Can you think of a time when doing the right thing made others sit up and take notice? A young man does what he feels is right, and his actions serve as...

SIGNPOSTS ON THE Journey

Anecdote by Steve Buist

When raising teenagers, there are not a lot of signposts on the highway of life that tell a parent how the journey is progressing.

Those that do pop up on the horizon are often negative—poor grades, failing grades, no grades. A bad attitude or trouble with friends, perhaps even trouble with the law.

Maybe that’s why parents of teenagers spend seven years holding their breath, crossing their fingers, and repeating over and over, “No news is good news. No news is good news.”

I have a sixteen-year-old son. To a sixteen-year-old man/child, life can be condensed to four basic necessities: a reliable TV converter, a comfortable couch, the need to remain horizontal (and motionless) on said couch for hours at a time, and the need to practice driving the car as much as possible. (There are only two subgroups of children that enjoy a trip to the grocery store—those under the age of five who think the visit might end with candy in the checkout line and sixteen-year-olds with a learner’s permit.)

The other night, my son attended a banquet where he works. He looked quite handsome and strapping in his suit and snappy coat. I had forgotten how tall he’s become but, of course, we rarely see him upright (see above, basic needs one to three).

When I arrived to pick him up from the dinner, he started to get in the car, then stopped, looking distracted. “Just a minute,” he said.