

'Thank you' can go a long way



KRIS HENRY

None of us could have gotten to where we are today without some assistance. Sometimes you have to look back to look ahead.

This is one of those times. So often we plod through life without once acknowledging the efforts of others who have played key roles in our development.

Those words of encouragement go unrecognized and that all too unpleasant kick-in-the-butt is dismissed without evaluation. This is a tragic mistake we all are culprits of in this society of 15-second attention spans.

But we can all change this fault in our existence.

Thank that mother who gave all she could to ensure your happiness. The one who treated you as if you were the most special person on the planet and was always there to listen to your thoughts without being judgmental.

Thank that father who never promised you more than he could deliver. The one whose insight took you years to discover and who let you be his

friend as well as his son.

Thank those step-parents who took you into their hearts and homes without the slightest concerns. The ones who never gave birth to you or took you to the Little League games, but in their caring have shown that they accept you as their child.

Thank those siblings who beat you up as a child, but were always there to support you when others doubted your abilities. The ones who were forced to raise you as best they knew how when left alone for seemingly endless days. The ones who, through it all, molded your personality and intelligence through shared experiences.

Thank those grandparents and relatives who saw you only in fleeting instances, but who accepted you with open arms every time. The ones who were needed for a higher cause and left your world much too soon.

Thank the special friends who have seen you in your best and worst moments. The ones who have brought you to both tears of laughter and pain. The ones who share themselves on the rainy AND sunny days.

Thank that special someone you choose to share yourself with every day. The one that brings a smile to your face every time their image creeps into your brain. The one person you are truly allowed to choose as part of your life.

On July 11, 1992, I went out

on a date and my heart has yet to return.

By sheer blind luck, a temporary job turned into the best thing ever to happen so far in my near 23 years because it is there that I was introduced to Holly Ann Werstlein.

She contains more beauty than should be allowed in today's society. Never have I met a person who genuinely cares for others and strives to do all she can for their behalf as she does. Her cheery personality and warm smile only add to the special person I see when I look into her blue-green eyes.

More than the woman I have come to love, Holly has become one of my closest friends. She has lent an ear to my troubles and has made me comfortable in this unfamiliar area called Oregon. She has accepted me for all the positives and negatives I have to offer while helping me thrive in ways I never thought possible.

So it is with all the love and admiration that I can muster that I simply kneel and say, "Holly, you are the love of my life. With you, my world feels complete. I would consider it an honor and a privilege if you would share the rest of your days with me. If so, I promise to fill your life with love and laughter and always have an open shoulder for you to lean on. Will you marry me?"

Kris Henry is a hopeful groom-to-be for the Emerald.



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