

Ring's Reflections

by Bob Ring

Giving Thanks

My better half Pat Wood has some thoughts to share on this Thanksgiving:

Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday. It has not become too commercialized and is still celebrated with family, friends, and most importantly, food. People get together, maybe in some activity, enjoy each other's company, and eat.

Thanksgiving marks the start of the Holiday season, and traditionally we give each other gifts. My definition of a true gift is something people really need or wouldn't "get" for themselves.

I have received some amazing gifts over the years, always thoughtful, often more than generous. The most memorable one came from Bob years ago. A green-plastic coffee cup appeared in my stocking with a note tucked inside, "For coffee in the shower, comes with one year of coffee refills."

I treasure my morning coffee and already am so spoiled. Bob gets up, makes the coffee, gets the newspaper, and we enjoy reading the paper and having coffee in bed. Then for one year, I had my second cup in the shower.

I've been thinking a lot about the holidays this year and the huge needs out there. The essentials to me are food, a place to live, warm clothing, health, and opportunities for education.

I support food drives, the Food Bank, cancer and ALS organizations, my university and the local libraries. I also call some of my knitting (caps, mittens, scarves) charity, but I enjoy the knitting so much that it's hard to call it giving.

Last Thursday's *Arizona Daily Star* front page story that there would be no Food Bank Thanksgiving boxes this year started me thinking about what we as individuals can do to help out this holiday season.

I propose taking 10% of the holiday budget and giving it to the charity of choice. So if the budget is \$250, \$25 dollars would be donated. If you don't have money, give of yourself; sit for a young couple so they can enjoy an evening out. Mow a yard, or more likely in Tucson, weed a yard for a neighbor. If you have a friend who is a full-time care giver, hire a sitter or nurse for the afternoon and take your friend to lunch or a movie.

I was thinking of buying my son a new camera this year to replace one I gave him several years ago. It would take better low-light pictures and would have tremendous video capabilities, but he doesn't really need it. Instead, I'm planning to take that money and split it between the Food

Banks in Phoenix, where he lives, and Tucson. I will then write a note to my son that I did this in his name.

I know David will be pleased as I can picture his smiling face as a child when we took fresh produce to the Sunnyslope food bank and the director told us that their cooler was bare, that they had only received cranberry sauce and stuffing mixes.

Today I am enjoying the warmth of my family and a cozy home, eating too much, and giving thanks for my many blessings.



Pat proposes several ways to give to others. (Courtesy of Bob Ring)