

March 21 Program – The Eugene-Springfield Spreading Kindness Campaign



Perhaps you have seen the newest lawn signs in town. Signs that do not promote a political candidate or promote or oppose a ballot measure. They simply say, “Choose Kindness.” Stan Paine and Doug Carnine, the leaders of the Eugene-Springfield Kindness Campaign explained the signs at the March 21 City Club Program. “We must promote our message of kindness more vigorously than the messages of anger, hate and distrust,” Paide said, when asked how they plan to counter the negativity that seems to infect much of public relationships today.

The Eugene-Springfield Campaign is in its infancy, starting about four months ago. Their first goal is to make the public aware of how much kindness is actually being shared today. Mr. Carnine said they want to assemble a list of over 100,000 acts of kindness that have happened recently before November 3 celebration. He is convinced they are well on their way, based on the few organizations who have responded to his request for documenting the kindness that goes on.

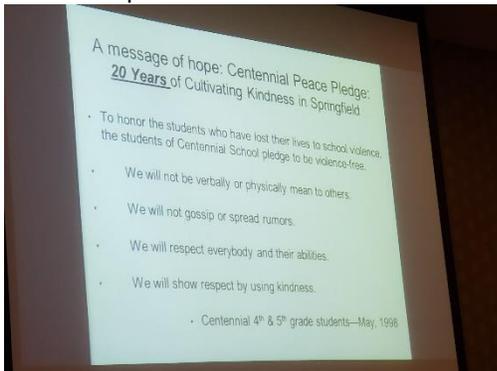
The campaign’s vision is to make kindness a part of everyday life; to recognize that acts of kindness are not unusual, but routine in everything that people do. They believe that by demonstrating how widespread and common acts of kindness make the example of demonstrating kindness easier to follow. They hope that a plethora of the simple yard signs they are distributing will remind people to be kind and, in doing so, cause kindness to spread throughout the community.

The campaign had its origin in Anaheim, California, where the Mayor, Tom Tate, started a campaign to lift the face of his city. It has, they say, been so successful that while the city remains deeply mired in poverty, it has a public safety rating of A-.



Mr. Carnine pointed to numerous benefits from increased kindness, noting that kindness is important in all relationships and is an important predictor of success in long-term relationships. Both speakers agreed they are seeking a culture change which will have long term benefits for the society.

Mr. Paine pointed to one notable demonstration of success that happened a generation ago, in the



wake of the Thurston High School shooting. He was spontaneously approached by a group of fourth and fifth grade students who wanted to “create a pledge.” Their efforts, shown here, have been recited weekly at Centennial Elementary School ever since.

The campaign is reaching out to community leaders and elected officials in its effort to touch every resident of the area. More information is available at the campaign’s web site: <https://www.spreadingkindnesscampaign.org/>