

Colleen's Contemplations – August 2009

I had a very pleasant experience the other night during client shopping that I thought would not only be a wonderful story to share, but also a reminder to all of our donors and volunteers about the difference you help make, and why WNC does what it does.

I had a “new” client in the other night who had received a free SHARE Easter meal but hadn't come in to the store and registered until now. Her sister brought her in. She used the Easter meal to serve Easter dinner to her sister and her nephew, and by the shiny eyes, I could tell it meant a lot to her to be able to do something for the people who are obviously her caretakers. So, she was already pretty happy with her association with WNC. As I was explaining why we need the current contact information and her birth date she said she read about the birthday gifts in our client newsletter and thought that was very nice of us, but mentioned that it was too bad her birthday was a month ago. I said as a belated birthday gift I could give her her choice of cake and frosting (which the girl scouts had collected for us). Once again she had happy tears, oh how nice of us she said once again.

As I was reading my notes for her, I saw that we owed her a Mother's day gift, so I got her one and one of the cards the kids had written up. She read the card (that said “Mom's need to: Take care of YOU. Be proud of YOU. Always love YOU. You are special.”) and the tears just flowed. It was the fact that a child wrote it that got her most. At that moment her sister walked up with a lamp and the tears came again. Turns out when she still had a dog, it used to knock over a lamp to get her out of bed (she has a chronic condition that can keep her bedridden and depressed). She no longer has the dog, but she also has no lamps. Yeah for light!

She and her sister looked around, this was near the end of the night and there was only one other family still there. They came up a few minutes later and asked if they were getting too much (of course they weren't), they had about a dozen outfits. They felt a bit selfish and were overwhelmed by the quality of clothing they were taking. “all these nice things for free.” There were a lot of tears. It was a good night.

Just remember that it's because of donors like you that we have birthday and Mother's Day gifts to give, meals to provide, and quality items to put in our store. It's because of volunteers like you that we can put together and distribute gifts and meals, and have items neatly placed in our store for clients to find. Without your generosity of time, money and items, we would have nothing to give our neighbors in need. But the items we give are just a fraction of the story.

We do what we do not just to get “stuff” into our neighbor's hands, but to put a bandage on their hearts and to show them they deserve to have nice things too. We do what we do to show people that they are valuable people who matter.

I just wanted you all to know how much I appreciate all you do. It allows me to witness a lot of wonderful blessings.

Colleen Woerner, WNC Store Manager