

# Perspective

In the fast paced, pressure filled world we live in its easy to get caught up in our own individuality. The responsibilities of being an adult, a manager, a spouse or a parent can and should be the driving force behind our decisions and actions. It is easy to list those responsibilities and live our lives and feel good about our contributions to the lives of those around us. There are many among us who find the time and energy to expand those responsibilities, never seek recognition for their efforts and come away from their efforts with a greater sense of satisfaction than many might realize. These efforts come in many forms and can be as simple as holding a door for someone in a wheelchair or as complex as leading a volunteer activity in their community. Supporting school activities, donating blood, supporting the activities of our faith or working in the community at any level all show a commitment to more than you and should be applauded and celebrated.

My journey of support started 10 years ago with of all things a motorcycle trip to Sturgis, South Dakota. In a chance meeting my wife and I met a wonderful couple from Wisconsin. Kevin and Carrie had come west to experience the motorcycle rally and for 3 days we were inseparable. It wasn't until our final day together that we found out Kevin was serving in the United States Marine Corps as a Major. We parted ways and continued to stay in contact via e-mail. Kevin was taking a position with the 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton. They were planning for a deployment to the Middle East in early January 2003 and our last conversation was about the trip we would take that August back to Sturgis. Kevin was killed in Iraq in March of that year.

Most, if not all of us, can point to some link in our families that tie us to the military. Our family remembers one of our own on the Vietnam Veterans Wall and we honor family at the World War II museum in New Orleans. I remember Kevin through the support of our wounded veterans. I know this is something he'd be proud of because of his great support and involvement of the Marine Corp's Toys for Tots Program.

When The PGA Tour became involved with Stonebrae Country

Club I had the great fortune to become involved with an entire network of people who believed that supporting others was the right thing to do. The PGA Tour has raised more money for charity than ALL the other professional sports combined. I leapt at the chance to be a part of Birdies for the Brave.

"Birdies for the Brave" was originally started by Phil and Amy Mickelson and has evolved in to a part of PGA Tour Charities. Since its inception in 1996 it has raised over 7 million dollars to benefit a wide range of military charities that provide support to wounded veterans, the families of soldiers killed and the families of currently deployed troops. Each of the TPC facilities throughout the country hosts an annual fundraising event and most if not all PGA Tour events now host a Military Outpost. These "outposts" provide food and beverages for attendees, recognition of the sacrifices military families make on our behalf and in many cases provide communication links so families can communicate with their loved ones deployed overseas. Our event invites active duty and wounded military personnel to play with each paid foursome. In some cases these have included people that have never even played. It makes for a great day of fun, support and camaraderie. My involvement with this program has been so gratifying. While it has allowed me to keep the memory of a friend alive in my work it has, more importantly, exposed me to some of the most amazing young men and women this country has to offer. The dedication and energy I have seen in those currently serving helps to motivate me to do my best. Meeting wounded veterans and seeing their love of life and their desire to continue making positive contributions is inspiring and has made the word perspective a much greater part of each day. Working with retired veterans still serving to support their comrades in arms shows their dedication to the commitment they made many years ago for all of us. For more information on Birdies for the Brave please go to <http://www.birdiesforthebrave>. Each of the benefitting foundations is listed. Perhaps there is one that strikes a nerve with you. Perhaps a visit only serves to reinforce the benefits to the efforts you currently make. Either way remember how important it is to make a difference.

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