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POWERED

Lansing area group looks for opportunities to 'Pass It Forward'

Not-so-random acts of kindness

TAMERA NIELSEN • FOR THE LANSING STATE JOURNAL • NOVEMBER 2, 2009

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We race to be first in the check-out line. We rush to work, school, or day care. We race to reach our next destination on the roadways and freeways. In our race and haste to get where we're going and do what we're doing, some of us have lost our ability to see outside our personal "ball of stress."

Or so the Founder of ePIFanyNow believes.

Just minutes into our conversation, it becomes evident why Bob Hoffman, public relations manager of the Wharton Center and founder of ePIFanyNow, is so passionate about his convictions.

Sitting alongside PIF (Pass It Forward) volunteer Lynda White, communications manager for MSU's College of Engineering, Hoffman recounts the moment he had his ePIFany.

'Ah Ha Moment'

It was December 2007 and Hoffman found himself in bumper-to-bumper traffic along U.S. 127. Carefully navigating his car through the sea of [commuters](#), a driver suddenly cut in front of him, nearly causing an accident.

"She didn't even look to see if it was clear for her to change lanes," Hoffman explains. "She was completely oblivious as to how she was driving. It was as if she was oblivious to everything except what she was doing."



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His initial reaction was irritation. Yet what occurred to Hoffman a moment later was the seed that sprouted ePIFanyNow.

He reasoned the woman, like most of us, was simply immersed in her own "ball of stress." So, instead of letting the situation compound his stress, Hoffman tried to think of a way he could "burst her ball of stress," he says.

"I wanted to get out of my car, walk up to her window, hand her \$50, and say 'I hope this makes your day better.' "

Hoffman chuckles, explaining he didn't go through with his thought because he didn't have any cash. But he did share his 'ah ha' moment with friends. And over the course of a few weeks, his story and momentum for the idea grew into the first ePIFanyNow event.

Hoffman enlisted the support of Trish LaPorte, owner of Dublin Square and others "too numerous to mention."

With the tables decked out, and food and drinks donated, they awaited the arrival of an intimate gathering of 35 people at Dublin.

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