

Small things really can make a big difference

This is a story about four Hidden Heroes, two adults and two young people.

I first met Penny Reynolds, one of the adults, two, three years ago when I was looking for someone to package the video features I do at Shaw TV to be used in the Our Hidden Heroes school program. Between her and her husband, Chris, there isn't much they don't know about video production and computers.

The more Penny learned about the Our Hidden Heroes program, the more interested she got in helping out and the more I learned about her and Chris, the more I wanted to work with them. Both have a number of health issues, serious health issues, but they don't show it, and they are definitely committed to making a difference in the world.

Since we met, Penny and



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Chris have done a number of different projects for Our Hidden Heroes and always with the same agreement: "Pay us what you can" and that's what we do; always doing what we can to be fair.

Recently Penny told me about some of the kids in her neighbourhood and what they have been doing to help her and Chris with their chores around the house. Last week I met two of them; eleven year-old, Mika Mohammad and ten year-old,

Arryn Thomson.

Their friendship started last summer when Chris and Penny were struggling with two and a half yards of decorative white gravel. Little by little they were getting the job done, but then the tempo picked up when Mika, Arryn and their friends jumped in to help. Soon the job was done.

A barbecue for all involved brought an end to the day, but a habit had already been formed.

Soon the Reynolds found the kids were picking up their newspaper every morning and placing it in their mailbox, and on garbage day their can was being picked up and placed near the garage. That led to the kids turning up to help with gardening – and learning a lot at the same time as well as having a lot of fun.

When Chris was doing wood work or painting, Mika was busy picking up new skills.

When Penny was arranging flowers, the kids made arrangements for their mothers.

Usually treats follow the good deeds but no matter how hard the Reynolds try to give them money for their help, the kids will seldom take it.

"We like helping," Mika told me, "and we especially like helping Penny and Chris because they are so nice."

Isn't it interesting the way things work out when you bring Hidden Heroes together both adults and kids? What goes around comes around.

Small things really can, and do, make a difference. When they grow up, I suspect these kids will be exceptional neighbours ... and parents.

» For more about Hidden Heroes, go to www.ourhiddenheroes.org. To nominate a Hidden Hero, e-mail bill@ourhiddenheroes.org.