

"I am a Charity Newsie"

By William Henry Haire

I am your neighbor. My work may be any of a hundred jobs or professions with my income moderate to high. Mine is a typical family you find next door, with a daily routine that ranges from the kids' school activities, my wife's club work, my own civic and fraternal meetings to those quiet Sundays when we attend church or perhaps visit friends and relatives.

I am a good citizen of proven character. I pay my bills and support worthy charities and community improvement. I lend my efforts to civic enterprises and look forward to a few evenings with the boys. In all those things, I am merely one of several million Americans in whom these things are commonplace, because of things expected of them.

Yet I am one of 200 men who have a little something extra - a compassion for children who cannot help themselves, and mine is a compassion that cannot be satisfied with a personal check or cash, but only by personal effort and attention.

Among other activities, one day each year I sell newspapers on the streets of Columbus to raise money to help clothe the needy school children of Franklin County.

I may be physically numb from the cold, but in my charity there is no coolness. There is only warmth and understanding, and physical discomfort is lost in the warm glow of compassion and self-satisfaction that comes from doing good.

I have seen the look in the eyes of thousands of children when they receive new clothing. I have been repaid a thousand times for those cold hours selling papers.

I am only one of 200 men, each of whom can never be remembered, but each of whom is helping build and maintain an organization of hope and realization for needy children that will never cease or be forgotten.

I am a Charity Newsie.

Written in 1958