



By John D. Matonich, LS

John Matonich is President and CEO of Rowe Incorporated, and is a licensed surveyor in Michigan and Ohio. He currently serves as Chairman of the Joint Gov't Affairs Committee for ACSM, and Chairman of the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee of NSPS.

Contagious Acts of Kindness

When was the last time someone did something special for you? Maybe, more importantly, when was the last time you did something special for someone else? I'm sure you can think back to a number of times when you were younger and tried to cook breakfast for your mother (usually a disaster) or saved your money so you could get your dad a special present. As we grow older, our attentions turn toward other special people in our lives. I remember once cooking a meal for a girlfriend on one of our early dates and how much she raved about boiled chicken, pasta, and canned corn. Shortly after I married her (I chased her until she caught me), I had to go out of town and I still smile about how special that homecoming was.

Doing something special can certainly extend beyond your home and family. I'm very proud of the people I work with. A number of years ago, one of our staff members was diagnosed with cancer and the rest of our staff for several years contributed to his family in many ways. Unfortunately, he lost his battle a short time ago, but the support for the family continued. We were able to give his family a little financial boost that they were not expecting, but appreciated very much. It is extremely hard not to feel good about helping.

We hear stories from time to time about random acts of kindness. Every time I hear of one I remember when I was a recipient. I was about six or seven years old and had walked uptown to the local market to buy a bottle of pop with some money I had earned. I placed the bottle on the counter and began to dig for the coins when I discovered I was a little short of the total needed. I must have lost some of the



pennies I had in my shirt pocket. I really felt embarrassed and was about to put the pop back, when I heard the clerk say, "Its okay. The guy ahead of you took care of it." I looked up in time to see the back of that man's head as he walked out of the store. I tried to run out to thank him, but I never did catch up with him. It may have only been a few pennies, but it had a big impact on me. In a town where I knew everyone, I never found out who it was that had been so kind.

A few years later I had the chance to be the benefactor, and surprisingly it was the same situation in the same little market. I was in front of a very young lad who was trying to buy a bottle of pop. He didn't look as though he had enough money either, so you can't believe how good it felt to hand the money to the clerk and disappear out the store's door. I certainly hope he remembers this and

returned the favor to someone else along the way.

I recently learned about a very special act. A service club I belong to was selling raffle tickets for a 100th anniversary model of a Harley-Davidson. The tickets sold for \$100 each and only 299 were to be sold. I happened to be out of town the day of the drawing, and being human, I was kind of eager to find out if I had won the bike when I got back home. No, I didn't win, but when I found out who did, I didn't care. The young gentleman whose ticket was drawn didn't even know his name was in the barrel. His girlfriend, as a surprise, bought the ticket for him. More significantly, he won't be able to ride it for awhile as he's currently serving in the military stationed in Iraq. Now there's the kind of homecoming anyone will envy...

And that's the situation as I survey it...