

What's In Your Bucket?

By Hap Hansen

It has been said many times that one cannot live forever. I disagree. I believe the things we pass on to our children and grandchildren – our ideas, our thoughts, our attitudes towards others, and our treatment of those less fortunate – are the parts of us that live forever.

In addition to the social responsibilities we should all provide to our community, we should also provide social inheritances to our offspring. I believe this social inheritance is the equal of the food, shelter, and education we provide to those we leave behind. If everything works as it should, our children will pass on this inheritance to their children and their children will also pass it on. Through them, the way we treat people, the way we act and the character with which we handled adversity will grow and strengthen throughout the generations.

Is our duty then to make sure inheritance we leave our children includes money and other material things? No. An appropriate social inheritance will live on through our children and will last far longer than money and other worldly possessions. If we can leave our children a good 'do unto others' philosophy and a commitment to community, social service and sharing, a part of us will, in fact, live forever. That inheritance should be in our bucket list.

I remember my father, who as a public servant, stretched the rules on numerous occasions to accommodate the working poor. He is remembered fondly by dozens of people he had helped over the years. He is gone now, but I hope I have expanded that helping legacy in my life. I hope I have passed that legacy on to my children and I hope they will pass on to theirs.

We all share a very large responsibility, as parts of us live forever. We may not think about our living legacy as we go through our day-to-day activities, but others will think about it. We will all be remembered, some of us for short periods of time, some of us for generations. Isn't it a comforting thought to know that our social inheritances of community service and attitude will be remembered by those future generations who will have known us only by our deeds? All those things should be in our bucket list.