

OneBranch

a newsletter for parents and families

What's

inside...

- 2 Found Passages from the field of education
- 4 Combining work and play
- 6 Time and Energy perspectives
- 8 Recognizing Seniors
- 9 A Poem about building bridges
- 9 Is Memory enough?
- 9 Who is Raising Teen Girls?
- 10 Eight Gifts that don't cost a cent
- 11 Pay attention to the details

www.OneBranch.org

back to Basics

by Terri Gray

We hear and have read stories of the early American pioneers, how simple their lives were. Mostly, it seems, we look at them and concentrate on their trials and want to steer away from a simple living, as if it were why they suffered hardships. The most valuable lessons that I have learned in life about priorities, I learned while in West Africa. Although industrialism has somewhat modernized living in the cities there, the small villages that dot the jungles that my husband John and I visited, are still living as our pioneers did. There was one particular village that won our hearts as they were especially warm and generous. We found others from their tribe the same way.

They live in modest dwellings, cooking on wood fires. Washing clothes on scrub boards making white clothes whiter than white. Those "better off" have just the number of plates, utensils or cups necessary for their family but enough for a special guest. Their dishes

"They live in modest dwellings, cooking on wood fires. Washing clothes on scrub boards, making white clothes whiter than white."

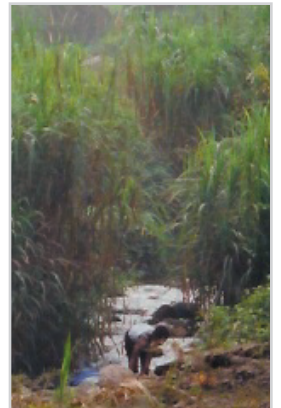


photo by Terri Gray

may be made of wood or clay. Some have a small set of china. However you are served, as their guest, it is as though you were royalty, and the food is set before you with a humble, giving attitude. There are simple furnishings, but as neat as as they can make it. Perhaps a blanket serves as a door, which is always welcoming a neighbor or family. They carry water from the nearest stream, river or from a community faucet. With jugs or buckets on their heads, the children help carry the water up hills.

Continued on page 4

If I'd known about the fire

by Sylvia Tomlinson

Back in 1999, in the early morning hours of a long string of hot July days and nights, we were awakened by a series of small explosions. Our farmhouse had caught fire while we slept, and as our guest from New Zealand met my husband in the hallway with the news

that the back of the house was on fire, I ran to the kitchen for the fire extinguisher. While Steve took the extinguisher out the front door and around to the back carport and storage area, I fumbled in the semi-darkness, knowing the phone and power lines came into the house where the fire appeared to have started. If I didn't find the fire department number soon, I knew I would be unable to call for help. My heart pounded against my eardrums, my mind felt stalled and numb.

Continued on page 5

note from the editor



It's nearly summer and my husband and I are taking a hard look at what we have.

We find our children joyously playing and creating when they have tools and supplies and the toys are no where in sight. As soon as the toys are out, a little war starts in our otherwise peaceful home. Their young undisciplined human nature shows itself and they are competing over who has the best and how can I get yours, crying and resorting to punches when all else fails.

There was a time when I was amused at seeing my kids with a new toy. But I have experienced far greater joy at seeing my four year old get excited about the bean plant he planted. Or seeing my eight year old collect wood sorrel seeds or make up a game. Do we really need to be constantly entertained? Can our children learn the ways of our kind if we separate them from daily living? Are we dumbing them down if we supply so many toys and give them little experience of contributing to the household they live in? How much time does a mom spend picking up toys? What ideas might help turn daily tasks into games?

These are questions for today. How can we help our children learn to contemplate and solve their own problems as they grow into adults?

Sincerely,

Lisa Westbrook

found passages

from the year
1957

regarding the
historic
method

from the field of education

"To utilize effectively the experiences of others in dealing with our own problems, we need to learn how to draw upon our social heritage.

This involves not merely a knowledge of the elementary techniques of historical research, but also some familiarity with the general scope and content of the record of man. By reviewing the experiences of others who may have lived or may now be living in faraway places, or at other periods in history, those experiences can be added to our own direct experiences and can thus be included in the reorganization process. Such a study of present problems in the light of the experiences of others is likely to result not only in the suggestion of new ideas but also in a much deeper understanding and more constructive appraisal, comprehension, and analysis of the problem itself.

It is also apparent that the historical method cannot be used successfully unless there is freedom to inquire, to search widely, to consider all points of view, and to examine critically. It involves freedom to suggest and to discuss openly, and full access to the records of the past. It also implies that before a commitment to act upon a given suggestion is made, we would do well to examine the problem and the suggested solutions from the standpoint of their historical backgrounds. While we cannot judge new ideas with complete certainty before trying them, the historical method will contribute to the formation of enlightened judgements. Even so, our decisions to act will of necessity always be somewhat in the nature of calculated risks."

Thut, I.N., The Story of Education, McGraw-Hill, 1957, pp.321-322.

thoughts for thinking

Parents and Teachers

from the year
1925

regarding the
youth

"In the life of youth, human contacts have vastly increased, and they have largely shifted from domestic to non-domestic types.

There was a time when most youths in the United States lived and moved and had their being in what may fairly be called a domestic circle of human contacts. The centre - the focus both in space and in interest - was the family. It dwelt in a detached house - a bewilderingly spacious one to the eyes of a present-day city dweller - with its own garden. This was not merely a place for eating and sleeping, but also for genuinely communal living with the members of one's family, and for visiting one's friends. And about this place were gathered the things and the activities that were intended to make of the dwelling what we Americans call "home" in distinction from house.

The persons who the youth chiefly met were those who dwelt within a community of neighbors every one of whom was acquainted with every other one. The storekeeper with whom one traded was known as an acquaintance, not merely a medium of merchandise. Moreover, many sorts of merchandise were purchased from the same individual, not from as many individuals as there were articles to be procured. Most youths worked with their fathers, but if one went into outside employment, it was usually with a neighbor, and the fellow-employees were neighbors.

These may just be called domestic types of contact because they made possible, in a high degree, the integration of both the self and the other that reaches its climax in the family. For many sides of one individual responded to many sides of another. One person was not just "employer," another "employee"; one "buyer," another "seller"; one male, the other female. Nor were the human contacts casual, incidental, ended as soon as a transaction is complete.

How different are the contacts of the city youth of today, and even, in many places, of the village country youth! As the dwelling has become less a home, so the people who meet are met under fewer human aspects, for briefer periods, in scattered places, on behalf of narrower interests. One deals more with a system, less with human beings as human; and human beings are known as classes, groups, or types rather than individual personalities. As the home dwindles toward a place for eating and sleeping, so, for a large proportion of the population, the neighborhood scarcely exists any longer."

Coe, George, *What Ails our Youth*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924, pp.7-9.

back to basics

from page 1



children carrying water photo by Terri Gray

The people draw from each others talents or trade what they have gathered from the jungle or made. They pass on many skills to their children. They team up to meet common goals for the village as a whole. Most are hard working and self driven. Their work place is in the dense lush of the tropical vegetation they live in. They gather food from the jungle in hopes to have extra to sell

stands to the by. This would supplies they does not sup- still wear long work with the in mind as feed, cloth and themselves and live simple lives After the sun and kerosene

They Carry the water from the nearest stream

The people draw from each others talents or trade what they have gathered from the jungle or made. They pass on many skills to their children.

on the roads on fruit few vehicles that pass help them to purchase need, that the jungle ply. The women there native dresses. They same main priority the city dwellers - to to have shelter for their family. But they with few possessions. sets, they use candles lanterns. Some eve-

nings, they gather together by an outside fire to relax from their days' labors and talk with their family. Sure there are many physical trials that beset them like heavy rains that wash their seed away which they had just planted, malaria carrying mosquito's, Green Mamba snakes and illnesses derived from times without enough nourishing food, clean water or proper hygiene. But they appreciate and are thankful for the littlest things, and as poor as they might appear, will share whatever they have with you.

Most in the city have changed their priorities since they have moved from their villages, gained work with wages and witnessed "civilized", "modernized" descriptions of worth, prosperity and success. They now live in rented shanties with electricity. And as they can afford it, the first priority is to buy a television to watch the 4 allowed channels. They purchase computers, videos and CD players (and CD's) to become westernized as they believe they are learning what success is by watching television. They buy clothing to match what they see as success and in style. (Sad to say, but MTV depicts to them what America is and they want to be like America). TV takes away time to teach and serve the family, as they stay glued to it, soaking every thing up. The children learn from the TV, from the music, and from their peers on the street rather than from the tight family unit the village had to offer. Husbands and wives driven by the expectations that their spouses and lives should reflect the ones shown on the TV screen or on the streets, seek fulfillment elsewhere. It seems like the "energy" that electricity should have blessed people with, stole their time. Many of the children suffer with illnesses because their parents use their wages, striving for material goods, instead of providing good nutrition. (Sounds like the news we hear in our own American cities). Thousands of people living so close also helps breed disease. As in their villages, they still have to haul water thru the streets. Sweltering, humid temperatures that once helped by the breeze from the trees in the village, hangs thick, mingled with the smell of mud and sweat for those in majority without air conditioners let alone showers or indoor plumbing. There are still mosquito's that carry disease. There was no escaping many of the same trials they had in the villages, but these new priorities

combining work and play

Here's a website that shows how ingenuity solves a water problem in South Africa

http://www.roundabout.co.za/main_the_playpump.htm

Children's roundabout solves the water problem in remote areas

about the fire

from page 1

have added these new troubles. There are some families clinging on to the simpler notions of life with hospitality and a giving attitude as priorities. The only reason these had moved to the city was in order to get bus rides to their jobs. They look forward to trips to their villages of which they are so proud.

We too must make decisions daily about our priorities. What guidelines do we use as we continually add to our endless "to-do" lists? What price are we willing to pay in order to 'do it all'? Do we spend our time merely entertaining ourselves, or do we spend our time building better relationships with family members and with others in the community? Like the villagers who moved to the city, do we allow television, computers, and CDs to steal our time and to define success for us?

The lives of the American pioneers and the West African villagers can help us 'get back to basics' and reorder our priorities. Their experiences help us understand which things are most important. It would benefit us to take a good look at how we are spending our resources; we need to carefully consider what we are teaching our children. We need to ask ourselves...What are the really important things in life? What am I not doing with my time that I should be? What energy am I wasting time on? What skills am I passing on to my children?

Spending our time and energy on the basic priorities of the simple life is an investment our families will appreciate.■

Terri Gray is a wife, mother and grandmother and lives with her husband in Junction, Tx. where she is compiling her memories of Africa in a book titled My Little Piece of Africa.

Question: Time and Energy

How important is it
in the year 2004?

I couldn't find the number. My husband yelled for me to get out of the house NOW. I looked at the children's baby pictures lining the top of my dresser and thought of the years of journals I had kept while we tried our hands at farming and ranching. Precious memories I knew I couldn't bear to lose. Well, I thought, I'll just come back and get them when this little mess is over. As I left the house at my husband's insistence, the black smoke curled out behind me and our little frame home burned quickly to the ground while we stood helplessly in our night-clothes and watched.

A neighbor had called the volunteer fire department but their pumper unit soon ran out of water and being short on funding they didn't have enough hose to reach the nearby creek or pond. It was one of the lowest points in my life.

Certainly I would have done some things differently had I known that fires don't just happen to other folks. I would have written the fire department number in big bold print across the inside page of the phone book and made a list of emergency numbers. We didn't have 911 in that rural setting. What advice would I give to others now after going through that experience? First, if you have children, conduct a fire drill. Don't assume you'll know what to do. When confronted with the surprise and violence of a fire the mind will likely be yelling NO! This is not happening!

Second, archive those memories. Make backup disks of your digital photos and video your household in case you find yourself filling out insurance claim forms. Think about the items you are attached to. You might miss a handwritten note from a six-year-old more than you think. And a large safe deposit box can hold more than insurance policies. If you already have one it can hold some of your memories. The rest will stay in your heart.

Earlier in the spring of 1999 we had sold most of our livestock due to health problems my husband had experienced. But we adapted. We did have the memories of the farm and the meat goats and all the trials and all the laughter too. Our days on the farm ended after the fire. We had just paid off the tractor and the house. We had kept a few cows that I could look after. They were tame and followed me around like puppies.

I had thought that we would live out our lives on the banks of Caston Creek, taking our rests on the elevated deck that overlooked Caston Creek on one side and timbered hillsides on the other. I have since learned two very important things. Our real treasures are not the things we collect but rather the precious memories we carry with us in our hearts and minds. And sometimes what looks like the end is really just the beginning.

Sylvia Tomlinson is the author of The Meat Goats of Caston Creek and is owner of Redbud Publishing, based in Victoria , Texas.

a Riddle:

I am a bundle of joy, fueled
by thoughtful attention,
laughter and love.

I am a

— — — —



a word Scramble:

Unscramble these letters to
see what you must do to use
time wisely.

khintgni

— — — — —

Answers on p.12

a Game: think of a game

How do you maintain
your environment so that
it is functional and pro-
ductive for your family?
Think of one task that
needs to be done in your
home...can you think of a
fun way to do it?



Time and Energy

perspectives

chemist's perspective

In the body, the energy from food is released through a chemical reaction with oxygen called an oxidation. Once inside the body energy from food must break down slowly in varying forms to satisfy cell functions and movement by muscle cells. This release takes place by metabolizing the three basic food materials (carbohydrate, fat, and protein) into a common chemical called adenosine triphosphate (ATP). This specific chemical breaks down the three basic foods which transfer the energy from all foods to the muscles. This energy is stored in the chemical bonds between the phosphate groups of the ATP molecule. Breaking these bonds (the conversion of ATP to ADP) with loss of a phosphate group provides the energy for cellular functions and muscle contractions.

If this ATP molecule has the ability to break down any food we eat, what is the point of eating healthy? Though ATP can break down any food we eat, the efficiency of metabolism on the cellular level varies. The human body can store only a limited amount of ATP. Therefore, during physical activity ATP must be replenished rapidly.
can't p.7

kids's perspective

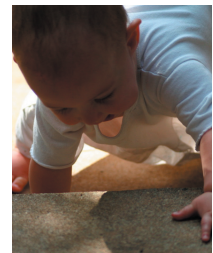
*I wonder how many
beavers it takes to make
a beaver dam?
I wonder how long an
ant lives? I wonder
how many times an ant
rebuilds its house?*

A cell

- takes in
- utilizes
- converts
- transports
- gets rid of
- replaces

baby's perspective

*on the Go!
E is for explore...*



parent's perspective

*moving our feet -
How do I use my time
and energy in my
home, with my kids,
spouse, friends, sib-
lings, parents, in inter-
action with neighbors
and the community?*

*home energy use
- What can I do to
pay more attention to
resources and their
use, looking for ways
to use time and energy
wisely?*

How do you use energy?

Notes

Aren't you glad
your body works
to use time and
energy
wisely?

Metabolism can occur aerobically (oxygen dependent) or anaerobically (oxygen not necessary). Aerobic metabolism can break down all three basic foods and supplies the ATP for endurance exercise. As exercise becomes more exhausting and the lungs gasp for oxygen, anaerobic metabolism kicks in. Anaerobic metabolism breaks down carbohydrates exclusively and is associated with energy for short burst of high level activity.

Equal weights of carbohydrates, fats, and proteins do not provide equal amounts of energy. Carbohydrates and proteins both contain 4.1 calories per gram. Fat is much more dense and contains 9 calories per gram. Through metabolism, the human body can break down healthy foods much more efficiently than fats. Even if the food is healthy a reasonable number of calories is an important factor of a balanced diet. Keep in mind that those calories need to be stored somewhere!

Pete Webber is a chemist completing his Ph.D. at the University of Texas at Austin.

mentoring

youth

*"He was not intimidated by the kids,
he reached out to them."*

BRYAN SCHELL, THE MAN WITH A BIG HEART FOR KIDS

recognizing seniors

by Deborah Coronado

Just over six years ago, the Dove Springs Branch of the Austin Public Library moved from its little corner in the Dove Springs Recreation Center to move into the beautiful new building now called the Southeast Austin Community Branch. What a wonderful day that was! It was a real milestone for the community and for the library. Although we quickly outgrew the newly provided space, it seemed like a palace compared to the little space we had previously occupied.

Although I did not know him then, I am sure that Bryan Schell and his wife, Kathleen, were present at our grand opening. Soon after our opening, the Schells began to frequent the Southeast library and always engaged my staff and me in conversation. Mr. Schell is a very talented artist who has made his living from his paintings and signs. He often browsed through our books to find pictures to inspire his art.

Within weeks of opening, Mr. Schell started commenting on the empty wall between two large windows in the children's area that was begging for a painting. He said that he wanted to do what he could to inspire the kids in the neighborhood to read. Mr. Schell then promised me that he was going to donate a large painting for the kids that would fill that space on the wall. At first I thought he was kidding, and I just went along with it and smiled. I told him how great that was going to be. However, I did not really believe it in my heart. It is easy for people to promise things that never happen.

As the weeks turned into months, we got to know each other better. Every so often, Mr. Schell would mention the promised painting again. He and Kathleen visited the library regularly. A few weeks before our first anniversary celebration, the Schells came into the branch and Mr. Schell announced that the painting was almost finished and would be ready to unveil at the anniversary. I had almost forgotten about it, and was very excited that his promise was to be fulfilled. As it turned out, the Schells donated a large and beautiful painting that uniquely pictures many types of literature and children reading.

We were always happy to see them. They were an interesting couple. Kathleen was a reserved, quiet woman from England who was always smiling. Mr. Schell was a short, jolly person a bit short on hair, with a smile from ear to ear. He was the perennial jokester, but always expressed appreciation for what we were doing with the dozens of kids that came to the library every day after school. We all got our hugs and words of encouragement with every visit by this special couple.

Eventually I visited Mr. Schell's studio and saw his numerous works in progress. I was so impressed that I bought a painting for my granddaughter. Now I am reminded of the Schells every time I step into her bedroom.

Over time, I became more acquainted with the Schells, a couple that demonstrated what marriage could be. They were always together and made it obvious that they got along well and worked closely together. Mr. Schell became involved with the kids in his neighborhood, getting to know them and taking the opportunity to teach them values like honesty, respect and an excellent work ethic. He promoted reading and the use of the library and encouraged his young neighbors to do well in school. He was not intimidated by the kids, but reached out to them.

Each of the Schells spent their time and energy in doing things that improved their little world. The fragrance of their lives has enriched anybody with whom they had contact. They added beauty to many locations through his unique, whimsical art. They encouraged the people around them, and built positive relationships. They have touched many lives.

Where are they now? I don't know. Over the last couple of years, I have lost contact with them. Their phone number is no longer a working number. I am sure that wherever they are, they continue to have a positive impact on the people they meet.

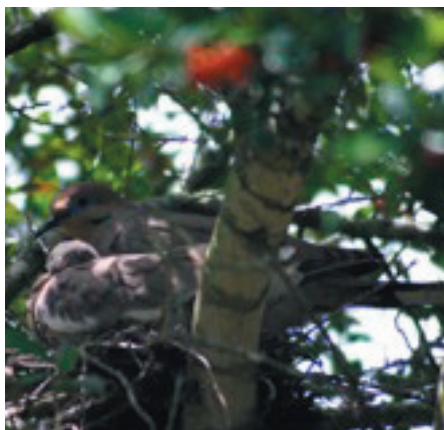
Deborah Coronado is now a librarian at the Oak Spring Branch of the Austin Public Library.

a poem on building

The Bridge Builder

by William Allen Dromgoole

An old man, going a lone highway
Came, at the evening, cold and gray,
To a chasm, vast, and keep, and wide,
Through which was flowing a sullen tide.
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
The sullen stream had no fears for him;
But he turned, when safe on the other side,
And built a bridge to span the tide.
"Old Man," said a fellow pilgrim near,
"Your journey will end with the ending day;
You never again must pass this way;
You have crossed the chasm, deep and wide-
Why build you the bridge at evening tide?"
The builder lifted his old gray head;
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he
said,
"There followeth after me today
A youth, whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm, that has been naught to me
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building that bridge for
him."
■



Spring 2004
Austin, TX.

March 19 - White-winged dove doesn't wait for the cedar elm to leaf out before sitting on her brood of eggs.

April 5 - Two european starlings

April 8 - Two yellow-crowned night herons rest at Shoal Creek in the late afternoon.

April 9 - Green lizard by the oleander, showing off its pink throat, oleander's are blooming.

April 11 - Cold front, rain

April 13 - saw two fledgling white-winged doves venture out of their nest in a yaupon to roost in a nearby crepe myrtle.

May 9 - Two adult robins out flying with their young fledgling.

May 30 - Giant swallowtail butterflies display their aerial acrobats and beautiful colors.

Is memory enough?

a physicist's thoughts

Memory, being some kind of recording, necessarily has a certain stable quality which cannot transform its structure in any fundamental way, and has only a limited capacity to adapt to new situations - for example, by forming new combinations of known principles, either through chance or through rules already established in memory. Memory is thus necessarily bounded both in scope and in the subtlety of its content. Any structure arising solely out of memory will be finite, and will be able to deal with some finite limited domain; but of course, to go beyond this, a fresh perception of new meanings is needed. And in fact, when you have a fresh perception you may also see new meanings of your memories. In other words memory may cease to be so limited when there is fresh perception."

*This quotation is from **Unfolding Meaning - A weekend of dialogue with David Bohm**, by David Bohm: David Bohm and Emissary Foundation International, 1985.*

The .org files - family resources



Energy and its Uses

- <http://www.ase.org/consumer/didyouknow/stills.htm>
- <http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/energy>
- <http://www.rff.org/rff/solidwasteandrecycling.cfm>
- <http://www.capewind.org> (click on kid's pages)

Time management

- http://www.mapnp.org/library/prsn_prd/time_mng.htm
- <http://www.betweenfriends.org/time.htm>
- <http://www.kubik.org/lighter/time-age.htm>

*"Most people are not thinking at all, they are merely re-arranging their prejudices."
William James*



photo by Doug Westbrook

Who's raising our teenage girls?

Librarian's Perspective

Beth Solomon is one of the helpful and talented librarians that works at the Southeast Community Branch of the Austin Public Library. We invited her to participate in a dialogue between educators, librarians, parents, and other members of the community to address issues that need our attention. We open the dialogue by addressing concern over the rise in juvenile detention of adolescent Girls.

Issue #1 **The Rise in Juvenile Detention of Adolescent Girls – What can we do?**

Background on the issue

Some time back we heard an NPR broadcast about the rise in juvenile detention of adolescent girls. There was one detention center in Massachusetts that had began doing weekly “beauty days” to increase the girl’s self-esteem. Most of these girls are considered high maintenance, low risk, explained as being

more dangerous to themselves than to society. Most are in for nonviolent crimes such as shoplifting. Most have been abused and come from broken homes.

The question is this. If you were approached to help design an intervention strategy for these girls, while in the detention center, what would you suggest that these girls might do with some of their time and energy?

Further, in home before they become a statistic, what would you like to see parents doing to encourage girls while helping them become capable productive members of society?

Beth Solomon:

Oh I’m so glad you asked this! I have read such wonderful “Y” fiction that, of course, I would recommend a required book discussion group. If they’re a captive audience anyway, then it might work! Girls like to talk about feelings and relationships, and there is tons of great stuff written for YA’s that really goes right to the heart.

by Angela Johnson, *Heaven and The First Part Last*, two books with a connecting cast of characters, all of whom have serious problems and deal with difficult lives.

"I have read such wonderful youth fiction..."

By Virginia Euwer Wolff, *Make Lemonade* and *True Believer*, two books in a trilogy (3rd book being written how) which deal with truly difficult circumstances and harsh environments with hope, humor and stressing important values.

There are tons of others. Those are the two sets that come immediately to mind. I also am particularly touched by most everything Gary Paulsen has written, some of which deals with his own life as a troubled teen. But I think with a group of girls, perhaps the female protagonist is preferable.

The discussion group would need to be very focused—one chapter, one meeting, themes passed out in writing to help the girls relate. I’m sure a caring social worker could do it.

Mom, Dad, when is the last time you read aloud?

This spring we started reading the Little House series by Laura Ingalls Wilder. The author wrote the stories at the request of her daughter, who wanted other children to hear the stories and see how the Ingalls family worked through the many challenges of life in the late 1800's .

Something to think about

“No printed word, nor spoken plea can teach young minds what they should be. Not all the books on all the shelves, but what the teachers are themselves.”

Rudyard Kipling

Spring Cleaning can

Energize your life - by cleaning out, getting rid of and rearranging - then use that energy to plant and make room for the abundance that comes after the spring rains.

Good Advice from Ellyn Sanna, in her book Balance for Busy Moms 101 Time Management Tips, Barbour Books, 2002.

From Tip #59

Pay Attention to the details

"Those details may seem trivial and insignificant - but a house will never shine if you don't dust the corners, wash the table and counters, and pick up the myriad pieces of paper that seem to multiply everywhere; a professional achievement will never be realized without dedicated attention to countless small, seemingly unimportant tasks; and a child will never grow strong and whole without reading him hundreds of stories, supervising thousands of meals and bedtimes, and hugging and kissing him about a million times. Each tiny detail is an essential and significant ingredient in the great shining goal you are working toward.."

eight gifts *that don't cost a cent*

- 1) the gift of listening... but you must really listen. No interrupting, no daydreaming, no planning your response. Just listening.
- 2) the gift of affection... be generous with appropriate hugs, kisses, pats on the back and handholds. Let these small actions demonstrate the love you have for family and friends.
- 3) the gift of laughter...clip cartoons. Share articles and funny stories. Your gift will say, "I love to laugh with you."
- 4) the gift of a written note...It can be a simple "Thanks for your help" note or a full sonnet. A brief, handwritten note may be remembered for a lifetime, and may even change a life.
- 5) the gift of a compliment... A simple and sincere "you did a super job" or "That was a wonderful meal" can make someone's day.
- 6) the gift of a favor... Every day, go out of your way to do something kind.
- 7) the gift of solitude...There are times when we want nothing better than to be left alone. Be sensitive to those times and give the gift of solitude to others.
- 8) the gift of a cheerful disposition...The easiest way to feel good is to extend a kind word to someone, really it's not hard to say hello or thank you. Friends are a rare jewel, indeed. They make you smile and encourage you to succeed. They lend an ear, they share a word of praise, and they want to open their hearts to us.

author unknown

topics upcoming - summer 2004

- *Patio gardens for kids and adults to grow together*
- *Summer Reading Program* ■ *Lessons brought home from Uzbekistan*
- *At home on a ranch in Wimberley, Texas*

background on the Parent's Library

The Onebranch Interactive Library is one place where parents can share and learn, the official web presence of Onebranch.org, established as a 501 C (3) educational nonprofit in November of 2001 by a small group of parents, educators and librarians. The original focus was to promote math and science literacy. But this was expanded in response to a request for a convenient place for the hundreds of questions children ask, where parents can share insights and resources.

Our growth these past three years has been facilitated by seed funding from several board members, 95% volunteer labor for research, writing and development, and by a growing list of caring individuals who serve as advisors. The common idea we hold is that life skills can enhance the quality of life and build stronger relationships. And that as parents, grandparents and neighbors - practicing and sharing our stories, lessons and ideas with each other is important and necessary for this and future generations! We hope you will join us!

Answers from page 6

Answer to Riddle: baby

Answer to word Scramble: thinking

OneBranch.org

7920 San Felipe Blvd. #1703

Austin, Tx. 78729



a newsletter for parents and families

Published by OneBranch.org 2004.

All rights reserved. (Issue #1, Vol 2., late Spring 2004)

Board of Directors: Connie Maxfield, M.S., Exec. Dir.; Sherry Hammons, Pres.; Rhonda Waites, Vice-Pres.; Becky Elliott, Sec-Treasurer; Lilly DeHaven, CPA; Jeanenne Glass, R.Ph.; Lavon Holcomb; Lisa Bilotta-Kunkel; Beth Solomon, MLS.

Editors: Becky Elliott, Terri Gray, Lavon Holcomb, and Lisa Westbrook

Art Director: John Elliott

Special thanks to everyone who contributed stories, articles and poems for this issue: *Deborah Coronado, Terri Gray, Don Hooser, Beth Solomon, Sylvia Tomlinson, and Pete Webber.*

This newsletter is available online in PDF format. We also do a print version in small batches as funds are available. If you would like to sponsor a batch for your local library or community center, let us know. Contact us by calling 512 335-4180, or write to Onebranch.org 7920 San Felipe Blvd. #1703, Austin, TX. 78729. Guest writers encouraged to share stories. We would love to hear from you.

Photo Credits: copyright remains with contributing photographer.

Mission: To involve parents in thinking and learning and to increase knowledge of life skills within our communities.

*A place for parents
and families*