

# Trips to the Shoe Shop

One day a sophomore at Amherst College in Massachusetts took a pair of shoes to be repaired to a shop run by a man named Jim Lucey. Lucey started a conversation with the shy young man and they became friends. The student stopped in frequently at the shop.

The student went on to become a lawyer, and with the help of Jim Lucey he found an office in Northampton, Massachusetts, not far from Lucey's shop. Their friendship grew and the young lawyer frequently dropped by the shop to talk to Lucey and other men who gathered there. He soon gained the respect of the group and before long they began urging him to run for political office in Northampton. A few years later, he was elected mayor.

That was the first step up the political ladder. Before long, the young man was elected to the state legislature in Boston and, eventually, Massachusetts voters made him governor.

In this office, he attracted the attention of national politicians, and at the next national convention, the governor's name was put on the ticket for vice president. His party won the election, but within three years, the President was fatally stricken. In August of 1923, the former Amherst student was sworn into the highest office in the land.

Several years later, a mail carrier delivered a letter to Jim Lucey's shoe shop in Northampton. The old shoemaker noticed that the return address on the envelope read, *The White House*, and his hands trembled as he opened it. There, on White House stationery, were these words:

*My Dear Mr. Lucey:*

*Not often do I see you or write to you, but I want you to know that if it were not for you, I should not be here. I want to tell you how much I love you. Do not work too much now, and try to enjoy yourself in your well-earned hour of age.*

*Yours sincerely,  
Calvin Coolidge*

One can never predict the impact of positive contributions and encouragement we may present to another. Not everyone – or anyone, for that matter – whom we meet may rise to the level of President of the United States, but what we do or say can have uplifting, and life-changing, influence on those God places in our paths.

This is a lesson especially important in the work of Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, both in terms of our service to our residents and in our interaction with fellow associates.

--Beecher Hunter