



photos by Andy Sharp

Nine of the Ten at a Time boys pose for a portrait. They collect \$10 each to donate to a charity. In the front row, left to right, are Carter Miller, 13, Jacob Kelly, 14, Elliot McMahon, 15, and Joseph Kelly, 15. In the back, from left, are Ryan Wall, 15, Blake Garcia, 16, Calvin Miller, 16, Jeremy Kelly, 10, and Niko Smith, 16.

Boys make big difference

Students give \$10 a month to pool into charitable donation

By MADISON SIMMONS

Ten dollars donated to a good cause might not save the world. But what if 10 people gave \$10? What if 20 people did?

It stacks up fast.

"Ten dollars isn't exactly a lot but the impact can add up to something huge," Carter Miller said.

This is the founding principle of Ten at a Time, the nonprofit Carter and his brother Calvin founded in 2014.

"Basically, it was about our families wanting to make a difference out in the world and going out to do good," Carter Miller said.

The Miller boys, 10 and 13 years old at the time, thought about putting on car washes, lemonade stands or bake sales. They had held fund-raisers for nonprofits before and the family often volunteered around town.

But they wanted a way to give continuously, and to learn more about where their money went along the way.

That's when, in September 2014, Ten at a Time was born. This giving group of boys is deserving of one of the *Sun's* 2016 People of the Year titles.

Giving and learning

Once a month, the Miller brothers and their friends, ages 10 through 16, gather around the kitchen table at the Miller house.

Each boy brings \$10 to the meeting.

"We were all very passionate about it being our own money and not just our parents,'" Carter said.

Some of the older boys have jobs. Others receive money for good grades, use holiday money or take on chores around the house.

The 10 boys said using their own money makes them feel good. Each meeting, a different boy selects which nonprofit their pooled money will go to.

Whichever member picks the organization of the month presents to the others on what the nonprofit does.

So far, the group has supported 27 nonprofits, raising \$2,700.

This year, more than half of the selected nonprofits were local. They included Ride on Center for Kids, Brookwood in Georgetown and the anti-bullying Kindness Matters campaign.

When possible, they give the money in person and spend some time volunteer-

ing at the nonprofit. They enjoy getting to know more about those in need.

"I knew they were people, obviously, but now they're individuals. They have joys and weaknesses. It's opened our minds and eyes to what's out there," Elliot McMahon, 15, said.

Earlier this year, the Austin group RecognizeGood, a group dedicated to spreading awareness of and raising money for local do-gooders, gave Ten at a Time a "Legend" award. Along with a ceremony, it came with a \$1,000 pay-it-forward donation.

Growth to come

The New Year will bring growth to the group.

In September, the boys chartered a second chapter headed by Ron Smith. For the past four months, they have doubled the group's giving. They have a few chapters lined up for 2017 already, including an all-girl chapter in Austin.

Though the boys are excited to expand their area of influence so rapidly, the new phase has its difficulties.

They will set up rules for other groups but will not be directly involved, nor will they be able to control the group's image. But, Calvin Miller said, the group is open to natural evolution.

"If anything changes, it may be a good thing," he said.

Beyond other chapters, the boys hope



Noah McMahon, 13, a member of Ten at a Time, poses for a photo.

that others will see their nonprofit as an example of how simple giving can be.

People do not have to be part of an organization to make giving a part of their life, Calvin said.

"A big part of the organization is to be the inspiration. You see someone else do it and you think, 'That's not hard,'" he said.

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