

# CHARACTER



**Citizenship**

**May 2007**

**Citizenship is the status of a citizen with its attendant, duties, rights and privileges.**

**Remember: You can make a difference.**

**“All it takes for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing.”**

*–Edmund Burke*

Recently I was standing on the balcony of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense building in the heavily fortified “Green Zone” of downtown Baghdad overlooking this ancient city.

I looked upon a land that has over 5,000 years of history and is the cradle of much of the civilization of the world in which we live.

In contrast to the people in the city, I was in a comparatively safe environment with soldiers, weapons and military vehicles behind sandbags, blast walls and miles of concertina wire and barricades

Across the Tigris River, which runs through the middle of Baghdad, I could see that none of those protections were in place for the thousands of people who live in a dangerous environment.

The cause of danger is a continuing conflict between groups seeking power and control over the future of the Iraqi nation and people.

The dangers of war are terrible, especially for the very young, the very old, the sick, the lame and the unprotected. Yet it is within this type of environment that true citizenship begins for the people of Iraq.

Citizenship is often described as the allegiance to a specific nation. For most people citizenship is but a matter of birth, not choice. And if it is choice, they must make a conscious decision to give up one national loyalty for another.

However, true citizenship is more than just an allegiance to a nation. It is the fundamental values of believing in what that nation stands for and the willingness to personally stand up for the opportunity to be a citizen of worth.

Many Iraqi’s have made the choice that their type of citizenship is to be found in the elements of freedom, something they have not had for more than 40 years.

There are other Iraqi’s who fear that any change in their political structure will take power away from the few and give it to the many.

Iraqi Army Colonel Ali, whom I have the pleasure of working with every day, is one of those who sees the value of freedom being essential to the principle of citizenship in a modern Iraqi democracy.

Colonel Ali told me one day that it was his belief that “the freedom for any person starts from his home.” He explained that that was where one learned to be a good citizen in the community and nation.

To Colonel Ali and many other Iraqi’s, it is the hope of the future that citizenship in the new Iraq will take place when there is a level of freedom and security that allows the Iraqi people to live their lives according to the dictates of their own hearts and minds.

For that purpose many are willing to sacrifice their lives in hopes that their children and grandchildren will be able to enjoy Iraqi citizenship to the fullest.

We, American’s, have been blessed to live in a time and age when we have enjoyed the blessings of our citizenship which is the envy of the world.

No matter what people say against our nation and government for the most part they would give almost anything to be part of the American experience.

I have come to see the reality of the dedication to freedom in the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people, and therefore I’ve come to cherish more fervently my own citizenship and loyalty to my country.

Yet, as Colonel Ali said, it is in our homes and families that the seeds of being a good citizen are sown and without watering that seed with effort, faith and diligence and giving it the adequate light of knowledge it will die on the vine and never grow to fulfill its destiny.

Within our own homes is the opportunity to build an appreciation for the value and faith in our nation and the goodness that is inherent in its foundation and destiny.

May we cherish the blessing of being born American’s or choosing to be an American and willing to help others find freedom and true citizenship in their homes and nations.

Len Allred  
*Lindon Resident*

”What is right is right, even if no one is doing it. What is wrong is wrong, even if everyone is doing it.”

*– Anonymous*

**“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”**

*–Margaret Mead*

**“There are no ‘passengers’ on spaceship earth. Everybody’s ‘crew’.”**

*–M. McLuhan*

**Character Connection is looking for volunteers to oversee our monthly newsletter and serve as treasurer. Lisa Tanner will be stepping down this summer after serving on the board for the past fourteen years. This is a wonderful opportunity to give back to the community and work with fun people. Please contact Lisa Tanner at 785-9246 or Kathy Allred at 785-7230 if you would like to get involved.**

## **Family Activities**

**\*\*Attend** a Memorial Day flag ceremony.  
**\*\*Ask a grandparent** or an older relative about their involvement with one of the world wars or other important parts of United States history.  
**\*\* The constitution** provides for the basic rights of an American citizen. As a family, read the constitution.  
**\*\*John F. Kennedy**, the 35<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, was born on May 29, 1917. He said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." Talk about the responsibilities of citizenship in the United States.

## **Kid's Corner**

Do you do your share of work it takes to be a safe, functioning and good community? Being a good citizen means to do your part for the good of the whole. The actions of one person can affect many others and do much to help make our community a better place to live.

We need to obey the laws of the land. We have a responsibility to preserve history and our environment. We each need to clean up after ourselves, report wrong doing, vote, pay taxes, study the current issues and voice our opinions.

As John F. Kennedy said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." Each of us who live here have a duty to be a good citizen in exchange for the benefits, rights and privileges of belonging.

Jeffrey Posland

**We, at Character Connection would like to focus on helping parents access character materials by using the web site located at [www.lindoncharacterconnection.com](http://www.lindoncharacterconnection.com). If you are interested in receiving a monthly reminder of the character traits and access to resource materials, please e-mail your address to [arlainea@isquaredinc.com](mailto:arlainea@isquaredinc.com)**

Character Connection is a not-for-profit organization encouraging the enhancement of character development in our community. We are accepting financial support. If you can help please send contributions to:  
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 c/o Alpine Foundation  
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 (You may also give your donation to any executive board member.)

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