

## **I can make a difference!**

**By: Marcia Buzzella**

I awoke that morning to the persistent "beep-beep-beep" of the alarm clock boring a hole into my sleep-deprived brain. Thanks to a rough allergy season, I just wanted to crawl back into my warm cocoon and hide from the day. Yet, as I tumbled from bed and walked gingerly across the cold tile to the kitchen where the black nectar of the gods (coffee) called my name, I realized that today ... I can make a difference! My steps became lighter and I smiled to myself as I donned my "pajamas," (the theme for the day was "pancakes and pajamas") grabbed a couple bottles of water and hit the freeway to drive across town.

The day in question was March 13, 2010 and the event was Make-A-Wish Arizona's Walk-for-Wishes. On that gorgeous Saturday morning I, along with 20 or so other co-workers and friends of AAA NCNU, was scheduled to participate in a 5k walk. This was my first 5k and I was a little nervous about how the event would play out; however, my fears were quickly alleviated as I arrived and found our event hostess holding a giant AAA sign to lead me to the team. There was still over an hour to race time and as we milled around the sign waiting for everyone to arrive I was able to make a difference in two ways.

First, I bought raffle tickets to support the cause (additional funds toward a deserving charity) and second ... well this one is a little more difficult to explain. Suffice it to say that the restrooms at the park, while permanent fixtures, were not overly private (there were no doors on the stalls!) and there was a young woman very much in need of the facilities that was near tears because she couldn't "go" without the security of the door.

Observing her dilemma, I offered to stand in front of the stall and act as a human door if she thought it would help. The young woman jumped at the offer and soon enough the crisis was

averted and we each went our separate ways. During this encounter I kept thinking to myself that it was amazing how a simple, inanimate object, such as a door, could bring peace of mind and security. For the second time that morning I was conscious of a smile spreading across my face and I was glad my presence made a difference for someone that day.

A few moments later, back at our team gathering area, I found myself holding the AAA sign when who should walk by...? The young woman from the restroom of course! She smiled, laughed and commented “leave it to AAA to be there when I need them.” I could only infer from this comment that she was a card carrying member of AAA and again I smiled, happy to be providing direct (versus indirect) service to a member for a change.

AAA Volunteers afforded me the opportunity to Walk-for-Wishes and in doing so I was able to make a difference for an individual, a charity and our organization. The picture below graces the cover of Make-A-Wish Arizona’s photo album for the event. It serves as a reminder to me of how my participation affected the lives of others. I am proud to be a member, an employee and a volunteer of/for AAA as it is clear, at least to me, that I can make a difference!

