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BFL News and Views

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Contrasting Weather in Autumn Reflects Our Lives

By Peter Lundgren

Late September in Michigan can bring 80 degrees or 40 degrees. As the saying goes, "if you don't like the weather now, wait 5 minutes and it will change."

This morning started like many other mornings. A hot cup of coffee in one hand, and a slice of toast in the other. When time allows, I enjoy having my breakfast at the kitchen table while I prepare the game plan for the coming day.

Last night brought a cold front with rain and wind, so the view out my window this morning was dark, wet and gray. Suddenly a huge gust of wind deflected off the side of the house and across the rear patio, completely blowing over the patio table and chairs. CRASH, the glass table top shattered into thousands of small pieces over about 200 square feet of patio and flower beds..... UGHHHHH.....

Admittedly, this is a small thing when put on a life scale, but what started as a wonderful morning suddenly became, UGHHHH....

Isn't this really how life is? We can't plan ahead for the things that dip out of our buckets. They just happen, and our feelings react to

acted by outside forces, our buckets would be full almost all the time. The truth is that outside forces have tremendous impact, but how we react to life's ups and downs, and the action we take to rebound from life's dips, is up to us.

Here's an idea. Next time outside forces invade your life and the level of your bucket, consider it your opportunity to "re-label" the issue. Identify the issue

that lowered your bucket level, and find some promise in it. It will take some effort, but it's always possible.

For example, if you badly stub your toe, remember that you are strengthening the leg you are hopping on. Well, you get the point.

As I write this article, my bucket has been lowered by a huge gust of wind. I think I'll take the opportunity to take a long lunch, enjoy the fresh, albeit moist, air, and literally pick up the pieces.



The "feelings" of autumn come in extreme contrasts.

them.

The "feelings" of autumn are no exception. Take a look at the two photos above, and imagine yourself in both places. How do you feel in both places? What are the differences?

It would be a simple matter to have a full bucket if walking along the lake in the left photo. But a full bucket is not so simple if walking under that umbrella on the right.

If our feelings were not im-



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Products are a great way to support any bucketfilling initiative, whether at home or in the classroom, For example, t-shirts for parents as well as for the children reflect bucketfilling unity throughout the family!

Heartspeak is the exclusive source of Bucketfillers For Life products and more.

- Posters
- Pencils
- Classroom Learning Package
- Bracelets
- Sunglasses
- Piggy Banks
- Backpacks
- T-shirts
- Coffee Mug
- More!

Be sure to also get your copy of *True Bucketfilling Stories: Legacies of Love*, by Stacey A. Lundgren.

Good News of the Month

Each month we will browse the net for some really good news and share it with you. Enjoy!

This month's good news comes from KMBC-TV, Kansas City, MO

Strangers Help Pay Woman's \$941 Water Bill

PECULIAR, Mo. – A Peculiar, Mo., widow who was hit with an unusually large water bill is getting help from strangers to help pay it.

Liana Crane said her \$941 water bill was way out of line with what she usually has to pay. She said she thought there was a mistake and

city officials said it was possible.

"Any time you have a bill of that magnitude, it's alarming to anybody," said Peculiar City Administrator Brad Ratliff.

The city checked Crane's meter and the line leading up to it and both tested fine. Since the city buys water from an outside source, it couldn't just waive the excessive fees.

Crane, a mother of three whose husband died in Afghanistan, said Thursday that she wasn't sure how she would be able to find the money to pay the bill.

"I don't have it. I don't have it," she

said.

A series of anonymous donors who heard about Crane's story on KMBC Thursday stepped in to help. They sent emails to KMBC offering money to help pay her bill.

"I'm just thankful for being in the position to help another," said one.

"Please tell her that she has guardian angels around her and know that there are people that truly care," said another.

Crane said she has been overwhelmed by the response. She said she plans to pay the kindness forward however she can.



Musings From the Bucket Man

By Merrill Lundgren "The Bucket Man"

My intent is to work until age 95. At the moment I am closing in on 93. My body is wearing out, and my energy level leaves much to be desired. But I still make some bucket filling presentations.

In the winter of my life my thoughts have been about the purpose of my life. That is probably expected from any thinking person at the end of his or her life.

And so, I directed a question to myself, "Did I make a difference in the lives of others?"

This is such a complex question. I thought it best to restrict it to my career life because my career impacted thousands of people.

At age 59 I risked change by resigning my well paying insurance position to devote the remaining years

of my life to spreading the "gospel" of bucket filling. We all have a bucket close to our heart and it contains our feelings. A bucketfiller inspires others to recognize the good in themselves and express that good to them. Conversely, a bucket dipper will say or do things that dip in the bucket of others.

Now that I look back on my life, my decision at age 59 gave purpose and meaning to my life. Did my actions justify my gift of life?

- We have made bucket filling presentations to students and teachers in about 400 schools covering 16 states.
- I bought Carol McCloud into my company, trained her, and worked with her. She decided to go on her own and she left with my blessing.
- We have made bucket filling

presentations to thousands of employees of municipalities, hospitals, and other business organizations.

- Our message has been heard in many churches.

Have I justified the gift of my life by my work in bucket filling?

Linda Ellis, in her beautiful poem, "The Dash", closes with these words, "and so when your eulogy is being read, would you be proud of how you spent your dash?" The Dash is the small line on gravestones indicating the year we entered life and the year we departed from life. Hopefully these words of an old man reflecting on the significance and meaning of his life will not be construed as egotistical or self-centered.

I am proud of how I spent my Dash.