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other city across America, but I can make a difference here and I believe I have by being a respected teacher and union leader for the Mansfield City Schools. Being respected comes with time and hard work, I have put both in, and believe I am a respected educational leader in my community for which I am very proud and take very seriously. There are many who are smarter than I, but I get up every day and work very hard to do what is right for the students, teachers, and support staff of the Mansfield City Schools and NCOEA.

Life Lesson: Make a difference in your community by working hard and earning the respect of your community. Don't let others set your standards.

My friends are another source of enjoyment. I enjoy spending time with those who want to laugh and have a good time. I can always find someone who wants to get together to tell lies and half-truths over an adult beverage. I like to have game nights at my house when we

get to laugh with friends and family. I enjoy getting to meet new people and become their friends. I enjoy a trip out and getting to talk to people I haven't seen for a long time. I enjoy a friend's invite on Facebook from a HS friend or someone I knew from my college days. Meg often asks me if I know everyone in North Central Ohio. I tell her no, but I am working on it. **Life Lesson: Have lots of friends, they are a source of happiness and avoid people who make you unhappy.**

Let me end with a Mia update. On Dec. 1st my little girl turned 4, and moved into my bed. For some reason the big girl bed has lost its magic and now my daughter wants to sleep in my bed. At first daddy thought this was cute, she would roll those big blue eyes and daddy would crumble. After a while I had masterfully negotiated that she would sleep in our bed on Fridays. It surprised me that this little person who is learning her letters, colors, and shapes is a very powerful force in my home. She

began to cry and complain of "ghosts" and "monsters" in her room and she had real tears. Meg had to assist me and show me how a "true" negotiator worked, I took good notes, but still was weak to those baby blues. Finally, I realized that the quality of my sleep was decreasing, little feet in the back, a hand on my face, and I never knew such a little thing needed an entire king size comforter every night all to herself in the middle of the bed. So we recently purchased a small cot for a little girl to sleep on in our room so Meg and I could get a good night's sleep. **Life lesson: don't look into their eyes!**

Enjoy your summer break, have many interest, do things you enjoy- without going into debt, avoid people who make you unhappy, stay busy, don't live in the past, and don't take yourself too seriously. Spend time with your family and make up your mind to be happy this summer.

Applause! Applause!

By Pamela Taylor

Applause is a part of most cultures and Pastor Terry Blair is one who has experienced this first hand. Many of you may know Terry as the interpreter/tutor of the hearing impaired students at Mansfield Senior High. You may have even seen her wave her hands in a semi circular fashion as to applaud at a function while interpreting for the deaf community at her husband's church. But there are many more people all over the world who have been influenced by her presence. Terry and her spouse, Thomas Blair, are ones who have "taken the world into their hands." As hosts of more than eight different students from as far away as Germany and Taiwan they have made it a life's mission to welcome students of varied backgrounds into their home. Their goal for each is to help them to see the American culture as it truly is. "So many times the way people see our nation is from the movie industry. When they come to stay with us we try to show them a true family with American values." She also told

me how they take these students to see Washington D.C. "The students most always are amazed by D.C. It is an eye opener to them. They see firsthand how much this country truly cares for one another and for others as well."

Terry has also traveled to close to twenty-nine nations as a medical mission's worker. Her background from once being a lab tech comes in very handy on these trips. She told me that her most recent trip was to the nation of El Salvador following the devastating earthquake. "When you travel to these nations a sense of knowing who you are enters your mind. Your faith meets the road. At times, you reevaluate and change from what you have seen. Other times you are happy with what you see. One thing that I have realized from my travels is how spoiled we Americans are. We take many things for granted."

Some day you may see Terry as she is filling her gas tank ready to head out on yet another trip. She may be headed to the airport. She may be

headed to Washington D.C. with another foreign student to share with them our nation's capital. But no matter what, I can assure you that she is a lady who is making a difference in our world. She is amongst many of you who deserve recognition.

I would love to hear of something special that you do during this upcoming summer break. Please write me at Teach621@aol.com when you do.



Thomas and Terry Blair

