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Theron Nelson, 90, shows off 61 of the more than 600 birthday cards he received for his birthday

Photo Andy Scheck

Card Bonanza for WWII Vet's 90th Birthday

By Cathy Tyson

No gifts, cards okay. Seemed simple enough – until the concept went viral. For his 90th birthday, Theron Nelson insisted he had enough stuff, so suggested no gifts. A simple card would be fine. His son Chris and daughter Debbie called that an “invitation to mischief.”

The pair along with six grandchildren, friends and acquaintances spread the word, resulting in well-wishers from far and wide responding to their requests. With the help of

Facebook, the Internet, and an outpouring of support from random folks – restaurant servers, barbers, bank tellers – an avalanche of cards found their way to the wry nonagenarian on Sweet Drive in Lafayette.

On his actual birthday, May 8, Nelson received 100 cards in the mail. Three days later his running total was 562 cards, and nearly a week later he had a total of 602 cards: post cards, birthday cards, and hand painted artwork. To date, Nelson has

received 628 cards from 13 countries from across the globe including Bahrain, Finland, Germany, South Korea, Slovenia, France - even as far as Antarctica. Thirty-eight states plus the District of Columbia were represented, including one over-sized finger painting from a creative toddler.

Nelson also received a flag that was flown over the U.S. Capitol on his birthday (arranged by Senator Barbara Boxer).

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Quote of the Week:

"Dependency is unhealthy—whether it is drugs, alcohol or money from Sacramento."

Read Letters to the Editor, page A9

Advertising

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Miramonte Student Comes to the Rescue



Dylan Watson races with Oakland Strokes. Photo provided

Miramonte sophomore Dylan Watson put recent CPR skills learned in his PE class to work Thursday, May 10 when he came upon a fallen man on the walking trail at the Lafayette Reservoir. Orinda resident Maria Rowland and her husband, Dennis, rushed to the side of an elderly man after he fell off a bench, landing facedown.

Watson ran up moments later, helped turn the man over, and after making an assessment immediately began chest compressions as Rowland called 911.

"I was so wowed by Dylan's presence," said Maria Rowland. "It was truly an emergency situation and he was present, attentive and conscientious. He was truly like a hero."

Rowland said the high school student performed CPR on the gentleman for approximately seven minutes until the Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) arrived. Paramedics shocked the man's heart three times and administered medication to get the heart beating again.

Miramonte High School PE teacher Christi Costa was glad the Moraga-Orinda Fire Department came to the school for two days this semester to talk to students and to help teach CPR. "We had every student perform CPR on the dolls," she said. "I made it especially serious in my class since I had heart failure after having my baby not too long ago (at 39 years old). I told my students that everyone

should know CPR and emphasized the importance on saving lives."

Contra Costa County Fire District Captain Paramedic Gil Caravantes said Watson did a phenomenal job. "Very few people step up when they see someone has fallen; they just keep walking," he said. "It's wonderful to see this young man stop and go the extra mile. Thanks to Dylan, we were able to get pulses back and he had spontaneous respirations when we arrived at the hospital." The gentleman was taken to Kaiser Permanente in Walnut Creek and was still in the hospital as of last week.

"Dylan was so shaken up afterward," said Watson's mother, Karen. "But at the time it happened, a calm just came over him and he knew what to do."

"I'm so proud of him," Caravantes said. "I'd love to have a son like him."

For information about CPR classes offered in the area, you can visit www.mofd.org/services/cpr-firstaid. J. Wake

Life in Lamorinda B1-B12

Cal Shakes Returns May 30

Lou Fancher previews the season. B2



Sports C1-C3



Mats Win!

Miramonte boys' tennis wins NCS; Simon Cryzna reports. C1

Our Homes D1-D12



Staying Safe

Cathy Dausman offers up a primer on home security systems. Page D10