

Life is a wheelbarrow

Last week in our staff room, I heard a great story that keeps coming back to me. It goes something like this....

Life is a wheelbarrow. As you travel along life's path, your wheelbarrow fills up with bricks - work, relationships, family commitments, life's crises. The wheelbarrow gets heavier and heavier. However, on occasion, the load lightens a bit. We have some good luck; a kid graduates from college, you get a new job.

Something positive happens and the wheelbarrow is a bit lighter. However, you will be disappointed again and again if you think that someday there will be no bricks. Your wheelbarrow will never be empty; we can simply hope the load will be different!

I think this analogy can teach us a lot, as we struggle with today's heavy and unfamiliar bricks. Folks keep telling me they are working harder and longer than ever before, streamlining operations, and trying to keep up with the tsunami of work and tough decisions that keep coming their way. Everything seems to take longer to accomplish. We are turning over every rock, evaluating its necessity and searching for ways to successfully accomplish the task in less time. Personally, I think I have learned more in the last twelve months than in the last twelve years!

With time, I am sure we will learn to deal with the heavy issues of reduced funding, increased library usage, and stressed staff. I am confident that this heavier wheelbarrow will make us and our libraries stronger and better able to balance the very different brick loads of the future.

Ten years ago, our wheelbarrows were full with Y2K (whatever that was!), amassing more and more stuff, and planning for early retirement. In 2010, most of us have a different load of bricks and perhaps are shifting the load a bit. We accept that the load will never go away completely but I am confident that as a community we will find new, innovative and sustainable ways to make it easier to maneuver those bricks.

Life is a wheelbarrow!

Have a great week...spring is on its way.

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