

The Surfer Girl

It was a gorgeous day at the beach in Southern California near Carlsbad just north of San Diego. Grandpa, Grandma, and our two grandsons, Spencer and Carter, were watching the surf and enjoying the cool breeze off the ocean in the late morning sun. We owned a timeshare within walking distance of the beach just across Highway 101, where we could return to wash the sand off our feet and jump in the pool later if we chose. What an idealic life!

Spencer and Carter were building sandcastles while we watched lazily on beach chairs. Nearby, I noticed a young college girl teaching a dozen young teens how to surf on long boards. Spencer also began to watch the surfer girl and her students more intently as he grew bored of the sand castles.

He and his brother, Carter, had only ventured into the water a few times before they retreated to the beach. The waves were a little rough and kept "spitting" them back onto the sand. As Spencer sat watching the instructor, she dismissed her class and began gathering her surf board and other gear to head home. Apparently, Spencer decided this might be an opportunity to get to know the surfer girl. He got up, walked over to her, and began a conversation.

At first, I thought Spencer was "hitting" on this beautiful, young, blonde surfer girl. But, he wasn't the outgoing type. A six-year old wouldn't normally initiate a conversation with a pretty girl at least fifteen years older than he was. He and the surfer girl were far enough away that I couldn't hear what they were saying, but it soon became evident from the arm gestures and pointing motions to her board and the ocean that he wasn't interested in her romantically but was asking her to teach him how to surf.

She somewhat reluctantly, at first, put her board on the sand and dropped her bag. The surfing instructor had him stand on her board while helping him to balance himself. She had him put his hands out to the side, crouch down, and lean forward, backward, and side-to-side. Spencer slowly grew more confident and was able to move around without losing his balance and stepping off the board. The surfer girl spent about fifteen minutes giving him a free lesson on surfing the

Southern California waves and when she finished her short lesson, walked up the beach and out of his life.

The scene of a young college girl taking the time to teach a six-year old boy a special skill she had, without expecting anything in return, will always remind me of the patience and kindness we all should display. I suspect my grandson won't even remember the incident. But, I was impressed by his innocence in approaching her and willingness to ask for help learning something he wanted. Do you remember the surfer girl, Spencer?

I recalled this memory yesterday while exercising at the gym and listening to the Beachboys singing "Surfer Girl" on my Kindle. It's amazing what memories a little music or an aroma can prompt. But, you've got to jot down a note to yourself quickly, if you are 75 years old and want to write about it to enjoy later. Otherwise, the memory will just fade like a puff of smoke.