

NRI Random Act of Kindness

Every so often an exceptional person comes into your life that draws your attention and makes you want to be around them. Their approachable, friendly personality makes you feel welcome and valued. It could be the way they always take the time to say hello or ask how you're doing. It may be their quick smile or their genuine laugh. Whatever it is, it makes them stand out from the rest of the crowd.

Since I have worked at NRI, I have met lots of great people, many of whom have become my friends. But one of these people stands out for me, and that's whose story I want to share with you today. His name is Jeremy White, and he is a Supervisor at KB. Jeremy, or as his close friends refer to him, "Pie", was referred to NRI by Chris Chow. In addition to the awesome supervisory skills he brought to this new role, he also revealed an uncanny ability to draw his coworkers and his crew towards him. It may be his goofy sense of humor, or his way of singling out an individual and giving them his complete attention, or maybe it's his willingness to jump in and help out at any time. Whatever it is, it quickly made him a favorite on the floor.

At the Christmas party last year, we sat at the same table, and I had the privilege of meeting Jeremy's girlfriend, Tasha. At one point, when she got up from the table, I remember turning to Jeremy and, in true female fashion, telling him that she was a keeper, and asking him what the hold up was... Anyway, three months later, he sent me an email letting me know that he had great news, they were expecting! The very next weekend he proposed. A couple of weeks later, they headed to the doctor for their first ultrasound, and got another surprise – TWINS!! Well, if I thought Jeremy was excited for one baby, I hadn't seen anything yet. He was practically floating when he came in to tell us the news. The next few months were filled with weekly updates and ultrasound pictures and more good news – a boy and a girl.

At the end of July, Tasha had some complications and was flown to the Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster, where she was placed on strict bed rest, and there she remained for over 3 weeks. On Aug 20th, 13 weeks premature, Hana Christine White and Dominic Gordon White came quietly into the world, weighing in at 1lb 14 oz and 2 lbs respectively. On the day that they were born, they were given only a 50% chance of survival. Surrounded by their parents, family and a team of doctors and nurses committed to beating the odds, they pulled through and by the second day, their chances were up to 70%. Each day has been a battle for these two little angels, who now at 4 weeks old have triumphed over adversity and been given an excellent chance of survival by their doctors. In two more weeks, they will be transferred to the Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops where they will stay in the neonatal ward until they are strong enough to go home with their parents.

October 1st – 6th, 2007 has been designated by the City of Kamloops and Interior Community Services as "Cool to be Kind Week". The idea behind this is to encourage people to commit Random Acts of Kindness, to help enrich the lives of others. NRI has demonstrated support for this initiative by purchasing advertising space in the Interior Community Services Daily News insert, but we would also like to encourage NRI employees to participate.

Now, employees at NRI are already well known for their generosity and their willingness to volunteer their time and resources to help out in the community and around the globe. At different times throughout the year, we seek out different organizations that would benefit from our assistance and I am always amazed at how the employees rally behind the cause. We sponsor local families at Christmas, we volunteer time and provide financial support to the United Way through payroll deductions, and we've even purchased tricycles for mine victims in Vietnam.

So this time, I'd like to focus our efforts a little closer to home. Jeremy and Tasha have faced a lot of obstacles already and the hurdles are far from over. Though we may not be able to lessen their emotional burdens, we can help with the financial ones. Any parents who are reading this will remember the diapers and the formula, the clothes and the car seats... now multiply that all by two. For any of you non-parents, like me, that works out to 640 diapers a month! If you figure in their costs incurred already of weekly travel back and forth to Vancouver (\$300 per trip), time off work, and all the while maintaining their home and vehicle payments (just to mention a few), it's not hard to see how, like their new twins, they'll be starting from behind.

Even if you don't know Jeremy and Tasha personally, I'm sure you know people like them. Think of the first person you call when you need a hand, the first one you want to tell about your great news and the one you can count on to give you a hug when you're feeling down. They are genuinely true of spirit and gentle of heart. They are the friends that make you want to be a better person and a truer friend. So I propose that for our Random Act of Kindness we put our hearts, minds and wallets together and see how much money we can raise to help get this young family back on track, or even ahead of the game!

Please make donations by submitting a payroll deduction form to Lianne. These can be found on SharePoint, or in the lunchrooms. Thanks Everyone!!