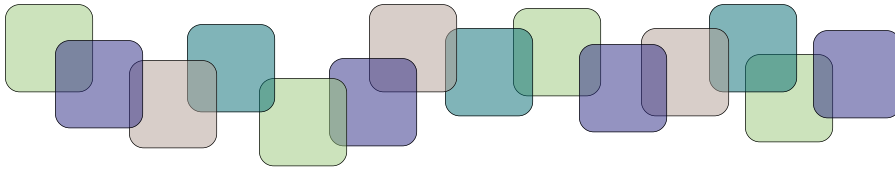


The PERIODIC PONDERANCE

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 1 :: 1525 SPRUCE STREET, SUITE 300, BOULDER, COLORADO 80302 :: 1ST QUARTER 2013

Honoring your worth/Taking care of your wealth



PRESENTED BY

TWC THE WEALTH CONSERVANCY, INC.



Melissa displays her creative contribution.

Santa's Little Helpers

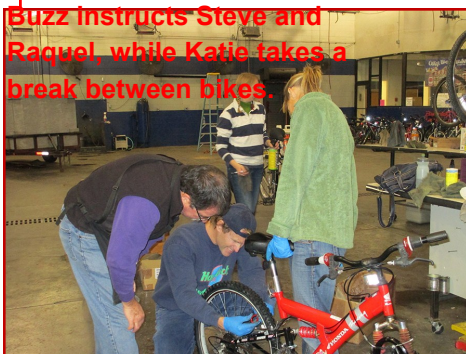
I was looking for a volunteer opportunity last summer when I heard about the "Kids Holiday Bike Program." This is a non-profit organization in Longmont, Colorado (Boulder's neighbor that sits about 20 miles north-

east), started 25 years ago by Buzz Feldman, a Longmont resident who believes that every kid should have a bike. And what better time to make that happen than Christmas? The organization takes donated bikes and cleans them up and repairs them and then gives them away—no strings attached—to kids right before Christmas each year. I put my name on the email list and eventually received an email that said, in part, "Our biggest need is for people who can clean & polish the bikes so that the mechanics can concentrate on the repairs."

Clean and polish? Really? Okay, sign me up; I can do that. So I showed up early one Saturday morning ready to get to work. In a back room were probably 50 or so bikes in various stages of disrepair waiting for volunteers (read Santa's elves) to work their magic to make them at least presentable, at best beautiful—and safe. Looking at those little bikes, I was overwhelmed by the lofty goal of refurbishing 400 bikes. But I finally chose a tiny, pink and purple bike. I cleaned that bike for an hour and a half and then polished it till it gleamed in the bleak garage light, and I was hooked. I couldn't find enough hours to



Buzz instructs Steve and Raquel, while Katie takes a break between bikes.



satisfy my craving to make these bikes shine! Every time I took one from filthy, neglected and dilapidated (one bike had chicken feathers stuck to it!) to squeaky clean and shiny, I got a rush imagining the face of the child who would choose that bike! Over the course

of the weeks leading up to the big day, Simple Green® became my signature scent and jeans with dirty knees (from kneeling on the floor in prayer to the air-compressor gods that I wouldn't blow up a tube while inflating countless flat tires) became my fashion statement.

In my excitement I brought the story of the program back to the office, and our TWC family enthusiastically decided we wanted to contribute. We closed our office and went as a group one day and donated about 35 - 40 man hours. After a brief and edifying orientation we donned very fashionable blue or purple rubber gloves and went to work cleaning caked-on mud from bikes with cobwebby spokes; scrubbing rust from wheels and handlebars, repairing torn seats with duct tape, lubricating rusty chains, changing flat tires and finally polishing the bikes to get them ready for the more complicated repairs by the elf bike mechanics.

Besides the sense of accomplishment as individuals and working as a team on a common goal, Raquel commented that it was rewarding to actually get our hands dirty making a difference in people's lives, a feeling shared by all of us. And we learned new skills and perceptions: Steve learned how to true a wheel by adjusting the spokes, Dianna became an expert at changing flat tires, Myra gained an appreciation of why her husband (an avid cyclist) spends so much time keeping his bikes in riding condition, both Susan and Melissa were delighted to learn that WD40® combined with steel wool and elbow grease will remove rust, and Katie took a trip down memory lane when she chose to work on a bike just like one she had as a child. At the end of the day, more than 30 bikes had been prepped!



There is a bigger story, though, and that is how so many components must come together to get these bikes to the kids. It is a story of community in the best sense of the word.

The program started small in Buzz's bike shop because an employee saw a kid with a need. Over the years it has grown into an amazing endeavor, this year giving away an astounding 561 bikes to kids whose families cannot afford to buy one.

Although bikes can be donated all year, a call goes out to the community in September to take unwanted bikes to any Longmont Fire Station where they are regularly gathered up by volunteers in "Jerry's Posse" (men with pickup trucks). At the same time, Elf Buzz notifies his co-elves that it's time to get to work! Elves converge on the bike garage (this year a vacant Sears garage) where benches and tools and bike stands and all the other necessary supplies are available for use in refurbishing the bikes to get them safe and presentable for their next home.

This year, a point came when the program was just about out of bikes. A plea for more bikes went out to the community via the local paper and the response was tremendous—lots of bikes showed up, far surpassing the goal of 400. Donations came in from businesses, organizations and individuals, which were used to buy parts, helmets and other necessities. (Every child receives a new helmet with his/her bike.)

The day before the giveaway, the bikes had to be transported to the Y.M.C.A. Golden Van Lines stepped up and some 16 elves loaded the bikes into two semis for transport across town and then unloaded them again a short time later. The volunteers line the bikes up in rows, move the boxes of helmets in and set up stations for any last minute adjustments or repairs.

On the big day, I arrived shortly before the doors were to open, camera in hand. There was no way I could get a clear shot of the astonishingly long line, so I just went in and found my way through the Y to the gym where the bikes waited. Walking into that room, I know my jaw dropped at the sight of row upon row of colorful, shiny bikes. At the far end by the exit were boxes full of brand new helmets of various colors. Along one wall were the repair stations. And there were elves everywhere, many dressed like you and me, some dressed like elves (of course), and some dressed as Boy Scouts!

Wandering around I saw that there was an anteroom with activities to keep the kids entertained while they waited in line for their turn to get a bike. Santa was in that room! And he was available for photos with the kids. There were also clowns and games and lots of other things to do.

The kids, with their accompanying family members came, a few at a time, into the room where the bikes were

waiting and were met by elves trained to help them choose the perfect bike. It was obvious the elves knew what they were doing, leading the kids to appropriate bikes, asking and answering questions, making suggestions, helping the littlest ones onto their bikes and steadying the bigger ones. When the perfect bike was chosen, they would all go to get fitted for a helmet and then to the repair stations, if necessary.

I expected the faces of the children to be lit up with anticipation and excitement, and they were, and I saw many other expressions cross their faces too: curiosity, trepidation, confusion, serious consideration, mischief (although I didn't notice one instance of misbehavior) to name just a few. On their way to the exit, what I most read in their faces was a strong determination to get out of that building fast and ride their new bike!

I took dozens of photographs starting with our TWC Volunteer Day through the giveaway afternoon trying to capture the scope of the project and the excitement of the day, as well as the action and faces of the kids, so I could share them with our readers. I am only able to put a few of them in this newsletter, but if you'll check out our website, TWCinc.org, you will see many more.

From the beginning when the initial arrangements are being made, until the last child leaves with a bike, the spirit of Christmas, a sense of community, lives in the hearts of all who participate. Put succinctly by Buzz, "What makes it such a success is that hundreds of Longmont residents donate bikes; the Longmont fire stations all serve as drop-off points; 3 guys with pickup trucks collect the bikes from the fire stations; this year, Twin Peaks Mall provided a space to make the repairs; about 100 volunteers showed up and put in more than 1,000 hours to clean and repair the bikes; Golden Van Lines provided 2 semi trucks, trailers and drivers to transport the bikes; the YMCA provided the perfect venue for the give-away; the *Times-Call*, Longmont's daily paper, did an over-the-top job of getting the word out about the program; and numerous individuals and organizations donated the funds needed to purchase helmets, repair parts and training wheels. If ANY of those pieces were not present, it wouldn't happen."

Do you believe in Santa Claus? I do.

By Barbara Denny



IT'S A DIRTY JOB BUT SOMEONE HAS TO DO IT



As we say good-bye to the old year and welcome the new, many people begin to think about resolutions; they review the past year, their accomplishments and learning opportunities, and set goals for the coming year. As for me, my mind turns to compliance. Because TWC is a Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) subject to regulation by the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC), each year I spend a fair amount of time between January first and the end of March reviewing our compliance program and updating our annual disclosures. The two main goals of the review, besides ensuring we are compliant with current securities law, are to review our policies and procedures to help ensure consistency in our operations and also to help guard against fraudulent activity in our client accounts by rogue employees or outsiders who may gain access to client information, whether it be via internet activity or physical access to our offices.

Our clients place a tremendous amount of trust in all of us at TWC and we, in turn, feel tremendous respect and responsibility regarding the trust that has been placed with us. While I have the utmost confidence in our entire team, during the compliance review I have to turn the table on my "normal" thinking about our team, our systems, and our procedures. I have to think about what might go wrong, and how that trust could be abused.

As a firm, we work hard to ensure the safety of client assets. Even so, we may not be able to prevent all criminal activity. There are several simple things, though, that you can and should do to help protect yourself. If you aren't in the habit of looking at your Schwab, private investment or other custodial statements, open them every so often. Review the transactions, particularly any withdrawals. Do they look familiar? Compare the balance on the reports we send you with the balance on the Schwab statement. The statements we send could possibly be manipulated by a rogue employee but the custodial statements are sent to you directly from Schwab. Similarly, compare the fee notice we send you with the withdrawal from your account. Do they match? If not, contact TWC for an explanation.

Many banks allow customers to set up alerts for their accounts. You can determine which alerts you would like to receive and can usually set the threshold. For example, you may want your bank to call, text, or e-mail any time a withdrawal or purchase over \$500 is made. Or

maybe \$1,000 is more appropriate for you. As another preventative measure, Schwab is now frequently calling customers for a verbal verification of withdrawal requests, particularly for larger ones. While these efforts can be annoying at times, they are meant to protect you.

Virtually all banks and other financial services firms like Schwab require written confirmation of address changes. This helps to prevent outsiders from being able to access your account online, change your address, and then request a check be sent to that address. They typically require a signature to transfer funds between accounts if the names do not match exactly. If changes are made to passwords, or other account information, an e-mail or text is usually sent to clients. Again, while these alerts can be bothersome at times, pay attention to them and contact the firm if something doesn't look right.

Another smart move to help protect yourself is to check your credit report on an annual basis. If you haven't reviewed your report recently, go to www.annualcreditreport.com to request a free report. You can do this for no charge once every twelve months. If you see anything suspicious, report it immediately. Feel free to contact your planner if you have questions about any of these suggestions.

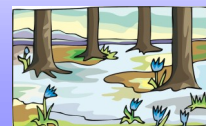
Here at TWC, we have procedures in place to ensure that more than one person is involved in both billing and preparing and reviewing quarterly reports. We also conduct background checks and contact references on every new employee. We keep all sensitive client information stored out of sight and have both locks and an alarm system on our doors. We also work with our IT consultants to ensure we have sufficient safeguards around our technology.

Again, while I trust all our employees and service providers implicitly and would like to believe that nothing bad will ever happen to any of our clients, I do believe in the saying that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. So, along with your normal resolutions, if you aren't already taking some of the steps mentioned above, please resolve to do a little bit this year to help prevent becoming a victim. And we at TWC will continue to do the same.

By Raquel Hinman

Visit our updated website at www.TWCinc.org!

TWC Hours and Holiday Closures
Office hours: Monday - Friday,
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (MT)
No holiday closures this quarter—Bummer!





SWITCH, HOW TO CHANGE THINGS WHEN CHANGE IS HARD

A BOOK REVIEW

Here at TWC, we've recently been doing some work on the concept of change and how we can be better facilitators of it. A book that has significantly affected my thinking about this is *Switch, How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, by Chip and Dan Heath. In a very engaging and metaphorically rich way, the Heath brothers make the argument that in order for change to be successful, the leader of the change must appeal to both the emotional and rational sides of our human brains. And to make change permanent, the environment has to be shaped in a way that is supportive and makes the change easier. Sound textbook boring? It could be, but the authors use an interesting analogy to get this idea across. Based on the book *The Happiness Factor* by Jonathan Haidt, the Elephant is used to represent our emotional brain while the rational brain is represented by the elephant's Rider. If it is true that people remember things best when there is a visual image attached, then the Heath brothers nailed it. The Elephant and the Rider are unforgettable metaphors to get across the authors' basic message: to enact successful change, we have to do three things: direct the Rider, motivate the Elephant and shape the Path.

Direct the Rider: Imagine the Rider astride the Elephant. He's holding the reins and ready to direct the Elephant where to go. But guess what? Sometimes the Rider doesn't know where he's supposed to go. He lacks clarity and vision. This is because our rational brain often gets caught in spinning our wheels, allowing us to go into analysis paralysis. Does this sound familiar? Sometimes we just can't figure out where to start. The authors tell us to direct our Rider by following the bright spots. Identify what IS working or has worked, start from there and build on it. Once you have found the bright spots, the next step is to script the critical moves. Consider how a physical therapist helps his patient recover from surgery by prescribing a set regimen of exercises, and you can understand what it means to script the critical moves.

Motivate the Elephant: The Elephant is willing to take this new and clear direction from the Rider, but he's going to need motivation to keep him on the road for the long haul. The Elephant is impetuous, impulsive and strong. Most people who have dieted can relate to the Elephant if they recall how easy it is to be sabotaged by a plate of cookies. To keep the Elephant motivated, the authors say it is critical to "find the feeling." In other words, successful change requires an emotional connection. With good reason, children can provide motivation for people who seek to give up bad habits like smoking and drinking. Finally, this explains why relying on sheer willpower never seems to work. Willpower eventually breaks down, so it's important to find the emotion that can truly sustain the motivation to change.

Shape the Path: If the Rider has good directions and the Elephant is motivated, then the last thing to do is to make the Path easier to move along. If you have to move through a jungle, it's certainly going to be difficult. Taking a machete and clearing the path makes the journey a lot easier because the Elephant won't get tired and the Rider can see where he is going. One way to shape the Path is to tweak the environment. For example, to help your partner lose weight, tweak the environment by stocking the pantry with healthy food instead of chips and cookies. To further shape the path, the authors urge rallying the herd. The idea is that behavior is contagious, so to help your partner lose weight, consider getting the rest of the family to eat healthier too.

No doubt getting both my Elephant and my Rider to work together while shaping a path for them to follow won't be an easy task. Nonetheless, after reading this book I'm definitely going to give it a try. As I map out my 2013 New Year's resolutions, I'm going to approach my goals in this new way and see if I can get my changes to stick. Stay tuned and look for the January 2014 edition of the *Periodic Ponderance* to see if it worked!

By Dianna Chiow

SUNRISE, SUNSET

Ever wonder why it seems like the days don't lighten evenly after the winter solstice, which falls on December 21st or 22nd most years in most time zones in the Northern Hemisphere? It's because they don't. The afternoons get longer while the mornings stay dark as late or even later than at the solstice. And once they begin to lighten earlier, they still don't do so at the same rate that the afternoons are getting longer. Why is this?

First, the Earth is nearest to the sun in January and is moving faster in its orbit around the sun than at other times of the year. Second, our 24-hour day is based on the average time it takes the Earth to spin once on its axis as measured from when the sun is highest in the sky (local noon) one day until noon the next day.

In simple terms, at different times of the year, time, as we measure it by clocks, and the movement we see of the sun across the sky grow out of alignment. In effect, this is most noticeable (to those who notice such things) around this time of year.

Here are two websites to check out if the explanation above leaves you in the dark ;-):

http://imagine.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/ask_astro/answers/980116c.html

<http://aa.usno.navy.mil/search.php?q=faq+docs+dark+days+html&cx=002940263540317832718:uhwwol5lyzc&cof=FORID:11>

A REAL-LIFE FAIRYTALE



Once upon a time there was a beautiful, young girl (well, not SO young) who worked for a wealth management firm whose specialty was working with inheritors of large sums of money. This girl (we'll call her Abbey) had worked at the company long enough to know firsthand how clients of this firm often experienced unique and complex emotions when they suddenly found themselves responsible for a bunch of money. Abbey sympathized with them; she could understand how it was a big responsibility.

One day, after a long, drawn out, contentious and complicated battle, Abbey suddenly received a certain amount of money in a lump sum. It was nowhere near a fortune, but it was substantial in her life. Everyone was so happy for her: "You must be so relieved," they said. "You must be so happy!" they said. "Now you can do anything you want," they said (not knowing how much or how little it was). "Let's go out and celebrate!" they said. Unbelievably, one person actually asked her how much she got!

Abbey realized she had begun to shy away from her well-wishers. She felt anxious and unsettled. What was going on? This was something she had expected and hoped for for a very long time. Why wasn't she jubilant? What exactly were her feelings?

First of all, she thought, I have this weird feeling of scarcity. Wow! What is that all about? This is more money than I've ever had. It's more money than most of my friends can hope for. And, it's also all the money I'm ever going to get—both my parents are gone, and there are no rich relatives waiting in the wings to leave me money. WHAT IF I LOSE THIS MONEY?!?! I am not SO young anymore; how would I ever recoup it? What if I mismanage it? What if I don't understand how to preserve it or possibly grow it? What if I make a mistake with it? I don't understand it: I don't understand if I can spend any of it or how much; I don't understand if I can

have a monthly disbursement from it; I don't understand how far it will go and how long it will last. Despite having done preliminary planning with an assumed amount, Abbey still could not quell her runaway what-ifs. What if my friends and family members are jealous? What if they want to borrow money? What if they expect me to pay for everything when we go out? What if they talk about me and tell other people that I got this money?

Another feeling came upon her: a sense of loss. *Huh?! I should have a sense of gain, she argued, and a sense of relief from the stress of dealing with this year after year. But now I can't use the not-having it as an excuse to not live my life: "I can't go to Europe/update my house/buy a new car/yaddayaddayadda until I get the money."* Talking it over with her therapist, she realized that she was feeling the loss of "normal" and now had to come to terms with a new normal that required taking responsibility for her life, in full. *Yikes!*

Underneath all these unexpected emotions, though, Abbey was very grateful and happy. After some time had passed, she realized that she had come to accept her good fortune with a sense of peace. For sure, there is work to be done now that the amount is known: meet with her planner to revise the preliminary plan; meet with her CPA; revise her estate plan, etc., and Abbey is ready to deal with it now. She also has learned skills to enable her to feel comfortable not responding to well-meaning people who tell her what she can and should do now that she has "all this money."

Will Abbey live happily ever after? Well, that remains to be seen: how she lives her life is up to her. Abbey is fortunate to work at a wealth management firm where she could talk over her feelings and be understood and supported by people knowledgeable about sudden wealth. You are fortunate to be able to tap the same resource—The Wealth Conservancy. We are at your service.

By Abbey

Published by
THE WEALTH CONSERVANCY, INC.
1525 Spruce Street, Suite 300
Boulder, Colorado 80302
303-444-1919
FAX 303-444-1479
TWCinc.org
twc@TWCinc.org
© 2013 The Wealth Conservancy, Inc.
*Honoring your worth /
Taking care of your wealth*

W
E
A
L
T
H
C
O
N
S
E
R
V
A
N
C
Y

