



BFL News & Views

January, 2009

**Bucketfiller Count
as of December 31st,
2008**

Watch the numbers
grow!

December Total:

2,410

Grand Total:

95,335 attendees



Bucketfillers Club Member T-shirts are available through our web site at a cost of only **\$9.95** with free shipping (with purchase of 4 or more.)

Also **Bucketfilling Family or Classroom certificates**, custom printed to your specifications and hand-signed by The Bucket Man! Free Shipping!



www.bucketfillersforlife.com



Happy New Year!

Love, Gratitude, and Filling Our Own Buckets

By Stacey Lundgren

A large part of our Bucketfillers For Life message is about love. What comes up often in both student and adult workshops when discussing love is how important it is to *express* love, not just acknowledge feeling it. That usually segues to the huge role that gratitude plays in expressing love. So I've been pondering gratitude during the holidays.

As I was growing up, gratitude was mentioned a lot to me by my parents, especially my mother. When I was a teenager, I decided that gratitude was definitely overrated. If I cried over a big zit and going to school with such a face, Mom said "Oh, be grateful you have two healthy eyes to SEE that huge pimple!" When I told her I couldn't possibly wear shorts because my legs were too fat, she lectured "Fat legs? Being way overweight means

nothing. Be grateful you can walk!" And, of course the famous "What do you mean you don't want your creamed spinach? Be grateful you have food to eat!"

As adults, we all get admonished to be grateful. I have made my share of gratitude lists, and yes, they are uplifting reminders. I have counted my blessings oh-so-many-times. Both are positive exercises that sometimes end with a mental "Yes....BUT", and are often prompted by self-pity or an awareness that I am feeling UNgrateful. So gratitude can seem to be a corrective measure instead of a pleasure.

A book I recently read had a suggestion that is simple and fun; it actually helps me *feel* gratitude and joy. I found that by doing this, my own bucket fills up quickly. Any negative feelings are dispelled immediately. Here it is: While you are in a good or neutral mood (if you do this while in a bad humor, it feels like a chore),

think of one thing for which you are grateful. Make it something that you usually take for granted, like the power windows on your car, the fact that your car started that morning, that it's someone else's turn to bring donuts to work, that you feel well, that you have \$100 in the bank, that your furnace is working, that you have your own teeth, etc. Then keep going. Don't think hard about it, just go. Keep it light. The smaller the things you think of, the more grateful you'll feel, because the mental list will go on and on. One little thing leads to another little thing and another.... It's all real, of course, and invariably leads to the "big stuff". Yet each time is a unique experience. I have laughed, teared up, and had downright epiphanies doing this. Try it for yourself. You deserve to fill your own bucket!

Join the Bucketfilling Yahoo Group!

Please join us in the new Bucketfillers For Life Yahoo Group:
http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/Bucketfillers_For_Life/

Webster Elementary Gratefully Salutes Mrs. Earp

By Stacey Lundgren

In late November, Dad (The Bucket Man) and I arrived at Webster Elementary School in Hazel Park, MI, to present a 2-1/2 hour Professional In-service to the staff. Immediately apparent was a table of refreshments, but most noticeable was a large, beautiful cake. Because pieces had already been cut from it, I couldn't read all the writing. I asked Mrs. Borowicz, the principal, what they were celebrating. Her answer surprised and touched me. "We are honoring the life of Mrs. Earp". We learned that Mrs. Earp was a much-loved volunteer who died this past spring. The 2008/2009 school year would be the first Mrs. Earp missed in 50 years.

This true, bucketfilling story was related to us by Kathy Borowicz, and because it beautifully exemplifies love, gratitude and bucketfilling, we choose to share it with all of you.

Webster Elementary in Hazel Park, MI, was filled with love on Tuesday, November 25, 2008, as the staff and students gathered for a special celebration of the life their long-time friend and Bucketfiller, Mrs. Morelle Earp, 81, who died after a brief illness this past Spring.

Mrs. Earp was a "playground lady"

by title; in reality, she was much more. She was a mentor and friend to hundreds of children over the last fifty years. In 1958, she began volunteering in the Hazel Park School District when her two sons were young students. She never stopped! In 1987, the school district hired Mrs. Earp to assist in the lunchroom and on the playground during lunchtime. In spite of her new employee status, she continued her volunteer work. Some of her contributions include: Cub Scout Den Mother, After School Sports Coach and Fun Night Sponsor. Mrs. Earp also volunteered at the Hazel Park Recreation Center and was active in her church.

In addition to her own family, she had a second family—the Ferndale Fire Fighters. Mrs. Earp liked to say she had two sons and many boys! She was like a mom and grandma to the Fire Fighters. She not only remembered each of their birthdays, but she also spent many holiday meals with the on-duty Fire Fighters.

The Webster faculty wanted to honor her memory by holding a celebration rather than a memorial. In attendance were her two families (her sons and several of her Fire Fighters), members of her church, representatives from the Hazel Park Recreation Center, former co-workers,

former students, Hazel Park School Board Members and Superintendent, and of course the Webster staff and student body.

The simple program included the presentation of a plaque with Mrs. Earp's picture which now hangs in the hallway outside of Webster's gymnasium. A brick paver was purchased in her memory and will be installed in the commons area outside of the entry to the Hazel Park High School Football Stadium. Four students read selections from a memory book compiled by the staff and students. The student body sang a song that was written in Mrs. Earp's honor. There wasn't a dry eye in the house! After remarks by the Superintendent, Fire Fighters and former co-workers, Mrs. Earp's son, Randy Earp, expressed his gratitude to us by donating \$1000 to Webster School in honor of his mother. We were so surprised! The family had only one stipulation – the money must be spent on the children. We are delighted to be purchasing playground bags for each classroom so the children have balls, jump ropes, etc. to use when they go out at lunchtime.

*Mrs. Earp filled many buckets over the years. We are all better people for having known her. **MORELLE EARP – Volunteer, Mentor, Friend***

Program Comments, Feedback, and Words from our Student Bucketfillers

My son made my day! It's really nice to not only feel appreciated, but have specific examples of what I have done that is appreciated.

This is such an opportune time of year to experience being a bucketfiller, whether donating food, clothing, gifts, money or time.

5th grade mother

We try to be bucketfillers on a daily basis. We have learned through some hard experiences that life is too short. You shouldn't lose sight of the people who play important roles in your life. We are always thankful.

4th grade mother

As a bucketfiller, I am going to try to "pay it forward." As a manager at work, I will try to emphasize the positives of my co-workers. At home I will continue to let my friends and family know how important they are to me and how much they mean to me. I will try to make at least one person smile every day.

5th grade mother

My daughter made me realize that respect and kindness are not lost with today's youth as some may think. She made me more aware of

my actions toward others.

4th Grade father

I'm thankful for you, Dad, because you say you are thankful for me.

5th grade student

Thank you, Grandma, for not getting mad at me for stuff that Mom gets mad at me for.

4th grade student

Grandpa, I always thought thank you when you took me fishing but I didn't say it. Grandma says if I pray it now you'll still hear me.

4th grade student

Mom, I'm thankful you're still alive after you turned 40.

4th grade student

Mom, I'm thankful you make my lunch even when I throw it away.

4th grade student

Dad, our new puppy is great even if she came from the Human Sosciaty. Thanks.

4th grade student

Dad, thank you for crawling under the livingroom table with me when I made it a fort with my blanket. I was just a kid then.

4th grade student

My staff and I loved our professional development with you. I've received positive feedback from so many staff members! Thank you for a delightful morning.

Kathy Borowicz, Principal Webster Elementary School Hazel Park, MI

I liked the laughter and humor during the assembly for my K-3 students. I also appreciated the opportunity for student participation. I will be asking my students to continue reciting the "Bucketfillers Pledge" and singing the "Bucketfillers Song."

Suzi Slater, Principal Webberville Elementary School Webberville, MI

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