THE KINDEST PEOPLE:
BE EXCELLENT TO EACH OTHER
(VOLUME 2)
By David Bruce
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Dedicated to Lori, Paul, Marge, and Brian

Advice

If you stop on a highway to help someone, be careful. I have read many, many newspaper articles about Good Samaritans being hit and injured or killed by vehicles when they stop to help someone. Sometimes, the best thing to do is simply to call 911 or whatever your country’s emergency number is.

NOTE: The deeds are numbered so that you can look up the sources in the Endnotes.

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THE KINDEST PEOPLE: BE EXCELLENT TO EACH OTHER (VOLUME 2)
CHAPTER 1: Stories 1-50
“The Lady was Screaming, ‘My Baby! My Baby’s Blue! … She’s Not Breathing!’”

On 11 October 2012 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Keaton Mason and her fiancée were in their car when Keaton’s baby decided to be born one month early. They were at the truck stop at I-40 and Choctaw Road, and when their baby daughter was born in the passenger seat of a white Honda, there was a problem. Jennifer Morris, who called 911, said, “It was crazy. The lady was screaming, ‘My baby! My baby’s blue! … She’s not breathing!’” The umbilical cord was wrapped around the baby girl’s neck. Paramedic Sandra Lesperance said later, “Her angel was there. He did everything right.” A homeless man named Gary Wilson, who is from Montana, became a hero. He freed the baby girl’s neck, tied the umbilical cord, and rubbed the baby girl’s back. She started breathing. Truck-stop employee Waneva Morris said, “I would describe him as kind of looking like Jesus. He had the long hair, the long beard. [He was] a very nice gentleman.” Keaton said, “He kept me pretty calm actually. He said, ‘Everything’s OK. She’s OK. She’s breathing.’” Mr. Wilson had been holding a sign saying, “Memphis.” After he had saved the life of the baby girl, truck-stop employees offered him a free meal and a free place to sleep. The next morning, he was gone. The baby girl, Tatum Brown, weighed four pounds, 11 ounces. Doctors said that she is doing well. (1)

“MY GOD, BUT YOU’RE LOVELY”

On 21 February 1970, actress Françoise Pascal, who was pregnant, went to actress Vivianne Ventura’s house. Unfortunately, a fire broke out. She was on the third floor, and many people — including film director Roman Polanski and film producer Gene Gutowsky — held a sheet for her to jump on. She jumped, missed the sheet, and landed on some iron railings — her neck was between two
railings, and her left arm was impaled on a railing. Unconscious, she was taken to a hospital. She lost her baby. Drugged on morphine to stop the pain, she drifted in and out of consciousness. She vaguely remembers an Indian doctor who comforted her. Once she came out of the morphine-induced haze, she learned that her friend the comedian Peter Sellers had visited her, dressed as an Indian doctor so that members of the press would not recognize him. He left a card for her; on the card he had written, “MY GOD, BUT YOU’RE LOVELY.” (2)

A Complete New Sound System

Max Geldray played jazz saxophone on Great Britain’s The Goon Show, two of whose stars were Harry Secombe and Peter Sellers. When Mr. Geldray needed a vein removed, he did not tell anyone because it was a minor operation. However, because he is a celebrity, news of the operation got into the newspapers. When Mr. Geldray returned home after the operation, he found his home filled with flowers and fruit — gifts from Mr. Secombe. And Mr. Sellers arrived and carried Mr. Geldray, who couldn’t walk, to his car, and then drove him to a shopping center. There, Mr. Sellers filled the car with a complete new sound system that was better than the one Mr. Geldray already had. (3)

“Believe Me, I Spent 20 Years Racking Up Huge Debts Pursuing Comedy”

In October 2009, the primary sponsor of U.S. Speedskating — the Dutch bank DSB — went bankrupt. The 2010 Winter Games were coming up, and the company could not donate the $300,000 it had pledged. Luckily on 2 November 2009, comedian Stephen Colbert announced that his show was becoming the team’s primary sponsor. He asked viewers to make small donations, and the U.S. Speedskating team received over $300,000 donated by approximately 9,000 people. It was a good investment —
the team won 10 medals at the Olympic Games. Why did Mr. Colbert do this good deed? He explained, “Believe me, I spent 20 years racking up huge debts pursuing comedy.” (4)

**Cricket Superstar Muttiah “Murali” Muralithar is a Superstar Good Samaritan**

Cricket superstar Muttiah “Murali” Muralithar is a good person. Chandika Hathurasinghe and Murali once stopped at a small café close to the Parliament grounds in Colombo, Sri Lanka. A boy working there recognized Murali and asked him for a signed photograph. Murali did not have one on him, but he promised to bring one by later. He did not forget. The very next day, after cricket practice, he went to the small café and gave the boy a signed photograph. Muali is talkative. Mahela Jayawardene said in an article in the *Guardian*, “He is the sort of guy you want in the dressing room, but sometimes you think: ‘Why is he in the dressing room — he won’t stop talking!’ When he exhausts us, he goes to see the opposition. He is the only player I have ever known who spends more time in the opponents’ dressing room than his own. You never sit next to him on an aeroplane because you won’t get any sleep. Lal, the masseur, has that job. But ask him to make a speech and you will be lucky to get 10 words.” Murali does serious good in the world. In 2005, he visited the town of Batticaloa on Sri Lanka’s east coast. It had been hit hard by a tsunami, and Murali arranged for 10 trucks to distribute emergency supplies in the relief camps. (5)

**Good Deed at the Famous Five Stand**

A fan of the Hibernian Football Club in Edinburgh, Scotland, copied and posted this on the football team’s website on 7 October 2012: “Bit of a long shot that the person will read this, but just wanted to say Thanks so much to the kind person that found my son’s iPod Touch in
the toilets in the Famous Five stand and handed it in. He only got it less than 2 months ago so it’s pretty new. He was half way down St. Clair Street before he realised he’d lost it and we thought there was no chance he’d get it back. He was so upset that it was gone, we were amazed it had been handed in. So anyway if you read this or if anyone knows who it was can they pass on my thanks for renewing my faith in human nature and making an 8-year-old boy very happy again.” The Famous Five are Hibernian’s 1940s and 1950s forward line of Bobby Johnstone, Willie Ormond, Lawrie Reilly, Gordon Smith, and Eddie Turnbull, all of whom have been inducted into the Scottish Football Hall of Fame. The north stand at Easter Road is named in their honor. (6)

Don’t Bully Chy Johnson; Her Bodyguards are the Football Team

Chy Johnson, a 16-year-old special-needs student, suffers from a brain disorder called microcephaly. Her head is smaller than it otherwise would be, and her life expectancy is only 25 or 30 years instead of three score and ten years. Her brain disorder also made her the target of bullies at Arizona’s Queen Creek High School who threw trash at her. Chy’s mother, Elizabeth Johnson, learned about the bullying and contacted the school’s starting quarterback: Carson Jones. He and other members of the football team are now Chy’s protection against bullies. Elizabeth said, “I emailed Carson, told him that Chy was having some issues, was just wanting some names. He took it a step further and went and gathered Chy up at lunch and she’s been eating lunch with them ever since.” The bullying stopped as Carson, teammate Tucker Workman, and many other Queen Creek Bulldogs started looking out for Chy. Carson said, “I guess they’ve seen her with us or something.” Tucker said, “We’re doing good and everything for us is going well but someone else needs to feel good, too.” Chy
called the Bulldogs “her team.” She added, “They save me because I won’t get hurt again. They’re not mean to me because all my boys love me.” As of 26 October 2012, the Bulldogs were undefeated. (7)

“It’s Sickening. And I was Embarrassed”

On 7 October 2012, the Kansas City Chiefs lost to the Baltimore Ravens, 9-6. When Chiefs quarterback Matt Cassel was knocked unconscious, many Kansas Chief fans cheered. (The Chiefs got off to a poor start in the season, and many fans blamed Mr. Cassel.) After the game, offensive tackle Eric Winston strongly criticized those fans: “We are athletes, OK? We are athletes. We are not gladiators. This isn’t the Roman Coliseum. People pay their money — hard-earned money — to come in here, and I believe they can boo, they can cheer, they can do whatever they want because I believe that hey, we’re lucky to play this game. A game. To come in here — and people — it’s hard economic times, and they still pay the money to do this. OK, but when somebody gets hurt there are long-lasting ramifications to the game we play — long-lasting ramifications to the game we play, all right. I already kind of come to the understanding I probably won’t live as long because I play this game, and that’s OK. That’s the choice I’ve made, that’s the choice all of us has made. But when you cheer — when you cheer somebody getting knocked out, I don’t care who it is, and it just so happened to be Matt Cassel, it’s sickening, it’s 100 percent sickening. I’ve never ever — and I’ve been in some rough times on some rough teams, I’ve never been more embarrassed in my life to play football, than at that moment right there. And I get emotional about it because these guys, they work their butts off — Matt Cassel hasn’t done anything to you people — hasn’t done anything to you people, hasn’t done anything to the media writers that kill him, hasn’t done anything wrong to the people that come out here and cheer him. Hey, if he’s
not the best quarterback, he’s not the best quarterback, and that’s OK. But he’s a person. And he got knocked out in a game, and we got 70,000 people [...] cheering that he got knocked out. Boo him all you want. Boo me all you want. Throw me under the bus. Tell me I’m doing a bad job, say I’ve got to protect him more, do whatever you want, say whatever you want. But if you were one of those people — one of those people that were out there cheering, or even smiled, when he got knocked out, I just want to let you know and I want everybody to know, that I think it’s sickening and disgusting. We are not gladiators, and this is not the Roman Coliseum. This is a game. And I’ll sit here and answer all your questions for the next 30 minutes if you want to ask ’em. And I’ll take all the responsibility you want me to take because I — I deserve it and I — you — if you wanna blame, blame me. And don’t blame a guy and don’t cheer for a guy that’s done everything in his power to play as good as he can for the fans. It’s sickening. And I was embarrassed. And I want every single one of you people to put that on your station.” After making this statement, Mr. Winston told members of the media, “If this isn’t posted in the paper or run on your [website], this is the last time you’re going to talk to me.” By the way, Mr. Cassel is a hero. On 26 January 2012, his wife noticed smoke and flames coming from a house in the Village of Loch Lloyd, a gated community in Cass County, Missouri. He ran to the house and alerted the woman inside that her house was on fire. She did not know that until he told her. A witness said, “I know Matt wouldn’t want this kind of attention, but I definitely think he was a hero last night.” Mr. Cassel said, “I just ran up to the house and alerted them. The real heroes are the firefighters.” (8)

Faking an Injury for a Compassionate Reason

Oregon Ducks scout-team player Dane Ebanez, who is a walk-on player without an athletic scholarship, had never
played in a bowl game before. The last game of his college career at Oregon was the 2013 Fiesta Bowl, and so this was his last chance to play in a bowl game. To ensure that his teammate would get in the game, Keanon Lowe faked an injury with 2:30 left in the game. Oregon was leading Kansas State 35-17 — this turned out to be the final score of the game. By the way, Mr. Ebanez, who grew up in North Pole, Alaska, said about his hometown, “They have candy canes for light posts on the main street, and a giant Santa house.” (9)

Karma and Giants Fan Anthony Scorcia

On 7 October 2012 at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, the New York Giants defeated the Cleveland Browns, 41-27. Karma paid a visit to one of the people watching the game: Giants fan Anthony Scorcia of East Northport, Long Island. On Facebook, he explained, “Ended up with an extra ticket before the game yesterday so I gave it to a guy who was searching the ground for his brother’s lost ticket. They invited me to a post game VIP tailgate party to show thanks. In addition to food and drinks, I got to meet Ottis Anderson, Harry Carson and Amani Toomer! It does pay to do good deeds!” Mr. Anderson, Mr. Carson, and Mr. Toomer all won Super Bowls with the Giants. (10)

“Go, Tornadoes!”

On 7 November 2008, one of the most inspirational high-school football games ever took place as Grapevine Faith, a Christian school, defeated Gainesville State, a juvenile correctional facility, 33-14, in Grapevine, Texas. The game, which has become an annual event, was inspirational because half of the Grapevine Faith supporters were cheering on the Gainesville State players, who had probably never had anyone cheering for them in their entire lives. After all, they never play at home — every game is
an away game. Grapevine Faith coach Kris Hogan had the idea of his team playing the team from Gainesville State. Coach Hogan sent out an email to his team’s fans, asking half of them to root for players on the other team: “Here’s the message I want you to send: ‘You are just as valuable as any other person on planet Earth.’” One of Coach Hogan’s own players asked him, “Coach, why are we doing this?” Coach Hogan replied, “Imagine if you didn’t have a home life. Imagine if everybody had pretty much given up on you. Now imagine what it would mean for hundreds of people to suddenly believe in you.” When the Gainesville State players took the field, the Faith fans — the fans of the other team — made a 40-yard spirit line for them to run through. At the end was a banner for the players to crash through; it said, “Go, Tornadoes!” Fans of the Grapevine Faith Lions made the banner. More than 200 Faith fans sat on the Gainesville side and cheered the Gainesville players on. Isaiah (no last names of the juvenile offenders are given), Gainesville’s quarterback and middle linebacker, said, “I never in my life thought I’d hear people cheering for us to hit their kids. I wouldn’t expect another parent to tell somebody to hit their kids. But they wanted us to!” Alex, a Gainesville lineman, said, “I thought maybe they were confused. They started yelling ‘DEE-fense!’ when their team had the ball. I said, ‘What? Why they cheerin’ for us?’” Half of the Grapevine Faith cheerleaders cheered for Gainesville State. Grapevine Faith coaches gave parents Gainesville State rosters so they could cheer for opponents by name. Coach Hogan said, “The looks in the eyes of those kids, and also our parents, our players, the officials, the ballboys — everybody. Everybody at the stadium was brought together. There was no good and bad.” Mark Williams, the Gainsville coach, told Coach Hogan, “You’ll never know what your people did for these kids tonight. You’ll never, ever know.” Coach Hogan said, “We wanted to show them unconditional love. Love covers a multitude
of sins, the Bible says, and it wasn’t just the Gainesville kids, because we’ve all sinned. That night, love covered everything up.” During a prayer after the game, Isaiah said, “Lord, I don’t know how this happened, so I don’t know how to say Thank You, but I never would’ve known there was so many people in the world that cared about us.” (11)

Kyle Braver Goes to the World Series

In October 2012, San Francisco Giants fan Kyle Braver got a ticket to Game 2 of the World Series. A senior at the University of California at Davis, Mr. Braver is a popular employee at the Coffee House at UC Davis, and his friends and co-workers collected the money to buy him the ticket. The presentation of the ticket to him was captured on video and put up on YouTube. He said, “If you look at the video, about half of that I’m struggling to breathe.” Ali S wrote on YouTube, “If you’ve been to the UC Davis Coffee House at some point these past couple years, you’ve met Kyle. And I’m pretty sure he waved at you with the biggest smile, and greeted you like you were one of his closest friends. The kid works 35+ hours a week, is taking an astonishing 21 units, and is supporting himself through school. He is a fantastic co-worker, a great friend, and someone that would have anyone’s back. With the help of his CoHo coworkers and their spontaneous donations, this goober got an extra special surprise after Game 1… a ticket to see his favorite team play in the World Series, ticket and transportation costs covered completely. Have a great time, Kyle, CoHo loves you!” Mr. Braver said, “I’m incredibly blessed to have the friends I have.” Ashley Smith, one of his friends, said, “He’s a genuine person, like he genuinely cares. When he does things for you, it’s not because he wants something back, he cares about people. He loves people.” The cost of the standing-room-only ticket and transportation came close to $500. When it came time to ask people for money, Ms. Smith said, “So then people
started throwing in $5, $10, $2, $6, $20.” Mr. Braver said, “Going to the game? Outside of certain family things like my little brother being born, this is the best thing that’s ever happened to me.” After attending the game, he said, “There are 42,000 people in the stadium and you feel like you’re the same person and you feel like it’s just an incredible communal experience. And the energy there, it’s something I can’t even explain.” Fellow student and co-worker Kristin wrote on Sacandco.net, “I wanted to share a very great story that has really touched the UC Davis community and even many of mine and my coworker’s family members. The Coffee House at UC Davis is run by over 200 students and makes/serve food to thousands daily. Everyone becomes very close and our community often feels like we are family. One of our coworkers is particularly loved extra by everyone. His name is Kyle Braver. He is one of the nicest, most genuine and hardworking people I have ever met. He works 30+ hours a week, covers extra shifts for coworkers and never stops smiling … all while balancing the loads of homework that result from 21 quarter system units. He saves every paycheck to pay his tuition and rent and rarely ever treats himself. He is the biggest SF Giants fan around and all of us (his coworkers) at the coffee house know how much he deserves the world. He deserves something amazing to happen to him for all that he willingly does for everyone else. Because of this, everyone at the coffee house pitched in to buy him a ticket to today’s SF Giants World Series game. We recorded this video of us presenting him the ticket at 3rd and U Cafe after we watched game 1 of the world series together. … We think it would be awesome to share this story with the Sacramento community and show everyone how us student workers at the Coffee House came together to make our favorite coworker’s dream come true.” The Giants won Game 2, 2-0, and swept the World Series in four games over the Detroit Tigers. (12)
“It was a Very Good Gesture of Honesty. A Gesture of the Kind that isn’t Made Any More. Or Rather, of the Kind that has Never Been Made”

On 2 December 2012, Abel Mutai, the Kenyan bronze medalist in the 3,000-meter steeplechase at the London Olympics, made a mistake in a cross-country race in Burlada, Navarre, Spain. He thought that he had crossed the finish line, but he had actually stopped about 10 meters before the finish line. Iván Fernández Anaya, a Spanish runner, was in second place, and he could have passed Mr. Mutai and won the race, but he declined to take advantage of his competition’s mistake. He used gestures to convince Mr. Mutai to continue running and cross the finish line first. Mr. Anaya said after the race, “I didn’t deserve to win it. I did what I had to do. He was the rightful winner. He created a gap that I couldn’t have closed if he hadn’t made a mistake. As soon as I saw he was stopping, I knew I wasn’t going to pass him.” Mr. Anaya’s coach is former Spanish distance runner Martín Fiz, the European marathon champion in 1994 and world marathon champion in 1995. Mr. Fiz said, “It was a very good gesture of honesty. A gesture of the kind that isn’t made any more. Or rather, of the kind that has never been made. A gesture that I myself wouldn’t have made. I certainly would have taken advantage of it to win.” Mr. Naya said, “In the Burlada cross-country race there was hardly anything at stake [...] apart from being able to say that you had beaten an Olympic medalist. But even if they had told me that winning would have earned me a place in the Spanish team for the European championships, I wouldn’t have done it either. Of course, it would be another thing if there was a world or European medal at stake. Then, I think that, yes, I would have exploited it to win …. But I also think that I have earned more of a name having done what I did than if I had won. And that is very important, because today, with
the way things are in all circles, in soccer, in society, in politics, where it seems anything goes, a gesture of honesty goes down well.” (13)

Money and Charity

At times, Nathaniel Hawthorne, author of the classic *The Scarlet Letter*, was short of money. During one such time, his lawyer friend George Hilliard collected money from several friends and fans of Mr. Hawthorne. When Mr. Hilliard gave him the money, he said it was a payment on “the debt we owe you for what you have done for American Literature.” Later, Mr. Hawthorne got a job as a diplomat in Liverpool, England, and was much more flush with money. He was charitable. As a diplomat, he ran into many Americans and helped them with loans that were usually not repaid. When several American sailors were shipwrecked in the Atlantic Ocean, he used his own money to help them. (14)

“To Not to have Entirely Wasted One’s Life Seems to be a Worthy Accomplishment, If Only for Myself”

Charles Bukowski worked at lousy jobs for much of his life, but he wanted to be a writer. In 1969, John Martin, publisher of Black Sparrow Press, made him an offer: For each and every month of the rest of Mr. Bukowski’s life, Mr. Martin would pay him $100. Mr. Martin attached a condition: Mr. Bukowski had to quit his job at the post office. Instead of working at lousy jobs, he would have to write. Mr. Bukowski, age 49, gladly accepted the offer and quit his job and wrote. In 1971, Black Sparrow Press published Mr. Bukowski’s first novel: *Post Office*. After 15 years of receiving $100 each and every month, Mr. Bukowski wrote Mr. Martin a letter in which he expressed his appreciation at not having to work at lousy jobs. In part, he wrote, “I remember once, working as a packer in this lighting fixture company, one of the packers suddenly said:
‘I’ll never be free!’ One of the bosses was walking by (his name was Morrie) and he let out this delicious cackle of a laugh, enjoying the fact that this fellow was trapped for life. So, the luck I finally had in getting out of those places, no matter how long it took, has given me a kind of joy, the jolly joy of the miracle. I now write from an old mind and an old body, long beyond the time when most men would ever think of continuing such a thing, but since I started so late I owe it to myself to continue, and when the words begin to falter and I must be helped up stairways and I can no longer tell a bluebird from a paperclip, I still feel that something in me is going to remember (no matter how far I’m gone) how I’ve come through the murder and the mess and the moil, to at least a generous way to die. To not to have entirely wasted one’s life seems to be a worthy accomplishment, if only for myself.” (15)

**Free Master Classes and Private Lessons**

Soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, famous for her opera performances and lieder recitals, lived a long life, dying in August 2006 a few months before her 91st birthday. After her career as a performer ended, she taught, giving many master classes. She always sincerely evaluated the students’ singing—after some of her lessons, students went away in tears; however, she did not charge for her master classes or for the private lessons she gave in her home. She also frequently paid for the hotel bill of young singers who came to see her because she knew that they did not earn much money. Her insights were interesting. When one soprano began an aria from the operetta *Der Zarewitsch* by Franz Lehár, singing “One will come, who will desire me. One will come to whom I’ll belong,” Ms. Schwarzkopf objected, “It is too chaste. There should be far more pleasant anticipation within the sound. All the men must immediately think, ‘Ah, so she’s that kind of girl.’” (16)
“Give Me the Part”

Gerhardt Stehmann, an extraordinarily competent man, sang bass and baritone for the Damrosch Opera Company. Among other abilities, he could learn a role very quickly. The German composer Xaver Scharwenka had written an opera and was anxious to conduct it, and Walter Damrosch agreed to let him use the Damrosch Opera Company for a performance. Unfortunately, the day before the opera was to be presented, tenor Ernest Krauss pleaded hoarseness, and it seemed as if the opera would have to be cancelled, bitterly disappointing Mr. Scharwenka. However, Mr. Stehmann said to Mr. Damrosch, “Give me the part, and I will learn it for tomorrow night.” Mr. Damrosch objected, “But this is a tenor part, and you are a bass baritone.” Mr. Stehmann replied, “Give it to me. I think I can transpose a few of the high notes and can at least save the performance.” He did save the performance, and he did not make a mistake while performing in the opera. This was both a good deed and a remarkable deed. (17)

How Good is Fats Waller?

Herman Autrey remembers a good deed that Fats Waller did for a bunch of kids during a theater engagement in Washington D.C. While Fats was taking a break in an alley early in the engagement, a kid approached him and asked to be let in the show free because he had no money. Fats told the kid to come back and bring a bunch of his friends with him. Lots of kids showed up, and Fats treated them to candy and let them in his show free. The owner of the theater was unhappy because the kids were taking up seats for free that other customers could have paid for, but the owner became happy at the next show and all the shows that followed because the kids told their parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles how good Fats was, and the parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles bought
tickets to hear Fats for themselves. By the way, Fats Waller was very creative musically, but he did not handle money matters well. Once, he was in a hamburger place with Fletcher Henderson and Fletcher’s musicians. Fats ate nine hamburgers and then discovered that he did not have any money. Fats offered to write nine songs for Fletcher if he would pay for the nine hamburgers that Fats had eaten. Fletcher accepted the offer, and Fats got manuscript paper and quickly wrote nine songs, including “Henderson Stomp,” “Hot Mustard,” “St. Louis Shuffle,” “Variety Stomp,” and “Whiteman Stomp.” Fletcher was a good man, and he did more than just pay for the hamburgers — he gave Fats an additional $10 for each song. (18)

“A Child Can Play to Their Heart’s Content Where There are No Content Hearts”

Some impoverished children in third-world countries find great joy in kicking a ball. Unfortunately, many of the soccer balls given to these children do not last very long. Tim Jahnigen made it his mission to develop a ball that would not quickly wear out on rocky fields where children play. His inspiration was a documentary about children in Darfur who made balls from garbage and string. Mr. Jahnigen said, “The only thing that sustained these kids is play. Yet the millions of balls that are donated go flat within 24 hours.” He learned that PopFoam, a type of hard foam made of ethylene-vinyl acetate, could be used to make balls that would take years to wear out. However, discovering how to use the material to make balls could cost as much as $300,000. Fortunately, Mr. Jahnigen, who used to be in the music business, has a famous friend: the musician Sting, who paid for the development of the ball. Sting said, “Even on the harshest of terrain and in the worst of conditions, the ball could survive and the kids could still play. I said, ‘Wow, yeah, let’s make it.’” Fortunately, the actual cost of developing the first prototype of the ball was
approximately $30,000. Sting named the ball the One World Futbol. Mr. Jahnigen said, “A child can play to their heart’s content where there are no content hearts. We don’t understand that having a ball is like the best PlayStation 3 or a rocket to Mars.” (19)

**Keep It**

When Count Basie’s band and Benny Goodman’s band were playing in New York City at the same time, musicians of the bands got together informally to play. Lester Young had a wonderful tone on the saxophone, and he also achieved wonderful phrasing when he played the clarinet — Mr. Goodman’s specialty. On this night, Mr. Young played first the sax and then a metal clarinet, which was not nearly as good as the wooden clarinet that Mr. Goodman was playing. However, after Mr. Goodman heard Mr. Young play the metal clarinet for a while, he so respected Mr. Young’s sense of phrasing that he handed him his wooden clarinet and told him to keep it. (20)

**Standing Up When Standing Up is Necessary**

Ed McMahon stood up when standing up is necessary. He is Irish, and he was old enough to remember this sign for job openings: “IRISH NEED NOT APPLY.” Eventually, Americans stopped being prejudiced against the Irish, but other kinds of prejudice remained. When his daughter Claudia came home from college with a Chinese friend, a country club in Westchester County that the McMahons belonged to refused to let them in. Mr. McMahon paid a visit to the country club and raised his voice. He says, “Believe me, no McMahon ever set foot in that country club again.” Mr. McMahon and his daughter Linda once went to P.J. Clarke’s in New York. A man there bothered Linda and tried to put his arm around her. Mr. McMahon says, “I poked him in the chest so hard I knocked him to the floor. I remember exactly what I said to him, ‘It will not be
necessary for you to touch me or any member of my family for the rest of your life. Do I make myself clear?” (21)

A Gift for Flossie

Martha Sigall spent her career in animation, and she worked with such cartoon luminaries as Tex Avery, Friz Freleng, and Chuck Jones. Another luminary she worked with was Mike Maltese, who started as an assistant animator, but who made everyone laugh so much that he started working in the story department, where he made up gags, including gags for “Horton Hatches the Egg.” In addition, Mr. Maltese is the one who suggested that the Road Runner in the Road Runner and Coyote cartoons make a “beep, beep” sound. Also, he and Chuck Jones started working on the Bugs Bunny cartoon “Bully for Bugs,” in which Bugs Bunny is a bullfighter, immediately after their boss told them never to make a cartoon about a bullfight because bullfights are not funny. Of course, the cartoon is funny. Mr. Maltese died in 1980, and Ms. Sigall made a wonderful gift to his wife, Florrie. Mr. Maltese had received screen credit on over 200 cartoons, and Ms. Sigall taped many, many of them from off her television set. She gave Florrie several tapes of the cartoons that Mr. Maltese had worked on. Florrie appreciated the gift and watched the cartoons many, many times. (22)

A Blank Check

When the father of Jamie Farr (who played Klinger on TV’s M*A*S*H) died, Jamie was broke and needed money to get to Phoenix, Arizona, for his father’s funeral. Jamie started to tell a long-time friend, Andy Fenady, his problem, and before Jamie was able to finish, Andy gave him a signed blank check and said, “Fill it out for whatever amount you need.” Jamie filled it out for $50 — at the time that was enough money for a round-trip air ticket. (23)
Saving Money on Christmas Cards

Burt Reynolds has been an actor long enough for his career to have had some steep declines as well as major successes. During a time when his career was in a steep decline and he became ill, he lost a lot of “friends.” He said, “I found I could save a lot of money on Christmas cards.” One of the people who stayed friends with him was Johnny Carson, star of The Tonight Show. Mr. Reynolds said, “Johnny called me every week.” Ed McMahon, who knew Johnny for decades, said that “he is an incredibly loyal friend.” (24)

Wanna Win $2,000?

In 2003, Colin Farrell was in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. A Toronto-area radio station offered a cash prize of $2,000 to anyone who brought Mr. Farrell to the station’s studio. Mr. Farrell found a homeless guy named “Stress” to take him to the studio and win the $2,000. In September 2007, Mr. Farrell was again in Toronto. He looked up Stress, who was still homeless, and took him on an over-$2,000 shopping spree. He bought Stress waterproof jackets, pants, boots, and socks. Dave Mott, manager of Europe Bound, an outdoor gear store, said, “The homeless guy was grabbing … whatever he wanted. Colin was walking around with the guy and doing the same thing — grabbed a sleeping bag and backpack, came back down and grabbed more clothing.” Mr. Mott added that “they seemed like they were really good friends and they were best buddies, like they’ve known each other for years.” Mr. Farrell also gave Stress $830 so he could rent a room; the money would cover Stress’ first and last month’s rent. John Mourtzis, the limousine driver who chauffeured Mr. Farrell on the day he did his good deed, said, “He proved he’s an awesome guy.” Mr. Mott said, “I ended up talking to his publicist. Apparently, he does this quite a bit.” One year after the shopping spree, according to an article in the Toronto Sun,
Good Deeds by Three Chippewa and by Silas Moore

Documentary film director Michael Moore’s ancestors got along well with the Chippewa Native Americans in Lapeer County, Michigan. Silas and Caroline Moore were expecting a baby in November 1837. When Caroline went into labor on November 30, Silas rode to get a doctor from Lapeer, leaving his wife with her sister. Three Chippewa stopped by the Moore home, which had no glass in the window because glass was scarce at the time. The Chippewa pointed out that wolves could smell blood and they could come through the window, and so they put blankets on the window and door to keep the smell of blood from going to the woods. The three Chippewa also stood guard outside. A boy was born. The next day Silas thanked the Chippewa, and the Chippewa chief gave him a wood carving to celebrate the birth of his son. The following year, Silas was able to repay the good deed. The Chippewa began to greatly suffer from a disease that white people had brought to North America: measles. The Chippewa had not been exposed to the disease before and had not built up any immunity. White people had some immunity, but measles killed even white people at the time. The white people quarantined the Chippewa, and the Chippewa sent word that they needed food and medicine. Lots of prejudice against Native Americans existed, and no food and medicine were forthcoming, so Silas gathered supplies from white neighbors to take to the Chippewa. The white neighbors warned Silas that if they suspected that he was catching the measles that they would send him to live in the quarantine area. Silas sat in one canoe and took a canoe full of food to the middle of Lake Neppessing. The Chippewa met him there and received the food. Two days later, Silas brought more food and medicine to the middle of Lake Neppessing. This went on for a few weeks, and most of the
Chippewa recovered from the measles. Neighbors helped out on Silas’ farm so that he would not fall behind. Silas’ son told this story to his daughter (Bess), and she told it to her daughter (Michael Moore’s mother), and she told it to Michael Moore. (26)

“Really Proud of Jack and His Friend Tyler Who Saved a Woman on the Beach Yesterday Who’d had a Heart Attack and [could have Drowned]”

On 7 October 2012, Jack Osbourne, whose father is the famous Ozzy, married model-actress Lisa Stelly. On 8 October 2012, he and his friend Tyler and some other people helped rescue a woman in Hawaii. Lisa tweeted, “Really proud of Jack and his friend Tyler who saved a woman on the beach yesterday who’d had a heart attack and [could have drowned]. They resuscitated her until the ambulance came. We just found out she’s in a stable condition! Awesome!” By the way, Jack was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis soon after the birth of Pearl, his daughter. He said in 2012, “Honestly, I’m fine. Ultimately that is the toughest thing with this disease that I’m learning, one minute you can be fine, and the next I went blind in my right eye. It’s a completely unpredictable disease.” Lisa said, “I think me and Jack are doing better than everyone else, honestly. We’re just really trying to stay positive and we don’t really have much time to be sad, because we have diapers to change and a little girl to look at and smile at. We’re just having fun. He’s going to be OK.” Later, on Facebook, Mr. Osbourne gave some details about the rescue: “I would like to clarify exactly what happened. On 10/8/12, I was approached by a family member telling me he had just seen a woman being pulled out of the water who’d drowned. I grabbed my friend Tyler who was a former Army operator and we went to see if we could be of assistance. In case you are not aware, I was a police reserve for 5 years and have had a lot of training in CPR and as a
first responder. I am not an EMT or Paramedic, but I have assisted in resuscitating individuals in the past.” He added, “When Tyler and I arrived on the scene, the woman was not conscious and had approximately 5 people assisting in an attempt to resuscitate her. A neurosurgeon from Japan had taken charge in trying to manage the chaos though she did not speak much English. The golf cart with the spine board then pulled up. Tyler, myself, and another woman all got onto the cart with her … and Tyler and I began administering chest compressions. Because of the angle Tyler was sitting, he couldn’t get a solid downward motion for the compressions. Tyler and I switched positions, and I straddled the woman in order to get the right amount of leverage for the chest compressions … As soon as the EMT’s arrived, I backed away and let them take over.” (27)

“We Regret Having to Refuse Bill’s Request that We Deliver the Children’s Toys in the Millennium Falcon. It was Heartbreaking Having to Explain to Him that It’s Not Real”

An internet domain name can be deleted from the relevant domain name registry and network information center so that it no longer belongs to anyone. Some of the domain names are valuable. Tucows is a global Internet services company based in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, that manages over 11 million domain names. It occasionally does the good deed of getting a valuable domain name into the possession of an individual or company who can use it. For example, when the domain name DarthVader.com was deleted, Tucows rescued it and donated it to George Lucas’ Lucasfilm Ltd. Bill Sweetman, a domain portfolio vice-president at Tucows, said, “Star Wars had a profound impact on me as a child. The moment I spotted DarthVader.com in a list of deleting domain names, I knew Tucows had to find a way to get this iconic domain name into the right hands. I knew I was its only hope.” Lucasfilm
appreciated what Mr. Sweetman did. It made a donation to the Tucows Elves Project, which provides toys to children of low-income families in Toronto. Miles Perkins, a spokesman for Lucasfilm, said, “We’re thrilled to be the new owners of DarthVader.com. And we are even more excited about supporting such a worthy cause. We regret having to refuse Bill’s request that we deliver the children’s toys in the Millennium Falcon. It was heartbreaking having to explain to him that it’s not real.” Other domain names that the Tucows experts have rescued and donated to individuals and organizations include FreddieMercury.com and PhilCollins.com. (28)

“Hi, Knocked Off Your Mirror! Very Sorry! Will Cover Everything — Ben”

If you drive a bit carelessly and knock the side mirror off a parked car, you are supposed to leave a note with your contact information and, of course, pay for the damage. Unfortunately, not everyone does this, but famous actor/director Ben Affleck does. On 6 October 2012, he hit a parked car in Santa Monica, California, and he left this note: “Hi, Knocked off your mirror! Very sorry! Will cover everything — Ben.” (29)

WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE

Raoul Walsh, director of the movies The Big Trail, High Sierra, and White Heat, once did a good deed for a favorite extra who was known as “Cheyenne Billy.” After Cheyenne Billy died, Mr. Walsh held a big, expensive Irish wake for him. He also sent the body back to Wyoming for burial. To everyone’s surprise, Mr. Walsh received in the mail a check for $1,000 and a Wanted poster for Cheyenne Billy: DEAD or ALIVE. Mr. Walsh cashed the check, put the money in his pocket, and said, “I guess that pays for the wake.” (30)
“I Fell on Top of Him, on His Private Parts, Which Must have Hurt”

Mishaps — sometimes dangerous ones — occur on movie sets. In 1973, Roger Moore prevented injury or death to actress Jane Seymour as she was about to plunge into a gaping hole on the set of the James Bond movie *Live And Let Die*. He grabbed her hair and kept her from falling. Ms. Seymour explained, “It was the voodoo scene, and I was tied up, waiting to be rescued by Bond. We were supposed to descend into a grave together, but it all went horribly wrong. The gravestone was actually a forklift truck in disguise and as the guy operating it pressed the wrong button, it collapsed. I could have plummeted into the chasm, but Roger instinctively grabbed my hair and pulled me towards him. I fell on top of him, on his private parts, which must have hurt.” (31)

“Spock Learned He Could Save Himself from Letting Prejudice Get Him Down”

In 1968, Leonard Nimoy, aka Mr. Spock, answered a letter sent to the teen magazine *FaVE*. The letter was by a biracial — black and white — girl from Los Angeles, California, who felt that she could relate to Mr. Spock because the character is also biracial: half-human and half-Vulcan. The girl ended her letter with this sentence: “I guess I’ll never have any friends.” Mr. Nimoy wrote, “Spock learned he could save himself from letting prejudice get him down. He could do this by really understanding himself and knowing his own value as a person. He found he was equal to anyone who might try to put him down — equal in his own unique way. You can do this, too, if you realize the difference between popularity and true greatness. It has been said that ‘popularity’ is merely the crumbs of greatness. When you think of people who are truly great and have improved the world, you can
see that they are people who have realized that they didn’t need popularity because they knew they had something special to offer the world, no matter how small that offering seemed. And they offered it and it was accepted with peace and love. It’s all in having the patience to find what you yourself have to offer the world that’s really uniquely yours.” Mr. Nimoy also wrote, “So — the answer to the whole problem, the answer that Spock found when he had to make his big decision, is in overcoming the need to be popular. It’s in choosing your own personal goal and going after it and forgetting what the others are saying. If you do this, then the ones who accept people for the right reasons — for their true worth — will find you and like you.” (32)

“Please Come to the Rescue of a Star Trek Fan”

Daniel Craft, a co-founder of the New York Asian Film Festival, was a big fan of Star Trek. Unfortunately, he got terminal cancer and he was afraid that he would not be able to see the new (in 2013) Star Trek movie, Star Trek: Into Darkness. A friend of Mr. Craft’s wife, Paige, posted a plea on Reddit that asked for help in finding a screener of the then-unfinished Star Trek film: “My amazing healthy film buff husband diagnosed with leukemia (CML) at 38 had to endure 3 rounds of chemo before they found a bone marrow donor match had a Bone Marrow Transplant, which was MORE chemo, full body radiation & lots of other horrific things....then endured/survived 3 major infections + a massive GI bleed that put him in the hospital 10+ times over 3 1/2 years not to mention 100’s of doctors visits.... he is my hero; I am his caregiver — I would do anything to help him.... he is now ravaged by a new TOTALLY UNRELATED cancer, (isn’t that a f[**]ker?) an aggressive and EXTREMELY rare vascular tumor that is crowding out his healthy liver tissue... they grew under treatment; there is nothing left to do but make him comfortable, at 41, he is jaundiced & his liver is enlarged,
his body has had enough, he has weeks to live. He was hospitalized and had to exchange our HOBBITT tickets (where the 10 min Star Trek preview was supposed to be shown) we were able to put him in a car and get over to the HOBBITT but NO PREVIEW???? we, his friends and family, the love of my life — WOULD LOVE him to be able to see the Star Trek movie but even the 10 minutes of the trailer would be AMAZING.” The movie’s director, J.J. Abrams, and one of its writers, Damon Lindelof, sent the Crafts a voicemail. Mr. Craft’s friend Grady Hendrix wrote this follow-up post on Reddit saying what happened after the Crafts received the voicemail: “The next day, one of the film’s producers showed up at the door of their apartment with a DVD containing a very rough cut of Star Trek: Into Darkness in his hands. Paige had made popcorn, Dan had spent the previous day resting so he could sit through the movie, and after signing about 200 nondisclosure agreements, they watched the film and had a blast.” On 4 January 2013, the 41-year-old Mr. Craft was moved to hospice care, and he died the following day. Mr. Hendrix said, “Dan would be rolling his eyes at being ‘the inspirational cancer story,’ but he’s done a lot for movies over the years. It’s nice that the movies finally did something for him.” Zachary Quinto, who plays Spock in the movie, wrote on Twitter: “My heart is with the family of dan craft. ‘may flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.’” Mr. Hendrix wrote on Reddit, “At a time when he didn’t have a whole lot to look forward to, r/StarTrek, JJ Abrams, Damon Lindelof, and Bad Robot performed a simple act of kindness for a total stranger and gave Dan something to be excited about for a couple of days. The movie did exactly what movies are supposed to do, it helped him forget about his problems for a couple of hours. It doesn’t sound like much, but in this case it was.” (33)

“Hey, Remember When Scotty Won Homecoming
In January 2013 at Unionville Community High School in Unionville, Bedford County, Tennessee, Scotty Maloney, a junior who has a neurological disorder named William Syndrome that inhibits learning and speech, was named Homecoming King. The three seniors who had also been nominated for Homecoming King — Jesse Cooper, Drew Gibbs, and Zeke Grissom — decided that Scotty should be the Homecoming King. Jesse said, “I’ve been blessed with so many things. I just wanted Scotty to experience something great in his high school days.” Drew said about Scotty, “He’s always happy, so he deserves some recognition for who he is.” When Scotty was announced as Homecoming King, he received a standing ovation. Zeke said, “It was just a ton of emotion from everybody. I think I saw Scotty shed a few tears. I know Jesse was pretty emotional. We were all emotional out there on the court.” Drew said, “We probably wouldn’t even think about it at all, but probably now we’ll think about it when we all get together — we’ll say, ‘Hey, remember when Scotty won Homecoming King?’” (34)

**A Chain of Good Deeds**

In December 2012, police officers John Reposa and Mark DeCecco of Providence, Rhode Island, learned about an autistic child whose iPad had been stolen. The two police officers went to an Apple store to buy a replacement iPad, but the manager of the Apple store instead donated an iPad to the child. The story made the local media, and as an English lesson, teacher Trish McGovern had her students at Park View Middle School in Cranston, Rhode Island, write letters of appreciation to the police officers, whose kind intentions had inspired a good deed by the manager of the Apple store. Ms. McGovern’s class had studied the book *Rachel's Challenge*. In 1999, Rachel Scott was the first
murder victim of the shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. Officer Reposa said, “In all my 19 years on the job, I very rarely have people write letters, especially not to this extent. You all did a great job. They were very heartfelt, and they all had very good spelling. Over the years I’ve received commendations on the job. I keep them all in a special place in my house. Your letters mean so much to me that I keep them in that special place with all of my other stuff.” Ms. McGovern explained to the police officers that she wanted the students to see “the impact that doing something positive has, that it has a positive outcome.” Officer DeCecco said, “We didn’t even want this to get out. We didn’t tell any of our supervisors what we were planning to do, but once it got donated, it had to be put out there. But for John and myself, it was between us and we did it because we felt it was the right thing to do.” The autistic child likes the new iPad, but of course she would like to have her old iPad. Officer DeCecco said, “Everyone saw how happy she was when she got the new one, but all of her photos, all of her memories, were all on that old iPad. She wanted that one. This has been a transition for her, a period of adjustment.” Officer Reposa said, “Life can be hard for people, and sometimes you can overcome those hard times by doing something nice. Ninety percent of the time, people’s interaction with police officers is negative, whether they are stopped for speeding, going through a stop sign, or if they have a problem at home — a bad situation. That takes a toll on us. A lot of what we see is negative, so when we can do something positive, we try to.” He added, “If you see someone who needs a little bit of help, spend a little extra time with them. It goes a long way, especially with our youth. It’s nice when you can see us and know that cops aren’t all bad, and later you can instill that in your own children.” Officer DeCecco said, “I looked up Rachel’s Challenge. I read the words she said. She said, ‘I have this theory that if one
person can go out of their way to show compassion, then it will start a chain reaction of the same. People will never know how far a little kindness can go.’ That stuck with me. We’re seeing that firsthand today, and it’s a goal to live by.” (35)

160 Dresses

A person who posted on Helpothers.org using the name Songinmyheart wrote in February 2013 about being a member of a group of five women who wanted to help a number of local girls from families who lack money. With the winter formal dances at school coming up, these women knew that the parents would have a difficult time finding formal dresses for their daughters, so the five women asked members of the community to donate formal dresses, high heels, purses, and even jewelry. The community responded, and the five women received 160 dresses — and accessories — to give away. In a comment on this story, Pinksmoochies wrote, “Every girl deserves to feel like a princess.” (36)

“He’s Kind of Like God, But He’s Not God. And He's Kind of Like Martin Luther King, But He’s Not Martin Luther King”

Michael Garcia, age 45, is a waiter at Laurenzo’s Prime Rib on Washington Avenue in Houston, Texas. He frequently waits on Milo Castillo, a five-year-old boy with Down Syndrome, and Milo’s family. In early 2013, a family asked to be seated away from Milo; they said, “Special-needs children need to be special somewhere else.” Mr. Garcia declined to wait on the family who wanted to be seated away from Milo, and that family left the restaurant. Fortunately, Mr. Garcia did not get fired. He said, “If I had gotten fired, oh well, I would have got another job. But what’s right is right.” Instead of being fired, Mr. Garcia became a hero because he supported Milo, and people sent
him money. Mr. Garcia donated the money — $1,145 — to Milo’s school: The Rise School of Houston, which is a preschool affiliate of Texas Children’s Hospital. Ashley Kress, the development director for the school and a mother of a child with Down Syndrome, said, “When you have something like this with someone who had no reason to be kind — he doesn’t have relatives with special needs, he’s not a teacher — but he did it out of a sense of what was right and from his heart, it gives us this hope. Like, OK, if Michael can do that, then maybe other people in the world can do that, too.” Kim Castillo, Milo’s mother, said about Mr. Garcia, “What he’s doing is not only inspirational, but it’s going to hopefully push people to make donations to this amazing, amazing school.” Mr. Garcia visited the school and met students and teachers. Ms. Kress knows that one little girl told her mother that she learned about “somebody new” in class: “Well, he’s kind of like God, but he’s not God. And he’s kind of like Martin Luther King, but he’s not Martin Luther King.” The mother asked, “Well, do you know his name?” She replied, “His name is Michael. He’s a waiter.” (37)

“I Volunteered to Help the Man Because, If I was Hurt, I Would Like to Think That Someone Would Help Me”

On 28 February 2013, Portia Marley, age 15, a year-ten pupil at Newman Catholic School in Carlisle, Cumbria, England, was a passenger on a bus whose driver noticed a man who had collapsed by the side of a road. The driver stopped the bus and asked if anyone on the bus had first-aid skills. Portia, who had learned first aid as a member of the Army Cadets, said, “I volunteered to help the man because, if I was hurt, I would like to think that someone would help me. People were surrounding him, and I wouldn’t like to have left the person in case something serious happened. He said he had something wrong with his legs, so I didn’t move him; I made him feel as comfortable as possible and
used my school blazer to keep him warm.” A passerby called an ambulance. Colin Munro, the head of year at Portia’s school, said, “We were really delighted to hear about Portia’s good deed. We always encourage our students to help others in the community, so to see her help out in this way is brilliant — we are really proud of her.” Amanda Henry, a reception teacher at Upperby Primary School in Carlisle, witnessed the incident. She said, “I thought Portia was so brave. It was such a brave thing to do, to react in the way she did in that situation.” She added, “At her age it shows such strength of character.” (38)

“I Bawled. It was Just So Much Food. I Never Expected that Good would Come from this Situation. There is Just So Much Bad News, and Sometimes Kids can have Such a Bad Stigma. What They Did was Wonderful”

Thanksgiving in Canada occurs on the second Monday of October. A little before Thanksgiving of 2012, vandals destroyed the Liftlock Community Garden plot of Jennifer Olauson’s family, a garden that her six-year-old son had worked very hard on. Before teaching a class to her students at Fleming College in Cobourg, Ontario, Canada, Ms. Olauson asked for permission to speak about something not related to the subject of the design-and-layout course. She then vented her feelings about the vandalism. The vandals had ripped up the garden and had apparently played baseball with the vegetables. She said, “It was just a mess.” Her son was devastated. The Friday before Thanksgiving, her students did a good deed. Sometimes, students take off early for a long holiday weekend, but lots of students showed up for class. Ms. Olauson said, “It was just weird. I was thinking, ‘It’s the Friday before a holiday. … What are they all doing here?’” Her students had collected money and had purchased a fall harvest for her and her family. When she entered the classroom, the harvest was on her desk. She said, “I
bawled. It was just so much food. I never expected that good would come from this situation. There is just so much bad news, and sometimes kids can have such a bad stigma. What they did was wonderful.” (39)

Three McGinnis Middle School Students in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, Come to the Rescue

On 23 October 2012 in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, three William C. McGinnis Middle School students — a 12-year-old seventh-grade girl and two 13-year-old eighth-grade boys — found a 14-month-old girl wandering, alone, along a street. The toddler had walked out of her home. Her grandmother missed her a few minutes later and ran down the street looking for her. The William C. McGinnis Middle School students contacted police, who responded immediately, and the grandmother showed up shortly afterward. Superintendent of Schools Janine Walker Caffrey said, “We are so proud of these amazing young people. They are a wonderful reflection of their families, the McGinnis School, and the great city of Perth Amboy. We all thank them for protecting one of our youngest and most vulnerable citizens.” (40)

“You Cannot Look at a Person and Tell Whether They’re Good or Bad. Evil Comes in All Shades and Colors”

The first black student to attend an all-white elementary school in the South was six-year-old first-grader Ruby Bridges, who broke this race barrier in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1960. Her parents wanted her to attend the all-white elementary school because they believed that she would get a better education there. Many people protested, and Federal marshals had to escort her to school to keep her safe. The adult Ms. Bridges said, “The truth of the matter is at six-years-old I knew absolutely nothing about what was going on. … The only thing that I was ever told is that I
was going to attend a new school today, and, ‘Ruby, you better behave!’” The teachers at the school mostly refused to teach a black child. An exception was Barbara Henry, a white schoolteacher from Boston. Ms. Bridges said, “You cannot look at a person and tell whether they’re good or bad. Evil comes in all shades and colors. That is the lesson that I learned from the teacher that looked exactly like the people outside that threw things, spit, and yelled — she looked exactly like them, but she was different, and I knew that at six years old, because she showed me her heart.” Ms. Bridges also had support from people in her neighborhood: “I was escorted every day by Federal marshals, but everyone on my street walked behind the car every day... I would pass [the windows of a dry cleaners’ shop] every day, and all the men that worked in the dry cleaners would wave and say, ‘How are you doing today? You do good in school.’ So when I got my report card, I would stand by those windows … and they would see it and they would hand me dollar bills. … That’s a community, and that’s what we need again.” (41)

“At One Point, Most of the Kids had Cried Themselves to Sleep Because They were Hungry, They were Tired, They were Thirsty, Wanting Their Parents”

On 4 October 2012, a heavy snowstorm in Manitoba, Canada, snapped hydro poles and lines. In this area, cellphone service is unreliable. A schoolbus operated by First Student Canada got stuck in the snow for nearly five and a half hours on a rural road near Sandilands. Alexi Catellier, age 13, was the oldest student on the schoolbus. He and two other students tried to keep the other students calm as the driver tried to dig the bus out. Alexi said, “It was definitely nerve-wracking. … You have to keep the kids calm, because otherwise the bus driver won’t be able to do his job. At one point, most of the kids had cried themselves to sleep because they were hungry, they were
tired, they were thirsty, wanting their parents.” Alexei and two other students melted snow to get drinking water. The 25 students on the bus ranged in age from five to 13. At about 8 p.m., Alexei walked to get help. He said, “The way the wind was blowing, and with the snow, it was freezing cold. And I was just wearing running shoes, track pants, a thin sweater and a little fall jacket.” He reached a man who called CN Rail employees for help. Alexei went back to the bus, and he and two other students carried some of the younger children to a nearby home. One of the younger children was his five-year-old brother, Bevan. The CN Rail employees arrived and pulled the bus out of the snow. Alexei’s mother, Tatiana, said about him, “I’m glad that he did it, and I’m glad that he had the potential to do it. But I’m not happy that he was in that position, and put in that position.” She added, “Heaven forbid someone was diabetic and needed insulin. We’d have a real problem with no food, no water, and no medical facility anywhere around.” Denis Ferré, superintendent of the Division Scolaire Franco-Manitobaine, said, “Are there other things we could have done? We’re going to have to look at the whole situation, what took place. The whole issue of procedures: what happens in nasty weather, how are the bus drivers trained, about kids leaving the buses, supervision issues, and contacting the parents [to] make sure everybody is up to speed. Our bus driver had a lot of experience. A lot of good things took place, and the best thing that could have happened was that no one got hurt.” (42)

Valentine’s Day Candy

In February 2013, this short letter to the editor by Crystal Moore of Post Falls, Idaho, which is near Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, appeared in The Coeur d’Alene Press: “My niece and neighbor walked up to trading company [apparently, the Trading Company store at 1501 E Seltice Way in Post Falls, Idaho] recently to buy valentine candy for their class.
They barely had enough money so the gentleman behind them in line paid for them. The girls say he was a firefighter and we would like to say thank you so much. He didn’t have to do such a good deed but didn’t even blink an eye to cover their bill. Thank you, whoever you are.” (43)

Valentine’s Day Dinner — Where?

On Valentine’s Day, 14 February 2013, Carlos and Barbara Landeros of Vallejo, California found a camera bag while they were visiting the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, California. They waited 45 minutes in case the owner showed up, and then they opened the bag. Inside the bag were credit cards and over $11,000. Barbara said, “I got nervous at first — it could be drug money. I was scared.” The couple gave the bag to the police, who located the owner of the bag: a Chinese tourist named Mark. The money, however, was not all his: He had been holding the money of several other Chinese tourists. Mark sent Carlos and Barbara Landeros a reward: a check. Unfortunately, the romantic Valentine’s Day dinner that Carlos and Barbara Landeros had planned did not happen. Finding the bag and turning it in to police took time, and then they got tied up in traffic. So where did they end up eating their Valentine’s Day dinner? McDonald’s. (44)

Some Random Acts of Kindness

To celebrate Thanksgiving of 2012, Huffington Post asked readers to send in accounts of random acts of kindness that they have done or have been the recipient of: 1) Johanna Schulman sent in this email about unclaimed property: “I like to perform at least one Random Act of Kindness a week. And if I run out of ideas, I go to the Massachusetts list of unclaimed property, which is found at our Department of State Treasury. There I find an unusual name of a person who has at least $100 of unclaimed property and get to work. I Google the name until I have
found an address for the person (that’s why I always start with an unusual name, otherwise it’s hard to). Then I print a copy of the page showing the property, circle their name, and send it to them anonymously with a little note. Usually I say ‘Enjoy this random act of kindness and pay it forward!’” 2) Lackey Diggs wrote, “When we came out of the store [a Barnes and Noble] I saw a piece of paper under our windshield wiper. […] it was a note that said, ‘You are the world’s only hope! Never give up! You are my people! Use this for whatever you can!’ with a $20 bill inside! It was so awesome and random! I’m in California and don’t know if it’s because we still have ‘Yes on Prop 37’ [a bill that if passed would have mandated labeling genetically modified food] written on our windows or our zombie family stickers or just random, but it was sooooo awesome!!!!” 3) One way to combat holiday stress is to pop the bubbles in bubble wrap sheets; therefore, someone put a bunch of these sheets where passersby can get them. A Huffington Post reader wrote, “One solution to combat stress during the holidays is this tower of bubble wrap, which circulated on Twitter and is also an act of kindness. Underneath a sign reading ‘Anti-stress for free’ are various bubble wrap sheets labelled 3 mins, 5 mins and 10 mins — corresponding to how much time the stressed-out person needs.” (45)

Christmas Dinner for 50 Homeless People

On Christmas Day of 2012, Gracie McNulty, age 10, along with her mother and three siblings — Kirstie, age 19, Thomas, age 21, and James, age 26 — served 50 homeless people turkey with all the trimmings from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the family cafe in Dewsbury, Yorkshire, England, because her late father had intended to feed the homeless on that day. Her father, Craig, age 38, did much work for charity but died in August after an accident while working as a roofer. Gracie’s mother, Sharon McNulty, age
46, runs the Grilled and Filtered cafe in Dewsbury, West Yorkshire. Sharon said about Craig, “After he died Gracie said to me, ‘I don’t want to have Christmas at home this year. I want to do what daddy wanted and open the cafe on Christmas Day.’ It wouldn’t feel right to celebrate, so we’re serving Christmas dinner to people who don’t have a home to go to.” Sharon added, “We’re all thinking of Craig. It’s all in his honour, and he would be so happy with what we are doing. It’s been absolutely fantastic, just to see their faces when they walked in. We’ve bought everybody thermal gloves, thermal scarves, and thermal socks and have also made sandwiches for them to take away.” The community donated money for the event, and the family gave tickets to local charities for the Christmas dinner — the charities distributed the tickets to homeless people. Gracie said, “It’s been the best Christmas ever. I was just at school feeling sad about my dad so decided I wanted to do something to make him proud and this felt like the perfect thing. People have been coming in calling me ‘super Grace.’ I haven’t asked my mum yet, but I want to do this every year.” Sharon said, “Craig was the most generous, giving person you could ever meet. He was always doing something for somebody and worked for the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, helping troubled youngsters achieve a trade. He spent all his time making other people happy and hopefully we’ll be able to carry that on.” (46)

“Any Time There’s a Jubilant Harmonious Feeling, Whatever Creed It is Under, We Thrive on It”

For Christmas 2012, St. John the Divine Catholic Church of London, Ontario, Canada, had a food drive. Among the biggest supporters of the food drive were the members of the London Muslim mosque. They gathered enough food to feed more than 100 families. Moe Lacerte, the volunteer president of the St. Vincent de Paul conference at St. John
the Divine Catholic Church, said, “I feel extremely pleased and grateful, looking around this room. We’ve never had so much to give. We will have extra; we’ll be able to replenish our food bank here. We all want the same things — peace and respect — and I see this as a beginning of working together.” After Mr. Lacerte reached out to the Muslim community, Ali D. Chahbar helped organize the drive with Zeba Hashmi, head of the outreach committee of the London Muslim mosque. Mr. Chahbar said, “To us, the spirit of Christmas is the spirit of brotherly love, and why wouldn’t we want to be a part of it?” He added, “It is so nice. People are really different. They are nicer, and you notice it. I wanted to get a megaphone and shout, ‘Can we keep this going all year, people?’ We are not Christians and don’t celebrate Christmas, but we are engulfed by the spirit and … any time there’s a jubilant harmonious feeling, whatever creed it is under, we thrive on it.” Children at the Islamic School collected most of the 30 boxes of food that the mosque donated. Mr. Chahbar said, “It was fantastic, amazing. Within the blink of an eye, they had boxes and boxes.” Mr. Lacerte was impressed by the amount of food collected by members of Western University’s Muslim Student Association: “We filled a pickup truck, and my van is filled to the gunnels. It was unbelievable.” (47)

“We Just Wanted to Come Out and Do Something Nice for Somebody, and We Picked You Guys”

On 21 December 2012, Ruby Modlin and her family shopped for groceries for Christmas at the Walmart in Altoona, Iowa. A man followed them as they shopped. Ms. Modlin said, “I kept noticing this man, and I’d smile at him.” She thought that maybe he knew her from high school, but when she got to the checkout counter, the man stepped in front of her and swiped his credit card to pay for her bill. Ms. Modlin remembered, “I said, ‘What?’ He said, ‘I’m paying for this.’ I said, ‘No, you’re not.’ He said,
‘Yes, I am.’” He paid the bill of $211, and then he told her, “Merry Christmas!” He added, “That’s my daughter and wife over there. We just wanted to come out and do something nice for somebody, and we picked you guys.” Ms. Modlin and her family do not know who the man was. She said, “I was still standing there in shock. We were too busy crying, and the register people were smiling.” She added, “I just want to thank them. I don’t know who they are, but I hope they see this. And from my husband, and granddaughter and me, we just want to thank them.” Her husband, Ray, called the Good Samaritans “angels of Christmas.” He added, “They’re just sent from heaven. There’s no amount of words that can thank people like that.” (48)

The Thief Even Stole a Bible

The daughter, son-in-law, and three grandchildren of Doris Thompson of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada, came home on Christmas Eve 2012 to find that thieves had burgled them. Ms. Thompson said, “Someone had broken into their home and unwrapped their gifts, stole what they wanted, and went into their bedrooms and also stole articles from there. They were devastated that someone would do that to them at any time, let alone Christmas Eve. Their Christmas was ruined.” The thief even stole a Bible. Ms. Thompson said, “On Christmas Eve [after the break-in] the officers took time to assure the grandchildren they were safe. They came in and they stayed and spoke with them. The youngest grandchild [a four-year-old boy] was really upset […] The police were really good with the family. One police officer told the grandchildren about how they can’t let bad people scare you like that. My youngest grandchild took it the hardest. He couldn’t understand why somebody would come in the house and do that.” On Christmas evening, six Sault Ste. Marie police officers brought gifts to the family. One of the officers was dressed
like Santa. Outside the family’s house, five police cruisers flashed their lights. Ms. Thompson said, “That was my youngest grandchild’s favorite part.” Earlier, on Christmas morning, friends of the family had come with gifts. Gifts from the police came from Canadian Tire; Sault Ste. Marie police had asked the business to open up the store for them on Christmas Day. Police bought gifts for the children, and Canadian Tire donated gifts for the parents. Ms. Thompson said, “There were gift cards, Lego toys, and remote control toys for the grandchildren, and for the parents a coffee maker, and a soap-making kit.” The father of the family said, “For the police, the main focus was on the kids, but they focused on all of us. I broke down and cried when I saw the gifts.” He added, “We’re grateful to the police and to Canadian Tire for their involvement; they deserve to be recognized, along with friends of the family who brought gifts Christmas morning.” Ms. Thompson said, “On Christmas Eve the family had tears of sorrow, and on Christmas night they experienced tears of joy, they were so overwhelmed. They’re all very grateful for the compassion; we’ll never forget the kindness. This was above and beyond the call of duty. This family will never forget Christmas 2012.” (49)

“Vdge Fxqct, Wlju vdgz bcn J iyci b bnsjgpwwo, gpb jsijgm gp fhrga: kxfabmt ivryt, Frqeqkg, bcn J iyci hju Mtnnxvrhcfpf gp icqyayeqpj xjqwo ryu. Prdju xqz!”

Brendan Emmett Quigley creates crosswords and knows a lot about codes, so his friend Alex knew to go to him with a peculiar problem just before Christmas. Alex wrote Mr. Quigley, “The lady that sits next to me in the lab has a 10 year old son who’s just of the age to be questioning Santa. Since Santa sees [and hears] all, he [the boy] decided to write a Christmas list in code, and only utter the decryption key to the code only once, out loud, to a friend of his on the playground, under the assumption that Santa or his agents
should hear it and would decrypt his list. His mom and dad have been working on the code for a week or two now with little progress, and Christmas is getting close. Think you know a puzzle geek that wants to take a crack at it?” This is the boy’s Christmas list: “Vdge Fxqct, Wlju vdgz bcn J iycl b bnsjgpgwwo, gpb jsijgm gp fhrga: kxfmbt ivryt, Frqeqkg, bcn J iycl hju Mttnxvrhcfpf gp icqayeqpj xjfqwo ryu. Prdju xqz!” Mr. Quigley posted the coded Christmas list to Facebook, and people immediately started to work on cracking the code. Natan Last of Brooklyn, New York, was the first person to post the key: “If Prdju xqz is Thank you: reverse each to get Ujdrp zqx. T + 1 = U, h + 2 = j, a + 3 = d, …” Kevin Wald of Cambridge, Massachusetts, almost simultaneously IMed the solution. Kevin wrote, “I got lucky. I thought of ‘This year,’ realized ‘Dear’ and ‘year’ (which end the same) had become Vdge and vdgz (which start the same) and did everything I’d tried before, for the word-reversed version. When I looked at the Vigenère shifts, the 1, 2, 3 pattern leapt out.” Here is Christmas list decoded, complete with the boy’s typos: “DEAR SANTA THIS YEAR MAY I HAVE A NUTCKACKER AND LEGEND OE ZEODA SKYWARD SWORD FINALLY MAY I HAVE THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OE INNATURITY NUNBER TWO THANK YOU.” (50)

CHAPTER 2: Stories 51-100

The Muslim Snow Patrol

One good deed that the Muslim Snow Patrol of the Islamic Diversity Centre (IDC) in Newcastle, England, did during the winter of 2012-2013 was to clear snow from residential roads and drives in the West End of Newcastle. Newcastle City Council provided the Muslim Snow Patrol with gloves, shovels, and grit, and information about which parts most needed snow removal. IDC director Abu Tayeb said
that residents “have been really appreciative of the work that we’re doing. They’ve been a bit surprised at why loads of bearded men have come and tried to help them clear their drives. As Muslims we believe that it is our Islamic duty to look after our neighbours, especially in these very difficult conditions. We’re trying to remove some of those preconceptions people have about Islam and Muslims by showing that Muslims actually do good things and are trying to help our neighbours.” Nigel Todd, the Labour councillor for Wingrove, said, “The residential streets are more of a problem for [the council] because we just don’t have the money to grit and clear them. This group is a tremendous example of what can be done and what can be achieved by everyone doing their bit. If every group just does a little bit, then together we can do a huge amount.”

(51)

“The Prophet Muhammad Embodied Mercy and Patience on a Daily Basis, and Taught that Killing a Single Person is Equivalent to Killing All of Humanity”

On 11 September 2012, terrorists killed Chris Stevens, the United States ambassador to Libya, in an attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya. Three other people died in the attack. The attack was at first thought to be a response to an anti-Islam film. Many Muslims condemned the murders. The Muslim organization CelebrateMercy urged Muslims to write letters of condolence for Mr. Stevens’ family. Over 7,500 letters from 115 countries poured in. Chris Stevens’ sister Dr. Anne Stevens wrote, “I want to thank you on behalf of our family for the tremendous efforts you have been making to collect letters from people around the world. We are thankful for the goodwill of the thousands of good people who are reaching out. It is this public display of goodwill that will move us all to better understanding and collaboration.” The letters — bound into a book — were presented to Dr. Anne Stevens. Tarek El-
Messidi, founder of CelebrateMercy, said, “Violence and vandalism, no matter how angry you are, is not right in any religion. By killing an innocent man, this mob did more to offend the Prophet Muhammad’s legacy than this film could have ever done. The Prophet Muhammad embodied mercy and patience on a daily basis, and taught that killing a single person is equivalent to killing all of humanity. This tiny, but loud minority obviously wasn’t listening, but the outpouring of heartfelt letters from Muslims worldwide reflects the values of the overwhelming majority.” According to CelebrateMercy’s press release about the presentation of the letters to Dr. Anne Stevens, “CelebrateMercy is a non-profit organization that aims to educate people of all faiths about the Prophet Muhammad through online telecasting and social media.” (52)

**Good Deed: To Feed the Poor and Greet Those You Know or Do Not Know**

A woman who calls herself Xenia when posted to her WordPress blog titled *Islamic Reflections* wrote about this very impressive good deed: “Narrated ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr: A man asked the Prophet, ‘What sort of deeds or (what qualities of) Islam are good?’ The Prophet replied, ‘To feed (the poor) and greet those whom you know and those whom you do not Know (See Hadith No. 27). (Book #2, Hadith #11).” (53)

**“How God Wants His Church to Work — One Good Deed Done, One Life at a Time, Multiplied a Million Times Over”**

In 2012, Dave Gipson, the Pastor of the Legacy Church of Naples in Florida, noticed that his neighbor’s grass was getting higher, and then he remembered that his neighbor had just undergone open-heart surgery. Pastor Gipson started his lawnmower and mowed his neighbor’s grass. In a guest column for the *Marco Eagle* of Marco Island,
Florida, he wrote, “I do realize that ‘Sunday grass mowing’ is something good churchfolks don’t usually do. But that’s exactly one of the problems Jesus exposed: self-righteous people more focused on keeping rules than helping others. With that thought, I revved the motor and kept mowing. Because that’s how God wants His Church to work — one good deed done, one life at a time, multiplied a million times over.” (54)

**It’s Catching Fire: The Spirit of Generosity**

In the spring of 1997, the Red River flooded Grand Forks, North Dakota, causing over $4 million in damage to St. Michael’s Catholic Church. A Catholic church of the same in Long Branch, New Jersey, raised $12,000 and sent it to the North Dakota church. In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy hit and damaged the New Jersey church, and as of 14 November 2012 the North Dakota church has raised about $15,600 to send to the New Jersey church. The Rev. Gerard Braun of the North Dakota church said, “That spirit of generosity caught fire. Several people mentioned to me that they thought it was a good thing we were doing, coming to the aid of the church that helped us.” (55)

“*They’re Doing a Good Deed for Lorraine. Isn’t that Wonderful?”*

In October 2012, Lorraine Pleu, age 90, became the recipient of a good deed by members of the First Baptist Church’s Outreach Ministry. Her house in Wallingford, Connecticut, had not been painted in 15 or 20 years, and the church members painted it. It all started when Ms. Pleu talked about the need for the new paint job to her neighbor Jeane Baker, who said later, “She’s such a nice lady. I remember her being so wonderful [when I was] a child.” Cory Kroon, another neighbor of Ms. Pleu’s, is part of the First Baptist Church’s Outreach Ministry. Cory talked to the young people in the College and Career Christians
program and asked them to take on the house painting. They did. About a dozen Good Samaritans gave Ms. Pleu’s house a fresh coat of brown and white paint. Ms. Kroon said, “I happened to be at the right place at the right time. We’ve been working on doing this since July. It’s also the official kickoff of our local outreach ministry. We’re trying to do more projects close to home.” The Reverend Douglas Valentine, the church’s pastor, said that it’s important “to go to the poorest of the poor.” (Church members have gone to such countries as Haiti and the Dominican Republic to do good works.) Reverend Valentine added that it’s important “to notice your neighbor, too.” Ms. Pleu picked out brown for the exterior. She said, “It’s amazing. I was always saying I wish I could get my house painted. It’s been kind of tough to keep up with everything.” Her husband died eight years ago. Church member George DeChello, who spent two days preparing the house for the paint job, said, “She’s such a sweet woman and part of the community. This is a great project to kick off our college-age mission.” Ms. Baker said, “They’re doing a good deed for Lorraine. Isn’t that wonderful? If you do it for others, it will come back to you. I’m going to be a senior some day, and I might need some help.” Ms. Baker treated the entire crew to breakfast and lunch. (56)

“When an Old Lady Asked Her How She Could Dare to Walk Next to a Serb, She Kissed Him”

For generations, many or most Serbs and Croats have not liked each other, but for at least some young people that is changing. Students from the United World College in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina, walked through the town carrying flags for a cultural parade — students from over forty nationalities attend that college. Reddit user EvolvedBacteria wrote, “My Serbian friend was walking hand in hand with his Croatian girlfriend.” Because they were carrying flags, their nationalities could be easily
known. EvolvedBacteria continued, “When an old lady asked her how she could dare to walk next to a Serb, she kissed him.” EvolvedBacteria continued, “For us, here in Mostar, it shows that the new generations are not willing to continue a war of minds.” (57)

**A Good Deed by the Seabees**

In 2012, three U.S. Navy Seabees deployed to Huaytará, Peru, volunteered time and labor to fix the town’s fountain. The volunteers are Builder 2nd class Jorge Gaitan, Construction Electrician 1st class Daniel Johnson, and Chief Builder Glenn Kohles. They repaired the fountain, improved the wiring, applied new sealant and spackle, and painted the fountain. Builder 2nd class Jorge Gaitan said, “The fountain was a great project that meant a lot to this community. I appreciate the opportunity to be part of the team working on this.” Construction Electrician 1st class Daniel Johnson said, “It’s a great feeling working on this project for which the community is so grateful.” Chief Builder Glenn Kohles said, “The fountain renovation was a great thing to do for a town that has been so receptive towards us while we have been working here in Huaytará. It made a difference in this town and left a great feeling towards Seabees.” Navy Rear Admiral Sinclair Harris, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and the U.S. 4th Fleet, said, “Community projects like this one help develop strong friendships with our partner nations. The work these Seabees performed is right in line with our mission to foster and sustain cooperative relationships with international partners.” Miguel Ángel Nacari Conislla, mayor of Huaytará Province, said, “On behalf of the Province of Huaytará, and myself, I express my sincere thanks and appreciation for having the Seabees’ support in the restoration of our town fountain—it has enhanced our city and the pleasure of our visitors and population in general.” According to an article by Lieutenant Kevin
Keenaghan for the Navy News Service, “The Seabees, U.S. Navy Sailors who specialize in construction, were recently deployed to the town of Huaytará, Peru, as part of a U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet sponsored subject matter expert exchange with Peruvian military engineers. They are working alongside the Peruvian team to help construct a school auditorium for the town. The auditorium project was developed as part of a larger cooperative military exercise between the United States and Peruvian governments.” (58)

“This Cognac is to You, Nate [Silver]. You’re My Hero”

During the 2012 Presidential campaign, Nate Silver of the FiveThirtyEight blog at the New York Times website [http://fivethirtyeightblogs.nytimes.com/] got a lot of hate for pointing out that President Barack Obama was very likely to be reelected. After President Obama was, in fact, reelected, Dr. AnnMaria De Mars pointed out that it took courage for Mr. Silver to stand up to all that criticism. In her blog, she wrote, “It’s one thing to make predictions in your class, or make snarky comments on twitter. It’s another to make them in the New York Times and on national television. Although the probability may have been 92% of an Obama victory, there was still an 8% chance he would be wrong and been publicly humiliated on every conservative network and blog, and on all of the moderate and liberal ones that didn’t understand math. Most people wouldn’t take an 8% chance of that — which is why Nate Silver is my hero. By taking a chance, going out on a limb, he brought mathematics, statistics and science in general to a much higher profile and level of confidence. Now maybe people will believe scientists about that global warming stuff, too. This cognac is to you, Nate. You’re my hero.” Mr. Silver proved the superiority of statistics to gut feelings. (59)
“If I Die Tomorrow, at Least My Vote Counts Today”

In early November 2012, lines were very long in Cleveland, Ohio, as people waited to vote early. Poor planning to accommodate voters is evil, as is deliberately trying to keep people from voting, but people did good deeds to help voters be able to stay in long lines and vote. According to an article by Jennifer Bendery for the Huffington Post, “Starting from the tail end, [the line] runs for about a block, then around the corner for another two blocks, and then around the corner for about half a block.” Volunteers gave free food to people waiting in line. Teresa, an older black woman at the front of the line who had waiting for over two hours to vote, appreciated the food: “Coffee, pizza, chips, and all that stuff.” Barack Obama campaign volunteers brought 50 pizzas. Greg, a retiree who had waited over two hours to vote, said, “If I die tomorrow, at least my vote counts today.”

The Coolest Kid at Lakewood, Ohio, High School

On 4 November 2012 in Cleveland, Ohio, United States Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Jill, stopped at the My Friends Restaurant before making a campaign appearance in nearby Lakewood, Ohio. As he stood at the cash register to pay for cheesecake and coconut custard pie, a 17-year-old girl, Amira Nasrallah, working there said to him, “You’re going to my high school.” She wanted to attend the political event. Mr. Biden asked her, “Why don’t you ride in my car with me?” She shrieked, “Oh, my God!” Mr. Biden told his aides, “You see this lovely young woman? We’re gonna let her ride with me, in my limo, to the high school.” Ms. Nasrallah’s twin brother, Amir Nasrallah, was also invited along. Mr. Biden told Amir, “You go around the other side of the door. That Secret Service agent will let you in.” In an article about this good deed, Shannon Travis wrote, “And with that, the vice
president entered the SUV, along with the young woman, her brother and Secret Service, making the young lady perhaps the coolest kid at her high school.” (61)

“Come Join Us Someday at Special Olympics. See If You can Walk Away with Your Heart Unchanged”

After one of the 2012 Presidential debates, conservative Ann Coulter made a fool of herself by Tweeting that President Barack Obama is a “retard.” Frank Stephens, age 30, has Down syndrome. He responded by writing an open letter to her, with his father’s help, explaining why calling someone a retard is wrong. Frank has worked hard to exceed expectations. His mother, Cornelia Stephens, said, “I might seem like I’m bragging, but he just amazes me.”

At Chantilly High School, in Chantilly, Virginia, Frank acted in plays, and sometimes a special part was written for him. Frank said, “I decided to see if I could change [Ann Coulter’s] heart. When she uses the ‘r’ word, it’s hateful and mean. I know she’s not hateful and mean. But she has to know how that makes people like me feel.”

Frank would like her to watch the Special Olympics. Frank’s letter ended in this way, “After I saw your Tweet, I realized you just wanted to belittle the President by linking him to people like me. You assumed that people would understand and accept that being linked to someone like me is an insult and you assumed you could get away with it and still appear on TV. I have to wonder if you considered other hateful words but recoiled from the backlash. Well, Ms. Coulter, you, and society, need to learn that being compared to people like me should be considered a badge of honor. No one overcomes more than we do and still loves life so much. Come join us someday at Special Olympics. See if you can walk away with your heart unchanged. A friend you haven’t made yet, John Franklin Stephens.” (62)
“I’ve Known You were Gay Since You were Six. I’ve Loved You Since You were Born”

When a father overheard his gay son talking on the telephone about his plans to come out, the father wrote him this note of acceptance: “Nate, I overheard your phone conversation with Mike last night about your plans to come out to me. The only thing I need you to plan is to bring home OJ and bread after class. We are out, like you now. I’ve known you were gay since you were six. I’ve loved you since you were born. Dad. P.S. Your mom and I think you and Mike make a cute couple.” By the way, in January 2013 a 15-year-old named Laurel came out to her parents by baking a cake — the icing stated, “I’m gay” — and writing this message to go with it: “Good morning, parents, I’m gay. I’ve wanted to tell you for a long time. I thought doing it this way would be a piece of cake. I hope you still love me. I mean, it’s hard not to love someone who baked you a cake. All my friends know and still love me. Your acceptance would be the icing on the cake. I hope you, much like this cake, are not in tiers. I hope we can look back on this and say ‘Boy, this one really takes the cake.’ It gets batter. Love, Laurel (Sorry for so many puns).” Laurel wrote later on Tumblr that her family completely accepted her: “My mom saw it and cried [tears] of happiness. We hugged and cried together. Then, we all ate the cake and talked. I am very lucky to have such supporting parents and to have so much support from you guys. Thanks, everyone!” In an email to the Huffington Post, Laurel wrote, “Everyone has been overwhelmingly kind. Straight, gay, and transgender people have been contacting me for advice or simply just to say congrats … I guess things travel quickly on the internet!” (63)

“I Can’t See a D*** Thing Wrong with Him [Pauses] or His Boyfriend”
At a restaurant in New Orleans, Louisiana, two young gays who made up a couple were regulars. One day, an older, conservative-looking man walked in and saw the couple. One member of the couple was uncomfortable and looked down to where he was holding his partner’s hand. It turned out that the older man was the younger man’s boss, and the younger man had not outed himself as gay at work. The older man said to his employee’s boyfriend, “I’m Mike, James’ boss. Very nice to meet you. We all love James in the office.” He then went to the Take-Out area and said to the employee who waited on him and who wrote up this story for the Not Always Right website about customers, some good and some bad, “You know … when I was growing up, I was taught that being gay was bad, a sin. But that young man is the brightest kid I’ve ever known, and I can’t see a d*** thing wrong with him [pauses] or his boyfriend.” The older man also paid for the meals of James and his boyfriend. The restaurant employee wrote, “To this day, I can’t think about the look on James’ face when I told him that his boss paid for his nearly $100 meal without [my] wanting to cry.” (64)

“We Found Our Son in the Subway”

In July 2012, gay couple Peter Mercurio, a screenwriter, and Danny, a social worker, got married. With them was their son, Kevin. Twelve years before the marriage, Peter received a call from Danny, who was in a subway exit on Eighth Avenue in New York City. Peter wrote in an Opinionator column in The New York Times, “Danny called me that day, frantic. ‘I found a baby!’ he shouted. ‘I called 911, but I don’t think they believed me. No one’s coming. I don’t want to leave the baby alone. Get down here and flag down a police car or something.’ By nature Danny is a remarkably calm person, so when I felt his heart pounding through the phone line, I knew I had to run. When I got to the A/C/E subway exit on Eighth Avenue, Danny was still
there, waiting for help to arrive. The baby, who had been left on the ground in a corner behind the turnstiles, was light-brown skinned and quiet, probably about a day old, wrapped in an oversize black sweatshirt.” Child Services took custody of the baby. Three months later, Danny testified in front of a judge about how he discovered the infant. Peter wrote, “Suddenly, the judge asked, ‘Would you be interested in adopting this baby?’ The question stunned everyone in the courtroom, everyone except for Danny, who answered, simply, ‘Yes.’” They did adopt the baby. By the way, the judge, who is female, officiated at the gay couple’s wedding ceremony. (65)

Two Teenagers in Love

In 2012, two transgender teenagers in Tulsa, Oklahoma, met each other and fell in love. Katie Hill, age 18, and her 16-year-old boyfriend, Arin Andrews, were both born the opposite sex but have been taking hormones to transition to the other sex. Shortly after her 18th birthday, Katie had gender reassignment surgery. Katie was born a boy and was called Luke for the first 15 years of her life. Arin was born a girl and was called Emerald. Both struggled with understanding their sexuality. They fell in love with each other when they met at a trans support group in Tulsa. Katie said, “All I saw was a handsome guy. We’re perfect for each other because we both had the same troubles growing up. We’re both size five, so we even swap our old clothes our mums bought us but we hated. We look so convincing as a boy and a girl, nobody even notices now. We secretly feel so good about it because it’s the way we’ve always wanted to be seen.” Katie got a £25,000 ($40,000) gender reassignment surgery in May 2012 — four days after birthday number 18. An anonymous donor paid for the surgery. Katie said, “Even from age three, I knew deep down I wanted to be a girl. All I wanted was to play with dolls. I hated my boy body and never felt right in
it. I kept my feelings a total secret growing up and was petrified of what people in our tiny Christian town would say. Now Arin and I can share any problems we face together.” Arin, who was born a girl, remembers going to school for the first time at age five: “The teachers separated the girls and boys into separate lines for a game. I didn’t understand why they asked me to stand with the girls. Girly things didn’t interest me, but I was worried what people would think if I said I wanted to be a boy, so I kept it secret.” Arin competed in local pageants, but he preferred riding motocross bikes with his father. Arin said, “Mum and dad argued when my motocross [schedule] clashed with my dance schedule. But at age 11, mum gave up. She couldn’t win. But I’ll never hold it against her. She was just proud of her only daughter.” Arin has female breasts that he hides by binding them, but he wants to get breast removal surgery. Arin was bullied at school. He said, “It was horrible. I looked like a pretty girl but acted and walked like a boy. Everyone started calling me a lesbian. It felt so humiliating. I didn’t feel gay at all. I started having suicidal thoughts and told my parents I felt confused, but I didn’t even know transgender people existed, so it didn’t come up. They said it was OK to be gay, but put me into therapy for my depression and to help with my confusion. My feelings of being a boy sounded so stupid I didn’t even say it in therapy. Then a student at my school, a Christian school, told the teacher’s office about a girl I was dating. They kicked me out because it was a religious school, even though I was a top pupil. I started another school and things have been better there. But everything changed when I met Katie.” Arin had read about Katie in his local newspaper. He said, “All her loneliness and confusion over feeling she was the opposite gender all her life sounded exactly like me. It was the moment I first had an explanation for my feelings. I realised I was ‘trans’ too. I finally had an answer after years of confusion.” When they met, they immediately
fell in love. Arin said, “She was beautiful and looked just like Megan Fox. I longed to know who she was and eventually plucked up the courage to do the guy thing and ask for her number. She said yes and we started seeing each other.” Katie learned what the word ‘transgender’ meant through browsing the Internet. She said, “I’d been so unhappy growing up. As I got older, it got worse and I couldn’t help being really girly with a high-pitched voice and high cheekbones.” Her parents worried about her. Katie said, “My parents were scared stiff and put me through 15 therapists to try and cure my depression. None helped because nobody suggested I was trans, and I didn’t know what it was. When I was 15, I found the word ‘transgender’ while desperately searching the Internet and instantly knew it was me. Mum was so terrified of losing me. I’d once tried to end my life, so she agreed to help me. I owe her everything. We made a list of all the things I wanted to do, like wearing bras and panties, getting hormone therapy, and maybe one day having gender realignment surgery. My brothers and even my grandma Judy were so accepting I was shocked. Dad was upset at first because he felt like he was losing his first son. Over time he’s learned to accept me and now calls me his daughter, which makes me smile.” She added, “More needs to be done to let people know about transgender issues. We both spent years in the wilderness and felt so alone. Our parents didn’t know how to help because none of us knew being trans was possible. Nobody should have to go through what we did.”

Well Done, Reverend Phil Snider of the Brentwood Christian Church in Springfield, Missouri

In August 2012 in Springfield, Missouri, the city council held a public hearing on amending the city’s nondiscrimination ordinance to include sexual-orientation and gender-identity protections. Reverend Phil Snider of the Brentwood Christian Church made a seemingly anti-
gay speech in which he criticized making “special rights for gays and lesbians.” But after he spoke for a couple of minutes, he revealed that he was actually using quotations from speeches by white preachers from the 1950s and 1960s that advocated segregation. He had taken out the words “racial integration” and substituted the phrase “gay rights.” He then stated that he hoped that the city council would stand “on the right side of history.” What had seemed to be a speech against gay rights turned out to be a very effective speech against discriminating against gays and lesbians. (Recommended reading: What the Bible Really Says About Homosexuality, by Catholic priest Daniel Helminiak.) (67)

**U.S. District Judge Michael Barrett: Defender of First Amendment**

In April 2011, Maverick Couch wore a T-shirt with lettering that read “JESUS IS NOT A HOMOPHOB” to Waynesville High School in Waynesville, Ohio. He wore the T-shirt to support the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network’s “Day of Silence.” The principal of Waynesville High School, Randy Gebhardt, called Mr. Couch into his office and told him to wear the T-shirt inside out. He did. The following day, he wore it again. This time, Mr. Couch was told that he would be suspended if he did not remove the T-shirt. He removed the T-shirt. The following fall, Mr. Couch asked the principal for permission to wear the T-shirt. The principal refused to give him permission. Mr. Couch and his family then talked to lawyers. On 21 May 2012, U.S. District Judge Michael Barrett upheld the First Amendment and ordered the school to allow Mr. Couch to wear the T-shirt. U.S. District Judge Barrett also required the school district to pay Mr. Couch $20,000 in damages and court costs. Mr. Couch, a 16-year-old junior, said, “I’m really blessed and happy. It’s just really amazing. I never thought it would come out like
Christopher Clark, senior staff attorney for Lambda Legal, which sued on Mr. Couch’s behalf, said, “We’re very happy for Maverick and all LGBT students in Ohio. If school officials had any doubt before, it’s clear now: First Amendment rights apply to all students on every day of the year, and efforts to silence LGBT youth will not go unchallenged.” Mr. Couch said, “I just wanted to wear my shirt. The shirt is a statement of pride, and I hope other students like me know that they can be proud, too.” The day after the court judgment, Mr. Couch wore the T-shirt to school. He said, “The principal didn’t say a word.” Mr. Couch added, “We need to accept others how they come no matter their religion, sexual orientation, the color of their skin. Everyone is who they are. We all need to come together as a whole and accept everyone.” (68)

**Anne Hathaway: “When My Brother Came Out, We Hugged Him, Said We Loved Him, and That was That”**

Celebrities have ways of making money that the rest of us don’t have. For example, when Anne Hathaway married Adam Shulman in September 2012, they were able to make money by selling their wedding photographs. The money they made will go to non-profit charities advocating same-sex marriage, as well as to the American Cancer Society, St. Jude Children’s Research, and The Girl Effect. Ms. Hathaway has a gay brother. She said, “In my household, being gay was, and is, no big deal. When my brother came out, we hugged him, said we loved him, and that was that.” (69)

**“I’m Not Ashamed of Who I Am; He Shouldn’t be Ashamed of Who He Is”**

Ryan Andresen of San Francisco, California, completed everything needed to get his Eagle Scout award, but he was not allowed to receive it because he is gay. Dr. Andy Zerbinopoulos, a dentist in Jacksonville, Florida, and a
former Boy Scout who won the Eagle Scout award, decided to give Ryan the Eagle Scout award he won years ago. Dr. Zerbinopoulous said, “This has been on my desk for the last 15-16 years.” He earned it when he was 17 years old. He said, “When I was awarded this medal in 1996, it really meant a lot to me — it was a true sense of achievement.” Unless the Boy Scouts change their mind and give Ryan an Eagle Scout award, Dr. Zerbinopoulous will send him his. He said, “If I can make him feel like he has some support out there, it’s worth it to me to send him a piece of medal.”

As of October 2012, the Boy Scouts organization is anti-gay, and hundreds of Eagle Scouts have returned their awards to the organization. Dr. Zerbinopoulous said about Ryan, “I’m not ashamed of who I am; he shouldn’t be ashamed of who he is. And even though it isn’t the same as receiving the award that he earned, I want him to know that there are people out there who support him.” (70)

“UPS Showed True Bravery Today”

As of 12 November 2012, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) has a policy of discriminating against gays and lesbians. For example, Jennifer Tyrrell is a lesbian whom the BSA forced to resign as den leader of her son’s Tiger Scout group because of its discriminatory policy against gays and lesbians. Many businesses do not discriminate against gays and lesbians, and so many of these businesses have decided not to donate money to the BSA. In November 2012, the United Parcel Service (UPS), Inc. decided to adopt a non-discrimination policy; the adoption of this policy disqualifies the BSA from future funding. UPS officials stated on its website, “UPS and The UPS Foundation do not discriminate against any person or organization with regard to categories protected by applicable law, as well as other categories protected by UPS and The UPS Foundation in our own policies. These include, but are not limited to race, gender, national origin,
disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran or military status, pregnancy, age and religion.” The Intel Foundation earlier decided not to donate money to BSA because of the BSA’s discrimination against gays and lesbians. The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) President Herdon Graddick stated, “Equality is not only good for business, but supported by a vast majority of Americans. The time is now for the BSA to end this outdated and unpopular ban before other corporate funders pull dollars and scouting families drop their support.” In 2010, UPS donated over $150,000 to the BSA. Zach Wahls, a HuffPost Gay Voices blogger, said, “UPS showed true bravery today in standing with the 80,000 Americans, including thousands of Scouts and Scout leaders, who oppose the Boy Scouts’ hurtful anti-gay policy. That bravery is what Scouting is all about. Corporate America gets it better than most: policies that discriminate aren’t simply wrong, they’re bad for business and they’re hurting the Scouting community. You would think that after all the Boy Scouts have lost as a result of this policy, they would understand that.” (71)

“This Bill Bans Non-Scientific ‘Therapies’ that have Driven Young People to Depression and Suicide”

In September 2012, Jerry Brown, governor of California, signed a bill — SB1172 — that made it illegal beginning on 1 January 2013 to use certain controversial therapy practices that attempt to change the sexual orientation of minors. Mental health practitioners will no longer be allowed to perform so-called reparative therapy. California is the first state to ban this “therapy.” Governor Brown said, “This bill bans non-scientific ‘therapies’ that have driven young people to depression and suicide. These practices have no basis in science or medicine and they will now be relegated to the dustbin of quackery.” Chad Griffin, president of the Human Rights Campaign, said, “LGBT
youth will now be protected from a practice that has not only been debunked as junk science, but has been proven to have drastically negative effects on their well-being. We commend Governor Brown for putting children first, and call on all states to take California’s lead on this issue.”

“If They Want to Live with Themselves, Let Them. That’s Their World, Not Mine”

It took 42 years, but Robin Tomlin finally received an official apology from the North Vancouver (British Columbia, Canada) school district in which he had been bullied in grade 12. No doubt, getting help from a lawyer and going public in 2012 helped him get the apology. In the annual (yearbook) for Grade 12, the text that he had submitted to be printed with his photograph had been replaced with the word “fag.” Mr. Tomlin spent years trying to get the text changed. Finally, in 2012, the text was changed to the words he had submitted: “Meet as many people from all over the world as I can. I want to be a cowboy.” A little later, he also got an official apology. Mr. Tomlin said about the North Vancouver school district, “They made a very sincere apology. It’s a happy day.” Superintendent John Lewis, reading from a prepared statement, said, “I hope that the school district’s apology will bring some peace and long overdue closure for Mr. Tomlin and his family. We share a common and continued concern for the youth of today and an interest in creating a more positive environment for the future.” Who changed the text of the annual? Mr. Lewis said, “We really don’t have the resources to go back 42 years and investigate what transpired at that time. We would count upon people coming forward. ... We would certainly welcome answers.” Vicki Nettles, a classmate of Mr. Tomlin’s, said, “As Robin stated, it brings closure. But more than that, it bring[s] light, and we need a huge light shone on bullying,
on the mental, physical, and emotional abuse of people — not just children — of people.” In September 2012, Mr. Tomlin got the help of a lawyer. The school district agreed to alter the page in the annual. After Mr. Tomlin went public with the bullying and his story appeared in the *North Shore News* (North and West Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada) in October 2012, he received an official apology. Mr. Tomlin has a daughter. About the people who put the word “Fag” by his photo in the annual, he said, “They know what they did. I know who they are. Leave it at that. If they want to live with themselves, let them. That’s their world, not mine.” (73)

“Mind the Gap”

The London Underground is concerned about the safety of its passengers. One of the things it does to ensure its passengers’ safety is to play a recording that says, “Mind the gap.” The gap is the small space between the boarding platform and the subway car. Oswald Laurence is one of the many people who recorded this message long ago, and his recording was gradually phased out everywhere except for the northbound platform of the Northern Line at Embankment Tube station. Then it was replaced there, too — until the London Underground received a letter from Mr. Laurence’s widow, who requested that it be reinstated so that she could hear her late husband’s voice again. The London Underground reinstated Mr. Laurence’s recording. Members of other families have also enjoyed hearing a relative’s voice give the warning. Peter Lodge made one of the recordings, and when his grandchildren hear him say, “Mind the gap,” they shout, “Granpa!” Tim Bentinck made one of the recordings, and whenever his wife, Judy, heard him say, “Mind the gap,” she would think, “Thank you, darling, I will.” (74)

“He Deserves This”
In February 2013, Wyatt Blaylock, age 14, showed his steer at the Fort Worth [Texas] Steer Show. It was one of the steers that finished 10th in its group. Nevertheless, he got a big price for his steer. Most steers in his group brought $4.50 to $6.50 a pound, but his steer brought $17.50 a pound, for a total of $20,895. Gary Ray, a past chairman of the Stock Show Syndicate, said about Wyatt, “He deserves this.” Wyatt said, “I don’t know what to say.” A group of local businessmen and -women who are members of the Stock Show Syndicate deliberately made the day special for Wyatt, whose father, Anthony Blaylock, had died of brain cancer at age 36. Diana Bregman, Wyatt’s grandmother and Anthony’s mother, said, “My son taught Wyatt to always finish what you start.” She added about Wyatt, “He’d get his father up, help get him dressed, help him with his meds. He was truly amazing with his father.” If Wyatt could tell his father something, he said that he would say, “Thanks for everything you taught me.” (75)

“We Got to be Surprised All Over Again”

In October 2012, Megan Erickson, age 24, found the dress she wanted to be married in, and she put $100 down as a deposit on the $1,035 dress at Pure Bridal in Ames, Iowa. Unfortunately, her fiancé, Jarrod Vancannon, hurt his back while working at his job as a brick tender, and so she knew that she could not afford the dress — or the wedding. Ms. Erickson told Pure Bridal to take her $100 and give it to the next bride-to-be who shopped there. This good deed was to honor a friend’s birthday — the friend had requested random acts of kindness instead of gifts. Ms. Erickson said, “I could’ve gotten the money back, but I didn’t want to. I just kind of did it on a whim.” Pure Bridal co-owner Kayse Carter and her business partner and sister Rita Gartin and other employees there were impressed by the good deed: “We were completely floored, because we knew how much that $100 meant to her.” Ms. Carter and Ms. Gartin decided
to donate the dress to Erickson. They also decided to ask various wedding vendors in Ames to see if they’d like to give to the couple. They did generously give these items: cupcakes, DJ, flowers, photography, reception venue, and wedding rings. In February 2013, Ms. Carter and Ms. Gartin invited Ms. Erickson to be a model, along with other local women, in the store’s annual fashion show. While she was on the runway, Ms. Carter and Ms. Gartin stopped the show and announced the gifts to her. Ms. Erickson said, “I was speechless, like, deer-in-the-headlights look. And my fiancée was involved, too. I’m surprised he kept the secret, because he’s not really good at that. But he did a great job.” Their honeymoon will be an all-expense paid trip to Las Vegas, Nevada. Ms. Erickson said, “We didn’t even know about that part until we saw the certificate in our gift basket on the way home. So we got to be surprised all over again.”

A Bunch of “Deaf” Kids at the Apple Store

Chris Gonzales, who lives in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, works in an Apple store located in a mall. On a busy day in February 2013, approximately 15 high-school kids came into the store with their teacher. Their school had given them Apple Store gift cards so that they could buy a 160GB MacBook, and they were there to choose either a black or a white model. Mr. Gonzalez noticed that the students were using sign language, which he did not know, so he went to the nearest iMac and opened TextEdit so he could communicate with the students. He filled all of their orders, and a few hours later he took a break and went to the food court to eat. There he saw the teacher and the students, who were speaking orally to each other — no sign language! The teacher laughed and then told him that none of the kids was deaf. Mr. Gonzalez wrote in his blog, titled UNRETROFIED, “Apparently, the teacher had decided to turn this outing into a strange assignment/experiment. The
idea was for the group of kids to spend the entire day at the mall, going store-to-store and behaving as if they were deaf to see how employees treated them. After explaining all of this, the teacher told me that almost every single store they’d visited had treated them a bit terribly. As if they were annoyed that they had to deal with all these ‘deaf’ kids and preferred to be finished with them as soon as possible. The next part of her story made me feel awesome inside: She said that I was the only person they worked with all day that had treated them like real people, and actually tried to be as helpful as the situation allowed. They had all been impressed with my idea of using TextEdit to communicate, because nobody else in the mall had even bothered to grab a pen and some paper. The students got to learn a real lesson about how the world treats those who are a little different, and I got a bunch of hugs and handshakes in return, along with a few tears shed all around. They even bought my lunch! We sat around and chatted for a while before I had to go back to work, and we exchanged a few more hugs before I left. I haven’t seen any of those kids since but they all seemed like a good bunch so I’m sure they’re all doing well somewhere. It was one of the most feel-good, warm and fuzzy experiences I’ve ever had, and I will remember it forever.” (77)

**United Airlines Helps Kerry Drake See His Dying Mother**

In early 2013, Kerry Drake was desperate to reach his mother before she died. He bought tickets for a United Airlines flight from San Francisco to Lubbock, Texas, by way of Houston. He said, “I knew this itinerary was a risk because the stopover in Houston was only about 40 minutes, and my connecting flight was the last flight to Lubbock that day. But I needed to get there as soon as possible, so I took the risk.” Unfortunately, United Airlines flight 667 was delayed leaving San Francisco. Mr. Drake
was visibly upset. Flight attendant Sofia Lares noticed Mr. Drake and tried to comfort him. Mr. Drake recounted, “She said she would do everything she could and brought extra napkins for my tears.” Flight attendant Lan Chung relayed Mr. Drake’s flight information to the captain. Flight 667 made up some time as it flew to Houston, but not enough. Mr. Drake thought that his connecting flight had already left; however, he said, “As I was running up to the gate, the gate agent saw me coming and shouted, ‘Mr. Drake? We’ve been expecting you.’ That’s when I knew they had conspired to help me. She waved me onto the plane without looking at my boarding pass.” United Airlines had held the aircraft for Mr. Drake, and he made it to Lubbock in time to see his mother before she died. He said, “Had I missed my flight to Lubbock, I would not have been able to tell my mom goodbye. When she died, I realized I was wiping away my tears with the extra United napkins that Sofia had given me the day before.” Many United Airlines employees helped him make the connection, including Denver-based captain Edward Goldstein and first officer Dirk Chilian, Houston customer service rep Marie Robertson, the flight crew and attendants on two planes, and all the Houston baggage handlers who made sure that his luggage got to his final destination. (78)

Chuck Feeney: Former Billionaire Who has Good Reasons to be a Millionaire

Chuck Feeney is a person who has given billions of dollars to charity. His mother, Madaline, was a nurse who each morning got in her car and drove by a neighbor with a disability as he was walking to the bus stop. She did this simply so that she could give the neighbor a ride. Chuck carefully considers costs and benefits. For example, Operation Smile gives children with cleft palates in impoverished countries a $250 operation that corrects the problem. That $250 operation greatly improves each day of
the life of the patient. Chuck’s foundation — the Atlantic Philanthropies — has given Operation Smile $19.5 million. Why has Chuck devoted most of his money to good works and kept only a very few million for himself? Chuck said, “I don’t dislike money, but there’s only so much money you can use.” Other very wealthy people such as Bill Gates and Warren Buffett have been inspired by him, but he said, “I’d be the last guy to tell a wealthy person what to do with their money. They’re entitled to do whatever they want.” He added, “A lot of wealthy people, they don’t realize they have the alternatives of spending the money for good. If they knew it gives so much satisfaction, I wouldn’t have to persuade them. The press says someone’s ‘one of the wealthiest persons in the world,’ but he hasn’t figured out how many grilled-cheese-and-tomato sandwiches that comes to. How many can you eat?”

He has five children. While they were growing up, they held summer jobs as servers, hotel maids, and cashiers. His daughter, Leslie Feeney Baily, said, “It is eccentric, but he sheltered us from people using the money to treat us differently. It made us normal people.” When she was a teenager, Chuck found a big long-distance phone bill that she and a girlfriend had run up by calling boys in Europe. Chuck disconnected the phone, and he gave her a map that showed all the pay phones in the neighborhood. He did more than that. Ms. Feeney Baily said, “Then he sent the phone bill to the other girl’s father. Now that was embarrassing.”

**Chantal and The Good Picture: Excellent Service**

Excellent service is appreciated. In 2012, bride-to-be Greer McDonald went to The Big Picture in Wellington, New Zealand, to have her wedding invitations printed. She returned later and picked up the invites, and she discovered that the employee had provided excellent service. Ms. McDonald wrote that “when I went to pick them up 24 hours later, she proudly gave me the stack of printed and
wrapped invites, ready to go … but then there was another pile. It was invites, our invites, on the same paper, but in a different colour design. Despite my designer’s recommendations, I didn’t do a test print and just blindly believed that everything would be OK. Turns out, about three-quarters of the way through the print, this astute worker had noticed the colour wasn’t right (It was way different from what displayed on the screen) because of some file-type issue. So she halted the printing, sourced paper that was almost identical (left over from another wedding apparently!), fixed the file (I don’t know what the technical term is for what she did) and had them all printed perfectly — and I was none the wiser. I just wanted to point something out here. This error was completely 100 per cent my fault. I should have done a test print. But what I loved about this experience was that the young lady who was helping me out obviously knew that they were wedding invites, and knew I was stressed out and frazzled and going a little bit crazy (hint: don’t try to move house alone and change your job while planning a wedding. Not fun).” She added, “I was floored. You know, when you have that customer service experience that just leaves you gobsmacked because you are just so appreciative of someone’s good deed? It’s the best feeling. And as a stressed out bride-to-be — with just three and a bit months to go — I couldn’t have been more in need of a good deed like this. So Chantal, and Chantal’s boss. Thank you. Again.” (80)

It Takes a Village of at Least 62 Blood Donors

In January 2012, after Graeme Snooks became seriously ill when ulcers began bleeding in his small intestine, it took over 62 people to save his life. In addition to the medical personnel working on him, Mr. Snooks needed blood transfusions from 62 blood donors. Mr. Snooks lives in Tasmania, Australia, but he was in the middle of New
South Wales, Australia, when he became seriously ill. Alistair, Mr. Snooks’ son, said, “I’d hate to think how this situation would’ve turned out without blood donors, and myself and my family cannot thank them enough.” Alistair said, “It turned out a slow internal bleed was the cause, and Dad ended up having 62 blood transfusions. Dad was a blood donor in the past, and it just goes to show you’ll always be rewarded for a good deed.” So is Alistair a blood donor? He answered, “Yes,” adding, “I’m not the biggest fan of needles and blood and stuff, though.” (81)

“He Changed My Life. He Made It More Happy”

Dr. John Hilinski and his wife, Deborah, started the Hilinski Foundation for Surgery in Hillcrest, San Diego, California. The foundation gives free facial plastic and reconstructive surgery to children. Natalie Hakimpour received surgery to remove a very noticeable mole from her nose. Natalie said, “They would bully me. They would say, ‘What’s on your nose? Oh, is that a mole?’ … I don’t get bullied anymore, and like, I’m not scared.” Her mother, Laleh Zohori, told Dr. Hilinski, “Thank you is not enough.” Ms. Zohori said about Natalie, “She was being called ugly, and she was being called different names at school.” Because the mole was not life threatening, the Zohoris’ insurance did not cover its removal. Through his and his wife’s foundation, Dr. Hilinski performed the more-than-$10,000 surgery for free. Dr. Hilinski said, “As a parent, you want to do everything you possibly can for your child. When you hit a wall, and you come across limitations that might be financial in nature, then you feel helpless.” He added, “The goal is purely altruistic in terms of trying to help somebody out.” About Natalie, Dr. Hilinski said, “The most obvious difference seems to be in her attitude. She just seems happier. She seems more content. She seems more comfortable.” Natalie said, “He changed my life. He made it more happy.” Dr. Hilinski said he hopes that the
good deed is paid forward: “Hopefully, they’ll look back at
that and use that for motivation for them to pay it forward
some day to somebody else.” (82)

“From My Experience as a Physician, I Find that the
Love and Support of a Spouse or a Family Member is
the Most Soothing Gift, Bringing Peace and Serenity to
Those Critically Ill”

A man received this letter, dated 7 December 2012, from an
emergency-room physician at the New York Presbyterian
Hospital who had treated the man’s wife, who had died:
“Dear Mr. [redacted], I am the Emergency Medicine
physician who treated your wife Mrs. [redacted] last
Sunday [2 December] in the Emergency Department at the
New York Presbyterian Hospital. I learned only yesterday
about her passing away and wanted to write to you to
express my sadness. In my twenty years as a doctor in the
Emergency Room, I have never written to a patient or a
family member, as our encounters are typically hurried and
do not always allow for more personal interaction.
However, in your case, I felt a special connection to your
wife [redacted] who was so engaging and cheerful in spite
of her illness and trouble breathing. I was also touched by
the fact that you seemed to be a very loving couple. You
were highly supportive of her, asking the right questions
with calm, care and concern. From my experience as a
physician, I find that the love and support of a spouse or a
family member is the most soothing gift, bringing peace
and serenity to those critically ill. I am sorry for your loss
and I hope you can find comfort in the memory of your
wife’s great spirit and of your loving bond. My heartfelt
condolences go out to you and your family.” The couple’s
child posted this letter on Imgur. (83)

Brightening a Snowy Day

In February 2013, a snowstorm hit Uxbridge, Ontario,
Canada, including Uxbridge Cottage Hospital. Laura Ricketts and many other people at the hospital dreaded cleaning off their cars after a long day of work. Fortunately, when Laura Ricketts ended her shift at the hospital, she discovered a gentle man and a group of kids busily cleaning the snow off the cars in the hospital parking lot. In a letter to the editor of the *Uxbridge Times-Journal*, she wrote, “They cleared the windshields, windows, roofs and around the car to make sure everyone could get out. The gentleman told me he was sure that we had all had a long day and that he and the kids wanted to do something nice for the staff at the hospital because we always took such good care of them when they needed us, even if it was in the middle of the night or in the middle of a snowstorm. This was a wonderful surprise at the end of a long day and a lovely way for this family to say thank you to us. Our team is so thankful to provide care in this great community to wonderful families like the one who helped make a snowy day a lot brighter for the team at the hospital.” (84)

“The Life Gave Me a Few Gray Hairs, and I, with the Help of Many Others, Made 67 Kids in Need Smile”

In November 2012, the mayor of Lynn, Massachusetts, Judith Flanagan Kennedy, got her hair cut short in order to help a friend make an impressive charitable donation: enough hair to make wigs for 50 children with hair loss. Mayor Kennedy said, “My friend had a 50th birthday wish. She wanted to collect enough hair for 50 wigs for children … and her birthday is Nov. 6, so I knew I had to cut it by then.” Wind n’ Waves Salon owner Edward Gingle cut off eight inches of the mayor’s hair. Mayor Kennedy said, “I haven’t had my hair short in at least 16 years.” Her friend is Peabody resident Jean Ahearn, who decided on her 48th birthday that she wanted to grow out and donate her hair on her 50th birthday to Children with Hairloss, a Michigan-based organization that provides — free of charge — wigs
to children with hair loss. Ms. Ahern said, “But since it was
the big 5-0, I wanted to do a little more than just the one
donation. I thought perhaps I could get 50 other people to
donate, too, but since it takes eight to 10 donations just to
make one wig, I decided I wanted to do even more.” She
set a goal of getting enough hair for 50 wigs — this meant
that she needed to find approximately 450 hair donors. She
ended up getting enough donors for 67 wigs. She said,
“One woman canceled her big birthday party and held a
hair-cutting party instead. Several moms used this project
as a way to help teach their child about appreciating what
you have and helping those who don’t.” She added, “I am
so glad that I took this on. I have seen firsthand how good
people are and how much they want to help. I have met
some amazing people and heard many inspiring stories. As
I think it is in most cases, when you give of yourself to
someone else, you get so much more in return.”
Mayor Kennedy’s teenaged daughter, Mia, also cut her hair
short for Children with Hairloss. Mayor Kennedy said, “If
she can do it, I can do it.” Ms. Ahern said, “They say,
‘When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.’ Well, I
guess you could say that in this case, life gave me a few
gray hairs, and I, with the help of many others, made 67
kids in need smile.” (85)

86.8 Gallons of Breastmilk

Some good deeds are unusual; for example, Alicia
Richman of Granbury, Texas, donated her breastmilk so it
can be used to feed premature and medically fragile infants.
In fact, as of October 2012 she holds the Guinness World
Record for the greatest amount of breastmilk donated.
Between June 2011 and March 2012, she donated 11,115
ounces of breastmilk (86.8 gallons) to The Mothers’ Milk
Bank of North Texas, which gives the breastmilk to
neonatal intensive care units, where it is fed to premature
and critically ill babies. In March 2011, Ms. Richman gave
birth to a son, and she started pumping her breastmilk. She said, “I was so blessed to have more milk than I needed. I pumped at work, on vacations, in the car. And I never had to buy formula.” Ms. Richman filled two freezers with her breastmilk. She said, “I started searching the Internet to find out what I could do with these freezers full of milk, and that’s when I learned about The Mothers’ Milk Bank of North Texas.” Amy Vickers, executive director of The Mothers’ Milk Bank of North Texas, said, “Alicia’s generous gift of human milk has fed hundreds, and more likely, thousands of premature babies across the United States. Three ounces of donor human milk could be as much as nine feedings for a premature baby. We know that she’s changed lives all over Texas and beyond, and we are proud to see her earn this recognition from Guinness World Records.” Erin Hamilton Spence, MD, a Fort Worth neonatologist and former milk donor, said, “We depend on donors like Alicia to sustain and grow our fragile infants whose mothers cannot provide them with their own milk. Her ‘extra’ milk saves lives.” (86)

Get a Mammogram — and a Free Pizza

In late October 2012, Karen Rummer got a mammogram at Memorial Medical Center in Ludington, Michigan. Her technician had a surprise for her: a coupon for a free Hungry Howie’s pizza. Actually, every woman who got a mammogram at Memorial Medical Center in October (National Breast Cancer Awareness Month) got a free-pizza coupon. Pat Patterson, owner of the Hungry Howie’s franchise in Ludington, has done this for four years, giving away about 2,000 free-pizza coupons. Mr. Patterson said, “It’s a good way to give back to the community.” Ms. Rummer said, “I think it goes above and beyond. They didn’t have to do it. Those kind of people are a huge asset to our community. We have wonderful businesses in our community.” (87)
New Legs for J.R. Vigil

J.R. Vigil suffered a serious car accident in Guam that led to the amputation of both of his legs. He had no insurance, and he could not afford prosthetic legs, so he was forced to stay in a wheelchair. J.R. said, “It’s tough, it’s frustrating, I was an avid runner, I felt I was in the prime of my life.” Fortunately, in 2012, a couple of years after the accident, Michael Arnette of Tulsa’s Progressive Orthotic and Prosthetic Services gave him free prosthetic legs. Michael said, “We’ve been praying for J.R. since he was in a coma and in serious condition.” Eventually, he learned that J.R. did not have insurance and could not afford prosthetic legs. Michael said, “When it didn’t look like it was happening, and a year had passed, we made the decision to offer the prosthetics that would let him walk again. Progressive Orthotic and Prosthetic Services gave J.R. $18,000 worth of prosthetics; J.R. can walk again — and swim again, too. Michael said, “Swimming will provide J.R. the opportunity to be the active person he used to be.” J.R. visited Tulsa and got his prosthetics. His mother, May Vigil, said, “I started crying. I’m just overjoyed.” J.R. said, “I’m super grateful. You really are an answer to prayer, the care that you’ve shown, the gifts they’ve given me are just awesome.” (88)

Kassidy Thomson and Lauren Edington: Nine-Year-Old Good Samaritans

At Taft Elementary School in Groves, Texas, Christina Puente teaches her students to be kind. In 2012, she read on Facebook that two of her former students — Kassidy Thomson and Lauren Edington, both aged nine — were selling pecans to get money to buy ingredients for a dinner for a local person who has lymphoma. She bought a bag of pecans and donated $20. Then she found out that the benefit was for her husband, Jesus, who was being treated
for diffuse large B-cell lymphoma. Ms. Puente said, “I saw it posted on a friend’s Facebook page and found out later it was for us. It touched our hearts.” Kassidy’s mother, Heidi Thomson, said, “There was one lady from Bridge City who came by and bought a bag of pecans and donated $50. The lady wanted to help and knew this was the time to do this.” Ms. Puente said that her former students are like her own children: “These are my kids. For them to choose to do this for us is priceless.” (89)

“Can I Give You Some Money to Help to Pay for the Rest?”

A woman who posts online using the name Phyllisstafford7 wrote in October 2012 about a special moment in a pharmacy: “I was in the pharmacy and I had to pay for my meds — but I didn’t have enough money! I just prayed, ‘Lord, what am I going to do?’ I needed all five of those meds, but I could only afford three. When the cashier totaled up the bill, I told her I did not have enough money. Out of the blue this lady walked up and asked how much I needed to get the rest of my meds. So, I told her. She said, ‘Can I give you some money to help to pay for the rest?’ I asked if she was sure, then she gave me the rest of the money. I turned around and she was gone!” (90)

Spider-Man and Captain America Do Good Deed at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee

On 17 October 2012, window-washers did their job at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. Knowing that sick little kids would be able to see them through the windows, the American National Skyline window-washers, including Jordan Emerson, Steve Oszaniec, and Danny Oszaniec, dressed in superhero costumes: Spider-Man and Captain America. The children got to see superheroes rappel down the outside of the building and clean windows. (91)
“The Knowledge that Jessica has Helped So Many People Makes Me Feel Almost Elated at Times. I Don’t Know How I Would have Coped Otherwise”

After Lindsey Adderson’s 17-year-old daughter, Jessica, died in a car accident, Jessica’s organs saved or greatly improved the lives of four people. Lindsey keeps in her handbag a letter from the mother of a little girl who received part of Jessica’s liver. The letter begins, “Before our daughter Ella received the wonderful gift from your daughter Jessica, Ella had a very poor quality of life. She spent all her time in hospital. But now Ella is able to run around in our garden and jump on her trampoline. From the bottom of our hearts, we cannot thank you enough.” Young Ella had been suffering from a life-threatening liver condition called neonatal cholestasis. Lindsey, who is from Chesterfield, Derbyshire, England, said, “I’m so grateful that this lady took the time to send me the card. At times I’ve been almost paralysed by grief at losing Jessica. But the knowledge that she has helped Ella and three other people to have a better life is a huge comfort to me.” On June 2008, Jessica died. Lindsey was at home with her husband and their two sons. She said, “For some reason I was feeling anxious and pacing up and down. Jessica was late and hadn’t called me, which was unheard of. Then a number flashed up on my mobile — the local pub where Jessica had previously worked. It was very unusual that they should call, and as I answered the phone, a sense of foreboding made it hard for me to breathe. The manager sounded shaken and very, very solemn. She explained there had been a car crash close to the pub and that Jessica was involved. I remember asking if Jessica was dead and she hesitated slightly then said no — she was still breathing. Right at that moment I knew my precious daughter was going to die, and suddenly I could hear myself screaming.” Her husband drove her to Chesterfield Royal Hospital.
Lindsey said, “We actually drove past the scene of the crash; we stopped and I could see that they were cutting someone out of a car. The police told me that Jessica had already gone in an ambulance, and I could tell from the number of police cars and people that it was very serious. Adrian kept telling me that Jessica would be OK, but I knew he was wrong. We arrived at the hospital and were rushed up to the intensive care ward. It was absolutely packed with doctors and nurses looking grave, and there was a really sad atmosphere about the place. My mother, auntie, and sister were waiting, and they were completely distraught. My auntie caught hold of my hand and said, ‘Pray, Lindsey, pray’. Then a nurse came and ushered us into a side room and told us the dreadful, awful news.”

Jessica was brain-dead, but machines were keeping her body organs alive. In the accident, Jessica had suffered catastrophic injuries to her head; in addition, the accident had ruptured her spleen and severed the main artery in her leg. Lindsey said, “I was taken to see her, and she looked so lovely, so peaceful — almost as if she were asleep. She had just a tiny bit of blood on the side of her mouth. It was as if my world was exploding into a million pieces. I know everyone thinks their children are perfect, but Jessica really was as beautiful on the inside as she was on the outside. She was always thinking about other people and was a wonderful big sister to her brothers. Despite the fact she had her pick of boys at her school prom, she saved the last dance for a boy who had learning difficulties. Right there I felt as if I, too, was dying, and I honestly had no idea how I would be able to carry on.” A doctor talked to Lindsey. She said, “He had tried to save Jessica, and he told me how sorry he was. Then he gently asked if Jessica was an organ donor.” Suddenly, through the fog, I remembered Jessica just a few weeks earlier sitting at the kitchen table and chatting to me while she cooked dinner. She announced out of the blue that she was signing up to be an organ donor.
‘They can take everything except my eyes,’ she said. In that instant I knew I had to abide by her wishes. Although legally the wish of the donor overrides the wishes of their family, it’s normal practice for the family’s permission to be sought, and the doctor asked me five times to ensure I understood what the implications were. Then I signed the forms.” Jessica’s biological father immediately agreed with Lindsey that it was right to donate Jessica’s organs. Lindsey said, “What I really wanted was to let Jessica die peacefully — to hold her in my arms as she took her last breath, and to say goodbye and thank her for bringing us so much joy. Instead I was letting her go to an operating theatre to die with strangers, to be cut up and taken apart. It went against every instinct I had as a mother, and to be honest I could hardly bear to think about it. But in the middle of this dreadful nightmare, I knew this was one thing I could still do for Jessica. It was what she wanted.” Jessica’s family members were able to say goodbye to her. Lindsey said, “We climbed into bed with her, kissed her, told her how much we loved her. I washed her beautiful red hair for the last time. Occasionally her hands would twitch and I would get a surge of hope, even though there was absolutely none. The nurses told me this was a reflex action, common in people on ventilation.” In addition, the nurses let Jessica’s friends into her room three at a time to say goodbye. Lindsey said, “They queued all day along the corridors.” Meanwhile, the transplant team found people who could use Jessica’s liver, pancreas, and kidneys. Lindsey said, “I knew she’d be treated as any other patient and given a general anaesthetic while her organs were removed. But as I watched her being wheeled through the double doors towards the operating theatre, I thought my heart would pump out of my chest. I knew then for certain that my daughter would never come back to me. Later that day, when I came back and cuddled Jessica, her body was ice-cold. She looked very pale and her throat had been
stitched. She was gone.” Young Ella received half of Jessica’s liver. A 43-year-old married man who had insulin dependent diabetes received Jessica’s pancreas and one of her kidneys. A mother-of-two who had polycystic kidney disease received Jessica’s other kidney. A 59-year-old man with non-alcoholic liver disease received the other half of Jessica’s liver. Lindsey said, “The knowledge that Jessica has helped so many people makes me feel almost elated at times. I don’t know how I would have coped otherwise.”

(92)

Competing for Kidneys

In 2007, the television reality show De Grote Donorshow aired in the Netherlands. It featured a critically ill woman who would soon die and who would donate her kidneys to someone who needed a kidney transplant. Three people who needed a kidney transplant competed for her kidneys. At the end of the show, the woman would choose which of the three contestants would receive her kidneys when she died. The show was controversial, but it had a twist ending. It was a hoax. The critically ill woman was a healthy actress. The three people who needed kidneys were truly ill and truly needed kidneys, but they were in on the hoax. The purpose of the show was to draw attention to the need for organ donors in the Netherlands (and everywhere). It worked: The day after the show ended, 43,000 people requested forms to become organ donors. (93)

“You Pray for Someone to Save You, But at the Same Time You Need to Pray for Them to Die”

In 2005, Connor Rabinowitz discovered that he needed a new heart. Unless he received one, he would die. Unfortunately, for him to receive a new heart, someone else would have to die. He said, “You pray for someone to save you, but at the same time you need to pray for them to die.” He added, “If you’re willing to give up a part of your body
to save someone’s life, then I think it’s a miracle.” Kellen Roberts was from Seattle, Washington. Nancy, Kellen’s mother, said, “He traveled all over the world. He traveled the United States. He jammed in as much as he could. It was a very different path than I would have taken, and you know what, I’m so glad he took that path. It left a much bigger legacy for us.” On 7 March 2005, during a trip to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Kellen fell, hit his head, and died. He was an organ donor, and Connor received Kellen’s heart. Connor said that he felt “scared. I was going to drive to the hospital, and they were going to cut me open and take out my heart.” The operation was a success, and Connor said, “I just wish he could know how grateful I am for him.” He wrote a letter of thanks and appreciation to Kellen’s mother, Nancy, who said, “The first thing I always do when people ask me about the donor is immediately start crying.” Connor said, “I saw Kellen’s picture, and it was, you know, very mixed emotions. I was so grateful, but I’d give it back in a second.” He met Kellen’s family a year after the transplant, and he and Erin, Kellen’s sister, fell in love. Connor said, “I never thought I could be so much in love with another person.” Erin said that they fell in love “instantly, before I even walked up to him, because he hugged my mother first, and we were kind of staring at each other, over my mom’s shoulder.” Connor said, “I have it vividly in my head. Just looking over, feeling her mom hug me, and just staring into her eyes.” Erin sometimes puts her head on Connor’s chest and listens to her brother’s heartbeat. She said, “It’s priceless to know that a part of something you loved so much can continue on, but not just continue on in existence, but be the life force for someone else, be the thing that is keeping him alive. I don’t know if there’s any words to describe that.” (94)

The Real Reason Barack Obama was Elected President

On 8 August 2012, the Make-a-Wish Foundation and
President Barack Obama made the wish of Janiya Penny, an eight-year-old from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, come true. She suffers from sickle-cell anemia, and her wish was to meet President Obama. She said, “I’m his number one fan.” In 2008, Janiya and her mother, Breale Gray, watched as Mr. Obama became President Obama. Janiya, then age four, thought that he had won because she wore her Obama T-shirt on election day. Janiya’s mother, brother, and grandfather all got to meet the President and have their photographs taken with him. Ms. Gray said, “He gave her a signed book of the Constitution, that says ‘Best Wishes, Janiya. Dream Big’ and special buttons and tokens.” Janiya said, “He signed my ‘J’ hat and gave me a bag of M&Ms.”

“Pooh Called Her, and She Started to Giggle”

The current [early 2013] voices of Winnie the Pooh and Tigger come from voice artist Jim Cummings, who took over the voices in 2000 with The Tigger Movie. In addition to using the voices for show business, Mr. Cummings telephones very ill children on behalf of the Make-a-Wish Foundation. He said, “One child that I called was dying of cancer. Pooh called her, and she started to giggle. Her mother was in tears, just crying. She said that was the first time her daughter had smiled in six months.” He also remembers speaking with a little boy who has autism: “He asked me to do all the voices, even small parts that I had done — extraneous characters. Then his mother, crying, got on the phone and said, ‘He doesn’t speak.’ I said, ‘He’s been speaking for over an hour.’ And she said, ‘No, my son doesn’t speak — he’s never spoken this much before. I videotaped this for his doctor.’”

Gay Emperor Penguins Make Good Fathers

In October 2012, two gay emperor penguins became fathers at the Odense Zoo in Denmark after they hatched an egg
that had been abandoned. Zoologist Nina Christensen said, “It’s very rare that female emperor penguins lay two eggs over one breeding season. Normally, they lay two eggs over three seasons, so she is extremely productive. But she just doesn’t want to hatch the eggs or raise the chicks.” The gay emperor penguins are raising the fledging penguin. (97)

No Good Deed Goes Unpunished

On 3 October 2012, John Boyle, a columnist for the Asheville Citizen-Times rescued a kitten on U.S. 64 in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Cars swerved around the kitten, and Mr. Boyle is the driver who stopped. The kitten scratched him, and then hid from him in his car, so Mr. Boyle had to borrow a cat trap to catch the kitten, which he did by using food as bait. Mr. Boyle wrote, “The salmon chow did the trick, although he did leave me a couple of little presents in the car, which now has a peculiar smell of fish and kitty bodily functions. Still, I’m glad I scooped him/her up and even more glad that Katherine Shenar at the Asheville Humane Society agreed to personally foster the little guy, who we were calling ‘Dash.’ Now, I just need to get the entire interior of my car steam cleaned and I’m back in business.” (98)

Well Done, D

On 4 November 2012, “D” of Pairodox Farm in rural Pennsylvania blogged about finding a Great Blue Heron, one of whose toes was caught in a coil spring foot trap in a creek that is a tributary of Chatham Run, which drains into the Susquehanna River. He put down his camera and carefully freed the heron, being careful not to be harmed by the frightened bird. D wrote, “If you should ever find an animal caught in one of these traps, your concern should be, first and foremost, for your own safety. If you can approach the distraught animal safely, follow these steps to
open the trap to release the animal. Manipulate the trap so that it [lies] flat. The levers on either side of the jaws will be straight up, having been tripped by tension stored in the two stout springs. Pushing both levers down (by stepping on one and pushing the other down with a free hand) will load the springs and thereby release pressure on the jaws. These will open and release the animal. Be careful … pushing the levers as you have has put the springs under tension. Release the levers slowly — do not allow them to snap closed or you might catch a finger.” The bird hobbled away, and then it took flight. Chances are, it will fully recover. (99)

“Mom, I Think We Should Give Back to Pound Rescue Because They Gave Us Our Best Friend”

Natalie Gurr, who lives in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, turned seven years old in October 2012. She and her family had adopted their pet dog, Bella, from Pound Rescue Adoption Centre, a local animal shelter. A generous person, Natalie decided to go without presents on her birthday, and instead collect monetary donations for the Pound Rescue Adoption Centre. Natalie’s mother, Tammy Gurr, said about her daughter, “She said, ‘Mom, I think we should give back to Pound Rescue because they gave us our best friend.’” On 28 October 2012, Natalie gave a check for $600 to Maureen Hurly of Pound Rescue. (100)

CHAPTER 3: Stories 101-150

Shia LaBeouf: Sea Lion Rescuer

In September 2012 in Los Angeles, California, actor Shia LaBeouf rescued a sea lion that was being tormented by teenagers. While Mr. LaBeouf was on a friend’s yacht in Marina del Rey, he witnessed teenagers throwing firecrackers at a sea lion that had climbed on a pier to search for food. A source said, “Shia was attending a party
aboard a friend’s yacht when all of a sudden he heard a sea lion barking and loud noises that sounded like gunshots. He jumped off the boat and onto the dock and spotted a group of teenage boys throwing firecrackers at a poor sea lion who’d climbed up on the pier, as the creatures often do, searching for food scraps. He roared at the boys telling them to put down the firecrackers.” The source added, “The boys were scared off by Shia’s tongue lashing and scampered away like frightened little girls. Shia ended up feeding the sea lion with food scraps he’d begged, borrowed, or stolen.” (101)

“Several People Beeped, Waved, Gave Me the Thumbs Up or the OK Sign!”

On 17 October 2012, Mercedes Benz SLK World Forum member Simply Slk of Lakeland, Florida, wrote about his or her good deed for the day: “Coming home from a great shopping day at the mall I noticed traffic both in front of me and oncoming swerving to the side of the road. As I drove closer to my street I saw a big turtle in the middle of the road! I pulled over on my street, got out, stopped traffic both ways, picked up the turtle and gently placed him in a yard. Stopping was a no brainer for me because some people around here would have hit him just for $hits and grins, not to mention someone would have picked him up for dinner tonight! I was making my way back to the car when several people beeped, waved, gave me the thumbs up or the OK sign! I feel good tonight!” (102)

“Doing What God Asks Even When It Seems Crazy is Worth It”

The Sterling family members were wary when they received an email about five orphaned Peruvian siblings who needed parents. Scott and Lauren Sterling, who live in Missouri, investigated the email and discovered that it was legitimate; the parents of the Peruvian siblings really had
died of tuberculosis. The Sterlings already had two children: a 17-year-old daughter and a 15-month-old daughter. However, Lauren, age 30, said to her husband, “Somebody’s got to do it, and why can’t it be us?” So the Sterlings adopted the five Peruvian siblings. In December 2012, the siblings arrived at their home and country. Of course, some adjustments were needed — both for the siblings and for the Sterlings. The siblings are learning English, and Lauren said, “So we eat spaghetti a lot if we have to. So I don’t buy expensive jeans. Those are dumb reasons to not take these kids in.” The Sterlings spent over a year adopting the siblings. Lauren said, “We got told ‘no’ a lot of times, and by then we were already crazy about these kids, so it was a rough part of the story. And you had to keep trusting that we were fighting for something that you knew was yours to fight for.” Now the family is together. Lauren said, “The sound of life is different — it’s a lot more loud and crazy, and half of it’s in Spanish, half of it’s in English, and half of it’s in Spanglish. But it’s really good. There’s a strange peace amidst the chaos.” Lots of community members helped. Lauren said, “People painted beds, people framed pictures — I mean, people made the girls’ room look like they had lived here for years. It was awesome to come home to that.” The Peruvian siblings also got to experience many new things, including snow. Lauren said, “These kids are fabulous. They have great attitudes. Nobody fought me on going back to school the second day. Everybody was up and ready, showers going on their own. So their attitudes are making the transition a bazillion times easier.” Because the Sterling family is so big, it is moving to a bigger house. Lauren said that her new children asked some strange questions about the move: “Their biggest thing is, ‘Do we get to take the carpet?’ It’s amazing the things they’ve been drawn to that are different for them — it’s carpet and TVs. ‘Do we get to take the TVs and the carpet?’” For the family, the adoption
has been a very positive experience. Lauren said, “It’s about people seeing that it’s possible — that, one, adopting older kids isn’t as scary as everybody thinks it is, and two, that doing what God asks even when it seems crazy is worth it.” (103)

A Real-Life Notebook Couple

In Nicholas Sparks’ novel *The Notebook*, a man tells his wife, who is suffering from dementia, stories from their past. A real-life couple in England is doing the same thing. Jack Potter, age 91, visits his wife Phyllis, age 93, every day at her care home in Kent. In October 1941 they met at a wartime dance, and in 1943 they married. Mr. Potter has kept a diary since boyhood; when he visits his wife, he shows her photographs and recalls happy memories of their courting days and married life and reads to her from his diary. Following the wartime dance, Mr. Potter wrote in his diary that 4 October 1941 was a “very nice evening. Danced with [a] very nice girl. Hope I meet her again.” Mr. Potter said, “I remember it like it was yesterday the first time I met her — she came up to me and asked me to dance. She was an excellent dance partner and an older woman. I thought she was wonderful, and I still do. It was definitely love at first sight; everything fell into place. It was uncanny really. I remember going home and scribbling down that I had met her in my diary; it sticks in my mind because, I suppose, it was a life-changing moment.” Sixteen months after the wartime dance, they married. Mr. Potter added, “I wrote down in my diaries all of our stories and our in-jokes. We have been together forever, we had no children, it was just us two. Phyllis struggles to speak and I will often read to her and chat to her, but she struggles to respond. I often take the diaries of our time caravanning and show her the pictures — she enjoys that. Whenever I turn up to see her, she stretches her arms out to hug me — she is very affectionate — despite being so unwell. I take
her pictures of her dogs she’s had in recent years to keep her up to date with everything around her.” In February 2013, they celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary; the Queen sent them congratulations. Mr. Potter said, “We celebrated our 70th wedding anniversary last weekend at the care home. I was absolutely overwhelmed by the amount of people there to celebrate with us; I didn’t know what to say. We usually celebrate our anniversary quietly with a glass of wine and a piece of cake, but they wanted to do something a bit special. People always ask what is the secret to success in marriage, and I just say what will be will be. We never aimed to reach this anniversary — it just came along. Our lives have been together, and they have been everything a person could ever want. Our motto is Que Sera Sera — whatever will be, will be. If it’s going to happen, it’ll happen — we just get on with it.” (104)

“The Whole Thing Only Took 45 Minutes of My Time. It was a Pleasure and an Honor”

In October 2012, Kelly and Rosa, a California same-sex couple, traveled to New York City in order to get legally married; they could not do that at that time in California. Unfortunately, because of Hurricane Sandy, aka Frankenstorm Sandy, getting married seemed to be impossible. They obtained a marriage license from the Clerk’s Office. New York City has a 24-hour waiting period before a couple can marry, so Kelly and Rosa planned to return to the Clerk’s Office the next day to get married, but Hurricane Sandy forced the Clerk’s Office to shut down. It seemed that Kelly and Rosa would be forced to return to California without getting married first. Fortunately, one of their friends, Etsy CEO Chad Dickerson, Tweeted a plea for a marriage officiant to help them. Anoop Ranganath, who is a registered wedding officiant in New York City, replied to the Tweet. Mr. Ranganath said, “It’s such a great story! How could I not?”
He married Kelly and Rosa at Columbus Circle. A lady sitting on a park bench acted as a witness. Mr. Ranganath said, “The whole thing only took 45 minutes of my time. It was a pleasure and an honor.” (105)

**Love Commandos to the Rescue**

In India, Devender fell in love with Lalita. Eventually, he gave her brother a note to give to her. It included his telephone number. It took her a long time to call him. Devender said, “I was tortured. The girl I liked most wasn’t calling me. I didn’t have her number. I wanted to tell her, ‘Lalita, I love you.’” The two began to talk together, and she began to love him as he loved her. Big problem. The two are from different castes — Devender’s caste is lower than that of Lalita, and her family did not want her and Devender to be together. He asked her to marry him. She said yes. Her family said no. Her parents shouted at her, “You will spoil your name!” Her father hit her. Lalita said, “I was disturbed … listening to [these] words. The day my father came to know, that night he hit me and tortured me.” She added that Devender and she “decided we will die, because we don’t have any other way.” Fortunately, they saw a popular television talk show and learned about the Love Commandos, a group of people who support loving couples who run away from disapproving families. The Love Commandos provide food, shelter, and protection. Founder Sanjoy Sachdev said, “We have far too many problems in India to worry about someone choosing to love another. How can society object to love relationships? Our young boys and girls have rights. India has become the country of killers of love. Every couple that approaches us is under so much pressure, so much stigma, where they feel they may be killed any minute.” Honor killings still occur in India; often, the people who are killed are people who wanted to marry outside of their caste. Devender and Lalita married. In 2012, Lalita said, “We are both fine. If society
thinks otherwise, let them.” (106)

“Superstar! Mom, You Get to Officially Wear a Cape Now”

On 1 March 2013, an unidentified mother in Spokane, Washington, walked out of the shower and saw her 14-month-old son jumping on a bed. The toddler tripped on a pillow and tumbled out of a half-open window. The mother immediately smashed through the window and grabbed her toddler’s foot. Her momentum took her out of the window and onto the porch overhang. She then lowered the toddler to the toddler’s grandmother before she fell into some bushes. Police spokeswoman Monique Cotton said, “The baby is going to be fine.” The mother suffered some cuts and injured her shoulder. In a comment on this story, “LFP mama” wrote, “Superstar! Mom, you get to officially wear a cape now.” (107)

Pauline Rescues Mario in Donkey Kong

Mike Mika plays a lot of old computer games with his three-year-old daughter, including Donkey Kong — her favorite game. In this game, Mario rescues Pauline. However, Mr. Mika’s daughter has played as Princess Toadstool in Super Mario Brothers 2, and she wanted to play as Pauline and rescue Mario in Donkey Kong, someone that the game does not permit — at least until Mr. Mika took action. He writes, “So what else am I supposed to do? Now I’m up at midnight hacking the ROM, replacing Mario with Pauline. I’m using the 2010 NES Donkey Kong ROM. I’ve redrawn Mario’s frames and I swapped the palettes in the ROM. I replaced the M at the top with a P for Pauline. Thanks to Kevin Wilson for giving me the lead on the tools and advice.” (108)

“Call 911 ’Cause I Can’t Find My Mom”

In October 2012, the mother of Karen Miah of Chester,
Pennsylvania, went missing. Ms. Miah’s 77-year-old mother, Katie Bean, suffers from dementia. Ms. Miah said, “I fell to my knees and I told my daughter, ‘Call 911 ’cause I can’t find my mom.’” At 5:30 a.m. on a cold day she was driving around Chester looking for her mother.” She said, “I’m driving through alleys and looking and looking.” At approximately 6:30 a.m., Danny Burton, age 34, of Chester was driving to pick up his cousin Khayree and saw something. He said, “I seen someone in the grass, moving her hands and something made me stop and I was like, ‘Wait a minute.’ So when Khayree came, I said, ‘Khayree, who is that right there?’ He was like, ‘I’m not sure.’” The two ran to the figure, who was shivering and wearing a nightgown. Mr. Burton said, “We asked the lady was she OK? She didn’t respond and we asked her again. She didn’t respond.” They called 911. The woman, Ms. Bean, was taken to Crozer Chester Medical Center. She was OK. Ms. Miah met and told Mr. Burton, “And I just thank God for you, you could’ve just kept on going, but you stopped and it just goes to show what kind of young man you are and I just thank God for you and Khayree.” (109)

**Nurse Saves Life of Boy; Seven Years Later, Young Man Saves Life of Nurse**

In 1999, Kevin Stephan, age 10, of Lancaster, New York, almost died after a Little Leaguer who was warming up accidentally hit his chest with a bat. His heart stopped beating, and he collapsed. He said, “All I remember is that I dropped the bat off, and all of a sudden just got hit in the chest with something, and I turned around and passed out.” Fortunately, a nurse whose son was a Little Leaguer saved his life. Penny Brown said, “I started CPR on him, and he came back.” In early 2006, Ms. Brown started choking as she ate at the Hillview Restaurant in Depew, New York. She said, “The food wasn’t going anywhere, and I totally couldn’t breathe. It was very frightening.” Mr. Stephan,
now age 17 and a volunteer firefighter, knew the Heimlich Maneuver. Employees at the restaurant yelled for him to help Ms. Brown. He said, “They knew I was a volunteer firefighter and they called me over and I did the Heimlich, and I guess you could say I saved Mrs. Brown.” She had saved his life seven years previously, and now he had saved her life. Mr. Stephan said, “It’s almost unbelievable.” Ms. Brown said, “The fact that it has been two individuals, that you know, helped each other out in a pretty dire situation, it’s pretty extraordinary.” The American Red Cross recommends that people know lifesaving techniques. Judith Rucki, who works in the Buffalo, New York, office of the Red Cross said, “We always ask people, if someone in the cubicle next to you went into cardiac arrest, do you know what to do?” Dan Curtis, who was trained by the American Red Cross, trained Mr. Stephan. Mr. Curtis said about Mr. Stephan, “He called to thank me for teaching him what I taught him in order to be able to do what he did at the restaurant. It was just incredible. And as an instructor, you can’t get a better compliment than that — when somebody in the civilian world takes what they learn in a four-hour CPR class and actually uses it to save someone’s life.”

Where’re Waldo Neighbors? Digging an Ambulance Out of the Snow

In February 2013 in the Waldo neighborhood of Kansas City, Missouri, a man had some cardiac trouble after shoveling snow; he had had minor cardiac trouble previously. An ambulance arrived, but its tires started spinning, so a group of neighbors came out of their houses and cleared the snow from the street. John Molloy, one of the neighbors who helped to clear away the snow, said, “We went down there and started trying to dig [the ambulance] out. Ten or 12 people came out and everybody just started shoveling. It’s a real testament to the whole city
block of people in the neighborhood.” Kansas City, Missouri, firefighters say that the citizens who shoveled snow may have saved the man’s life. (111)

“It’s Nice to Know People Do Care and Make the Time to Show It”

At 8 a.m. on 8 March 2013 in Hampton, New Hampshire, Dick and Lynn Goodman ran into a problem. They needed to get to a doctor’s appointment at 8:30 a.m., but their car was snowed in, despite some shoveling earlier that morning. Ms. Goodman went out to Exeter Road and waited for a plow. When a plow came by, she explained the problem, and the man with the plow quickly cleared the driveway. In a letter to the editor, Ms. Goodman wrote, “It’s nice to know people do care and make the time to show it.” She added, “We would like to thank that young man for answering our plea for help, and we want the company for which he works, Apco Landscaping in Stratham, to know what a caring person he is. If we don’t take the time to care for others in need, who will?” (112)

“Looks Like You Could Use Some Help, Sir”

In January 2012, a 79-year-old grandfather went outside to use a snow blower on his property in or near Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada. The snow blower was broken, so he started to shovel the snow. However, the driver of a P.U.C. [Public Utilities Commission] truck saw him and stopped the truck. The driver and another man got out and said, “Looks like you could use some help, sir.” They then shoveled the grandfather’s driveway for him and would not accept payment. The grandfather’s granddaughter, whose name was not given but who posts online as sly_826x, wrote, “What these men don’t know is a couple months ago my grandfather was diagnosed with heart conditions. I was so touched to know that there are people out there that still like to do good out of the kindness of their hearts. Thank
you to the men that helped my grandfather. The good deed was well appreciated not just from him but the whole family.” (113)

“Great Job, Joe!”

In March 2013 along State Route 54 in the San Diego, California, area, Caltrans maintenance worker Joe Thomas saw two crying women by the side of the road. They flagged him down. The women were Denise Ortiz and Rebecca Hill. Ms. Ortiz was the mother and Ms. Hill the grandmother of 13-month-old Cesar Ortiz, who had been ill and was not breathing. Mr. Thomas called 911 and then gave Cesar CPR. Soon, Cesar started gasping and then he breathed on his own. Emergency workers arrived and took Cesar to Rady Children’s Hospital. Mr. Thomas said, “I didn’t think about it. I just did it.” Mr. Thomas had been driving to work, although he usually does not take SR-54. He said, “I just think God led me that way that day. God just used me.” Caltrans holds training seminars for CPR; that is how Mr. Thomas learned his emergency skills. Denise Ortiz said, “I was scared; I’ve never been through this before. I have to take a CPR class now, just in case.” Cesar recovered fully. Caltrans thanked Mr. Thomas on Twitter: “Great job, Joe!” (114)

“I Died Once, and I Don’t Plan on Dying Again for a Long Time”

On 13 August 2012 in Pembroke Pines, Florida, Ken Gundel had a massive heart attack in front of the man he was doing landscape work for: 84-year-old retiree Irwin Baron. Despite being forced to use a walker or a scooter to get around, Mr. Baron saved Mr. Gundel’s life. Mr. Gundel said, “I was on the bottom, and he took me back. He’s a life saver.” Mr. Baron said, “I felt I did what I was supposed to do.” Mr. Baron told his wife to call 911, and he gave Mr. Gundel CPR. Mr. Baron said, “He just passed out right in
front of me. I could see that he had a heart attack and was actually gone.” He added, “All I could think of was saving this man’s life. I’m saying, ‘C’mon, come back, come back.’” Within five minutes, emergency medical personnel from the fire department arrived. In February 2013, Fire Division Chief John Penick said, “Without the quick and decisive lifesaving actions of Mr. Baron, Mr. Gundel would not be alive today.” Mr. Gundel made a complete recovery, became engaged, and still does landscape work. He said, “I look at life differently. I died once, and I don’t plan on dying again for a long time.” Mr. Baron said, “I’m very, very happy that I still have a gardener.” In February 2013, Pembroke Pines city officials gave Mr. Baron the Phoenix Award, which fire departments give to someone “whose actions directly result in the saving of another human life.”

“If You’re Going to Collapse, the Middle of an Emergency Physicians’ Convention is Probably About the Best Place to Do It”

The very best place to have a heart attack is an emergency room; the second-best place is at a convention of emergency-room physicians. On 8 October 2012, an exhibitor at the Colorado Convention Center collapsed. He did not have a pulse. Three emergency-room doctors attending the convention saved his life. Dr. David Pigott, MD, of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, was one of those responding doctors. He said, “When someone stops breathing and has no pulse, immediate action is essential to saving his life. We did CPR in shifts until EMS arrived to take him to the hospital. A physician near us just happened to have a CPR mask in her bag.” The other two responding doctors were Dr. Jared Shell, an emergency physician in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Dr. Jerry Edwards, an emergency physician in Clearwater, Florida. Dr. Pigott said, “If you’re going to collapse, the middle of
an emergency physicians’ convention is probably about the best place to do it. The best news is that we have heard the patient is doing well!” (116)

“My Poor Choices in the Past Disqualify You from Making Good Choices in the Future? Does What You Did Yesterday Define Who You are Today or Who You will be Tomorrow?”

In October 2012, Katrina (no last name given) wrote in a post on the ProCPR Blog, “Do your poor choices in the past disqualify you from making good choices in the future? Does what you did yesterday define who you are today or who you will be tomorrow?” The answer to these questions is No. For example, in August 2012, Sergio Leyva, an inmate in the Los Angeles county jail, used CPR to save the life of a correctional officer who suffered a heart attack and collapsed. Mr. Leyva said, “No breathing. No heartbeat. I did CPR on him. And, basically brought him back to life. I didn’t see him as an officer. He’s a person. I was going to help that person, regardless of the uniform or no uniform. That man is someone’s father, and I have a father. I would like someone to be able to help my father if that happened to him. I’m really not a bad person. I’m actually a good person. I just made bad choices. That’s all. I know that if it were me [lying] on the ground, dying, that man would have helped me.” (117)

“Is There Anything I can Give You to Make You Feel Happy Again, Like Cookies or Eggs or Visiting You to Tell Jokes”

In January 2013, Captain Matthew Porcari, age 34, of the Owego, New York, fire department died while fighting a blaze. Billy Huddleston, age five, sent the fire department this letter of condolence: “DEAR OWEGO FIREMEN: I love you guys because I really love your fire trucks. I am so sad your firefighter died and I love you guys. I’m 5 yrs old
and when I grow up I’m gonna move into your fire station because I want to be a firefighter. Is there anything I can give you to make you feel happy again, like cookies or eggs or visiting you to tell jokes. Maybe a blanket or a present. I loved Captain Matthew Porcari. Call my Mom if you need me. Love, Billy Huddleston.” Maria Huddleston, Billy’s mother, said, “Everything in the letter that he wrote was his idea.” Captain Porcari’s uncle, Lee Dunham, who is a Lieutenant with the Owego Fire Department, said about the letter, “It brought tears to my eyes when I read how he wanted to come and bring us cookies or eggs or come and tell jokes. For a five-year-old kid to write that and be that interested in our fire department, [and] especially Captain Matt Porcari, it’s just overwhelming.” The firefighters invited Billy to visit the fire department, which he did. Billy’s mother said, “Every day it was ‘Momma, when are we going to the fire station? When are we going to the fire station?’” Owego Fire Chief Ed Franz said about Captain Porcari’s death, “It really hit us hard.” He added, “And we were so happy to see [Billy] come down and see where Captain Porcari’s station was, his equipment, where he sat. It really touched our hearts.” (118)

“Whoa! I’m Ugly!”

On 12 October 2012, a propane heater exploded in a house in Vernonia, Oregon. The propane heater was leaking, and it exploded when Rose Cutright, the grandmother of 12-year-old Seth Cutright, lit a cigarette. His grandmother caught on fire, and Seth suffered serious burns to his hands and face as he carried her to safety. He said about the explosion, “It was like ‘Boom!’” He added, “My grandma was on fire — not completely on fire, just a little bit. Then when I was walking, it went out. […] I carried her outside and set her on the ground. I went to the next-door neighbor’s and said, ‘Call the ambulance.’” The fire took three hours to put out, and it almost completely destroyed
the house. Seth and his grandmother were treated at the Oregon Burn Center, and his grandmother was in serious condition. Seth’s face bears evidence of the burns. He said that when he looked at his face in the mirror, he said, “Whoa! I’m ugly!” He is expected to recover fully from his burns. Seth’s father, Roger, told him, “I love you. I’m proud of you. You’re my hero.” (119)

**A Two-Minute Fire Rescue**

On 21 September 2012, firefighter Jared Brown was overcome by smoke while trying to put out a fire in an Auckland, New Zealand, building. He activated his distress signal unit. Within two minutes, two fellow firefighters had rescued him. Fire Service acting area commander Steve Lakin said that the two firefighters entered the burning building “like a train” to rescue Mr. Brown: “It was a textbook rescue. I’d like to praise the two firefighters who went in to rescue Jared. They did really well.” He added, “The smoke was so thick that you couldn’t see your hand in front of your face.” Mr. Brown had entered the building with other firefighters, but he had become separated from them. Mr. Lakin said, “As the crew came out and realised a firefighter was missing, we initiated emergency procedures immediately to search for the firefighter.” (120)

“**You Can’t Get a Better Day than that You Save Two People’s Lives. It Doesn’t Get Any Better than That**”

In October 2012 in Gallia County, Ohio, Chris Williams saved a mother and her three-year-old son from a fire in a trailer. He saw the fire when he walked out of his front door. Mr. Williams said, “Saw a lot of steam coming out of windows and door and said, ‘Look at all of that steam.’” Mr. Williams’ girlfriend, Misty Bingham, said, “We looked at the other trailers, and I said, ‘No, that’s smoke.’” Ms. Bingham called 911, and Mr. Williams ran to the trailer. Mr. Williams said, “I was banging on the door and didn’t hear
anything, but then heard footsteps and she couldn’t get the door open. So, I ripped it off, and there she was and her little dog was down there.” The woman told Mr. Williams that her three-year-old son was still in the burning home, and he ran inside. Mr. Williams could not breathe, and he ran outside the home without the boy, and then he ran inside again. Ms. Bigham said, “I thought we’re going to lose a kid. What if something happens to him and the kid?” Mr. Williams said, “I could see little hands coming out of the bedroom coming out of the smoke. I could see the little forms, fingers. I snatched him and brought him out and gave him to his mama.” He went back into the burning home to search for a second child, but it turned out that the child was not home. Mr. Williams said, “I wasn’t thinking about what was happening to me. I did after and got emotional. I just wanted to get everyone out.” Ms. Bigham took care of the little boy until the ambulance arrived. She said, “I had him over there for a while, and he just looked up at me and said, ‘I love you.’” Arson investigator Keith Elliott said, “You can’t get a better day than that you save two people’s lives. It doesn’t get any better than that.” Mr. Williams said, "I hope everyone else would do the same thing if I was in need.” The mother had recently bought a fire extinguisher, but she did not have the batteries for it.

(121)

“The Guy was Just Bleeding Profusely from His Ears and His Mouth”

On 12 March 2013, a man rolled his pickup truck over and was severely injured on Interstate 805 at the Telegraph Canyon Road exit in Chula Vista, California. Two teenagers rescued him by giving him CPR. Aljael Ramirez, age 18, said, “The guy was just bleeding profusely from his ears and his mouth.” Mr. Ramirez’ friend Giovanni Lucatero, age 19, also performed CPR. Mr. Ramirez said, “[I] started CPR [with] my buddy here … I didn’t even
know it was him until we were halfway done with the CPR.” The two, who had attended Otay Ranch High School together, saw the crash separately, and both stopped their vehicles so that they could help. Mr. Lucatero said, “I ran up to the scene. I saw the blood. I yelled, ‘Is anyone certified?’ He said, ‘Yes, I am ….’ I didn’t know it was [Mr. Ramirez].” Mr. Ramirez said, “I was actually studying at my friend’s house. I have class today, so I had all my stuff with me, blood pressure cuff and so forth.” Mr. Lucatero is a lifeguard, and Mr. Ramirez is an Explorer with the La Mesa Fire Department and a cadet with the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department. Mr. Ramirez said, “The training that both departments give is outstanding.” The director of the La Mesa Fire Department Explorers program, fire engineer Dan Lachenbruch, said, “This guy’s got a future. He’ll get there.” Mr. Lucatero begins Coast Guard basic training in October. (122)

**Cheyenne Garratt, Age 16, Makes It Home**

On 2 March 2013, Cheyenne Garratt, age 16, was driving her moped from her job to her home in Stevenage, England, when she hit an icy patch and crashed. She hurt her knee and was unable to pick up her moped. A man in a car saw her crying; he turned his car around and came back to her. Cheyenne’s mother, Chandra, said, “He pulled up behind her and said he was on his way home to Baldock but asked if she needed medical help. Although she had hurt herself quite badly, adrenaline kicked in. She was in shock and said she just wanted to go home.” The man then followed Cheyenne to make sure she got home safely. Cheyenne tried to pay him money for gasoline, but he would not accept it. Cheyenne said, “When I got in, my mum asked if I had got his name. I just didn’t think — you don’t know where your head is at the time. I really regret not asking what his name was; he was really nice.” Chandra added, “All we know is that he was driving a white car and my
daughter thinks he is in his mid-twenties and may have owned a bike. We spent the night at A&E [Accident and Emergency — the British term for the Emergency Department of a hospital] — and she now has a very bruised and swollen left knee. I would love to find this person just to say thank you. I am so grateful for him stopping and making sure my Cheyenne was ok and got home. I really appreciated what he did for my daughter.” (123)

“She Saved My Dad. She Pushed My Dad Out of the Way and Saved My Dad. That was What She Cared About”

In February 2013, Teresa Marquard, age 58, and her husband were taking a morning walk in Wissinoming Park in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, when a vehicle driven by a man whom police say was drunk hit her — she saved her husband’s life by pushing him out of the path of the vehicle. Teresa’s daughter Monica said, “My mom, she’s a hero, and I’m very glad she saved my dad for us, because we’d be lost without both of them.” Teresa’s daughter Denise Hirschman said, “She saved my dad. She pushed my dad out of the way and saved my dad. That was what she cared about. She cared about us more than anything.” Monica said, “She said he was the only one for her.” Another daughter, Teresa, who was named after her mother, said, “She was a hero. She was amazing.” (124)

“She was an Angel to Me. She’s My Hero”

In January 2013, Elias Uribe lost control of his 18-wheeler as rain made Interstate 30 slick near downtown Dallas, Texas. He crashed, and his truck caught on fire. He could not get out because his door was jammed shut — the fire was inches away from him. He said, “Probably 30 seconds more, and I would have caught on fire.” A stranger saved his life. Mr. Uribe said, “And then in the distance I could
hear a woman screaming, ‘Can you get out? Are you OK? Can you get out? It’s burning.’” The woman was Terry Sims, who was driving by on her way to work. She said, “I came around, and I saw flames coming from underneath the trailer, so I pulled him out of the truck.” Mr. Uribe said, “She was an angel to me. She’s my hero.” Ms. Sims said, “He was in the truck, and the door wouldn’t open. We had to pull him out the window. I was just so scared it was going to blow.” Mr. Uribe said, “I could barely walk, but I leaned on her and she pulled me all the way.” Fire quickly engulfed the cab of the truck. Mr. Uribe has three children: Eliazar, age eight; Elizabeth, age 10; and Elias Jr., age 12. Their mother died in a car crash in May 2012. Mr. Uribe said about Ms. Sims, “I’d like to thank her very much. I don’t have words to say.” He added, “More than ever, you don’t know how fragile life is.” (125)

“I’d Reach Over and Rub Him on the Head or Arm a Little Bit. He was Trying to Go to Sleep on Me, and I Wouldn’t Let Him”

In May 2011 on I-35 in Waxahachie, Texas, Kyle Webb, age 28, was in a terrible motorcycle accident in which his leg was severed. Fortunately, a Good Samaritan named Stewart King, age 45, who was driving an 18-wheeler, saved his life. Mr. King said, “I stopped and tried to help him out best I could.” He added, “I think God put me there in the right spot at the right time.” He called 911, and the operator told him to keep Mr. Webb awake. Mr. King said, “So, I’d reach over and rub him on the head or arm a little bit. He was trying to go to sleep on me, and I wouldn’t let him.” Mr. Webb said later, “I didn’t even know him and he saved me.” Mr. Webb is married with three children under the age of six. Although he lost his leg, he is alive. He said about Mr. King, “God sent him to give me a second chance.” Mr. Webb’s wife, Asley, age 25, said, “And he gave me a life too because without him [Kyle], I wouldn’t
have been able to go on either.” Mr. Webb said about Mr. King, “He was an angel that night.” Mr. King said, “I think I’m gonna start going back to church just because this happened.” (126)

“Everybody’s Just Like, ‘You’re a Hero,’ and I’m Like, ‘No. I’m Not.’ It was Instinct”

On 26 February 2013, a bus driver in Baltimore County, Maryland, felt ill. Passenger Janai Stafford said, “All of a sudden [the bus driver] said, ‘Something’s not right. I don’t feel good. Something’s not right.’ And then all of a sudden, he passed out all over the wheel.” The passengers on the bus included many children. Ms. Stafford, who does not have a driver’s license, said, “I put my foot on his foot. I didn’t even know what foot to put. It just happened. I put my foot on his foot, and I just wrapped my arm around him, and I steered the bus to the right and parked it.” The driver was taken to a hospital. Ms. Stafford said, “Everybody’s just like, ‘You’re a hero,’ and I’m like, ‘No. I’m not.’ It was instinct.” (127)

“We Walked a Couple of Feet and the Car Actually Blew Up”

On 22 February 2013, Thomas Linn became a Good Samaritan on Route 40 in Richland Township, New Jersey. The driver of the car in front of him lost control after a tire blew out, and the car hit a telephone pole and then flipped over. The driver got out of the car, but being disoriented, he then tried to get back in the car, which had caught fire. Mr. Linn said, “I went over to him and said, ‘Sir, can you please come with me?’, like really nicely and he’s like, ‘Oh, I don’t know what happened,’ and we walked a couple of feet and the car actually blew up.” The driver complained of chest pains and was taken to a hospital. (128)
“A Lot of People are Either Too Afraid to Help or They Just Don’t Know How. It Just Means a Lot that Someone was Willing to Help Me”

On 5 February 2013, Mikaela Christianson was involved in a multi-vehicle accident as she drove on Highway 14/61 in La Crescent, Minnesota. She said, “It just happened so fast. I just remember being in pain.” Her arm was badly broken. She said, “Now I have 11 screws and a plate in there. I have to wear a cast for a month, then I’ll have another cast put on, also for a month, and then I’ll get a splint for a few weeks after that.” A mystery woman helped her: “When I was screaming, a woman opened up my passenger door. She turned off my car to make sure nothing else would happen, and she was holding my wrist, telling me everything would be OK. She told me she was a nurse. She comforted me, and she called my parents for me.” Mikaela’s father, Mark Christianson, said, “To get a call like that and find out your kid’s been in some sort of accident, it’s pretty scary.” In all the confusion, no one got the mystery woman’s name, but both Mikaela and her father had messages for her when they appeared on WXOW (La Crosse, Wisconsin) television. Mark Christianson said, “Thank you for taking care of my daughter.” Mikaela said, “I just really want to say thanks to her because a lot of people are either too afraid to help or they just don’t know how. It just means a lot that someone was willing to help me, and I hope that some day if I’m in a situation like that I’ll help somebody, too.” (129)

“I Don’t Want to Die This Way. I Don’t Want to Die. Don’t Leave Me”

On 3 November 2012 in San Antonia, Texas, off-duty police officer Sergeant Jesse Garcia rescued two teenaged females — one aged 17 and one aged 19 — from a burning car on Loop 1604 near Sulfur Springs Road. He was the
first person on the scene. Sergeant Garcia said, “And I heard her saying that ‘I don’t want to die this way. I don’t want to die. Don’t leave me.’ So I just grabbed her, and when I stuck my head in there and saw that she was trapped, I tried to get some air and she said, ‘Don’t leave me.’ I said, ‘I’m not leaving you, I just need some air.’ And I got out and went back in there, and that’s when it got a little worse. I felt my shoulder catch on fire, and I could hear the crackling of the helmet.” He was wearing a motorcycle helmet — something that he credits with preventing him from being burned more badly. The two females were in critical but stable condition at a hospital. (130)

“When It Comes Down to It, My Dad Raised Me Right, You See Somebody Who Needs Help, You Help Them Regardless”

On 23 October 2012, Army reserves sergeant Seth Perrier and some other people helped rescue Jack Nentwig, age 89, and his wife, Betty, age 92, after the Nentwigs’ 1994 Oldsmobile started burning and Mr. Nentwig pulled over on Highway 77 North near the Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport. Sergeant Perrier and three other drivers pulled over to help. Sergeant Perrier, who has served in Kuwait, said, “The only other time I’ve seen a car go up like that was overseas. They weren’t making any attempt to get out, weren’t moving.” Several people rescued the elderly couple. Sergeant Perrier said, “ Reached out and pulled the woman across the passenger seat, the other side you couldn’t get in.” Betty Nentwig said, “Well, that was amazing — he just grabbed me.” Sergeant Perrier said, “As soon as we got them out, you heard the tires hissing and popping, you heard the gas tank start to go.” He added, “When it comes down to it, my dad raised me right, you see somebody who needs help, you help them regardless. If it was my Grandma out there, either one of
them, I would hope to God somebody would stop and help them.” (131)

“I Hope I Never Have to See That Again”

In September 2012, a car hit and dragged a 10-year-old boy at a Queen Street pedestrian courtesy crossing in Richmond, Nelson, New Zealand. Three passersby lifted the car off him. Jordan Stirling-Rowling, age 10, said that the car that hit the boy, who was riding a push scooter, had not slowed down. Jordan said, “He [the boy] didn’t see it [the car] coming because he goes across there every day and he just expected it to stop.” Subway assistant manager Patrick McDougall, Coffee Shack co-owner Keith Simpson, and an unidentified woman lifted the car off the boy. Mr. McDougall said, “He was completely under there. I thought he was under the wheel. I hope I never have to see that again.” St. John Ambulance team leader Jon Leach said that the boy was treated at Nelson Hospital for bruising and abrasions and was discharged that evening. Mr. Leach said, “It sounds like he’s got off very, very lightly.” He added, “Talking to people there, I’m not sure that the driver was aware the boy was under the car so if people hadn’t waved her down it could have been worse.” He praised the people who lifted the car off the boy because they didn’t try to move the boy; moving the boy could have worsened any possible spinal or internal injuries. Raised crossings are known as courtesy crossings. The New Zealand Transit Agency said that although courtesy crossings are not official crossings, “overall they had an excellent safety record, and drivers were still obliged to use due care and consideration to other road users, including pedestrians using a courtesy crossing.” NZRA spokesperson Andy Knackstedt said, “As with all types of crossings, it’s important that pedestrians take care and check carefully to ensure that the way is clear (or that vehicles have stopped) before stepping out onto the crossing. Similarly, drivers
should always be vigilant, slow down around crossings and watch out for pedestrians — especially children.” (132)

“I Lightly Touched and Rubbed His Arm and Called Him ‘Sweetie’ so if He was Still Alive, He would Hear and Feel Some Tenderness in the Midst of the Terror”

On 27 October 2012, a bicyclist and a motorcyclist collided on Santiago Canyon Road in Rancho Santa Margarita, California. Reidel Post lives in Placentia, and she arrived on the scene shortly after the accident occurred. She had been in a bad cycling accident 24 years previously, and she was able to comfort one of the victims, Frank, and his 13-year-old son, who was also riding a bicycle and had witnessed the accident. In her own accident, Ms. Post had to be airlifted to Western Medical Center in Santa Ana, just as Frank had to be, and so she knew what to say to him and his son. When she arrived on the scene, Frank was lying on his stomach, and his nose was bleeding. Ms. Post said, “No one was by the bicyclist, so I lightly touched and rubbed his arm and called him ‘Sweetie’ so if he was still alive, he would hear and feel some tenderness in the midst of the terror. I know what that feeling is like, so it was my time to repay a debt of many years ago.” She added, “I thought Frank was dead when I arrived on the scene. I shaded his face with my jacket, talked to him as though he was conscious.” Frank opened his eyes, and he tried to get up. Ms. Post said, “But at this point there were several of us who told him he could not get up. He kept trying to get up, but we told him no.” Frank’s 13-year-old son was present. Ms. Post said, “He was a very mature and smart 13-year-old. When I asked him to look at me so he would not see his father being turned over and placed on the gurney, it was almost impossible for him to do. I told him, ‘I’m so sorry for what you saw happen to your father.’ He replied while crying, ‘I wish I hadn’t seen it, but I did.’ I told him that I predict he will be OK. I couldn’t promise anything,
but I believe it will be all right after he is taken to the hospital.” She then said to the boy that 24 years previously, “I was in worse shape than your father, and look at me now.” Frank was in stable condition at Western Medical Center. (133)

“You Were an Amazing Mum, Fun, Cool and Very Unnormal. You’re My Hero — It was Really Brave to Save My Beautiful Sisters’ Lives”

In October 2012 in Cardiff, South Wales, Karina Menzies, a 31-year-old hero mother, threw her daughters — Ellie, age eight, and Tiana, age 23 months — out of the path of a hit-and-run driver — but she became the victim of the hit-and-run driver and died on 19 October 2012. On 9 November 2012 she was buried in Cardiff. At her funeral, her brother Craig said, “She’s being buried in a leopard-print coffin. That was her style, and she would have loved knowing we kept it going for her final goodbye.” Her three girls, including 11-year-old Sophie, attended the funeral service. Tiana was hurt in the accident; she was in a wheelchair. Sophie, who was away on a vacation at the time of the accident, wrote this tribute to her mother: “You were an amazing mum, fun, cool and very unnormal. You’re my hero — it was really brave to save my beautiful sisters’ lives.” (134)

Good People Live in New Zealand

Ana Samways has an always-entertaining almost-daily column titled Sideswipe in the New Zealand Herald. Often, people write in with accounts of good deeds. For example: “The Gibson family say they ‘would like to thank some very kind members of the public who assisted us on Friday night [21 September 2012] when the axle of our caravan [trailer] broke in the hills from Waihi to Whangamata. These strangers stopped and assisted with traffic control willingly and for extended periods of time. In particular we
wish to thank the ladies on a girls’ weekend, the gentleman who was at the top bend for over an hour and the wonderful Saunders family who stayed with us and our two young children for over an hour and a half. How wonderful is it that in times of need we can still offer our time and comradeship to others in distress.”” (135)

“Lucky to be in the Right Place at the Right Time”

Northfield, Illinois, Police Sergeant JJ McCulloh heard the sound of a car crash while he was on patrol on 30 May 2011. A man had lost control of his car and driven through a railing, ending up unconscious in over three feet of water. Sergeant McCulloh said, “I decided I was going to have to get wet, so I jumped in.” He opened a front car door and found a man inside. He said, “I could see there was a gentleman in there who was floating. He was lifeless.” Sergeant McCulloh used a knife to cut the man’s seatbelt and got the man out. He said, “He magically just floated out into my hands.” He then got the man out of the water and started providing CPR with the help of a Good Samaritan who had stopped. Sergeant McCulloh said, “After about five minutes of CPR, he started to revive. The pulse came back, and he started to regurgitate and he started to breathe on his own.” He added, “I’ve done CPR multiple, multiple, times. Usually it’s not successful.” Northfield Officer Kevin Tierney entered the water and searched the car for any other passengers, but there were none. Both officers needed to get cleaned up after the rescue. The Northfield Water Department tested the water, and Sergeant McCulloh said, “We were told there was a 90 percent chance that it contained raw sewage coming down from Highland Park.” After cleaning up and putting on fresh uniforms, the two police officers worked another five hours that were not as exciting as what they had just been through. Sergeant McCulloh said, “I was very happy. I was very grateful to the powers that be that the gentleman
looked like he came back. That was a good feeling, for sure. You could work your whole career and not have something like that happen to you. I was lucky to be in the right place at the right time.” Northfield Police Chief Bill Lustig said, “I’m very proud of them. There’s a lot of training that goes into being a police officer in this police department, and they displayed a great know-how.” (136)

“If It Wasn’t for Them, I’d be Dead”

In March 2013, people formed a human chain to rescue Josh McQuiod, age 12, who nearly drowned in the water along Marine Parade, Napier, New Zealand. Josh was pulled out to sea and dragged by the current 150 metres along the beach. After seeing footage of the rescue, his father said that he “couldn’t believe how close he [Josh] had come to, you know, actually dying.” Josh said, “When I was in there. I thought I was going to die. The waves smashed me so much. There were five really big ones. They flipped me around quite a few times. I was underwater.” Josh added that being in the water was “like being in a washing machine you know, just boom, boom, boom.” The first few rescue attempts failed because rescuers could not hold on to Josh in the heavy waves. A police officer came up with the idea of the human chain that anchored him to shore as he rescued Josh. One female witness said, “It was amazing to watch and a huge relief to see the boy brought to shore. I really think if the police had not arrived at the scene so quickly he would have drowned.” An ambulance took the unresponsive boy to Hawke’s Bay Hospital, where he recovered. Josh said, “I’d love to thank them so much for what they did. They saved my life. If it wasn’t for them, I’d be dead.” (137)

“Just ’cause We’re Incarcerated, Doesn’t Mean We’re Bad People”

In January 2013, a canoe carrying three boys capsized in
Salmon Creek where the Klineline Bridge crosses Highway 99 in Hazel Dell, Oregon. Fortunately, some prison inmates on a work detail rescued the boys. Nelson Pettis, a member of the inmate crew, said, “We just thought it was some kids screaming until we seen their two heads bobbing in the water with the canoe upside down. They were coming down over flooded Salmon Creek. It was raging pretty fast.” Mr. Pettis said that after he dove into the creek, “I just let the current take me down until I could get to a spot where my feet hit ground, and I tried to stay put. They actually came to me right there. Right then, the current swept me from underneath my feet and I grabbed onto the kids and got them to a little island in the middle of the river.” Larry Bohn, another member of the inmate crew, jumped into the water and helped the 16-year-old get to shore. Then he helped Mr. Pettis with the younger boys. Mr. Bohn said, “They were really scared. They kept telling us, ‘Thank you, thank you,’ all over again.”

A Clark County technical rescue team and firefighters from Vancouver, Oregon, arrived and brought the younger boys back to shore. Jon Fowler, who also worked on the inmate crew, said he helped to carry one of the boys to shore. David Vincent, who was near the site of the rescue, said, “It’s just good to see anyone from any background assisting another person out there and young kids out there, actually. I tip my hat to them. It’s a great thing.” Mr. Fowler said, “I think we did something that any good person would do. You see three helpless kids in a river, you help. That’s what you do.” He added, “Just ’cause we’re incarcerated, doesn’t mean we’re bad people. We made some bad choices in our lives, but we’re still, we’re just like everybody else. We’re just paying our debt for what we did wrong.” The three inmates are in prison because they were found guilty of committing non-violent crimes. (138)

“I Couldn’t Stay Inside Very Long, I Stunk So Bad of
River Water”

On 19 October 2012, a boat accident occurred at a Front Street dock in Melbourne, Florida. Robert Vitaliano, a Brevard County sheriff’s sergeant who was on his way to a wedding reception, said, “I stepped out of my truck and I was actually on the phone with somebody, and I heard a bang at the dock. I look and I see, and I think it was a 21- to 25-foot bow rider vessel that had struck … the dock.” The boat’s engine kept running. Mr. Vitaliano said, “As [the boat] went vertical, I was running down to the water’s edge. It went straight up and flipped over upside-down. … I was in disbelief, actually. It’s not something that you ever imagine seeing. It was one of those things where you just kind of reacted.” Mr. Vitaliano and six other wedding guests — Griff Ace, Ryan Ace, Danny Moser, Anthony Pellettere, and Mark Wolf — went to help three people thrown out of the boat and three others trapped underneath. Mr. Vitaliano said, “This was not an individual effort.” The men lifted the boat high enough that the people underneath could swim to shore. Mr. Vitaliano said, “They had no chance of breathing under there. They were trapped.” Brevard County Sheriff Jack Parker said, “It’s situations like this that make me proud to serve in a community where our law enforcement officers and citizens put the needs of others first and save lives. This event could have ended tragically if not for the quick actions of Rob and the citizens who came to the rescue.” Mr. Vitaliano said, “It was our honor and our pleasure to come and help them in a time of need.” Despite being soaked, he went to the wedding reception, but he said, “I couldn’t stay inside very long, I stunk so bad of river water.” (139)

15-Year-Old Carey Glover to the Rescue

In 2012, on her very first day as a lifeguard, 15-year-old Carey Glover from Umhlanga Rocks, Durban, South
Africa, helped rescue five people from a rip current. Ms. Glover said, “It was ironic because my squad leader was telling me about rips and then next thing there were people caught in a rip.” Her squad leader went into the water to save the swimmers, but Ms. Glover recognized that five people were too many for him to rescue by himself. Other lifeguards were far away, so she went into the water to help him. She said, “My squad leader ran off with one torpedo buoy, so I grabbed another torpedo buoy and swam in to take out the most hysterical person, and then went to call the other lifeguards to help.” (140)

“The First Thing We Saw was the Boat Capsized and an Empty Life Raft, and Then Dozens of People Thrashing in the Waves. It Looked like a Nightmare”

On 13 October 2012, the whale-watching ship *Miroshga* capsized just north of Duiker Island near Hout Bay, a coastal suburb of Cape Town, South Africa. Thirty-nine people were rescued, and two people died. The boat of Hout Bay fisherman Alfonso Wichman was the first to reach the *Miroshga*. Mr. Wichman said, “The first thing we saw was the boat capsized and an empty life raft, and then dozens of people thrashing in the waves. It looked like a nightmare. We were especially concerned about the children and elderly. The water was crystal clear, and that means it’s extremely cold.” Mr. Wichman and his six crew members pulled people into their boat, saving 20 to 25 people. He said, “Some of the people couldn’t move, they were just lying in our rubber boat, they were so scared. There was another ski boat nearby which also tried to help, but they didn’t have space to hold the survivors. We thought we could save everyone, but then I reached out to an old man in the sea, and as soon as I grabbed him I realised he was dead.” Brad Geyser, National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI) Hout Bay station commander, said, “Some [people] had been trapped underneath the capsized boat.”
The trapped people knocked on the hull and were rescued. Mr. Geyser added that “police divers came across two females trapped deep inside the hull and who were [...] using air pockets to breath. After [police divers coached] the females on some emergency dive training, both were successfully brought out by the police divers to safety.” Survivor Emma Tengskog, a Swedish tourist, said, “I was up on the roof. Suddenly I saw a lot of water inside the boat. We drifted to the rocks, then there were a lot of waves coming. One big wave hit the boat and it flipped over.” The NSRI thanked many people and organizations for their help in the rescue, including this one: “Last but not least, [we thank] the small poaching boat whose crew gallantly got into the water and helped save passengers into rescue craft. One was seen to be holding a child in his arms all the way back to harbour whereupon he handed the child to waiting medical staff and disappeared.” By the way, in 2005, the Miroshga braved rough seas and strong winds to pull in a snoek boat that had capsized off Onrus: the Masakane 1.

“The People on the Platform, They are Grabbing Anything They Can, Our Coats, Our Shirts, Grabbing His Legs, Trying to Get [Us] on the Platform”

On 17 February 2013, Air Force Academy Cadet Garrett O’Hanlon, a 22-year-old who is majoring in economics, was at a New York City subway stop with his sister, Agnes, when they heard a scream. He said, “We look over, and there’s a man facedown on the tracks. I look up, and there is two minutes left until the arrival of the next train. Next thing you know … I’m jumping down into the tracks and running toward the man.” Mr. O’Hanlon weighed much less than the unconscious man, who weighed approximately 220 pounds: “I’m only 160 pounds. I couldn’t lift this guy up by myself.” Two other bystanders helped him lift the man off the tracks. Mr. O’Hanlon said, “The people on the
platform, they are grabbing anything they can, our coats, our shirts, grabbing his legs, trying to get [us] on the platform.” A few seconds after the bystanders helped pull the four men onto the platform, the train arrived. First responders arrived quickly to take care of the unconscious man. Agnes told her brother that she had screamed — she thought that the train would hit all four men. Mr. O’Hanlon said, “I couldn’t hear her. It just happened so fast. There was no thinking. … there was only one goal, and that was to get the guy out safely. I wasn’t even thinking about the train, which is probably not the smartest thing to do. It wasn’t until the next day when I was on the subway I noticed how fast it goes.” The other two heroes were Matt Foley and Dennis Codrington; both are age 23. Mr. O’Hanlon said, “I couldn’t watch a man die. It was such a rush, it happened so quickly — I just had to react.” Mr. Codrington said, “The guy was pretty heavy and the train was coming.” Mr. Foley said, “The train was one minute away. Once you’re down there, you’ve got to make moves. It was out of control.” Afterward, they reflected on the rescue. They are thankful that bystanders helped them up on the platform. Mr. Foley said, “I’m glad there were good people there.” Mr. Codrington, a personal trainer, said, “It puts a whole new perspective on everything. There have been times when I’ve been drunk coming back home. It could’ve been me.” Mr. Foley, an automotive technician, said, “I’m currently unemployed, so I feel pretty useless right now. But now I feel like a new person, and good things are happening everywhere.” Agnes O’Hanlon said, “I was very frightened. I know how fast the train comes. But I’m just very proud of my brother. A little shakey, but very proud.” (142)

“I Had To”

On 8 January 2013, a man fell onto the subway tracks at the St. Clair West station in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
Fortunately, Dwight Orchard, a 23-year-old plumbing student at George Brown College, leapt onto the tracks and saved his life as a train came into the station. Mr. Orchard said, “I could see the subway running toward him, and everybody was screaming. It was a split-second decision. … I just wanted to get him out of there. I didn’t want him dying.” Mr. Orchard cradled the man like a baby and threw him onto the platform before scrambling to the platform himself. His explanation of why he had risked his life to save the life of another man was simply this: “I had to.” (143)

“I was Completely Amazed by Their Courage”

On 14 October 2012, a 54-year-old woman from Minnesota fell off the platform at the Kendall Square Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) station in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She was near the edge of the platform, took a step back, and fell onto the tracks. Her husband and some other passengers helped her back onto the platform. No train was approaching. Witness Elise Tyson said, “I heard some screams by the entrance and I look over and there’s a woman just crumpled on the ground, on the tracks. People just jumped into the tracks and save her. It was incredible.” Ms. Tyson added, “I was completely amazed by their courage.” The woman was knocked unconscious by the fall, but quickly regained consciousness. She went to Massachusetts General Hospital for an evaluation. (144)

“It Sounded Like a Squeal, so I Looked Up and There was a Child on the Roof”

On 28 February 2013 in Niagara Falls, New York, an 18-month-old child climbed out of a second-floor window onto the snowy roof of a home. Amber Haley, who lives in the neighborhood, said, “I heard a little noise from across the street. It sounded like a squeal, so I looked up and there
was a child on the roof.” She added, “He was like walking around and moving. Then he slipped a couple times and I screamed a couple times and then I started screaming for help.” Antwan Moore heard Ms. Haley screaming. Mr. Moore said, “Seeing the baby, I thought about my son being up there on that roof, did what I had to do.” Mr. Moore, with assistance from a passerby, climbed onto the snowy roof and grabbed the toddler, who was wearing only a diaper and socks. He covered the boy with a sweatshirt to keep the boy warm and waited for help. Mr. Moore said, “Seemed longer than that, but it was like 10 minutes until first responders got there.” Earl Bass of the Niagara Falls Fire Department said, “To go up without a ladder and to get up there and secure that child the way that he did, I tip my hat to him.” The boy’s father was sleeping; a four-year-old opened the window. (145)

Couple Rescued from Ice Floe off Sweden

In late 2010 or early 2011, a Swedish couple got in trouble on the frozen waters off the southwestern coast of Sweden as they were long-distance ice skating. An icebreaker ship came between them and shore. What had been one continuous surface of ice became hundreds of ice floes. The sun was close to setting, making the situation even more dangerous. Fortunately, they had a cell phone and they called the Coast Guard. Otherwise, they would have had to attempt to jump from ice floe to ice floe and probably would have died. Twelve minutes later, a helicopter arrived and rescued them. Coast Guard member Patrik Nilsson was lowered to the floe; he pulled the Swedish couple to the safety of the Coast Guard helicopter. Mr. Nilsson said, “The conditions for this kind of operation were optimal, the weather was good — and the view was pretty good, too.” The couple was flown to a local base in the town of Save on the island Hisingen, and then took a taxi home. (146)
“She Fought a Tornado, and She Won”

In January 2013, a tornado hit Gordon County, Georgia. Betty Stewart, an 80-year-old great-grandmother, was babysitting her great-grandson: two-year-old Zane McFarland. She wrapped the baby in a towel and shielded him from the tornado with her body. Her nephew Kenneth Hayes stated, “She said to Zane, ‘I’m not going to let you go.’ She doesn’t remember anything else, except somebody found her in the road. She remembers somebody talking to her when she was out in the middle of the road, and she didn’t let go of him.” The tornado demolished the house they were in. Mr. Hayes said, “She fought a tornado, and she won.” Ms. Stewart and baby Zane were found lying along Highway 53 several yards away from the wreckage of the house. Ms. Stewart was still holding on to baby Zane, who had a broken femur. Mr. Hayes said about Ms. Stewart, “She’s got a broke back in two places, [and like Zane] a broken femur. The skin is gone from one hand down to her elbow. She has bleeding on the brain, cuts all over. She’s black and blue all over.” Like, Zane, Ms. Stewart also had surgery. Before the surgery, she asked if Zane was OK. Thanks to her, he is. (147)

“He was Walking Through Cold Water to Try to Save Other People, Which is Not Easy Especially with the High, High Winds”

In October 2012, when Hurricane Sandy hit Breezy Point, on the southwest corner of Long Island, New York, many homes flooded and many homes burned. Off-duty firefighter Joe Adinolfi, age 48, was wearing a life vest because about five feet of standing water was outside his house when he heard a cry for help — it was coming from the parking lot in front of his house. He said, “When I got over there, closer, I saw it was these elderly women.” Three women were holding onto the back of an SUV. They had
several small dogs and an African Grey Parrot. Mr. Adinolfi said, “They were crying, ‘Please help me.’” He told them, “I’m coming, ladies. We’re going to get to my house, don’t you worry.” In addition, one of the women had an autistic brother who was clinging to a nearby fence. With him was his Spanish-speaking aide, and near them were a mother with her two adult daughters. The boyfriend of one of the adult daughters was also present. Mr. Adinolfi brought everyone — people and pets — to his house, where they dried off and stayed for a couple of hours before leaving to stay elsewhere. One of the women he helped, Joanne Lepera, a 28-year-old dental assistant, said, “He was walking through cold water to try to save other people, which is not easy especially with the high, high winds. He was extremely calm. He didn’t seem like there was like any stress on him. He was just trying to help a neighbor out in need.” Mr. Adinolfi said, “That was nothing — really, it wasn’t. Just leading them over there.” However, he added, “I hate to think what would have happened to them.” (148)

“Her Voice was, Like, She was Going to Die if I Didn’t Open that Door”

Just before 10 p.m. on 16 January 2013 at the Persyn family house in Shepherd, Michigan, three children were alone: James Persyn III, age 14; Acelin Persyn, age 11; and Angus Persyn, age two. Their father, James Persyn Jr., had driven away to pick up his fiancée, Tiffany Ramon, who had just gotten off work a few miles away. A woman began banging on their door and screaming. Young James said, “Her voice was, like, she was going to die if I didn’t open that door.” He unlocked the door and let the woman in. The woman was a senior at Central Michigan University several miles north; a man with a gun had abducted and raped her. The woman was bruised, she cradled an arm that she said was broken, and she was wrapped in clear packing tape. She said that she had broken her arm when she jumped
from the rapist’s vehicle. She had seen the Persyn house and ran to it. Young James said, “She’s like, ‘We gotta hide! There’s someone out there who just kidnapped me and he’s trying to kill me!’” Acelin looked out the window; she saw a car being driven slowly in their long driveway. Driving it was the rapist. Young James locked all the doors and took everyone into the bathroom to hide. Everyone but young James got into the bathtub. He got a weapon: a hunting knife. He also got his dog: a friendly Labrador retriever and pulled it into the bathroom. The rapist was outside, shouting, “Let me in or I’ll kill you!” Young James gave the woman his cell phone, and she called 911. Then he called his father and said, “We need help right now. There’s a man outside our door trying to get in, and I’m really afraid.” His father immediately returned home. Acelin said about young James as they waited for their father, “I wanted him to come in the bathtub with me and just hug each other and say good-bye. I didn’t know what was going to happen, if we didn’t make it, if he actually did make it in here and my dad didn’t get home in time.” The rapist got a can of gasoline, poured it on the house, set it on fire, and drove away. The children’s father arrived before the police did. The father’s description matched the description of the rapist, and when a sheriff’s deputy arrived, the deputy understandably thought that the father might be the rapist. The sheriff’s deputy pulled his gun and ran to the children’s father, who shouted, “I’m the dad! I’m the dad!” Police cruisers arrived, and the children came out of the house and identified their father. An ambulance took the woman away. Afraid of the rapist, the family stayed together in the living room. At approximately 5 a.m., the police called their house to let them know that the rapist had been shot and killed. A guilty man had died, but young James had saved an innocent life. His father said, “We just kept saying, ‘We’re proud of you.’” (149)
From Burglar to Hero

In October 2012 in Campbellsville, Kentucky, Chris Tuttle, an 18-year-old inmate serving time for third-degree burglary in the Taylor County Detention Center, became a hero along with a city worker. Mr. Tuttle was out on work release when he helped keep a woman from being abducted. Mr. Tuttle, who was installing new streetlights, said that “a guy pulled up beside this girl who was walking home from Burger King.” He added, “Then she started walking off down an old country road, and he backed into where we were at, and I saw him take his pants off.” Mr. Tuttle and a city worker followed the man, who began struggling with the young woman. Mr. Tuttle said, “And he pulled out and got away, but we got the girl, though. We took her home.” He added, “I did what anybody hopefully would have done.” Hack Marcum, the Taylor County Detention Center Jailer, recommended that Mr. Tuttle be released from the detention center early: “He was put in jail for doing wrong. He should be rewarded for doing right.” He added, “When this inmate went above and beyond maybe to save a person’s life or at least keep her from physical harm, we think he should be rewarded.” Mr. Marcum said about work-release inmates, “When they see something that’s wrong in the community, they know. They are not all bad people. There have been a lot of citizens out of jail that would have seen that and just stood there and watched. He didn’t. He had the initiative to go there and do something about it. And we are very proud of him. […] I do think he’s a hero.” (150)

CHAPTER 4: Stories 151-200

“Don’t Nobody Want to Run to Gunshots.” “But This Man [Eduardo Perez] Did?” “Yes, He Did, He Did”

On 5 October 2012 at the Cottonwood Apartments in Memphis, Tennessee, two men tried to rob and abduct a
woman. Fortunately, Eduardo Perez, who speaks Spanish but not English, witnessed the robbery and came to her rescue. He was shot, but he prevented the two men from forcing the woman into a car. A witness said, “Don’t nobody want to run to gunshots.” A reporter asked, “But this man did?” The witness replied, “Yes, he did, he did.” Mr. Perez was shot; the bullet grazed his leg. The reporter asked a translator, “Can you ask him if he was scared or was he frightened?” The translator asked him, and then replied, “No, he is no scary.” Witness Timyara Harris said, “The man, I’m proud of him. He’s a hero. They were yelling in Spanish and I don’t speak Spanish, but I’m pretty sure he was saying ‘Let her go’ and he hit him with a beer bottle and he got shot.” She added, “I’m pretty sure he would help us like he did this woman and I’m just happy she’s OK.” (151)

“I’m Sure She Saved a Lot of Lives by Trying to De-Escalate the Situation. She was Just Brave and Courageous Throughout The Whole Thing”

On 21 October 2012, Radcliffe Haughton, a 45-year-old former Marine, murdered his wife (Zina) and two other women, and wounded four other people, before he committed suicide in Azana Spa in Brookfield, outside Milwaukee, Wisconsin. On 4 October, Radcliff slashed his wife’s tires, and she asked the court for a restraining order, saying, “He threatened to throw acid in my face, burn me and my family with gas. His threats terrorize my every waking moment.” She had suffered domestic violence for years. On 18 October, three days before Radcliffe murdered her, his wife, Zina, had begged a court for protection, saying that she knew that her husband would kill her. She said, “Things have gotten so bad. We need to separate. We need a divorce before you hurt me. I don’t want to die.” The judge ordered Radcliffe to stay away from Zina and forbid him to own a gun. On 20 October, Radcliffe bought
a .40-caliber handgun from a private seller; Wisconsin law states that only dealers need to do background checks. Zina was brave as she faced death and may have saved other lives. Betty Brunner, a customer in the salon, said about Radcliffe, “He yelled, ‘Everybody!’ Get down. Get down.” She added, “Zina walked up to the reception desk, kind of shielding the young receptionist, and said, ‘What do you want?’” According to Ms. Brunner, Zina said to Radcliffe, “Calm down, sir” and “Anything we can give you, anything you want? These are good people — they’re just here. This is a peaceful place.” Radcliffe pushed his wife behind a wall and started shooting. Ms. Brunner believes that Zina is a hero: By walking up to Radcliffe, Zina kept him away from most of the customers in the salon. Ms. Brunner said, “I want to emphasize how very brave Zina was, because she was a hero. I’m sure she saved a lot of lives by trying to de-escalate the situation. She was just brave and courageous throughout the whole thing.” (152)

**Police Officer Keeps Two Old People Warm**

Someone posted on Imgur a note that someone had posted somewhere on the Web. As in so many of these posts, relevant data such as who, where, and when are missing. However, the why is very clear. The person was passing along a good deed that he or she had witnessed. The person had seen two elderly people sitting in the back of a police car and was wondering what they had done wrong. A bus pulled up, and the police officer escorted the two elderly people out of the police car and onto the bus. The poster wrote, “I then realized that the police officer was just being nice because it is so cold outside & these folks were very elderly and she wanted to take of them.” This happened in the city of Portland, but the state (or country?) is not mentioned. (153)
“He Helped Me Out When I Needed It, and I Appreciate That. I’ll Never Forget that Man. It Definitely Restored My Faith in God”

In December 2012, a Plano, Texas, police officer pulled Hayden Carlo, age 25, over because he had an expired sticker. Mr. Carlo has been struggling to support his wife and two young children. He said, “You get paid, pay your bills, and there’s your money. It’s gone.” He explained to the police officer why the sticker was expired: “I said, ‘There’s no explanation for why I haven’t done it, except I don’t have the money.’ I said, ‘It was either feed my kids or get my registration done.’” The police officer wrote a citation and handed it to Mr. Carlo, who said, “I opened it up and there’s a 100-dollar bill. I broke down in my car — what else could I do?” The police officer kept the good deed secret, but Mr. Carlo’s grandfather, Billy McIntire, wrote a letter to the department about the good deed. Mr. McIntire said, “I get emotional when we talk about this type of thing. You just don’t find that many officers who would do this type of thing.” The police officer wants to remain anonymous, but fellow officer and department spokesperson David Tilley said, “As he told me, this man needed it more than him, and it was the right thing to do.” Mr. Carlo did the right thing with the money; he updated the registrations on his car and on his wife’s car. Now he is driving to a new job. Mr. Carlo said, “He helped me out when I needed it, and I appreciate that. I’ll never forget that man. It definitely restored my faith in God.”

East Jutland Police Officer Makes Sushi Delivery

In February 2013 in Aarhus, Denmark, a minor traffic accident kept a sushi vendor from delivering an order to a young couple. No problem. A policeman from East Jutland Police did the good deed of making the delivery while the sushi vendor recovered from the accident. On its Facebook
page, however, East Jutland Police stated that it cannot always offer such services. (155)

“You See Someone and You Just Help Them”

On 26 February 2013, police officer Charlie Ziegler saw a woman pushing a baby in a stroller in icy rain in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Officer Ziegler said, “I went up to her and said, ‘Get in the car. There’s no reason for you or your baby to be out here.’” He then drove them three blocks to their destination: the daycare center where the woman worked. A passerby witnessed the good deed, took a photo of it, and posted the photo on Facebook; the photo went viral, surprising officer Ziegler, who did not consider the good deed newsworthy. He said, “You see someone and you just help them.” Officer Ziegler’s mother-in-law, Donna Johnson, said, “He’s just that type of person. Very helpful and outgoing, and he doesn’t want to see anyone in trouble or in need.” Officer Ziegler’s wife, Rachel, said, “It’s not a surprising story.” Like her husband, Rachel said that she is surprised by how viral the photo became: “Last Tuesday I was actually having lunch with him and he told me that someone from the local news had contacted him and it surprised me. You would just expect anyone to do that … to save someone from the freezing rain.” (156)

Blisters the “Size of His Palm”

In November 2012, New York Police Officer Larry DePrimo bought boots for a homeless man on a cold night. He said that he saw that the man had no shoes or boots or socks, but that he did have blisters the “size of his palm.” He bought the homeless man $75 insulated boots and a pair of thermal socks, and knelt down to put them on the homeless man’s feet. Mr. DePrimo said, “You could see the blisters [on his feet] from 15 feet away. I knew I had to help him.” Jennifer Foster, a tourist from Arizona, took a photograph that went viral. She said about the homeless
man, “This man’s face lit up like it was Christmas and like, he had just been given, literally, a million dollars.” Ms. Foster’s own father is a police officer who she has seen give a hungry man breakfast in a donut shop. The NYC Police Commissioner gave Mr. DePrimo a pair of cufflinks in recognition of his good deed. Mr. DePrimo also received much recognition on Facebook and on TV’s Today Show. He said, “It’s a lot about the people. You see just great comments. People are saying their faith in humanity is restored, and that’s the biggest thing I can take away from all of this.” (157)

“It’s a Heart-Warming Reminder There is Still Good in the World”

In January 2013, while Sam Mellor was celebrating his sixth birthday at a play centre, thieves burgled his family’s home in Sheffield, South Yorkshire, England, and stole £700 worth of property, including Sam’s new PlayStation games. Sam’s father, Gary, said, “We thought his sixth birthday would forever be tarnished by the break-in. But the kindness of others has been uplifting — it has completely changed our perspective.” Gary wrote about the burglary on Facebook, and strangers started to give Sam games. A woman went to the Mellor home and gave Sam a game, and a woman on a playground gave Sam two games. Gary said, “People have been so kind — friends of friends of friends who don’t even know us have been getting in touch. It restores your faith in human nature. More than 200 people shared my status on Facebook within 24 hours, and many people — some as far away as America — have offered new or spare copies of games to replace the ones Sam lost. It’s a heart-warming reminder there is still good in the world.” (158)

“I’m Going to Do This — I’m Protecting the People Near Me”
On 5 January 2013 on the streets of Lincoln Park in Chicago, Illinois, junior welterweight boxer Peter Heliotes helped in the capture of a man who had stolen a woman’s purse after threatening her with a screwdriver. After getting off work, he saw a man who seemed to be drunk and hugging a woman. Mr. Heliotes said, “Then I realized he was grabbing her purse — he was kind of wrestling with her. I’ve never really seen anybody get mugged before, but it was kind of my instincts.” The robber grabbed the purse of the woman, who began to scream. Mr. Heliotes ran after the man. Mr. Heliotes said, “I didn’t know if he had a knife or what, so I tried to knock him to the floor by pushing him into the wall. He kept running.” Another man, who did not want to be identified, blocked the robber’s path. The man, age 24, said, “I just heard someone yell out, ‘Stop that guy,’ and he’s literally 30 or 40 feet in front of me. For me it was just a split-second decision that I’m going to do this — I’m protecting the people near me.” The two men wrestled the robber facedown to the ground and took the woman’s purse and the man’s screwdriver. Mr. Heliotes remembered, “I said, ‘Was he sticking you up with the screwdriver?’ She had a mark on her back. He was a pretty strong guy.” Police officers arrived and took the alleged robber into custody. The 24-year-old Good Samaritan said, “It’s one of those hypothetical situations that I think you’re always, ‘What would I do?’ It doesn’t even seem like it’s real life. I’m not even sure you could chalk it up to instincts.” The female victim, age 29, said about the robbery, “I actually thought it was a joke … then I realized, ‘He may actually have a gun.’ Then he took my purse.” She added about the two Good Samaritans, “How do you say thank you to just kind guys off the street who don’t know you and just provided so much safety and security at that time for you? They not only gave me the security that night … they gave me the faith that there is good out there.” (159)
“A Dumb Kid Who Wants to Right a Wrong”

In 2013, the Riphagen family of suburban Chicago, Illinois, finally got back four gold rings that a thief had stolen 15 years previously. The thief returned them anonymously in a letter of apology. Margot Riphagen, age 31, now lives in Portland, Oregon. She recalls exactly when the rings were stolen. She was only 16 years old when the four rings were stolen. She said, “It was a long time ago, and it was a pretty bad situation. I invited a few friends over, and then all of a sudden there were all these people there I didn’t know. We immediately noticed stuff was missing. My parents actually turned me in to the police. They always understood this wasn’t my fault, but we had never recovered those rings and I still have no idea who it was.” The anonymous letter was signed, “A dumb kid who wants to right a wrong.” Margot said, “We don’t care who it was. I was stupid when I was 16, and I’m sure they were too. Somebody did it for the thrill of it, not for money.” The four rings had major sentimental value, she said: “The first ring is my mother’s actual wedding band, that she was not wearing because she was going to get it re-sized. The second is a ring with a small diamond that my father gave my mother when my sister was born, who is a year older than I am. And then the other two, I actually didn’t know existed until we got them back, but they are my grandparents’ wedding bands. They had small diamond chips put into them for me and my sister when we got older. So it was a pretty big deal. I’m now actually wearing my grandfather’s wedding band.” She added, “We never thought we would get any of the stuff back. It’s completely amazing and wonderful, and we’re all thrilled about it. It’s a super-positive thing and a great way to start the New Year.” (160)

“I was Just Only Too Pleased to Help — There are Some Despicable People Out There”
In January 2013, burglars broke into the home of World War II veteran Louis Butler, age 92, in Royton, near Oldham, Greater Manchester, England, and stole money and bank cards. Mr. Butler, who flew as a part of the crew of Lancaster Bombers during the war, worried about cancelling his bank cards; he was afraid that he would reach a calling center in India — with his difficulty in hearing, he thought that he would be unable to understand the speech of whoever answered the phone. Fortunately, he reached somebody local: Victoria Mowbray, who went to his house during her lunch break and helped him cancel his bank cards. Mr. Butler said, “The lady at the bank was great, and she has restored my faith in human nature. She cancelled my missing bank cards and phoned the police for me so I could report the crime. She even called my daughter, Angela, to tell her what happened. She helped me with everything. It just shows the bank can help customers where it matters. I was dreading getting through to a call centre in India but to get through to someone working up the road was like a breath of fresh air. For her to then come over and help me was above and beyond the call of duty. I just wish more banks could operate like this when their customers need them.” Burglars stole £300 in cash, a laptop, his passport, and other important papers. Fortunately, his daughter had in her possession his 1943 Distinguished Flying Medal that King George VI had given to him. Mr. Butler had been a wireless operator in bombing raids over Germany. Mr. Butler said, “I was shaken when I woke up and saw everything had been taken. My desk was open and the drawers were all out and so was the drawer in the table in the hall. They took my laptop, my folder with all my phone numbers and important letters and bills, my passport — everything that they could get their hands on. They also took £300 out of a cash jar that I have in the desk. I didn’t know what to do until I found the phone number for the Royal Bank of Scotland customer services,
so I rang them. A nice lady answered, and I was very surprised but happy that she was from my local branch rather than from a call centre in India. I’m hard of hearing and knew I wouldn’t understand them if I got through to someone there. When I told her what had happened, the lady just dropped everything and came straight round to my home in her car to help me cancel my cards. I was amazed. She is so helpful. I can’t thank her enough.” Mr. Butler’s daughter, Angela Hobson, said, “Dad was disorientated when he came downstairs to find all his stuff missing and what Victoria did shows there are some very kind people left in this world who go over and beyond what can be expected. Dad is well known and very well liked, and people in the locality were disgusted and outraged when they found out what happened. It must have been obvious to whoever broke in that an old person lived there. He had his war pictures of Lancaster Bombers on the walls and a stairlift, but it still didn’t stop them.” Ms. Mowbray said, “I don’t think I have done anything special. When he rang the bank, I didn’t even know if he was a customer of ours or not. He was saying he was a 92-year-old man and he had been robbed. He said he had gone downstairs and they had taken everything. I was worried there was no one at home with him, and I couldn’t have that on my mind, especially if he was in shock. I told my manager I needed to go even if it was my lunch. I helped him cancel all his cards, and I called the police on the way to the house. When I got to his house, I recognised him, and realised he had been a customer of the bank for a long time. I was just only too pleased to help — there are some despicable people out there.” (161)

“The Child Saved My Life. I Didn’t Even Know He Could Drive, But He Drove the Car Like an Ambulance”

On 18 May 2009, John McDonagh, age 14, saved the life of
his father, Bernard McDonagh, age 44, whom a gang had attacked with a machete and an iron bar as he waited in his car outside Ennis National School. John shoved his father out of the driver’s seat and then drove away from the gang. One of Bernard’s fingers was cut off and could not be reattached. He also suffered injuries to his arms, elbow, head, and shoulder. With his five-year-old sister and his baby nephew in the car, John drove his father 2 kilometers to Ennis General Hospital in Ennis, County Clare, Ireland. Bernard said, “My son John is a hero. The child saved my life. I didn’t even know he could drive, but he drove the car like an ambulance going in and out of traffic trying to get me to hospital as quickly as he could.” Detective Sergeant Michael Moloney, a garda, said that two sides of the McDonagh family had been feuding and that Bernard and one of his assailants were cousins. (162)

**Good Guy Trucker**

This is an interesting random act of kindness, although it does involve helping someone not get caught breaking the law. A Redditor known as Famousblinkadam is from Minnesota. He bought a car in Vermont, flew out to pick it up, and then started driving it home. He likes to go faster than the posted speed limit, and so he was speeding in Ohio. However, in Ohio he was forced to slow down because two trucks were going 65 mph side by side and therefore using both lanes. Famousblinkadam wrote on Reddit, “The faster of the two truckers just got past the other semi but did not get back over into the slow lane for some reason. When he finally got back over, I saw why he had been going so slow. There was a good ol’ Ohio State Patrol car sitting in the median about 100 yards ahead. That nice trucker kept me from going over 65 miles per hour to save me from getting a pretty spendy ticket. Good guy trucker, if you’re reading this, I owe you a beer or 5 if you should happen to pass through southern Minnesota.” (163)
Good Samaritan Finds, Returns Stolen Purse

In January 2008, the purse of Ann Roberts, of Stevenage, England, was stolen. Fortunately, the purse and many of its contents were returned to her by a Good Samaritan who found her purse in a wooded area where the thief had apparently thrown it. While Ms. Roberts was upstairs in her home, the thief entered her home and stole her purse, whose contents were worth, Ms. Roberts estimated, £500. The contents included a camera, a credit card, a diary, and a USB pen. The thief took the camera and credit card, but Ms. Roberts was happy to get the other items back. She said, “It’s been a bit of a hassle what with sorting out the insurance, but I’m pleased I’ve got my USB pen back because I had photos going back three years on it which are of sentimental value. I was also pleased to have my Filofax [personal organizer] returned because it’s got all my work details in it that are no use to anybody else. I would like to say a big thank you to the man who found my bag and contacted me. And I would like to warn people to keep their doors locked even if they’re in their home because this happened within the space of 15 minutes. I didn’t hear anything and didn’t realise that my bag had gone until the next morning.” (164)

“This Man Proved to Me that There are Obviously Some Nice People Around and has Made Me a Little More Positive Again”

In October 2012 in Grimsby, England, Sophie Welstead, who is a full-time school nurse and a single mother of two, was the victim of a thief who smashed in her car window and stole her purse, which contained two mobile phones and theatre tickets, worth nearly £300, as well as cash and credit cards. She had bought the theatre tickets to celebrate her daughter’s birthday. Fortunately, an elderly man found her purse and returned it to her. Apparently, the thief had
taken the cash and thrown the purse and other contents away. Ms. Welstead said, “It was a thoughtless smash-and-grab, but the bag had my entire life in it and was going to cause me so many problems. I knew I could replace the cards and the phones but it was things like my diary, my driving licence, and the tickets — which I had only picked up that day — that were going to be difficult. They are worth a lot of money and if I hadn’t got them back, I don’t know what I would have done for my daughter’s birthday. I was on the phone to cancel my third card when there was a knock at the door, which I assumed was the man coming to fix my car window. However, it wasn’t — it was a man returning almost everything that had been taken, including the tickets. I was so shocked, I didn’t even know what to say. He had picked up absolutely everything when he had found it upended in People’s Park and I just wanted to say a big thank you.” She added, “So often you hear about the negative things that people do, and I was feeling a little bit unlucky myself after recent events. [On 5 October 2012, a thief had stolen her satellite navigation system.] However, this man proved to me that there are obviously some nice people around and has made me a little more positive again. For no gain to himself, he took the time to pick up every last thing and delivered it to me at my house — and I barely got chance to thank him.” (165)

“I’m Shocked that She was that Calm and Collected. I Can’t be More Proud of Her”

Paityn Mock, age 10, missed school because she had a fever. Her mother, Jenn Mock, left to buy Paityn a sandwich at Subway, so Paityn was home alone in a rural part of Camas, Washington, when the doorbell began ringing. A teenage boy was ringing it. Because Paityn had been taught by her mother not to open the door except for relatives, she called her mother, who again told her not to open the door. Then someone cut the screen in a window at
the back of the house and entered. Hiding in the pantry, Paityn again called her mother, who told her to call 911. She did. The intruder unlocked the front door and let another person in. Paityn said, “I felt really nervous and scared. But I didn’t exactly pour my eyes out [cry].” She left the kitchen and hid behind a tree. Her mother was speeding home. Jenn said, “I just panicked.” Deputy Rick Buckner with the Clark County Sheriff’s Office arrived first and arrested the driver. Jenn went inside the house and called for Paityn, and then she found her outside by the tree. Jenn said, “I’m shocked that she was that calm and collected. I can’t be more proud of her.” She added, “Had she not been here, my house would have been cleared out.” Sheriff’s spokesman Sergeant Fred Neiman recommended that parents talk to their children about what to do if they are home alone and someone breaks into their home. The two intruders escaped, but the driver was said to be cooperating with the police. (166)

“If You’re Afraid, You Call Us. Whenever You Need Us, We will be Here”

Is anyone tougher than bikers? Maybe not. Members of a group called Bikers Against Child Abuse volunteer their time to make victims of child abuse feel safe. In 2012 in Arizona, a group of bikers drove up to the home of an 11-year-old girl. The 14 motorcycles stopped, and a formidable, intimidating man got off his 2000 Harley Road King and told the girl, “Hi, I’m Pipes.” She replied, “Nice to meet you.” The other bikers, some of them female, meet the girl. The bikers’ names are Nytro, D’Animal, Rock, Pumpkin, Tree, Sassy, Rembrandt, Harmony and Shiraz (twin biker chicks), Surely, Uno, Smiles, Tool, Mo Money, Bigg Dogg, Fat Daddy, Ghost Daddy, Father Time, and Trucker. Rock told the girl, “I’m really a nice guy.” Police reports state that one of the girl’s relatives abused her. She wakes up at night, terrified. The bikers wear their motto —
“No child deserves to live in fear” — on the back of their black leather vests and T-shirts. The article “Bikers Against Child Abuse Make Abuse Victims Feel Safe” by Karina Bland in The Republic (Phoenix, Arizona) explained, “Even kids know that nobody messes with bikers. Bikers look big, and strong, and mean, both in real life and in how they are portrayed on television and in films. They are easy riders, sons of anarchy, not afraid of anything. And they take care of their own. A child who has been abused by someone bigger and stronger knows too well what it feels like to be small and vulnerable. BACA shifts that balance by putting even bigger and stronger people — and more of them — on the child’s side. And if those even-bigger and stronger people are scary-looking too, perhaps with flaming-skull tattoos, chains on their belts and scars of questionable origin, so much the better.” Rembrandt said, “The biker image is what makes this work. Golfers Against Child Abuse does not have the same feel.” The bikers do such things as stand guard outside all night upon request so that the child-abuse survivor feels safe. The bikers will take the child to school. The bikers will go to court when the child testifies and give moral support by sitting in the front row. Pipes tells children who are going to testify, “Look at us, not him.” He said, “When we tell a child they don’t have to be afraid, they believe us. When we tell them we will be there for them, they believe us.” The bikers introduced themselves to the 11-year-old girl, and then they gave her a small denim vest covered in patches. It bore the girl’s new biker name: Rhythm. Pipes said, “This means now you’re part of our big, ugly family.” One of the other bikers said, “Speak for yourself — we’re not all ugly!” Pipes told Rhythm, “If you’re afraid, you call us. Whenever you need us, we will be here.” Another part of the initiation into the biker gang is a ride on one of the motorcycles. Two members of the gang became Rhythm’s primary contacts. They gave Rhythm their cellphone numbers, and she can
call them 24 hours a day. As a result of her initiation into the gang of protectors, Rhythm laughed, something she had not done for a long time. (167)

“I Thought They Would Help Us Out by Donating Money, But the Full Cost of the Wheelchair?”

Good people and bad people exist in this world. In 2005, some bad people broke into a family’s garage in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, and stole tools — and the wheelchair of nine-year-old Tyler Morgans. A good person is Paul Brown, who hosts a radio morning show on 100.3 The Bear. He dipped into the station’s children’s fund and bought Tyler an electric wheelchair. Tyler’s father, Charlie, said, “The fact that Tyler’s going to get an electric wheelchair just makes my heart melt. I couldn’t do it because they are so expensive. I don’t know how I’m going to repay the Bear morning crew for what they’re doing …. I have no words. I thought they would help us out by donating money, but the full cost of the wheelchair?” (168)

“Greetings, Citizens of the World. We are Anonymous”

In October 2012, the hacktivist group Anonymous knocked offline more than 24 websites that it alleged were child-pornography websites. It posted a list of all the neutralized websites and this notice (lightly edited): “Greetings, citizens of the world. We are Anonymous. We are defenders of the internet. We are yet again on the heels of pedophiles around the world. There are many websites with children being exposed and it is not right morally, legally or in respect to human rights. Pedophiles of the internet, this is a warning to you. This is a warning to your supporters and anyone that takes part in your sick world. We will come for you. We will find you. We will shut down your websites and kick you out. You are not welcome here and we have had enough of you. Leave our children alone and while you are at it leave the rest of the
planet alone. This is not a threat, this is a promise. We will hunt you down and exterminate you like cockroaches. You are the lowest form of life on this planet and it is time for you to be extinguished. We are the ones that will do this task. We are Anonymous. We are the great Legion. Everyone, from all walks of life, have joined in this fight. People in every country, in every race and every religion all have the same belief. The belief that our children deserve to be safe. The pedophiles have not gone away and we must join forces to make it happen. We need to put all of our resources together to get these evil people away from our children. There are many of you that are concerned about the same issue. Now is your time to act. Get involved. We do not forgive, we do not forget, expect us, we are legion, and we are coming for you pedophiles.” (169)

**Ordinary Muslims Help Victims of Terrorism**

On 12 October 2002, a violent Islamic group set off bombs on Bali, an island that is part of Indonesia. Civil servant Bambang Priyanto heard an explosion while he was reading in bed. He got up and headed toward the explosion on his motorbike, carrying a flashlight and a first-aid kit. He said, “People were bleeding, screaming, ‘It’s hot, very hot,’ and some had skin peeling.” He witnessed much death, and he helped to save lives. Over the next 11 hours, he led a group of 20 people — non-extremist Muslims — and they ferried the wounded to a hospital. He said, “Every anniversary, I feel the heat from the flames that night, I get flashbacks of people’s hair and clothes on fire, how they roll around on the street. It’s terrifying. No one wants to ever see that happen again.” Over 200 people died in the terrorist attack. He believes that the vast majority of Muslims in Indonesians are against such terrorist acts. He said, “Perhaps it was God’s will that He did not like what was being done in the religion’s name there, that somehow a group of ordinary Muslims plunged into the rescue effort
without hesitation.” After the terrorist attack, Bambang Priyanto joined the Red Cross, and he has provided help at various disaster sites in Indonesia. (170)

“She Went Straight to Him. Decision to be a Death Sentence. She had to Know that He Can Not Miss”

When far-right extremist Anders Behring Breivik carried out two terrorist attacks in Norway on 22 July 2011, a Danish mother named Hanne Fjalestad sacrificed her life to save Norwegian children. She hid a few children and then ran toward Anders Behring Breivik and made herself his target instead of the children. Skagard Sven, age 19, who survived the massacre, said, “She went straight to him. Decision to be a death sentence. She had to know that he can not miss.” Both Hanne Fjalestad and her daughter, Anna, age 20, were working as medics at the Labour Party youth camp where Anders Behring Breivik murdered 68 people, including many children. Hanne’s father, Per Balch Sorensen, who lives in Jutland, Denmark, said, “She gave her life for Norway, so she should rest in Norwegian soil.” She was buried in the Norwegian town of Lunner, which is where she and her Norwegian husband lived. Anna said that she felt numb after the terrorist massacre: “I have nothing left over for the murderer. Not sorrow and not anger. He doesn’t deserve it.” (171)

**Good Deeds in Western Australia**

Lots of good people live in and around Perth, Western Australia, Australia). For example: 1) In December 2009, David McKean of Cooloongup lost his wallet in the car park of Mandurah Forum shopping centre. Someone found the wallet and turned it in; Mr. McKean got it back. In a letter to the editor, he thanked the Good Samaritan and then added, “I am a great believer in karma, and know that you must be too. I went and bought two presents for the Kmart tree, one for you, and one for me; so two more people
benefited from your kindness. Thank you again and I hope you and your family have a Merry Christmas, and a happy and healthy New Year.” 2) In a letter to the editor dated 21 August 2010, Barbara Harper-Nelson of Lesmurdie wrote, “I thank the kind person who on August 10 found my wallet on the steps outside Liquorland in Kalamunda and passed it to the staff. Apart from getting it back, it was good to know that there are still honest people about.” 3) When the vehicle of Ted and Trudy Ansell of Rockingham broke down, a young woman and some other people really went out of their way to help them. In a letter to the editor, Ted and Trudy Ansell wrote that they requested the use of a phone to call RAC [Royal Automobile Club], but that the young woman did much more: “The gracious young woman not only offered her phone but also offered to drive my wife home to Rockingham. She also offered to bring me a coffee while I waited by the car. As if that wasn’t enough, when the RAC arrived she walked the 300m to my car to inform me her partner had offered to tow my stranded vehicle home should it be necessary. After my car had been safely delivered that night, my neighbour over the street arrived to offer us the use of his second car until ours had been repaired. On reflection, we realised ‘good Samaritans’ are all around us when we’re really down.”

(172)

**Sharp Eyes Detect a Good Deed**

About noon on New Year’s Day 2013, a man walked two small dogs along Gunn Street, Devonport, Tasmania, Australia. Sharp-eyed Brian Wade noticed the man doing a good deed, and so Mr. Wade sent this letter of appreciation to the editor of the *Advocate* (Burnie, Tasmania): “WELL done to the man walking his two little dogs in Gunn Street about noon on New Year's Day. The plastic bag which was obviously meant for ‘doggy doo’ was full of rubbish he was picking up on his way.” (173)
A Classic Good Deed: Helping a Woman with a Cane Cross the Street

In March 2013 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Antonio Pines was earning his salary holding a sign and waving a hand to attract the attention of drivers by to the sign. He noticed a woman with a cane who needed help crossing the street at the corner of Gunbarrel and East Brainerd Road. Mr. Pines took action, and he took her arm. They started crossing the street. She could not walk fast, and the light changed before she reached the other side of the street. Mr. Pines stayed between her and the oncoming cars, and he waved to let drivers know that two people were in the street. One driver had to slam on her brakes to avoid hitting them. Mr. Pines made sure that the woman with the cane crossed safely to the other side. In a 7 March 2013 article in The Chattanooga, Jen Jeffrey wrote, “Thank you, Antonio Pines, for your good deed. You may have thought you were just helping someone to cross a street, but you may have saved her from injury. You may have helped the driver become more aware and your relevance helped this writer to continue having faith in our fellow man.” (174)

Flock Someone for Charity

One way to do a good deed in West Sayville, New York, is to flock someone. Flocking is something that nine-year-old Blake Passaro, of West Sayville, did in February 2013 to raise money for the Sayville Relay for Life event (a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society). People donate $25 to fill someone’s yard with a flock of plastic pink flamingos. The “victim” of the flocking is given this note: “A friend has paid to have this Flock of Pink Flamingoes gather on your lawn to roost. In case you did not know this, Plastic Pink Flamingoes are very territorial. They will stay on your lawn until they are sent to a new victim’s house. They can only be removed by a highly trained professional
like myself. Please help this Fundraising Flock move along by making a donation. Please check the option below and I will send out a team of removal experts. ( ) I appreciate the flocking, but I am unable to donate funds at this time. ( ) I would like to make a donation of $____ towards the removal of the flock. ( ) I would like to move this flock to a friend/victim for a set fee of $25.00. Please call […] if you have any questions.” Blake’s mother, Melissa Bartell, said, “We were flocked a few years back. It was for a dance school fundraiser. When we were thinking about our fundraiser for this year, Blake remembered how fun it was to wake up and see all the flamingoes on our lawn. We ordered the flock and started about two weeks ago. So far everyone has really enjoyed it and has been very generous.” Blake had also done such things as collect books and toys for young patients at Stony Brook Hospital. (175)

“When have Your Friends Come Through for You in an Amazing Way?”

In November 2012, Redditor Pogswaggle asked, “When have your friends come through for you in an amazing way?” Here are some answers: 1) [Name censored] wrote, “I used to walk to my office job every morning. One morning in December my ears were so cold they were horribly painful and I didn’t have money to buy a hat or earmuffs. I barely made minimum wage and had maxed out my credit card. I called my mom on my office phone and told her how badly my ears hurt and could I please have a hat or earmuffs for Christmas (3 weeks away). The following morning there was a beanie sitting on my chair with a note that said simply ‘Sometimes Santa comes early.’ To this day I have no idea who put it there. I still tear up thinking about it.” 2) Owlesque5 wrote, “A few years ago, I had a shitty part-time job and one month I couldn’t afford rent (even after getting paid to donate plasma). My best friend, knowing what I was going
through, sent me a sweet card that contained $100 cash. At the time, $100 felt like I’d won the goddamn lottery. She told me it was a gift and I didn’t need to pay her back, but a couple years later she was in a rough spot and I folded a $100 bill into a heart shape and sent it to her. I think of her as a sister.” 3) HectorAnonymous wrote, “My ex (we were still together at the time) needed to go pick something up from this guy’s house, I think it was a rocking chair or something, but didn’t have a vehicle to do it with. I was at work, and she was just going to borrow someone’s vehicle, but my friend is a really nice guy and offered to give her a ride in his pickup, and help her load it up and transport it for us. She went inside to pay the guy while my friend waited in the truck, and when she didn’t come out immediately, he went inside to help her load the chair. This asshole had her pinned against the wall by the door and was trying to kiss her, clearly against her will, and my buddy pushed him off of her. Even though this guy was way bigger than him, my friend was willing to do what it took to protect her. I guess the neighbor heard the commotion and called the cops and the guy got arrested. If he hadn’t gone with her, and she had just borrowed his truck or something, this could have ended much worse.” (176)

“Such a Gem of a New Yorker, A Good Samaritan Willing to Help Someone Having a Run of Bad Luck”

In late October 2012, Hurricane Sandy hit New York and New Jersey especially hard. New York Times writer Jessica Miller needed to get to the airport to fly home to San Francisco from Brooklyn, but gasoline was in short supply. Even taxis were idle because of the shortage of gasoline. She went to the subway but was too late — by approximately 20 seconds — to catch the F train. She asked a Metropolitan Transit Authority employee about the train schedule, and he mentioned that he was going home to Far Rockaway and he could give her a ride to the airport. Ms.
Miller wrote in her *New York Times* blog *Metropolitan Diary*, “I still believe that New Yorkers take care of each other when terrible things happen, and this is what gives me the courage to get in a car with a total stranger. We talked about ourselves a bit on the way, and joked about how he was earning his Boy Scout patch. He heroically drove me all the way to J.F.K. and we got there just in time. I offered him some money, but he refused.” She added that she feels “deep gratitude at finding such a gem of a New Yorker, a good Samaritan willing to help someone having a run of bad luck.” (177)

“**There are Good People in Benton County [Oregon]. Someone Out There Cares**”

In November 2012, someone sent a $100 cashier’s check and a letter to Benton County (Oregon) Finance Director Mary Otley, who stated, “The letter said, ‘When I was in high school many years ago, some friends and I were walking around a back road in Benton County and two of the boys I was with destroyed a street sign.’” The letter and cashier’s check impressed Ms. Otley and other people. She said, “I shared this with the commissioners, and my tag line was there are good people in Benton County. Someone out there cares.” (178)

**Redditors Saving Lives**

In July 2012, Redditor mdr-fqr87 accepted an invitation to join a German man on his yacht and cruise around for two days. Later, he sent Mdr-fqr87 an email saying that Mdr-fqr87 had saved his life by simply listening to him. He had planned to commit suicide out of despair about a divorce and losing his children, but talking to Mdr-fqr87 saved him. In October 2012, Mdr-fqr87 asked other Redditors if they had ever saved a life. Here are some stories: 1) Synaesthetist wrote, “This July I was in an airport at the top of an escalator where a woman was trying to deal with her
luggage, a baby in a stroller, and a toddler. Her toddler slipped right before they got on the escalator and without thinking she reached for him and, in doing so, let go of the baby stroller that was halfway on to the top stair of the escalator. The stroller started to tilt downward and when I realized it was about to completely tip over, I dropped my own luggage, grabbed it and brought it back up to the landing. No idea if I actually saved the kid’s life, but the escalator was empty, so I imagine it would have fallen all the way down.” 2) Private_pants wrote, “Twice. First time, I was in a park in Belfast doing some geocaching, when I came across a man in the river Lagan. He was VERY drunk, and had fallen in. He was standing waist deep on a ledge at the side, with 20ft sheer rock walls either side. No ropes, life belts or anything about, so I dialled 999 and got the emergency services out. After [the man was rescued], a fireman told me that if I hadn’t found him, his legs would have given way and he would have drowned. The second time was much more dangerous (stupid?) on my part, and much more glorious. On my way to university one day, I witnessed a car accident. A car spun off the road (no idea why), rolled, and ended up upside down, with smoke billowing from the bonnet. I pulled over and ran down. The driver (only occupant) was panicking, trying to get his seatbelt undone. I sprinted back to the car and got my stanley knife from my toolkit, cut his seatbelt and pulled him out the broken window. The guy was pretty banged up, but nothing seriously wrong. About a minute after, the car caught alight and burned out. I made a snap decision, which could easily have ended with both my death and his, and I was VERY lucky.” (179)

Three Good Deeds

Here are a few good deeds from the website <gooddeedaday.com>: 1) “I always buy a day pass for the bus which is enough to get me to and from wherever I’m
going. When I get off my last bus journey, I no longer need the ticket so instead find someone else who can use it. It’s much more rewarding to give it to a single mum with lots of shopping or a young kid so they can spend their money on something they actually want” (published 18 September 2012). 2) “A woman dropped an empty plastic bottle on the escalator when she was walking hurriedly on the street during lunch hour. I immediately picked it up and threw it into the rubbish bin. I just wanted to keep our environment clean and safe for people here” (published 14 March 2012). 3) “Saved a baby from being run over, the Dad left the door open and the toddler wandered off along the road towards a busy roundabout, when I realised the toddler was alone I ran (superman kind of speed) and grabbed the boy. Parents were more than happy to see him again :)” (published 12 May 2009). (180)

The Crimson Canuck: Helper of the Homeless

In 2012, the masked superhero known as the Crimson Canuck walked the streets of Windsor, Ontario, Canada. His purpose? To give the homeless water bottles, snacks, and warm clothing. He carried a backpack filled with whatever small items he thinks will help the homeless. He has even fulfilled requests for things such as toothpaste and toothbrushes. The Crimson Canuck said, “If they need anything out of my bag, I just open it up and say, ‘I’ve got some hats. I’ve got some toques [hats for women]. Grab what you need and hopefully it helps you out.’ I’ve got whatever I’ve got in my bag and I’m willing to offer it to whoever needs it.” He said that he decided to help the homeless because at one point he himself was almost homeless: “I got very close to that point of [living on the streets], and once I got myself reestablished and got a job and started paying my taxes again, I figured I may as well give back to those who were going through exactly what I was.” When he isn’t the Crimson Canuck, he is just an
average man. He is in his 20s, and he has a wife and two children and a nine-to-five job. Why does he wear the mask? He explained, “Wearing the mask, I want to basically show that my identity and who I am isn’t important — [what’s important is] what I’m doing. I could be anybody, therefore anybody can do this.” The Crimson Canuck is one of the hundreds of men and women in the US and Canada who are part of the Real Life Superheroes movement. He said, “We adopt the look and ethos of our comic book counterparts, and we apply it in the real world. We try and be as good as we can be, and be as helpful as we can be to our communities. And ultimately we just want to save the day, or at least somebody’s day.” He said that he hopes to inspire others to do good deeds: “What I’m doing right now will hopefully awaken some of our younger citizens in Windsor to take action and be active in their communities. Don’t ask yourself what’s going to happen if I stop and help this guy, ask yourself what’s going to happen [to] this guy if I don’t stop and help him.” He added, “We can help educate children on bullying, [we can] help kids read through comic books, as well as going out and supporting various charities in our communities. I want to make myself as visible as possible to the community.” (181)

Free Lunch, and Good Deeds in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

Good people live in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada: 1) On 16 October 2012, an anonymous woman paid for Detective Constable Mark Ballantine’s lunch at a drive-through. He was driving the Peterborough Lakefield Community Police Service’s forensics van. He said, “I want to thank her for doing something nice today. We have been busy this year in the Forensics Unit, and the good deed was appreciated!”

2) In the summer of 2011, Energy 99.7 FM’s morning man Bill Porter left the Junction and found a parking ticket on
his windshield although his car was in an office lot and not on the street. He looked at it more closely. It was not for his car. Someone else had gotten the ticket and put it on his car. Still, he paid the $15 fine, saying, “I thought I’d make it my good deed for the day.”

3) This appeared in the “Over the Back Fence” column on <Mykawartha.com> on 11 March 2012: “Good deed on a Sunday: Thank you to the OPP [Ontario Provincial Police] officer and auxiliary officer who pushed out a couple stuck in the snow at the Squirrel Creek Conservation Area on Sunday. The kind gesture was appreciated.” (182)

A 59¢ Good Deed

Erin McHugh is the author of One Good Deed, a book in which she writes about doing a good deed each day for a year. As you would expect, she continued to look for opportunities to do good deeds after the year was finished. On 19 October 2012, she wrote a blog post about a very inexpensive good deed: “I was just renewing ErinMcHugh.com on GoDaddy — an address I’ve yet to use, though I’ve owned it for several years now — and as I was paying, a pop-up asked me if I’d like to ‘round up.’ I love rounding up: it is one of the best marketing ideas of our times. Banks offer it so you can save a little every time with your card; grocery stores ask you to do it at the register for a cause; and now my domain-owning company wants to know if I’d like to round up to the next dollar. [Because it was] October [October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month], I automatically clicked for the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. What did it cost me? 59¢. Almost anybody can afford to do that every single day at the week. I try to avoid making money the base of a good deed, but I so commend new, easy ways to give like this one. Funny thing is, that 59¢ is the only positive thing I’ve gotten out of owning that domain yet.” Check out <http://onegooddeedbook.com>. (183)
“We Can be Confident the Future of East Texas, and Indeed Our Country, will be in Good Hands”

On 19 March 2010, Robert Dendy and his wife were returning home to Longview, Texas, after visiting their children in Atlanta, Texas. On Texas 155, they had a flat tire. Fortunately, John and Jodi Luzio of Linden, Texas, saw them and stopped to help. John, who worked for Brown and Root at the Eastman Chemical plant, changed their flat tire and did not accept any payment. Mr. Dendy wrote in a March 2010 letter to the editor of the Longview News-Journal, “At a time when folks worry about the apathy and callousness of our young citizens, an incident like this is very reassuring. When caring parents like John and Jodi are such wonderful examples to their children, we can be confident the future of East Texas, and indeed our country, will be in good hands.” (184)

Good People Live in Annapolis, Maryland

One of the very good things that <capitalgazette.com> does is to give space to readers who want to publicly thank Good Samaritans. This gives recognition to Good Samaritans and encourages people to be Good Samaritans. This letter by Joyce Masterson of Annapolis appeared on 14 October 2012: “Oct. 6 marked the first anniversary of my accident. After eating on my deck with my son’s family, I collapsed in the living room. My husband tried to revive me to no avail and called 911. The ambulance came right away and took me to Anne Arundel Medical Center. Doctors at the hospital found my brain was bleeding and had me airlifted to Hopkins Bayview, where the bleeding finally stopped. I want to thank the EMTs from the ambulance, the hospital and Hopkins for their quick responses. After two days, I woke up and was able to go home, and eventually to go back to work and to drive. Citizens in Annapolis are lucky to live near some of the best health professionals in the
United States. Thank you for helping to prevent a health disaster.” This letter by Christine Jorgensen of Annapolis also appeared on 14 October 2012: “I was recently downtown in Annapolis and turned from Main Street onto Conduit Street. Apparently I misjudged the location of the sidewalk and my front wheel went over the curb. The loud bang immediately informed me that it was a mistake. I pulled over at the next corner to inspect the damage — a very flat tire. I had barely stepped out of the car when a young man and his daughter, who had witnessed the incident, came over and asked if I needed help. Actually, they didn’t ask — they simply volunteered to change the tire for me. No sooner had the jack and spare tire been removed from the trunk and placed in position when the skies opened up. At that point, they headed for shelter, while the father assured me he would be back. Sure enough, as soon as the rain let up, he was back. He efficiently changed the tire and placed the flat in my car. He refused my offer to pay him and I failed to get his name. I am very grateful for the generous assistance to me and for witnessing a family that so automatically came to the aid of a stranger. From the daughter’s eagerness to help it was clear that was standard practice for this family.” (185)

“What Wonderful People There are in this City [Rockford, Illinois] I have Called Home My Whole Life”

On 5 November 2012, the Rockford Register Star in Rockford, Illinois, published this letter to the editor by Mary Kegel of Rockford about a good deed: “Traveling south on Mulford Road last Monday (Editor’s note: Oct. 8) with my grandchildren in tow, I approached the turn lane onto Harrison Avenue when my car stalled. Crazy with concern for the grandchildren and the oncoming traffic, I quickly called my son for help. He dropped everything and was on his way. In the meantime, a good Samaritan named
Rick approached from a red truck, turned on his hazard lights and looked under the hood. Rick informed me the car would be okay, called my son back and told him which tools to bring to get the belt back on the pulley. When my son, Kenny, arrived, Rick informed him to buy a new pulley. As the guys worked together and the traffic kept swirling around us, I couldn’t help but think how fortunate I am and what wonderful people there are in this city I have called home my whole life. Thanks, Rick, many blessings to you and your family for being a helping hand in what to me was a dire situation. It’s days like this when we are challenged with problems that the true heart and soul of the people in this city come forth.” (186)

“I am So Very Grateful to that Wonderful Man”

In October 2012, Jackie Schroth wanted to thank a Good Samaritan, but she did not know his name, so she sent this message to the Facebook page of Patch (Strongsville, Ohio): “Hello, a few weeks ago I was stranded at Drug Mart. My daughter dropped me off and had to run to another store. I then realized we left our house in Columbia Station [in Lorain County, Ohio] with a pan of water boiling on top of our gas stove. To make a long story short, while standing outside of Drug Mart, I started asking people if they were leaving to go west on (Route) 82. Approximately 10 people said no. Finally a sweetheart of a man told me yes, he was headed west on 82. Unfortunately, I do not remember his name, but he did tell me that he worked for the city of Strongsville and had a red truck. I hope he reads this because I want him to know how very grateful I am to him for giving me a ride home, especially since I was in a state of panic. What a wonderful man he is and I just want him to be aware of how special he is. Thank you, sir.” She added, “I am so very grateful to that wonderful man.” The mystery Good Samaritan was Strongsville Service Director Joe Walker, who said, “It was
no big deal. I’m glad I was there to help her. […] She told me her story and said no one would give her a ride home. She was so relieved when I offered. She was a very nice lady — very appreciative.” When he drove her home, they discovered that her house was still safe. Mr. Walker said, “I’m just glad everything worked out for her.” (187)

“Treat Your Self”

Even small children engage in random acts of kindness. An Imgur user posted a photo of a dollar that he or she found in a children’s book at a library. Along with the dollar was a note scrawled in a child’s handwriting: “Treat Your Self.” (188)

Sili’s Good Deed that Made Katherine’s Day

Katherine, the blogger behind Kathy’s Calm to Chaos Life, likes sweepstakes and Twitter Parties. Sometimes, she wins a prize. At one Twitter Party, she won a $25 gift card to the Microsoft Store. Sili (@MyMamiHood) sent the gift card to her quickly; not everyone is quick to send prizes. Katherine knew exactly what to buy with it: a “wireless limited edition artist mouse with a red dragon on it to match my laptop and laptop bag!” Unfortunately, when she went online, she discovered that she could not use the gift card — it had to be used in a physical store, not in an online store. The physical Microsoft store nearest to Katherine was 300 miles away. She let Sili know about the problem, and Sili said that she would take care of it. Soon, a package arrived for Katherine: The package contained a wireless limited edition artist mouse with a red dragon on it. Katherine wrote about Sili in her blog, “Every now and then someone comes along that just makes you feel, well, feel awesome!” Sili’s blog is My Mami Hood, and you can follow her on Twitter @MyMamiHood. (189)

Michelle Kenneth’s Unwanted But Expensive Beauty
Michelle Kenneth has the kind of job in which a lot of companies send her free stuff, including expensive beauty products. She has sensitive skin, so often she can’t use the beauty products, and sometimes she does not want other stuff that companies send her. So she does a good deed with these items. In September 2012, she wrote in her blog *Running to Stand Still*, “So I gather up all of the freebies, throw it in a cute paper bag and take it into the office. I only bring these in on Mondays (because everyone has the Monday Blues) or on a really crappy, rainy day. I’ll attach a note to it to brighten everyone’s day and just leave it in the communal kitchen next to the fridge for everyone to see when they get their coffee (or snacks) in the morning. […] I want the ladies to all stumble upon the little surprise bag … because you never know how your crappy morning can change so quickly when you find a beauty product that’s worth $150 in that bag. So for those looking to purge items from your home (especially unused beauty items), bring them into the office in a nice little bag and slap a happy note on it. People LOVE this kind of stuff. I also place random unopened packaged foods in the kitchen with a note saying TAKE ME! on it. When my library has their seasonal book sales, sometimes I’ll pick up some extra books (especially children’s books) and leave them in the copy room for people to take. I’ve never seen a book go unwanted by day’s end.” (190)

In 2012, Montana State University fine art student Nathan Ira, age 23, was giving a flower to people whom he did not know but whom he thought needed a flower to brighten their day. A note came with the single flower: “For whatever you are dealing with, you deserve this.” He called his project “You Deserve a Flower.” Mr. Ira said, “It
doesn’t matter who you are or where you’ve been, you’re dealing with something difficult. It’s one of the undeniable truths: Everyone’s dealing with something.” How does he pick the people to whom he gives a flower? He said, “Sometimes you can tell by the look on their faces or the way they walk. You can just tell they need a flower.” Not everyone looks as if they need a flower. Jordan Mantzey, a young man, took a flower, laughed, and said, “That’s what I love about this community.” Susan Helkenn took a flower, smiled, and admitted being tired; she had been shopping with a four-year-old daughter in tow. Mr. Ira said that he hopes that the idea will spread and that someday he may receive a flower: “That would be really incredible if it came full circle.” (191)

A Fantastic Guy

One of the readers of Ana Samways’ entertaining column Sideswipe that is published in the New Zealand Herald wrote her to praise a bus driver’s good deed: “At 11.30pm, I was getting very worried as our 21-year-old Japanese student wasn’t home. At a quarter to midnight, a bus driver called. He had woken up our distressed student at Browns Bay (way, way past our stop). He got our phone number from her and wanted to know what he could do to help. He said he needed to finish his route to Torbay but he would drop her at the McDonald’s in Wairau Rd, where we could pick her up at about 12.30am. What a fantastic guy.” (192)

A Good Deed and a Cautionary Tale

About 11 p.m. on 23 October 2012, a person who posts online as Slo-Go’en got a telephone call from a female friend who runs a motel near where Slo-Go’en lives. A hiker needed a ride to his car, and Slo-Go’en’s friend knew that Slo-Go’en would be still awake and would be willing to give the hiker a ride. Slo-Go’en wrote, “It turns out the hiker was a day hiker who had gone up the Caps Ridge trail
to the summit of Mt. Jefferson [in New Hampshire]. The problem was, he left the parking lot at about 2 PM, which even in good conditions would be a bit marginal to get to the summit and back before dark this time of year. But when he got above the tree line, he ran into snow and ice which slowed him down a lot. He said once he broke out above tree line, it was like a whole different world up there. Yep, sure is. Anyway, he finally gets to the summit, loses the trail, then finds a trail, but this one is the Castle trail, which goes down a different ridge than the one he came up on and which eventually comes out to the highway, pretty much miles from anything. Then once at the highway, it took him a while to get a ride standing on the side of that dark and desolate road, as the temps started to dip towards freezing. This story could well have had a different ending if he hadn’t had a headlamp and had ended up on a different trail (it’s a real maze up there) which might have led him into the Great Gulf instead of down to the highway. I didn’t ask if he had a map with him, but I suspect not. So, that was my good deed for the day and I only asked that he pay it forward if and when he got the chance. I finally got back home just after midnight. Driving up and down the Jefferson Notch road, a narrow, twisty dirt road, in the dark, is really slow.” (193)

**A Good Deed on Mount Jackson**

On 26 August 2012, a person from Clay, New York, who calls himself Bignslow online wrote about a good deed he performed on Mount Jackson, New Hampshire, when he met two novice female hikers and did a good deed for them. Darkness was coming, and he learned that they had not understood the time it would take for their hike: What they thought was a round-trip time was actually a one-way time. Bignslow wrote that “I asked if they had any lights, to which they replied ‘no.’ They had admitted that they thought the AMC [Appalachian Mountain Club] hike time
was round trip rather than one way and were not prepared to be out after dark. I knew it would be a challenge for Nicole and I to get out before dark so it was very unlikely that they would be getting out before dark. I offered them my headlamp knowing that I had a spare in my pack. The people assured me that they were trustworthy and that would send it back so I gave them a card with my name/address/phone on it so they could contact me and send me the lamp. Nicole and I continued on our merry way making it within 1/4 mile of the trailhead before it got too dark (for me) to hike, so I put on my spare and we hiked back to the car at the crawford trailhead without any drama.” Unfortunately, by 4 October 2012, the two novice hikers had not returned his headlamp. At least, he got some good karma for his loss. (194)

**Good Samaritans: A Teenaged Girl and Her Mother in Malta**

On 20 September 2012, Mr. and Mrs. Colin Pearson of Audley, Staffordshire, England, received some very bad service on a bus in the small Mediterranean island country of Malta. Fortunately, a girl from Manikata helped him. Mr. Pearson wrote in a letter to the editor of the *Times* in Malta, “I would like to thank an unknown girl from Manikata and her mother who kindly rescued my wife and me from an isolated village. We visited Notte Bianca in Valletta on September 29 and wished to return to Golden Bay on the last scheduled bus at 10.40pm. We boarded a 44 bus in Valletta and expected to be delivered safely to our hotel. The bus arrived at Mgarr at 11.30pm and the driver brusquely told us that he was going no further, saying something incomprehensible about waiting for a shuttle service. There was no advance warning (indeed, I had earlier e-mailed Arriva, expecting additional services for Notte Bianca, rather than less) and I have not had any explanation or apology from them. We were not the only
passengers to be surprised by this early termination. Those who were included a teenage girl who had expected the bus to take her to Manikata rather than be stranded in the middle of nowhere. Fortunately, she had her mobile phone and was able to wake her mother up, who came to collect her and, very kindly, gave us a lift to Golden Bay. We never got her name but would like to thank her publicly for being a Good Samaritan to rescue us from the ravages of Arriva, who did not arrive!” Arriva is one of Europe’s largest transport services organizations. (195)

“He Handed Me a Pack of Credit Cards and Money — Over $100 — and Said He had Found it on the Ground Near the Passenger Side of Our Car”

In early 2013, Marjorie Taylor and her husband, who live in Monroeville, Pennsylvania, went to see a movie. Only one other couple — much younger than the Taylors — were present. After the movie, the younger couple left quickly, but the Taylors took their time, as many elderly couples do. Outside the theater, the male part of the young couple was waiting for them. In a letter to the editor of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania), Ms. Taylor explained, “He asked my name and which car was ours. Then he handed me a pack of credit cards and money — over $100 — and said he had found it on the ground near the passenger side of our car. He would not take a reward. We intend to pay it forward for this good deed — it surely left us with a warm feeling of appreciation for the younger generation!” (196)

“It’s Nice to Hear a Positive Story for a Change, and It Shows We do Have Good Children in Clacton”

In March 2013, James Morrison, age 14, of Recreation Road, Clacton, UK, found a wallet while delivering newspapers after school. His mother, Fiona, said, “There was a lot of cash and credit cards in it, but James brought it
home and asked if we could try and find the owner. His first instinct was to return it. The man was really grateful. He manages an Indian restaurant and offered James a complimentary meal. I’m really proud of him. All you hear about is young kids doing bad things. It’s nice to hear a positive story for a change, and it shows we do have good children in Clacton.” (197)

“I Kinda Thought She had a Baby. If She had a Baby, She Needs to Feed It”

In February 2013, Kearstin and Celeste Cruz of Boyd, Texas, found something interesting; together, they said, “A wallet. And it had a lot of money in it.” A woman had lost the wallet and money. Celeste Cruz said, “I kinda thought she had a baby. If she had a baby, she needs to feed it.” Their father searched for the woman on Facebook. Failing to find her, he contacted the police, who found the woman. Boyd Police Chief Greg Arrington said, “I found her through a library card; that’s how I could get in touch with her.” The woman had just cashed her income-tax check, and the wallet contained $1,350. Police Chief Arrington said, “I called her on the phone first, and she just started crying. She was so relieved that it had been returned.” In a school assembly at Boyd Middle School, teachers and staff commended Kearstin and Celeste Cruz for their good deed — and all the middle-school students got ice cream. In addition, two charitable foundations gave the Cruz family $2,000 to reward the two sisters’ honesty and good character. (198)

“I Still Don’t Honestly Know How It Got Back to Me — It’s a Miracle. It’s the Most Magical Feeling I’ve had in 40 Years”

In November 2004 in Whithorn, Scotland, pensioner Brian Salmon, age 74, lost his wallet, which contained £160. He had just cashed his Department of Social Services check.
Fortunately, a Good Samaritan found it and dropped it through Mr. Salmon’s letter-box. Mr. Salmon said, “On Monday I got my new winter fuel payments from the DSS, so I went across to the Post Office to cash them. It tells you on the instructions to go and cash them straight away, so I did. With some of the money, I bought a lot of power cards, which I put in my pocket. I cashed the whole £300, my £200 winter fuel payment and £100 extra because I’m over 70. I paid for £140 worth of power cards and put the rest, £160, in my wallet. I came back out and the bank still wasn’t open, so I went down the town to Costcutters. I bought a couple of things, but I never got to the bank because I went home to dump my messages. It wasn’t until later on in the afternoon that I realised that I had lost my wallet.” Unfortunately, because of darkness and rain, he was unable to look immediately for his wallet. He said, “I couldn’t get to the bank because it was closed, so I phoned the police on Tuesday morning and they told me to backtrack, to go back to everywhere I had been. I asked the police, ‘What do you think my chances are of getting it back?’ and the lady said, ‘We aren’t allowed to answer questions like that,’ so I didn’t hold out much hope. I went back down the street into Costcutters and the newsagents, and I said, ‘Look, I’m sorry, I’ve lost my wallet, have you seen it anywhere?’ but nobody had. But the wonderful thing about it was all the fantastic offers of help and sympathy I got from everybody. Everybody was being very kind and helpful. If anything not too pleasant happens to you, this is a lovely part of the world to be in — it really is. Various people said, ‘Have you told the bank?’ because in my wallet was my bus pass, senior citizens card and other bits and pieces — all these things you don’t think about until you realise you don’t have them anymore.” And then Mr. Salmon got his wallet back: “On Thursday I was in my kitchen making tea and the phone rang. As I came out right there, underneath the letter-box, was my wallet. I looked
out the door, and there was nobody to be seen. Nowhere in my wallet was my address — there was nothing to indicate where Brian Salmon lives. I still don’t honestly know how it got back to me — it’s a miracle. It’s the most magical feeling I’ve had in 40 years.” All of his money was still in his wallet. Mr. Salmon said about the Good Samaritan, “They should be very proud of their honesty and kindness and so should Whithorn.” (199)

“I Opened It First, and I Saw All the Money, and I Quickly Closed It Back Up”

In December 2012, Patrick Morgan, an African-American cleaning service worker at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport in Florida, found a lost iPad. In the case of the iPad was $13,000. He said, “I opened it first, and I saw all the money, and I quickly closed it back up.” He alerted the authorities about his find. Almost immediately, the owner of the iPad and the money showed up and claimed the lost items and gave Mr. Morgan a $60 reward. He gave the money to two people in need: a homeless woman and a cleaning employee. The Broward County Aviation Department presented Mr. Morgan with a plaque and a gift. His employer, Sunshine Cleaning Systems, awarded him $625. Larry Calufetti, president of Sunshine Cleaning Systems, said, “Patrick is such an outstanding and honest person. What he did speaks volumes about his personality.” Mr. Morgan said, “It’s just a good feeling to know that I returned it, and that’s the bottom line. I wasn’t looking for anything.” (200)

CHAPTER 5: Stories 201-250

“The Correct Thing to Do”

In March 2013, a janitor named Daniel Valentin, age 42, of Villamor Air Base, Pasay City, Philippines, found a wallet that contained approximately Php100,000 ($2,466 US) in
foreign currencies at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 1. The owner of the wallet, Jerome Franco Biason, had lost it while getting into a taxi. Mr. Valentin said, “I did not have any second thoughts returning it. That was the correct thing to do.” (201)

“I Could’ve Kept the Money, But I Didn’t Do That”

In early 2013, Pamela North Hollowaay found an envelope containing $7,000 — all in $100 bills — at the International Terminal of Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in Atlanta, Georgia. She said, “I showed the money to the [shuttle] driver, then I went right inside and turned it in right away.” Her supervisor counted the money in front of her and then contacted the Atlanta Police Department’s airport precinct. Ms. Holloway said, “I could’ve kept the money, but I didn’t do that. I’m an honest citizen. I’m a taxpayer, and I believe in doing the right thing.” A man called and was able to tell the police what was written on the envelope. The man, a podiatrist who lives in Alabama, had been traveling to Costa Rica. Ms. Hollowaay said, “Hopefully if that ever happened to me, someone would turn my money back in, too.” (202)

“Darlene, God’s Got Your Back!”

In February 2013, Darlene Moore of Jacksonville, Florida, dropped her wallet in a Walmart parking lot. When she discovered that her wallet was missing, she retraced her steps. She said, “I had $200 in there. Along with all my ID and credit cards.” She even looked at the Walmart parking lot surveillance footage and saw her wallet: “We saw it there, people were walking by it, no one picked it up.” Then it disappeared. She said, “We couldn’t see who took it.” She filed a report with the police: “They pretty much told me I’d never get my wallet back.” However, when she was home, she got a surprise. She said, “My son brought [the mail] in and sat it on the table. There was my wallet
and a book on top of it.” This is the note that she found in the book: “Darlene, God’s got your back!” She said, “And then it says ‘blessings’ and there’s the signature.” Unfortunately, the signature is mostly illegible: “There’s definitely an ‘S’ in there.” She added, “I’m just on a high because this all happened like 2 weeks ago, and I’m still elated about it.” (203)

“The Cops are Looking for You”

Two weeks before Christmas of 2011, Amber Dukes lost her wallet, which contained her ID and credit card. She lives in the Dallas, Texas, area, but she lost her wallet while visiting family in Longview, Texas. Fortunately, an employee at a hotel found her wallet and gave it to a police officer, who investigated and gave it to her father, who lives in Longview and who called her to say, “The cops are looking for you.” Ms. Dukes wrote in a January 2012 letter to the editor of the Longview News-Journal, “To everyone involved I want to say thank you. I do not know the name of the officer, or the people at the hotel, but I want them to know they did something extraordinary, and something I will never forget.” (204)

“Thank You, Sir, for Such a Kind and Noble Act”

The uncle of Cristina Hangman of Yountville, California, lost his wallet in the parking lot of an auto parts store. A man found the wallet, got the uncle’s phone number, and called it. Her uncle was not at home, but Cristina’s mother — the uncle’s sister — took the call. Unfortunately, she wrote down the Good Samaritan’s phone number incorrectly. Fortunately, the Good Samaritan was persistent. In a letter to the editor of the Napa Valley Register (Napa, California), Cristina wrote, “We were surprised when the doorbell rang at our house that afternoon and the gentleman was there with the wallet in hand. My mother tried to give him a reward, but he would
not accept it. We were not able to get his name, but he was driving a truck from Valley Painting. I don’t know if he is the owner or an employee, but I know we will remember them the next time we have a painting project. To the good Samaritan: Thank you, sir, for such a kind and noble act. My uncle was very happy and relieved to get his wallet back. Your honesty and kindness made us smile. Thank you, sir.” (205)

“There are Still Some Good People Out There”

In Milford, Delaware, Harold Walls lost his wallet — and the $800 inside it. He had planned to buy a 55-inch flat-screen TV with the money. Of course, he searched for the money before writing it off. Mr. Walls and Rick Webb worked together as garbagemen, and Mr. Walls said that Mr. Webb and he “went back and retraced our steps, every place we’d been.” They did not find the wallet. Mr. Walls said, “I wrote it off, honestly. I’d lost it, done and gone. Ain’t no sense in harping about it or crying over spilled milk. Keep moving.” Three years later, in February 2013, Mr. Walls got a surprise: “My supervisor said, ‘I have something that belongs to you.’ And he showed me my wallet.” The $800 was still inside it. In 2012, the city government had auctioned off the trash truck to a farmer in Maine who disassembled the bench seat frame in the cab — and found the wallet. Mr. Walls said, “This farmer out in Maine mailed it back. I was real surprised it came back with everything. … It happens to restore a lot of faith that there are still some good people out there.” (206)

“Wouldn’t It be Great if Money Started Pouring Out?”

On 22 February 2012, as Pat Wesner, the director of the Pember Museum in Granville, New York, was driving on route 22 north of the village of Salem, New York, a Brinks armored truck passed her. She said that she thought, “Wouldn’t it be great if money started pouring out?” It did.
She said, “He hit a bump and a spray of change came out in front of my car and I looked and went ‘Oh my god — that’s money!’ He hit another bump and bills just flew out all over the place.” She gathers the money — $11,000 — and called police. She stayed by the road until police arrived; police quickly contacted the guards in the Brinks truck. Ms. Wesner said, “It’s stealing if you take something that’s not yours and [...] I picked up a lot of bills that were on the ground and never even thought that I would put anything in my pocket. It didn’t belong to me.” (207)

Getting Back to FOB Azizullah

On 17 January 2013, a 21-year-old Colorado soldier, Pfc. Chad Reid lost his wallet on a street in Afghanistan. It contained his identification and several credit cards, and without it he could not board the flight back to his base: FOB Azizullah. He really, really needed that wallet. Fortunately, a stranger found his wallet and called a telephone number in it. The number was for Pfc. Chad Reid’s grandfather in Landsdale, Pennsylvania. Bob Meeker, Pfc. Reid’s grandfather, said, “I was in my office. My phone rang. I said, ‘Bob Meeker,’ and this voice asked if I knew Chad Reid. I told him I did, and he said, ‘My name is Bill Peasley, and I’m calling from Afghanistan.’ My heart raced, because I didn’t know what might have happened.” Mr. Peasley is a civilian aircraft mechanic working in Afghanistan whose wife and three kids and home are in Otis, Maine. He had been going to eat at a company chow hall when he saw the wallet. Mr. Peasley said, “The sun had started to set and it was getting dark out, so I almost didn’t see it. I couldn’t imagine losing something so valuable in a stressful place so far from home. And I knew I had to return it as soon as possible.” He gave Mr. Meeker his contact information, and Mr. Reid called Pfc. Reid’s mother, who lives in Denver, Colorado, and passed on the contact information. Almost immediately
after the call, Pfc. Reid called his mother. Mr. Meeker said about Pfc. Reid, “He just kept telling us how it had been impressed on him, ‘You always need identification.’ To be in a place like Afghanistan, in a war situation, to lose your wallet, there’s no telling what could’ve been done with the information he had in there, but his biggest concern was how he was going to get on that airplane.” Pfc. Reid’s mother gave him the good news that his wallet had been found, and she gave him Mr. Peasley’s contact information. Pfc. Reid signed on to Facebook to find Mr. Peasley, and he found that Mr. Peasley had left a message for him. Mr. Peasley said, “After the phone conversation with Bob, I got on Facebook and attempted to find Chad. After about a half hour, I was able to find him and send him a message telling him that I found his wallet.” The two men met, and Pfc. Reid got his wallet back. Mr. Peasley said, “I believe even the smallest acts of kindness are very important, especially in a location like this where everyone is under an extreme amount of stress. Even everyday activities here are stressful, and I cannot imagine how much worse it must be to work off the base in a dangerous situation.” Mr. Meeker was impressed by Mr. Peasley’s good deed: he said that for him “to do this from Afghanistan, to go through the trouble, really struck us. This guy has a lot of character.” Mr. Peasley said, “Being happy and doing nice things tends to rub off on people.” (208)

“People Don’t Turn in Money When It’s Lost.” “I Do”

In June 2012, Jeanne Wolcott of Athol, which is in the same county as Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, lost her wallet, which contained $230. She got it back. Why? She said that it is because she lives in North Idaho: “Where else in God’s green Earth could you go and lose $230 and get it back, every penny of it. I’m very impressed by it.” She had lost her wallet at the Walmart in Hayden, which is also in the same county as Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. She returned to the
Walmart and asked if anyone had found a wallet. Fortunately, someone had. A manager asked her a few questions about the wallet, and she answered the questions correctly. Ms. Wolcott said, “She handed me my wallet. There was $230 in it, just exactly what there was when I lost it. I was just floored.” She is on Social Security, and she needed the money: “That was all the funds I had until the first of the month.” Karma may have played a role in this happy ending. When Ms. Wolcott was seven or eight years old, she found two $20 bills while crossing a street in Bishop, California. She went into a bookstore and left her aunt’s name and phone number in case someone asked about lost money. An elderly gentleman soon called and said that he had lost some of his money from Social Security: two $20 bills. She and her aunt returned the money to the man, and he gave her a reward of $5. Young Jeanne told him, “I’m just doing what anybody else would do.” He said, “People don’t turn in money when it’s lost.” Young Jeanne replied, “I do.” (209)

“Our Students [at Holiman Elementary in San Angelo, Texas] are in Good Hands”

In 2012, the wife of Mack Kessler lost a check during the Halloween Carnival at Holiman Elementary in San Angelo, Texas. Someone found the check and mailed it to Mrs. Kessler. Mr. Kessler wrote in a letter to the editor of the *San Angelo Standard Times*, “I assume that this is the normal teaching in the school, and I also am sure that our students there are in good hands. My mother (a teacher for 44 years) would be proud. Thanks again to whoever did the good deed.” (210)

“All I Kept Thinking was Somebody Somewhere was Having a Very Bad Day. That could be Somebody’s Rent or Damage Deposit or Both — Somebody Needed that Money for Something”
On 10 September 2012, Chelsey Walker, the manager of the Fairway Plaza McDonald’s restaurant in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, found an envelope of money next to a till. She said, “All I kept thinking was somebody somewhere was having a very bad day. That could be somebody’s rent or damage deposit or both — somebody needed that money for something. It’s definitely a lot of money, somebody would have had a great week, or a trip to Las Vegas or Mexico.” She turned in the envelope of money to the police, who commended her in a press release: “Police wish to publicly commend the McDonald’s staff member who turned the money in. Thank you for your honesty and integrity.” A few months previously, at another McDonald’s location in Lethbridge, Ms. Walker and her staff found a purse. It contained cash, a passport, and other items. The rightful owner got her purse back. (211)

“The Young Man Did the Right Thing, and I Think the Lord Blessed Me and He’ll Bless that Young Man”

On 20 October 2012, John Gordon lost a bank bag containing $2,500 cash in a shopping cart at A to Z Variety in Fort Smith, Arizona. He remembers, “I said we probably won’t ever see that again.” But he did see it again. Employee Biagio Tumminello found it: “I walked up to it and noticed it was a bank bag, and my heart already started to thump a little bit.” He added, “I just wanted to get it out of my possession as fast as possible.” He gave it to his boss. Mr. Tumminello said, “I would want somebody to do the same for me. My father always taught me if it’s not yours you just don’t take it.” Mr. Gordon went back to the store to see if anyone had handed in the money. Of course, Mr. Tumminello had. Mr. Tumminello said, “He gave me a hug. He said, ‘Did you look inside of it?’ I said, ‘Yes, sir, I did,’ and he just gave me a tighter hug.” Mr. Gordon got all of his money back. He said, “The young man did the right thing, and I think the Lord blessed me and he’ll bless that
young man.” He added, “In this economy, you don’t see that kind of thing happen very often.” (212)

Gino, Owner of Goldsmith’s of Buffalo, New York: Good Samaritan

On 4 November 2012, Jennifer Lysiak, Lancaster Editor of MetroWNY (Western New York), wrote, “A couple of weeks ago, I was told that Depew business owner Gino, who owns Goldsmith’s of Buffalo, did a good deed. I definitely thought he deserved some recognition, and I thought we could all do more good deeds.” Gino found a wallet whose contents included a Metro payroll check. Gino called Metro’s human resource department and got the information needed to return the wallet to its rightful owner. Quickly, the mission was accomplished: The rightful owner got the wallet back. (213)

“They were Overjoyed. Couldn’t Believe the Honesty”

On 22 October 2012, Gaynol Waugh, a T repairer, found a wallet containing $912 on a Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority bus. He did the right thing and handed it in to the authorities. Mr. Waugh said, “Whether it be one dollar or a million, it’s not mine and [keeping it is] not the right thing to do. I’ve always felt that way.” He added, “It’s not my money and obviously it belongs to somebody, and I just wanted to make sure she got it back.” Kevin Graney, district superintendent at the Charlestown bus facility, returned the wallet and money to its rightful owner. He said, “They were overjoyed. Couldn’t believe the honesty.” (214)

Anonymous Canadian Female Good Samaritans Finds, Returns Over $2,000

On 16 October 2012, a woman in Vernon, British Columbia, Canada, saw lots of money blowing around in a parking lot. She gathered as much money as she could and
called the police. A business owner had dropped the money. According to Royal Canadian Mounted Police spokesperson Gord Molendyk, over $2,000 was returned to the business owner. The Good Samaritan wished to remain anonymous. (215)

**Parking Lots are Good Places to Find Money**

On 17 October 2012 in Framingham, Massachusetts, a woman — who does not want to be identified — turned over to police $6,600 in $100 bills that she had found strewn in a parking lot. Detective Scott DeCiero said that the police were able to identify who had dropped the money by viewing security footage. The security footage revealed the license plate of the car that the man who had dropped the money got into. The police returned the money to its rightful owner: the Marlborough Brazilian Market at 192 Main Street. Detective DeCiero said, “We were happy we could get it back to them.” (216)

**Jonathan Ratliff: An Example of Honesty and Character**

On 17 October 2012, this letter to the editor by Norm Archibald of Abilene, Texas, appeared on the website of the Abilene Reporter-News: “On Saturday afternoon in the parking lot of H-E-B, I witnessed an older gentleman accidentally have some money blow out of his pocket into the parking lot. I then witnessed a young man who works for H-E-B bringing in shopping carts retrieve the money and run to return it to the man. The man did not realize he had lost the money. I caught up to the young man who works for H-E-B and asked his name. His name is Jonathan Ratliff. He is an example of honesty and character. He is a tribute to himself, his family, and H-E-B. I am glad to live in a city with people like Jonathan. I am very proud of what he did. Thank you, Jonathan.” (217)
Anonymous Female Good Samaritan Found an Envelope Stuffed with over $6,000

In October 2012, a woman looked through a book at the Poulsbo Library in Poulsbo, Washington. She found an envelope filled with $100 bills; the total amount was over $6,000. She did the right thing and left the money with a library staff member. The reason? She said that she knew that whoever had lost the money would be upset. About an hour later, a local man entered the library and said that he had lost an envelope filled with money. He showed the library staff member a bank slip that showed that he had withdrawn over $6,000, and he gave the library staff member the exact amount of money that he had lost. This amount matched the amount that had been found, according to Sharon Lee, library branch manager. Happy ending: He got his money back. In a comment on this story, Olympicdude wrote, “Hopefully he threw a couple bills her way. I leave a note in my wallet that says ‘If found, take all the cash and call me @ xxx-xxxx.’ So whoever is lucky enough to find my wallet will walk away with anywhere between $4-$13 AND feel good about themselves for returning it to me.” And Belatrix wrote, “Great piece. I walked in to the Fred Meyer in Federal Way a couple years ago. The bathroom. A wallet was sitting there stuffed with bills above the sink area. Dropped it off at customer service. As I left, a frantic guy was running back to the store. I said … lose something? Freaking out, … my wallet! It is at customer service. His heart beat must have dropped by a factor of 5k.” (218)

“I Never Thought I’d See that Money Again”

In August 2012, Patrick Butler of Stephenville, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, lost a wallet containing nearly $1,000. On 14 September 2012, John Sommerville of Stettler, Alberta, Canada, found the wallet
and more than $700 in cash scattered in ditches near Gadsby, Alberta. Mr. Butler had been in Alberta looking for work. He had borrowed the money — $1,000 in $20 bills — to pay for the trip. Mr. Butler had spent only a few dollars before losing the wallet. Mr. Sommerville, an Atco Electric linesman, was checking a power line when he found a $20 bill in a ditch. He searched the ditch and found a couple of hundred dollars. He thought that maybe the money had blown across the highway, and so he checked the ditch on the other side of the highway. He found more money, bringing the total to $645, and he found Mr. Butler’s wallet and ID. Mr. Sommerville returned twice more to look for money; in total, he found $765. He contacted Mr. Butler’s wife, Brenda, and returned the wallet and money. Mr. Butler said, “I never thought I’d see that money again.” He added about Mr. Sommerville, “I really want to thank him personally for what he did.” (219)

**Slater Johnstone and Others: Good People**

On 7 October 2012, Ed Dunnill of Manitouwadge, Ontario, Canada, and a friend finished about a 24-hour trip from the Philippines and arrived at the Thunder Bay International Airport in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. He paid his parking fees, but out of exhaustion, he lost his wallet. Fortunately, some people helped him. In a letter to the editor of *The Chronicle-Journal*, Mr. Dunnill wrote, “Not knowing that my wallet was missing, I left the airport and went to gas up at one of Thunder Bay’s gas bars only to discover that my wallet was missing. My friend was gracious enough to pay for the gas and we went back to the airport. I contacted one of the security officers and asked him if anyone had turned in a wallet. To my surprise, someone did turn it in with all of the contents still in it; even all of my money. I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to Slater Johnstone for his remarkable good deed, and if he reads this article, you can obtain my contact
information through airport security or *The Chronicle-Journal*. I was told by airport security that Mr. Johnstone is a Lakehead University student. Honourable mentions should be made to such students. Also, I would like to extend thanks to all security personnel who worked that night.” (220)

**Adam Woldemarim: Las Vegas Taxi Driver Who Returned $221,510 in Cash**

On 2 September 2012, Las Vegas, Nevada, taxi driver Adam Woldemarim, a 42-year-old who is from Ethiopia, was cleaning a taxi when he found a black soft laptop case filled with $221,510 in cash. He turned in the money to the security office at Frias Transportation Management, which owns the company he works for: Virgin Valley Cab. A young man had won big gambling, and then had left the money in the cab. He was, of course, happy to get the money back, and he gave Mr. Woldemarim $2,000 as a reward. Alex “Baharu” Alebachew, age 50, one of Mr. Woldemarim’s friends, said, “It would have been nice if my good friend got more money, but I think the most important thing here is that a lot of people think foreign cabdrivers like us abuse tourists or they long haul their customers or we’re just here causing problems and we don’t belong here. They never see the good side to us, the honest side.” (221)

**“This is a Gift of Heaven from Ma”**

Leo Guarente of The Junk Depot in Saugus, Massachusetts, hauls away junk, and he sometimes finds valuables in the junk he hauls away. He said, “We find antiques, we found confederate money, WWII helmets.” In 2012, he was supposed to haul away a 1970s Hope chest from a house in Medford, Massachusetts. He looked inside first. He said, “All of a sudden there was this envelope and I looked in it and [it] said thousand dollars bonds on it. It was, one
thousand one thousand one thousand.” All told, he found $114,000 of bonds. The owner of the Hope chest was Marie Veloso. He gave her the bonds, and she — of course — said, “Thank you very much.” The bonds had belonged to her mother, who had recently died of cancer. Ms. Veloso said, “This is a gift of heaven from Ma.” Mr. Guarente said, “It warms my heart to know that I helped someone.” (222)

“If He had been There When I Got Home, I Probably Would have Married Him”

In December 2005, Paula Rigsbee of West Columbia, South Carolina, lost her wallet; fortunately, it was quickly returned to her. While she was buying gas at a convenience store on a trip to see her mother, her wallet fell out of a front pocket of her jean jacket. She said, “I didn’t know I had done that. I didn’t realize it was missing until I got almost home because I didn’t need it.” Immediately, she began looking for it in her car. She even called her mother and asked her to look for it. Neither could find the wallet, but when Ms. Rigsbee got home, her wallet was waiting for her in her mailbox, along with a note from a stranger. She said, “All my money was there. Nothing was missing. Nothing. I don’t know if I cried harder at losing it or at getting it back.” The person who had found her wallet was Andre Williams, a Northeast Richland electrician. He had stopped at the same convenience store where Ms. Rigsbee had stopped, and he had stepped on her wallet. Her driver’s license was inside, and he spent nearly an hour finding her home so he could drop off her wallet. Ms. Rigsbee said, “If he had been there when I got home, I probably would have married him. It’s encouraging to know there are still people like that. You don’t see them everyday, and you don’t always hear about them. I wouldn’t get rid of this note for anything in the world.” Mr. Williams said, “There are a lot of good folks in the world. I do good because a lot of good has been done to me.” (223)
“Richard [Penny] Really is One of a Kind; He is a Guardian for the Community. This was Such a Lovely Thing for Him to Do. I Never Expected to See that Purse Again”

In 2012, Juana Moreland lost her purse in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada. After a month had passed, she thought that she would never see it again. Fortunately, Richard Penny, an elderly man who spends a lot of time doing the good deed of picking up litter, found it and returned it to her. While he was picking up litter from the Irving Mainway parking lot on Commercial Street in North Sydney, he saw something in the water. He said, “I noticed a purse on the rocks, and when I checked there were papers and identification still inside. I knew that whoever owned the purse would need these important papers and cards. I was sure they would be worried about what happened to their identification papers and want them back no matter the condition.” He found an address in the purse and returned it to Ms. Moreland, who said, “I just couldn’t believe it when he came to my door. The purse is a Roots bag, so it is quite nice, but it is important to me because it was a gift from my sister. It has sentimental value.” Mr. Penny has picked up litter for years. He said, “I’ve done this all my life. I can’t stand seeing garbage on the ground. I have to do something. I pick it up or sweep it up. That’s what I was doing the day I found the purse: cleaning up litter.” Ms. Moreland said, “Richard really is one of a kind; he is a guardian for the community. This was such a lovely thing for him to do. I never expected to see that purse again.” She gave Mr. Penny a small reward and bought him his favorite coffee. She said, “At first he wasn’t going to take it, but it was little enough. He is such an asset to our community — who else would be out in all kinds of weather keeping our streets clean? This was a real act of kindness for which I’m grateful.” (224)
“That Driver Deserves a Reward and If I Weren’t Broke, I’d Give Her Cash”

In September 2012, Michael Hackamack left a briefcase on a Muni bus in San Francisco, California. He said that he realized that he had left his briefcase behind “about four seconds after I got off the bus, and it just started away. There was no catching it.” The briefcase contained valuables: “My laptop, my wallet, credit cards, checkbook, medications.” Also, it contained 14 carats of diamonds that decorate a platinum ring and bracelet. Mr. Hackamack said, “And I’d just gotten, a couple of weeks ago, a thank-you letter from Mr. and Mrs. Obama for one of my paintings that now hangs at the White House. That was unreplaceable.” He called the police and filed a report. Five days later, he got a call from Muni’s Lost and Found. They had his briefcase, and everything was still inside it. Mr. Hackamack said, “I went ‘Oh, amazing!’ Such honesty these days. That driver deserves a reward and if I weren’t broke, I’d give her cash.” The bus driver was Kimberly Robinson; Mr. Hackamack gave her a big hug and a bouquet of roses. Ms. Robinson said, “I was really glad he got his bag back. I didn’t realize how much he had in his bag until he told me. So, I’m glad he got his belongings.” San Francisco Transit agency spokesperson Paul Rose said, “It’s not uncommon for an operator to go an extra mile to show an act of kindness. A lot of times, the perception is the other way, and for this type of story to come out for an operator like this, it’s a good thing.” (225)

“I have Your Diamond in My Hand. Everything is Going to be OK”

In March 2013, Katie Sattler picked up her dogs after their grooming at a PetSmart in Vero Beach, Florida. Unfortunately, after she left the store, she discovered that a three-carat, $30,000 diamond was missing from her
engagement ring. She said, “I thought I was going to have a heart attack or something.” In hysterics and unable to drive, she called her husband and then she called PetSmart. PetSmart manager Jeff Lamscha took her call, and while she was on the phone, he retraced her steps and found her diamond in a corner. Mr. Lamscha said, “I told her immediately, ‘I have your diamond in my hand. Everything is going to be OK.’” Ms. Sattler returned to the store within 10 minutes and picked up the diamond. Mr. Lamscha said, “There wasn’t a question in my mind that I wouldn’t have returned the diamond. I could tell how distraught she was, and the first thing I wanted to do was reunite her with it.” Ms. Sattler’s husband, Mark, praised Mr. Lamscha: “It’s just a happy-ending story where someone had the honor, the integrity, the sincerity to step up to the plate and do the right thing.” (226)

Lost, Found, and Returned: Wedding Ring

Darlene King’s husband lost his wedding ring, and Darlene thought that she would never see it again. But in June 2012, five or six years after it had been lost, Darlene — now age 78 and a widow — got it back. Shannon and Steve Callahan found the ring in a car they had bought, and they spent three weeks searching for its owner. As the Callahans gave the ring to Darlene at her home in Auburn, California, Shannon said, “I want to give this ring back to you — and a hug.” Shannon felt strongly about returning the ring to its proper owner. Her husband explained, “She lost her own ring before and was really upset.” Thomas King had lost the ring before he and Darlene had moved from Texas to California. Darlene said, “I told him it probably went down the drain or something. We thought it was a lost cause.” The Sacramento Bee helped find the ring’s owner and telephoned Darlene, who said, “The first question I asked was is it white or yellow gold. Because if it was yellow, it wasn’t his. And it would be disappointing if it wasn’t his.”
The ring is 14 karat white gold with five diamond flecks on top; the couple’s wedding date — April 29, 1961 — is inscribed inside the band. Shannon found the ring in the family car while searching for Steve’s lost cellphone. She said, “My heart dropped inside. I turned to my husband and said, ‘OK, it’s a ring.’ There were five diamonds on top of it and an inscription. So I knew it was a wedding ring and it belongs to somebody.” Darlene has plans for the ring: “I guess I’m going to give it to my son. It’ll be a gift from his father.” (227)

“I Never Thought I’d See the Ring Again”

In 1997, while Kim Rossi, whose name then was Kim Cook, was living on Iowa Street in Napa, California, a thief broke into her home and stole all of her jewelry, including her gold 1983 Napa High School class ring. She said, “I never thought I’d see the ring again.” Not long after the theft, Steve Killian bought a 1968 Impala. Later, he started to restore the car, and he found a class ring when he tore out the carpet in the rear. He said, “I would think it’s an important part of your history.” On the inside the ring were the initials “KLC,” and on the outside was the name “Kim.” Mr. Killian had also attended Napa High School, but in the late 1980s. He tried to find the class ring’s owner. The woman from whom he had bought the car was not named Kim, so he knew that it wasn’t hers. He looked at old yearbooks at the Napa High library and found a 1983 graduate named Kim Cook, but he was unable to locate her. For several years, he gave up on trying to find her, but then he had an idea: Facebook might help him find her. He found a Kim Cook Rossi listed on Facebook and sent her a friend request, which she accepted. Mr. Killian said, “Once I started explaining everything, she got real excited.” Ms. Rossi remembered, “He said, ‘I’m pretty sure this is your ring,’ and I started crying.” In February 2013, the two met in Napa, and Mr. Killian gave her the ring. Ms. Rossi put
on the ring and said, “My hands are shaking. It looks brand-new. I can’t explain how I feel right now. Thank you so much.” Mr. Killian said that he wanted to do the right thing: “That’s always how I’ve been. I would hope someone would do the same for me.” (228)

“The Whole Moral of the Story is There are Still Good People Out There”

In November 2012, Hager Elsayed, a teacher assistant, lost her princess-cut engagement ring at a New York City subway station. When she noticed that the ring was missing, she thought that she had left it at home, but she searched thoroughly and could not find it. That is when she realized that it must have slipped off her finger. She said, “I guessed that since I lost a few pounds, it slipped off.” Her fiancé, Juan Rivera, a fireproofer, had worked many hours of overtime to buy the ring for her. He said, “I was devastated. I was like, ‘I’m still paying for that ring. How could you do that!’” In January, Ms. Elsayed was at the Fort Hamilton Parkway N-train station. She saw the station agent who had been working there when she lost her ring and asked him, “Did anyone by any chance find an engagement ring?” The station agent, Anthony Tiralosi, said that an elderly Asian woman who spoke no English had found the ring and turned it in. Mr. Tiralosi said, “I knew it was an engagement ring because I used to sell jewelry. As soon as I saw it, I knew the ring was worth at least $4,000. It was a gorgeous ring. I said, ‘Gee, whoever lost this must feel sick.’” He added, “I told my kids that night about the ring. I wanted them to know the importance of returning something that didn’t belong to them.” Ms. Elsayed got the ring back after she provided proof that the ring was hers — including photographs and a proof of purchase from her fiancé. She is grateful to the anonymous Chinese woman who found and turned in the ring. She said, “The whole moral of the story is there are still good people
“Did You Ever Find the Sax Guy?”

Chris Bires, age 42, lost his wedding ring through an act of generosity. He was crossing the Madison Street Bridge in Chicago, Illinois, to catch a train when he heard a saxophone player busking for money. Mr. Bires reached into his pants pocket, took out a handful of change, and tossed the change into the sax player’s box for collecting money. Later, he realized that he was not wearing his wedding ring. He thought that he had lost it in the gym, but no one there had seen it. He searched his home, but he did not find it. Then he realized that after his workout, he had put his ring in his pants pocket. He had given the sax player intentionally some change and unintentionally a platinum band, worth over $1,000 and inscribed with the words “I love you.” He kept looking for the sax player every time he crossed the Madison Street Bridge, but he did not see him. He also asked bridge regulars if they had seen the sax player. One person he asked was Bonita Franks, an unemployed woman who begged for money and passed out copies of her resume on the bridge. Time passed, and Mr. and Mrs. Bires thought that they would never see the ring again. But after taking a vacation with his wife, Mary, he saw Ms. Franks on the bridge and asked, “Did you ever find the sax guy?” She had. She said, “I’ve been looking for you.” And she gave him his wedding ring back. She had asked the sax player about it, and he had given it to her to return to its rightful owner. Mr. Bires was impressed: “Two people on the streets asking for money easily could have hawked the ring.” But they did not.

“Something Just Pulled Me to Keep Going — You’ve Got to Find that Ring”

In 2012, Sheryl and Bob Smith of Las Vegas, Nevada, celebrated their 35th anniversary on the sands of Pensacola
Beach, Florida. Unfortunately, Sheryl lost her wedding ring in the sand. She said, “We were getting ready to leave the beach and when I got ready to get up to take my beach shoes, the water shoes to shake them out, my ring slipped off.” The Smiths searched for an hour to find the wedding ring, but they could not find it. A German tourist named Markus Weise suggested that they ask a man with a metal detector for help. They kept searching, but eventually everyone except Mr. Weise gave up. Although Sheryl did not think that he would find her ring, she gave him a pamphlet from her church, Liberty Baptist Church of Las Vegas, and said that he could contact her through the church. Sheryl said, “I remember praying to God that he would help us find it.” Mr. Weise said, “I felt like I was driven by something I really couldn’t recognize, something just pulled me to keep going — you’ve got to find that ring — so I kept on going even though it took a lot of time.” After two hours of searching, he found the ring. He said, “I almost gave up, but I found it 13-15 inches deep buried in the sand. It was just a little metal thing that ran through my fingers through the sand.” Mr. Weise then contacted the Smiths. Sheryl said, “I am so thankful that he is honest and loyal to contact our church. You don’t find people like that. I told him, you know this was all God, that God used him to find that ring. I felt God is real — he does answer prayers.” (231)

“I’ll Take Five of the Largest Black Coffees You Have, and Ten of Your Ham and Cheese Sandwiches”

At a coffee shop in New York City, an approximately 14-year-old girl walked in. She was wearing ripped jeans and a leather jacket, she had multiple piercings, and her hair was bright purple. People stared at her as she made her order: “I’ll take five of the largest black coffees you have, and ten of your ham and cheese sandwiches.” She paid with a $100 bill, which the employee waiting on her made sure is
genuine. The employee gave the girl her change, and the girl said, “Your tip jar says that the money goes to you guys. Are any of you in college?” The employee replied, “Yes, I’m going to Rochester Institute of Technology. A few others are in college as well.” The girl said, “Good for you,” and then she left a large tip before leaving with her coffees and sandwiches. The employee was curious, followed her, and saw her giving the coffees and sandwiches to homeless people. Then the employee mentioned her generosity, “You just tipped us over $100. You’re also giving away a lot of food.” The girl replied, “Yeah, my dad is crazy rich. I feel like I can do more if I actually interact with people instead of signing a check to a charity. Every Friday I gather anyone I see who needs a good meal, and buy it for them.” She smiled, and then she added, “I may be young, but I can make a difference. I usually hand out flyers for homeless shelters or soup kitchens, too.” The employee smiled for the rest of the week. (232)

Tom Mabe, Roman Atwood, and Dennis Roady: Pizza for the Homeless

Tom Mabe, Roman Atwood, and Dennis Roady enjoy playing pranks; one prank involved feeding the homeless. Mr. Mabe pretended to be a police sergeant when he called a pizza place and ordered a pizza to be delivered to two “undercover agents” who were actually two homeless people. He paid for the pizza with his credit card, and 30 minutes later the three pranksters watched as the pizza place delivered a pizza to the two homeless people. (233)

“You Can See on Their Faces How Happy They are to be Receiving the Meal”

In January 2013, members of the Deshmesh Darmar Temple, a group that follows the Sikh religion, served hot curry, rice, and pudding to the homeless of Winnipeg,
Manitoba, Canada. They acted in partnership with the Feed My Lambs Street Mission, a Winnipeg organization that serves weekly hot meals to the homeless. The Sikh group prepared the homemade vegetarian food — all the food was traditional East Indian dishes. Pam Ghattora, president of the Ramgarhia Association of Manitoba, said that they served over 200 people in the Siloam Mission’s Princess Street parking lot. The Siloam Mission is a Christian humanitarian agency. They also gave the homeless mitts, tuques (knitted woolen hats), and gloves. Ms. Ghattora said, “Yes, it was very chilly but we didn’t mind. It just feels very rewarding to be helping people in that way. Besides, if the people we serve have to live with this kind of cold, then we should be able to, too.” She added, “You just get a sense that you’re really helping people and you can see on their faces how happy they are to be receiving the meal. That’s all the motivation we need to continue.”

M. Alice LeGrow Knows How to Talk to Kids

M. Alice LeGrow is a party princess; in other words, parents hire her to be Snow White or Cinderella or some other princess at parties for little girls. She definitely is a creative person and has a gift for being with kids. In 2012, she was going into a grocery store when a boy of about seven darted in front of her and said while staring at the ground, “You wanna buy some candy for my school?” He then handed her an order form. Ms. LeGrow got down on one knee to talk to him. She wrote, “One thing I’ve picked up from princessing is to always put myself at eye level with children, because it sets them more at ease and makes them feel more like equals in the conversation. Kids often feel small and powerless when an adult is looming over them at two to three times their height, so I try to remove that emotional barrier by getting down to their height to make them more comfortable.” She then said to him,
“Well, I like candy a lot. I like that you got right in the way of me walking in the door, too — that’s some real initiative.” The boy was pleased by the praise and became visibly more confident — as well as audibly more confident as he made another pitch for the school candy drive. Ms. LeGrow said to him, “Well you know, I don’t have a lot of dough on me right now. Definitely not enough for a candy order. But here’s five bucks, cuz you really sold me on this pitch. I like your style, kid.” (She wrote, “I always talk like I have a mental 1940’s fedora on at all times, complete with words like ‘broads’ and ‘mack.’ I don’t know why.”) He took the $5 and gave it to his mother and then he did a good deed for her. Ms. LeGrow wrote that the boy “rushed over to hold the door for me, grinning like a maniac the whole time. Didn’t matter that it was an automatic sliding door, he still held the edge of it after it had opened and gestured me inside.” She added, “It means a lot to kids when you’re straight with them and you don’t talk to them like they’re idiots. They appreciate it more than you know. Kids aren’t stupid and they can tell when you’re speaking to them like you would to an especially clever pet poodle. So I guess that’s one of the reasons kids like me a lot. I don’t patronize them, no matter how young they are.” (By the way, M. Alice LeGrow’s superpower is being able to smile for 45 minutes straight while working as a party princess. Also by the way, she once wrote, “Little girl at a party today told me that dolphins smile all the time because they're vampires. Seems like a legit argument.”) (235)

A Loving Couple’s Most Impactful Memory

Richard Branson, the founder of Virgin Group, knows a man named Pankaj Shah who regularly pays someone else’s bill when he eats out. Mr. Shah asks the restaurant manager to choose whichever couple seems to be most in love, and then he pays that couple’s bill. During the 2012
holiday season, Mr. Shah went to a Boston, Massachusetts, restaurant that he had not been to in three years. Also there was a couple whose bill Mr. Shah had previously paid. Mr. Shah and the restaurant manager had this conversation, as recounted by Mr. Branson: “Manager: That couple I chose, they’re here. Pankaj: How would you know that? Manager: Dude just got down on one knee and proposed. Pankaj: Huh? What? Manager: We went over and asked why they chose this place, and the guy said they were sitting at that same table three years ago and some stranger paid for their meal and made them think about kindness and love and they’ve been talking about it ever since. They’ve incorporated it into their lives and said there was no other place he could have proposed, it was their most impactful memory.” The couple invited Mr. Shah to their wedding.

(236)

“There is Really a God, and He Does Send People to Help Others That are in Need”

People sometimes stand in line at the Georgia Power office in Stockbridge, Georgia, to pay their bill or to explain why they cannot pay their bill and plead for their power not to be turned off. Georgia Power clerk Glenice Harris often hears hard-luck stories. Fortunately, in December 2012 a Good Samaritan overheard a man’s hard-luck story; she said, “The bill was about $230-something. He said, ‘I just don’t have the money right now.’” The Good Samaritan standing behind the man in line paid the man’s bill. Georgia Power clerk Athena Brewer said, “He really was like an angel sent. It’s like he just dropped from the sky.” The Good Samaritan continued to pay or help pay other customers’ bills. Ms. Brewer said, “He just ended up standing in between the two of us and just helping people. You know, ‘How much is their bill? How much is this bill? How much is their bill?’” The payments the Good Samaritan made ranged from $100 to $300. Ms. Harris said
that the Good Samaritan paid the entire bill of one woman whose power had been cut off. The Good Samaritan then gave the woman money to feed her children. Ms. Harris said, “And I could tell it was spontaneous and he was smiling, and people were like, ‘I can’t believe this.’ They actually started taking pictures with this guy.” The two clerks had previously met the Good Samaritan, who used to be a homeless, disabled veteran. Ms. Harris said, “And for him to be able to be where he is now, to be able to help somebody, oh my God, it was amazing. He was just like, just giving, you know?” She added, “There is really a God, and He does send people to help others that are in need.”

(237)

“It Lifted My Spirits to Know that There are Good People Out There Who have a Sense of Kindness”

On 9 February 2013, Doris Epp was standing in line as she waited to pay for a few groceries at Thrifty Foods in Haney Place Mall in Maple Ridge, British Columbia, Canada. She is elderly and tires easily due to health issues. The cashier had some difficulty ringing up items for another woman and apologized to the customers. Ms. Epp wrote in a letter to the editor of the Maple Ridge News about what happened next: “Once the problem at the till was fixed and the line started moving again, the gentleman in front of me whispered something to the cashier, and before I knew it, she started ringing through my items with the gentleman’s in front of me. I spoke up to fix the error, but to my surprise, the cashier informed me that the gentleman was going to pay for my transaction with his. Along with the gentlemen paying for my groceries, the cashier was also kind enough to pay for a reusable bag for myself. This has never happened to me and I was taken aback. This random act of kindness brought me to tears, along with the cashier. It was not a large transaction, but it lifted my spirits to know that there are good people out there who have a sense
of kindness. I cannot thank this stranger enough for his kind actions. I want to share this and at the very least hope this story brings a smile to your face.” She also wrote, “Good deeds occur few and far [between], but when they happen, they make an impact.” (238)

“I Wanted to Do Something Nice for a Stranger Because One Day a Stranger Did Something Nice for Me”

On 31 October 2012, Reddit user “womp0982” posted a photograph of a typed note that was left on a truck. The note stated, “You do not know me but I saw that you needed some tires for your truck and I wanted to do something nice for a stranger because one day a stranger did something nice for me. The receipt is in the envelope and all you have to do is go by Warehouse Tire on 3rd Street and ask for Steven Hodges and they will be put on for free. All I ask is that one day you do something nice for a complete stranger.” Some Reddit users did not believe that the note was genuine, but a Huffington Post writer telephoned Warehouse Tire & Battery Sales in Washington, North Carolina, and talked to Steven Hodges, who confirmed the order of new tires. However, he thought that the Good Samaritan and the man who owned the truck might know each other. In other words, although the note stated, “You do not know me,” that may be a smoke screen to keep the recipient of the good deed from knowing who the Good Samaritan is. Many posters on Reddit write about good deeds; for example, in a comment on the post, “Berdjie” wrote that “my girlfriend paid for someone’s breakfast the other day at McDonalds. It didn’t cost much and she got a kick out of wondering if it made the stranger’s Monday any better.” (239)

“My Brain Thinks I’m in my 40s, but My Body Doesn’t”
In Rainier, Washington, Steve Lovegren, a 62-year-old Army veteran, helps people keep their water on. He said, “I just don’t like to see people walked on. And I don’t want to see their water turned off when they have kids in school.” He added, “If I have a neighbor that needs help, I’m going to help them. Some people say, ‘Well, I get my bill and pay it.’ That’s not the attitude we should have.” Teevin Bros. Land and Timber Co. donates scrap logs to Mr. Lovegren instead of pulping them. Mr. Lovegren and four volunteers then cut and sell the wood: A small trailer full of wood sells for $100. He does get some benefits from cutting the wood: “Because of my back [damaged vertebrae], I can’t sit for long. So this keeps me moving. And I’ve lost a lot of weight.” People call him for help, and he pays enough on their water bill to keep it from being turned off. City Administrator Debbie Dudley said, “He’s a real proactive volunteer, and a great resource for the City of Rainier. We appreciate his willingness to help. It’s encouraging to see his selflessness.” How long will Mr. Lovegren do this? He said, “As long as I can, and as long as I don’t screw my back up. My brain thinks I’m in my 40s, but my body doesn’t.”

“It’s for You”

Seattle, Washington, media personality John Curley tells a heartwarming story about a charity auction held on 24 October 2012 in Leavenworth, Washington, to raise money for a memorial to four skiers who died in an avalanche on 19 February 2012 and another skier who had died one year earlier in an avalanche: Daniel Zimmermann, Chris Rudolph, Jim Jack, and John Brenan. About 400 people bid on donated items. Mr. Curley, who was the auctioneer, said, “And I’m telling you guys, every single item was selling at three times the value. The whole place was crazy to raise as much money as they could for their fallen friends.” One item was a custom necklace created
especially for the auction. At the end, two women were bidding for the necklace; one woman was John Brenan’s wife. Mr. Curley said, “The bidding got up to $1,500, and the woman bid one more time and she stopped. And I went to get her to bid at $1,700, and she had this look in her eyes like, ‘I’m going to lose this.’” The other woman was bidding too much money. Mr. Curley said, “Another woman bids against her, takes it from her, and then stands up and says, ‘It’s for you.’ I’m telling you the whole place went crazy. Bought it for her and gave it to her, but wanted to make sure she paid as much money she possibly could for this. It was so sweet. And I’m like, ‘I love you, Leavenworth.’” He added that stories like this “make the world a better place.” By the way, Mr. Curley and his family try to live by this mission statement: “Be kind, be strong, be funny when you can.” (241)

“Mom. That Lady was So Nice. I Think I Should Buy Coffee for Someone. Can I?”

In October 2012, a woman who posts online using the name Sheryl told about a gift a Good Samaritan gave her. Sheryl occasionally gets a free Starbucks gift card and visits there, although her budget otherwise would not accommodate those visits. One day while in a store with a Starbucks, she needed a never-ending budget because all she heard from her six-year-old daughter was such things as “Mom, can I have this? Can I have this? Can I have this? I want this … You never buy me this!” and “I want … I need … I must have … I’m going to die if I don’t get it … I really will, mom …” A woman heard Sheryl tell her daughter, “Not today, Wendy, maybe another day, but I don’t have any free gift cards left.” The woman then gave her a free Starbucks gift card with $15 on it, saying that she was paying it forward. Sheryl bought Wendy a Chocolate Milk with Whip Crème, and Wendy said, “Mom. That lady was so nice. I think I should buy coffee for someone. Can
I?” (242)

“I Cried All the Way Home and Just Thanked the Lord”

In October 2012 in Sherwood, Oregon, Debora Durall, a cashier at Target, witnessed a good deed that led to other good deeds. She said, “I was feeling really, really down.” But the good deed perked her up. She said, “I cried all the way home and just thanked the Lord.” At work, a family tried to pay for a purchase with a credit card, but the credit card was declined. An anonymous woman in line paid the bill for the family. Ms. Durall said, “I’m like, ‘It’s a lot, it’s $161.85,’ and she says, ‘That’s OK. I’ve needed help before, and I want to help them.’” The woman left, and Ms. Durall told the family, who did not witness the good deed, “Your debt is totally paid in full.” She added, “The wife she started tearing up. She goes, ‘Why would anybody do that for me?’ It really touched me.” The good deed inspired additional generosity. Ms. Durall said that the family gave her $20 to pay or help pay for the next customer’s purchase. She said, “The next person came through the line which I believe were the two teenage girls. They’re teenagers! What would I have done as a teenager — score! I wouldn’t pass it on to the next person, but they did it.” She added about the woman who gave away $161.85, “I will always remember her, and she has no idea the impact she made on how many people — she just has no idea.” (243)

“One Day, You’ll be Just a Memory for Some People. Do Your Best to be a Good One”

A woman who posts online using the name Bjames3061 writes about being on a beach vacation, going into a grocery store, and being complimented by a cashier on the necklace that Bjames3061 was wearing. Bjames3061 told the cashier that she had gotten it for 40 percent off at a
department store down the street, and Bjames3061’s friend suggested that the cashier go there and buy one on her break. However, the cashier could not afford it at that time. Bjames3061 decided to buy a necklace for the cashier — her friend offered to pay half of the cost. The saleslady at the department store knew the cashier and said about her, “She is a very sweet lady. But she is going through a rough patch right now and has to drive a long way to work. With gas prices so high, it sure isn’t easy.” Bjames3061 and her friend gave the gift to the cashier. Bjames3061 wrote, “She knew immediately what we had done and was so thankful. As we drove home today, we discussed how that random act of kindness probably meant more to us than it did to the recipient. It feels so good to do nice things for others. I grew up poor, with a single mother and two sisters. We had no help from our dad, and I never dreamed as a little girl that I would be able to help others. Now, I try to do that on a regular basis, and it is so very rewarding!” In a comment on this story, Blessed2BKind wrote, “So very thoughtful :) Thanks for sharing your story. Love what you did for her … she will never forget … There is a saying: ‘One day, you’ll be just a memory for some people. Do your best to be a good one.’ What a great gift and memory you gave to her.” (244)

A Good-Deed Flash Mob

Employees at Tanglewood Manor, an assisted-living facility in Jamestown, New York, pay one dollar to wear jeans on casual Fridays. When they have enough money in the kitty, they find a project that will do good in the community. In October 2012, employees went to the Wegmans supermarket in Lakewood, New York, and passed out gift cards to help customers buy groceries. Tanglewood Chief Operating Officer Terri Ingersoll, who came up with the idea of this good-deed flash mob, said, “This was a very big deal. The staff absolutely loved it, and
they’re already begging me to be able to do it again before the year is over. Everybody’s just been really excited about it; there are some good-hearted people here. Receptionist Becky Decker said, “This lady was in a motorized scooter, and we tried to talk to her but she just kept going. We finally got her to stop, and she was so thankful that we had a gift card for her.” (245)

“The Corps Family is Bigger and Better than Most People Would Know About. We are All Family and Always will Be”

In January 2013, James McConnell, age 70, died in Bluebell Nursing Home in Southsea, Hampshire, England. Staff at the nursing home worried that no mourners other than themselves would show up at his funeral, so they posted messages on Facebook. More than 200 people attended his funeral. Mr. McConnell had been in the military service, and many present and former service people showed up at his funeral, including Royal British Legion standard bearers, who were followed by several flag-bearing motorcyclists. Two buglers from the Royal Marines Band Service played the “Last Post” to end the service. Addressing the congregation, the Reverend Bob Mason said, “The great majority of you who have come here today did not know James McConnell but wanted him to have a dignified farewell. I thank you for that kindness and generosity of spirit.” Former Royal Marine Danny Marshall said, “It was mentioned wrongly that he did not have family: The corps family is bigger and better than most people would know about. We are all family and always will be.” (246)

“What are Your Most Grateful Moments?”

Reddit is a source of beautiful stories of kindness. For example, in September 2012, Nopantskid wrote this: “My mother died ten years ago. I had dropped out of school to
help my dad run his business, assure my younger sisters had food on the table, and my mother have care during her battle with cancer. She died, in February of 2002. My father began to consider winding down his business quickly. What was home for me? I knew I had to finish my education, so I applied to Illinois State University, and several other institutions. All said no. Illinois State said I missed the deadline for applying. I called the school, and I got a secretary for the psychology department. I hadn’t noticed any deadline. She told me when the deadline was, all the [more] bitter for me because it was two days after my mother had been buried. I had been in shock, but that was what broke the proverbial camel’s back, and I broke down on the phone. She said ‘hold on, let me check something’ … she dug out my file from … somewhere. ‘Your grades check out, good. Let me just … ok. We’ll see you in the fall. Keep this between us, kay?’ I kept that promise for ten years, where now it is a cornerstone in how I deal with employees and peers and my country. I graduated from a school I shouldn’t have been accepted into by their rules, by the mercy of a woman I never met.”

Seizethefray wrote this in September 2012: “Back in 2006, I lost my father due to a motorcycle accident that left him comatose for a month. I had just started a new job right after it happened and my trainer told me I might have to reapply due to the obvious schedule accommodations I’d be needing. Still, I scraped up the little money I had and flew out of state to be by his side. Eventually I had to go back home and back to work since I supported myself while I tried not to think about the fact that my dad was dying. Helpless, angry, sad, stressed — all understatements. When I returned to my training class, I found flowers and a card on my desk. Inside the card were notes and well wishes from all of my new coworkers and about $350 in cash. It wasn’t a large group of people either — maybe 10-15 tops. I was speechless. There I was, at my absolute lowest
knowing I was going to lose my dad at age 22 (most likely while I was at f[**]king WORK) and in came a group of strangers making sure I had enough money to buy a plane ticket so I could go back and spend more time with him. I get choked up just thinking about it. Even though training was rigid and I fell behind, my boss made sure I didn’t have to go through the grueling rehire process. She even bent the rules on my bereavement leave to make sure I had all the time I needed to travel and grieve. I never truly understood compassion and empathy until then.” By the way, the person who started this thread wrote this in September 2012: “I work in a restaurant as a busser. Today I watched my manager kick out a large group of people waiting for a table because one of them called me a thing. I am an FTM [Female to Male] transgender. I have never felt so grateful for someone sticking up for me.” Here is one more amazing story of kindness (out of many); HOOded wrote this in September 2012: “Mum suffered a huge stroke earlier this year in New Zealand, I live in Australia. Got on a plane asap the next day to get there, but before I did I had no idea how to get from Wellington NZ to the small town hospital she was at a few hours outside of Wellington. And to make matters worse, my plane didn’t get in till Midnight. So any chance of public transport was pretty slim. Asked r/NewZealand if anyone knew of a way for me to get there. Got five PMs offering me a lift, no strings attached. Took the first one up on his offer, got to the hospital in less than two hours after my flight landed. Easily my most grateful moment of my entire life. Edit: Oh and two of my mates dropped everything, work, uni etc and flew down with me.” (247)

“I am Deeply Grateful to My Country for Honoring and Respecting My Years of Service and My Relationship with Nancy, the Love of My Life”

In February 2013, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K.
Shinseki used his discretionary authority to allow the same-sex spouse of a member of the military to be buried in a national cemetery. Retired Lieutenant Colonel Linda Campbell said, “I am deeply grateful to my country for honoring and respecting my years of service and my relationship with Nancy, the love of my life. Willamette National Cemetery [in Portland, Oregon] is a beautiful, peaceful place. Knowing that Nancy and I can join my parents on that hallowed ground is a source of great comfort and healing.” In December 2012, Nancy Lynchild, Ms. Campbell’s partner, died of metastatic cancer. The Department of Veterans Affairs released a statement about the decision by Secretary of Veterans Affairs Shinseki: “This was the first non-Veteran partner of the same gender he was asked to consider, this is the first he has approved. It’s important to note that the Secretary did not base his decision on the individual’s marital status or state recognized relationship status, but rather based it, in part, on evidence of a committed relationship between the individual and the Veteran.” Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley said, “I can only hope that this historic moment is just the first of many for same-sex couples across the nation. All our veterans deserve the honor of being buried in a national cemetery with their partners by their side.” (248)

“It was One of Those Instances Where People Might Think the Worst, But in Fact It Turned Out to be a Good News Story”

People can see something and be mistaken about what they see. In January 2007, a person saw some children at a cemetery in Whitehaven, Cumbria, England, and called the police, who investigated. It turned out that the children were not stealing flowers; instead, they were trying to replace flowers that the wind had blown off gravesites. A police spokesman said, “At first it was thought these children were taking flowers off graves, but it became clear
when we investigated that they were doing a kind act in putting them back. They obviously weren’t able to tell which flowers had come from which graves, but they were doing their best to apportion them out fairly.” He added, “It was one of those instances where people might think the worst, but in fact it turned out to be a good-news story.” (249)

Emergency Compliment

If you’re feeling down and need perked up, you can go to <http://emergencycompliment.com/> and get, yes, an emergency compliment — or two, or three, or more. For example: “Your hair looks great today. It also looked really good two days ago” and “Your blog is the best blog.” (250)

APPENDIX A: SOME BOOKS BY DAVID BRUCE

Retellings of a Classic Work of Literature

*Dante’s Inferno: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante’s Purgatory: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante’s Paradise: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante’s Divine Comedy: A Retelling in Prose*

*From the Iliad to the Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose of Quintus of Smyrna’s Posthomerica*

*Homer’s Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*

*Homer’s Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose*

*Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes’ Argonautica*

*Virgil’s Aeneid: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare’s 1 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*
William Shakespeare’s As You Like It: A Retelling in Prose
William Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar: A Retelling in Prose
William Shakespeare’s Macbeth: A Retelling in Prose
William Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream: A Retelling in Prose
William Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing: A Retelling in Prose
William Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet: A Retelling in Prose
William Shakespeare’s The Taming of the Shrew: A Retelling in Prose
William Shakespeare’s The Tempest: A Retelling in Prose
William Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night: A Retelling in Prose

Children’s Biography
Nadia Comaneci: Perfect Ten

Anecdote Collections
250 Anecdotes About Opera
250 Anecdotes About Religion
250 Anecdotes About Religion: Volume 2
250 Music Anecdotes
Be a Work of Art: 250 Anecdotes and Stories
The Coolest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes
The Coolest People in the Arts: 250 Anecdotes
The Coolest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes
The Coolest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes
Create, Then Take a Break: 250 Anecdotes
Don’t Fear the Reaper: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Books, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Books, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Dance: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Families: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Families, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Families, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Families, Volume 4: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Families, Volume 5: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Families, Volume 6: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Music: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Music, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Music, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Neighborhoods: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Relationships: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Sports: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Sports, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes
The Funniest People in Television and Radio: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Theater: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People Who Live Life: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People Who Live Life, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

Maximum Cool: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Politics and History: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Politics and History, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Politics and History, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Religion: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People in Sports: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People Who Live Life: 250 Anecdotes

The Most Interesting People Who Live Life, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

Reality is Fabulous: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

Resist Psychic Death: 250 Anecdotes

Seize the Day: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

**Kindest People Series**

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 1

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 2
(Free) Kindest People Volumes

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 3
The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 4
The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 5
The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 6
The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 7
The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 1)
The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 2)
The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 3)
The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 4)
The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 5)
The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 6)
The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 7)
The Kindest People: Be Excellent to Each Other (Volume 1)
The Kindest People: Be Excellent to Each Other (Volume 2)
The Kindest People: Be Excellent to Each Other (Volume 3)
The Kindest People: Be Excellent to Each Other (Volume 4)

The Kindest People: Be Excellent to Each Other (Volume 5)

Free Philosophy for the Masses Series

Philosophy for the Masses: Ethics

Philosophy for the Masses: Metaphysics and More

Philosophy for the Masses: Religion

Free Discussion Guide Series

Dante’s Inferno: A Discussion Guide

Dante’s Paradise: A Discussion Guide

Dante’s Purgatory: A Discussion Guide

Forrest Carter’s The Education of Little Tree: A Discussion Guide

Homer’s Iliad: A Discussion Guide

Homer’s Odyssey: A Discussion Guide

Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice: A Discussion Guide

Jerry Spinelli’s Maniac Magee: A Discussion Guide

Jerry Spinelli’s Stargirl: A Discussion Guide

Jonathan Swift’s “A Modest Proposal”: A Discussion Guide

Lloyd Alexander’s The Black Cauldron: A Discussion Guide

Lloyd Alexander’s The Book of Three: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain’s Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: A
Discussion Guide

Mark Twain’s The Adventures of Tom Sawyer: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain’s A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain’s The Prince and the Pauper: A Discussion Guide

Nancy Garden’s Annie on My Mind: A Discussion Guide

Nicholas Sparks’ A Walk to Remember: A Discussion Guide

Virgil’s Aeneid: A Discussion Guide

Virgil’s “The Fall of Troy”: A Discussion Guide

Voltaire’s Candide: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare’s 1 Henry IV: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare’s Macbeth: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet: A Discussion Guide

William Sleator’s Oddballs: A Discussion Guide

(Oddballs is an excellent source for teaching how to write autobiographical essays/personal narratives.)

APPENDIX B: EXCERPT FROM WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S AS YOU LIKE IT: A RETELLING IN PROSE BY DAVID BRUCE
In another part of the forest, Rosalind, Celia, and Jaques were talking.

Jaques said, to Rosalind, “Please, pretty youth, let me become better acquainted with you.”

“They say you are a melancholy fellow.”

“I am melancholy. I do love being melancholy better than laughing.”

“Those who are either too sad or too merry are abominable fellows and betray themselves to every modern criticism — they are worse than drunkards when it comes to making themselves targets for ridicule.”

“Why, it is good to be serious and thoughtful and say nothing.”

“Why then, it is good to be a post in the ground. A post says nothing.”

“I have my own kind of melancholy. I do not have the scholar’s melancholy, which is envious. I do not have the musician’s melancholy, which is imaginative. I do not have the courtier’s melancholy, which is proud. I do not have the soldier’s melancholy, which is ambitious. I do not have the lawyer’s melancholy, which is politic. I do not have the lady’s melancholy, which is nice. I do not have the lover’s melancholy, which is all of these. I have my own kind of melancholy, which is compounded of many ingredients, extracted from many objects, and indeed the various thoughts inspired by my travels. These thoughts wrap me in a very moody melancholy.”

“You are a traveller!” Rosalind said. “By my faith, you have great reason to be melancholic. I am afraid that you may have sold your own lands to see the lands of other
men. If that is the case, if you have seen much and have nothing, then you have rich eyes and poor hands.”

“Yes, I have gained my experience.”

“And your experience makes you sad and serious. I would rather have a fool to make me merry than experience to make me sad, especially if I would have to travel to acquire my sadness!”

Orlando arrived; he was an hour late for his appointment to woo Rosalind.

Orlando said, “Good day and happiness, dear Rosalind!”

Jaques recognized that this sentence was in iambic pentameter. It had five feet of two syllables with the stress on the second syllable. Unrhymed iambic pentameter is known as blank verse.

Jaques said, “It is time for me to go. May God be with you, if you are going to talk in blank verse.”

“Farewell, Monsieur Traveller,” Rosalind said. “Since you are a traveller, you ought to act like other travellers. Be sure that you lisp with a cute foreign accent and wear strange suits of foreign fashions. Be sure to disparage all the benefits of your own country, be out of love with the land where you were born, and almost criticize God for making you look like an Englishman. If you don’t do these things, I will hardly think you have ridden in a gondola.”

Jaques departed.

Rosalind said to Orlando, “How are you, Orlando! Where have you been all this while? You think that you are a lover! If you ever play such another trick on me, do not ever come within my sight.”
Orlando objected, “My fair Rosalind, I came within an hour of the time I promised to be here.”

“Came within an hour of the time you — who are supposedly a lover — promised to be here! A man who will divide a minute into a thousand parts and break only one part of the thousandth part of a minute in the affairs of love is a man about whom it may be said that Cupid has patted him on the shoulder, but I swear that that man’s heart has not been wounded by Cupid’s arrow.”

“Pardon me, dear Rosalind.”

“No. If you are ever again so late for a date, come no more within my sight. I would prefer to be wooed by a snail.”

“By a snail?”

“Yes, by a snail,” Rosalind said. “Though the snail comes slowly, he carries his house with him. He has something to offer a woman — more than you can offer, I think. Besides, the snail brings its destiny with him.”

“What destiny is that?”

“Snails have what look like horns,” Rosalind said. “Men who are late for dates must expect to be made cuckolds. The snail comes pre-equipped with horns and therefore knows what to expect.”

*I get it*, Orlando thought. *I had better not be late for dates for Rosalind.*

“Virtuous women are not horn-makers, and my Rosalind is virtuous.”

“And I am your Rosalind.”

Celia said to Rosalind, “It pleases him to call you Rosalind, but he has a better-looking Rosalind than you.”
I get it, Orlando thought. If I am late for dates, my loved one and her friends will think that I have another girlfriend.

Rosalind smiled at the expression on Orlando’s face, and then she said to him, “Come, woo me, woo me, for now I am in a good mood and likely enough to consent to love you. What would you say to me now, if I were your precious Rosalind?”

“I would kiss her before I spoke.”

“No, you had better speak first, and when you were stuck for something to say, then you could kiss her. Very good orators, when they are out of words to say, will spit, but lovers who are out of words to say — God help us! — should take the cleaner option and kiss.”

“Suppose Rosalind declines to kiss me?”

“Then you have a new subject to talk about: You can beg her for a kiss.”

“Who could be out of words to say when he is with the woman he loves?”

“You had better be out of me than in me if I were your girl — or I would think that my virtue is less impressive than my wit,” Rosalind joked.

“Let’s talk about a different ‘out.’ Would I be out of suit?”

“A suit can mean a suit of clothing. If you were in me, you would be out of suit. But given that I am virtuous, you would not be out of your apparel, but you would still be out of your suit — that is, request. I would make you give up your attempt to seduce me. Am not I your Rosalind?”

“I am happy to say that you are, because I want to talk about her.”
“Well, let me pretend to be her and say that I will not have you as my boyfriend.”

“Then let me be me and say that I will die.”

“Do not yourself die. Die by proxy — have a lawyer act for you by proxy. But seriously, people have examined the verses of the Bible and concluded that this poor world is almost six thousand years old, and in all that time not one man has died in real life because of love. Troilus loved Cressida, but he had his brains dashed out with a Greek club, yet he did what he could to die from love before he died from the club and he is regarded as an exemplary lover. Leander would have lived for many happy years, even if his loved one, Hero, had become a nun, if it had not been for a hot midsummer night. Leander, that good youth, went into the Hellespont to wash himself but started cramping and was drowned. The foolish coroners of that age said that the cause of his death was his love for Hero of Sestos. They said that he drowned when a storm arose while he was swimming in the Hellespont to visit his lover. All of these tales of men who have died from love are lies. Men have died from time to time and worms have eaten them, but the men did not die because of love.”

“I do not want the real Rosalind to think like this. I believe that her frown might kill me.”

“Trust me, her frown will not kill a fly.”

I get it, Orlando thought. Some of the ideas of romantic love are exaggerated. Still, love really does exist.

APPENDIX C: ABOUT THE AUTHOR

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy — me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine’s
brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka “The Joker,” decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name — David — ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn’t been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don’t often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for “sounds like” and “two words,” then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn’t let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor’s degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a master’s degree in English and a master’s degree in Philosophy. Currently, and for a long time to come, I publish a weekly humorous column titled “Wise Up!” for The Athens News and I am a retired English instructor at Ohio U.

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