

Just a Word...

from Steve Dickerson, Communications Secretary

About 40 years ago I was walking west along Cherokee Street in Walla Walla. It was a Sunday morning, and we had just concluded an elders' meeting of the Eastgate Adventist church. Why was I on Cherokee Street? Eastgate church hadn't yet been built. The congregation had been meeting in rented quarters and found it convenient to hold committee meetings in what was then the Walla Walla General Hospital. I had chosen to walk to the meeting since my home was only about a mile away.



The meeting had concluded and I was on my way home when a car pulled up near me with the window down. "Do you want a ride?" the occupants asked. The driver of the car was another elder, who had been at the same meeting. "No," I said, "I'm just walking for my health." "That's what we thought, but we wanted to check."

The car started to pull away, but before it did, I heard these words: "*You are appreciated.*"

Worry weighs a person down;
an encouraging word cheers a person up.

Proverbs 12:25

The church was having some internal problems, and I was head elder at the time, so I had been presiding over the somewhat stressful meeting. A word of appreciation was just what I needed.

As you know, elders, deaconesses, children's division leaders and many others are volunteers. Sometimes the only thanks they get is a call from the nominating committee asking them to serve for yet another year. I was happily committed to my church—Sabbath School teacher, head elder, song leader, Sabbath afternoon Bible study leader; I even directed a choir for awhile—but those three words, "You are appreciated," were priceless. I don't have to tell you what my reaction was; you know, because here I am telling you that I remember the occasion 40 years later.

We have little idea of what's going on in someone else's life—even if they are a close friend. But a word of encouragement or appreciation may do more good than you can imagine. Be lavish with words of appreciation!

So encourage each other
and build each other up.

1 Thessalonians 5:11