

Small Acts, Big Heart



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Spending any length of time in my little red Ford Focus these days usually brings me to tuning in to news stories or podcasts and listening to what's going on in the world and others' stories.

A while back as I was driving home from the airport, I took advantage of the 35-minute trip to pull up TED Radio Hour on my phone's NPR app, and the podcast I settled on was "Giving It Away: TED Radio Hour examines generosity and philanthropy."

It started with a story from volunteer firefighter Mark Bezos who wanted nothing but to be a hero when he was called to fight his first fire — instead was given a task that didn't live up to his heroic dreams, or so he thought.

Mark arrived in the middle of a rainy night as the second firefighter on the scene. He found the captain standing outside a burning home with the homeowner — she was under an umbrella, in her pajamas, barefoot, standing in the pouring rain.

The first firefighter was given orders to go inside the home and save the woman's dog. Mark was jealous that the guy that beat him to the scene will get to tell the story of how he saved a living creature.

Next, the captain gave Mark his orders — go upstairs, past the fire, into

the master bedroom and grab a pair of shoes. Mark tells of how this isn't exactly how he hoped his first fire would go since grabbing a pair of shoes was nothing to write home about.

A few weeks after the incident, the fire department received a letter from the woman thanking them for their effort in saving her home. "The act of kindness she noted above all others," Mark says, "someone had even gotten her a pair of shoes."

My own parents tell of a similar story following a fire that destroyed their home. It was early December in 1985 when my mom got a call at work saying her home, which her grandparents built in the early 1900s, caught fire. Volunteer firefighters rushed to the scene but not much could have been done. Everything inside had been consumed by flames.

My dad, mom and their 22-month-old daughter, my older sister, received an outpouring of support from the community which they remember even to this day. In the midst of all the giving, it was a small gift that stood out to my mom. As they arrived at my grandparent's home to stay that night, they found a lovely little dress and a bag of diapers hanging on the doorknob — this small, anonymous gift gave my sister something beautiful to wear for Christmas.

This spring, cattlemen in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas will be beneficiaries of all acts of kindness — great and small — as the livestock industry rallies behind their own following fires in the Great Plains. As I write this, I cannot visit social media without seeing videos of truckloads of donated hay moving into the areas destroyed by fire, or posts about how to give and to support cattlemen. I'm proud to be part of such a generous industry.

From all these stories, what we learn is don't miss out on an opportunity to do something good because you're waiting to do something great. Each day gives us an opportunity to be generous with our time, money and kind words. Small acts of kindness may not get you a headline or medal, but they certainly do not go unnoticed.

In this issue

In this issue we recognize 2,542 Dams of Distinction — cows that met the highest standards of production and the producers who managed them. We also recognize 106 Sires of Distinction, which sired efficient, fertile and productive females. We also introduce to you the new *Hereford.org*, a mobile friendly website of the AHA. Turn to Page 48 to learn about the new website features. **HW**