

GOD'S WILL

Wear the Heart

I want to share a special Gold Heart story. We have a group of volunteers who help us with the Gold Hearts during January-February. Kathy Rudis is my "star" Gold Heart Volunteer. She gets a bunch together to sell hearts each week. This story concerns her directly.

Kathy's mother's health had been failing. She was in a rest home for the past month or so and had to be rushed to the hospital. Kathy, a schoolteacher, had been going straight from school and spending hours tending to her mother, who was failing daily.

Her mother was clearly fighting the inevitable. Ruthia confessed to Kathy that she felt guilty because she had been unable to go to church and had missed Sunday services for almost a year. She felt that there would be consequences.

When she was well, Ruthia Rogers had helped with the Gold Heart Drive, selling hearts at the theatre. She always enjoyed and commented on the Variety movie trailers shown, which preceded the feature presentation.

Kathy reminded her that we were selling hearts and commented "Do you remember the man on the Harley Davidson who flashed the Gold Heart to St. Peter at the gate?" Then she pinned a heart on her sleeve and told her she would wear that heart to heaven. Ruthia remembered the commercial, where the lawyer was trying to go through yet, when the biker approached the gate and flashed his heart, St. Peter let him right in. Ruthia smiled very contentedly, then she relaxed and, 45 minutes later, she passed away. This happened Monday, 18 February 2002.

Gold Hearts are not only helping kids.

*Edward Jablonski - Tent 26: Illinois
Past Chief Barker*

True Grit

Another time I remember so well, during an early-on wheelchair basketball game - one of our boys with spina bifida fell out of his chair. Robbie was about seven then. Immediately, everything stopped. We were all holding our breaths, trying to think what to do. However, no one rushed out to help, including our coaches, who were adult wheelchair sportsmen because, on the sidelines Robbie's mother held up her hand and said

"No. He can do it himself". He was a little guy with blond curls poking above his sweatband, and he had a determined expression. After several unsuccessful attempts, he finally righted himself - to exploding cheers and applause!

His triumph was not just one of putting himself back into the chair, but of tenacity, perseverance and determination to rise above his problem - a great lesson for all of us. I still get chills thinking about it.

There are so many wonderful stories out there, and they should be shared. I know of the terrific work each of our Variety Tents all over the world has done through the years. Really spectacular work! This is where we come together to share. Through sharing we can help each other to reach more children, and that is what counts, why we're Barkers. After all, "a right idea must bear fruit", as my Mother always taught me.

I'd like to share a little poem with you that was carried through the Korean War by a young man with whom I was acquainted who was in the medic corps:

"I am the place
Where God shines through,
For He and I
Are one, not two.
I need not fret,
Nor fear nor plan,

He needs me now
Right where I am;
And if I'll be
Relaxed and free,
He'll carry out
His plan through me."

That little poem has helped me many times, and I hope it helps you. Sometimes we have to let go of problems and let God work.

Marilyn Rabakukk - Tent 17: North Texas



Robbie is on the right tracks.