

## HOW ABOUT *WE* MAKE IT A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

By Donna Rotsch Jensen

When we moved to a little village in the hills of Pennsylvania, from the Los Angeles area, it wasn't what I expected it to be. I guess I'd hoped for the neighborliness of Little House on the Prairie. People sitting on their front porches with time and the inclination to visit. But you know what? They came home from a long day at work and sat down in front of the TV like the rest of us. Perhaps it was the Amish I was looking for?

No one stopped in with a freshly baked pie to say, welcome to the neighborhood. So, I baked them some of my huge dinner rolls, and called on them.

We began attending the local church. Construction was underway on a lovely new home on the hillside just above it. In a few months we heard that it was finished and the family would be moving in from out of state in a couple of weeks. I suggested to my Sunday school class that we cook them a meal and take it to them to say welcome to the neighborhood. Someone said, "That sounds like a good idea, Donna, why don't you do it?" I

didn't know it at the time, but the sister of the young woman who built the house was in our class and they had grown up there!

Our income was small, so I made a pot of homemade chili, with a side of rice, a tossed salad, my dinner rolls, and a cake. I put it in a cardboard box and carried it from my car up the hill to the house. The drive wasn't yet finished. The lady of the house welcomed me warmly and was most appreciative. We sat and visited some before I left while my daughter played with hers. A few days later she called and asked if I could use clothes her daughter had outgrown. She was also changing out the curtains and bedding in her room and would like to give the others to us. You can't out give the Lord!

When I moved to Queens in New York, of course no one welcomed me, but then they didn't even know I was there! First floor windows all were barred. The shades were pulled. I was told no one would come to the door if I knocked... But I gave it the old college try 😊 I baked my buns, put them in a disposable basket covered with a large napkin and knocked on a few of my neighbor's doors. They did open the door and received them. I hope they weren't afraid to eat them!