



STEVEN'S SPIRIT Of Giving

Welcome



Welcome to the Winter edition to our Steven's Spirit of Giving Newsletter.

SSOG began in Spring 2011 as a way to honor Steven Daniels, a Son, a Brother, an Uncle and a Friend to many. If you were one of the people that were blessed to know him, you most likely experienced the kindness he exhibited through-out his time with us. It is his spirit of love that presses us forward as we seek to promote kindness within our community and beyond.

We have been blessed in Western New York to be experiencing a relatively mild winter this year! Still we look forward to Spring and the promise of the renewal it brings. In this issue, we bring you articles highlighting kindness through volunteerism, our Kindness Crusader Corner, Hospitality Hub, Humor Spot and our new Wellness Words.

It is our hope that the information we share through the SSOG Newsletter brightens your day, and like us, you will be inspired by Steven's Spirit of Giving! We welcome your contribution of articles for future issues.

Gail M. Daniels
Executive Editor

Kindness Crusaders...



Winter either has us bundling up to enjoy the splendor of a white, glistening crisp day, or finding new ways to stay entertained indoors. Here are some random acts of kindness you can do with your family while we await warmer weather:

- At your local mall, tape quarters onto the kiddie rides so a child can enjoy a ride for free
- Brush the snow off of a neighbor's car, or shovel their walk
- Purchase gift cards for an on-line movie site. Distribute the cards with a bag of microwaveable popcorn to neighbors to enjoy on a chilly night
- Donate old baby blankets to an animal shelter
- Take a hot chocolate to your school crossing guard

-Kristin Fields

A Call to Breast Cancer Action

When Jeanette Koncikowski lost her mother to breast cancer in 2012, she was determined to find a way to assist the community in understanding breast cancer risk factors and prevention strategies. To this end, Jeanette became a "Community Leader for Change" with the Breast Cancer Action Network. The mission of BC Action is to, "achieve health justice for all women at risk of and living with breast cancer." While many charitable organizations exist to raise awareness about breast cancer and to encourage diagnosis and treatment, BC Action focuses specifically on understanding environmental risk factors and promoting education, advocacy and prevention.



BC Action believes in:

- Health justice as a human right
- Honesty, fearlessness and truth-telling about the breast cancer epidemic
- Honoring women's diverse voices and lived experiences
- People's health and well-being over corporate profits
- Transparency and accountability for ourselves and others Integrity and freedom from conflict of interest
- Collective action that changes the world for the better

As a Community Leader for Change, Jeanette created a Facebook group for WNY BC Action, providing weekly breast cancer updates to 173 members. Additionally, she coordinates community pot lucks, survivor speaking sessions, Think Before You Pink® activities and education programs, such as "Toxic Cosmetics and Breast Cancer," and "Racism, Classism and Breast Cancer." Jeanette works closely with other community leaders, including breast cancer survivor and activist, Bridget Hallock.

In her work with BC Action, Jeanette has found a way to give back to her community while honoring her mother's memory. To learn more about BC Action, please visit <http://www.bcaction.org/>.

-Andrea B. Nikischer



Guerrilla Giving

As Americans we are proud of our spirit of giving, tithing ourselves through a plethora of voluntary programs, both secular and religious. And, as is usually the case in a market economy, an industry has arisen to help channel individual generosity to those in need. Many charitable organizations bundle individual gifts into formidable treasuries able to target meta problems or direct funds to communities with little or no fundraising opportunities – and they do so with very few overhead expenses. Others siphon of a large or even lion's share for themselves, forming a giving industry complete with corporate-level CEO salaries. These polar opposites represent to public face of giving in America, with many providing an important service – a relatively easy anonymous way to share, to give, to return something to society.

Then there's guerrilla giving. This is acephalous, leaderless, anarchistic and often unorganized. With guerrilla giving, you see a need or a problem, and you give of yourself. You give your time, your expertise, your labor, or as we do with big charities, your money. Ironically we see this in mid-20th Century Americana images of boy scouts helping senior citizen's cross streets, or a person giving money to a hungry panhandler. There are no limits to how this spirit of giving can manage itself. This, I believe, is Steven's Spirit of Giving. With guerrilla giving, anyone can be a philanthropist, at any time. A



guerrilla giver can informally donate their time, perhaps shoveling the walk for an elderly neighbor, or picking up litter on a hiking trail. A guerrilla giver might host a fundraising event for a sick friend, or organize a community to help a family through a crisis. A guerrilla giver could organize people to fight against an injustice, or lobby for a civic improvement project such as a park or after-school program. A guerrilla giver can organize a clothing drive, start a community garden or raise funds to donate a bench or swing to a playground.

The opportunities for guerrilla giving can be as spontaneous as they are infinite. The generosity of a person donating their time, experience and

creativity, transcends social class boundaries. A poor person donating time often represents a much more generous act than a billionaire donating millions of dollars. Guerrilla giving is embodied in those random acts of kindness that often go unnoticed, but when put together, give us hope and make individual struggles possible. Sometimes they can change the world. In a consumer society, such generosity is revolutionary. Evolutionarily, it's responsible for the persistence of humanity.

-Michael Niman

Friendship Night

Many times in life it is our experiences that drive us to do, be or become something. This is no different. Our group- "Friendship Night" was founded by a need for adults with special needs to have somewhere to go to socialize and to learn about the love of Jesus. Salvation is a message for everyone, with no exclusions. Our mission is to let people with special needs know they can feel connected to others, find and nurture friendships that will last a lifetime. My name is Becky McKeon and my friend Marilyn Peterson and I along with our Pastor, James Swanson started our club called "Friendship Night".

27 years ago, the pastor asked if myself and another Sunday school teacher (Marilyn) would be interested in checking out this program for a social club for handicapped adults. I had just completed my degree in Special Education and felt that this opportunity was very near and dear to my heart. I had just given birth to my fourth child - who was a beautiful healthy baby boy. I was so grateful and appreciative that I felt I should be giving back for so many blessing we as a family had received.

We met a few times - reviewed the protocol and material and decided to invite the local group homes and our pastor's daughter Karna who had Down's Syndrome. We averaged about 20 people for the 1st year and then continued to grow. We would come together by playing BINGO and then having a lesson on "Friendship" and social graces. We sing and then share a snack. We now go to Blson games, bowling, do crafts, make chocolate candy, have Easter egg hunts, a beautiful Christmas dinner and strong lessons about our faith that they can make connections to. *See Friendship Page 4*

Irish Soda Bread

Ingredients
 4 cups all-purpose flour
 3 tablespoons sugar
 3 teaspoons baking powder
 1 teaspoon salt
 6 tablespoons cold butter
 1-1/2 cups raisins
 1 tablespoon caraway seeds
 2 eggs beaten
 1-1/2 cups buttermilk

In a large bowl, combine first 5 ingredients. Add butter and stir until crumbly. Add raisins and caraway seeds and stir. Save 1 tablespoon of beaten egg. Add to bowl, buttermilk and eggs minus 1 tablespoon and stir mixture until moist. Knead on floured board 10 min. Shape into ball.

Place on greased 9 inch round pan. Cut a 4 inch. X, 1/4 deep. Brush the top of the dough with the 1 tablespoon of reserved egg. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour and 20 min., or you insert a toothpick and it come out clean. If the top looks like it is browning too quick, then you can cover it loosely with foil for the last 20 min. When backed cool for 10 min. before removing from pan to cool on wire rack. Yields 1 loaf.

Great for St. Patrick's Day!

-Marilyn Albrecht



Factors in Restaurant Pricing Strategies

For many years restaurant diners have faced the dilemma of enjoying premium wines with their meals and paying large mark-ups for wines that can be purchased for a third to fourth of the price in wine shops and liquor stores. Concepts like corkage fees, wines by the glass programs, and “restaurant exclusive wines” have sprung from a guest’s reluctance to fork over large sums of money for pedestrian Cabernet sauvignon and uninspired bottlings of chardonnay. Intrepid wine enthusiasts turn multiple shades of green when discovering their favorite Barolo is \$90 on a wine list when they just saw it for \$44.95 at the local liquor store. How dare these charlatans pilfer from poor unsuspecting diners? Restaurant owners and operators are well aware of the negative perception of diners toward wine list pricing strategies. Here are some reasonable justifications for their strategies.



STORAGE

Diners pay for the proper storage and service of wines. Temperature controlled wine refrigeration, knowledgeable and trained staff are part of what you pay for. In addition restaurant owners and operators are providing ice buckets, decanters and a variety of other wine related paraphernalia to create a distinct culture of bacchanalia.

SERVICE TEMPERATURES OF WINE

Sparkling wines- 41°F - 47°F or 5°C- 8° C

Dry Whites and Roses- 44°F- 54°F or 7° C- 12° C

Light Bodied reds - 50°F- 55°F or 10° C- 13° C

Medium Bodied to Full*- 55°F- 65°F or 13°C - 18° C

GLASSWARE

Savvy owners and operators eschew old fashioned jelly jars for sleek, delicate glassware that focuses wine’s aroma and flavors properly, allowing for proper aeration of fuller bodied wine. Reidel, Spiegelau, and Ravenscraft glassware brands are elegant, sensuously curved and extremely delicate. Clumsy porters and bus people can be heavy handed and negligent with these fragile pieces, necessitating frequent replacement of these valuable vessels.

TRAINING

Great amounts of time, effort, and financial resources are put into server/ bartender training with regards to a restaurant’s wine list. Typically the service staff is called into work early to learn about the wines being offered and sample selected bottlings. This costs additional payroll expense, product use, and time and effort for managers to plan these seminar style gatherings. Frequently managers print packets of information and contact sales representatives to meet with the staff and pontificate on the finer points of wine sales technique. Chefs are called in to work with the service staff regarding proper food and wine pairings and suggestive sales speak....it is a big deal!

SERVICE

Often over looked is the fact that you are paying for the wine to be served to you in an elegant and highly professional manner. There is a ceremony that is precise, time honored and expected when ordering a bottle of wine. Diners often consider choosing a distinct and appropriate wine which is a very important aspect of the meal and their role as host. This simple act takes on a heightened sense of cultural importance; good servers and managers understand this concept and perform in a serious and focused manner to meet this expectation. In order to exceed this expectation a server/ manager will need to have superior wine knowledge to answer specific food/wine pairing questions or speak knowledgeably about specific vintages of wine. This valuable skill is often taken for granted until a guest receives shoddy service. Wine spilled on crisp, white linens serve as marks of shame. Servers stumble, bumble and butcher the names of wines. Corks break, wine is over-poured not leaving enough for all the guests. Questions about vintages are received with blank stares and slack jawed confusion. That Poggio di Sotto Brunello di Montalcino 2001 you just forked a small fortune over for is now being served in a port glass.

OTHER FACTORS

It is important to understand that all elements of a restaurant owner’s overhead are reflected in food and beverage pricing. The lease, the lights, gas, linen, china, glass, insurance, and so many other bills pile into a restaurant owners mail box at a staggering rate. Expensive Point of Sales systems have become a necessity for owners to coordinate sales figures and inventory control. Food and beverage must be marked up substantially to yield an owner even the thinnest of margins. *See Wine Page 4*



(Wine continued)

STANDARD WINE MARKUP

Brand X bottle cost: \$12.50

Retail Mark up:

30%- 35% = \$17.00- \$19.00

Restaurant Mark up

250-300% = \$31.25- \$37.50

*These figures are estimates based on Industry standards and can fluctuate based on the purveyors overhead, philosophy or laws of supply and demand.

** For more expensive bottles of wine (\$40 and up) the wine cost is typically doubled as patrons would rarely, if ever pay such exorbitant sums for these wines.

-Josh S. Blumberg CSW

(Friendship continued)

The best is our picnic in June where we have a BBQ dinner together and play games!

Each year we grew. We hit a bump in the road when our Pastor moved. We moved churches and gained an even larger following! We added events to our program. We had 60 as our largest group! We have clients that have been with us for 25 years! As life would have it, my first job was at the Language Development Program in Kenmore, where I met a set of twin brothers that had cleft palate. They were pretty involved- but adorable! When I walked into the meeting and saw them- I felt that life really does come around full circle! To be able to share with them as adults has been so rewarding. We teach them that they are never alone, to be kind, gentle and respectful in all circumstances and above all pray when you feel alone or scared. Many of them have had health crises and family issues. They have told us that they know they have help from God! Yeah! Mission accomplished!

If you are interested in joining our group- we meet the 1st Thursday of each month at the Eastern Hills Wesleyan Church in Clarence at 7:00-8:30pm. Call ahead and ask about Friendship Night to make sure we are on for that night!

-Becky McKeon

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Winter Health Ideas for Children

As we are all aware, there is a national issue with childhood obesity. Being fit however, is not just about what we eat or drink, or how we move. It is also about how we feel. Having the right mindset helps give us energy, helps us to be more active, and helps us to make good decisions such as what healthy foods to eat or activities to engage in.

Winter time can be dark and dreary. We want to keep our kids active, even if the weather is not so cheery. There are many ways to get engaged in winter activities. These activities help to keep our heart pumping, our energy level up, and our kids to sleep better at night. We all can benefit!

Some good ideas for winter activities may include:

Sledding

Making snow angels

Skiing

Ice skating

Snowboarding

Building a snowman

Ice fishing

Building an igloo

Snowshoeing

Having a snowball fight

Remember it is important to dress warmly, and limit the time outdoors if the weather is extremely cold. Several thin layers helps to insure our children avoid hypothermia or frost bite.

If you are looking for other ideas to engage your children in winter fun and healthy eating, two good websites to visit would be:

Healthychildren.org

fit.webmd.com

On these websites you can find other great ideas for outdoor activities, as well as kid friendly recipes for healthy eating.

Another good resource for your family would be your own pediatrician's office or website.

So get out there and have fun! What a great way to spend family time together, all the while keeping our kids happy and healthy.

-Dr. Becky Daniels



"I think I'd like to go in research"