

The Kindness Of Strangers

I came across a couple of instances of good citizenship lately, so I thought I'd share. I would write a letter to the local newspaper, but I don't think they'd print it – they didn't print the last one I wrote them about the wonderful person who found my lost wallet and turned it in to the police station – intact! I guess the newspaper is only interested in printing letters where someone has an issue or is complaining about something...

So the other day, we were stopped at a stoplight, and it turned green – but the car in front of us was not moving, and that's when I noticed that he had his hazard lights on. The guy behind me was too close for me to back up, so I was stuck. I saw the guy behind me throw his hands up in frustration, and I'm thinking, oh great, here comes the blaring horn and obscenities (I'm from Chicago – sadly, that is what most people there would do). My husband gets out of our car to see if he can help push the stalled car, and off they go. The next thing I know, there are two other men helping push it (they had been on the corner holding signs advertising a sale at the shopping center). Then, the guy behind me – the one who I thought was p-o-ed – gets out of his car to see if *he* can help!! What an amazing example of people being thoughtful and going above and beyond! I've both lived in and visited plenty of cities where I saw (or I was) a stalled car. But in all of these instances, never have I seen **4 people** come out to help the stranded driver. I've seen cars speeding angrily around the stalled vehicle, people honking, making obscene gestures, yelling obscenities, or simply ignoring the person in need. I feel very lucky that I was able to witness such selflessness; people disregarding whatever their own plans may have been for that day – people willing to sacrifice being on time to their obligations just to help another in need. How refreshing!

And something else happened this week – I'm sure you know about the big snowstorm by now. We got about 8 inches of snow that came down in less than 12 hours. I was sitting in my living room, watching it come down, and I was trying to shovel when I could – I couldn't bear the thought of my husband having to come home from work with a walkway full of 8 inches of snow to shovel. But I have 4 little kids, and we had just gotten a new puppy, so my efforts to shovel away the snow as it fell were in vain – I just couldn't keep up. So I'm playing with my kids in the living room, watching the snow fall, when we see someone clearing our walkway for us with a snowblower! I thought that it must be a neighbor; someone who has a snowblower and was kind enough to take pity on those of us who only have shovels. I told the kids to watch the man and see which house he went into so I could later drop off a thank you note. But instead of walking into a house, he packed up his snowblower in a red truck and drove away! I didn't recognize the man nor his truck, but I don't think he was just roaming town snowblowing everywhere he went – he purposefully cleared **our** walkway! I doubt he reads my blog, but if he does, then I'd like to tell him a big THANK YOU! And for the rest of you – never underestimate the power of a kind word or deed! I have a wall hanging with that saying on it in my bathroom, and it means even more to me now!