

Glasspell: The Pursuit of Meaning

By Bridget Kenny

Tulips push through heavy mud and winter's leftover grime to give us our first splashes of spring color and frogs and crickets revive themselves to sing to us at dusk. Spring has arrived, bringing all that it can give! What if nature performed its daily function of self survival, without giving its gifts of color and gesture of a song? Spring would still come, but it would not be quite as full and our world would not be as beautiful.

Our own lives are now so full with work, family and personal commitments we often struggle to keep up with our health, finances and relationships. Maybe these are only our daily functions of self survival. How can we possibly make our lives more fulfilled or contribute to the beauty of our world?

Janice Glasspell chooses to fill her life with positive experiences. At the end of the day she feels needed as well as thankful for what she has. She chooses to focus more on others and less on herself. In very practical ways, Janice makes a difference and makes the world a better place. "My gift is to simply help where I can," she says. Many of her volunteer commitments take minimal time and effort, but make a positive difference for someone in our community. Some of the local organizations that Janice helps with are Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity Camrose Region, Martha's Table and the food bank.

Other volunteer activities take more of her time and effort, but add so much to her life. Janice is passionate about reaching beyond this community to assist people in underdeveloped countries. She feels it is her responsibility to help make the world a better place because she has been given so much.

Together with a group of friends, she collects dolls and toys for an orphanage in Cambodia. Unopened hotel toiletries are also sent to a prison in that same country. "Kids usually go to prison with their parent, because there isn't anyone else left to care for them," says Janice. "There is little or no soap in the prisons, so this is a way we can make their life a tiny bit better."

While none of us has the power to make life better for everyone, every one of us has the power to make life better for someone. If you'd like to find out how you can find meaning and make a difference, call the Volunteer Centre.