



This is Part II of a two-part article.

One of the first lessons his father taught the boy was the value of helping people less fortunate than himself. When he first began to work, he was a butcher boy and earned a dollar a week.

On Saturday morning at the end of the third week he was employed, the father said to his son, "When you get paid today, keep your dollar. We will do something tomorrow." And the next day, on the Sabbath day, he took the lad to New York where you could always find a line where there was a hand-out.

He told his son, "See that lunchroom over there?"

The boy said, "Yes."

"Well, when these men have finished eating what they've been given, go to any man you want; don't ask him his name or give him your name. Just ask him, 'Can you eat more?', and if he says 'Yes', take him to that lunchroom, give the counter man the dollar, and say 'Let this man eat it or smoke it, but no change.'" (That was so the man could not buy liquor.)

The son said to his father, "Dad, I worked all week for that dollar!"

And his father said to him, "Son, remember this: no matter what you give to help somebody else, you'll never miss it." And how true that statement is.

There was another incident. They were walking on a main street one day and a man came up and asked for something for a cup of coffee, and the son said, "Go on, you've been drinking."

The father said, "Give him something."

The son said, "Why?"

The father said, "You go to Sunday School, don't you? It says, 'I was athirst and He gave me to drink' "

"Yeah, but not licker."

"Son, you may want a cup of coffee someday. Give him something."

This father was that way all through life, always that concerned for reaching out.

It may seem strange, but the only time his son saw his father in church was when the younger man was being married; and yet, at the father's funeral there were people from all walks of life who came to pay their respects. The undertaker was amazed at the number who came -- people the father had helped throughout his life.

During his lifetime the father bought his son only three toys; a set of soldiers, a baseball doll, and an erector set. Everything else was made out of things around the house. His son quite often wishes he could remember all the things his father made. But he does remember puppets.

And so now we come to the story of the puppets.

About five years ago there was a young lady on our street who was 16 years old and who had an operation for curvature of the spine. She had to lay in a cast for six months, without getting out of bed; it was quite an ordeal.

The first thing this man did was to buy 24 convalescent cards. He put

a stamp on the envelope of each, addressed them to Pat, and sent them out to his friends all over the United States with this message.

"Send this card to Pat, but don't sign your name. Sign it "Your friend in Minneapolis" or "Your friend in New Orleans" or wherever they happened to live.

Pat was amazed at the number of cards she got from people all over the country. It was picked up by other people and she received cards from all parts of Europe and even one from the Philippines.

It wasn't long before the man began to wonder what else he could do to help Pat pass the long hours. He remembered the puppets his father had made for him, and he made one for her, about 30" tall, in blank; he bought some crayons and told Pat, "Decorate this."

Pat had a brother who, when he saw the puppet, wanted one too, and all the kids in the neighborhood wanted them, and the man became known to the children as the Puppet Man, or Mr. Puppets.

One day he received a letter from one of the neighborhood hospitals, asking for a donation. Mr. Puppets put a dollar in the envelope, and a puppet along with it, and mailed it off. He promptly forgot about it.

A week later he got a letter from the Crippled Children's Hospital, thanking him for the puppet. Having forgotten he had sent anything, he called them up and asked where they had gotten it; they told him he had sent one with his donation.

He asked if they could use some more, and they said they could, so he brought over 25 puppets he made from gift boxes, Christmas boxes, and cardboard just laying around. A few days later, he received another letter asking "Will you make some medium-sized puppets for out-clinic?", and so he took over 25 more.

That began the history of giving to the hospitals. He has made and given out more than 3,000 puppets to hospitals and over 3,000 to children each time he goes out. He and his wife go out every evening for a snack. He always takes two puppets with him, and he's learned a lot about children.

The Crippled Children's Hospital, when they put a child in an oxygen tent, given the child a puppet, and the child has no fear of what is taking place.

At another hospital, in their speech clinic, they have discovered a child will talk to a puppet but will not talk to the nurse. Another person, one who works with children that lisp, has told him that when a child is given a puppet it will talk to the puppet and will not lisp.

Some of the things that happen when he has given out the puppets are most satisfying. He was out at a diner recently, saw a little girl and gave her a puppet; the child was tickled.

Her mother came over after they had finished their meal and said her child had rheumatic arthritis and many problems, and oh, she was so thankful.

He gave a puppet one day to a little fellow in the park; he played with it a while, then gave it to his mother. She started playing with it, and he said, "Mother, stop that. You'll wear out the battery."

It is his habit, most times when he gives a child a puppet, to say, "His name is Stanovitch Humberdinkle. He has to have wheaties every morning, and go to bed (and he figures what time the child should go to bed), and go to church on Sunday with your father."

One day in a restaurant there was quite a group of people waiting to be seated. He gave a puppet to a little boy waiting with his parents, and repeated the remarks about Stanovitch Humberdinkle, wheaties for breakfast, going to bed on time and going to church on Sunday.

The little boy looked up and said, "I've got a problem, Mister."

Mr. Puppets said, "What's your problem?"

"I go to Temple."

There are many stories about things that have happened with these puppets as they've been given out. Mr. Puppets has come to the conclusion that 80% of children in America are spoiled rotten, that 90% of the parents don't know how to bring up a child.

There is no definite contact between parents and children, he feels. It's amazing the number of children who say, "Did you make that? I'm going to make some."

If only parents would sit down and talk with their children and work with their children, what a different situation we would have.

It's been a glorious experience. There's much more I could tell you, but these stories give you an idea of what happens when you reach out and show concern for others.

The reason I've taped this; I've never written a speech or a sermon in my life. I feel that if I do not know my subject when I go on a rostrum, a platform or pulpit, I don't want to speak.

It's been an interesting life, a rewarding life, and I hope the Lord will let me keep on making these puppets because they bring a great deal of happiness, and they seem to bring families together. There's a great deal of concern.

And so, I send you this tape recording, just a brief thing of what has happened because of these little pasteboard puppets, and I hope you'll get some enjoyment out of it. Good bye.

And so ended the words of Mr. Puppets. This is the story of what one person brings and gives away whenever he goes out among people most of us think of as strangers.

This is the kind of souvenir I most enjoy bringing home.