies to donate their time to important issues of national scope.

By Robert Jefferson

You see them all the time in print, on radio and on TV: your agency probably created one of them, or is in line to do so. They are ad campaigns that promote awareness of worthy causes rooted in the public good, and they all carry the logo of the Ad Council.

The Ad Council started as the War Advertising Council in 1942 in a flurry of national largess toward the common goal of winning the war. That largess did not end with the war—in fact, American media have contributed $13.2 billion in space and time over the past 42 years. In 1984 alone, that support amounted to $804,813,611. Added to this are the uncounted millions in creative services and management expertise provided gratis by advertising agencies.

The Ad Council has tackled almost 400 different causes since the war, and currently handles 30 major public service campaigns. It receives over 300 inquiries a year from private, philanthropic, and government organizations, but accepts only a fraction. The American Association of Advertising Agencies selects the volunteer agency from a list of applicants anxiously awaiting their turn at

Leber Katz
Partners, 1985
A recent entry into the Ad Council fold from 1983, the drunk driving campaign broke on the crest of public and legislative outcry. This campaign is designed to reach 16- to 24-year-olds, who cause 42 percent of fatal alcohol-related traffic accidents.

Drinking and Driving Can Kill a Friendship

NEGLECT CAN KILL, TOO. IT JUST TAKES A LITTLE LONGER.

Abused children are helpless. Unless you help.

Write: PPC.

Campbell-Ewald, 1980
The campaign to prevent child abuse started in 1976 and really caught the attention of the media and the public in the early 1980s. This is an example of a campaign that set out to define and expose a problem, and changed objectives as public awareness grew.
an assignment that promises real benefits and a sure-fire advertising triumph. The Association of National Advertisers appoints the equally enthusiastic volunteer campaign coordinator.

As part of our fifth-anniversary issue, we are looking back over recent campaigns for some Ad Council causes that have appeared since our debut—some that date back to the beginnings of the Ad Council, and some that broke only recently. Beneath each ad appear its volunteer agency and date, with a short discussion of the campaign.

Foote, Cone & Belding/Honig, 1985
Is there anyone who doesn't recognize this one? Smokey's been around so long (Foote, Cone & Belding dreamed him up in 1942) they don't need to use his whole tagline anymore. Unlike some Ad Council campaigns, which serve their purpose and fade away, the Prevent Forest Fires effort is bound to continue instructing each new generation about wilderness safety.

J. Walter Thompson, 1984
The American Red Cross campaign dates from 1945 and aims to promote three prongs of the organization's work: to recruit volunteers, to increase blood donorship, and to enroll individuals in Red Cross health and safety programs.

NW Ayer, 1984
Since 1982, the National Council on Alcoholism has aimed to eliminate the guilt, shame and fear that often prevent alcoholics from receiving treatment. Jason Robards is one of several famous recovered alcoholics recruited for this campaign.

Continued →

August 1985/Magazine Age 67
Dancer Fitzgerald Sample, 1983
McGruff, the crime prevention hound, may become the most potent animal symbol since Smokey. The campaign broke in 1978, and the FBI credits "greater citizen involvement" for helping reduce crime.

THE GUARD & RESERVE:
It's their job to protect you.
It's you who protect their jobs.

D'Arcy MacManus & Masius/deGarmo, 1981
The National Guard ads aim to increase employer support for allowing employees service time. It started in 1973, right on the heels of the all-volunteer army.

McCann-Erickson, 1985
Since 1979 the government has been trying to convince recipients of government checks to use direct deposit to avoid paper work, possible loss or theft, and long lines at the banks.

Kenyon & Eckhardt, 1984
This new campaign has a built-in expiration date. The Statue of Liberty will celebrate her centennial in 1986, and then the bulk of fund raising will continue for the restoration of nearby Ellis Island.

Benton & Bowles, 1984
This is a brand new campaign, launched in 1984 to combat adult functional illiteracy. The sponsoring Coalition for Literacy includes groups interested in raising literacy levels, such as booksellers and the 4As.