

One good deed... and another

Over the years, I've often heard the DJs on Toronto radio stations telling of random acts of kindness.

You know the sort of thing we're talking about here— like when someone pulls up to the drive-thru and is told the person ahead has paid for their order.

Wikipedia, the on-line encyclopedia, defines random acts of kindness as "a selfless act performed by someone to help or cheer up a stranger, for no reason other than to make people happier."

'RAoKs' as they are often referred to, come in all shapes and sizes, but all have one thing in common— they bring a little bit of joy or comfort to the recipient, as well as the giver.

I've heard of RAOs for years, but (apart from a local car dealer paying to fill up my co-worker's gas tank when she was at the gas bar) most RAOs I've heard of happened to people I've had no connection with— until this week.

I have a friend who drops by the office from time to time. Bruce O'Connor is a very kind and courteous man, who enjoys many things in life— art, history and politics to name a few.

A veteran of the Second World War, Bruce was a tail gunner in a Lancaster bomber, and put his life on the line for his country many times.

I told his story a couple years back.

He has always dropped by to lend me a book, see how I'm doing, or simply to take a break from his regular mall-walking exercise. But this week, Bruce dropped by my office for a totally different reason.

He had a favour to ask— he wanted me to e-mail a letter to the editor of an out-of-town newspaper, since Bruce has no Internet access. I was out when he dropped by, but he left the letter for me. Naturally, I was only too happy to help.

I read the letter, where he told of being in St. Catharines the day before, and after a medical procedure, Bruce had dropped by a local restaurant to cheer himself up with a piece of chocolate

Ted Brown



cream pie and a tea.

When Bruce finished his treat, he asked for the bill. He was amazed to learn that the young couple sitting across the aisle from him had paid his bill when they left.

They had spotted Bruce's airman's pin on his blazer, identifying him as a veteran.

Bruce summed up his letter to the editor with: *This old air force and army type would just like to say 'How gracious and thank you, especially during VE week.'*

I e-mailed the letter to the St. Catharines newspaper, and coincidentally, within minutes of sending it, Bruce dropped by the office again to see if I'd had any luck. I told him I'd just sent it. We chatted a few minutes and he was on his way.

Returning to my desk I found a reply to my e-mail from *St Catharines Standard* editorial page editor Calvin Reid asking for Bruce's home phone number so he could let Bruce know when his letter was running— another act of kindness.

As I sent the info to Calvin, I was struck how RAOs are infectious— one leads to another.

So the next time you're in line at the drive-thru, or someone is struggling to find the correct change at the till ahead of you— open your wallet (and in doing so, your heart) and make a stranger's day.

You just might be surprised how good it makes you feel.

(Ted Brown can be reached at tbrown@independentfreepress.com)



Habitat for Humanity®
Halton



Habitat for Humanity Halton will be building in Georgetown this summer and is now accepting applications for families.

Information sessions for those interested in finding out about the Home Ownership program will be held in:

•Georgetown - Thursday, May 10, at 7:00 p.m.

•Georgetown - Saturday, May 12, at 10:00 a.m.

Call (866) 314-4344 to register! You must attend an information session to get an application form.

Georgetown

GARDEN CENTRE

140 GUELPH ST. 905 877-8882

OPEN
7
DAYS!

- Hangers
- Flowering Plants
- Annuals & Perennials
- Finished Accent Planters

Rose Bushes

Various Colours **\$11.99**

2 gal. pot

LAWN & GARDEN SUPPLIES

- Fertilizers • Tools
- Grass Seed
- Weed & Insect Spray

Top Soil \$1.99

Fresh Bouquet of **Flowers \$2.99**

Only bunch

COME MEET

"THE GRILL OF YOUR DREAMS"

Featuring

TO FIT YOUR LIFESTYLE, IT FIRST HAS TO FIT YOUR FOOT

We put comfort, performance, and fit technologies into shoes that look as good as they feel. So you'll be ready to go wherever the day takes you.

WIDTHS AVAILABLE

2A	B	D	2E	4E	6E
----	---	---	----	----	----

Not all models come in all widths.

dunhamfits.com
a trusted new balance breed

72 Main St., Georgetown

905-877-3201

Backyard Touch

318 Guelph Street, Georgetown

905.873.8835

HOURS: Mon. - Fri. 10 am - 6 pm; Sat. 10 am - 5 pm, Sun. 11 am - 3 pm

HYDROPOOL
hot tubs - swim spas
(FORMERLY BEACHCOMBER)

MORE THAN JUST HOT TUBS