



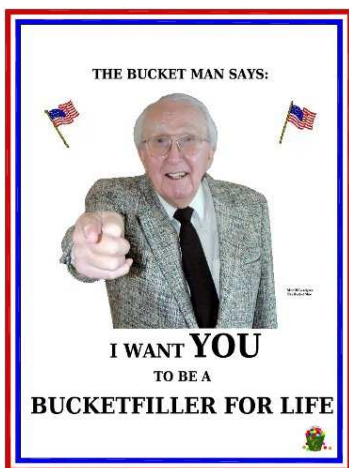
# BFL News & Views

March, 2009



**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.)

**NEW!**  
**Bucket Man "I Want You!" Posters!** These posters are 18" x 24" and high-resolution printed on heavy weight coated paper.



**How to purchase:** \$7.00 each and are only available via phone or email:

810-231-0677  
or  
peter@bucketfillersforlife.com

## A Truly Bucketfilling School

By Stacey Lundgren

As I arrived at Ganiard Elementary School in Mt. Pleasant, MI, I immediately felt the positive energy in the building. The entire first day was a joy. The morning of the second day, the teachers and I arrived before 7:30 A.M. for a workshop we call the Teacher Orientation. I noticed their smiles and how they greeted each other warmly. The meeting was just as warm—positive comments from teachers, contributions to discussions, hugs and plenty of sharing made it

time well spent. *Bucketfillers always make a difference.*

After that uplifting meeting, I went to the office. There was Lisa Gomez, the school secretary, responding to a small, crying girl. Generally, I believe that responding to children's needs (no matter where,, including at my house!) usually falls into one of three classifications: 1) Efficient, quick but impersonal, 2) Inefficient, slow and irritable, or 3) Supportive, timely and bucketfilling. Lisa's response definitely was in category number three.

This is what she did: The child had obviously fallen into a wet, dirty puddle; her pants were partially soaked and soiled. Lisa came out from behind the counter, knelt down to gain eye contact with the student and told her not to worry; she would get something for her to wear. Lisa quickly disappeared into a closet, came out with several pairs of pants that looked like they might fit the girl. She cheerfully said (to my amazement) "Okay, let's see which one of these pants you like and if it

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Minetto Elementary School: A Bucketfilling Exercise

Doreen Bednarski and Leeanne VanDurme are 2nd grade teachers at Minetto Elementary School in Oswego, NY. Also being members of the Bucketfillers For Life Group on Yahoo, Doreen recently sent the group the following post and gave us permission to post it here as well:

*"We've been doing bucket fillers since September (2nd grade). We had the students color a small*

*bucket with their name on it. We laminated them and attached them to a library pocket and put them on the coat closets out in the hall. In the classroom, we have a bucket that I purchased at Target and decorated. We use bucket filler slips that we modified from a website. Bucket filler slips are completed before free time 3 or 4 days/week and placed in the classroom bucket. It's listed right on our daily schedule. We check each slip*

*to be sure it is truly a bucket filler and that it makes sense. Over the year we review what makes a good bucket filler, the importance of writing to different people, etc.*

*Before school on Monday I place the slips into the indiv. buckets on the closets. If there is anyone who does not have a slip in their bucket my co-teacher*

*(Continued on page 2)*

# Trinity Lutheran Student Sends Love to His Father in Iraq

Part of our Why I Love and Respect You exercise involves not only expressing loving feelings toward someone in your life, but also includes a response from the person who was chosen in the exercise. Mateo Herrera, a student at Trinity Lutheran School in Utica, MI, chose his father, currently serving his country in Iraq. Soon afterward he

received the following response from his dad, and we received permission to share this with you:

*"It meant a lot to read what Mateo had written. I know Mateo loves me and it was nice to see what he put into words. It's funny; I feel the same way about Mateo as what he wrote about me. I am lucky to have such a*

*good son. Mateo means the world to me! I will carry the bucket paper with me every day I am gone to remind me of his love!"*

*"I would like for my family to make Bucketfillers for our family for Christmas to remind everybody how important they are to us and to show our love to them."*

## A Truly Bucketfilling School (cont'd)

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goes with your pretty shirt."

The child stopped crying. She contemplated which pair might look best, and with Lisa's encouragement chose a pair that would complement her shirt. She went into a room to try them on, came out to model them with a smile, and went off to class with an air of confidence and excitement. I wondered how many children in a similar condition Lisa had seen in that office throughout the years; I imagined many. But she cared about *that* child; she cared about how *that* child was feeling. She didn't stand behind the counter and talk down *at* her—she knelt in front of her and spoke *to* her. Ganiard had a thoughtful stash of clean clothing, obviously tucked away in a closet somewhere for such situations; Lisa left her other responsibilities to thoughtfully choose a few special things to help the girl feel understood, supported and val-

ued. *Bucketfillers always make a difference.*

Later that day I presented workshops to Mrs. Castellon's and Mr. Bunting's fourth graders. When I explained the "Why I Love and Respect You" exercise, each teacher told me of something their students did to be supportive of each other. When someone was experiencing a tough time, everyone would write something positive to each classmate, specifically mentioning one of that student's great attributes. What powerful things to teach children to do—care about others' feelings and look for the good in everyone! *Bucketfillers always make a difference.*

Last but certainly not least, I was in Mrs. Jansen's class, just winding up a workshop. The door opened, and just as I looked over to see who might be coming in, a lone snow boot flew into the room and the door

quickly closed. I'm sure I looked startled, and Mrs. Jansen said above the students' laughter, "Oh, it's just Mr. Giegling". Mr. Giegling, I knew, is a second grade teacher in the school. I had already experienced his sense of humor during the K-3 assembly the day before. Mrs. Jansen explained that sometimes Mr. Giegling did such things to tease the children. I immediately thought how simple and special it was for all those children to know that although Mr. Giegling had a classroom of children, he remembered their classroom, too. He helped them to experience the joy of laughing at something silly and simple, reminding them that life can be fun. But best of all, those children knew that someone thought of them—that they are valued. *Bucketfillers always make a difference.*

Thank you, Ganiard Elementary School, for an inspiring two days and for reminding me how much I have yet to learn.

## Minetto Elementary School: A Bucketfilling Exercise (cont'd)

*(Continued from page 1)*  
or I make sure to write something. When the children come in to school they empty their buckets and choose one to read at morning meeting. Every so often we send a slip home for parents to complete and send into

school.

*We absolutely love bucket filling. The students will even refer to characters in read alouds as bucket fillers or bucket dippers. Bucket filling is powerful!*

Thank you Doreen and Leeanne for being terrific leaders in the bucketfilling philosophy, allowing us to share your experience here, and for teaching your students this great message!

## 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/](http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/Bucketfillers_For_Life/)

# Program Comments, Feedback, and Words from our Student Bucketfillers

*As former Superintendent of the Livingston Educational Service Agency in Howell, MI, I have met Merrill Lundgren many times and I am well aware of the impact of the "Bucketfillers For Life" program. I have heard wonderful feedback from schools.*

*I am so glad to hear that you continue to champion a program so beneficial to our youth.*

**Sally Vaughn, Ph.D.**  
**Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer**  
**Michigan Dept. of Education**

*One of the aspects I really appreciate about the Bucketfillers For Life program is the multi-day format. Our entire staff and every single student got this positive message. It permeated everywhere! Now Bucketfilling will continue much better than it would from one quick assembly.*

**Linda Dinan, Principal**  
**Ganiard Elementary School**  
**Mt. Pleasant, MI**

*This experience has shown me that my daughter has an enormous capacity for love and compassion. I can only hope that I may have had a small part to play in that. If my*

*daughter can fill the buckets of others who cross her path even half as much as she has filled mine, then they and she are both truly blessed.*

**5<sup>th</sup> grade father**

*Mom, I love you because you said I was the cutest baby after I gave you so many pains in your stomach.*

**4<sup>th</sup> grade student**

Here is a beautiful tribute from a 4<sup>th</sup> grade boy to his mother:

*Why I Love and Respect You, Mom*

1. *You gave birth to me*
2. *You're always on my side even if you're mad at me*
3. *You're proud of me*
4. *You never yell except sometimes*
5. *You let Dad get me a puppy*
6. *You laugh at my jokes*
7. *You listen to my stories*
8. *You got me a bike helmet*
9. *You force me to wear a seatbelt*
10. *You kiss Dad in front of people*
11. *You pick up the dog poop when it's frozen to the ground*
12. *You tell me stuff about when you were a kid*

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