

Christmas for Brooks' World Travels

TO THE EDITOR:

The Christmas tree sale for Marshfield's student program called Brooks' World Travels was a success. We would like to thank all of the parents, students, teachers, businesses (especially the Roche Bros.) for their wonderful help. Molly and I would like to especially thank Paul Randle and Rich Boretti for their endless ideas, effort and their humor. We would also like to thank Bill Lass and the citizens of Marshfield who supported us and who bought Christmas trees. This all has enabled us to continue this wonderful program.

As many of you know, Brooks' World Travels is named in memory of our son, Brooks. Brooks was

a sophomore at Marshfield High School when he died from a rare side effect of an anti-malarial medication he was taking while visiting Peru. He is missed more than words can express. Now each year 20-25 students from Marshfield High School will travel overseas to do a community service adventure and learn about other cultures in the same way that Brooks did his entire life. Molly and I raised Brooks to understand how much all of us, everywhere on Earth, are so much more the same than different. Brooks always lived his life like that.

The selling of Christmas trees both raised funds and gave students the opportunity to be part of a wonderful experience. We loved having the students who are going on the next trip team up with their

parents to sell trees and learn about working with the other people and the public. As expected, the humor overrode the mistakes that occasionally were made. It was amazing to hear the ingenuity of some of the students who were trying to describe a Christmas tree to a potential buyer in the dark after our lighting system failed. "Really," I heard one say, "This tree is full and round and over seven feet tall. Let's bring it up to Roche Bros where there is light and you can see for yourself." Christina had the humor moment of the season. "Look at all those pine tree branches we cut off. Let's sell them as "Make your own wreaths." I laughed very hard. We all did. But Christina was serious and she sold some. Great job!! I especially liked the comments of several not-to-be-

named parents who seemed surprised to hear how great their kids were in selling trees, fixing and organizing things and solving all manner of problems. "You are kidding? Right Dave?" one said to me. "He never gets off his butt at home...You're kidding?" I wasn't, and it didn't surprise me either. These kids can make the future seem much more possible and brighter when we might otherwise get discouraged.

Then, of course, there was the Roche Bros. After the first night that we were selling trees near the back of their store, the manager, Rich Ordway came out looking concerned. "We think that you should sell them in front of the store near Plain Street. People can't see them back here. Don't worry we can replant the grass

next spring." It was too late. Moving hundreds and hundreds of trees is a lot of work, but their thoughtfulness was touching. Then a few days later there comes Rich again in full dark suit and tie pushing a cart with hot chocolate and coffee. He looked like he really wanted to keep us warm. He and the Roche Bros did even without the hot chocolate and coffee.

Next year we hope to almost double our sales. Roche Bros. invited us back. I hope we can be there forever. If we can double our sales, then we can come closer to enabling the students who go with Brooks on his world travels, to go at no cost. What an opportunity for those who have the wish or dream of experiencing the world and meeting other people in other

countries. We believe that as our children come to take on the roles that we now have, that will become increasingly important.

This coming April the second annual trip will take place. Brooks would be very very happy, and we think that the students who were selected to go will learn what Brooks did in his short 16 years of life: We are all so much more the same than different. We are sad, but happy that Brooks has left this legacy for others and, hopefully, that in doing so, our world will become a better place for our children. We wish you a promising year, and again, we sincerely thank all of you for your support.

David, Molly, Ryan, Taylor and, of course, Brooks Singer

FOR MORE LETTERS SEE PAGE 12