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## Workplace Buddies

### Creative ways to say “You make coming to work nicer!”

You see each other almost every day—you make small-talk about the weekend, complain about the coffee or wish you had bigger cubicles. Some co-workers become your closest personal friends; others hover in that strange realm inhabited by people you see more often than your family, but still don't know much about.

Now we're not about to suggest you have everyone over and, summer-camp style, force everyone to bond on a deep emotional level over s'mores. Your managers will probably take care of that at some point with an expensive Quality Management Teamwork Training Retreat, where you spend three days shoving each other through hanging rubber tires and crawling across two-by-fours, and are rewarded at the end with a T-shirt that says “There's no ‘I’ in ‘TEAM.’”

Still, there are times you want to express appreciation, sympathy, admiration and other thoughts—and as always, Greetings Workshop is right there to help. (So you might as well put it on your computer at work, too.)

**u**You needed help on a project. Immediately. And you got it—from a constant supply of coffee to the all-important collating and stapling of the presentation books to an empathetic ear when you hollered about changing deadlines. For gosh sakes, thank these people. Start with personalized notes expressing your gratitude for their thoughtfulness, and, while you're at it, send a note to the boss saying what a privilege it is to work with such a great team.

**u**You know a co-worker is going through a tough time, but it seems awkward and insensitive to just walk up to the water cooler and say, “Hey, hear your life kinda stinks.” Instead, drop a note in the mailbox just to say “hang in there” or offer a lunch hour with a sympathetic listener.

**u**Does anyone ever get the recognition they deserve at work? Head up a Committee to Commemorate Small Miracles, and put up signs or banners when co-workers achieve the near-impossible...a polite response to an obnoxious customer, a big sale to a finicky client, a well-deserved and long-overdue promotion.



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## Fun Stuff for Guys

Great ideas for that special fella...  
and you don't need a radial saw!

When it comes to guys, come to Greetings Workshop! Any guy loves to get a personalized card at home or work. But there's so much more you can do to give him a thrill or two, without ever having to leave your computer. Here are just a few suggestions; let your imagination run wild and see what else you can dream for your dreamboat.

- u Personalize his remote control. Better still, print a list of his favorite cable channels and their numbers to tape on the back of the remote. (A picture of you, looking adorable, couldn't hurt, either.)
- u Print up a "One from Column A, B, and C" menu to make him a special meal of all his favorite things. Be sure to list "Hot Lips" under dessert choices!
- u Print something inspirational for him to post on that computer he stares at all day long. Maybe a frame that reminds him of your favorite vacation spots—complete with pictures and scanned postcards or souvenirs. Make a special Internet-style message like "I love you.com"!
- u Is he off to the airport again? Hide some cards in places he's sure to find them while he's gone. Remind him how much you miss him and how much you're looking forward to him coming home! (wink, wink)
- u No house is complete without a "honey-do" list. Make yours fun! For every job he completes, you can have a special thank-you card ready. When everything's done, roll out a banner naming him the Handiest Husband in the Universe!
- u "Shhhhh! Bill the Genius At Work." What special guy wouldn't appreciate THAT hanging on his office door? With Greetings Workshop, it's easy to make fun, frisky or functional doorknob signs. He gets his privacy--and you get to let him know you're thinking about him, even when he's thinking about something else entirely!
- u Garages aren't fun places. But a banner might fun things up a little bit. What about his name and favorite saying above the door of his workshop...or is it an auto repair center? Surprise him with "Bob's Garage. No you can't borrow anything." Or perhaps "Steve's Wood Shop and Sawdust Factory. Let the Chips Fall Where They May!"
- u If you ask him, he'll tell you that just doing all those nice things is all the reward he needs. Wrong. What he needs are fun coupons he can redeem for some of his favorite things. Maybe it's a coupon for you two to go to a movie—and he picks! Action film, anyone? Or it could be for his favorite meal, at home or out. Or maybe it's a coupon for an evening alone with only you. Hmm. Maybe you'd better print a bunch of those!



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## Beyond Girls' Night Out

### Wonderful ways to celebrate your women friends

They understand you. They sympathize with you. They listen to you when you're at your most irrational.

Girl friends are every bit as important when you're all grown up as they were when you were looking for someone to play dolls with. When you're single, they commiserate about good dates, bad dates or no dates. When you get married, they consent to wear the most hideous outfits imaginable so you look better in your wedding gown. And when you have kids, they offer advice and support much more gently than, say, your mother-in-law...who, we're certain, has nothing but the best intentions.

So how do you repay these fabulous friends? What could you possibly do to compensate them for their time and effort? Of course, Greetings Workshop has some suggestions. (You're welcome. That's what we're here for.)

**u** *Start with a simple—and probably unexpected—“thanks.”* After you stay up all night picking a relationship apart over the phone, or whining about your job over a cup of coffee, or shopping for four hours for a dress you never find, send a heartfelt note of appreciation. It's a handy chance to let her know why you're so glad to have her as a friend--kind of like a paper hug. (Awwwwww.)

**u** *Make a big deal out of Chick Night.* Print up calendars for the whole gang with that one special Wednesday (or Thursday or Friday) highlighted. Send invitations. Print up an itinerary. If you're going to someone's house, why not put together a menu—perhaps pointing out that, when consumed in the company of friends, none of the calories count. And your mother would remind you to send thank-you notes the very next day.

**u** *Tell her she's great.* Girls learn from birth to be modest and unassuming...which means we're just awful at accepting compliments. (C'mon—how many times have you said the equivalent of “What...this old thing?”) Unfortunately, this accompanies an amazing need to hear how fabulous we are.

**u** So maybe everyone in your circle of friends should be given *A Week of Her Own*, during which you will all shower her with meaningful compliments (“I've always admired the way you...” and “You're better at this than anyone I know.”), via cards, notes, banners, e-mail and phone calls. It all ends with an anti-roast; instead of slamming your guest of honor mercilessly, you praise her until she blushes.



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## Big Ideas for Small Businesses

### Ideas for everything from lemonade stands to computer consultants

OK. So you probably didn't pick up Greetings Workshop with the idea of using it for your business. And if we said it's every bit as important to your success as, say, your accounting software, we'd be exaggerating a bit. But just a bit. Let us explain.

You probably already know that 80% of your business comes from 20% of your clients. And that keeping a customer takes fewer resources than finding a customer. So communicating with the people who already like your product or service makes sense.

(Can you see where we're going here?) Some examples...

- u Maybe you don't do enough mailing and letter-writing for investing in stationery and business cards to be worth it. Use Greetings Workshop fonts and artwork to design letterhead, note cards, memo sheets, labels and business cards and print out a sheet whenever you need to. Or choose a great Hallmark Connections Computer Papers design that captures your business strategy!
- u If you create your own products, use Greetings Workshop to tell the story—how the product is made, why you make it, where you got your inspiration, how to use the product. Put it in your own words, and sign each card if it feels right. You can also include care instructions, ingredients, recipes, and (of course) your name, address and phone number for future orders.
- u Lots of businesses send thank-you notes and holiday cards to their clients. But with Greetings Workshop, you can personalize yours. Choose artwork and fancy text that reflect your business. Plus, you can create cards for special occasions in your business...like an anniversary sale, new product introductions, or parties.
- u Hey...we haven't even mentioned flyers, posters and signs. With Greetings Workshop, you can tie all of your stationery, press releases, product labels and promotional material together, using the same artwork and fancy text in everything you do. And, because Greetings Workshop lets you produce eye-catching, full-color materials, potential clients can't help but notice.
- u Keeping a file of your clients' e-mail addresses makes those occasional notes even easier—and as an added bonus: no delivery delays!



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## Quality Family Time

### Greetings Workshop helps you share meaningful time with your kids

According to research, kids say their number one wish is for more “quality time” with their families. We don’t know where they pick up language like that, but it’s nice to know a few hours with mom or dad outrank a new video game.

Almost any computer program can be used to bring children closer to their parents—mostly because parents can ask questions about using the program, and the kids can probably come up with answers faster than the tutorial. At Greetings Workshop, we’ve come up with a few more ways to create Bonding Experiences.

- u Just because you’re serving mac’n’cheese from a box, green beans from a can and hot-dogs from a plastic package doesn’t mean dinner can’t be special. Send invitations to the whole family inviting them to supper at 6:30 p.m. sharp—RSVP required. No early departures allowed; for an hour and a half, you’re on a date with the most important people in your life.
  - u Print up a fancy menu describing the exquisite meal, whip out the linen table cloth, light some candles and provide place cards. (If the dog is habitually fed under the table, go ahead and put a place card there, too.) If you want to be especially fancy, use Hallmark Connections Computer Papers.
- u Designate one night to be TV, video and computer free. Print up calendars for everyone in the family letting them know when it will be—that way no one schedules sleep-overs, meetings or tennis games. What you do with it is up to you. Of course, we’ve got some ideas!
  - u Play games. Board games, card games, charades...anything you can play in teams is a good way of bringing the family together. Print up awards for the winners and losers: Best Sportsmanship, Luckiest Dice Roller, Best Compensation for Dad’s Complete Lack of Artistic Ability.
  - u Interview each other. Find out what your spouse and kids think about anything and everything...from politics to music to education. Make up journals—use the single-fold card format for the cover—and encourage everyone to write about it when you’re finished.
  - u Play Show’n’Tell. Maybe you haul out your college yearbook or high school scrapbook, and your 12-year-old brings a few CDs of his favorite music. After it’s all over, write notes, letting each family member know what new things you learned and liked about him or her.
- u Just because you live together doesn’t mean it’s silly to write letters. Keep plenty of Hallmark Connections Computer Papers, envelopes and labels on hand. Mail a card every now and then just to say “hi” or “I love you.” Don’t forget to give your kids stamps so they can send each other notes.



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## Writer's Block

### A crash course in writing about your feelings

You've mastered the basics of Greetings Workshop, and now you're ready to take things a step beyond personalization and write your own cards. Or perhaps all this interpersonal communication has you wishing you were a little more comfortable writing about your true feelings toward the recipient. Or maybe the idea of even *thinking* about your feelings makes your stomach churn (isn't that what a professional greetings writer gets paid for?) but you've gotten yourself into a situation where you just have to spill your guts. Whatever the case, here's how to make it easier.

- u **Just get started.** The more time you spend staring at the computer screen, the harder this is going to get. Start simply, with "When I'm with you, I feel..." or "When I think about you, I feel..." or "When you look at me, I feel..." and go! Worry about whether it makes sense later.
- u **Don't worry about how it sounds at first.** The beautiful thing about *writing* about your feelings is you can go back and rephrase if you realize you've put your foot in your mouth. So sit your little internal censor down in a corner of your mind and tell her to keep quiet—at least until you've got a good, solid first draft to work with.
- u **Write like you talk.** Skip the flowery phrases and big words—unless you use them in your average conversations. The biggest key to making your writing warm and meaningful is realness. So if you tend to babble, take a deep breath and start typing...forget about sentence structure and punctuation and just go until you've said your piece. (Hint: Dashes and ellipses are the babbler's best friends.) If you're uncomfortable talking about your feelings, don't be afraid to start with, "This is really hard to say, but here goes..."
- u **Focus on the person you're writing to.** When you're writing in a journal, all that matters is how you feel. But if this outpouring of emotion is intended to communicate your thoughts to someone else, you'll want to read it from his or her perspective before you lick the envelope or hit send—especially if you're writing during a tough time.
- u **Still nervous? Sleep on it.** You've said just what you want to say, just the way you want to say it. At least you think so. But then again, maybe the timing's all wrong. Or maybe you're making a huge mistake. Or maybe you're apologizing for something no one even noticed. No big deal—just hold off on sending it until you've had, at the very least, a substantial nap.
- u **Then, make it look great.** Hallmark Connections Computer Papers, labels and envelopes are available in designs appropriate for lots of different occasions. Pick one that works with your wonderful words!



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## Greetings Workshop as a Designer's Tool

### Some ways to get even more creative with our artwork, fonts, and formats

Greetings Workshop isn't just for greeting cards, invitations, announcements, banners, posters, flyers and labels—although that already seems like a lot. With some of the most original artwork of any software program and flexible formats, it's also a simple desktop publishing program. Try it for...

**u***Really personal stationery.* Start with an 8.5 x 11" page or a note card. Zip through Greetings Workshop's clip-art library and find a simple piece that's really you—maybe it's a classically designed leaf or border, or a cute kitty, or a romantic rose. Add your name or initials, and it's time to play.

**u**Placement: Try a border, with your name or initials centered at the top or bottom. Or make your name the dominant element, with a tiny graphic next to or behind it. Maybe the artwork is the eye-catcher, with your name centered in simple letters beneath it.

**u**Color: Contrast the colors, using bright and dark or warm and cool. Try “reversing” your name or initials—printing white or light letters on top of dark artwork. Or pick a color from the artwork to use for your name.

**u**Versions: There's a lot of room for creativity on a full sheet of paper—plenty of space to include your full name, address, phone number and artwork. Make an abbreviated version, too; shrink or crop the artwork to use with just your initials on labels and note cards.

**u**And one more thing: Ever run across a quote, observation or verse that sums up your philosophy? No reason not to include it, too.

**u***Territory marking.* Need labels for your famous green pepper jelly? Or do you tend to lose books to well-intentioned but forgetful friends and wouldn't mind some personalized “ex libris” stickers? Or is your stapler (not to mention your scissors, hole punch, coffee mug, letter opener...) constantly disappearing from your desk? Use Hallmark Connections designed labels and start getting possessive.

**u***Gifts that gab.* There's a story behind every gift—where you found it, why it's special, what it means, or how to take care of it. Design your own gift tags—the smaller card format is handy—and go into detail.

**u**The layout: Keep it simple—“to” and “from” on the outside and the scoop on the gift on the inside. Or, if the gift is handmade, you might design a logo (like “Hand-crafted by Carolyn”) using clip art and fancy text for the cover. Or maybe you can find a piece of artwork in the Greetings Workshop art files that hints at or represents the gift.

**u**The words: If you found the gift somewhere unusual, make it an epic saga (“While exploring the undiscovered corners of Mound, Texas...). If the gift sparked a memory, tell the story simply, in your own words (“Remember that time we stayed up all night drinking coffee and *you* said...”). If the gift itself is unusual, explain it (“Note: this isn't nearly as scary as it seems...”).



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## Newsletter Writing

### Creative ideas for sharing news with family and friends

You're the family historian/reporter/gossip. Once a year, you cram everything that's happened to your family in the last 12 months into one tiny little letter. And you'll probably admit that it's much easier to write one letter and mail it to everyone on your list.

But wait—there's no reason those entertaining, information-packed newsletters have to be limited to the holidays. Take a hint from the business world and use newsletters to keep family and friends up to date on, well, everything.

uFirst, figure out who you want to keep in touch with: your entire, extended family, old high school or college buddies, friends from the military living all over the world, friends from a chat room...or just about any other group with something in common. Get everyone's name and address; if you really want to save time, do as much of this as possible by e-mail or use Hallmark Connections address labels.

uOK...now who's going to write this stuff? You can—especially if you're the picky type who will be annoyed as all get out by others' grammatical errors or pointless rambling! Or you can retain editing rights. Or, for Type B personalities only, you can throw it open and print all submissions uncensored and unedited.

uClick over to Invitations & Announcements to create a call for articles. Are you looking for general news (birthdays, vacations, promotions), humorous essays, stories and reminiscences, recipes, advice, photos? Be sure to include the format you'd like things in: typewritten, e-mailed, text files, TIFF, GIF or JPEG, scrawled on a napkin. And don't forget the deadline. We recommend making it about a week before you actually need the articles.

uNow use "create your own" in Flyers & Signs to put together an 8.5x11" newsletter. Or select one of Hallmark Connections Computer Papers. A few tips...

uMake all the headlines the same font—maybe a bold, easy-to-read, sans serif (Latin for "without the little wingy things on the ends of letters"). Same thing for the stories; try a 10-12 point serif ("with wingies").

uArtwork keeps newsletters from looking too "gray" (meaning "just a lot of words"). Use Greetings Workshop designs or scanned-in photos and cartoons.



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## Getting to Know You

### Ways to get the attention of that special someone

It's official—your friends are sick of hearing about The Crush and wish you would just SHUT UP and do something about it. And the crush has clearly reached critical mass, because you can't think about anything else. It is Time To Act.

OK. So what comes first? We suggest a little testing—the greeting card equivalent of sticking your toe in a swimming pool. Maybe your first communiqué is vaguely impersonal—a congratulations on winning in Humorous Interp at the forensics tournament or an invitation to come over and watch videos with a bunch of friends.

“Hmmm,” thinks The Crushee. “What a nice person this is.” Good for you...you've made a great first impression.

Now you've made contact. Time for some serious flirting. We recommend funny cards—and you'll choose the perfect ones, because hours of intense observation have revealed exactly what The Cute One finds funny. Stick a card on a car windshield, inside a notebook or folder, or inside a locker.

By this time The Funny and Talented One is thinking “Wow. What an exceptionally nice person this is.” The next step is for you two to fall madly in love...and for The Crushee to ask you out for some food. This is your chance to go all out, because you're a naturally thoughtful person and you dig stuff like this. So you keep sending funny little cards. If you stop now, The Gorgeous One may not be able to identify what's changed, but will know that something is missing. So you create the occasional congratulatory banner or encouraging poster. You make some coupons good for an hour of help on a project, or a free car wash, or a batch of homemade cookies.

Eventually, you can use those little greetings to tell The Wonder Person about your warm and true feelings. Start with something along the lines of “It's fun hanging out with you...” Then throw in some stuff about how you feel when you're together. And sooner or later you get to the little l-word (like) and the big L-word (love).

Sigh.

Oh, and while all this is going on, don't forget all those friends who suffered with you through The Crush. They'll need updates.

They'll need invitations to sleep-overs to discuss The Relationship. They'll need thank-yous for their advice and patience. Remember—you don't want to take those future bridesmaids for granted.



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## Awards Ceremonies

### Creative ways to say “And the special person is...”

Remember how much you loved getting certificates and awards when you were a kid? Whether it was for good citizenship, excellent penmanship or perfect attendance, there was something incredibly cool about those paper reminders that you did something *right*.

Now computers make it easy to do fancy, personalized awards for just about anything, which makes it easy to take them for granted. But maybe that’s just because we rarely get noticed for the everyday stuff that really matters—like being a good parent, or going above and beyond on a project, or making a kick-butt lasagna. So why not create your own awards ceremonies, where you take the time to tell the people you care about that you appreciate the little things?

**u**Say “*Thanks.*” A Certificate of Appreciation can be much more than a generic thank-you for “outstanding effort.”

Say your best friend invites your kids over for an afternoon so you can get some work done, or your significant other gives a particularly fabulous foot massage, or a coworker treats everyone to bagels and cream cheese one morning. When you create the award, write about how thoughtful they are *and* how great it made you feel!

**u**Say “*You’re terrific.*” Every now and then it’s just nice to know someone thinks you’re OK. So say it with a Proclamation of Excellence in Friendship—and formally declare all the reasons

you’re lucky to have such a swell pal. An Award of Outstanding Kidship can detail things you just love about your child, from “the way you take such good care of your goldfish” to “your great big laugh.” Don’t let fancy words get in the way; say how you really feel.

**u**Say “*You did it.*” You know how hard your husband worked to put the doll house together. (Of course, it would have been easier if

he’d read the instructions, but that’s beside the point.) Let him know with a Certificate of Completion acknowledging your admiration for his effort. And when your cubicle buddy finally finishes the tedious project she’s been slaving over for six weeks with little or no support from management, an Outstanding Performance by a Corporate Drone Award lets her know that you, at least, think she deserves a raise!

**u**Say “*Wow!*” Sometimes someone does something so selfless and thoughtful you get a little teary-eyed just thinking about it—and the very nature of these acts means they go entirely unnoticed. Create an Unsung Hero Award, and tell someone who volunteers for Big Brothers/Big Sisters, or spends weekends working for Habitat for Humanity, or made your little girl smile again after her hamster died that you wish there were more people like them.

**u**Say *it with style.* Use Hallmark Connections computer papers to dress up your awards. We especially like the gold star design, but you can choose your favorite!



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## Milestone Birthdays

### Greetings Workshop offers gobs of ways to honor the antique

Once you've turned 21, or 30, or 40, or any of those other Very Important Ages, none of the years in-between seem all that important (after all, 31 only means you're now "in your thirties"—note the lower-case "t"). But wouldn't you feel slightly slighted if your friends didn't make a huge fuss over the Big Something-O?

There. That's how we rationalize humiliating friends and family on their milestone birthdays. Simple, isn't it? Now, on with celebration.

u We think Special Birthday People should be reminded of their specialness over and over. That's why we like the idea of a Birthday Countdown Calendar—say, the 40 Days of 40. Just print up two calendars: On the first, put a little piece of wisdom, advice or downright mockery on each date ("Day 13: Arthritis sets in." "Day 27: You're lucky—being 30 means not having to worry about a date for the prom."). On the second calendar, put the countdown - Day 1, Day 2, etc. Then use a craft knife to cut doors in the second calendar, and glue it over the first. Voila!

u We also think Special Birthday People should think of their age several times a day. To help them, print up a bunch of labels that say something like "Hey, Ed! In case you forgot, you're 40!" Now sneak into Ed's (or whatever your friend's name is) home or office and stick the labels on everything that seems appropriate. (Examples of "appropriate:" Page B-17 of the newspaper, a stick of deodorant, a can of tomato soup. Example of inappropriate: \$200 leather loafers.)

u Just because you have the nifty greeting card program doesn't mean you should have all the fun. Share the joy by printing up a banner that says "30 Reasons We Can Tell Jared Is Getting Older." Number the spaces, hang it in the break room, and let Jared's thoughtful coworkers fill in the rest.

u Taking an aging friend out to a birthday lunch or dinner is very thoughtful—and it becomes even more so when you've made custom placemats by scanning in a picture of the birthday person's face and putting it on a horizontal sign with a festive border. Throw a box of crayons or markers in the middle of the table and everyone can add their own artistic flourishes, to be presented to the Guest of Honor at the end of the meal. (So watch where you drip that spaghetti sauce.)

u Turn your wizened friend into the Ancient Wise One of your workplace: Print up some flyers inviting everyone to her cubicle for advice, words of wisdom, instruction in the use of the copier. She's sure to appreciate this opportunity to share her knowledge with complete strangers. (Hallmark Connections birthday designs can help with printer ink conservation if the Ancient One has lots of friends!)



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## Showing Appreciation

### Thoughtful ways to go beyond thank-you notes

If you've got Greetings Workshop, we can guess at least one thing about you: You've been told since birth to write thank-you notes. (Marketing research is a fabulous thing. Still, some of the things we've discovered about you scare us a little—we think your “likely brand of toilet paper” is none of our business.)

Anyway, we think thank-you notes are wonderful, for great and small acts of kindness—there's no better feeling than being thanked for something you did without thinking it was a big deal. It makes you feel like a nice person.

Which brings us to the bigger subject of “showing appreciation.” Every day, people go around doing nice things, obligatory things, difficult things, work-related things, necessary things, family things, mom things, dad things, thoughtful things, guilt-driven things, over-and-above-the-call-of-friendship things. And for the most part, the things go, if not completely unnoticed, at least under-acknowledged.

We're not for a minute suggesting that you buy a steak dinner for every friend who opens a door or tells you your outfit makes your butt look almost non-existent. But how about a little positive feedback?

First train yourself to notice when someone goes out of their way for you (even if it's just a tiny detour). Then let them know what it meant to you. Did it make you smile? Restore your faith in the basic goodness of human beings? Make your life easier? Earn you a \$5K a year promotion? Lessen your stress for an hour or two? Take a load off your mind?

There are a zillion ways to do the “letting them know” part. Here are a few:

- u *The card.* It doesn't have to be fancy or long-winded. Check out one of our “thanks for that” cards and plug in the kind deed. Don't forget to add a note about the way it made you feel—that's the part that will make them glad they did it.
- u *The award.* How about a formal expression of your gratitude? Look at our “Awards” article for some hints.
- u *The banner.* Tell the world what a wonderful person your friend is with a yard-long thank you—in this case, size does matter.



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