

Always help your neighbors!

Submitted by Bridget Kenny

While waiting in the check out line, many of us skim the titles of the magazines. We are often curious about the lives of beautiful movie stars. Headlines of a devastating car crash, fires and other tragedies often catch our attention too. Some of the articles evoke our sympathy for victims and their loved ones and remind us that misfortune can strike even our closest neighbors. Emergency response professionals do a great job taking care of immediate needs and dangers. But wouldn't it be nice if there was someone on the scene who was there to merely offer support?

Rosemary Snider is a volunteer for an organization that offers such support. She dedicates some of her time and care to Camrose and District Victim Services Society http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/voc/publications/directory/services/services_alta.html. Volunteers for this organization are trained to be the extra support for victims and their families. They act as advocates from the time of a tragedy all the way through the legal proceedings that may follow.

The inspiring thing about many volunteers is they volunteer in so many capacities. Rosemary contributes to her community through many worthy organizations as well. Her church, the Agricultural Society, and various women's groups have benefited from her desire to help others. She attributes this habit of helping others to a basic concept that her family taught her at a young age, "Always help your neighbors!" What is less obvious in this life lesson is the simple recipe for a fulfilled life.

Rosemary would say she receives more than she gives through her efforts in helping her neighbors. She is often busy with activities outside of her home, meeting new people and learning new skills. She feels that her experiences with volunteer work have helped her grow as a person. "We get in too much of a rut sometimes. Volunteering teaches me to adapt with whatever comes my way," Rosemary explains.

In what ways are you able to help your neighbors? Reaching out to help others can make our own lives richer and more meaningful. Could we do more? Even seemingly small gestures can make a big difference. Next time you are waiting in the check out line, use the time to brainstorm one thing you can do to help a neighbor. If you just can't come up with something that fits with your life, don't give up! Contact the Volunteer Centre of Camrose and District at www.whyvolunteer.ca or phone at (780) 672-0141. Finding a volunteer position just right for you is easier than you may think. The rewards for sharing your time, your skills and your care are waiting to be discovered!