

**Published in:**

**Creative Commuting – Creative Think – Roger Von Oech**

In December 1981 I started commuting to work with my two children. **Kim**, age 3 1/2, and **Lance**, age 5. They were attending a Montessori school near Tandem Computers' Cupertino facility. Since my hobby is learning, they welcomed the opportunity to teach me daily from the backseat.

On our very first commute together, we noticed a big Texaco sign, which I read. Then a 7-Eleven sign. The next Texaco sign was sighted and a game was started. I gave Smokehouse almonds to the one who sees Texaco first, two to the other. With eleven route there are many 7-Elevens and Texacos that I've paid off on. They won too many nuts, so I set a max of 10 nuts going into school and 5 coming home. Now they have to carry the info on how many nuts are left. "How many nuts do you have left, guys?" I ask. "2 Dad." "How do you know?" "I got 3 and 2 and 3..."

On one commute day, Kim said, "Hey, Dad, I can spell Ford backwards." No Ford signs or pickups were nearby and she did it on her first try. Super Lance very calmly responded, "I can spell Chevrolet backwards." He did. First try and rather fast. How did he do it? I asked the same question. He smiled and said he saw it in his imagination.

The first Creativity Dividend (CD) went to Super Lance on December 19, 1981 when he summoned me to the big color-coded map of San Jose to ask if we stayed on Stevens Creek or went to Highway 280 for the oak blue route. He was on his knees mapping the 7<sup>th</sup> route on his just drawn route-maps and needed more data. An awards ceremony was initiated immediately with, "Kim, come and see what Lance just did. He just mapped a map. I'm impressed. I'd like to reward you with 2 quarters and 1 to Kim to encourage creativity. We'll call it a Creativity Dividend."

Kim won her first one a few hours later when she looked at the "Exit" sign in Pizza Hut and said "Dad, that's part of 'Texaco' – T-E-X."

A recent Creativity Dividend went to Lance for the following: One Wednesday night leaving the pizza parlor. Super Lance said, "Dad, if you had 'LEFT' and 'CHEVRON' and took out the 'F' and the 'N' you'd have the first part of Chevrolet. Dad, I think that deserves a Creativity Dividend. Don't you?" I'm easy.

On two occasions I've tried to display my brilliance. I failed miserably. One day as we were driving in I said, "Okay you guys, both 'one' and 'ten' have 3 letters. Which letter do they both have?" One of my backseat teacher replied "E", the other "N." Another day I said to Kim, "Chevrolet" has the same first 4 letters as Chevrolet." I'd hardly finished when Super Lance said, "The first six, Dad"

"A wise man makes learning fun." Proverbs 1.5:2.

By: Lance D. Shaw