

A studio that is on a mission to inspire, educate, and motivate....

The Ben's Bells Project.



A few months back, Colleen was visiting Marjon Ceramics in Tucson and was introduced to an amazing studio by Steve and Shirley Hieb. This studio was like no other and presented an inspirational message that she brought back to Ohio with her- 'Believe in the power of kindness'.

The Ben's Bells Project is a non-profit community art project that was inspired by the spirit of 3-year-old Ben Maré Packard, who passed away unexpectedly ten years ago. Ben had a touch of a cold and there was absolutely no notion that he was seriously ill until his airway swelled completely shut. After countless tries of rescue breathing and CPR to open his airway, he passed away. Losing Ben inevitably changed the lives of his mother, father, and 6-year-old brother forever.

Ben's parents, Jeannette Maré and Dean Packard, felt a tremendous loss and were not sure how they would go on. Gradually they began incorporating coping strategies into their lives and that is where the design for the Ben's Bells wind chimes began. The therapeutic effect of working with clay to make such a design was found to be such an amazing power, and because of that power Jeannette and Dean decided to make hundreds of the bells and distribute them randomly around the community. Their goal: encourage the kindness that we so depend on to get through each day. Since the passing of Ben, it was the kindness of others, strangers, and friends that helped Jeannette and Dean heal and they felt that they needed to pass that kindness on to others.



The hands of many create each wind chime, so that during the making process, a multitude of individuals are involved in the making of that one special Ben's Bell. The individuals sculpt and paint the clay beads and then all the clay components are kiln-fired and assembled for distribution.

Ben's Bells are not for sale, but if you come across one hanging randomly throughout Tucson and surrounding communities, it is yours to take. They have also started making their way across the country in states such as North Carolina, New Jersey, Colorado, Idaho, and Maryland. So keep passing around the kindness to others and you never know....a wind chime may show up hanging on a tree just for you.



If you would like to learn more about this terrific organization, you can do so by visiting their website at www.bensbells.org.

This article was written by Sara Massello of Mayco Color