

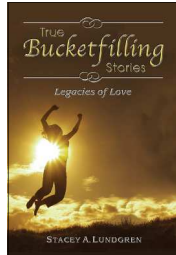
Bucketfillers for Life, Inc.

Proudly Serving the Entire United States with 5 Regional Training Centers



BFL News & Views

March 2011



True Bucketfilling Stories: Legacies of Love, by Stacey A. Lundgren. This wonderful collection of 10 short stories with discussion questions is available at Heartspeak, Inc.



www.heartspeakproducts.com

Other bucket filling products available at Heartspeak:

- Posters
- Pencils
- Bracelets
- Sunglasses
- Piggy Banks
- Backpacks
- T-shirts
- More!

Be sure to also get your copy of Heartspeak's exclusive eBook, "Almost at the Front", a collection of World War II letters by Merrill Lundgren, The Bucket Man.

Bucketfilling in Action

By Stacey A. Lundgren

In January, the words "in cahoots" took on a new meaning for me. I had traveled to Pleasant Lake, Indiana, to present programs at Pleasant Lake Elementary School.

During a break, I looked for a place in nearby Angola to have a cup of coffee and check email. And there it

was, Cahoots Coffee Cafe. I grabbed my laptop, and as I approached the front door I asked a young snowshoveler (who turned out to be a volunteer in cahoots with Cahoots) if the place has WiFi. He replied "Yes, Ma'am!" And then I walked into a most unique place, complete with pool table, piano, guitar, stacks of games, a television and more. Soon my bucket was filled to overflowing!

I ordered a cup of coffee and a bagel and reached for my debit card. The barista, a young woman with pink hair and fake handlebar mustache, told me that they only take cash or a personal check. **NO CREDIT**

CARDS? Finding myself cashless, I told her I would write a check; but I am from out-of-state and would she like to see my driver's license? "No, thanks" was the reply. *What kind of a place is this?* I thought. My



Cahoots Eclectic Interior

curiosity caused me to ask why they don't accept credit cards, and Naomi, the barista, said "we are a non-profit". So then **I had to know** why in the world a coffee shop would be non-profit.

This is what I learned: Cahoots Coffee Cafe is a community effort, sponsored by two local churches and supported by volunteers and a few employees. It is open to the public, but created



Barista Naomi Bush and Manager Barb Bryan

for youth. The cause is "Through the efforts of our staff, adult volunteers and the support of the community, we offer the following activities for our youth: Academic tutoring, a formal

mentoring program including drug, tobacco, alcohol and anti-violence seminars, arts and crafts, community volunteer projects, game nights, movie nights with free popcorn...and the list went on.

This is how they state their mission: "To serve our youth by providing a safe, non-threatening and non-judgmental venue to share their talents, develop meaningful relationships with caring adults and peers, and cultivate their own gifts. We believe teens need support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values and role models, social competencies and a positive identity. Cahoots Coffee Cafe provides a unique venue for many of these needs by offering adults an opportunity to volunteer and assist our youth with academic tutoring, counseling, and planned activities for expression of their artistic and musical talents."

What started as a common coffee break turned into a

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bucketfilling learning experience! Congratulations to those who created and support Cahoots Coffee Cafe—you deserve it! This simple, humble spot in a small Indiana town proves that love-in-action exists. This is

what bucketfilling is all about—caring, loving and taking a pro-active role in mitigating the bucket dipping so prevalent in the world. In fact, let's remind ourselves and our children that there is a LOT of bucketfilling that goes on the world by no-

ticing and then talking about it every time we see an example. Like this coffee cafe, let's "be in cahoots with love." For more information, please visit www.cahootscoffeecafe.com

What Do You Choose to See?

by Stacey A. Lundgren

Reprinted from her semimonthly column in [Troy Media](#)

There is a lot to look at wherever we go. We look with our eyes, and the image is conveyed to our brains. When truly seeing, the image is conveyed to our hearts. What do you look at, or more specifically, what do you choose to see?

We perceive so much that is negative. Bad news bombards us from everywhere. Take airports, for instance: there are television screens broadcasting weather tragedies, political unrest, war, crime, and economic disaster.

Your trek takes you from one end of the airport to the other until you reach your gate. By the time you arrive you're a bit winded, but still positive. But then you remove your coat, shoes, wristwatch and belt, place all liquid items in a baggie, stand in the x-ray scanner-thingy with your hands above your head, palms up (oh gosh, is this when they see me naked?), while a handsome but grim TSA agent inspects your carry-on bag, rooting through your underwear. All the while, television screens surround you blaring scary stuff and fellow (robotic) travelers stare down at their cell phones as they walk and text. You've come to believe you've lived way too long by the time your flight is boarding. Know what I mean? Where is the joy?

Seeing, not just looking

At an Iowa elementary school one day I noticed a display of quotes on the wall. One resonated deeply. It was Henry David Thoreau who said "It is not what you look at that matters . . . it is what you see." These simple, profound words will hopefully forever change what I see.

Early the next morning, I drove along a country road, winter cornfields showing nothing but stubble and patches of snow. A cattle truck in front of me was going way under the speed limit. Hills and curves prevented me from going around him. This is what I looked at – the rear end of a slow-moving truck on a dreary Iowa Wednesday. This is how I felt – irritated. A few seconds later, I glanced in the side mirror. What I saw stunned me. A gigantic full moon loomed. Wow, where did that come from? I wondered. I saw it again, this time in my rear view mirror. The huge sphere was an unusual gold-like color and hung there as if by invisible cords.

Suddenly, I was parked on the side of the road, the slow truck fading into the distance. I leaned against the cold trunk of the car and saw that moon like I had never seen it before. Gratitude and awe filled me, replacing the frustration I felt when I looked at the truck. Thank you, Mr. Thoreau.

I finally arrived at my destination in the tiny farming town where the only

place that looked hopeful for a cup of coffee (sans Wi-Fi) was called The Gingersnap.

I considered sitting in my car and hoping for cell phone coverage. But Thoreau's words came back to me, so I pulled into The Gingersnap. Who knows what I might see?

Walking in, I noticed that, to the right, was a grocery/hardware/work clothes department, straight ahead was the beer aisle, to the left was the cafe area. Four older men, sitting in a booth, briefly turned their eyes to look at me. Glancing up I saw hanging on a wall, a dusty clock that had stopped working at 4:20 one day. Everything felt suspended in time.

That morning, while sipping a mug of Gingersnap coffee, I saw and appreciated what many of us believe to be totally replaced by the hustle and bustle of bigger places – a slice of Americana we imagined lost with the days of Mayberry.

The four men, probably farmers based upon what they wore, sat with their elbows on the table, each holding a mug. There was no real conversation. Occasionally one would sigh, saying "Yup". The others nodded.

The door opened. A man with a long, unruly beard walked in and sat at the table across from me. The waitress swept by with a bottle of syrup and plunked it on his table. The man with the syrup sat quietly, not texting, not using a cell phone, and certainly not listening to an iPod. He just sat.

You know who you are

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One of the farmers tipped the last of his coffee into his mouth, set the mug down and said, "Well, I suppose." Another said, "Me, too", and a third "Yup". They slid out of the booth, waved to the waitress, and left without paying. I was curious about that until I saw the hand-written sign above the cash register: Credit ex-

tended up to \$35 for some folks. You know who you are. I smiled.

The blonde woman delivered one huge pancake as big as the plate it was on to the bushy-bearded man. He poured syrup in the middle of the pancake, then ate from the center outward. As the hole got bigger, he poured more syrup into it. The syrup didn't spill over the sides of the plate!

Perhaps for the rest of my life, when I eat pancakes I will think of Iowa and Thoreau.

Life is thrilling, but only sometimes. It is always, however, interesting. Positive things are everywhere if we will just remember to see them. Seeing makes every day boredom-proof . . . and beautiful.

BFL Program Feedback and Words From Our Student Bucketfillers

I love and respect you, Great-Grandma, because you are patient with me and all children.

4th grade student

I love and respect you, Grandpa, because you encourage me and listen to everything I say.

4th grade student

I love and respect you, Zeke, because you do the stuff with me that our Dad should have done.

4th grade student to his 22-year-old brother

I love and respect you, Dad, because I can see how much you love Mom.

5th grade student

Why I Love and Respect You, Dad

*You loved and respected me
 You cooked and bought our food
 You didn't scream at me or call me names
 You were always there for me
 You helped me with my reports and homework
 You gave me everything I asked for for my birthday
 You took me to fun places
 You spent time with me
 You played sports with me and went to all my baseball games
 You gave me confidence
 You said I am the best son ever
 You hugged me so I knew you loved me
 You were nice and let me get things
 You filled my bucket*

From a 4th grade student whose father died suddenly in December, 2010

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