



The Cost of Value

“THAT’LL BE \$10.25,” SAID THE CASHIER behind the counter. His hand hovered over the computerized screen of the register, and his eyes seemed to be darting, afraid to make eye contact with me. Who could blame him? This was highway robbery, and he was the robber.

“\$10.25?” I asked, with more of a sneer in my voice than I intended to let escape. I was at the concession stand at the AMC Theatres, grabbing a calorie-laden snack for the movie I was about to watch. How could a small – that’s right, *small* – popcorn and drink cost \$10.25? All that came across the counter toward me was one paper cup filled with ice and a skosh of beverage, and a small bag of popcorn.

Begrudgingly, I handed over my debit card, feeling like I had just been fleeced big time. The snack cost \$10.25, but it definitely wasn’t worth it. But then again; cost and value are rarely the same thing.

What value do you put on your ability to live in the U.S. in general, and here in Spokane, specifically? For many, Spokane is a small town from which they are waiting to escape as they dream of life in a big city, where there is presumably more culture, more to do and more diversity. Living here comes at the cost of giving up big city offerings.

For others, though, the chance to live in Spokane is a blessing, and an answer to prayer. While we may not think about the value of life in this area on a day-to-day basis, there is a group of residents who find living here to be invaluable. Spokane is home to many refugees who are learning to navigate life in this country, a place that truly is home of the free and land of the brave. For them, the chance to live, work and be a part of a community like Spokane is priceless after the experiences that have shaped their lives—experiences like living in refugee

camp, being separated from their friends and families for years, and suffering from culture shock. The cost for them to get here has been great, but so, too, is how much they value life here. On page 82, their story is told.

While many of us already know the value of living here, every once and a while it is nice to be reminded of it.

It can be seen in the beauty surrounding us. How blessed are we to be able to venture in any direction and within less than an hour be on our way to incredible wilderness? In this issue, on page 38, our in-house outdoor adventure expert, John Latta, describes the great value of living within a day’s drive of hiking spots like Roman Nose, Tank Lakes and The Rockwall.

How about being able to get into a restaurant on a whim, rather than having to make reservations weeks ahead of time? Just another added value of life in Spokane! Restaurants like Clover, and The Copa, which we review for you in this issue, offer big city quality, but are located in our cozy corner of the woods.

Looking beyond the pages of this magazine, it is easy to identify things that are of the most value in your life. These are the things you can’t put a price tag on, and to which you can’t assign a dollar value. For me, it is the people in my life that have the greatest value. Being able to see them, spend time together, have fun with them, talk through the rough spots of life, share ideas and laugh together; these are the most valuable gifts I have been given in my life.

Experiencing those moments is something to be valued; however, taking them for granted and letting them get pushed to the side in order to handle a crisis at work or manage an over booked calendar can be one of the costliest mistakes ever.

I hope you can take a bit of time for yourself, flipping through these pages and rediscovering why life in Spokane is such a valuable blessing. Then, I encourage you to set the magazine to the side, knowing it will keep for when you are ready to come back to it, and make a conscious effort to spend time with those who you love and you are loved by, who are the most valuable treasures of your life. It will be well worth the cost of time, and is something you will value forever. (And if you need a conversation starter, you can always talk about how costly movie popcorn is!)

Thanks for reading!

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