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Treasurer's Note

November 27, 2024

Honoring My Grandma by Serving Others

I know you're busy getting ready to gather with family and friends this week, so we'll keep this newsletter short and wish you a Happy Thanksgiving.

At Thanksgiving dinner, my family likes to take turns telling each other what we are thankful for. It is probably something we ought to do more often than once a year, but this holiday serves as a nice reminder.

I am thankful for so many people in my life, and I have written about many of them in my Treasurer's Notes. Today, I'd like to tell you about my mother's mother.

I loved all my grandparents, but I was closest to Grandma Roessler. Geographically, I was really close. The first house I lived in was a house she and my grandpa had built, lived in, and sold to my parents. My second house was another house that she and Grandpa had owned and then jacked up and moved from the country into town. And my parents built my third and final childhood home right next door to Grandma.

Had there not been a sidewalk between our houses, I am sure that I would have worn out a path between them. I spent a lot of time with her. She was like a second mother to me.



This is one of the first photos of me with my Grandma Roessler. At 10 pounds and 2 ounces, I was a big baby.

Her husband, my Grandpa, died months before I was born. From that point on, it seemed to me that she devoted her life to volunteering in our church, to baking, and to her 18 grandchildren.

She frequently spent her mornings at church with other women sewing quilts for the less fortunate. She seemed to spend many afternoons baking. As a kid, I liked to "help" her. Bread, homemade noodles, pies, and around the holidays her kitchen would become a factory for hard candy and a variety of cookies.

I put "help" in quotes because my wife will tell you that I obviously didn't learn much from Grandma about cooking or baking. I was really good at helping her eat the sweets. And she spoiled me.

When I was younger, I was convinced I was her favorite grandchild. As an adult, I know that all her grandchildren felt that way. She had a tremendous ability to make you feel loved and special.

And yet, I don't ever really remember her telling me that she loved me. I'm sure she did at some point, but I don't remember it. I asked my mom if her mother had told her that she loved her. "I don't really remember her saying that, but she didn't need to. It was clear that she did," Mom replied.

People show love in different ways. Some use words of affirmation. Others through touch and some through gifts. My Grandma showed her love through quality time and always being there to help.



Grandma not only lived close by, but she often stood right over our shoulders, keeping a watchful eye on us.



Throughout my childhood, Grandma was frequently by my side, or I was by hers.

At the end of her life, she was being taken to the hospital and a paramedic asked if she wanted to lie back on the gurney or to sit up. "Whatever is easiest for you," she replied. Those were the last words I know she spoke, and they sum up her attitude toward others very well.

This Thanksgiving, I encourage you to let your loved ones know that you are thankful for them. That can be through words, gifts, hugs, time together, or service.

If you are looking for ideas, we have a way to help. Feel free to visit our missing money [I-CASH database](#) and look up the names of your loved ones. If you find that we have money for them, we have a share button that will send them an email.

Also consider picking up the phone. Think how nice it would be to talk to that sibling, cousin, or friend you haven't spoken with for awhile. You can tell them you were thinking of them and how important they are to you, and that you found money on the State Treasurer's [website](#) that belongs to them. Your actions will show them that you spent time on them. You can add some kind words and give them a hug when you see them in person.

After all, most people like money, and you'll probably make them happy by helping them to get back what belongs to them.

You also will be doing me a favor. I feel like I honor my Grandma whenever I can provide a good service to people, and putting more money into their pockets around the holidays, is something she would approve of.

Happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Michael



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