

Lindon

CHARACTER

Connection



GENEROSITY

JANUARY 2011

Generosity: Sees and fills the need without waiting for thanks. "I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver."—Maya Angelou

Well, it's over. Another Christmas has come and gone, and along with it the whirlwind of activities, events, and decorations that typify this special time of year. As I pack up the holiday trinkets, I can't help but think that each year seems to pass by more swiftly. By this time next year, chances are slim that my children will even remember what their Christmas gifts were! But it is my hope that, somehow, they will remember what is truly important about the season and that we will live it all year long.

E. Paul Hovey said, "He who lives for himself will have small troubles; but they will seem to him great. He who lives for others will have great troubles; but they will seem to him small. That is the spirit called Christmas." Losing ourselves in the spirit of service—in the spirit of generosity—is truly the key to happiness. And there are so many ways of being generous: with our time, with our money, with our talents, with our friendship, with our love.

Recently, I read a rather amazing article about a father and son that demonstrates true generosity. You may have heard of Dick and Rick Hoyt. Rick was brain damaged and unable to control his limbs. Dick and his wife, Judy, were told that he would be a vegetable for the rest of his life and should be institutionalized. They refused to do so, and when Rick was 11, they rigged him up with a computer that allowed him to control the cursor with the side of his head. He started communicating. In high school, Rick typed out that he wanted to be a part of a charity race for a paralyzed classmate. His father, who was overweight and out of shape at the time, pushed his son in the five mile race. That day changed Rick's life. "Dad," he typed, "When we were running, it felt like I wasn't disabled anymore!" After that, Dick became obsessed with giving Rick that feeling whenever he could.

Dick and Rick have completed 212 triathlons (can you imagine hauling a 110-pound person through grueling, 15-hour Ironman competitions?) and 25 marathons. They still compete in a race almost every weekend. What an incredibly unselfish father. But you know what they say: What goes around comes around. It turns out that two years ago Dick had a mild heart attack. One of his arteries was 95% clogged, and the doctors said that if he hadn't been in such great shape, he probably would have died 15

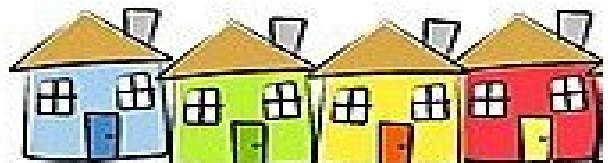
years ago. Parenting even a healthy child requires constant generosity in so many ways!

As I struggle with my own selfish impulses, I am reminded of a long-ago trip to Israel. While there I was able to swim in two very different lakes: The Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. The two experiences were extremely different from each other. Bruce Barton captured the differences quite eloquently in the following passage:

"There are two seas in Palestine. One is fresh and fish are in it. Splashes of green adorn its banks. Trees spread their branches over it and spread their thirsty roots to sip its healing waters. The river Jordan makes this sea with sparkling water from the hill, so it laughs in the sunshine. Every kind of life is happier because it is there. This river Jordan flows farther on south into another sea. Here are no splashing of fish, no fluttering leaf, no song of birds. Travelers choose another route when passing. The air hangs heavy above its waters, that neither man nor beast nor fowl will drink. What makes this mighty difference in these neighboring seas? Not the soil in which they lie, nor the country roundabout. The Sea of Galilee receives but does not keep the Jordan. For every drop that flows into it, another flows out. The giving and receiving go on in equal measure. The other sea is shrewder, hoarding its income jealously. It will not be tempted into generous impulse. Every drop it gets it keeps. Receiving all and giving nothing—it is called "The Dead Sea." The other sea gives and lives. There are two seas in Palestine; and two kinds of people in the world."

So at this time of year when we are making our New Year's resolutions, let us all resolve to continue to give of ourselves. What Winston Churchill said is true, "You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give."

Kristin McQuivey
Lindon Resident



Book List

The Happy Prince

by Oscar Wilde

Magical Hands

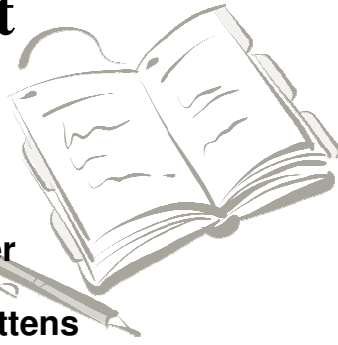
by Marjorie Barker

A Chair for My Mother

by Vera Williams

The Dog Who Had Kittens

by Pilly M. Robertus



Family Activities

****As a family, make a plate of cookies for a neighbor that you don't know well.**

****Look in the newspaper public service column for opportunities to help others in need.**

**** SWEET REWARD: Set aside a large jar for marshmallows. When you see a family member be generous with their time or possessions, comment about the act, then add 1 large marshmallow to the jar. When you have 40 marshmallows, make Crispy Rice treats and enjoy the sweetness of generosity.**

****On January 6, La Befana is celebrated in Italy. Befana, a kindly witch, visits with toys for good children. Leave a small gift for someone "from Befana" and watch the results of your generosity.**

Kids Corner

A poem to memorize...

If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying deed, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
One glance most kind
That fell like sunshine where it went—
Then you may count that day well spent.
But if, through all the livelong day,
You've cheered no heart, by yea or nay—
If, through it all
You've nothing done that you can trace
That brought the sunshine to one face—
No act most small
That helped some soul and nothing cost—
Then count that day as worse than lost.

By George Elliot

*Help thy brother's boat across the stream,
and Lo! Thine own has reached the
shore.*

Hindu Proverb

**"No one is useless in this world who
lightens the burdens of another."**

—Charles Dickens.

**"There is no delight in owning
anything unshared."—Seneca**

**"Without the rich heart, wealth is an ugly
beggar."—Ralph Waldo Emerson**

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Newsletter To Be Announced

We, of Lindon Character Connection, would like to focus on helping parents access character materials by using our web site: www.lindoncharacterconnection.com. Lindon 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 us please send contributions to:

Lindon Character Connection

c/o Alpine Foundation 575 N 100 E American Fork, UT

84003 You may also give your donation to any executive board member. (This newsletter is a reprint from January 2007)

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HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ONE AND ALL!!

