Servant-Leadership Blossoms at Broetje Orchards

by Cheryl Broetje, Broetje Orchards

(Cheryl Broetje and her husband Ralph are owners of Broetje Orchards, a 4,000 acre orchard operation located near Prescott, Washington. Established in 1980, Broetje Orchards’ apples are marketed worldwide to stores under the FirstFruits of Washington label. The orchard and warehouse employs 900 people year-round, plus an additional 900 people during harvest time. Broetje Orchards is committed to the belief that faith and commerce can thrive together. The Broetjes have taken the lead in creating a community/family environment for its largely-Hispanic workforce. Employment, affordable housing, daycare services and education facilities on-site help employees grow personally and raise their families in a healthy environment. The commitment to servant-leadership has deep roots at Broetje Orchards.

—Editors)

W hen I first read Robert Greenleaf’s test of a servant-leader, it was the last line—“and what is the effect on the least privileged in society”—that leaped out at me. As the owners of a business, we have always known that we must empower our people to help us reach our business goals of producing, packing and shipping excellent fruit to customers. What society does not expect from the business sector, or hold it accountable for, is its commitment to gauge its behavior by its effects on the least priv-

On the Road and in the News with The Greenleaf Center

Listed below are some of the recent programs and outreach activities involving Greenleaf Center personnel. The Greenleaf Center offers a wide array of workshops, institutes, retreats, speakers, and consultative services. Please contact Julie Beggs, Chief Learning Officer, at 317-259-1241, or e-mail her at jbeggs@greenleaf.org if you are interested in our providing servant-leadership programs or speakers for your group or conference.

Recent Programs and Outreach

Adjunct Facilitator Jeff Miller provided an introductory session on servant-leadership for faculty and staff at Indiana Wesleyan University located in Marion, IN.

Chief Executive Officer Larry C. Spears and Chief Learning Officer Julie Beggs made a short presentation to the 25th Class of the Stanley K. Lacy Executive Leadership Series at the Madame Walker Theater located in Indianapolis, IN.

Julie Beggs provided a short introductory session on servant-leadership for the Montgomery County Community Leadership program in Crawfordsville, IN.

Adjunct Facilitator Jim Boyd consulted during a planning session with members of the Ole Miss Women’s Council for Philanthropy through the Lott Leadership Institute at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, MS.

For the second year in a row, Julie Beggs conducted a half-day session on servant-leadership for students involved in the Emerging Leaders program at Indiana University Southeast located in New Albany, IN.

Larry C. Spears participated in a series of meetings in Columbus, GA.

Julie Beggs conducted a short presentation for several case managers within the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield division located in Indianapolis, IN.

Jeff Miller provided an introduction to servant-leadership at the third annual servant-leadership retreat sponsored by Chapman University located in Orange, CA.

Jim Boyd conducted a day-long session on Building Highly Effective Educational Institutions through Servant-Leadership for members of the faculty and staff at Chicago State University in Chicago, IL.

Julie Beggs conducted a site-visit and hour-long presentation for members of High Point University community in High Point, NC.

Larry C. Spears and Director of Development Wendell Walls participated in meetings in Battle Creek and Ann Arbor, MI.

Julie Beggs and Wendell Walls visited with staff and friends of the Center for Sharing located in Walla Walla, WA. While there, Julie Beggs conducted the day-long Symposium program for members of the educational community in Walla Walla.

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Toward Spirituality and Servant-Leadership

by Jack Collins, Volunteer Associate

Those who knew Robert Greenleaf personally were aware that, consistent with his Quaker heritage, he frequently spent time in quiet reflection. From his writings, I am convinced that he was a person of deep spirituality. At the same time, when it came to the nexus between servant-leadership and spirituality, he did not use a baseball bat to get our attention. Much of his spirituality can be found between the lines of his writings. He does tell us directly that he felt churches, and especially seminaries, had a significant role to play in getting servant-leadership across to the leadership of institutions, and in developing the servant-leaders our society needs.

When I began reading Greenleaf, I read out of my background as a Christian pastor, and also as one who had directed major nonprofit and government agencies serving persons with disabilities. I was immediately struck with how what he wrote related to my knowledge of the New Testament, and for that matter the basic teachings of most world religions. I was saddened that Greenleaf felt he had never found much response from seminaries, and that he never found a church congregation which was ready to be the church of tomorrow by adopting servant-leadership as its operating philosophy. I was inspired by how businesses, academic institutions, nonprofit agencies, and even some government entities had embraced the servant-leadership philosophy. I suspected that many of the servant-leaders in those places were led to servant-leadership because their faith helped them to see its value. Their success in their fields of endeavor was obviously proof enough of the power of servant-leadership.

Soon I found myself in conversation with CEO Larry Spears and other staff members of The Greenleaf Center. I volunteered to give some time in pursuit of working toward getting the servant-leadership concept out to churches, synagogues, and other faith-based entities. This has been an enlivening experience for me. I have discovered that many major consultants on organizational leadership are motivated by deep spiritual principles, even though they usually do not speak and write in typical religious language.

Over this past year, I have spoken directly to a small number of church congregations. I have also managed to get a significant “Spotlight Letter” published in the Indianapolis Star on how servant-leadership relates to the mission of churches; have submitted an article to a major Christian publication; and have spent much time searching for other contacts in the faith-based area. This latter effort has led to bringing together a panel of persons who are currently devoting themselves to servant-leadership, and who are willing to present a session at the national assemblies for two Protestant denominations this summer. More importantly, I have been able to assist in connecting people with one another, so they can discover what they are each doing in the faith-based area. There is activity of a vital nature, concerning spirituality and servant-leadership, taking place across the country. There are books being published by faith-based presses (some are traditional religious language."

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Recent Commentary by Larry C. Spears

“Ten characteristics of servant-leaders are: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.”


“The basic idea of servant-leadership is both intuitive and sensible. Standard practices are rapidly shifting toward the ideas put forward by Robert Greenleaf, Margaret Wheatley, Peter Senge, James Autry and others who suggest that there is a better way to lead our organizations in the 21st century. Servant-leadership and related ideas are all a part of a rich new tapestry being woven within organizational life today.”

— from an address given to the Korea Productivity Center, Seoul, Korea, May 2000

“Our fundamental understanding of character has much to do with the essential traits exhibited by a person. The nature of character and its relationship to leaders has also taken on increased significance in recent years. Robert K. Greenleaf, the originator of the term, ‘servant-leadership,’ is someone who thought and wrote a great deal about the nature of servant-leadership and character.”


“The work of philanthropy takes place in a world that is increasingly glutted with information and yet starved for meaning. While Greenleaf’s writings were based on organizational life in a very different era, he nonetheless articulated a belief that leaders have a unique responsibility to search for and articulate coherence for the groups they lead. True to the themes that run through his work, he argued that this is a process that is both intellectual and spiritual, and that rather than being the solitary gift of a leader working in isolation from his or her peers, the process of conceptualization is rooted in relationships and shared meanings.”


“Chief among the characteristics of a servant-leader is Listening. Almost everything else flows out of a commitment to listening carefully to what others have to say. The servant-leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps to sharpen and clarify that will. Listening and reflection are essential to the growth of a servant-leader.”

— from an address given at the Greenleaf Centre Australia-New Zealand Conference, Melbourne, Australia, November 2000

“In 1970 Robert Greenleaf coined the term “servant-leadership” and first wrote about it in the little orange essay called, The Servant as Leader. Over the past 30 years over 600,000 copies of that essay alone have been sold worldwide. Through it, and through the dozen other essays and books that followed, many people have been introduced to servant-leadership and have put it into practice in their personal and organizational lives.”

— from an address given to the Stanley K. Lacy Leadership Program, Indianapolis, Indiana, January 2001

“The number of companies committed to the understanding and practice of servant-leadership continues to grow with each passing year. TDIndustries, Southwest Airlines, The Toro Company, Synovus Financial and others are helping to blaze new trails toward the establishment of better and more caring work environments composed of servant-leaders.”

— from an address given at a program of the Servant-Leadership Center-Europe Hilversum, The Netherlands, February 2001

Who is the Servant-Leader?

The servant-leader is servant first. . . . It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. . . . The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant — first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or at least, not be further deprived?”

— from The Servant as Leader by Robert K. Greenleaf

The Greenleaf Center’s Mission

The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership exists to support those who, through the practice of servant-leadership, seek to create organizations in which individual stakeholders become healthier, wiser, freer, and more autonomous; and in so doing, build a better, more humane society which welcomes the full diversity of the human family.

The Greenleaf Center’s Goals

1. To make all institutions aware of servant-leadership and to deepen their understanding and practice of it.

2. To create a larger base of caring people from which servant-leadership can arise (i.e., CEO’s, trustees, aspiring leaders and followers, external consultants).

3. To achieve widespread recognition, understanding and acceptance of spirituality in the workplace.

4. To create a new understanding and practice of moral persuasion toward organizational transformation, and to follow the methodologies of exemplary servant-leaders.

Originally founded in 1964 as the Center for Applied Ethics, Inc., the Center was renamed the Robert K. Greenleaf Center in 1985. The Center is an international, not-for-profit institution headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana.
Servant-Leader Books in Review

The Essentials of Servant-Leadership: Principles in Practice


Available now through The Greenleaf Center for $15 ($11 + $4 shipping).

Reviewed by Larry C. Spears

Larry C. Spears is CEO of The Greenleaf Center, Senior Editor of The Servant-Leader, and editor of five books on servant-leadership.

Ann McGee-Cooper has been a longtime advocate of servant-leadership and a consultant to a number of companies including TDIndustries and Southwest Airlines. Ann and her colleague Gary Looper have recently written a most useful guide to the understanding and practice of servant-leadership in the workplace. The Essentials of Servant-Leadership: Principles in Practice is a highly recommended new publication and an invaluable resource for those who are committed to putting this concept into practice.

This 16-page monograph is packed with information to aid individuals and organizations in their own pursuit of servant-leadership. The contents include: a look at the roots of modern leadership models; an overview of servant-leadership; an examination of how servant-leadership serves organizations; two case studies of servant-leadership at TDIndustries and Southwest Airlines; a section on how to begin practicing servant-leadership; plus, a closing section on why leadership styles matter.

Servant-leadership has proven itself successful in a growing number of businesses and organizations. McGee-Cooper and Looper assert that servant-leadership begins with a true motivation to serve others and to build shared goals within an organization. The involvement of employees in decision-making creates increased job satisfaction and commitment to a collective vision. Companies such as TDIndustries, Southwest Airlines, The Container Store, Synovus Financial and others that have appeared on Fortune magazine’s annual listing of “the 100 Best Companies to Work for in America” are living proof of the positive impact of servant-leadership in these workplaces.

Servant-leadership challenges the notion of the traditional leader as a stand-alone hero. McGee-Cooper and Looper write that servant-leadership focuses on a holistic understanding, building a shared vision, effective self-management, encouraging interdependence, learning from mistakes, encouraging creativity from all, questioning assumptions, promoting shared trust, and the embrace of humility. This type of approach is also one that can help to create a powerful legacy.

“For servant-leaders, it’s about lifting others to new levels of possibility and accomplishing as a team much more than what one person might accomplish alone,” say the authors. “These individuals find that the magical synergy that results when they put aside their egos, share visions, and nurture true organizational learning brings collective joy, deep satisfaction, and amazing results!”

The pathway to becoming a servant-leader may be found through taking such steps as: listening without judgment, being authentic, building community, sharing power, encouraging interdependence, and developing people. The authors cite Phil Jackson, head coach of the NBA’s Los Angeles Lakers, as a servant-leader who knows how to encourage supportive relationships among team members. They write: “[Phil Jackson] works to build a strongly interdependent team—one in which players listen to each other and dig deep to find the resources to make a difference.... In a league that glorifies individualism, Jackson’s ability to convince superstars to put their egos aside for the good of the team has contributed to his teams’ success.”

McGee-Cooper and Looper note that the companies on Fortune magazine’s list of the 100 Best Companies have about 50 percent higher returns to shareholders than do their direct competitors who did not make the list. “These organizations perform better than their rivals on employee retention, morale, worker safety, and other measures as well,” they write. “Some examples from the inner workings of these companies can bring a clearer insight into how and why servant-leadership is so powerful.” They proceed with a careful examination of both TDIndustries and Southwest Airlines.

At TDIndustries, the authors outline how servant-leadership has enabled this often cited company to build a shared vision through a curriculum of servant-leadership work; building a foundation for credibility for the process; adding other levels of servant-leadership; soliciting feedback and fine-tuning the process; and, implementing a three-part experiential-learning process. The authors quote a senior leader at TDIndustries as saying: “Servant-leadership is far more than simply being pleasant. The first measure is, do you grow the people you lead? Do you provide honest, thoughtful feedback and set expectations for meaningful continuous performance improvement? And are they inspired to become servant-leaders?”

Herb Kelleher, CEO of Southwest Airlines, is cited as a natural servant-leader who surrounds himself with a diverse team of servant-leaders. “I have always believed that the best leader is the best server,” says Kelleher. “And if you’re a servant, by definition, you’re not controlling. We try to value each person individually and to be cognizant of them as human beings—not just people who work for our company.”

McGee-Cooper and Looper note that Robert Greenleaf clearly believed that the means do determine the ends. Like Greenleaf, they take issue with those who believe that any leadership style is fine as long as it gets results. “We cannot encourage a flexible organization through inflexible means,” they write, “nor create a vibrant, productive community through fear and intimidation.”

The authors conclude that shared commitment “grows out of servant-leadership, which dares to lead by building shared trust and—even more—unconditional love. As more leaders break free from the patterns of the past and find the courage to explore this promising new paradigm, a new vitality will fill our lives and workplaces.”

The Essentials of Servant-Leadership in Practice proves itself to be essential reading.
On the Road and in the News (Continued from page 1)

Greenleaf Center Trustees Jack Lowe Jr., Frank Wilson, Jan Levy, Jeff McCollum, and CEO Larry C. Spears were among the U.S. panelists at a servant-leadership program sponsored by The Greenleaf Centre-United Kingdom and held in London, England.

Julie Beggs conducted a day-long program, Servant Leadership: A Workshop for Community Leaders, for members of the Ocala, FL community sponsored by Central Florida Community College Corporate Training Center.

Jeff Miller provided a half-day program for members of the Mount Vernon Nazarene College community sponsored by the Collaboration Task Force in Mount Vernon, OH.

Julie Beggs presented a short introduction on servant-leadership to a general session at the annual conference for the Tri State Case Managers’ Network-Indianapolis in Indianapolis, IN.

Larry C. Spears spoke at two programs sponsored by the Servant-Leadership Center-Europe, and participated in meetings held in Hilversum and The Hague, in The Netherlands.

Julie Beggs presented a half-day session for members of the Leadership LaPorte County program in Westville, IN.

Larry C. Spears and Wendell Walls participated in a series of meetings and a conference in San Diego, CA.

Publications

The following is a selected listing of recent articles, books, and other publications featuring servant-leadership and The Greenleaf Center. Please let us know of any articles or books about servant-leadership that you may come across.


“Bediend door de baas,” a Dutch-language article on servant-leadership written by Tjeb Maris and Jaap Hutten, appeared in the April 2000 issue of Management Scope.


“Trainees as Leaders of Learning,” an article by John L. Bennett that featured servant-leadership, appeared in the March 2001 issue of Training & Development, the monthly publication of the American Society for Training and Development.

The Essentials of Servant-Leadership: Principles in Practice is a new monograph by Ann McGee-Coooper and Gary Looper and published by Pegasus Communications as part of their Innovations in Management Series. This 16-page publication examines the meaning-and-practice of servant-leadership and focusses on its applications at TDIndustries and Southwest Airlines. This publication can be ordered from The Greenleaf Center for $15 ($11 plus $4 shipping).

Upcoming Events

The Greenleaf Center’s 11th Annual International Conference on Servant-Leadership takes place in Indianapolis on June 7-9, 2001. Featured presenters include: James Autry, Joyce DeShano, Michele Hunt, Jack Lowe Jr., C. William Pollard, Peter Senge, and Danah Zohar. Contact The Greenleaf Center for more information or to register.

Three of The Greenleaf Center’s educational programs will be offered as pre-conference workshops in Indianapolis on Thursday, June 7. Distributing Organizational Power Through Servant-Leadership (James Showkeir), Ten Characteristics of Servant-Leadership (Jeff Miller), and Reflections on Leadership (Isabel Lopez) will each run concurrently from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. This is a good opportunity to experience these workshops and to consider the possibility of bringing them to your own workplace or organization. Contact The Greenleaf Center for more information or to register.

Servant-Leadership Retreats 2001: August 24-26 in Chicago, IL; October 26-28 in Chicago, IL; and, December 28-30 in Niagara Falls, Canada, co-sponsored by The Greenleaf Center. Contact The Greenleaf Center for a brochure.

Innovations in Business: November 15, in Indianapolis, IN. Margaret Wheatley will be the featured presenter in an exciting new program sponsored by The Greenleaf Center. Registration material will become available in July.

Ways to Support The Greenleaf Center

Gifts to the Greenleaf Center provide important support for our work in servant-leadership. As a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization The Greenleaf Center benefits from your gift and you receive the fullest charitable deduction allowed by law. In addition to a gift by check, we invite you to consider the following gift options:

- A Gift of Stock: You may wish to take advantage of the many tax incentives associated with a gift of securities or appreciated property.
- Wills and Bequests: A charitable bequest can often reduce estate taxes while enabling you to make a gift to The Greenleaf Center that might not otherwise be possible during your lifetime.
- Deferred Gifts: Many gift instruments such as Charitable Remainder Trusts and Charitable Annuity Trusts are available through which you can support the work of the Greenleaf Center while also providing you with lifetime income.

For more information please contact Wendell J. Walls, Director of Development, at 317-259-1241.
They had a dream in their hearts, and a desire to serve. They just needed an empowering team around them. We started with their felt needs for decent, affordable housing, and child-care facilities that would prepare their children to start kindergarten in the U.S. and be on par with Anglo children in language and social skills. We looked around for who was ready to grow. They have become our pre-school staff, housing managers, and social service workers in addition to becoming agribusiness managers on a world-class level. Along the way, we have implemented continuing education goals according to their stated needs. Over the years, we have become a training ground for emerging Hispanic leaders, many of whom go on to become first-time home owners, and embraced the servant-leadership concept have much to offer our churches if they are only humble enough to listen. I believe that our churches and seminars are in a uniquely-qualified position to help prepare servant-leaders who will carry out the philosophy in their vocational lives, and by so doing will change our society along the lines that Greenleaf envisioned. Such efforts will be very consistent with what Jesus called “the Kingdom of God.”

If you have an interest in this area, please write or fax me in care of the Greenleaf Center, or you can email me at greenleaf@iquest.net. We are seeking opportunities to write for religious journals, opportunities to speak and lead sessions with churches, and with gatherings of persons who want to focus on the spiritual aspects of servant-leadership. We are interested in hearing what you are doing in your community that we can share with others.

Jack Collins is a retired minister and not-for-profit executive who has served a number of organizations in both Indianapolis and Philadelphia. He is a Volunteer Associate with The Greenleaf Center, working on leadership initiatives related to faith-based agencies.

Collins

(Continued from page 2)

included in the Greenleaf Center’s resource catalog. There are even some church bodies that are using servant-leadership as a means of church renewal for the 21st century.

My hope for the future is that we may have a growing number of examples to share with those who seek faith-based connections to servant-leadership. There is a hunger for the resources and enthusiasm that come from the Greenleaf Center. I believe that those businesses, in particular, that have opportunities to write for religious journals, opportunities to speak and lead sessions with churches, and with gatherings of persons who want to focus on the spiritual aspects of servant-leadership.

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