

What Can One Person Do?

Don't tell Lisa Sellman that one person can't make a difference. She knows better.

Sellman, a community activist and life-long volunteer, recently learned how one act of kindness can set off a chain reaction that can span the globe.

"It just started out with me asking a regional pet food company for a donation of dog food for Red Lake Rosie's in Minnesota," said Sellman, a professional dog trainer and owner of a pet care business. "I called Solid Gold Northland, and one of the marketing managers there advised me that they were trying to increase the number of people who 'liked' them on Facebook, and that if I could get 40 new Facebook members to click on their 'like' button, they'd give me \$200 worth of pet food."

So Sellman, who currently volunteers for six different community groups, sent a message out to all her Facebook friends inviting them to Solid Gold Northland's fan page on Facebook. Somehow, the invite made it to the Facebook page of The Patrick Miracle, a page devoted to the story of a two year old pitbull found by a janitor in a dumpster. Their Facebook page has charted over 109,000 "like" clicks from users. When the founders of the page posted Sellman's invite, Solid Gold Northland received more than 2,000 new fans from all over the world in the course of about 48 hours.

"When I contacted them the next week, they were blown away by how quickly the response took off," said Sellman, also author of the children's book *The Legend of the Wolves of Gunflint Lake* (www.dreamcatcherpress.us), which contains the theme of the value of community service and which she hopes will serve to inspire others. "As a result of the combined outreach, Solid Gold Northland and Chuck and Don's Pet Food Outlet have committed a donation of \$2,000 worth of

pet food, and I've helped to forge new friends from other countries who all care about the same things I care about. And it all started with a simple posting on Facebook because I wanted to help a local animal shelter. It's been magical."

Sellman's simple act was a drop in the bucket compared to her schedule of volunteer activities. She works as an after school care volunteer at the Minneapolis Indian Center, a special events assistant at the Loft Literary Center, a volunteer marketing director for canine events at the Gunflint Lodge (the real location contained in her children's book), and a trail staff assistant with Wilderness Inquiry, where she and her husband take disabled children and adults on outdoor adventures throughout the US. They've been volunteers with this organization since 1997.

"Although I work hard, I love being able to serve my community," Sellman said. "The people in all the organizations I'm involved with, all share my values and my world view and they are my friends and my family. The people and the activities fill up my life with fun, joy and a purpose I could never have achieved any other way. It doesn't mean that I think everyone should take the same path that I have. I know most people don't have the time. My point is this: it only takes one simple act, one click of a mouse button to start a movement. It happened to me and it can happen to you. All you need to do is give it a shot."

