

CHARACTER

Generosity

May 2009



Generosity: "the liberality or willingness in giving; unselfishness."
Being thoughtful of the needs of others.

In the late 1990's Vladimir Campero sat quietly in his home in Australia watching a documentary on his native country Bolivia. Stirred in his soul by that which he viewed he announced to his wife that they must go back to their native country and "help my people." Today, he is the regional director for a humanitarian group providing knowledge, training and resources that improve the well being of less fortunate children and families in Latin America. Last year over 150 North American volunteers worked along side Vladimir giving their time and personal resources to travel to Bolivia on expeditions to care for those less fortunate. Their efforts assisted 29,359 beneficiaries in health programs, 5,724 in education programs and 722 in micro-enterprise programs.

We could describe him as being a generous man, a man who gives freely of his time and talents to those in his community. His generosity is reflected in his cheerful countenance and humble heart. We are blessed to live in a community of thousands of Vladimirs! The generous giving of oneself is deeply implanted in the hearts of our own community. The following abbreviated true story of one of our Lindon young men serving a mission illustrates this principle:

"At each of our conferences it was our practice to have the district leader stand and report on his district's service projects. At one conference, a district leader came forward and asked his district to stand, face the missionaries, and show them their hands. We all quickly saw that they were all covered with blisters. He reported their service project had been to dig a well for one of the poor families in Elbasan who had no running water in their home.

Initially, when they had started digging the 6 feet in diameter well, the digging was relatively easy. As the hole got

deeper, they soon couldn't throw the dirt up and over the edge, so they devised a system to fill buckets tied to a rope. When a bucket was filled, it was hoisted up where two elders on top would take and haul the dirt away.

When you get down to 15 feet, that is a deep hole. At 16 feet they hit solid rock. How great is your generous spirit to continue your service project at a time like this? After some searching, the young man found the one man in the little city who had a jack hammer. However, after the man broke two bits while drilling, he refused to go any further. How does this affect your generous spirit? With a home made sledge hammer they continued on chipping away using the sledge and old railroad spikes.

How is your generous spirit when you get to 20 feet and you're still in rock with no water? How about 25 feet? It was at 26 feet when they found the rock in the bottom of the well was wet. They broke through the rock, went down another foot, and the next day at 27 feet, they came out to find a foot of water in their well."

And so what our venerable Vladimir and our Lindon lad have generously given is their time and their generous will to lift life's burden from others. The gift of time is one of the most generous gifts one can give because it's the least renewable of resources. Generosity doesn't require money. It requires imagination. And so as our souls are stirred to "help my people" may each of us have the will to go the full 27 feet. In so doing we will truly become noble, kind individuals who are genuinely generous.

Bob Sorenson
Lindon Resident
(Reprint of May 2005 Article)

"Generosity is not giving me that which I need more than you do, but it is giving me that which you need more than I do."
-Kahlil Gibran

"All my experience of the world teaches me that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the safe and just side of a question is the generous and merciful side."
-Anna Jameson

Book List

“The Quiltmaker’s Gift”
by Jeff Brumbeau

“The Library”
by Sarah Stewart



Family Activities

-Said Robert of Doncaste, “What I gave I have, what I spent I had; and what I left I lost.” Play “Hot Potato” and talk about the idea of love not being love until you give it away.

-Make a family treat and share it with a neighbor.

-Johns Hopkins was born on May 19, 1795. When his family(Quakers) freed their slaves, Johns ended his formal education to help on the family plantation. In 1812, he worked for his uncle in the grocery business. Johns was soon a prominent wholesale grocer in Baltimore. His wise investments in banking and railroads also brought rich returns. He left his fortune to establish the internationally renowned Johns Hopkins University and Johns Hopkins Hospital.

By Laura Clement

Kid’s Corner

During this economic downturn, this is an important characteristic to be aware of and improving upon. We live in one of the most prosperous nations on the earth. Most of us have enough and to spare. We can donate clothes, used furniture and other household items to DI for the needy. The earthquake in Italy as well as many disasters of the past help us be concerned about meeting the basic needs of other humans in distress. We can donate to trustworthy organizations that will help provide shelter and blankets. We can participate in food drives to be sure that the hungry have what they need to survive. We can donate money to worthy causes to support and promote good around us. Most of us can regularly donate blood at blood drives. We can donate our time and volunteer service to others in need. Cleaning a park, contributing to scouting, tutoring a child, visiting a lonely elderly person....there is no end to the wonderful works of good we can do for others. The best part about having a generous heart is what good it does for you!

Natalie, Pleasant Grove High School

We, at Character Connection, would like to focus on helping parents access character materials by using the web site located at www.lindoncharacterconnection.com.

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