

Ernstraud Magazine

REALIZING THE VISION | SHARING JOYFUL KINDNESS

volume 6, number 2 :: 11 January 2019 :: Written by the publisher
Kent V. Busse, 1660 W 104 Street, Chicago, IL 60643-2823, USA

Free distribution at www.ernstraud.org only; ISSN 2164-4926

Copyright © 2019 Kent V. Busse. When quoting, include the credit line "Ernstraud Magazine" or "Kent Busse." Wide sharing of articles and issues, with credit, is highly encouraged and gratefully appreciated.

§1 A Polite Correction

This piece of happiness needs to be shared. There is a grocery product that I dearly love. The company recently raised its price one-third by packaging fewer pieces per bag. After about a month, the packaging again showed the LARGER count—which should mean that the price went back DOWN. I again purchased the product.

However, after my purchase I found only the lower count of pieces—appearing like overcharging followed by FRAUD!

The best response? Certainly not to call the police! I chose to telephone this small local company, where my call was answered by someone actually involved in the operation, possibly the owner. This person checked the packaging and found that indeed, the bag supplier had provided bags imprinted with the OLD amount, and the assembly line had not caught the change.

Am I satisfied? Yes! If the condition persists, that would become a problem, and grocers would probably discontinue carrying the product. Instead, I anticipate that my alert has already set in motion the corrective procedures. The company can monitor the bag supplier's deliveries, and I can continue to enjoy this excellent product. Producer and consumer acting in good faith realize mutual benefit.

This is more than a story of polite cooperation. It also serves to demonstrate how citizens resolve differences without resort to government force. Good merchants know the value of fairness in keeping customers, and they are as responsive to me, the consumer, as they would be to officers of the law. We implemented constructive action instead of punitive (hurtful) measures. Law enforcement is freed to spend its time on intentional fraud.

§2 Fallen Tree; Elevated Neighbors

A few years ago, the tree on my parkway dropped a limb that stretched past the curbs on both sides of the street. It was a complete block to traffic. The city would surely have come to the rescue if residents on the street had spoken up. The unknown was how long this would take.

In a combination of impatience and good intention, I grabbed my tree saw and proceeded to cut branches. Within fifteen minutes there were five neighbors, each with a saw, cutting away. In less than half an hour we had the street cleared and the branches neatly stacked on the parkway for collection by the city. Amid mutual congratulations, life returned to normal.

Whereas the city has personnel, oversight, and regulatory power, individuals can act sooner and more directly than government. Personal good will addresses a multitude of situations when people simply help each other as needed. Not waiting for creation of a bureaucracy, we can customize our results locally. Government can be reserved for the big projects and situations that require organized resolution of differences. People who concentrate on the well-being of others find that much of the kindness we desire is found in our spontaneous private collaboration.