

## A House for Katherine Red Feather

Robert Young was a successful businessman in Seattle when, on a business trip in New Mexico, he noticed a newspaper headline that read: *Elders Freeze to Death*.

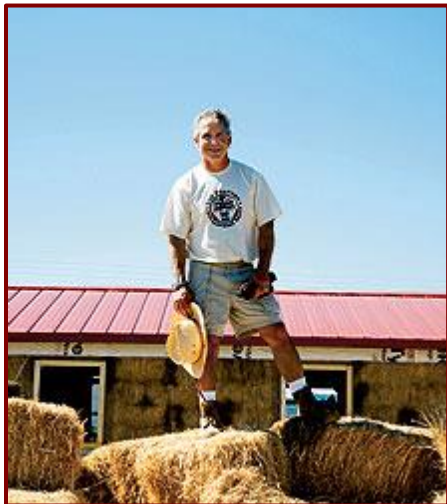
The article detailed the crushing poverty on local Native American reservations and the horrible living conditions of many elderly Native Americans. Young couldn't explain why the news story grabbed his heart, but it did.

A few weeks later, when Young learned of an Adopt-a-Grandparent program for Native American elders, he called the number and signed up. Young was paired with a 78-year-old Native American woman in South Dakota named Katherine Red Feather.

Katherine welcomed Young into her family as her newest "grandchild." In spite of her poverty, her letters to him were full of joy, proudly sharing news of her large family. When Young asked if there was anything he could send her, she asked only for a bottle of shampoo and some aspirin.

Young couldn't imagine living in such poverty that shampoo and aspirin were luxury items. He determined to visit Katherine Red Feather and see her living conditions for himself.

Young and his wife, Anita, were shocked by the poverty they saw on Katherine's reservation. They found her living in a busted-up trailer pushed against the body of an old school bus. The trailer was dark and black and barely enough room to turn around in.



There was no running water, so Katherine needed to carry it from a well out back. It was next to an outhouse with a black flag flying overhead – “to scare away the rattlesnakes,” she said. “They think it is a hawk.” And Young was humbled by the joy and love of Katherine and her family. When he returned home, Young couldn't find satisfaction in his work. He worried all the time if his adopted grandmother was safe and warm and had all she needed.

That summer, Young, Anita, and a handful of friends traveled back to South Dakota to build a house for Katherine. As news of their project spread on the reservation, Katherine's family and friends showed up to help, and they had a big celebration when the home was complete.

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Now Young could relax and get back to his ambitious and successful life, right? You know better than that. God had put a new vision in Robert Young's heart, and he couldn't bury his talent in self-interested pursuits. After a lot of research and thought, Young sold his half of his successful business. He and Anita moved to Bozeman, Montana and started the Red Feather Development Group to provide affordable, secure housing to Native Americans.

What is the point of this story? God directs our talents and energy toward good works that bring Him glory. Faith and obedience require the boldness to let go of our own security and comfort and let God use us for His larger plans.

God has entrusted you with great wealth – your life, your talents and energy and intellect and influence. So, think about it: What do you want to hear at the end of your life? What will it take to hear God say ...

*Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your Master's happiness! (Matthew 25:21 NIV).*

– Beecher Hunter