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The Salvation Army Angels

By Steven L. Anderson, Ph.D., MBA

I have a client, Marc McTeague, who recently told me a very inspiring story. Marc is President of Best Hoovler McTeague Insurance Agency. A few years ago he had an employee who told him about the Salvation Army Angels Program. This program is designed to provide Christmas gifts to children in Franklin County who would otherwise not be able to receive them. Most of these children are foster children. Every year the people in this program buy gifts for around five hundred children. Marc told me that he really likes this program because one hundred percent of the proceeds go to charity.

The first year Marc found out about the program he bought gifts for a few children. The next year he helped a few more. Each year his involvement has grown. He now has a big network of people who buy gifts for children through him. In November every year he contacts all of these people and asks them how many children they would like to sponsor. He then coordinates the program and makes sure the gifts get to the Salvation Army.

I am writing this article because I was so overwhelmed by the depth of Marc's commitment to this program. As I said earlier, a few years ago, Marc sponsored a few children. Last year he and those people he is coordinating **sponsored 350 children!** So, Marc has single-handedly taken responsibility for two thirds of the kids in the whole program!

To give you an idea of his (and his wife's!) commitment, last year The Salvation Army did not have enough warehouse space for all of the gifts. So, Marc agreed to store the gifts in his house. He told me that for several weeks last December there were paths through many of the rooms in the house. The rest of the house was covered in bags full of Christmas gifts with children's names on them. The Monday before Christmas a Salvation Army truck arrived and they loaded the gifts into it where they were taken to be distributed to the children.

I can attest to the fact that Marc was exhausted by this process last December, yet he did it anyway. When I asked him why he has become so involved he told me that it makes him sick to think that some child might wake up on Christmas and not have any gifts. I think a big component of being an effective leader is to become involved in one's community. Marc has done this in a big way. I thank him for inspiring me. I hope his story has also inspired you. If you would like to help with this program next Christmas feel free to contact Marc at 614-206-1322.