— HANDY ALL AROUND —

Handy All Around

Tana Reiff

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It's Not a Job

"Don't have a job, don't want a job." That's what Wayne Hiller told people when they asked what kind of job he had.

"So what do you *do*?" they would ask.

"This and that," Wayne would answer. "This and that."

Those words were true. Need a paint job? Wayne can do it. Need a porch light fixed? Call Wayne. Need any leaves and brush cleared? Wayne's your man.

Sometimes he would pass by a house and see a chore that needed doing. Then he'd just go up to the door and knock.

"I see your roof gutters are full of wet leaves," Wayne would say. "I can clean them out for you."

Usually, the person at the door would say, "Sure, go ahead. I've been meaning to do that for a long time. What would you charge?"

"Whatever you think my work is worth," Wayne would say. Then he would get right to work. He'd clean out that gutter until it looked like new. When he finished the

job, he'd knock on the door again. He'd show the customer his work and take their payment.

Then Wayne would be on his way. Before long, he'd find another house that needed something cleaned or fixed or painted. But he didn't have a job, he would say. And he didn't want one, either.

Job or no job, he was busy every day it didn't rain. And some days when it did.

No one knew how much money Wayne made. It was more than anyone might have guessed. He lived with his mom, giving her money for the rent and electric bill every month. He helped out with food and other items for their home. He put the rest of his money into his bank account.

The more work Wayne did, the more he knew he needed a truck. He might even want to buy a house someday. And it would be nice to have his own workshop, too. But for now, the money piled up, and Wayne kept on making more.

He didn't have a *job*, though. He didn't even like to hear people say he did "odd jobs." "I know I'm odd," he would say. "But don't call it a job." That always brought a laugh.

Wayne's smile and easy way helped bring him a lot of work. If Wayne came up and knocked on your door, you liked him right away. You knew by his face and manner that he was a good guy. If he had worked for your friend or neighbor, you knew he did good work. If he had worked

for you before, you knew how fair he was. Wayne Hiller was easy to trust. He trusted people back, too.