“The Baby’s Not Crying — It’s Not Breathing Right Now”

On 16 March 2013 near Garfield and 22 Mile roads in Macomb Township, Michigan, a hysterical father flagged
down Ryan Cornelissen, a 21-year-old criminal justice student at Macomb Community College, who then called 911 and said to the dispatcher, “A guy stopped me. I think something’s wrong with his wife. He doesn’t speak very good English. He stopped me on the side of the road.” The couple had been going to a hospital because the woman was about to give birth, but the baby arrived before they made it to the hospital. Mr. Cornelissen said, “The baby’s not crying — it’s not breathing right now.” Dispatcher Steven Kukuk told him, “You need to try to stimulate the baby’s breathing, rub his back with your fingertips. Hold the baby so the head is supported too, okay? Keep the head supported — we want to keep that neck and head supported.” Dispatcher Kukuk told Mr. Cornelissen how to provide rescue breaths and how to give CPR to the infant. Eventually, the child began to breathe. Mr. Cornelissen said, “Oh, yes! The baby is whimpering. He’s breathing!” Dispatcher Kukuk said, “Very good. You did a good job.” An ambulance took the mother and baby to the Henry Ford Macomb Hospital to recover. Macomb County Sheriff Anthony Wickersham said, “The calm demeanor of Ryan is positively remarkable. And the excellent instructions provided by Dispatcher Kukuk are a testament to his training and professionalism.” The parents of the baby are Vietnamese. Mr. Cornelissen said, “After it was over, the dad came up to me, thanked me numerous times.” (1)

**Finnish Babies Sleep in Cardboard Boxes**

Ever since 1938, the government of Finland has given expectant mothers a box that contains baby clothes, baby bedding, a sleeping bag, a small mattress, cloth diapers, outdoor gear, baby-bathing products, and other items that a baby needs. When the small mattress is placed at the bottom of the box, the box becomes baby’s first bed. The four walls of the box keep the baby from falling out of the box. Expectant mothers can choose between taking the box
or a grant of money — in June 2013, the amount of money expectant mothers could get was 140 euros. However, almost all expectant mothers — 95 percent — take the box because it and its contents are worth much more than 140 euros. At first, only expectant mothers with low incomes could get the box, but beginning in 1949, it was given to all expectant mothers. Finland has one of the lowest infant mortality rates in the world — in part, because of the box. Heidi Liesivesi, who works at Kela — the Social Insurance Institution of Finland — said, “Not only was it offered to all mothers-to-be, but new legislation meant in order to get the grant, or maternity box, they had to visit a doctor or municipal pre-natal clinic before their fourth month of pregnancy.” Reija Klemetti, a 49-year-old from Helsinki, remembers getting a box: “It was lovely and exciting to get it and somehow the first promise to the baby. My mum, friends, and relatives were all eager to see what kind of things were inside and what colours they’d chosen for that year.” The colours are always gender-neutral so that the clothing can be passed down from a boy to a girl or from a girl to a boy. Titta Vayrynen, a 35-year-old mother who has two young boys, said, “It’s easy to know what year babies were born in, because the clothing in the box changes a little every year. It’s nice to compare and think, ‘Ah, that kid was born in the same year as mine.’” She added, “There was a recent report saying that Finnish mums are the happiest in the world, and the box was one thing that came to my mind. We are very well taken care of, even now when some public services have been cut down a little.” The maternity box encourages good parenting. Panu Pulma, professor in Finnish and Nordic History at the University of Helsinki, said, “Babies used to sleep in the same bed as their parents, and it was recommended that they stop. Including the box as a bed meant people started to let their babies sleep separately from them.” To promote breastfeeding, the box does not contain baby bottles in

“An Honest Man is Found in Wilkes-Barre!”

On 2 July 2013, entertainer Steve Martin performed bluegrass music at the F.M. Kirby Center for Performing Arts in downtown Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Earlier that day, unfortunately, he lost his wallet while bicycling in Wilkes-Barre. Fortunately, a man found it and turned it in at the Kirby Center. Mr. Martin, who did not reveal the man’s name, Tweeted, “An honest man is found in Wilkes-Barre! Thank you, sir! RT @CBS Pittsburgh: Stranger comes to the aid of comedian and returns his wallet!” The wallet contained credit cards and a driver’s license. Mr. Martin thanked the Good Samaritan in person. (3)

Comics Helping Comics

Often, comedienues help other comedienues (including aspiring comedienues). The comedienne known as Simply Marvelous worked at a customer-service place in California. At work, she ran across contact information for LaWanda Page, a comedienne and comic actress who is remembered for playing Aunt Esther in the TV sitcom Sanford and Son, which starred Redd Foxx. Although Simply Marvelous was not supposed to do such things, she telephoned Ms. Page and asked her to listen to a comedy
tape that Simply Marvelous had made. Simply Marvelous remembers, “She said, ‘Yeah,’ and invited me over to her house, and I was just overwhelmed by just hearing her and talking to her.” Thea Vidale remembers other good deeds: “There was a time when, black comics especially, we had our own underground railroad. That’s the only way I can say it. If comics got stranded in cities where other black comics were or cool white boys were, we would hook them up with the numbers and we would say, ‘Look, if you here, you can go and stay with these people.’ Even my house was one of the houses you could stay at.” (4)

Entertainers Supporting Entertainers

Casey Wilson was a featured player on Saturday Night Live during the 2008-2009 season, and she found the women there to be very supportive. Casey played the redhead in a spoof for the TV series Mad Men, and at one point in the sketch she had to drop off some papers, but she didn’t have a line to say. Amy Poehler, whom Casey likens to a protective mama bear, said to the writers, “Let’s give Casey a funny line when she comes in.” Casey says that Amy did not have to do that kind of thing, but she did it anyway. Male comedian Denis Leary was very supportive of the very young Janeane Garofalo. Denis hosted Thursday nights at the comedy club Play It Again Sam’s, and he controlled which comedians were able to perform on Thursday. Each Thursday, he allowed Janeane, who was a new performer, to do stand-up comedy. Comedy manager Barry Katz watched Janeane perform, and in his opinion her material was smart, but the audiences just were not laughing. He said to Denis, “You know she’s bombing every week. Don’t you think we should try somebody else in the show and take her out for a few weeks?” Barry remembers, “It was the only time he ever got mad at me in his entire life. He stuck his finger in my face and said, ‘F**k you, Barry. She’s funny. She will work my show
every f**king week, and if you don’t like it, I’m out of here.” These days, of course, Janeane is a top comedian. Here’s another person standing up for someone else: Whoopi Goldberg and Sam Elliott — he of the fabulous mustache and voice — worked together in the 1987 movie *Fatal Beauty*. She would have liked for her character to have a love interest and to have kissed Sam Elliott, but one VIP basically told her, “You have no f**kability factor. No one wants to f**k you.” Sam told the VIP, “Number one, that’s the rudest thing I’ve ever heard anybody ever say to somebody else, and number two, what are you talking about?” Then he said to the director, “And who wants to f**k you?” (5)

“That (Inflated) Medal will Serve as a Constant Reminder that the Power of Human Kindness can Make Another Person Feel Better than Any Individual Sporting Accomplishment”

On 5 May 2013, Tami Licht of Pleasant Hills, Pennsylvania, ran in her first marathon — actually, it was her first-ever race as well as her first marathon. She did not run the whole Pittsburgh Marathon; instead, she and some co-workers ran the legs of a relay marathon. A novice, Ms. Licht chose to run the shortest leg: 3.5 miles. She ran well, recording a personal-best time, and she was looking forward to getting a medal. (In the Pittsburgh Marathon relays, as each runner finishes a leg, the next member of the relay team hands the finishing runner a medal.) Unfortunately, the next member of the relay team told her, “They ran out.” In a letter to the editor of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Ms. Licht wrote, “Bummer. I really wanted that medal because this was such a big accomplishment for me personally. I’m a new runner and not exactly a spring chicken.” She hoped to find a race official who might be able to mail her a medal, and as she talked to an official, a couple of men overheard her. One of the men took off the
medal that he was wearing and gave to her, saying, “Here, have mine. It will just end up in a drawer anyway.” Ms. Licht wrote, “I was just stunned. Folks were sporting (proudly) their medals all over town. I couldn’t believe anyone would just hand one over. What a hugely nice gesture.” In addition, she later discovered that the medal was for a half-marathon, not for a leg of a relay. Ms. Licht wrote, “I really want to thank that man for his spontaneous act of kindness. It really made my first foray into a marathon extra special. And that (inflated) medal will serve as a constant reminder that the power of human kindness can make another person feel better than any individual sporting accomplishment.” (6)

“How Could It be Better Than That?”

Keven Wilson’s son is Tom Wilson, who on 10 May 2013 made his NHL debut, playing for the Washington Capitals. Keven attended his son’s debut game, flying to Washington, D.C., from Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He knew that his son was unlikely to play many minutes in the high-pressure playoff game, so he arrived early. He said, “If you want to see them on the ice, it’s nice to see them warm up, because they might not get too many shifts.” Keven wore a black pullover, but another son, Peter, wore one of Tom’s jerseys from when he was playing for the Plymouth Whalers. Because of that jersey, many Capitals fans guessed that Keven and Peter were related to Tom. Keven said, “People were recognizing us all over the place.” Lots of fans wished them well, and the fans were enthusiastic about Tom playing for the Capitals. Keven said, “It was really quite an experience. We were blown away by how friendly everyone was. It’s a different place.” One fan even gave Keven a present. Keven said, “Next thing I know, this fellow shows up and throws a jersey at me. He said, ‘You’re in Washington — you have to have a Washington jersey.’” The red jersey had been personalized
with Keven’s son’s name and number. Keven said, “I can’t take this from you — are you kidding me?” The gift-giver said, “This is a great day for you and your family. I want you to have it.” The Capitols won in overtime. Keven said, “What a great way to start your career! And to have the fans be so friendly and so welcoming — to have a guy give me my son’s jersey to wear? How could it be better than that?” (7)

“Once the Ambulance Left and Everything had Settled Down, We Pulled All the Guys Aside and Focused on How Proud of Them We Were”

On 7 May 2013, a car hit a Laguna Creek High School (Elk Grove, California) female student at Valley High School in south Sacramento, California. Practicing nearby were the players on the Valley High School baseball team. The accident pinned the girl’s upper body under the car. In the locker room, co-head coach Brett Sawyer heard the screech of tires and a loud bang. He came out of the locker room and saw “the entire team sprinting to the parking lot, jumping over fences.” Eight or nine students lifted the small sedan off the girl, and assistant coach James Millholland pulled the girl out from under the car. Varsity student-athlete Chas Roberts said, “It was like, a reaction— you had to do what you had to do to save someone’s life.” Paramedics responded to a 911 call and took the car to a hospital. Mr. Sawyer said, “Once the ambulance left and everything had settled down, we pulled all the guys aside and focused on how proud of them we were.” The coaches canceled the rest of practice. Mr. Sawyer said, “Some guys were still kind of shaken up by the whole ordeal. She was just a teenager, like them.” He added, “To a man, every single one of those kids, their head hasn’t gotten big. They don’t walk around campus thinking they’re heroes.” Varsity coach James Millholland said, “We all just ran out there as a team. No one was saying much, and then the
guys got around the car and just lifted it up. There was very little talking.” Mr. Sawyer said, “To be honest, we might not have the best baseball team around, but we sure do have a great group of guys. They just knew what to do. They were all raised right.” The girl is expected to completely recover. (8)

“She Should Get the Golden Glove for Catching a One-Year-Old”

On 19 June 2013, Cristina Torre, the 44-year-old daughter of Joe Torre, former major-league baseball player and New York Yankees manager, caught a one-year-old boy who fell from the storefront awning of a frozen-yogurt shop on Third Avenue at 92nd Street in Brooklyn, New York. She saw the boy in danger and called 911, but the boy fell before help arrived and she caught him. Ms. Torre said, “People have been really kind and expressing gratitude and everything. I personally have been in shock. Today I feel a little better, but I’ve been in shock during this whole thing. I’m just happy the baby is alive and well and his parents are getting the help they need to ensure his safety.” She added, “I’m a Montessori educator so my priority is the safety and well-being of the child, and I’m hoping that’s what comes out of this — that people who need help and guidance and caring for their young get that.” Ms. Torre, despite her famous father, is not a sports nut. She said, “I hate to say it, but I’m totally not the biggest sports fan. I’m kind of the black sheep of the family. But definitely, I have my dad’s focused attention when need be. And of course, to act. And yeah, I do think I have quick hands, I have to admit that. I’ve always had this quick reaction to behavior.” Joe Torre said about his heroic daughter, “She always had good hands. I don’t know if they’re mine or not. I’m so proud of her.” The boy Ms. Torre saved had crawled onto a fire escape after pushing a cardboard barrier away from a window. Ms. Torres said, “I just was positioning myself
where I thought he might fall. I feel fortunate that he landed right in my arms. It was effortless to catch him. Once it was happening, he was landing.” The boy’s aunt, Sandra Miller, said, “I’d like to thank her. She should get the Golden Glove for catching a one-year-old.” Ms. Torre said, “I will go by this afternoon to see how the baby is, if I can. I would like to know where he is, and at some point I’d like to be able to see him and know that he is OK. That’s my concern in all of this.” (9)

“He is Just a Little Boy, and Not a Man Yet”

Joel McKinnon, who lives in Dover, Ohio, is the head of the Joel McKinnon Farmers Insurance Agency. In 2012, he noticed a poem by the late Chaplain Bob Fox that was being published and republished on Facebook. Mr. McKinnon liked the message: In sports such as Little League baseball, the emphasis should be on fun and doing your best, not on being overly competitive. Mr. McKinnon put the poem up on his agency’s Facebook page, and later the poem appeared on the Farmers Insurance corporate Facebook page. In both cases, the poem got many, many Likes. On his agency’s Facebook page, Mr. McKinnon wrote, “‘He’s Just a Little Boy,’ a poem by the late Chaplain Bob Fox, is a simple message that many of us tend to forget — and it’s a great reminder that we are all just kids ‘playing a game’ — That in life we can not always be winners, but sometimes we fail, sometimes we are not the winner, and the story book finish does not always take place. What matters in life is how we handle these situations, and more importantly how we teach our children to handle them — I have always been a believer in positive reinforcement and trying to find the good in every situation — We may not believe it now, and it may seem easier to point the finger, but a pat on the back and a few ‘atta boy’s’ can make a huge difference in a child’s life.” Mr. McKinnon and Farmers Insurance decided to make 1,500
signs and send them out to communities that requested one. The signs are posted on fields where kids play sports games. This is the poem: “He stands at the plate with his heart pounding fast. / The bases are loaded, the die has been cast. / Mom and Dad cannot help him, he stands all alone. / A hit at this moment would send his team home. / The ball meets the plate, he swings and he misses. / There's a groan from the crowd, with some boos and some hisses. / A thoughtless voice cries, ‘Strike out the bum.’ / Tears fill his eyes, the game’s no longer fun. / So open up your heart and give him a break, / for it’s moments like this, a man you can make. / Please keep this in mind when you hear someone forget, / He is just a little boy, and not a man yet.” (10)

“Timing is Everything When Something like This Happens”

On 23 May 2013, as the Kansas City Royals played the Los Angeles Angels, a 14-year-old girl was shown dancing in the upper deck on Kauffman Stadium’s video board. Just after the camera turned away from her, she collapsed. Fortunately, a member of the Royals K-Crew, a group of team employees who entertain fans, also works as a pediatric nurse at Children’s Mercy Hospital. Sam Sapenaro, a 26-year-old woman, responded immediately. The 14-year-old had no pulse. Ms. Sapenaro, assisted by a man who was also a nurse, began performing CPR on the girl. They resuscitated the girl, but her pulse faded again and stadium medical personnel had to resuscitate her a second time. Ms. Sapenaro said, “We were on her in the first 15-20 seconds of her going down. Timing is everything when something like this happens.” Paramedics took the girl to Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. Ms. Sapenaro returned to work on the K-Crew, and many fans thanked her for assisting the girl. Ms. Sapenaro said, “It’s hard for me to accept that compliment
just because I am a nurse and I feel that’s what I’m supposed to do. The outpouring of love has been incredible from the Royals organization and the Royals fans.” Ms. Sapenaro has worked as a member of the K-Crew for four years. Toby Cook, the Royals’ Vice President for Community Affairs, said, “To say that it was fortunate that this young woman from the K-Crew was a registered nurse is an understatement. She was there; she knew what to do. It was a heroic effort on her part to be able to respond that way and have her medical training kick in, going from entertaining fans one second to providing potential life-saving care to somebody the next.” He added, “She went from K-Crew to nurse mode and stayed that way right up until the point that we transported the patient.” Ms. Sapenaro said, “It’s definitely a different situation when you’re out in the field not expecting it, when you’re in a different job role, and then you have to switch back into nurse mode.” (11)

Matt Kemp: Giver of Gifts

Following a game against the Giants in San Francisco in May 2013, Los Angeles Dodger outfielder Matt Kemp signed a baseball for a fan named Josh, and then gave him his hat and his jersey—and his shoes. Josh’s friend Tommy Schultz posted video of the good deed on <YouTube> and wrote, “Matt Kemp is such a great person. He came over after the game and made one of my best friends’ night :) he’s fighting a tough battle and this was such a great gift by Matt Kemp! I’ll never forget this.” The video does not show Josh thanking Mr. Kemp, leading viewers of the video to think that Josh cannot talk, so Tommy wrote later, “Josh can talk so you all know. He was just very shocked to receive this from Matt.” Tommy also wrote that Josh has a rare form of cancer. YouTube user UtterDissonance commented, “As a SF Giants fan, I’ll always hate the Dodgers, but I don’t think I will ever hate
Matt Kemp. Guy is a class act every time I see clips of him outside of the game.” The fan is Josh Jones from Tracy, California. Mr. Kemp said that third base coach Tim Wallach “told me that there was a big Dodger fan at the game and that he didn’t have a long time to live — not longer than a month and a half. So after the game, I just decided to go meet him. He couldn’t talk because I guess his speech was gone. When I said ‘Hi’ to him, he just looked at me in shock. It almost got me.” Josh has been wearing the No. 27 jersey that Mr. Kemp gave him. Because of the cancer, Josh has a difficult time speaking, but he said in an interview with CBS that Mr. Kemp’s good deed “made me want to keep fighting cancer, made me really happy when he did this.” Mr. Kemp’s good deed has gone viral. Josh’s father, Steve Jones, said, “I had no idea it was going to get this huge. I just wanted my son to be able to meet Matt Kemp, and that was it, you know. But it sounds like a lot of people are interested in our story, so that’s the good thing.” Mr. Kemp continued doing good things for Joshua. In late May, three weeks after meeting Joshua, Mr. Kemp flew him and his family to Los Angeles, California, so that they could see the Dodgers play at home. On Memorial Day, 27 May 2013, Joshua got to meet Dodgers president Stan Kasten, Angels star Mike Trout, Dodgers ace Clayton Kershaw, and, of course, Mr. Kemp on the Dodgers baseball field. Three weeks previously, of course, Joshua’s father, Steve, had asked Dodgers third-base coach Tim Wallach to ask Mr. Kemp to say “Hi” to Joshua. Steve Jones said, “You don’t find a lot of ballplayers who will do something like that for you. I asked him to come over and say hello to my son, and he’s done a lot more than that.” (12)

“I have a Soft Spot for Kids with No Funds to Play, Kids that Can’t Afford to Do What They Want to Do”

Justin Harrington, owner of GM Tree Service, helps kids to
play ball at the Leominster American Little League field in Leominster, Massachusetts. In 2013, he sponsored four children to play baseball: one player from each of four divisions, from T Ball to the Major League. Mr. Harrington said, “I have a soft spot for kids with no funds to play, kids that can’t afford to do what they want to do.” He added, “I grew up with parents that were divorced, and we didn’t have much at all. Now I have a successful business, and can afford to help out. There is nothing like seeing a kid happy and no price you can put on to see a kid smile.” Rob Lora, president of Leominster American, is impressed by what Mr. Harrington is doing: “This guy is paying out of his own pocket for these kids to play.” Mr. Harrington said, “I would rather see the kids here on the baseball field than sitting home playing video games, or hanging out looking to get into trouble.” Mr. Harrington also donates to fundraising events to fight cancer. He said, “My trucks are all painted pink for cancer awareness.” The boys Mr. Harrington is helping are Tanner Martin, Kyron Hobdy, Domenic Swaine, and Will Vargo. Tanner, age six, who plays t-ball, said, “I’m a Red Sox fan.” Kyron Hobdy, a minor leaguer, said, “I like catching, and I played left field at practice.” Domenic Swaine, who plays instructional ball, said that he is “very excited to play baseball this year.” Will, a first baseman, said, “I watch the timing of the ball, and I like to help teach my younger cousins. I like to help the younger kids coming along.” Mr. Lora said, “What Justin has done lets other kids who may not have the chance to play to be out there having fun, too. I can’t say enough about this.” (13)

“It [Excluding African-Americans from Baseball] wasn’t Just, It wasn’t Decent, It wasn’t Fair, and I was Going to End It”

Branch Rickey, the general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, played a major role in breaking the color line in
major-league baseball when he hired Jackie Robinson, but another white man who played a major role in keeping Mr. Robinson in the major leagues was Albert B. “Happy” Chandler, the commissioner of baseball. The owners of the baseball teams voted 15-1 against Mr. Rickey’s plan to hire Mr. Robinson, but Mr. Chandler overrode the owners’ vote and allowed Mr. Robinson to play major-league baseball. Mr. Chandler later explained, “I’d have to meet my Maker some day, and if He asked me why I didn’t let this boy play, and I said, ‘Because he was black,’ that might not be a satisfactory answer.” Mr. Chandler added, “I just decided it [excluding African-Americans from baseball] wasn’t just, it wasn’t decent, it wasn’t fair, and I was going to end it.”

Atticus Lane-Dupre: Hat-Trick Hero

Eight-year-old Atticus Lane-Dupre discovered that he had a cancerous tumor on one of his kidneys after a soccer ball hit him in the belly and the pain did not go away. His kidney was removed. He plays soccer, and he missed the last game of the 2012 season with his team, the Green Machine, because of cancer treatment. The Make-a-Wish Foundation grants the wishes of children who have or have had life-threatening illnesses, and it granted Atticus’ wish: He wanted his team to play a game against the Major League Soccer team the Portland Timbers of Oregon. On 1 May 2013, the game took place at Jeld-Wen Field in Portland — over 3,000 fans watched the game — and Atticus scored the final goal on a corner kick to lead his Green Machine team to a 10-9 victory over the Timbers. This broke the Timbers’ six-game winning streak. For this game, Portland coach Caleb Porter coached the Green Machine. He said about the play that scored the game-winning goal, “Just how we drew it up.” Atticus said, “I had lots of fun.” Make-a-Wish Oregon spokeswoman Tracey Lam said, “Atticus wanted to involve his entire
team because they have been so supportive of him throughout his treatment. That touched our hearts, and the Timbers really stepped up and made it magical for him.” Atticus’ mother, Jennifer Lane, said, “I think he was kind of sick of all the attention for having cancer, so he picked something his whole team could do.” Portland Timber player Jack Jewsbury said after the game, “When a team like the Green Machine comes in, it puts pressure on you. It’s really tough.” After the game, Portland Timber player Will Johnson exchanged jerseys with Atticus. Will said, “It’s the first and only time in my career I’ll ask for somebody’s jersey.” William Conwell wrote an excellent article about the game for the Stumptown Footy, a publication devoted to the Portland Timbers, and he wrote the article straight. The lead paragraph: “Despite being pressed all game by the Timbers, Major League Soccer’s hottest team, the Green Machine were able to lean on their captain, the hat-trick hero, Atticus. In the final seconds of regulation, and with the score tied at 9-9, Atticus received the ball at midfield and drove toward the Timbers’ last man, Sebastian Rincon. Seeing his opening, Atticus slipped the ball through Rincon’s legs and into the back of the net, sending the crowd of 3000 Green Machine diehards into hysterics as the final whistle blew with the score standing at 10-9 in favor of the Green Machine.” (15)

“What Tyrone [Mings] Did Just Goes to Show that Footballers Do Care a Lot About the Fans”

Tris Monk is a lifelong fan of the soccer (English football) team of Ipswich, Suffolk, England. He wanted to go to an important match in March 2013, but the 24-year-old was skint (English for the American “broke”) because he is saving for a deposit for a new flat (English for the American “apartment”) for his wife (25-year-old Char), two daughters (three-year-old Lara and four-year-old Kate-lynn), and himself. Mr. Monk Tweeted Ipswich substitute
Tyrone Mings, age 19, to wish him good luck in the match and mentioned that he would like to attend the match but was skint. Mr. Mings Tweeted back to ask if Mr. Monk could physically if not financially make it to the match. Mr. Monk Tweeted that he could, and Mr. Mings left two free tickets for him at the ticket office; he Tweeted, “left u 2 tickets under the name tris monk. Shouldn’t miss a game cos u can’t afford it.” Mr. Monk said, “I couldn’t believe it. It came completely out of the blue. It was an absolutely quality day — and [Ipswich] Town won!” Mr. Monk said, “We got the tickets from the main ticket office. On the envelope, it said ‘From Tyrone’, and it had his autograph. Footballers get a bit of a bad press and people are quick to criticise. But I think they do a lot of good charity work and I think what Tyrone did just goes to show that footballers do care a lot about the fans.” Mr. Monk and his friend Simon Wyse attended the match. They had company: Mr. Mings’ injured teammate Anthony Wordsworth joined them in the Sir Alf Ramsey stand as Ipswich Town won, 1-0. Mr. Monk said, “It’s been a brilliant weekend — I will never forget it.” Mr. Mings said, “I’m glad Tris had a good day and it was a good result for him and other Town fans. I’m delighted I was able to help.” (16)

Rollin T. Gridley: Hero

Back in the days of Jim Crow, the Tucson (Arizona) High School football team traveled to Douglas, Arizona, for an away game. Tucson coach Rollin T. Gridley and his players went to eat a prearranged pregame meal at the Gadsden Hotel, but Tucson had one black player, Morgan Maxwell Jr., and the hotel management told Mr. Gridley that the black player could not eat in the dining room. Tom Danehy, a columnist for the Tucson Weekly, wrote on 20 June 2013, “Gridley had the players get up from their chairs, leave their meals behind and march out of the hotel. They went to a store, got some bologna and bread, made some
sandwiches, and then proceeded to kick the crap out of the Douglas team. Maxwell’s best friend on the team, Frank Borman (who would go on to command the Apollo 8 mission that orbited the moon on Christmas Eve 1968) wrote in his autobiography that Gridley’s act shaped his attitude on race for the rest of his life.” Mr. Danehy also wrote that “after the end of World War II, black Tucsonans were at best second- (and more probably, third-) class citizens. The only public pool in town, at Oury Park, was used by Anglos and Latinos (in those days universally referred to as ‘Mexicans’) on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Thursday was Negro Day, after which the pool was drained, scrubbed and rechlorinated for the exclusive use of Anglos over the three-day weekend.” Because of the Civil Rights Movement, such idiocy no longer exists — at least, not in this particular form. (17)

“It was Nothing. I was Just Worried about Her”

On 15 April 2013, 6-3, 293-pound Middle Tennessee State football player Darius Johnson, an offensive lineman, helped a female athlete at the Special Olympics at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Before she began competing in the 100-meter dash, Brittany Eyrich, a 10-year-old student at Northfield Elementary, wanted to get her photograph taken with Mr. Johnson. Theresa Eyrich, Brittany’s mother, said, “She loves football, but she usually doesn’t go up to anyone like that. But for some reason, she saw No. 75 and she really wanted to meet him and get a picture with him. He was so nice to her. Well, after that, she ran her 100-meter dash and got too hot at the end, and it threw her into a seizure. First her teacher [Karen Godwin] helped her, but we had to pick her up and move her quickly for her medicine.” Brittany has autism and epilepsy. She has medicine to take for her seizures, but the medicine needs to be administered in a private setting. Brittany weighs 130 pounds, more than her
mother can carry, so her mother enlisted the help of Mr. Johnson, who bench-presses 465 pounds. Theresa said, “He scooped her up like a rag doll. But at first, she didn’t want anyone to pick her up. She said, ‘No, no, no.’ But then she saw it was No. 75, who she asked to get a picture with. So she let him pick her up, and he ran her to a safe place for us to take her medicine.” Mr. Johnson said, “I’ve never seen anyone have a seizure, so I just did whatever I could. At the beginning of the day, that’s not what I expected to be doing, helping a girl like that.” Mr. Johnson, who had suffered an injury in a scrimmage, was wearing a walking boot. He said, “I couldn’t feel my ankle anyway with that boot on. And I was just worried because they said they had to move her somewhere or it could be bad. I picked her up and ran as fast as I could to find a place to put her so she could take her medicine.” Brittany recovered from the seizure, and her mother called Mr. Johnson that evening. She said, “I called [Mr. Johnson] and thanked him from the bottom of my heart. He didn’t have to do what he did. Those seizures can get bad if she isn’t treated, but we couldn’t carry her. If he didn’t jump in there and help, it could have gotten very bad very quickly. And I just thought he should get the gratitude that he deserves.” Mr. Johnson said, “She just wanted to say how much she appreciated that. It was nothing. I was just worried about her.” (18)

“ya made me look like dad of the year!”

Shaq Wilson, a linebacker for South Carolina’s football team, took some time off from preparing for the NFL draft to play video games online with a boy whose father requested through Twitter that he play him. The boy, of course, was excited. On 2 April 2013, after the games session, the father Tweeted Mr. Wilson, “thank you man,you made his day, he kept fist bumping me,ya made me look like dad of the year! Thank you.” Mr. Wilson Tweeted back, “you are just, keep doing what you doing &
being you.” (19)

“He Deserved His Chance”

On 12 February 2013, Mitchell Marcus, a special-needs senior at Coronado High in El Paso, Texas, got into a basketball game for the final 90 seconds after having been team manager for three years: the Coronado Thunderbirds were playing the team from Franklin High School. Mitchell missed his first shot and the ball went out of bounds, giving Franklin High possession, but with 13 seconds left and his team behind by 10 points, Jonathon Montanez, a senior at Franklin High, threw the basketball to Mitchell, who scored. Video of the shot went viral and came to the attention of Los Angeles Clippers star Chris Paul, who treated the two players, the boys’ families, and Coronado coach Peter Morales to a Clippers game against the Oklahoma City Thunder. Mr. Morales said, “It was a gesture out of the heart. We never expected all this.” Accompanying them at the game was Scooter Braun, who manages pop sensation Justin Bieber. Mr. Braun and Mr. Paul are friends, and Mr. Braun is the person who let Mr. Paul know about the video. After the game, Mr. Paul and teammates, Matt Barnes, Jamal Crawford, Grant Hill, and Lamar Odom met the boys and gave them signed jerseys and posed for photos. Mitchell, a big basketball fan, said, “I was very happy. Amazing, it’s my dream.” Jonathon said that his decision to pass the basketball to Mitchell was spur of the moment: “He deserved his chance.” (20)

Doing the Right Thing

Financial writer Suze Orman started out as a waitress, and she wanted to own her own restaurant but she lacked the money. A long-time customer named Fred Hasbrook saw her looking sad and talked to her and discovered why she was sad. He then talked with some of his friends — more long-time customers — and they gave her personal checks
and commitments that were worth in total $50,000. Mr. Hasbrook told her, “This is for people like you, so that your dreams can come true. To be paid back in ten years, if you can, with no interest.” This was more money than Ms. Orman had ever had, and she did not know what to do with it. Mr. Hasbrook advised her to go to the local Merrill Lynch office and put it in a money market account. Ms. Orman, who was naïve about finance and did not know what a money market account is, did go to her local Merrill Lynch office, but after she explained her plans to open a restaurant, an unscrupulous broker convinced her not to put her money in a safe money market account but instead to put it in risky options — something that resulted in very high commissions for the broker and usually resulted in very high losses for the customer. Ms. Orman explains, “At that time nearly ninety percent of all people who bought only options lost their money; they are very high-commission, very fast, and very speculative.” In a week or two, she made $5,000; shortly afterward, all of her money was gone. What to do? How to repay the money? How to explain that she had lost all the money? She got a job with Merrill Lynch, and while she was studying for the Series 7 exam to be a broker, she realized that the broker who had put her money into options and lost all her money had been acting unethically. Brokers are required to invest a client’s money in a way that is appropriate for that client. Because Ms. Orman was going to buy a restaurant and the broker knew that, her money should have been put in a safe money market account, not in risky options, which are only for the very wealthy, and maybe not even for them. She went to her manager and told him that she had been cheated, and he advised her not to do or say anything because the broker who had cheated her made a lot of money for the company. Ms. Orman left the manager’s office and thought, I’m young, I’m only 30 years old. Fred told me I didn’t have to pay back the loan unless I could, and at no interest, so I
could just sit here and do nothing. But what if it wasn’t me — what if it was my mother, or grandmother, or somebody who didn’t have time to recover? Ms. Orman did the right thing and sued Merrill Lynch. If she had let the broker and the Merrill Lynch office get away with cheating her, the cheating would have continued. Because of the lawsuit, she could not be fired without extremely good reasons, so she kept working there and became a top broker without cheating any customers. The broker who had cheated her was fired, and a new manager who came into the office investigated the lawsuit, realized that Ms. Orman was in the right, and settled the lawsuit. She got back all her money, plus interest. She paid back Mr. Hasbrook and the other generous customers who had loaned her the money. And, of course, she became an expert in personal finance, about which she has written many books. (21)

A Very Large Advance

One of Edith Wharton’s best friends was fellow American novelist Henry James. In 1913, when Mr. James reached the age of 70, Ms. Wharton suspected that he was having financial problems, and she wrote a number of his American friends, including Charles Scribner, to raise money for a birthday present for him. She asked each of them for “a sum of money (not less than $5,000) for the purchase of a gift, the choice of which would be left to him.” Mr. James, however, found out what Ms. Wharton was planning, and he stopped it. Ms. Wharton was nevertheless convinced that he was having financial problems and so she convinced Charles Scribner to give Mr. James a very large advance for his next novel. All of the money for the very large advance came from the pockets of Ms. Wharton. By the way, when Ms. Wharton was 11 years old, she wrote a novel that began “‘Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Brown?’ said Mrs. Tompkins. ‘If only I had known you were going to call I should have tidied up
the drawing-room.” Young Edith gave her novel to her mother to read, and her mother commented, “Drawing-rooms are always tidy.” (22)

**Saving a Friend’s Farm**

When the stock market collapsed in October 1929, author Willa Cather lost some money, but she still had a good income from royalties, so she did not suffer financially during the Great Depression. In fact, she sent money to friends and relatives who needed it. For example, the Pavelka family almost lost their farm to foreclosure, but Ms. Cather saved it by paying the property taxes they owed. Annie Sadilek, who married a farmer named John Pavelka and became the mother of 10 children, had lived close to the Cathers as Willa was growing up; they became lifelong friends. As a servant, Annie had helped support her family by sending money to them. Will used the stories of Annie and her father, Francis, who had committed suicide, in her novel *My Ántonia*. Annie’s husband is the basis of a character in Willa’s short story “Neighbor Rosicky.” By the way, Willa’s grandmother had, when she was a young woman, helped a slave named Nancy Till escape and find freedom. When Willa was five years old, in 1879, Nancy returned to thank Willa’s grandmother — and to be reunited with her own mother: Old Till. This story became the basis of Willa’s novel *Sapphira and the Slave Girl*. (23)

“I Trust the Glass Slipper — I Mean the Bracelet, Reached You Safely”

Opera singer Clara Doria and poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow were friends. After a visit with Mr. Longfellow, Ms. Doria accidentally dropped a bracelet that fell on the verandah steps of his home in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mr. Longfellow found the bracelet, realized that it was hers, and wrote her this note dated 7 February 1877: “Dear Miss Doria: As the Ritter von Toggenburg
knocked at the Castle gate and heard the fatal words, —
‘Sie du suchst trägt den Schleier — ist des Himmels Braut,’
so two days ago I knocked at your door and heard the
equally fatal words: ‘She’s gone to Providence!’ The truth
is, I was like the Prince in the Fairy Tale and came to try on
the glass slipper which you dropped after our pleasant supper. How unlucky I was to choose just the day when
you were not at home! I trust the glass slipper — I mean
the bracelet, reached you safely. I gave special charge to
the maid at the door to lay it upon your pianoforte. Hoping
you will come and see us again soon and drop another
bracelet or something else for me to bring back to you, I
am, with all good wishes, Yours very truly, Henry W.
Longfellow.” (24)

Four-Year-Old Calls Darth Vader for Instructions

On 2 April 2013, the four-year-old son of Stephanie Kaloi
had surgery on both legs and went home with a walker and
knee immobilizers. Her son hated the walker because he
associated it with pain; after the operation, he was asked to
walk with a walker and it hurt — a lot. Fortunately, Ms.
Kaloi and comic artist and illustrator Ben Dewey are
friends. (Mr. Dewey is the author of the Tragedy Series, a
Tumblr.) Mr. Dewey turned the walker into an AT-AT
from the Star Wars films — the AT-ATs attack the good
guys at the beginning of The Empire Strikes Back. Ms.
Kaloi wrote about her son, “Dude loves being able to call
Darth Vader (his favorite character) for instructions, and
has mastered the sound of a laser being fired. More
importantly, the goal was accomplished: our son happily
walked all around our living room firing lasers at us for
nearly an hour without once being scared that the walker
would cause him pain. He’ll need the walker for another
three weeks, and having him happy to use it is a huge leap
forward for his recovery. It’s absolutely magical, and yes:
the Force is mighty strong with this one. And if you
REALLY want to geek out, a friend of mine posted a photo on Reddit and WILLIAM SHATNER COMMENTED ON IT. Did your fandom heads just implode? ’Cause mine just did.” This is the comment by William Shatner (he played Captain Kirk on Star Trek, but you already knew that, right?), who when he wrote it had seen only a photograph, not the article by Ms. Kaloi: “Very clever! I bet he loved it!” (25)

“Instead of Us Going to the Museum, the Art has Come Out to the Sidewalk to Us”

Madison, Wisconsin, has many art galleries and museums, but Madison artists Rachel Bruya and Jeremy Wineberg wanted to make some art available to people who don’t go to the art galleries and art museums. They decided to create small art galleries for the public. The Little Mifflin Gallery is about six feet tall, and it has an 18-inch-high glass box big enough to display a very small sculpture or a few works of art on paper. The Little Mifflin Gallery is next to the sidewalk in front of Ms. Bruya’s home on E. Mifflin Street; it opened in June 2013. Two more little art galleries readily available for public viewing are planned. Mr. Weinberg, a sculptor, will manage the Little Monroe Gallery, which will be located near his workplace: Monroe Street Framing. The third gallery, the Little Forward Gallery, is expected to be located somewhere on the University of Wisconsin campus. Mr. Weinberg said, “People don’t have to go into a gallery. We’re bringing art back into this lively social scene.” Ms. Bruya, who in 2007 graduated from the University of Wisconsin’s master of fine arts (MFA) art program, received support for the idea of the small art galleries from the university. Dean Allen and Gabe Strader-Brown, who are graduate students in woodworking, built the galleries. Dane Arts and a Madison Arts Commission BLINK! grant from the city of Madison also supported the project. Mr. Wineberg said, “You don’t want to do [artwork] that’s
repulsive to people who live here, but you also want to challenge them. You can push yourself, make something new.” Ms. Bruya and Mr. Wineberg have advised artists not to display works of art that use precious metals, lest the works of art be stolen. Ms. Bruya said, “If someone wants to back up their truck in the middle of the night and tie this thing [gallery] up and yank it out of the ground, there’s nothing we can do to stop it. Mr. Wineberg said, “You’re taking a chance to put stuff out there. One of the cool things about this is it catches a lot of people by surprise. We’re trying to encourage a serendipitous kind of experience.” Passersby have taken note of and liked the Little Mifflin gallery. Ms. Bruya said, “One of the first people that stopped by after the show went in was a mom with her two kids. She kind of pulled them over and said, ‘Hey, look, you guys. Instead of us going to the museum, the art has come out to the sidewalk to us.’ That encompassed every intention we’ve had with the project. It was amazing to have someone walking by get that right away.” (26)

“The Reason I was Crying is Because I Had So Much Joy that I had Just Made Two Teens So, So Happy”

On 22 June 2013, Taylor Swift performed at Investors Group Field in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Roxy Lacroix and her boyfriend showed up with tickets that they had bought on Kijiji, Canada’s largest free classified website; unfortunately, the tickets were fake and so they could not get into the concert. Ms. Lacroix cried, and an older man offered her his ticket. She turned him down because she was with her boyfriend and she wanted to see the concert with him. She said, “And he’s like, ‘You know what?’ And he takes out his wallet, takes out another ticket, and he’s like, ‘I have two to give to you guys.’” Ms. Lacroix knew only the older man’s first name: Raymond. She wanted to thank him a second time, so she posted on social media a
photograph of him, her, and her boyfriend. Quickly, Raymond was identified. He is Raymond Bernier, and Ms. Lacroix spoke to Mr. Bernier by telephone and thanked him again. She said that he had ridden a city bus home and cried all the way. Ms. Lacroix said, “He’s like, ‘The reason I was crying is because I had so much joy that I had just made two teens so, so happy.’” (27)

**A Smooch from Action Bronson**

In June 2013 at a concert in England, American rapper Action Bronson lost his phone after performing in an audience of thousands. He asked the audience to try to find his phone, and Nathaniel Benjamin found it and gave it to him. Action Bronson gave him a reward. On Instagram, Riggdup posted a photo of Action Bronson kissing Mr. Benjamin’s head and explained, “Meet Nathaniel Benjamin. Young Bronson took it to the audience and lost his phone (the one with the important #’s and unreleased material) in a crowd of thousands. When he jumped on the mic and asked the crowd to help him find the phone, young Nathaniel — who drove 2hrs wearing a bootleg Action Bronson T shirt — raised his hand and saved the day. He was rewarded for his honesty with all access to event, a smooch and a couple pounds to have someone clean smooch off.” (28)

**“Tough and Smart. That’s What You Want to Be. The World Can’t Handle People Who can Mainline Aggression and Still Rock”**

According to Nicholas Pell, Henry Rollins saved his life. In 2002, Mr. Pell suffered from depression. He wrote to the *LA Weekly* that “my antisocial depression reached its lowest point. I was living in Washington, D.C., surrounded by the nadir of early-2000s hipster culture, privileged officers’ wives and Beltway snipers. My extroverted, upbeat roommates overwhelmed me, never more so than
when they held a cookout swarming with angular haircuts, skinny jeans, and Locust T-shirts. Borderline suicidal, I spent a lot of days in bed, staring at the walls, too depressed to stand up.” For some reason, he wrote a letter to Mr. Rollins, perhaps because Mr. Rollins had originally come from Washington D.C. In the letter, Mr. Pell listed a number of things that he hated about his life. He mailed the letter, and then he forgot about it. A few weeks later, he received a postcard from Mr. Rollins. It stated, “Dear Nick, Tough and smart. That’s what you want to be. The world can’t handle people who can mainline aggression and still rock. Best, Rollins.” Mr. Pell wrote, “The postcard is gone now, though I’m not entirely sure where it went. One day I went to look for it and it just wasn’t there. Sometimes I feel an absence, like a missing tooth. Still, it’s not the physical object that matters. Having the postcard or not having it doesn’t make my memory, or the impact Old Man Rollins had on my life, any less real.” Mr. Rollins is a former lead singer for punk group Black Flag. In 2013, he was asked to reunite with some other members of Black Flag and go on tour, but he prefers to move forward rather than to go backward. To him, performing old music often seems like going backward. However, this does not mean that he never performs old music. In 2013, he pointed out that “I went out 10 years ago and took those songs on a brief lap around the world, but that was mission-specific. I took all that money and gave it to the West Memphis Three’s attorneys, and that is how the DNA evidence got tested to help free them. We went from L.A. to Tokyo, everyone showed up, and we made a whole bunch of money and I didn’t even take a dime.” The West Memphis Three are three people from West Memphis, Arkansas, who were convicted of murder in 1994 when they were teenagers. (29)

**Lena Horne: Fighting Prejudice**

Money was tight for lots of people during the Great
Depression, including the family of 16-year-old Lena Horne, who in 1933 auditioned as a chorus girl at the Cotton Club in Harlem, New York. She passed the audition and started performing three shows a night — the last show began at 2 a.m. — as well as appearing with the chorus line at business conventions and nearby vaudeville theaters. She made $25 a week — a lot of money at the time and much more than salesclerks and secretaries made. Because of the hours she worked, she stopped attending her high school classes. A truant officer visited her home, and he discovered where Lena was working, but he did the very good deed of not forcing her to attend classes because, according to Ms. Horne, he knew that she was the principal financial support of her family. By the way, her grandmother, Cora Horne, was known as the “Tiny Terror.” Whenever she saw boys who were hanging around street corners instead of going to school, she loudly scolded them. Ms. Horne fought racial prejudice. For example, she protested when white German prisoners of war were seated in front while black American soldiers were seated in back at one of her USO appearances during World War II. When Ms. Horne discovered discrimination at the Copacabana in New York while she appeared there — the nightclub accepted the reservations of blacks over the telephone, but when the blacks showed up, they were told that their reservations had been “lost” — she added a nondiscrimination clause to her contracts. Some white people supported her despite the prejudice of other white people. Despite being a famous entertainer, when she moved into a new home, some of her new neighbors circulated a petition to get her to leave. Fortunately, other neighbors — such as actors Humphrey Bogart and Peter Lorre — supported her and made the petition disappear. (30)

“I’ve Got Joy Joy Joy Down in My Heart”
In July 2012, Cliff “Coach” Ramos and Steve “Pee Wee” West went on a trip and performed at least one good deed on each of the 11 days of the trip. For example, on Day 11, they were at the Los Angeles (California) Airport waiting for a flight that kept being delayed. By them were a couple and their two small daughters. One girl—a toddler perhaps one and a half year old—was getting cranky. But either Coach or Pee Wee (the person is not identified) had some songs for children stored on his phone. Either Coach or Pee Wee wrote, “I remembered I have some tunes for toddlers on my finger rubbin’ phone I play for my granddaughter, so I knelt down and started playing ‘Sesame Street’ to try to calm her down. She smiled immediately as did her sister and her parents. There were even a few other people looking in on the action and enjoying themselves. When I played ‘I’ve Got Joy Joy Joy Down in My Heart,’ the little girl really started moving and clapping with the music. She even raised the roof once.” (31)

“ Took a Man from Liverpool to Care Enough and Pay the Bill. Thanks, [Sir] Paul”

Sir Paul McCartney visited Motown and saw a run-down Steinway grand piano. In 1877, the piano had been built, and by the 21st century, it was in terrible shape, having been used in many, many Motown recording sessions. Sir Paul decided to pay the cost of restoring the piano. He paid for the piano to be shipped to New York’s Steinway factory, where it was restored. Of course, some parts had to be replaced, but restorers kept the original piano case. The restorers called it “one of the finest instruments” that they had ever worked on. In early 2013, Sir Paul and Motown founder Berry Gordy played the piano at a fundraiser in New York. In April 2013, the piano arrived at the Motown Museum in Detroit, Michigan, where it was put on display. Terri Hemmert, a blogger for WXRT (Chicago, Illinois), wrote, “Next time you’re in the Motor City, drop by at
2648 W. Grand Boulevard and tread that sacred ground that gave birth to some of the best soul music ever recorded. Some of the locals have pointed out that the city didn’t fix it. Gordy didn’t fix it. Took a man from Liverpool to care enough and pay the bill. Thanks, Paul.” (32)

**Slices and Sodas**

At 4:30 a.m. on 21 March 2013, Rohan Marley, son of reggae musician Bob Marley, went out for pizza at Artichoke Basille’s Pizza and Bar on West 17th Street in New York City. He saw a group of people who looked homeless outside the pizza shop, and he bought $30 of pizza slices and soft drinks for them. (33)

**Britney Spears, a Man Asking for Money, and a Brave Security Guard**

In March 2013, Britney Spears came across a man asking for money outside a drugstore in Los Angeles, California. He said to her, “Please help me … I’m at the end of my rope!” Ms. Spears withdrew $100 from an ATM and gave it to him. The man was so happy to get the money that he gave Ms. Spears a bear hug, startling her so much that she screamed. The drugstore’s security guard bravely came running, thinking that Ms. Spears was being held up. The security guard took the money from the man, but Ms. Spears explained, “No! … No! Give this man his money back! I gave it to him!” (34)

**“Honey, Do You Want This Frog [Stuffed Animal] and This Rice Krispie Treat?”**

On 17 March 2013 at the Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvanian, Pink stopped singing her hit “Who Knew” because she saw a little girl in the audience crying. She asked, “Is everything OK right here? Is this little girl all right? What’s going on? Why is she crying? Why is she upset?” Apparently, the little girl had started
crying because she had seen some kind of altercation. Pink said, “Because there was a fight? You all are fighting around a little girl? C’mon … all right, all right, I know, everyone’s about to fight. I know, I’m from here.” (Pink was born in Abington Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.) Pink, who has a toddler, then offered the little girl some treats: “Honey, do you want this frog [stuffed animal] and this Rice Krispie treat?” The little girl was lifted up to the stage and accepted the gifts. Pink told the girl that she was beautiful, and then Pink said to the audience, “Are we OK now? Cut it out, y’all. We’re grown-[*]ss women.” She then continued the concert. (35)

The Very Generous Solomon

Gerald Moore, a world-famous accompanist, respected people who knew their own worth when their worth was great. When the pianist Solomon was very young, he rehearsed a concerto with the Bournemouth Orchestra under conductor Sir Dan Godfrey. Sir Dan said something insulting to Solomon, who immediately left the piano, went to his dressing room, put on his hat and coat, and got ready to take the next train to London. To his credit, Sir Dan immediately went to Solomon’s dressing room and apologized to him. Solomon stayed and played, and the two men became friends. Solomon and Mr. Moore were also friends. When Mr. Moore journeyed from Australia to San Francisco, California, Solomon met him and entertained him: They had a fabulous dinner together at Trader Vic’s. The next morning, when Mr. Moore was ready to leave his spacious suite at the Clift Hotel, the employees told him that they could not accept his money — Solomon had taken care of the bill. (36)

“I Can’t Tell You Because I Can’t Read Very Well”

Sidney Poitier, who in 1963 became the first black actor to win an Academy Award (Oscar) as Best Actor (for his
performance in *Lilies of the Field*), dropped out of school when he was very young, and he could not read well. Fortunately, a man taught him. Mr. Poitier thanked the man in *People Magazine*: “I left school at 12-and-a-half. But I wanted to be knowledgeable, even though at the time I did not know that such a word existed. I was working in Queens [New York] as a dishwasher, and one evening I was sitting in the dining room trying to read the newspaper. This Jewish waiter walked over, stood looking down at me and then said, ‘What’s new in the paper?’ I said, after hesitating, ‘I can’t tell you because I can’t read very well.’ He said, ‘Oh, would you like me to read with you?’ That night and every night, that man, whoever he was, sat next to me and taught me to read — not just the pronunciation and meaning of the words, but what a comma was, what a period was. I eventually had to go to work elsewhere, and I never got a chance to go back and tell him what a gift he gave me. I never ever got an opportunity to thank him.” As of June 2013, Mr. Poitier had written three autobiographies and one novel. (37)

**Retroactive Pay**

Anne Beatts and Michael O’Donoghue were boyfriend and girlfriend, and they were hired as writers for *Saturday Night Live*. They were being paid the same, but apparently that was a mistake. Ms. Beatts says that NBC decided, “No, wait. That’s a mistake. We didn’t mean to pay you the same.” That was bad news for Ms. Beatts; after all, she and Mr. O’Donoghue had just spent an impoverished year together before being hired to write for *Saturday Night Live*. So Ms. Beatts went to Lorne Michaels and said, “This can’t be. We have to be paid the same!” She remembers, “Plus, the money was gone. I’d spent it. We are talking about a big $750 a week, which to us was largesse — unimaginable largesse. And then Lorne, bless him, just told them they had to reactively change it and pay us the same.
And they did.” (38)

“Maybe We Shouldn’t Mutiny Today ’Cause There are Police Outside Monitoring Me”

In October 2010, actor Johnny Depp paid a surprise visit to the Meridian Primary School in London, England, while he was dressed as Captain Jack Sparrow of *Pirates of the Caribbean* fame. He made the visit in response to this letter by nine-year-old pupil Beatrice Delap: “Captain Jack Sparrow, At Meridian Primary School, we are a bunch of budding young pirates and we were having a bit of trouble mutinying against the teachers, and we’d love if you could come and help. Beatrice Delap, aged nine, a budding pirate.” A witness responded hearing “incredible screams of joy” as Mr. Depp and some other actors dressed as pirates entered the school. Mr. Depp went to Beatrice’s class and asked her to identify herself. Beatrice said, “He gave me a hug and he said, ‘Maybe we shouldn’t mutiny today ’cause there are police outside monitoring me.’” Indeed, police were around the nearby 18th century Old Naval College, a major location in the fourth *Pirates of the Caribbean* movie that Mr. Depp was then filming. Mr. Depp had previously done a few remarkable good deeds in London. In March 2007, the kidneys of Lily-Rose, his then eight-year-old daughter, failed. She was treated at Great Ormond Street Hospital, and medical personnel saved her life. Mr. Depp donated £1 million to the hospital. Also previously, while dressed as Captain Sparrow, he had visited ill children in the hospital and told them bedtime stories. (39)

“The Way He was Spurting I Thought It was the Carotid [Artery] or the Jugular [Vein]”

In June 2013, Jim Walpole, age 77, and his wife Marilyn, age 79, who live in Defiance, Ohio, visited Toronto, Ontario, Canada. They had eaten at and left P.J. O’Brien’s
restaurant when Mr. Walpole tripped and cut his neck on some scaffolding. His wife yelled for help, and people responded. Marilyn Walpole, a retired nurse, said, “The way he was spurting I thought it was the carotid [artery] or the jugular [vein].” The first person to reach Jim Walpole was actor John Malkovich, who was starring in *The Giacomo Variations* at the Elgin Theatre. Mr. Malkovich applied pressure to the wound until paramedics arrived. Mr. Walpole said, “I’m forever grateful to him — he really helped me out.” Chris Mathias, a doorman from the King Edward Hotel, also ran to help Mr. Walpole, who was lying on his back in a pool of blood. Mr. Mathias said, “I believe [that John Malkovich] was having a cigarette and witnessed the whole thing happening. He placed his hand and started applying pressure to the man’s neck [and] didn’t let go until the ambulance arrived.” Ben Quinn, the owner of P.J. O’Brien’s, happened to be driving by and got out of his car to help. Mr. Walpole said, “I was bleeding so bad on my neck and Chris bought him a towel and John kept pressure on my bleeding neck and then Quinn kept me from turning over and made me stay there until EMS arrived.” Mr. Walpole was taken to St. Michael’s Hospital, where he received 10 stitches. He said that medical personnel told him that “if it was an 8th of an inch further, I would have had real trouble.” Mr. Malkovich is a two-time Academy Award nominee, and Mr. Walpole said he plans on watching some of the actor’s movies. Mr. Walpole said, “I never had the opportunity to see him and thank him after the incident. I asked him what his name was, and he said it was John.” He added, “I didn’t ask the last name because I didn’t figure I’d remember it anyhow.”  

“I Nearly Died When I Saw Him”  

Kayleigh Duff, a 23-year-old mother of a two-year-old son named Kai, has been diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of cancer — the same form of cancer that took her
father’s life when she was eight years old. She has made up a wish list that includes such items as meeting actor Tom Hardy, who appeared in *Inception* and played the character Bane in *The Dark Knight Rises*. The sister of Mr. Hardy’s fiancée saw Ms. Duff on television, and a surprise meeting with Mr. Hardy was set up for Ms. Duff. After the meeting, Ms. Duff, who lives in Herne Bay, Kent, England, said, “I nearly died when I saw him. I was shaking — I just thought we were having a day out in London. Tom’s fiancée, Charlotte, and [my friend] Katie [Birch] arranged it all without me knowing, and he was so lovely and down to earth. We had lunch and tea and scones, and he bought me a diamond necklace.” (41)

**Two Friends**

Clark Gable and Hattie McDaniel were friends, and Mr. Gable helped Ms. McDaniel to get the coveted role of Mammy in *Gone with the Wind*, the role for which Ms. McDaniel got the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress — the first Oscar won by an African-American. (She was also the first African-American to be nominated.) When the movie premiered in Atlanta, Georgia, during those days of Jim Crow, none of the black actors in the movie was invited to attend. Mr. Gable at first vowed not to attend the premiere, but Ms. McDaniel told him that she was not surprised that no black actors were invited to attend the premiere and she told him that he needed to attend the premiere to get publicity for the movie. She also thanked him for his friendship. After Ms. McDaniel integrated the West Adams Heights district of Los Angeles, California, Mr. Gable attended her parties. (42)

“**Dear Mister Rogers, Please Say When You are Feeding Your Fish, Because I Worry About Them**”

Everyone loves Mister Rogers because he really did care and because he was kind. He once received this letter from
Kate, age 5: “Dear Mister Rogers, Please say when you are feeding your fish, because I worry about them. I can’t see if you are feeding them, so please say you are feeding them out loud.” Katie’s father added this note: “Katie is blind, and she does cry if you don’t say that you have fed the fish.” In his book *Dear Mr. Rogers, Does It Ever Rain in Your Neighborhood?: Letters to Mr. Rogers*, Mister Rogers wrote, “Since hearing from Katie, I’ve tried to mention out loud those times that I’m feeding the fish.” (43)

**FACT: “David Brent Saved My Life”**

Jody Parrish, age 32, felt suicidal after a six-year relationship ended, so he wrote a suicide note and sent his ex a text message to say goodbye. Then something unexpected happened. He accidentally stepped on the remote control, his sister’s DVD started playing, and on the TV popped up an episode of the British hit comedy *The Office*. (The TV series was remade for American television, and it has the same name.) Mr. Parrish spent five hours laughing at bungling boss David Brent (whose catchphrase is “Fact”), played by Ricky Gervais, and he decided not to commit suicide. Mr. Parrish, the father of two, said, “David Brent saved my life. I’d not seen it in years but I don’t think I’ve ever laughed so much. I realised I had lots to live for.” Now he takes medication to control his depression. Mr. Gervais said, “I’m so pleased for him.” (44)

**Sir Oliver and the Queen**

Oliver Burton, a 10-year-old who has Down’s syndrome and is dying of cancer, wanted to meet Queen Elizabeth II of England. This was not possible, but he got the next best thing: He met Helen Mirren, a Dame of the British Empire — and an actress who plays the role of the Queen in her West End show *The Audience*, a show in which she plays the Queen, and then he got meet her (and the show’s corgis) backstage; she stayed in character as Queen
Elizabeth II. Dame Helen also “knighted” him, making him Sir Oliver. After the visit, Dame Helen said, “It was a pleasure and a privilege to meet such a brave young man.” Oliver’s father, James Browne, said, “She stayed in character for the whole thing. Oliver thought she was the real Queen, and well, that’s good enough for us. She was really lovely. She did the whole thing — had a butler there, was dressed in costume and did it all properly for him. She sat in Oliver’s wheelchair and gave him her big chair. She had a glass of coke together and biscuits and little sandwiches and they even brought in her corgis from the show, Coco and Roco. She was wonderful and in some of the photos you do a double take because she really does look like the real Queen. She ‘knighted’ him and told everyone that they had to call him Sir Oliver. He had a brilliant day. He took his British flag and got her to sign it and just waved and waved it all day.” The National Children’s Tumour Leukaemia Cancer Trust arranged the visit with Dame Helen. Family support worker Andi Daw said, “I expected it to be two minutes in and out, but it was not at all. They had tea and cakes, they had the corgis, and they really took care of them. The theatre could not have been more helpful; we really could not fault them. It has made an enormous difference to Catherine and her family. She even said she has woken up the last few days feeling lifted. It’s a memory that she will hold for the rest of her life. Even when Ollie is not around anymore, they have got something they can look back on. It really was Ollie’s biggest wish to meet the Queen so it was absolutely huge.”

An Unusual Photo Album

When Reddit user Ticklesmyfancy, aka Stephanie, graduated with an AOS [Associates of Science degree] in web design and interactive media in June 2013 [Stephanie wrote on Reddit, “I literally had to use 17 bobby pins in
order to keep my graduation cap on”), her grandmother gave her a photo album. Inside the photo album were not photos, however, but money, including many, many $20 bills. Stephanie wrote on Reddit, “There [were] also three $50 bills at the end of the album. I rounded to $2900, but it’s actually a total of $2910.” (46)

“That Kind of Creativity is Beautiful, and That’s What We Want to Teach”

On 7 June 2013, some female graduating high school students at William Aberhart High School in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, got up early for a positive senior prank: They left sticky notes with positive messages on the lockers of their classmates. Hannah Rumpel, one of the students who participated in the positive prank, said, “Especially in high school, everyone is really self-conscious and lots of bullying goes on and it’s just good to feel important in one way or another.” She added, “It’s our last kind of hoorah to make people feel good about themselves.” The positive messages included “You are so beautiful,” “You matter,” “You’re dope” (“dope” is slang for “awesome, cool, nice”), and “You are gorgeous.” The reaction to the positive prank has been, uh, positive. Ms. Rumpel said, “It’s been really good. We’ve heard lots of different stories about people that were really touched by them, especially teachers as well.” Sonja Hunter, a teacher at William Aberhart High School, said, “You can’t imagine what it’s like to walk in in the morning and get that little perk. Those are the kinds of things that you just say, ‘Bring it on.’ That kind of creativity is beautiful, and that’s what we want to teach.” (47)

Professor Norm Chervany: A Caring Professor

When Joan Oliver Goldsmith decided to earn an MBA degree at the University of Minnesota, she ran into some major problems trying to understand statistics, and so she
went to Professor Norm Chervany and said, “I’m going to need some help.” Then she started crying. She went to the ladies’ restroom and washed her face, and then she came back to Professor Chervany, who, she says, looked more embarrassed than she felt. He told her, “Don’t worry. I’ll work with you ’til you get it. And you will get it.” He tutored her twice, and the night before their third scheduled tutoring session, intellectual lightning hit her, and she suddenly understood the statistical curve. She telephoned him to cancel the tutoring session, and he said, “That’s a bit sooner than I expected, but I knew you’d get it.” By the way, one of Ms. Goldsmith’s friends is named Vern, who used to live upstairs from her. One day, she fell and she could not lift up her head without vomiting. She called Vern for help, and he insisted that she see a doctor, so he called an ambulance to take her to the emergency room. Later, he called her in the emergency room. He told her that he had cleaned up the blood and the vomit, and he offered to take care of her cat if she needed to stay in the hospital.

Maddie and Jon and the Prom

In April 2013, a photograph originally posted on Facebook went viral. The photograph showed two high school students from Wisconsin: Maddie and Jon. Maddie had met and liked Jon, and she had asked him to the prom. He accepted. Jon’s father, Mike Larson, posted the photograph and this text: “This is my son Jon with his prom date Maddie. He is a junior and he has autism. About a month ago, Maddie, a senior, came to my office (I’m a teacher at their school) and asked if Jon’s mom and I would allow her to take him to prom. Maddie had gotten to know Jon through a school club that promotes friendships between special needs kids and regular kids. ‘He’s a junior,’ she explained[,] ‘so it’s his prom too. I just think he should have the chance to go.’ I told her we would be honored to
have him go with her. During the next couple weeks, she asked what his favorite color was (orange) so she could get a dress in that color. She also made reservations for their group (they doubled with another couple) at a restaurant that served his favorite food — chicken fingers and French fries.” Jon’s father encouraged people to post the photo for a number of reasons, including this one: “To remind us all, in a time when we hear about all the terrible things going on, that there are wonderful kids like Maddie working to make other [people]’s lives better.” (49)

**A Much-Needed and –Appreciated Birthday Gift: A Wheelchair**

In April 2013, 10-year-old Alex Maurice Fraits received a much-needed and –appreciated birthday gift from the grade-one students at the Moneague Primary and Junior High School in St. Ann, Jamaica, and from their class teacher Kesreen Dillon and student teacher from the Moneague College Patrice Wilson: a brand-new Everest and Jennings wheelchair. All final-year student teachers from the Moneague College must perform a project with their class while they are spending 11 weeks in a practicum. Ms. Wilson’s class project combined two topics from the class curriculum: “Caring for family members with physical challenges” and the “Good Samaritan.” Now the students of Grade 1D are “The Good Samaritans of Grade 1D.” Ms. Wilson learned about Alex from community health aid nurse Janice Beadle-Campbell, who works at the Moneague Health Centre. In 2011, the mother of Alex and his oldest sister, Keneisha Harrison, died, and now Alex and Keneisha live in Faith’s Pen in the parish. Alex’ mother had been unable to buy him a wheelchair, but she had wanted him to have one so that he could go to school. Marcia Hinds, the principal of Moneague Primary and Junior High, said, “The entire teaching body at the school was touched by the presentation [of the wheelchair
to Alex], and many teachers had positive comments to offer pertaining to the project.” She added, “This act of kindness goes in tandem with the saying ‘a good deed cannot go unnoticed.’” (50)

CHAPTER 2: Stories 51-100

“I Thought I was a Lone Wolf. I Just Stuck by Myself. And as It Turns Out, I Actually Fit In”

In April 2013 at Miller High School in Corpus Christi, Texas, Tyrell Clay was elected Prom King, but he gave the crown to a long-time friend, Adam Chadwick, and let him be king. Tyrell is a popular athlete who plays football, basketball, and track. Adam does not play sports and has a heavy load of Advanced Placement courses. Adam said, “I’m not really into sports. That’s just not who I am.” Both were nominated for Prom King, even though before being nominated Adam was not sure he would go. He said, “I asked a few girls out. I got rejected three times, so I almost said forget it. And then I get nominated, so I have to go.” Fortunately, a fourth girl asked him to the prom, and he accepted. Popular athlete Tyrell was voted Prom King, but he said, “I could see like the disappointment in Adam’s face. He was like really red, and he was looking down to the ground. And I was like he deserves this more than me.” Adam said about Tyrell, “He walks across the floor, and puts the crown on my head, and it probably wasn’t a minute, but I felt like I was frozen for a minute.” Tyrell said, “We had made a bet in first period, and I told him if you get king, I will bow to you, so I walked over there and gave it to him, and I bowed to him, and everybody just kind of cheered. It was pretty amazing. I kind of liked it. And he got a real happy like smile. It was pretty funny. It was pretty sad. I wanted to cry, but I was like no you can’t cry.” Adam said, “I’m more in with the crowd than I thought I was. I thought I was a lone wolf. I just stuck by myself.
And as it turns out, I actually fit in.” (51)

**Katelyn Norman: Prom Queen**

For two years, Katelyn Norman, a 14-year-old freshman, of LaFollette, Campbell County, Tennessee, fought the bone cancer known as osteosarcoma. Then she received word that her chemotherapy treatments no longer worked, so she made a bucket list. On the list was this item: Attend the Campbell County High School prom. But she had difficulty breathing and had to go to Children’s Hospital and was not able to attend the prom at her school. Sharon Shepard, the organizer of the prom and an instructor at Katelyn’s school, said, “She contacted me and said prom must go on — that’s her, and you can’t help but feed off that energy, that life.” She added, “Once you meet her, your life will never be the same — she has such an impact.” Fortunately, the people at the hospital and her family and friends brought a prom to her in her room at the hospital. They decorated her room, she had a date who gave her a corsage, and she received a prom-queen sash. Outside her window, family and friends held candles. Ms. Shepard said, “They wheeled her over to the window and propped her up to where she could wave outside to the crowd.” McKayla Pierce, a friend, said, “Tell her that I love her and she’s my hero.” Brandi Marsh, another friend, said, “If I could say anything to her, I would say, ‘Hold on’ — she’s fighting hard.” LaFollette Mayor William Baird even declared March 26 Katelyn Norman Day. He said, “We wanted to try to make this day, and this time in her life, special to her because she makes it special for people in Campbell County.” To honor her, thousands of people lined Highway 63. Seirra Ames, who held a candle in Katelyn’s honor, said, “I think she’s a hometown hero for all of us and a great inspiration to everybody.” Ms. Shepard said, “It amazes me that an individual has that much impact on people. But that’s just Katelyn.” On 29 March 2013, a few days after the makeshift prom, Katelyn
Criticism can be an important force for good. In early 2013, Gerald “Jerry” Conti, a teacher in the Westhill School District in New York, wrote a letter stating that he would retire at the beginning of the new school year. He has two more years to go in order to get the full retirement benefits for 30 years of service, but he is unhappy with much of what is going on in the education profession in the United States. In his resignation letter, he wrote, “With regard to my profession, I have truly attempted to live John Dewey’s famous quotation (now likely cliché with me, I’ve used it so very often) that ‘Education is not preparation for life, education is life itself.’ This type of total immersion is what I have always referred to as teaching ‘heavy,’ working hard, spending time, researching, attending to details and never feeling satisfied that I knew enough on any topic. I now find that this approach to my profession is not only devalued, but denigrated and perhaps, in some quarters despised. STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics] rules the day and ‘data driven’ education seeks only conformity, standardization, testing and a zombie-like adherence to the shallow and generic Common Core, along with a lockstep of oversimplified so-called Essential Learnings. Creativity, academic freedom, teacher autonomy, experimentation and innovation are being stifled in a misguided effort to fix what is not broken in our system of public education and particularly not at Westhill.” He added, “A long train of failures has brought us to this unfortunate pass. In their pursuit of Federal tax dollars, our legislators have failed us by selling children out to private industries such as Pearson Education. The New
York State United Teachers union has let down its membership by failing to mount a much more effective and vigorous campaign against this same costly and dangerous debacle. Finally, it is with sad reluctance that I say our own administration has been both uncommunicative and unresponsive to the concerns and needs of our staff and students by establishing testing and evaluation systems that are Byzantine at best and at worst, draconian. This situation has been exacerbated by other actions of the administration, in either refusing to call open forum meetings to discuss these pressing issues, or by so constraining the time limits of such meetings that little more than a conveying of information could take place. This lack of leadership at every level has only served to produce confusion, a loss of confidence and a dramatic and rapid decaying of morale. The repercussions of these ill-conceived policies will be telling and shall resound to the detriment of education for years to come.” In an interview with the Post-Standard of Syracuse, New York, Mr. Conti said, “This whole thing is being driven by people who know nothing about education.” However, much of his criticism is directed at education below the university level. He said that he supports the “university model” of teaching: “You hire the best people for the job and let them do the job.” He added, “I can’t teach any more. I spend too much time bean counting.” In the conclusion of his letter, Mr. Conti wrote, “For the last decade or so, I have had two signs hanging above the blackboard at the front of my classroom, they read, ‘Words Matter’ and ‘Ideas Matter.’ While I still believe these simple statements to be true, I don’t feel that those currently driving public education have any inkling of what they mean.” Mr. Conti put his retirement letter on his Facebook page, and the letter went viral. Many people posted comments about the letter. Sally Dee posted on Mr. Conti’s Facebook page, “MR. CONTI! Thank you for having the guts to speak your mind, and teaching me how
to find mine.” Ethan Kocak wrote that “to teach history in such a way that it was both engaging and interesting (and I think also his habit of creating a sort of narrative) takes special skill — skill that evidently isn’t appreciated or even considered acceptable by the unimaginative vogons [Vogons are an unpleasant alien species that appear in Douglas Adams’ satiric book *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* in charge of administering our education. Mr. Conti, you actually helped me realize there was more to American history than [BS] about pilgrims.” (53)

“Garfield [High School] Teachers Refuse to Administer an Ethics Violation”

Many teachers are against excessive standardized testing. In January 2013, teachers at Garfield High School in Seattle, Washington, voted without any “no” votes on ethical and professional grounds not to administer the Measures of Academic Progress, or MAP, test — a standardized test that has no effect on whether a student will graduate. In an opinion piece in *The Seattle Times*, history teacher Jesse Hagopian gave many reasons why the teachers voted against administering the MAP standardized test. This is an interesting reason: “Former Superintendent [redacted] brought the MAP to Seattle at a cost of some $4 million while she was serving on the board of the company that sells it. The state auditor called this an ethics violation because she did not disclose it until after the district approved the company’s contract. After [redacted] was fired, the MAP somehow survived the housecleaning. Garfield teachers refuse to administer an ethics violation.” Of course, Mr. Hagopian listed many reasons dealing with the MAP test’s effect on students, including these effects: “This test especially hurts students receiving extra academic support — English-language learners and those enrolled in special education. These are the kids who lose the most each time they waste five hours on the test. Our
computer labs are commandeered for weeks when the MAP is on, so students working on research projects can’t get near them. The students without home computers are hurt the most.” Mr. Hagopian, who listed other negative effects of the MAP test, including that it asks students questions about material covered only in courses that they will take later, ended his opinion piece in this way: “Garfield’s teachers are preparing students for the real-life tests they will face, and reject the computer multiple-choice rituals that fail to measure grade-level content — not to mention character, commitment, courage or talent.” (54)

Save Texas Schools

In February 2013, over 10,000 teachers, parents, students, and education advocates attended the third annual Save Texas Schools rally on the south lawn of the capitol in Austin, Texas. They encouraged Texas lawmakers to spend more state money on the public schools and to cut back on expensive standardized testing. American GI Forum spokesperson Placido Salazar spoke and asked Texas lawmakers to restore the $5.4 billion in school spending that they had cut in the year 2011. Texas State Senator Kirk Watson (D-Austin) stated in his speech, “We know Texas can do better. Texas has done better. And Texas children and schools deserve better than they’re getting from this Legislature. The Legislature is failing our children.” Former Texas Education Commissioner Robert Scott said, “$1.2 billion will be shipped to Pearson to cover the costs of the STAAR test. We have increased the costs and the consequences at a time that we have cut funding.” Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education Diane Ravitch, who originally supported the standardized testing mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 but now opposes it after seeing its consequences, flew from New York to state in her speech, “Texas is the place where the testing madness started. And Texas is the place where the vampire
gets garlic in its face and a mirror waved and a stake in its heart.” Allen Weeks, the organizer of the third annual Save Texas Schools rally and the director of Austin Voices for Education and Youth, said, “It just makes sense that if they [Texas legislators] took [$5.4 billion from the budget for state schools] … that you would put that back just to get us at a baseline. We need to go back up at what was really a barely adequate level before the cuts. Even then it was not good.” (55)

“**They are Really Each Other’s Brothers and Sisters in Here**”

As so many Girl Scouts do, Isabella Conger, a student at Orangethorpe Elementary School in Fullerton, California, sells Girl Scout cookies. Unfortunately, in 2013, she received a counterfeit $100 bill for some of the cookies she sold. Teacher Nancy Karcher explained, “Her and her mom had gone to the bank to turn in her money for Girl Scout cookies and unfortunately, one of the $100 bills was counterfeit. The bank told her they would be responsible for paying for all the money.” Isabella said, “My mom started to cry. Whenever we got home, I started to cry.” One of her classmates, Andy Penn, age seven, came with the idea of a fundraiser to replace at least some of the money. Teacher Betty Chang said, “We weren’t surprised at all. For better or worse, our kids are busybodies. They want to know everyone’s business, and they want to help. They are really each other’s brothers and sisters in here.” The students donated $2 each to help replace the counterfeit money. Andy said, “Doing good things makes a person feel good, and it makes you feel good inside, too.” Isabella said, “Thank you so much.” (56)

“A **Billboard that Produces Drinking Water from Air**”

Researchers at the University of Engineering and Technology (UTEC) in Lima, Peru, and advertising agency
Mayo Peru DraftFCB put up a billboard in the village of Bujama, Peru, which is near Lima. It is no ordinary billboard. Yes, it does advertise — it lets potential students know about the newly established (in 2012) engineering university UTEC. However, it also provides drinking water to the villagers. Although the village has little rainfall, its air is humid because the village is by the sea. The billboard takes water from the air, as the billboard itself announces: “A billboard that produces drinking water from air.” Using a system of filters and a condenser, the billboard produces 96 litres of drinking water per day. Jessica Ruas, a spokesperson from UTEC, said, “The panel traps humidity in the air and transforms it into water. It’s that simple. There is a lot of water. It is right there in the sea, but it is not suitable for drinking purposes, and costs a lot of money to process it.” The water is collected, then stored in tanks on top of the billboard, and then it is filtered and flows down a pipe to a tap that anyone in the village can use. The system for producing water cost approximately US$1,200, and the water it produces is important to the village. Ms. Ruas said, “We hadn’t realised how big the impact would be.” (57)

“Tornado on the Ground, Guys. Quiet!”

On 2 March 2012 in Henryville, Indiana, Angel Perry was driving a school bus on which were 11 children who had been sent home from school because of bad weather. A tornado appeared in front of the bus, and Ms. Perry said, “Dear Lord, what do I do?” She called an emergency dispatcher and decided to turn the bus around and take the children back to their school because they would be safer in a building than in a bus. A bus microphone recorded the emergency call: Ms. Perry: “We’re going back to the school. Count how many kids we have please. Eleven. Thank you so much. If anybody needs to call their parents, we’re going back to the school.” Child: “I do. I don’t know
my parent’s number.” Ms. Perry: “We’ll call when we get to school.” Radio: “Henryville, there is a tornado on the ground.” Ms. Perry: “Tornado on the ground, guys. Quiet!” Radio: “I see the tornado on the ground north of the school.” Ms. Perry: “If you got a book to put over your head, do it. Get in the middle!” She drove the bus back to the school and got all of the children inside. She told the children, “Everybody stay together. All our group together. Yeah, go go go go! Go go go go! A few seconds later, the tornado drove the 18-ton bus into a car and then lifted it into the air and hurled it into a diner. The children and Ms. Perry were safe and uninjured in the school. (58)

“Happy Thanksgiving”

In 2012, Alex Jalapenos wrote about a random act of Thanksgiving kindness: “So I’m currently on the bus and the driver suddenly stops on a undesignated bus stop. She doesn’t say anything to anyone but just gets off the bus and starts walking away. Apparently, there was a homeless guy sleeping on the streets shivering because it gets a bit cold in the mornings. She takes off her jacket and gives it to the man saying ‘Happy Thanksgiving’ and walks back to the bus. Before we left, the guy wore his new jacket and I could see him shed a tear of happiness. One of the sweetest things I’ve seen.” (59)

Black Friday 2012

Improv Everywhere is dedicated to causing scenes of an interesting, nondestructive type — the group’s motto is “We Cause Scenes.” For Black Friday 2012, the group had about 100 people camping in tents and sleeping bags outside a 99-cent store on 1st Avenue and 5th Street in Brooklyn, New York, waiting for it to open. The main employee (or possibly owner) of the 99-cent store was very happy to see so many customers — they were lined up around the block! (At first, he thought the line was for a
Rite Aid. He was delighted when he learned that they were his store’s customers.) And when the store opened, the customers really did go inside the store and eagerly purchase 99-cent items. To add to the excitement, actress Cody Lindquist pretended to be a local NBC news reporter as she conducted interviews with delighted — and confused— store employees and passersby. Charlie Todd wrote, “It’s a great dollar store, and everyone who worked there was super friendly. Go check it out if you are in the East Village and in need of some deals — 1st Avenue between 4th and 5th!” The group’s “About Us” statement is this: “Improv Everywhere is a New York City-based prank collective that causes scenes of chaos and joy in public places. Created in August of 2001 by Charlie Todd, Improv Everywhere has executed over 100 missions involving tens of thousands of undercover agents.” By the way, Mr. Todd also wrote the book Causing a Scene about the group. (60)

Alex Brunelle: The Supermarket Clerk (and College Student) Who Saved Christmas

In late November 2012, Alex Brunelle, a college student, was working at a cash register at Shaw’s Supermarket in Merrimack, New Hampshire. He waited on a few customers, including one who paid with cash. Mr. Brunelle said, “I was just here ringing, and he was probably the third or fourth person through.” After the customer had left, Mr. Brunelle decided to stock some of the shelves. Then he found $350 in cash: “When I turned around, I saw all the cash just on the floor.” He figured that his last customer, the one who had paid in cash, had dropped the money, but he did not know that customer’s name. He said, “I just picked it [the money] up, counted it, and brought it to the store manager so it would be locked up and taken care of.” The next morning, the customer called the supermarket and was happy to learn that his lost money had been found. Mr. Brunelle said, “I was pretty relieved to hear that he got it
because it is a significant amount of money.” The customer was a single father who was out of work and who was going to use the money to buy Christmas presents for his children. Mr. Brunelle said, “He just kind of hugged me and cried. It was a really good feeling for sure to know that he was appreciative and a good guy.” (61)

“They went in as Private Citizens with No Formal Protection, No Seal of Approval from the U.S. Government and No Diplomatic Immunity”

In the spring of 1939, a Jewish couple in the United States went overseas to Europe to rescue Jewish children. They succeeded in bringing 50 children to the United States. One child was eight-year-old Klara Lee, whose mother gave her a hard-to-get apple as a going-away present. In 2013, Ms. Lee said, “That apple was like a diamond, a gem. I never took one bite of that apple. I kept it and kept it as a souvenir from a parent I didn’t know if I would ever see again.” After the apple rotted, she had to throw it away. Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, were the rescuers. In January 1939, Gilbert came home and told his wife that he wanted to rescue Jewish children. He belonged to the Jewish fraternal organization Brith Sholom, which had built a summer camp in Collegeville, Pennsylvania. It had 50 extra beds that children could sleep in, and he and Louis Levine, president of Brith Sholom, had discussed bringing 50 Jewish children to the United States. Eleanor agreed to help and started getting affidavits of financial sponsorship from people they knew. Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus went into Nazi territory to get the children, although Eleanor pointed out to her husband, “This is crazy. No one in his right mind would go into Germany right now.” The Krauses and Dr. Robert Schless, a German-speaking physician who went with them, selected 50 children in Vienna, Austria, choosing those who were physically and mentally healthy. Steven
Pressman, who made the film *50 Children: The Rescue Mission of Mr. and Mrs. Kraus*, which is narrated by actors Alan Alda and Mamie Gummer, said, “They went in as private citizens with no formal protection, no seal of approval from the U.S. government and no diplomatic immunity.” The Krauses took the children first to Berlin, Germany, to pick up visas, and then they traveled to Hamburg, Germany. On 3 June 1939, they boarded the SS *President Harding* and sailed to New York. Many of the children were able to stay with distant relatives or with foster families. Ms. Lee stayed with a great-uncle and his wife for a year. Her parents were able to travel to the United States, and she was reunited with them. Because of the Krauses and Dr. Robert Schless, 50 Jewish children escaped death in the Holocaust. (62)

**Hoax-Slayer and Snopes: Fighters Against Bad Information**

Websites such as Hoax-Slayer and Snopes do good deeds by pointing out inaccurate information. For example, this is an **inaccurate** email that has been widely disseminated:

“Subject: Fw: Fwd: Sign in Houston Mall

“What enrages me is that Americans would shop there!!!! Now, this is stepping over the line.

“IN CASE YOU HAVE NOT SEEN THIS. READ CAREFULLY.......... 

“This is so ‘Unbelievable’....

“In Houston ...

“Harwin Central Mall: The very first store that you come to when you walk from the lobby of the building into the shopping area Had this sign posted on their door. The shop is run by Muslims. Feel free to share this with others.”
In the email appears a photograph of the sign, which states, “We will be closed on Friday, September 11, 2009 to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Ali (A.S.)”

The email continues,

“Imam Ali flew one of the planes into the twin towers.

“Nice huh?

“Try telling me we’re not in a

“Religious war!

“THIS HAS NOT BEEN AROUND....SO MAKE SURE IT DOES!”

Hoax-Slayer provides a brief analysis of the inaccurate email as well as a more detailed analysis. This is the brief analysis: “This sign was indeed posted on the door of a shop at Harwin Central Mall in Houston, Texas in September 2009. However, aside from the date, the sign has no relationship whatsoever with the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Imam Ali, the person named on the offending sign, was not one of the September 11 hijackers as claimed in the protest message. In fact, Imam Ali is a holy man much venerated in the Islamic religion and he is viewed by Muslims as the successor to Muhammad himself. Imam Ali died hundreds of years ago in the year 661 AD.” The detailed analysis by Hoax-Slayer ends with this paragraph: “Given the date of the store’s holiday, it is not at all surprising that the sign caused so much confusion and consternation. That said, it seems clear that the store manager meant no disrespect, even though the placing of the sign with such wording at that particular time of the year was certainly ill conceived. Although the initial confusion caused by the sign is certainly understandable, it is hard to imagine how Imam Ali’s name was misidentified in the subsequent protest email as one of the 2001 hijackers
other than by a deliberate and willful act of deception.” The owner of the store has been threatened because of the erroneous information in this and other, similar emails. (63)

**Ministering to Actors**

In the days of vaudeville, Father Leonard was the pastor of St. Malachy’s Church, which was located in the theatrical district of New York. He knew that many vaudevillians arrived in New York late Saturday night, and he knew that they needed to sleep in the next morning. So that they could get their rest and still attend Mass, he started to hold Actors’ Mass at 12:15 p.m. and at an even later time. He founded the Actors’ Chapel, and he did much good work for the actors, including getting actors who drank much too much to sign a pledge to give up alcohol. Vaudevillians singers and instrumentalists performed at his Masses. Father Leonard gave sermons using the slang of actors, and he was so funny when giving some sermons that passersby heard the laughter and wondered what was going on in the House of the Lord. Father Leonard once ministered to an actor who was a lapsed Catholic but wanted back in the good graces of the Catholic Church. To show his good intentions, the actor gave him a Masonic card and a pint of whiskey to take away and dispose of. Afterward, Father Leonard was nearly hit by a truck. He told others the story later and said, “If the truck had hit me, I could see the headlines in the tabloids: ‘Priest found in gutter with Masonic card and whiskey in pockets!’” (64)

“**Praying is Never Wrong. My Job is to Encourage People to Pray**”

In 2013, St. John’s Episcopal Church in Aberdeen, Scotland, began to welcome Muslims to use its premises for Islamic prayers because the mosque they were praying at was too small and so worshippers were forced to pray outside. Chief Imam Ahmed Megharbi leads the five daily
prayers of Islam in the main chapel. The minister of St. John’s, Reverend Isaac Poobalan, age 50, said, “Praying is never wrong. My job is to encourage people to pray. The mosque was so full at times, there would be people outside in the wind and rain praying. I knew I couldn’t just let this happen — because I would be abandoning what the Bible teaches us about how we should treat our neighbours. When I spoke to people at the church about the situation, someone actually said to me this was not our problem, but I had seen it with my own eyes, so it was a problem.” He added, “They were out there praying and the snow came on for the first time in winter, it was really hard to watch. When they were doing the prayer, they had their hands and feet exposed and they were sitting on the pavement, which is very rough. You could even see them breathing because it was so cold, and I think when I saw that, the visual impact was such that I just couldn’t walk past. It felt wrong, mainly because the church is next door, it’s a big building and it remains empty on a Friday lunchtime, which is when they need the place most as that’s when they are at their busiest. We had something we could offer and they were just standing out in the cold and I said to my congregation, ‘We need to do something.’” Sheikh Ahmed Megharbi of the Syed Shah Mustafa Jame Masjid mosque said, “What happens here is special, and there should be no problem repeating this across the country. The relationship is friendly and respectful.” Reverend Poobalan said, “It’s a move that is so basic and fundamental. It has nothing to do with religion — it’s all based on human need. The religious divide shouldn’t divide us as people. But I anticipated there would be some opposition as it’s strange and new and there was some natural anxiety in the beginning. But once people realised that there is more commonality between us. I certainly hope, wish, and pray that this will help relations between the two religions. When I spoke to the imam, there was some hesitation on their part, too, because this has
never been done before. But they took us up on the offer and it has been a positive relationship.” St John’s is part of the Scottish Episcopal Church. The Right Reverend Doctor Robert Gillies, who is the Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney, said, “It would be good to think we can change the world. Most of us most of the time feel we can’t so don’t bother. But sometimes, someone has a vision we can do something of global significance on a local scale. This is what is happening between St John’s and the mosque in its grounds. Everyone can do something locally, and if more were to do so, then something big might just begin to happen globally.” (65)

“You Can’t Target a Whole Community for What One or Two People have Done”

On 22 May 2013, two men murdered British Army soldier Lee Rigby near the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich, southeast London, England. The two murderers told passersby that they had killed the soldier to avenge the killings of Muslims that they said the British military had committed. The English Defence League (EDL) is a far-right group that opposes the spread of what it calls Islamic extremism in the United Kingdom. Following the Woolwich murder, about half a dozen people showed up at an EDL-sponsored protest at a mosque in York, England. Members of the mosque invited the protesters inside for tea and plates of custard creams. Leanne Staven, one of the protestors, said, “We need a voice. I think white British who have any concerns feel we can’t speak freely.” She added, “Change has been coming for a long time, and in light of what happened to that soldier in Woolwich there have to be restrictions on people learning extremist behaviour and it has to stop.” Some Muslims at the York mosque believe that the possibility of genuine dialogue exists. Mohammed el-Gomati, a lecturer at the University of York, said, “There is the possibility of having dialogue.
Even the EDL who were having a shouting match started talking, and we found out that we share and are prepared to agree that violent extremism is wrong. We have to start there. Who knows — perhaps the EDL will invite us to an event and the Muslim community will be generous in accepting that invitation.” Ismail Miah, president of York mosque, said, “Under the banner of Islam there are very different politics: democratic politics, the far right, left, central, all over. You can’t target a whole community for what one or two people have done. What they’ve done in London is for their own reasons but there’s no reasoning behind it from an Islamic point of view.” A boy at the mosque displayed this sign: “York Mosque welcomes anyone who condemns extremist violence.” (66)

“Christ Came to Take Away Our Sins, Not Our Minds”

On 21 May 2013, a tornado devastated many homes in Moore, Oklahoma, and 24 people died — ten were children. When natural disasters occur, often some people survive and some people die. Often, one or more survivors thank God for saving them, but even believers can ask why God did not save the people — including children — who died. Rebecca Vitsmun made the decision to leave her home with her 19-month-old son. She made the right decision because the tornado tore her home apart; since she and her son were not there, they survived. Television journalist Wolf Blitzer asked her, “You’ve gotta thank the Lord, right? Do you thank the Lord for that split-second decision?” Ms. Vitsmun replied, “I’m actually an atheist.” Mr. Blitzer said, “You are. All right. But you made the right call.” Ms. Vitsmun added, “We are here, and I don’t blame anyone for thanking the Lord.” A group named Atheists Unite decided to have a fundraiser for Ms. Vitsmun. A web page devoted to the fundraising project states, “It’s important that our community shows that we have your back when you come out publicly as an atheist.
Let’s show the world that you don’t need to believe in a god to have human compassion nor does all charity fall under the banner of religion. Let’s get this courageous woman and her family back in their own home.” As of 10:30 a.m. on 25 May 2013, the group had raised $73,248 although its goal was to raise $50,000. Atheists Unite is capable of very effective satire, as shown by its perks for contributions. For example, a $10 contribution will get the donor a prayer from comedian Doug Stanhope, who promises, “I will say a prayer on my knees for everyone [who] donates ten bucks. It will be twice as valuable as a real prayer or your money back.” A $25 contribution will get the donor a free Bible: “For 25-dollar donations, we will leave a free Bible in the nightstand of your next hotel stay. Go ahead, take it. It’s yours.” A $10,000 contribution will get the donor the Holy Grail: “Of legend. Can use for both hot and cold beverages. Special powers. Dishwasher safe.” Only one Holy Grail is available. Moral evil as well as natural evil exists. In May 2013, three women were rescued from a man who had kept them as sex slaves in Cleveland, Ohio, for approximately 10 years. The rescue is an excellent thing to happen, but we can be believers and still ask where God was for the past 10 years. Syndicated columnist Connie Schultz wrote about the Cleveland case, “I am a deeply flawed Christian. I want to know where God was during the past 10 years. If this had happened to my daughter, I’d want to ask God, ‘What were you thinking? What was the plan?’ I mean no disrespect, and I feel guilty even asking. In my heart, I accept the mystery. In my head, the questions persist. I draw some comfort in the words of the late Rev. William Sloane Coffin: ‘Christ came to take away our sins, not our minds.’ Perhaps I am forgiven for questioning what I cannot understand.” (67)

How to Disarm Volatile Customers

A cashier at an American clothing store knew that the store
had a deal going on: Customers could get 30 percent off with a coupon. The cashier heard a man in line speaking and knew that he had a military background. When the man reached the cash register, the employee said, “Hi, I couldn’t help but overhear, but what branch are you?” He named his branch of military and added, “I did a tour of Iraq for a while.” The cashier said, “In that case, I can see that you forgot your coupon! That’s not a problem; we’ll take 30% off for you!” A woman in line started yelling, “I don’t have my 50% coupon!” When the woman reached the cash register, she said, “I deserve my 50% off!” The cashier replied, “Ma’am, our store has never had a coupon that goes over 30%.” The customer yelled at the cashier, “You gave that discount to him! Why can’t I get the discount?” The military man took off his left arm (a prosthetic) and said, “The 50% discount only costs an arm and a leg.” The female customer stopped yelling. The cashier wrote about this incident on <Notalwaysright.com> and added, “Thank you to all of our military, and especially the ones with great humor!” (68)

“You Truly Made an Old Sailor Very Happy!”

The 87-year-old grandfather of Steven Withey served in the British Royal Navy during World War II. Steven visited him to set up a new PC, and his grandfather showed him an old photo of himself as a young sailor approximately 20 years old that a relative had emailed to him. The photo was cracked and showed many signs of age. Steven lacked Photoshop skills, so he turned to Reddit Pic Requests (www.reddit.com/r/picrequests) for help in restoring the photo. Redditors came through in a big way. Steven received some excellent restored photos, including one that had been colorized. He chose his favorite and framed it to give to his grandfather. Steven said, “I was blown away by the selfless dedication of the people on that thread. They expected nothing in return, yet spent hours of their day
working on the photo; it was truly heart-warming and I was excited to share it with my Grandad, as he had no idea any of this was going on.” Steven’s girlfriend filmed him giving the restored photo to his grandfather, and he posted the video to YouTube with this note: “Thanks to everyone involved, you truly made an old sailor very happy!” (69)

“If We had Guns that Shot Chocolate, Not Only Would Our Country be Safer, It Would be Happier”

After the 14 December 2012 shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, in which 20 children and six adults were murdered, a seven-year-old second-grader named Myles (no last name released) had an idea about how to prevent further gun fatalities, and he wrote Vice President Joe Biden about his idea. After a few months, he received in May 2013 a handwritten reply on vice presidential stationery from Mr. Biden, who wrote, “Dear Myles, I’m sorry it took me so very long to respond to your letter. I really like your idea. If we had guns that shot chocolate, not only would our country be safer, it would be happier. People love chocolate. You are a good boy, Joe Biden.” The letter was sent to Downtown Montessori Academy in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, because Myles did not write his last name and did use the school’s address. Virginia Flynn, the head of the school, said, “Everybody was impressed. You should have seen everybody. Their faces were just wide-eyed. The fact that it was handwritten made it really special.” (70)

Kurd Men for Equality

Is being a woman something to be ashamed of? According to some men, the answer is yes. But according to some Kurd men in Iran, the answer is no. After a judge punished a man by forcing him to dress in women’s clothing, the Kurd men started a Facebook page for their “Kurd Men for Equality” campaign. On the page, they posted photographs
of themselves wearing women’s clothing; in addition, they posted messages of support for women. Pedram Penhan wrote, “Hoping for the day that sexuality, gender will not be a way of evaluating humanity.” Ala M wrote, “For many years, women in my country have been side-by-side with men, wearing men’s clothes, struggling. Tonight I am happy and honoured to wear women’s clothes and be even a small part of the rightful struggle of people to express gratitude and excellence to the women of my country.” Namo Kurdistani wrote, “We should gather together and condemn this stupidity, brutality, and inhumanity against women. This is the least I can do to support women.” On 16 March 2013, women marched in Marivan, Iran, to protest the use of women’s clothing as punishment. By the way, on the “Kurd Men for Equality” Facebook page, some women posted photographs of themselves wearing men’s clothing. (71)

Texas State Senator Wendy Davis: The LeBron James of Filibustering

On 25 June 2013, Wendy Davis, a Democrat and a member of the Texas Senate from District 10, became a hero when she filibustered in Austin, Texas, for 11 hours against a bill (Senate Bill 5) that would have closed down 37 out of Texas’ 42 abortion clinics. Ms. Davis needed to filibuster for 13 hours — until midnight — to make sure that the anti-abortion bill did not pass, but Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst, a Republican, ruled that part of her discussion was off-topic — she discussed mandatory ultrasound testing — and stopped her filibuster. Leticia Van De Putte, a Democrat and a member of the Texas Senate from District 26, became a hero by taking up time and running out the clock on voting. A crowd of State Senator Davis supporters also helped by cheering her and State Senator Van De Putte. Esquire had a timetable of important events in the filibuster and the vote that took place after the
deadline:

“11:45 p.m.: Time when Senator Leticia Van de Putte asked why the Senate chair did not recognize her motion to adjourn: ‘At what point does a female senator have to raise her hand in order to be recognized over a male senator?’ The crowd of supporters erupted into cheers.

“16 minutes: Time it took for the crowd to stop cheering, at which point the session should technically have ended, as the midnight deadline had passed. A vote was taken after order was restored.

“12:02 a.m.: The time that the Senate timestamp showed the vote was taken on Senate Bill 5, according to Democratic Senator John Whitmire. The Texas Senate website also displayed that the vote was taken after midnight.

“19-10: Final vote count that was recorded — enough to pass the bill.

“12:30 a.m.: Time when Associated Press broke the news that the bill has passed.

“2:04 a.m.: Approximate time the Texas Senate website was edited to show that the vote was taken before midnight.

“2:45 a.m.: Time when Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst reversed his call and announced the bill was dead.”

State Senator Davis wore a back brace during the filibuster so that she would not be forced to lean on anything due to fatigue. After the bill was stopped, she told supporters, “Today was democracy in action. You all are the voices we were speaking for from the floor.” By the way, at 5:10 p.m., someone altered State Senator Davis’ Wikipedia page to make it state that she is “the LeBron James of
Filibustering.” And at 7:40 p.m., President Barack Obama Tweeted, “Something special is happening in Austin tonight.”

Almost certainly, Texas governor Rick Perry will get the bill passed later, so did the filibuster really accomplish anything? Yes. Amanda Marcotte of Slate has a list of things that the filibuster accomplished, including this one:

“One) National attention for a story Republicans hoped would be buried. The whole point of putting the abortion bill in the special session was so that Republicans in the state, particularly the ambitious Dewhurst, could pander to the religious right without catching too much heat from the national media, or the libertarian branch of Texas Republicans who think all this abortion stuff is a waste of time. Any hopes they could slip this one in under the radar are gone.” (72)

**Mizuno Women’s Wave Rider 16 Running Shoe: Perfect for Outrunning the Patriarchy**

On 25 June 2013, Texas State Senator Wendy Davis filibustered for 11 hours to stop a bill (Senate Bill 5) that would have closed down 37 out of Texas’ 42 abortion clinics. During the filibuster, she wore comfortable shoes: the Mizuno Women’s Wave Rider 16 Running Shoe. Satire is an effective — or at least funny — way of combatting stupidity, and so satirists went to the Amazon.com page for these shoes and wrote such comments as these:

Shoegirl wrote, “If you live in North Dakota, make sure you purchase these within the first six weeks of your running program or you will be prohibited from purchasing them. It’s for the safety of the shoes.”

Beusen wrote, “Love the color and the fit ... but would like to see an elephant pattern on the bottom; it would improve the traction!”
Heather wrote, “The next time you have to spend 13 hours on your feet without food, water or bathroom breaks, this is the shoe for you. Guaranteed to outrun patriarchy on race day.”

Kate McIntyre wrote, “I’m hoping that when I lace these babies up and step out, every male troglodyte who sees my feet will recognize these red shoes and know that I am dead serious about controlling my own body and making my own reproductive choices.”

Christine Winslow wrote, “I’m not sure I could ever bring myself to buy or wear shoes like this. But you know, I’m so glad I have the option.”

GML wrote, “When I first began wearing these shoes I thought my reproductive rights were secure. Turns out, I couldn’t have been more wrong. Luckily these shoes are really great for kicking republican legislators out of office! They want to shut down reproductive and health care facilities for the poor in Texas? Use these shoes to shut down the state capital!

“These go perfectly with any back brace you may need after good old fashion filibustering for 9 hours (with 4 more to go). What’s that? Your crappy mean-spirited colleagues on the other side of the aisle say it isn’t fair? That’s right, ladies, this shoe is completely washable, so just shove it up their [*]ss.

“Most importantly, even if you wear these gems without sox for three days straight, they still smell better than a republican Lt Governor who tries to push a law through past midnight, which is absolutely and completely illegal. Yea, pretty stinky I know.”

Men got involved, too. Tom Miller wrote this one-star review:
“1) I am a man and these are clearly women’s shoes

“2) I have never gone through the experience of wearing them

“3) These shoes are not designed for my feet; and

“4) They are of a color I would never wear...

“I feel somehow compelled to decide for the shoe’s female target market whether or not they should own them.” (73)

“Love and Only Love”

One of artist Derek Gores’ many collages is titled “Love and Only Love,” which comes from a song by Neil Diamond. It is a happy collage that shows two women in a park with a little girl. Mr. Gores wrote in an email to the Huffington Post for an article that appeared in June 2013, “It’s a picture of my sister, Emily, her wife, Tiffany, and their daughter, Raleigh. I don’t go for intellectual symbolism, or angry art. Instead, I depicted a day at the park. A regular day for people with a rich love, enjoying time, watching their daughter be silly, be curious, and wearing a super hero t-shirt like she often does.” Mr. Gores added, “Love conquers all. The love in the gentle moment is self evident, and I hope that could change a mind or two.” Mr. Gores created the collage, which is made from pieces of hate speech, after California banned gay marriage in 2010; the ban has since been overturned. He pointed out about “Love and Only Love” that “a closer look shows that the piece is made of a spectrum of elements. Fun and regular life, but also elements of hate speech and some of the challenges that gay people deal with.” Mr. Gores’ website gives additional details about the artist and his art: “Derek Gores recycles magazines, labels, and assorted found materials to create his collage works on canvas. The series showcases Gores’ contrasting interests in the living beauty of the figure, the mechanically angular and abstract
design aesthetics of fashion, and a fearless sense of play. Derek was honored to have his work selected for the Manifest Hope DC exhibit coinciding with the Presidential Inauguration in 2009, and was named ‘One of the 40 important artists of the New Contemporary Movement’ while in an exhibit in London in 2010. ‘I like my pictures to barely come together with teasing little details. The mind can’t help but wander, even when trying to focus on one thing. In the collages, some of the little bits I use are deliberate, but I’m after an end result more interesting than I could have planned. One friend calls it a “Zen Narrative.”’ His subjects are fierce figures in a space, influenced by heroes Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, Franz Kline, Rube Goldberg, Max Ernst, and, ‘those great old long-exposure photos of Abraham Lincoln where you can feel the whole minute inside each image. I love that buzzing stillness. I do reference a classic beauty, but made of raw and geometric and un-designed parts, so I feel it’s a contemporary beauty too. Key to me is that it is the subject’s strength, for her alone. I’m not interested in conscious concepts — I make something simple and let the elements combine in the head, reacting with each history the viewer brings to the table. When it goes well, I hope to create a real moment, instead of just a picture of a moment.’”

“Right. I’m Going to Sort This S*** Out Once and for All”

In 2008, during a four-month training exercise in Canada, Prince Harry of England stopped six soldiers from a rival regiment who were threatening to beat up a gay soldier whom they accused of falsely stating that a soldier in their regiment was gay. Trooper James Wharton told Prince Harry about the threat, and Prince Harry took care of it. Prince Harry was a Troop Commander in the Blues and Royals, and he was Trooper Wharton’s Tank Commander.
Trooper Wharton said, “I told him, ‘I think I’m going to be murdered by the infantry.’ I climbed into the turret and talked Harry through exactly what had happened. He had a complete look of bewilderment on his face. I couldn’t stop the tears from welling up in my eyes. He said, ‘Right. I’m going to sort this s*** out once and for all.’ He climbed out of the tank, and I poked my head out of the turret a few moments later to see him having a go.” Trooper Wharton said, “I could see he wasn’t holding back.” Prince Harry warned the tormentors that they would face severe discipline if they continued their threats. Prince Harry briefed a senior officer about the situation, and then he told Trooper Wharton that the situation had been taken care of. In 2013, Mr. Wharton, who had left military service early in the year, said, “I will always be grateful to Harry, and I will never forget what happened. Until he went over and dealt with everything, I was on track for a battering.” Mr. Wharton wrote about the incident in a book about his ten-year military career: *Out In The Army*. Prince Harry, age 28 in 2013, is known for his commitment to his troops. Shadow Defence Secretary Jim Murphy said, “The whole country will applaud Prince Harry. Our Forces should reflect the modern-day Britain they fight so hard to defend.” Tory Member of Parliament Colonel Bob Stewart, who led British troops in Bosnia, said, “Well done, Harry, excellent leadership. It’s typical of him and typical of young officers in the British Army today, really superb.” Ben Summerskill, Chief Executive of the United Kingdom-based gay and lesbian charity Stonewall, said, “I take my hat off to him for protecting James Wharton.” (75)

**Starbucks: A Company that Supports Gay Rights**

On 22 March 2013, Howard Schultz, the CEO of coffee chain Starbucks, stood up to an anti-gay investor. Tom Strobhar, head of the National Organization for Marriage, an organization that is against legalizing same-sex
marriage, stated at the Starbucks annual general meeting that the company’s support of gay rights might be losing it customers and therefore costing it business. Mr. Schultz replied, “If you feel, respectfully, that you can get a higher return than the 38 per cent you got last year, it’s a free country. You can sell your shares of Starbucks and buy shares in another company. Thank you very much.” The audience applauded Mr. Schultz. In March 2013, Starbucks and dozens of other companies recommended that lawmakers in the United States legalize same-sex marriage. These companies believe that doing so will save billions of dollars by allowing the companies to streamline benefits plans. (76)

“Nothing in the Bible or in Catholic Teaching can be Used to Justify Prejudicial or Discriminatory Attitudes and Behaviors”

In 2013, a male student at McQuaid Jesuit High School in Brighton, New York, requested that he be allowed to attend Junior Prom with another young man. Father Edward Salmon, president of the school, decided to allow the students to attend the prom together. In a letter dated 27 March 2013 announcing his decision, he wrote, “I have made the decision that, if our two brothers who have asked to attend the Junior Ball together wish to do so, they will be welcomed.” He also wrote about “the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, who in their Pastoral Message, ‘Always Our Children,’ ‘… call on all Christians and citizens of good will to confront their own fears about homosexuality and to curb the humor and discrimination that offend homosexual persons. We understand that having a homosexual orientation brings with it enough anxiety, pain and issues related to self-acceptance without society bringing additional prejudicial treatment.’ I would like to let a ray of light enter into possible misunderstanding of the Church’s teaching. In that same message […] the Bishops
are clear — ‘Nothing in the Bible or in Catholic teaching can be used to justify prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes and behaviors.’ The Bishops continue: ‘It is also important to recognize that neither a homosexual orientation, nor a heterosexual one, leads inevitably to sexual activity. One’s total personhood is not reducible to sexual orientation or behavior.’ In that same message, the Bishops refer to a 1986 Letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith which emphasizes that ‘Respect for the God-given dignity of all persons means the recognition of human rights and responsibilities. The teachings of the Church make it clear that the fundamental human rights of homosexual persons must be defended and that all of us must strive to eliminate any forms of injustice, oppression, or violence against them.’ The Bishops continue, ‘It is not sufficient only to avoid unjust discrimination. Homosexual persons ‘must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity’ (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2358). They, as is true of every human being, need to be nourished at many different levels simultaneously. This includes friendship, [brotherhood] which is a way of loving and is essential to healthy human development. It is one of the richest possible human experiences. Friendship can and does thrive outside of sexual involvement.’” (77)

“I Suggest You Stop Right Now, or Else…” — the Big, Tall, Strong Gay Man Pushes His Shirt Sleeve Up and Flexes His Bicep and Adds, “…You All and I are Going to Have a Problem”

At a restaurant in New York City, a big, tall (6-foot-3), strong gay man and a friend are eating lunch when they notice some teenagers harassing a thin, short, gay waiter. One teen says, “Haha, look at [waiter] f*** up like he always does!” A second teen says, “Ha! D*** f****t!” The waiter ignores the teens, but one of the teens trips him while he is carrying food. The waiter cries. The big, tall,
strong gay man goes over to the teens and says, “Do we have a problem here?” One teen says, “Mind your own business, man!” Another teen says, “Yeah, f*** off! This kid is a f****t anyways!” The big, tall, strong gay man says, “I suggest you stop right now, or else…” — he pushes his shirt sleeve up and flexes his bicep and adds, “…you all and I are going to have a problem.” Scared, the teens shut up. The big, tall, strong gay man tells the waiter, “Hey, if anybody ever tries to harass you or hurt you again, call this number. I know what’s it’s like [to be] bullied because you’re gay. Just remember: I’m here to help you.” The manager of the restaurant gave the big, tall, strong gay man a $100 gift card. Later that night, the waiter telephoned the big, tall, strong gay man. Some months after that, the big, tall, strong gay man and the waiter were engaged. (78)

**Free Coffee with a Kiss**

In 2013, a French café — the Metro St. James café in Sydney, Australia — opened near St. James Station in the Sydney Central Business District. For the month of June 2013, it had a unique promotion. Couples who go to the café between 9 and 11 a.m. can get morning coffee for free — if they kiss. On the café’s Facebook page appeared this message: “We’re not accepting your money, just your kisses.” In a promotional video, a waiter tells a couple, “We’ll watch you. It has to be a real kiss … a true kiss. I can see if it is a fake kiss. I am kind of a specialist.” The couple kisses — and so do two other couples. (79)

**“Thank You, Richard Anderson”**

On 13 June 2013, Jessie Frank needed to get on board a Delta flight so that she could “pick up my Type 1 Diabetic 12-year-old from her diabetes summer camp. I’m sure she would have been fine if someone else had shown up in my place, but it’s a special moment for me. Camp Kudzu gives
my daughter 5 days a year when she feels ‘normal.’ Pick-up day gives me a glimpse into that special world where she’s just like everyone else, and she’s a little bit of a different person for the rest of the day. By the next day, it’s back to the harsh realities of managing a difficult, deadly, incurable disease that kills 1 in 20 before the age of 18. Most people just don’t understand how different it is from regular diabetes.” Unfortunately, because of bad weather, airplanes suffered multiple delays, as well as cancellations and re-routings. Ms. Frank ended up eighth on a waiting list for a seat. She got one, although she told no one at Delta about her 12-year-old diabetic daughter. She wrote on Facebook, “A vaguely familiar face met me at the doorway, not in uniform so probably an off-duty pilot I had seen before. He quickly grabbed my roll-aboard, helped clear a space in the overhead, and showed me to my seat.” Actually, the familiar face turned out to be the CEO of Delta. He gave up his seat to Ms. Frank and instead sat in a jump seat: a small, folding seat for temporary use. Ms. Frank wrote, “As the plane descended into Atlanta, the flight attendant announced that there was a special guest on board. He was riding in a jump seat, because he had given up his place to allow one more person on that flight. That special guest was you: Richard Anderson, CEO of Delta. Suddenly I realized that ‘familiar face’ was not an off-duty pilot. It was you, the CEO of Delta, vaguely familiar from the safety video. It was you, Richard Anderson, who gave up your seat for me. It was you, the Delta CEO, who helped me with my bag. It was you, acting just like an ordinary Mr. Anderson, who showed me to my seat. You, Richard Anderson, the CEO of Delta, did all that for me, just an average, middle-aged, woman with, as far as anyone at Delta knew, no special reason to get home. But more importantly, it was all of your employees that day that did so much helping me to get home — and now I know why. Because Delta is led by you, Richard Anderson, a dedicated
and inspiring leader who so clearly demonstrates, at his very core, that he leads by example, and does not set himself above all those who allow this airline to exist. Thank you, Richard Anderson. As a result of your leadership and the actions of yourself and your employees, I had my special day with my special child. You and your employees gave us both one more day of happiness, and for that, we are both very grateful. I have always been a loyal Delta customer, but Thursday solidified that loyalty for life! To all Delta employees who helped me on Thursday: thank you again.” In a comment on Facebook, Heather Morawa wrote, “As a Delta employee for 23 years, this does not surprise me about Richard. Thank you for sharing, Jessie!” (80)

“Everyone Worked to Stop These Two TGVs [French High-Speed Trains] for a Woman in Distress”

In May 2013, an elderly woman climbed aboard the wrong TGV (Train à Grande Vitesse — French high-speed train) in Paris and soon realized that she was going in the wrong direction. She had intended to go to the city of Reims, but she was headed toward the city of Nancy. Crying, she asked a passenger what she could do. The passenger contacted train employees, who then alerted the control room at Pagny-sur-Moselle, and arranged for the train to stop at Champagne-Ardenne and let the elderly woman off. From there she could take a train to Nancy. Two SNCF (Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Français — French National Railways) workers helped the elderly woman change trains. A second passenger had offered to give the elderly woman a place to stay in the city of Nancy, but fortunately that was not needed. The first passenger — the one who had contacted train employees for the elderly woman — said, “People do not often speak of the SNCF in very good terms. But here, everyone worked to stop these two TGVs for a woman in distress.” (81)
“CHAINSAW PANDA. BE AFRAID … BE VERY AFRAID”

Reddit user Bushytailswisher has a 12-year-old daughter named Eliza who likes an illustration depicting Chainsaw Panda that was created by an artist at the online youth-oriented clothing store “Pause Designs — Malls Suck, Support Underground.” Eliza wanted to use the design on a T-shirt with the words “CHAINSAW PANDA. BE AFRAID … BE VERY AFRAID” written on it. Many people nowadays would probably simply pirate the illustration, but Eliza emailed Eric at Pause Designs on 23 March 2013 and asked for permission to use the illustration: “Dear Mr. Eric, My name is Eliza and I am 12 years old. I live in America. I am emailing this to you because your drawing is pretty fricking amazing. If a bacon t-rex came up to me with a sandwich, I would give him your design. It’s pretty cool. Anyway, I was wondering if I have permission to use it. You know, because it’s awesome. I wanted to include it on a t-shirt that is my favorite color. I also included some text on it that said “chainsaw panda.” I am in no way going to sell or advertise this t-shirt because, you know, I’m 12. The only thing I can do is make toast. Please send a reply with an answer ASAP. Again, I’m only 12. Eliza.” Eric gave her permission to use the illustration in a charming email dated 24 March 2013: “Hey Eliza, I’m glad you like the Chainsaw Panda drawing so much! A t-shirt in your favourite colour would be pretty cool, but if you really want to make your friends jealous, may I suggest a gigantic Chainsaw Panda tattoo instead? Maybe one on each bicep. Yeah. Then, when you’re old enough to drive, you can just flex your arm outside the car window and (I’m assuming) everyone will get out of your way! Cool, right? The possibilities are endless really. You could probably get into movies for free, stay outside longer at recess, get all those sweet snacks the other kids get
packed in their lunches at school, all just by flashing those kids a Chainsaw Panda tattoo or two. Not too shabby. Alternatively, if your parents say no to the tattoos, it’s alright with me if you make a shirt with the panda on it. [...] You can make toast?! Eric.” By the way, the Pause Designs website has a FAQs section that includes these questions and answers (and more questions and answers): “How can I pay? We can accept payment/credit cards via Paypal. [...] In addition, we also accept payment by mailed-in cheque, gold coins, money order or well concealed cash.” “I want a tattoo of some of your artwork. Is this okay with you guys? Absolutely. But we definitely want pics of it when it’s all finished.” (82)

Keeping the Customer Ecstatic

In April 2013, a number of customers used a 90 percent off code at the UK RazerStore to buy computer games. Unfortunately, the code was bogus. However, rather than disappointing its customers, Razer allowed them to use the code to buy one product, although legally it could have declined to accept the coupons. Razer CEO Min-Liang Tan wrote on Facebook that we’ve “always had a customer comes first policy at Razer and in respect of this incident, we have decided to honor the orders that were placed using the unauthorized code by Razer fans buying single products for their own use.” He added, “It will cost us an insane amount of losses.” (83)

The Story of a Broken Cheeseburger

In March 2013 at a Chili’s fast-food restaurant in Midvale, Utah, Anna MacLean, age 25, took her little sister, Arianna Hill, a seven-year-old who has autism, to lunch. Afterward, Arianna was going to see the Easter Bunny. However, Arianna’s cheeseburger was cut in half, and Arianna said that it was “broken.” Lauren Wells, who was serving Anna and Arianna, said, “Automatically we cut it in half so it’s
easier for the kids to eat.” Anna explained that Arianna has autism, and Lauren immediately ordered a new, uncut cheeseburger for Arianna. Chili’s manager Brad Cattermole also apologized to Arianna for the broken cheeseburger. He said, “I was like, ‘Did we bring you a broken hamburger?’ And she [said], ‘Yeah,’ and so I told her we’ve got another one coming on the way in just a second. I offered her some French fries to munch on while she’s waiting.” Anna wrote on Chili’s Facebook wall, “Being a child with autism, she has to have certain things in a particular order at all times. One slight change in her routine can change the course of the day instantly. I was so touched by this experience. Especially since I know people who have been asked to leave restaurants when their child with autism is being disruptive. I expected a few different things with this scenario based on past experiences, but I did NOT expect such kind and compassionate mannerisms from Lauren and Bradley.” Anna also posted a photograph of young Arianna kissing her newly made unbroken cheeseburger. (84)

“Acts like THIS are What We Middle Easterners Know Our Homeland For”

Someone calling him- or herself Humans of New York was impressed by the customer service at Al Pasha Restaurant and Juice Bar at 1178 Fulton Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn, New York. Humans of New York wrote, “I wanted to share something simple but awesome that just happened to me. I woke up this morning with a scratchy throat, so I walked to a nearby juicebar to get a green juice. I asked the owner if he had any kale. Instead of saying ‘no,’ he said: ‘Please, take a seat, I will run and buy some for you.’” In a comment, Robert Eufinger wrote, “That’s customer service! Years ago in Okinawa I went to a shop looking for dish soap — the shop owner must have had some, but with the language barrier he thought I didn’t like the kind he had. He asked me to come back tomorrow — I
did. He drove 30 miles to the capital city to buy me a single bottle of dish soap, then only charged me $0.59 for it. ‘Number 1 dish soap.’ After that I bought everything I could at his little store!” And Najmeh Flâneur commented, “While Fox News and CNN would have you think otherwise, acts like THIS are what we middle easterners know our homeland for.”

“No, We’ve Already Got that Taken Care of. Thank You for Serving Our Country”

In March 2013, Melissa Nichols and her husband sat down at a table in an Olive Garden restaurant in Lubbock, Texas. Their server was Dawn Ward, who stated, “They said they had a special event happening and they wanted to spend it here at Olive Garden. And so I enquired what it was, and they said that he was going to be deployed the next morning.” Ms. Ward then asked the Olive Garden management if it was OK to comp the Nicholses’ tab. It was OK, so when the Nicholses wanted to pay their bill, Ms. Ward told them, “No, we’ve already got that taken care of. Thank you for serving our country.” She said about the Nicholses, “They were very gracious and surprised — very surprised.” She added, “They said, ‘Well, what can we do?’ and I said, ‘Just pass it to someone else.’” (86)

A Company that Compensates Its Employees Well

Cory Suter, a Ph.D. student in Economics at Temple University and the founder of Direct Congress, is impressed with the family-owned business that makes Jiffy mixes. In a March 2013 article, he gave seven reasons why he is impressed. This is reason #3: “Jiffy mix management treats their employees the way they would like to be treated.” This is the support that Mr. Suter gave for reason #3: “Not only does the CEO [Howdy Holmes] know most of his 350 employees on a first-name basis, he also has compensated them well, including giving some stock-
ownership in the company. With an average salary for a production worker of $47,000 per year, the median family income in the little town where Jiffy mix is $72,266, which is $20,000 more per year than the median U.S. family income. While a Wall Street investor would want to lower this ‘unnecessary’ labor expense, Holmes believes caring for his community and workers is what good business is all about.” (87)

**A Monetary Reward for “Hard Work, Intelligence, Initiative, and Common Sense”**

The years 2010-2013 were tough for many retailers; because of the recession, consumers reined in their spending. Despite the tough times, Lord Wolfson, the CEO of British retailer Next, got his company through the tough times and earned a bonus of £2.4 million — about $3.6 million in United States dollars. He then gave the money back to his employees. An employee who has been with Next since June 2010 or longer will get one percent of their annual salary; for the average clerk, that will be $300. Mr. Wolfson said that giving the employees his bonus was “a gesture of thanks and appreciation from the company for the hard work and commitment you have given to Next over the past three years and through some very tough times.” Approximately 19,400 full-time and part-time Next staff will receive a part of the bonus. Mr. Wolfson said, “I remain very grateful for the way in which everyone has helped to navigate our business through this recession. The task of growing sales and controlling costs looks set to remain a challenge over the next few years. But if we continue with the hard work, intelligence, initiative, and common sense of recent years, then we have every chance of continued success.” From 2010 to 2013, the company share price nearly doubled. (88)
Christopher’s

M. Alice LeGrow is the party princess for hire! This means that she dresses up as a princess and entertains children at parties. The company she works for often goes to hospitals to entertain ill children for free. Frequently, the hospital is St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children in downtown Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. On her website *The Party Princess for Hire!*, Ms. LeGrow writes, “Why do we visit the hospital so often? Because it’s a place where sick children hate to go and are often tired, nervous and scared of what’s happening to them. They are very small children who don’t understand why they must stay at the hospital, away from home and parents. They feel out of their safe zone and are often in pain. They need comforting and reassuring and for something to take their minds off their conditions. That’s where we come in.” Doing this good deed can be expensive in money as well as time: “We pay all the expenses out of our own pockets, we throw parties and supply gifts for the children, decorations, favor bags and do hours of entertaining for free. We even front our own parking costs if there’s no free parking available.” She adds that “the joy of bringing happiness to little children in need is more than enough thanks for my boss and her girls. We don’t hand out business cards or leave fliers for our company. We don’t even mention our company, because we stay in character the whole time. My boss is very adamant about this. This is CHARITY, not a way to drum up sales.” For an early 2013 visit to St. Christopher’s, Ms. LeGrow stayed up all night making a princess cloak for the main girl — Aliana — the princesses were going to visit. Often, the princesses have one main child they visit, but they also pay visits to many more children and talk to children who see them on the street. The idea of making the cloak came to Ms. LeGrow late at night. She explains, “I was working very hard on another project the night before
when I thought to myself, ‘It would be nice if I had the time to make something for Aliana, like a cape and hood or something simple. OH DAMMIT, NOW I HAVE TO DO IT, BECAUSE I THOUGHT OF IT.’’” She adds, “I’m not an amazingly selfless person by nature, I just come from a family of people who are dedicated to going overboard on gift-giving. […] So when I thought, ‘hand-sewn princess cloak,’ I suddenly had a moral obligation to do it, because thinking it and then NOT doing it would be basically admitting that a kid with a brain tumor isn’t worth the trouble. So I put my other work aside, dug out my kids’ cloak pattern and ended up spending three times as long making it as I thought I would, because that’s always the way, isn’t it? It was late, after the fabric stores had closed, so I had to use whatever was on hand. I had some fabric flowers and roses left over from another kid’s dress, and some pink and black velvet-embossed fabric, and my friend Carrie had given me an elaborate charm bracelet that she no longer wanted, which I could take apart and use the charms to make the cape extra special.” She went as the Rose Beauty princess — she does not work for Disney, so her princess characters are either in the public domain or are generic. A second princess — played by Erika — who went with her was the public-domain Snow White. The two princesses visited Aliana in Oncology. Ms. LeGrow writes, “The social worker told me later that she had been cross and difficult that morning, very cranky, hiding her face and not wanting to cooperate during tests, but the minute we came in, she was shocked and began grinning from ear-to-ear, and was thrilled to pieces for the rest of the day. We greeted her warmly, got a hug each, asked about her day and if she was having fun, said hi to mom and dad, then posed for the hospital PR photographer. We then did a little ceremony of making Aliana a princess for the day, crowning her with a fancy little Cinderella crown my boss had bought and given to Erika to present (she buys presents
for all the children we’re sent to visit), and then I helped Aliana open her cape package and don her princess cape.” They also read her a fairy tale and sang songs with her. Ms. LeGrow adds, “Aliana astounded me by doing something NO other child has ever done in my experience … not at parties, not at events, not ever. She sang along with all the songs. That doesn’t sound like much to you, but I was shocked. No kid EVER sings along with us no matter how much we entreat them to at parties. They just watch us do it. Aliana can’t form words very well, but she still sang all the words to each song and even requested some favorite songs of her own, like ‘Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.’” After visiting Aliana, the two princesses visited other ill children. Ms. LeGrow has a Fish Puppet, who is a boy and has a deep voice. A nurse complimented Ms. LeGrow on being able to lower her voice as the Fish Puppet. The nurse said, “You can lower your voice so well! How do you do that?” Ms. LeGrow replied, “Years of practice,” in her normal deep voice, and then resumed speaking in her high-pitched princess voice. The boys at the hospital especially liked the Fish Puppet. An autistic girl named Antonia said over and over to Ms. LeGrow, “PRINCESS! PRINCESS! I LOVE YOU! PRINCESS!” Later, outside the hospital, a little girl saw Ms. LeGrow, who went to her and spoke to her. As Ms. LeGrow left, she heard the little girl tell her mother, “THAT WAS AWESOME!” Ms. LeGrow writes, “Today I have a heating pad on my back and a lot of ibuprofen and vicodin in me, not to mention a LOT of work to catch up on, but it was worth it. It was TOTALLY worth it. The first thing I did was email my boss and tell her to put me on the list for the next visit!” Check out Ms. LeGrow’s website here: <http://bizenghast.com>. (89)

By being Infused With Superformula, aka Chemotherapy, Superheroes such as Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman, and the Green Lantern
Regain Their Strength

Lots of kids like comic books. Some kids have cancer. Is there a way to make cancer centers friendlier to kids? Yes. The A.C. Camargo Cancer Center in São Paulo, Brazil, redesigned its cancer ward to look like a Super Friends Hall of Justice. The cancer center is a client of worldwide ad agency JWT’s Brazilian office, which stated in a press release, “Covers for intravenous bags were constructed based on characters from the Justice League, creating … a child-friendly version of the treatment. Co-developed with doctors, the covers are easy to sterilize and handle and meet all hospital hygiene standards. [The] experience went far beyond the covers by also providing a new look to the entire Children’s Ward: the game room was turned into the Hall of Justice, corridors and doors were decorated in the same theme, and the exterior acquired an exclusive entrance for these little heroes.” In addition, JWT and Warner Brothers worked together to produce a special series of comic books in which such superheroes as Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman, and the Green Lantern undergo treatments similar to those the kids are going through. By being infused with Superformula, aka Chemotherapy, the superheroes regain their strength. (90)

Holy Batcave!

Charles Keller, who lives in Phoenix, Arizona, gives ill children tours of Batman’s Batcave (formerly a warehouse), which includes a Batmobile, Batmobile Parachute Pickup Service Van (Batman does not litter; the Batmobile Parachute Pickup Service Van picks up any parachutes that Batman leaves behind while he is busy chasing villains), Bat Cycle, and Batman’s crime-fighting equipment. Mr. Keller said, “It’s the thing that kinda gets me up and gets me going in the morning. This has now really become what I do as my profession, and I have the
greatest job in the whole world.” On 23 June 2013, the
guest of honor was Kenyon Antone, who has a respiratory
ilness. Bernadette Alvarez, Kenyon’s mother, said, “When
he’s here having a good time, he doesn’t think of his
illnesses. He’s being a kid; he’s being a nine-year-old child
having a good time.” Mr. Keller is an early-retired Apple
Computers whizkid and a very wealthy man who has
decided to do good with much of his money. The entrance
into the Batcave is through a sliding bookcase in Bruce
Wayne’s study. Most of the gadgets that can be seen in the
1960s television show can be seen in the Batcave. Mr.
Keller was inspired by the example of Bruce Wayne: “Here
is a wealthy guy who uses his money not just for his own
enjoyment but to truly make the world better and safer for
all. He also passes this wisdom and passion to his young
ward. The two of them are honest, moral, hardworking, but
most of all they put others first and by doing so their lives
are made all the richer.” In 2013, Mr. Keller turned 50
years old. He said, “Now that I am on the back side of life
and have had my share of successes, I also wish to figure
out a way to give back. It was important to me that this be
done in a way that reflected not just my values but also my
sense of humor. Still more important was that it be
something my two boys [nine-year-old Chaz and seven-
year-old Cade] could both enjoy, grasp, and ultimately
emulate.” One main purpose of the Batcave is to give ill
children an experience to make them happy. Mr. Keller,
who has been ill as a youth and as an adult, said, “I
understand what it is like to have poor health and no
answers. I feel deeply for what these families go through
and not just the kids. Everybody suffers: parents,
grandparents, siblings, all of them. That we can give them
all a reason to smile, all the better.” He regards the Adam
West version of Batman as providing a good role model for
children: “In our society there are so many examples of
people who gain fame, wealth, and notoriety by making
bad, even dreadful decisions. Yet every year, there is a brand-new crop of youngsters who choose to don their Batman or Batgirl outfits and within their young imaginations fight for all that is right and good. Sure, Batman is fun, but it is also a life lesson that comes in a bright box with a shiny bow on top. Just like Mr. Wayne, I am all the richer for it.” (91)

**A Doctor’s Good News**

Mike Oppenheim, M.D., writes the column *The Life of a Hotel Doctor* for Hospitality Net. As a hotel doctor, he responds when hotel guests have a medical problem. For example, he responded when a child at the Disneyland Hotel had a fever. The family, of course, was depressed because they were in a hotel room with an ill child when they had planned to be enjoying themselves at Disneyland. Dr. Oppenheim drove to the Disneyland Hotel, examined the child, and determined that the child had a non-serious viral infection. He explained to the child’s parents that children frequently catch these viral infections, that there is no cure, that the child will recover within a few days, that only the symptoms can be treated, and that staying in bed does not help. The child’s father asked him, “You mean we can go to Disneyland?” Dr. Oppenheim said, “Staying in bed doesn’t make it go away quicker.” The members of the family cheered, and followed him out of the door on their way to fun and excitement. (92)

**A Note from Fletcher’s Dad**

Fletcher’s Dad is awesome. Fletcher is a kid who is excited about going trick-or-treating on Halloween, but he has a medical condition that does not allow him to eat candy. Therefore, Fletcher’s Dad gave neighbors this note (and a small toy):

“Dear Neighbour,
“I live in Discovery Ridge. My son Fletcher is 8 years old and will be dressed as an Angry Bird for Halloween (a character from the video game). Fletcher has a very severe form of Epilepsy. In order to treat his Epilepsy and prevent more seizures, Fletcher must maintain a medical diet called the Ketogenic Diet. The diet is very strict and excludes many foods, including every type of candy.

“Obviously, Halloween would be a very difficult time for him as all of his friends are trick or treating and getting all sorts of candy. He is very excited and simply can’t wait for Halloween to arrive. We want Fletcher to participate in as many events as he can. Therefore, we have purchased a number of small toys to give to Fletcher on Halloween instead of candy. One of these toys is attached to this letter. We are asking that when Fletcher comes to your door on Halloween evening, instead of giving him candy, please give him this small gift (he will be with me and he will introduce himself as ‘Fletcher’).

“Thank you so much for helping us make Halloween a very special day for Fletcher.” (93)

“This is an Incredible Thing. I Would Never have Expected This in My Life”

In May 2013 in Wareham, Massachusetts, many Good Samaritans worked to enlarge and renovate the house of Cindy Jeffers, age 59, to enable her to more easily take care of her disabled 12-year-old grandson, Jeremiah, who has cerebral palsy. She also has another grandson who lives with her. Ms. Jeffers said, “For these children, we love them so much.” She added, “This is an incredible thing. I would never have expected this in my life.” Victor Fernandes, a founder of the Team Noah Foundation and board member at the Schwartz Center in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, said that the value of the work that everyone did on the house was approximately $150,000.
Leading the work were the Team Noah Foundation, Cameron’s Kids, and the Trevor / Jordan Alves Foundation (TJA). During the week her house was enlarged (it doubled in size) and renovated, Ms. Jeffers and her grandsons stayed at a Hyannis motel. Her house now has a basement, a washer and dryer, three bedrooms, and a lift that will help transport Jeremiah from his bed to the handicapped-accessible bathroom. In 2004, Jeffrey and Debbie Goulart founded the non-profit Cameron’s Kids in honor of their son, who — like Jeremiah — had cerebral palsy. Jeffrey Goulart said, “I guess this is what it means to be a neighbor.” Debbie Goulart said, “Jeremiah, you are now family to every single one of us.” (94)

“You Know, Mom, I Love You and Thank You for Giving Me Another Mom. You’ll Always be My Mom, But Thank You for Giving Me Her”

Dr. Roseanna Means, a physician who trained at Harvard and now works at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, helps homeless women. For example, she will approach a homeless woman sitting on a park bench and say, “I have some socks — you need some socks?” Often, the answer is, “Oh, sure, that’d be great.” In 1993, Dr. Means started volunteering at health clinics for the homeless. She said, “When I see these women, I see this could be me, it could be you, it could be any one of us, because there’s nobody that goes through life without having any problems. My own personal life, I’ve been through cancer, I lost a child, I’ve been through divorce, I have steel knees — I’ve been through lots of personal things in my life.” One homeless woman whom Dr. Means has personally helped is Donna O’Connell, who was a homeless drug addict in 2001 when she first met Dr. Means. Ms. O’Connell said, “We sat down and started talking, and she gave me courage and hope and she gave me antibiotics and evaluated me and then I opened up and
started talking about my life and she just helped me.” Ms. O’Connell now has a home, works part-time, and is sober. She said about Dr. Means, “She saved me, so now when I go to my mom’s grave I say, ‘You know, mom, I love you and thank you for giving me another mom. You’ll always be my mom, but thank you for giving me her.’” In 1998, Dr. Means founded a non-profit organization: Women of Means. A team of 16 volunteer doctors gives women in homeless shelters free medical care. Dr. Means said, “It’s a giving of human kindness to people who just need to be acknowledged and validated and appreciated.” (95)

“It’s Very Generous to Raise Money and Then Use It All to Help Other People”

In December 2012, Jake June, a six-year-old first-grader at Academy Street Elementary School in Bayport, New York, was treated for the stomach flu at Stony Brook Long Island Children’s Hospital. He decided to do something good for other patients. Jake said, “Because they took care of me, it’s time for me to pay them back.” On 1 April 2013, he donated 1,800 coloring books for children in the hospital. To raise money to buy the coloring books, on 2 March 2013, he and his family had an iced-tea and cookie sale at All Pro Sports Academy in Bellport, New York — his father’s business. They raised $275. Jake’s father, Scott June, said, “We’re just so proud of him. It came out of nowhere on his own. He just wanted to repay the favor that was done for him.” Sean Flynn, a 10-year-old patient in the pediatric emergency department, said, “I think it’s very cool. I think it’s remarkable a six-year-old boy has a dream to help people. It’s very generous to raise money and then use it all to help other people.” (96)

Nine Bald Friends in a Row

On 23 March 2013 at a barbershop in Wilmslow, Cheshire, England, eight friends supported a friend by getting their
heads shaved. All of them attend Wilmslow High School. Tom Lee, age 17, had been diagnosed with Hodgkin’s Lymphoma, and hair loss is often a symptom of chemotherapy. To show support for Tom Lee, eight of his friends — Ollie Knight, Alex Lloyd, Mike Loughlin, Harrison Peck, Seb Pemberton, Tom Sneyd, Harry Stobart, and Jake Vaughan — went with him to the barbershop and got their heads shaved. They also set up a JustGiving page to raise money for The Teenage Cancer Trust. As of early April 2013, they had raised over £3100. Ollie Knight said, “At first we were not considering raising money but to only shave our heads to support Tom. However, I’m so pleased we decided to because of the incredible sum we have raised. We all feel extremely proud!” Alex Lloyd added, “The support from everyone so far has surpassed what we expected by a long, long way. I would like to thank every single person who has donated so far, the support they have given us, but more importantly the support for Tom and his family is astounding. We would appreciate it if people could continue to spread the word. The Teenage Cancer Trust does amazing work every day and deserve every penny they get.” In a comment on the article, Lee Brocklehurst wrote, “Congratulations, lads, you’re a credit to your parents, Wilmslow, and clearly great mates of Tom.” Also, Kate Ravenscroft wrote, “Proud to say that my son is one of Tom’s friends. What they have done is amazing and they have really rallied round Tom to support him in his battle against cancer. Donate if you can and take a moment to realise that not all teenagers are how they are made out to be in the media. Good luck, Tom xx.” (97)

“I Never Thought I Would Need Blood”

Bruce Smith of Australia donated blood for years and years, and one day he needed blood—lots of blood—to save his life. It was available. Ever since he was 16 years old, he had donated blood to the Australian Red Cross. In
2007, he was diagnosed with B-cell lymphoma — saving his life required many blood and plasma transfusions. Mr. Smith said, “It took 14 months and 12 rounds of chemotherapy and a stem-cell harvest and stem-cell transplant. I was in such a poor condition they had to give me blood.” He added, “I never thought I would need blood.” By November 2008, Mr. Smith was in remission. Mr. Smith always knew that donating blood was a good deed. He said, “At the end of it, it helped to save my life. But along the way it’s helped a lot of people.” He and his wife, Dawn, want people in good health to donate blood. He said, “I encourage everyone, but in particular the younger people, to get involved. It doesn’t take much time, and you never know — it could be your own life you are saving.” Red Cross Blood Service community relations team leader Krystal Lopez said, “Donation levels can drop to critical levels in winter due to colds and flu, and we need as many new donors as we can get. You never know when it could be you or a loved one in need of an emergency blood transfusion.” According to a July 2010 article by Gemma Abele in the Bundaberg NewsMail (Queensland, Australia), “One in three Australians will need blood in their lifetime, but only one in 30 people donate.” (98)

“Becky, for You, I will Do It for Free”

When Rebekah McManus, a pharmacy technician at Market Street Apothecary in Corning, New York, learned that a woman who has amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as ALS or Lou Gehrig’s Disease, needed a motorized wheelchair to help her stay independent, she thought about holding a fundraiser. She contacted her Facebook friend Michael “Mick” McCartney, who owns two health care businesses in the Buffalo, New York, area to see if he could help. Ms. McManus said, “Tuesday at work we learned that Shelly Cromwell is in the advanced stages of ALS. I was talking to my boss and I said, ‘I am
going to call Mick. He and I are Facebook friends.’ When I told him about Shelly, he said to me, ‘Becky, for you, I will do it for free.’” Mr. McCartney provided the motorized wheelchair free of charge; he simply wants it returned to him when it is no longer needed. Ms. Cromwell said about Mr. McCartney, “This is the most wonderful thing. I don’t even know him at all.” She added, “You do not know what this means to me. Now, I can go from room to room without asking someone to do something for me. I can do for myself and that makes me felt good. I am happier now that I can get around.” Mr. McCartney said, “Thank goodness for Facebook. When Becky called me, she told me there was a 39-year-old woman in an advanced stage of ALS. I figured I could help someone with their quality of life. I have been in this business for 16 years. Your insurance doesn’t cover a lot of things, and some people do not even have insurance.” Ms. McManus and Mr. McCartney went to high school together in Cooperstown, New York. They each moved away, but they used Facebook to keep in touch. Ms. McManus said, “This is such a wonderful story. I had no idea he was going to just give her one. This is really a good deed.” ALS, a progressive neurodegenerative disease, affects motor neurons, making the brain unable to initiate and control muscle movement. (99)

**Problem-Solving with Taxis**

On 4 April 2013, a radio station put out a call for motorcycles with compartments for passengers — a kind of taxi — to go to the 800-meter airstrip in Contamana, a town of 26,000 in an impoverished part of Peru, so that they could light up the airstrip enough that a Medevac plane could take off. The plane carried three very ill passengers: a woman and her newborn baby and a man with a tropical disease. Unfortunately, the plane needed to take off at night, and the airport was not equipped with the lights
necessary to do that. Approximately 300 motorcycle-taxis showed up, directed their lights on the runway, and the plane was able to take off. Radio presenter Adolfo Lobo said, “We have always been people with a heart.” (100)

CHAPTER 3: Stories 101-150

“There’s Colposcope Drove Me Nuts. It was Chipped, Wouldn’t Stay in Position, and was Just Unfixable”

If you want to help women stay healthy, it helps to have good medical equipment. Dr. John Salmon is a gynaecologist from Wodonga, Victoria, Australia, who saw the need for a new colposcope for the Colonial War Memorial Hospital in Suva, Fiji. A colposcope — a magnifying instrument — allows the gynaecologist to examine a woman’s cervix and check for pre-cancerous changes. Dr. Salmon, who had worked for a year in Suva, said, “Their colposcope drove me nuts. It was chipped, wouldn’t stay in position, and was just unfixable.” In 2013, he made a personal presentation to the Belvoir Rotary Club, and it donated $12,500 for a new colposcope. Dr. Salmon said, “Rotary has helped enormously.” As of July 2013, the new colposcope was in use. (101)

“I Didn’t have Time to be Scared. I Started Punching and Kicking Those Dogs as Best I Could. They Took Me Down Twice”

On 27 April 2013 in Lebanon, Maine, Adam Horr heard a 12-year-old girl screaming. He ran toward the screams and saw two dogs attacking the girl “like they were trying to tear her apart.” A third dog was present but not attacking. Mr. Horr said, “It was really quite terrifying. I didn’t have time to be scared. I started punching and kicking those dogs as best I could. They took me down twice.” According to state police spokesman Stephen McCausland, the two attacking dogs — pit bulls — jumped a fence and attacked
Angel Sargent, who was playing nearby. Each dog weighed between 50 and 60 pounds. Mr. Horr’s actions probably saved Angel’s life. Medical personnel at Frisbie Memorial Hospital in Rochester, New Hampshire, treated Angel’s wounds, including bites to the neck, legs, and shoulder. She was held overnight. Mr. Horr said, “I heard her screaming, ‘My leg! My leg! My leg! Ow, my leg!’” When he ran to the girl, the dogs started attacking him, too. He said, “They were focused on both of us. I was trying to take all the focus. I was willing to let them tear me apart if she could get away. I was almost certain at one point they were going to kill her.” When a dog bit one of Mr. Horr’s legs, he fell to the ground. He said, “I jumped right back on my feet. I knew better than to be on the ground.” Then a dog bit his left forearm and clamped down on it. Mr. Horr said, “I immediately punched it in the eye with my right fist probably 20 times.” While doing that, he was kicking at the other dog, which was attacking the girl. Fortunately for Mr. Horr, he was wearing a loose-fitting hooded sweatshirt, so the dogs often bit the sweatshirt instead of Mr. Horr. He used a wooden broom handle to hit one of the dogs in the head, snapping the handle. He said, “It seemed to make the dog angry. I just kept hitting them” with what remained of the handle. He added about the girl, “She was able to get up and ran in the house for safety.” A man came out of the home, and the dogs quieted down. Mr. Horr called 911. His puncture wounds to his arm and leg were treated, and the girl was taken to a hospital. Mr. Horr, who has teenage children of his own, said, “I choose to believe if it was them being attacked, someone would help them.” (102)

Good Friends — Human or Otherwise — Save Lives

Dave Ferwerda, who has a farm in Rock County near Clinton, Wisconsin, has an eight-year-old friend: his dog Hannah, a red heeler. In March 2013, Mr. Ferwerda, accompanied by Hannah, went to his barn. In the barn, a
pregnant cow attacked him, knocked him down, and started mauling him with her hooves. Mr. Ferwerda said, “I was in shock, so I couldn’t walk. I went out on my hands and knees and she [Hannah] kept the cow away … stayed right there. She would get the cow by the nose and bite it, and get it back.” Mr. Ferwerda was black and blue after the attack, but alive. He added about Hannah, “She stayed between the cow and myself. Unbelievable! What loyalty. The love I’ve got for this particular dog, it’s hard for me to express it. She’s more than just a lifesaver; she’s such a good little dog … just absolutely wonderful.” Mr. Ferwerda pointed out, “She’s not a show dog … she doesn’t do tricks. But she’s got so many other things about her that are so precious … almost like a little human being. I have a hard time talking about it without getting choked up.” Cows have kicked out a few of Hannah’s teeth, but Hannah is still not afraid of cows. Mr. Ferwerda said, “All of my dogs have been good dogs, but you always get one in a life that’s special.” Mr. Ferwerda has a human friend named Mary who also saved his life. A month after Hannah saved his life, Mr. Ferwerda did not feel well. He had very bad headaches, and he had trouble driving. Mary took him to a doctor who diagnosed a blood clot on his brain and then rushed him to Madison, Wisconsin, for emergency surgery. Mr. Ferwerda’s good friends have twice saved his life.

(103)

A “Kiss” from a Deer for a Good Deed

At the end of May 2013, West Virginia State Trooper Will Hash checked on a deer that was reported to be stuck in a fence on Johns Creek in Cabell County. Such things happen, and unless the deer releases itself or is released, it will die. The dispatcher had told him, “There is a deer stuck in the fence. Its back is injured, and you will probably have to put it down.” State Trooper Hash said that the deer had scratches down its back and that the deer seemed tame. He
added, “The deer sniffs me and everything and I said, ‘This is crazy,’ and it started rubbing its antlers on my legs like it’s a tree.” After determining that the deer was clear of the fence and would survive, State Trooper Hash went back to his car and the deer followed him and gave him a “kiss.” State Trooper Hash said, “It was definitely a changing experience for me, probably one of the neatest things that has happened in my life.” (104)

**Litter: A Danger to Deer and Other Animals**

In May 2013, a whitetail doe got a large, clear plastic jar stuck on its head, and it was not able to either eat or drink. The doe hung around the yard of Janet Murphy’s home in Hermantown, Minnesota. Ms. Murphy said, “I’m just thankful it could get some air in there.” She tried calling 911 and the Department of Natural Resources, but she was unable to get help for the doe, which stayed around her yard: “She’s following me and my daughter around my yard. She’s not scared of us.” Ms. Murphy wrote about the deer on Facebook, and she received advice to contact Wildwoods, a wildlife rehabilitation organization in Duluth, Minnesota. Farzad Farr, a volunteer with Wildwoods, lent Ms. Murphy a 10-foot metal catch-pole with a noose at one end that can be put over a deer’s (or other animal’s) head and cinched. The pole is made deliberately long to help the catcher avoid injury. Ms. Murphy said, “I came home, and it [the doe] was lying on the edge of the woods. I thought, ‘Well, I’ll try it.’ I got the catch-pole and started approaching her. She stood up and kind of backed up into some trees. I extended the catch-pole as far as I could. The cable on the catch-pole went around” the plastic jar. She added, “When I started securing it, she started jumping just like in a rodeo. Up in the air and down. Side to side. She got on the ground and started to roll.” Ms. Murphy held fast to the catch-pole and the cable that was still tight around the plastic jar. She said, “I pulled
straight down on the ground, and it [the plastic jar] popped right off.” The doe immediately went to an area in the woods where water was present. Ms. Murphy put food in her deer feeder, and the doe ate. Peg Farr of Wildwoods said that litter can be dangerous to wild animals: “We get calls on this every year, at least two or three per summer — raccoons, skunks and cats. This is our first deer.” (105)

“I have a Moral Duty to Look After All Creatures Who Live in Trees as Best as I Can”

A tree was a danger because it leaned over a road in Childer Thornton, a village in England, so in May 2013 tree surgeon John Joinson was brought in to cut the tree down; however, he noticed bees coming and going in a crack in the tree. Mr. Joinson could have easily killed the bees with insecticide, but he decided to try to save the bees instead, and so he consulted a beekeeper. Mr. Joinson said about the bees, “They were in the trunk. The beekeeper suggested we went back at night and filled the crack with rags, which we did. The next morning we felled the tree with the crack still plugged and the bees still inside. When we finished work that day, we removed the rags and the bees were able to fly out. Then it came to the point when we needed to shift [move] the tree. The beekeeper found the queen and isolated her — she was twice the size of the other bees. She was put in a small ventilated box and then placed in a bigger cardboard box. When the bees returned, instead of going into the tree, they went into the box as she gives off a pheromone, and they could smell her. Over about four hours the majority of bees were in the box and not the nest. The beekeeper then took them to his hives in Llandegla. He said we saved about 20,000.” Bees are important in the fertilization of plants. Mr. Joinson added, “Everyone needs to know how important bees are. I have a moral duty to look after all creatures who live in trees as best as I can. Every job is different, but I’ve never had one quite like this
before.” Bees have suffered a die-off in recent years. One way to help is to plant bee-friendly plants. According to Martin Smith, president of the British Beekeepers Association in 2011, “It is really important that there are flowering nectar-rich plants around in August, September, and October to provide the nutrition that’s needed so the bees can top up their stores of honey in the hive to see them through winter.” (106)

**“Ewe Won’t Believe It”**

Five sheep belonging to the Evans family of Harwood, Maryland, made their escape and stayed away for about a week until some Good Samaritans rounded them up. In a letter to the editor of the *Capitol Gazette* (Maryland), the Evans family wrote, “Ewe won’t believe it, but our five sheep are safely penned today after nearly a week on the lamb. They grazed on some of the choicest lands in Edgewater, Davidsonville and Harwood, at great peril to themselves and drivers. We are truly indebted for tips and help to many local neighbors, including Jim, Tim, Gloria, ‘the Mulcher,’ Russ, Flynn, gardeners A-E, Ceci, Celso, Windfield Farm, Cynthia, the ‘soccer family,’ the jogger, Ford, mailman, Baker, Joan, Betsy, and the officers from Anne Arundel County police, Animal Control and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. And to the Kramers, for nabbing them at the end. We are sheepish, a bit more broke and extremely thankful for a happy ending and for such great neighbors.” (107)

**Jackson is Grateful**

In March 2013, Wendell Overton, a 10-year-old boy in Manteo, North Carolina, saw some boys between the ages of five and 13 torturing a cat. They were doing such things as throwing the cat in the air and running over the cat with their bicycles. Wendell rescued the cat and took it home to his mother, Julia. They took it to Roanoke Island Animal
Clinic to be treated, and then the cat was placed with the Outer Banks Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals so it could be adopted. On Facebook, Outer Banks SPCA wrote, “Wendell confronted the boys and took the cat home where he and his mother called us.” The cat is now named Jackson. Outer Banks SPCA added that Jackson “is recovering well, resting comfortably, eating like a king and will be looking for a new home soon. Wendell and Jackson’s story has touched so many hearts already. Words cannot express our gratitude, and I can only imagine how grateful Jackson must be!” (108)

“not just a girl ….”

Jaime Moore’s daughter, Emma, had her fifth birthday in April 2013, and Jaime wanted to do something special to honor it. She dressed Emma up as five influential women in history and took her photograph for a photo series titled “not just a girl ….” The five women are Susan B. Anthony, Coco Chanel, Amelia Earhart, Jane Goodall, and Helen Keller. Each woman is depicted in a photo set by a photo of Emma as that woman. Underneath each set of photographs is a couple of inspiring quotations from that woman. For example, underneath the photos for Helen Keller are these quotations from Ms. Keller: “Be of good cheer. Do not think of today’s failures, but of the success that may come tomorrow. You have set yourselves a difficult task, but you will succeed if you persevere; and you will find a joy in overcoming obstacles. Remember, no effort that we make to attain something beautiful is ever lost.” — “What I am looking for is not out there, it is in me.” On her website, Ms. Moore wrote, “So my amazing daughter, Emma, turned 5 last month, and I had been searching everywhere for new-creative inspiration for her 5yr pictures. I noticed quite a pattern of so many young girls dressing up as beautiful Disney Princesses, no matter where I looked 95% of the ‘ideas’ were the ‘How to’s’ of how to dress your
little girl like a Disney Princess. Now don’t get me wrong, I LOVE Disney Princesses, from their beautiful dresses, perfect hair, gorgeous voices and most with ideal love stories in the mix you can’t help but become entranced with the characters. But it got me thinking, they’re just characters, a writers tale of a princess (most before 1998) … an unrealistic fantasy for most girls (Yay Kate Middleton!). It started me thinking about all the REAL women for my daughter to know about and look up [to], REAL women who without ever meeting Emma have changed her life for the better. My daughter wasn’t born into royalty, but she was born into a country where she can now vote, become a doctor, a pilot, an astronaut, or even President if she wants and that’s what REALLY matters. I wanted her to know the value of these amazing women who had gone against everything so she can now have everything. We chose 5 women (five amazing and strong women), as it was her 5th birthday but there are thousands of unbelievable women (and girls) who have beat the odds and fought (and still fight) for their equal rights all over the world……..so let’s set aside the Barbie Dolls and the Disney Princesses for just a moment, and let’s show our girls the REAL women they can be.” The last set of photographs in the series is of Emma herself. In both photos, she is wearing this political button: “EMMA FOR PRESIDENT 2044.” She is also wearing this button that bears this quotation by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich: “Well behaved WOMEN RARELY make history.” (Ms. Ulrich’s quote — which became the title of a book by her — was actually “Well-behaved women seldom make history.”) (109)

“Remember When I Put Notes in Your Lunchbox?”

Redditor DovhPasty wrote a post titled “My mom made me a lunch today out of the kindness of her heart and I found this note inside. I love you too, mom.” This is the note,
which was written on stationery with “A Special Note …” at the top: “Remember when I put notes in your lunchbox? Moms do that because they want their kids to feel loved when they aren’t around. Even though you are so BIG I feel the same way. I love you wherever you are. [Heart] Love, Mom.” Redditor Sarcelle commented on this post: “Trying real hard not to cry over here. Not succeeding.” Dads also write notes. Redditor Wishawigglewould wrote this comment on the post: “I realized how much sugar and simple carbs were in the cereal my kids ate in the morning so I started making hard boiled eggs with my Egg Genie every night for them. I have the quart-sized freezer bags with the white area for writing so I started finding all of the good Mario, pokemon, and clean video game jokes I could find so they started the day with a laugh. After a while, I literally ran out of one liners that would fit so I started making [up] my own corny jokes about Minecraft or something. I thought they didn’t appreciate [it] so I was thinking about phasing out it. But one day my mom was watching them after school while I was at work (they’re 8 and 11) and she said they tried to tell her every joke they could remember and how much they love it when dad leaves them a corny joke in the morning. It’s a pain not getting to bed on time the nights I forget to make eggs while I cook dinner (single dad) but all I can think about is how sad they’d be if a school bus fell from space and killed me and their last bag of eggs in the fridge had an empty label on it. I think a lot about that. School buses that refuse to obey the laws of physics are f[**]king terrifying.” (110)

**Happy Mother’s Day**

The website <notalwaysright.com> has many stories about bad customers and about good customers. One anonymous person wrote about taking his or her mother out to eat at a fast-food restaurant following “a failed dinner by her husband.” At the counter, the mother said, “Happy
Mother’s Day to me, at [fast food restaurant] at nine at night.” The cashier replied, “Yeah, I’ve been here all day.” After the mother and adult child had eaten, the mother said, “I have decided we should do something for the woman in there. Here I was complaining, while they have been working all day. They probably weren’t able to spend time with their families.” The mother and adult child went to a nearby store where the mother bought two bouquets of flowers and two boxes of chocolates, and then they went back to the fast-food restaurant. The mother said to the cashier, “You’re a mother, aren’t you?” The cashier replied, “Yes, I am,” and the mother said, “Well, I thought you deserved these.” The writer of this experience wrote, “Mom gives the woman the flowers and chocolates. The cashier thanks her repeatedly, looking on the verge of tears. My mother leaves feeling a lot better. Even though her day wasn’t what she had hoped it would be, she at least got to make someone else’s better.” (111)

**Gifts for the Homeless**

The mother of Redditor BaconisDank hands out plastic bags to homeless people. BaconisDank writes that the “Winter Pack” contains a “roll of toilet paper, hand sanitizer, bottled water, tuna and crackers, teddy grahams, fruit snacks, poncho, wet wipes, toothpaste and tooth brush, gum, comb, socks, gloves.” (Redditor SucksAtVideoGames commented, “That’s chicken salad not tuna and crackers bro.”) Redditor Boomerkuwanga wrote this comment on the post: “About 20 or so years ago, I was living on the streets in Boston. I was that guy sleeping on a piece of cardboard in the alley. The first week I was homeless, Boston had its coldest recorded temp in like a decade. I tried sleeping on some building’s exhaust vent, and wound up with pretty bad burns on my side from the grate. A few days later, still during a record cold spell, some lady gave me a bag just like this. It had TP, some food, and one of
those shiny emergency blankets. It seriously saved my [*]ss. I think I might have died from the cold the next few days without that blanket. Tell your mom to keep up the good work. Those bags don’t seem like a lot, but when you’re living in a reality where 90% of people treat you as though you’re invisible, or tell you to get a job and then walk away all f[**]king pleased with themselves, a bag of food and toiletries might as well be a gift from the gods themselves.” And Redditor Seekfear wrote this comment on the post: “‘get a job.’ I once said that to a 20 something young homeless girl standing at the door of grocery store. I felt so self righteous and smug with myself at the time. The look on her face was blank, Her eyes seemed as if they never blinked. As i was walking away i heard her saying ‘Sorry’ in a very dim and trembling voice. When i came back outside, i found myself looking for her; I wanted to say sorry, I wanted to apologize for my idiocracy; however, she was nowhere to be found. I drove around the parking lot looking for her, to no avail … I hope she is doing ok. I wish i could take [those] 3 words back.” (112)

“If You Could Give Away a Box of Cookies, Who Would You Give It To?”

In Shalimar, Florida, Girl Scouts of Troop 1359 keep a written record of their good deeds. Before each meeting at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Shalimar, the Girl Scouts remember and record the previous week’s good deeds. Heather Swanson, their troop leader, also has them contemplate a question—for example, “If you could give away a box of cookies, who would you give it to?” Ms. Swanson said, “I never know what they’re going to say.” Sarah Nelson, age 10, of Shalimar, wrote in her notebook, “My good deed was helping my brother get dressed so he would not get in trouble.” Elena Land, age six, of Fort Walton Beach, wrote, “Today me and my friends were riding our bikes and we stopped and picked up trash along
the way to keep our environment clean.” Leilani Jay-Petersen, age nine, said, “No matter how big or how small you are, you can make a difference.” Ms. Swanson agreed: “It needs to start somewhere.” Laura Price, age seven, said, “I think it’s very inspiring to know that everybody here has done good deeds.” (113)

“Who’s Gonna Turn in a Bag of Money, Except the Girl Scouts?”

On 8 March 2013, Gwen Vignon took a bag of money from her Redondo Beach, California, Laundromat, put it on her lap in her car, and drove to a Vons grocery store in Hermosa Beach, California, before driving home. She said, “I got home and I remember I didn’t see the bag, and it was gone from the car.” She thought that the money was probably lost forever, but she did retrace her steps to try to find it. She said, “I just thought I’m not going to see it again. I was resigned to the fact that it was a stupid mistake. Who’s gonna turn in a bag of money, except the Girl Scouts? I wasn’t happy, that’s for sure. It meant I couldn’t pay the utilities.” Fortunately, some Girl Scouts did find the money: a pouch containing a six-inch-high stack of dollars—over $1,200. They had found the money while selling Girl Scout cookies outside the Vons grocery store. Ms. Vignon returned to the Vons grocery store and asked employees if they had found her money. They had not. The Girl Scouts saw her and asked if she was looking for lost money. Hearing that she was, the Girl Scouts told her that they had turned it in to the police. They also told her that they had thought the money was drug money. This made Ms. Vignon laugh. She bought the rest of the boxes of Girl Scout cookies—all 25 of them. She said, “I just want them to get credit for their troop. They told me they just wanted to do the right thing.” (114)

Day 1: Learn CPR; Day 2: Save a Life
In April 2013, eighth-grader Paris White collapsed during practice with her Wesleyan Academy softball team in High Point, North Carolina. Fortunately, the day before, teammate Taylor Bisbee had completed her mandatory CRP course. A teammate called 911, and Taylor immediately began to perform CPR. She said, “It was scary to see her fall like that ’cause I wasn’t expecting it.” She added, “I just knelt down next to her and I just started,” Bisbee said. It was really scary for me because it was the difference between life and death.” Coach Donald Brewer said that staff quickly arrived and used a defibrillator to get Paris’ heart started again. He said, “They hooked the defibrillator up, and when they cut it on, it said they needed to shock. The defibrillator said stand back and it shocked her and got her heart beating again.” An ambulance took Paris to Duke University Hospital, and she is expected to fully recover. (115)

“I Just Saw This Beautiful Child on the Ground, His Eyes were Wide Open, His Lips were Turning a Little Blue. I Put My Hand on His Chest, and I Didn’t Feel Anything”

In May 2013, Ian McGreevy, age eight, was playing in a Little League baseball game in Highland Memorial Park in Harrington Park, New Jersey. He collapsed after a baseball hit him in the chest as he was attempting to steal third base. Maureen Renaghan, age 40, who was watching her own son — a different boy — play in the game, ran to assist him. She said, “I just saw this beautiful child on the ground, his eyes were wide open, his lips were turning a little blue. I put my hand on his chest, and I didn’t feel anything.” She began performing CPR on him, and he regained consciousness, turned over, and vomited. Ian was fully conscious when paramedics arrived, and he was airlifted to Hackensack (New Jersey) University Medical Center. Police Chief Albert Maalouf said, “You hear people talk
about heroics, and I try not to overuse that word, but in this case, I think it applies. For her to act fast, while others were in shock, she made a quick assessment and potentially saved this child’s life.” Ian fully recovered from what medical personnel described as being like “a serious bruise on the heart muscle.” Ms. Renaghan, who had learned CPR about 20 years previously, said, “I was just so glad I could help.” Ian’s mother, Lisa McGreevy, said about him, “He’s jumping around like a jelly bean.” She said about Ms. Renaghan, “I’m forever in her debt. I thank God she was there because I don’t know what would’ve happened if she wasn’t.” (116)

“I was Dead, so I Can’t Tell You Anything”

On 27 October 2012, something important happened to Dennis Brekke, age 66, at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds, but he does not remember it. He said, “I was dead, so I can’t tell you anything.” His wife, Janet Brekke, knows what happened. They were selling flashlights, and Dennis decided to take a break: He then suffered a massive heart attack. Two St. Paul police officers — Garaad Sahal and Derrick Herling — helped him, and Mr. Sahal gave him CPR. Mr. Sahal had just graduated from the police academy about two weeks earlier on October 4. Janet said about Dennis, “He would have been gone; there’s no question in my mind.” St. Paul Police Chief Thomas Smith gave the two police officers and some other people awards on 16 April 2013 and said, “Ordinary people do extraordinary things to make this city just a great place. Great police officers, great citizens.” In August 2012, St. Paul police commander Dave Korus came to the rescue of Gary Veenstra, age 64, who collapsed at the Minnesota Vikings’ first preseason game at the Metrodome. Commander Korus said, “Mr. Veenstra dropped right in front of me. I saw him go down like a ton of bricks.” Commander Korus recommends that everyone learn CPR.
Mr. Veenstra said, “If it wasn’t for his quick work, I wouldn’t be here. I owe him my life.” (117)

“I Ran Over to Her [Ms. Trysnicki] and I Said, ‘What’s The Problem?’ and She Said, ‘My Baby’s Not Breathing’”

On 18 June 2013 as Jessica Trysnicki was driving on the New York State Thruway near the I90 E ramp near the Walden Galleria, Alexis Jodlin, her seemingly healthy 16-month-old daughter, became seriously ill. Ms. Trysnicki said, “She just started having a seizure. I looked behind me and she was in her car seat with her arms were flailing about, her [eyes] rolling in the back of her head and her lips were purple.” Ms. Trysnicki stopped the car by the side of the thruway and called 911. Nearby thruway maintenance workers saw that something was wrong and came over to her car. Richard Hart, a maintenance worker for the NYS Thruway, said, “You could see the panic. She was on the phone. Soon as I ran back to her, she approached me, handed me the phone, and begged me to tell 911 where we were.” Off-duty Eden, New York, police officer Richard Syracuse, who was in a car with his wife, pulled over to help. Mr. Syracuse said, “I ran over to her [Ms. Trysnicki] and I said, ‘What’s the problem?’ and she said, ‘My baby’s not breathing.’” Mr. Syracuse began performing CPR on Alexis, and a volunteer firefighter soon joined him. Mr. Syracuse said, “We were still working on the baby trying to get a pulse back, and shortly after[ward] we did.” An ambulance arrived and took Ms. Trysnicki and little Alexis to Women and Children’s Hospital, where doctors diagnosed Alexis with a viral infection in her lungs and treated her with antibiotics. Ms. Trysnicki said, “Thank you from the bottom of my heart for helping my daughter. Thank you.” With the help of the antibiotics, Alexis will be fine. (118)
Ponsonby Fire Station: Kind to Kids

People sometimes write Ana Samways, author of the always entertaining column *Sideswipe* that appears almost daily in the *New Zealand Herald*. For example, Adrian wrote this about a good deed performed by the Ponsonby Fire Station: “I’m part of the Big Brother programme and my little brother Carlo and I were out for a walk along Ponsonby Rd when he saw some firefighters sitting in the fire truck. We stood there for a minute in case the fire truck was about to race off and the men on duty were nice enough to roll up the door and invite Carlo in to sit in the fire truck and tell us a bit about the station. Carlo was really stoked with it and even got a little goodie bag which he was excited to take home and rip into. It was an extremely nice thing to do.” Ponsonby is an inner-city suburb of Auckland City, New Zealand. (119)

Saudi Arabian Firefighter Abdullah Badhan Al Subai: “It is My Duty to Help and Serve, and if God Willed Me to Die, So be It”

In March 2013, Saudi Arabian firefighter Abdullah Badhan Al Subai saved the life of a small boy in an apartment in the Red Sea city of Jeddah. Mr. Al Subai said, “We have just performed our duty, and we thank God everybody is safe. We heard there was a fire at a building in Al Rihab neighbourhood, and we rushed to the area. As we were dealing with the blaze, we discovered that the heavy smoke made its way into the apartment across from the one where the fire erupted. I entered the flat and saw a child gasping for breath in a smoke-choked room and [the child] needed to be evacuated promptly.” He put his breathing mask on the boy and carried him away from the smoke and fire. Mr. Al Subai said, “I helped him with the mask as I could not accept that I was breathing almost normally while he was having smoke-inhalation problems. It is my duty to help
and serve, and if God willed me to die, so be it.” He carried the boy to the Red Crescent, where paramedics looked after the boy. Blogger Al Ghareef wrote, “Thank you for your efforts. You are a real hero who gave a shining example of the loyal men in the service of the country. Abdullah should be honoured and promoted because of his exemplary love for the country and work.” (120)

**Omid Abbasi: Heroic Iranian Firefighter**

On 14 May 2013, fire broke out in an apartment building in Tehran, the capital of Iran. Omid Abbasi and other Iranian firefighters arrived to fight the fire. Learning that a seven-year-old girl was trapped inside, Mr. Abbasi rushed into the building and found the girl. To keep her alive, he gave her his oxygen mask. He rescued the girl, but he suffered brain death due to lack of oxygen, although doctors in a hospital emergency room tried to save his life. After he died, his family donated his organs to three patients who needed transplants. His mother said, “He was kind and loved saving people.” The little girl attended Mr. Abbasi’s funeral and said, “He saved my life, and I am really thankful.” Reddit user D3VO_Lution commented, “I will never cease to be amazed by the sheer selflessness of some people in this world.” (121)

**International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Heroes**

On 25 June 2013, a fast-moving fire hit a nursing home in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Fortunately, the nursing home was next door to the Community College of Allegheny County, where instructor Tammy Miller was teaching a communication class of 24 members of the union International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). Ms. Miller said, “We were on break, and some of the students were standing outside when they noticed smoke coming from the neighboring building. I then said, ‘Oh, my
God, that’s a nursing home,’ and they made off like a swarm of bees for the building.” No alarms or sprinklers were set off because the fire had started on the roof. The IBEW members helped the nursing home’s staff get the residents to safety. Ms. Miller said, “They were running down halls, knocking on doors to make sure everyone was out.” IBEW student Jaimee Cancolina said, “Some helped people out, some people got oxygen tanks out, and we got everyone out and across the street.” Some residents who could not walk had to be carried out. Everyone was successfully evacuated. No injuries were reported. Ms. Miller said, “This was a fast-moving fire and no one inside even knew it was happening. Without these heroes, the papers would have a very different headline.” (122)

Save a Life, Buy Ice Cream

On 30 June 2013, a Nissan Maxima hit a power pole near Corona, California, so hard that the power pole broke into three pieces and was pulled out of the ground. The car tipped over on the passenger side and caught fire. Inside the car was the unconscious driver, who suffered a broken leg, two broken arms, and head injuries. Fortunately, Corona resident and off-duty firefighter Curtis Carter, age 44, witnessed the accident. Also fortunately, he had with him a walnut-handled Bone Collector pocketknife — an anniversary present from his wife. Mr. Carter used the knife to cut the driver’s seatbelt, and he, another Good Samaritan, and an ambulance crew pulled the unconscious driver out of the car. After Mr. Carter and his wife witnessed the accident, he and the other Good Samaritan pulled the car that had had the accident upright. An ambulance crew that happened to be nearby tried to extinguish the fire. Mr. Carter said, “I knew the fire had gotten a hold of the car, so my concern was getting the individual out of the car in a timely manner.” Because the fire was under the car and in the engine compartment, it
could not be completely put out. Mr. Carter cut the unconscious driver’s seatbelt with his knife, and then, he said, “We basically had to drag him out of the car.” Shortly after the man was pulled out of the car, it was engulfed in flames. Mr. Carter, who has been a firefighter for 18 years, said that what he did was “not a big deal.” Mr. Carter had to perform one more duty after saving the man’s life. The firefighters he works with have an unwritten rule: Any firefighter who gets his name or photograph in the newspaper has to buy ice cream for everybody. (123)

“I Think God Helped Me Because There’s No Way […] that Someone Could have Lifted Those Sisters with a Broken Collarbone and that Fire and Not Felt It”

On 2 June 2013, a van driven by 39-year-old Kian Cleefman, was involved in a two-vehicle collision in Frankfort, Indiana. (According to the Clinton County sheriff’s office, the other driver crossed the center line and died at the crash site.) Kian’s car, which contained her five children, caught fire. Kaleb Siebert, age 13, suffered a broken collarbone, but he carried his six-year-old and three-year-old sisters out of the van. He said, “I didn’t feel the impact. I didn’t feel the airbag. I just felt my mom shaking me and saying, ‘Get out of the car.’ I don’t think it was me that got my sisters out of there. I think God helped me because there’s no way […] that someone could have lifted those sisters with a broken collarbone and that fire and not felt it.” One of his sisters suffered a fracture and dislocated shoulder, and his mother suffered burns. Their aunt, Hanna Esteban, said, “It’s definitely a miracle, especially after seeing the pictures, it became real. Like wow, my family was in there. Thank you, lord, for your protection.” (124)

“I Think It was Something Anybody Should Have Done. I’m Just Happy the Girl is OK”
In December 2012, Paige Jackson, a seventh-grader at North Whidbey Middle School on Whidbey Island, Washington, saw a student who was injured when a pickup truck struck her while she was in a crosswalk on Whidbey Avenue. Paige ran to the student and comforted her until emergency helpers arrived. The truck driver stopped and also stayed with the injured girl. Paige put her jacket over the injured girl, held her hand, and talked to her. Paige said, “I just wanted to keep her talking and not lose consciousness.” She also asked a student to dial 911. In March 2013, the Islands Chapter of the American Red Cross gave Paige a Youth Hero award. North Whidbey Middle School Principal Bill Weinsheimer nominated Paige for the Red Cross honor. Before making the nomination, he talked to the first responders. Principal Weinsheimer said, “They took notice and were really impressed by Paige’s composure and ability to do the right thing.” Paige said, “I think it was something anybody should have done. I’m just happy the girl is OK.” (125)

“I was Just Actually Telling My Son a Bible Story on the Way Home from My Mom’s. I Said This is a Perfect Example of Kind of Practicing What You Preach”

On 24 March 2013, Nathan Flege needed some help after running into trouble while driving his small sports car east on Interstate 275 in a snowstorm to his home in West Chester, Ohio. Mr. Flege said, “I was in the center lane and just driving along, and it spun around on me when I came over this overpass. Ended up in the ditch, tried to get it out, got it stuck in the mud. Nothing really happened, didn’t hit anybody.” Colerain Township Police Officer Jamie Pinley quickly showed up and so did Colerain Township resident Angelo Keeling. Both are Good Samaritans. Mr. Keeling said, “I was just actually telling my son a Bible story on the way home from my mom’s. I said this is a perfect example of kind of practicing what you preach, so to speak, so I just
pulled over and asked him if he needed some help.” Mr. Flege did. Mr. Keeling attached one end of a strap to Mr. Flege’s car and the other end to his own vehicle, and Officer Pinley got behind Mr. Flege’s car and pushed. It worked. Mr. Flege’s car quickly reached solid pavement. Mr. Keeling said, “I’m glad we got him out. It makes the trip worth it to be successful.” Mr. Flege, whose car was undamaged, said that he is tired of winter weather: “I’m ready for some palm trees and some sunshine.” (126)

“*It was So Horrific. I Never Witnessed Anything like That. It was Straight Out of the Movies*”

On Sunday, 17 March 2013, an accident resulted in two cars catching on fire and shutting down the eastbound lanes of the 134 in Pasadena, California. One car rolled over several times, and emergency workers took four people to Huntington Memorial Hospital for treatment of trauma. Good Samaritan and witness Bobby Navarrette said, “I saw an officer pulling some guy out of one of the cars. The driver in the other car, she didn’t get out, so I ran over there. The car had caught on fire. I heard the driver screaming, ‘Help me! Help me!’ so a couple of us just tried to open the door, but we couldn’t. We bent it back far enough to be able to reach in and grab people.” Mr. Navarette added, “Someone broke a window. The driver was still in there with her seat belt on. I ran to the other side of the car, the smoke was so bad. You couldn’t see anything. I jumped in the car and tried to reach for the seat belt.” He got the driver out, and he helped a passenger in the other car: “I ran to the back window, and saw the passenger was conscious. I just reached my hand in and said, ‘Come to me, I’ll pull you out.’” Afterward, he said about the accident, “It was so horrific. I never witnessed anything like that. It was straight out of the movies.” (127)

“Do Unto Others as You Would Have Them Do Unto
In “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you …,” an online review of the free eBook *The Kindest People: Be Excellent to Each Other* (Volume 2), Anonymous wrote on 15 May 2013, “Driving home early one morning, on a dark, deserted country road, my sister just happened to notice that a car had driven off an embankment up ahead. Without any thought to her own safety, she pulled over, got out of her car, and proceeded to climb down the hill to check on the situation. Thank God she did! The driver was unconscious and bleeding profusely from a head wound. She took off her sweatshirt, used it to staunch the flow of blood, called 911, and waited with the man until the paramedics arrived. Though she never found out if he survived that awful crash, I know he knew, somehow, that someone was with him during those most critical moments.” (128)

“I Couldn’t Get the Doors Open in the Car. Luckily, the Two Windows on the Passenger Side were Open. I had the Girls Unbuckle and Come Out to Me”

On 28 May 2013, a 66-year-old grandmother driving a car that held her two granddaughters, ages six and nine, lost control of the car on a hill. It crashed through a brick wall and ended up in a swimming pool in Yorba Linda, California. Neighbor Anita Campbell heard the accident and the crying of children, and she came to the rescue. Ms. Campbell said, “I couldn’t get the doors open in the car. Luckily, the two windows on the passenger side were open. I had the girls unbuckle and come out to me.” She also got the grandmother out through a window. Ms. Campbell said, “It was just timing. I just felt I needed to get them out of the car as fast as I could.” The grandmother and her two grandchildren were taken to the hospital; they were reported to be in stable condition. A crane removed the car
from the swimming pool. (129)

**Nick Ferrebee: Lifeguard and Superhero**

On 11 June 2013, Reddit user Royalbailey wrote about Nick, a lifeguard who saved Royalbailey’s little girl’s life. Royalbailey’s little girl almost drowned, and Nick gave her CPR. Royalbailey wrote about his little girl and Nick, “She says he’s a superhero. He is!!” The little girl was blue when Nick pulled her out of the water and started giving her CPR. Royalbailey wrote, “I think it’s pretty impressive for an 18 year old watching 15 kids in a pool to get that done.” Reddit is careful to preserve users’ privacy, as well as the privacy of people being written about on Reddit. However, the complete story with full names appeared in an article in *The Columbus Packet*, a local newspaper in Columbus, Mississippi. Royalbailey is Colin Krieger, publisher of *The Columbus Packet*, the little girl (the second born of three daughters) is three-year-old Katie, and the superhero lifeguard is Nick Ferrebee. In early June, the Kreiger family went swimming at the old country club, and Mr. Krieger saw his oldest daughter — six-year-old Allison — talking to the lifeguard, who asked her about Katie — who had given her floatie to someone else — and whether she could swim underwater. Allison then came running to her father, screaming about Katie. Meanwhile, the lifeguard — Nick — got Katie out of the pool. Mr. Krieger wrote, “Her eyes were rolled back in her head, her legs and face were blue, and she didn’t move an inch. Terror. There’s no other word to describe the moment. People who saw the whole thing said she wasn’t under for more than 30 seconds, but she had turned blue.” Nick started chest compressions with Mr. and Mrs. Krieger by him. Mr. Krieger wrote, “The official report says it was about a minute, but I’m going to go ahead and say it was a lifetime before my baby coughed for the first time. The lifeguard kept doing the compressions until she threw up on her own. He quickly sat
her up and handed her to my wife, who enveloped both Katie and her hero at once.” Katie cried — because she wanted to go back into the water. Instead, she was taken to Baptist Memorial Hospital for observation and stayed there overnight. She is fine. Mr. Krieger wrote, “I ask that anyone who knows Nick or his family, please give them a hug and do whatever you can to help him.” (130)

“If I Would have had My Wedding Dress on, That’s What I Would have been in the Water In”

On 29 June 2013, Becki Salmon, age 30, and Matt Werner, age 33, were having their engagement photographs taken on the banks of the Wissahickon Creek in Fairmount Park in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Ms. Salmon said, “It was hot, it was humid, and it was awful in the sun.” But it was fortunate that they were there because a five-year-old boy stepped into the water and went under. Ms. Salmon said, “He was obviously struggling to get back to the surface. His head went back. He was bobbing up and down. I knew he was going under.” Fully clothed, Ms. Salmon, who is a trained lifeguard and paramedic in Montgomery County, jumped into the water. She said, “If I would have had my wedding dress on, that’s what I would have been in the water in.” Wyndmoor, Montgomery County, photographer Ken Beerger, who took photographs of the rescue, remembered, “Matt said, ‘We got to get him!’ and I turn to my right and Becki, she was out of her sandals, she’s doing the dive right into the water.” Ms. Salmon said, “It was almost over my head where we were. I had to swim to him. I grabbed him. I pulled him up into me, pushed him over my shoulder and immediately started smacking so he started throwing up water.” Mr. Werner said about Ms. Salmon, “She has been very humble through this process, and she hasn’t wanted to take the credit she deserves. But she definitely deserves the recognition.” Ms. Salmon said, “Once you’re an EMT for a while, you’re in emergency
services, you don’t think — you react, it’s what you’re trained to do.” The boy, who was visiting from Maryland with his mother, is safe. His mother, who went into the water after her son, is thankful. (131)

“She was Really Flailing About. It was like Taking a Beach Lifeguard Award Exam!”

On 15 June 2013, Iona Steen, a 28-year-old vacationer from Brighton, Sussex, England, nearly drowned in the sea off St. Agnes, Cornwall, England. Off-duty Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service firefighter and long-time member of St. Agnes Surf Lifesaving Club Howard Davey, age 44, heard her calls for help and swam to her and told her that he was going to help her. Ms. Steen, who had been surfing for two hours and who then took a break before getting back into the water, said, “With hindsight I was very tired and I just kept being pushed under the water and I got very distressed.” Mr. Davey said, “She was really flailing about. It was like taking a Beach Lifeguard Award exam! She jumped on top of me, and I had to reassure her and encourage her to kick her legs. I protected her as several waves broke over the top of us and then Royal National Lifeboat Institution lifeguard Dan Stirling joined us on a rescue board. It was then Iona became very limp and Dan carried her out from the water. For me it was a classic case of being in the right place at the right time.” Ms. Steen said about Mr. Davey, “He took over when he reached me. I was pretty dazed, but he was really great and I felt very safe. In fact, everyone was brilliant and I was very impressed with the whole team from Howard to Dan and all the others who helped me, including the paramedics and hospital staff.” Dickon Berriman, RNLI Lifeguard Manager, said, “It’s really important that people keep an eye on each other in the water because you never know when someone is going to start struggling. Howard was able to help Iona immediately and look after her until RNLI
lifeguard Dan Stirling arrived on the scene. Clearly teamwork ensured she was assisted safely to shore.” Cornwall Council cabinet member for homes and communities Geoff Brown said, “This is an excellent example of someone using their skills and training to save a life and Howard’s prompt and decisive actions are to be commended. Working with the duty RNLI lifeguard, they responded to the emergency with great professionalism, and we are all delighted that Iona has made a full recovery. This incident also serves as a timely reminder of the power of the sea and the need to take care in the water at all times.” (132)

“I Love You Aussies. I’m Never Going To Bag You Guys Ever Again”

In April 2013, a South African man named Brett Archibald went overboard and spent 27 hours in Indonesian waters, 19 kilometres from the Mentawai Islands, which are off the west coast of Sumatra. Authorities told his wife that he had been lost at sea, but some Australian surfers and the captain and crew of the Sydney-owned charter boat Barrenjoey saw and rescued him. Perth, Australia, lawyer Colin Chenu and his friends, who were celebrating their friend Simon Carlin’s 50th birthday as they too took a surfing vacation, saw in the water “a red head and a white arm wavin’.” They swam to the man and brought him on board. Mr. Archibald said, “I love you Aussies. I’m never going to bag you guys ever again.” (“Bag” is slang for “make fun of.”) Mr. Chenu, age 49, said, “It was a feeling of sheer elation — when we dragged him onto the boat, we were all pumping the air, screaming. He was a pretty tough bugger — a surfer and mountain biker, and he told us he had been treading water the whole time in rough seas. He said he’d been seasick the night before and vomited so much he blacked out and fell overboard from his boat, the Nagalout. He said he woke up in the water and saw his boat sailing into the distance.” Mr.
Chenu and his friends were sailing back to Australia when the crew received news that a man had been lost at sea. Tony Eltherington, the skipper of the Barrenjoey, began a search-and-rescue effort. Mr. Chenu said, “Eltherington got the co-ordinates of where the man supposedly fell overboard and insisted we mount a search. We headed out in terrible weather in a small 25-foot boat and spent about four hours looking, but we were forced to turn back before dark. It was blowing 20 knots, there were so many peaks and troughs and we thought, ‘This poor bastard is out in this?’” The next day, the weather was much better. Mr. Chenu said, “About 4 a.m. the next day — 24 hours after Archibald had gone overboard — the skipper wanted to give it one last try and told us we’d be at the spot by daybreak.” At 7:15 a.m., one of the crew yelled, “There he is!” Among the Aussies was a specialist neurologist, who examined Mr. Archibald, who ate and rehydrated himself and then called his wife. Mr. Chenu said, “The one saving grace was that the water is warm. If this had happened in Australian waters, he would never have survived.” (133)

“He Dove Right in, Tennis Shoes and Jeans, T-Shirt and All — Got Him and Started Calling for Help”

On 6 June 2013, a three-year-old boy who was walking with his aunt fell into a canal in Fresno, California. The aunt called for help, and a man known only as Miguel responded. Laura Haney, a witness, said, “He dove right in, tennis shoes and jeans, T-shirt and all — got him and started calling for help.” Miguel gave the boy CPR. The boy revived, and paramedics took him to a hospital. Miguel, a hero, left before reporters could interview him. (134)

“Thank Goodness, Thank God, I Got Her!”

In May 2013 on the shore of Aliso Beach Park in Laguna Beach, California, Patrick Watson, age 46, and his son
Danny, age 18, went to the beach to go skimboarding. They ended up searching for a little girl who had just been pulled from her mother’s arms by high waves. Patrick said, “It was just complete turmoil,” but he found the little girl. He said, “At that moment, when I grabbed her, I pulled her in like a football. I was like, ‘Thank goodness, thank God, I got her!’ So I was able to push off the bottom with one foot and get her above water.” The baby’s mother saw the rescue and ran toward Patrick and her little girl, screaming, “My baby!” Patrick said, “When she [the little girl] made the first sound, when she coughed out the water, started screaming, that was just an unbelievably wonderful sound.” He added, “I was so thankful to hear that sound. The Lord was there with us.” He added that the mother “was shaking, pretty much hysterical.” This was not Patrick’s first rescue at Aliso Beach Park. Ten years ago, he saved the life of an exhausted swimmer. (135)

**49 Years Later, She Thanks Her Rescuer**

In 1964, Eady Rothstein, age five, fell into a pool at a club near Lido Beach on Long Island, New York. In 2013, she remembered, “I can picture being underwater, screaming.” Larry Brickman, a 21-year-old medical student, was working as a lifeguard to pay for school. He rescued her and gave her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation for several minutes. In 2013, he said, “If no one was there to do this, I’m afraid she would have succumbed.” In 2013, Ms. Rothstein said, “I’ve always said I wanted to thank him, and I should do it.” She had found an article about her rescue in a family scrapbook and decided to look up her rescuer. A search on Google gave her the contact information she needed. She said, “I got his phone number. I got his answering machine, and I left a message.” Dr. Brickman — he is an MD in Boca Raton, Florida — said, “My final words to her when I hung up that day, after I called her back, were, ‘You know, I guess we just got very
lucky, you and I both.’” Ms. Rothstein said, “I owe [him] my life, and it’s a very nice feeling to finally be able to say, ‘Thank you.’” (136)

**Teenage Invincibility**

On 9 April 2013, the Smith family heard a woman screaming as they rested at the top of the Mist Trail at Yosemite National Park in California and watched the Merced River go over Vernal Fall: “Save my baby! Somebody save my baby!” A nine-year-old boy was in the water and heading toward the 317-foot waterfall. Melissa Smith of South San Jose said, “When I heard the scream and saw the boy, I thought, ‘Oh, no. Oh, my God, no. Then I blinked and saw [my son] going after him.” The fall is dangerous, and many people have drowned there: Some people have drowned while trying to rescue another person who had fallen in. Yosemite park ranger Kari Cobb said, “Nobody has ever survived going over the fall.” She added, “It is very common that rescuers will drown when they are trying to rescue the initial person who went in. And in a situation with rushing water, it’s extremely dangerous for everyone.” Melissa’s son, 16-year-old Alec, however, jumped over the protective barrier and went to the water. Holding onto a rock, he reached out and grabbed the nine-year-old boy. Alec said, “I got half my body in the water and kept the other half out. I grabbed the kid, and got a good hold, but I could feel him slipping a little bit, but then his dad grabbed me.” Alec’s father, Justin, served as a backup catcher in case Alec missed. Alec’s uncle, Jerry Ramsey, an eyewitness, said about Alec, “If he’d hesitated, the kid would have been gone. If he had used bad judgment, that would have been it.” Alec’s father, Justin, said that his son had “teenage invincibility.” He added, “He didn’t realize the danger until he looked back on it, but what he did was heroic.” Alec said, “Don’t think about what could have happened. Be grateful for what did
happen.” (137)

“I Thought I was Going to Die”

On 29 December 2012, two 12-year-old boys, Will White and Sergio Schuler, rescued Vincent Shao, age 32, after he was caught in a rip current at Waihi Beach, Bay of Plenty, North Island, New Zealand. Mr. Shao, a Chinese immigrant, said, “I thought I was going to die.” He and a friend had been setting crab pots on the surf beach near Bowentown when a rip current carried him to sea after he lost his footing. He swam against the rip current and quickly grew exhausted. Will and Sergio saw Mr. Shao and heard him screaming for help. Will is a member of the Waihi Beach surf lifesaving club. The two boys swam out to Mr. Shao. Will stayed with him, while Sergio swam back to shore to get help. Mr. Shao said, “When I almost gave up, the boy gave me hope. You can see the hope there and you will try your best to survive even though you are very tired. That’s why I think the boy, Will, really helped. I want to say thank you to him. I’d say he has a bright future. He just stayed with me and told me what to do.” Sergio then swam back to Mr. Shao, and he and Will helped him reach shore. Sergio’s mother, Vivian, telephoned for an ambulance that took Mr. Shao to Tauranga Hospital. He was released after four hours. Waihi Beach surf lifesaving club captain and police sergeant Dave Litton said about the two boys, “They didn’t think twice about jumping in. And it’s not like they were there looking for trouble; they were just having a swim.” He added, “We’re [The club members are] really proud of both the boys. It’s an example of what can be achieved with even just a little bit of surf training.” (138)

“I Never Kissed So Many Coast Guard Men in My Life”

In September 2008, a father and his son survived over 15
hours of treading water without life jackets in the Atlantic Ocean. Walter Marino, age 46, and his son, 12-year-old Christopher, live in central Florida, but they were vacationing at Daytona Beach when, on 6 September 2008, Christopher got caught in a riptide and Walter went after him. Both were swept out to sea and trenched water. The two used the Buzz Lightyear catchphrase “To infinity and beyond” to determine each other’s location. The two, however, eventually were pulled apart by the ocean current and waves. Walter said, “Buzz Lightyear got us through. I’d be screaming ‘To infinity, and beyond,’ and then I would hear him, and it would get more and more distant until finally I couldn’t hear anything else.” While the two were within hearing distance of each other, Walter often would yell, “To infinity,” and Christopher would respond, “And beyond.” Walter thought that his son had drowned; he decided to attempt to keep on living for his daughter. Walter said, “That’s when I resigned myself to the fact that he was gone. I just kept thinking about her [his daughter, Angela] and how I was not going to leave her without a brother and her father in the same day — not on my watch.” At approximately 8 a.m. on 7 September 2008, a group of fishermen found and rescued Walter. A couple of hours later, the Coast Guard let him know that his son had been found and rescued. Walter was found about eight miles from shore, and Christopher was found about one mile from where Walter was found. Christopher laughed as the Coast Guard pulled him from the water. Walter said that “they pointed to the helicopter and they said, ‘You see that helicopter? It has your son on it, and he is fine.’” He added, “At that point, I was just elated and I never kissed so many Coast Guard men in my life.” Christopher has autism. Walter said about his son, “With many kids with autism, the thing that is so dangerous is that they have no concept of fear or fear of death. In this case, though, it perhaps saved him — that and the fact that water is one of
his favorite things. Whenever he goes missing or tries to run away, we can always find him near water … even at the mall if it is just near a fountain.” He added, “He was on an adventure. It was all just a day in the ocean for him. And it wasn’t until the jellyfish started to sting that he started to freak out a bit.” The two were treated for dehydration at the emergency room at Halifax Medical Center in Daytona Beach. Walter said, “It may be a while before we go back to a beach. But he still loves the water. He’s already gotten back in a pool.” (139)

“I Can’t Imagine Not Helping Someone in that Situation”

In March 2013, a 63-year-old man fell onto the tracks in a Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, subway station. Chris Knalfec, age 32, who was waiting for a train, rescued him. Mr. Knalfec said, “Out of the corner of my eye, I seen a body flail on the tracks. I can’t imagine not helping someone in that situation.” He added, “I jumped down. He was in pain. He was in agony. I knew I had about five to 10 minutes until another train. I told the guy in the booth to suspend southbound trains.” He said, “I already had a plan if a train came. I was going to roll him underneath where you stand, like underneath the ledge, or if I couldn’t, I was going to ask someone to jump down and help me roll him.” The train stopped, and firefighters arrived to help the fallen man, by whom Mr. Knafelc had stayed. South Eastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA) Police Chief Thomas Nestel said, “The line is energized which means there’s an awful lot of electricity running through that track area and a passenger who doesn’t even know that person that fell immediately runs and jumps onto the tracks to save that person. He’s a hero.” Mr. Knafelc said, “There have been people there for me when I needed somebody. And, these people I can’t pay back, so the next best thing would be to pay it forward.” (140)
EMT Dispatcher Joann Hilman-Payne Stayed on the Phone with a Stroke Victim for Almost Eight Hours Until the Stroke Victim can be Located

On 10 June 2013, Mary Thomas, a housekeeper, suffered a stroke and used her cellphone to call 911 from an apartment she had been cleaning on East 72nd Street in New York City. Her speech was badly slurred and she could not communicate well because of the stroke. Emergency Medical Technician Joann Hilman-Payne, a Fire Department New York dispatcher, stayed on the telephone and cooperated with other emergency workers for eight hours to find Ms. Thomas so she could be taken to a hospital. EMT dispatcher Hilman-Payne and her supervisor, Lieutenant Arlene Simmons, both worked hard to help the stroke victim. EMT dispatcher Hilman-Payne kept speaking to the stroke victim and trying to keep her conscious. Emergency Medical Dispatch Captain Philip Weiss wrote a letter to the FDNY asking for recognition for EMT dispatcher Hilman-Payne and her colleagues. In the letter, he wrote, “Throughout the entirety [EMT dispatcher Hilman-Payne] worked to keep the patient awake, she never lost her own composure and remained calm while attempting to elicit more information from the patient.” Lieutenant Simmons called many people with the last name of Thomas to try to find out where the stroke victim was located. She also asked the Fire Marshal’s Office for help. Emergency Medical Dispatch Captain Weiss asked both Verizon Wireless and the New York Police Department to help trace Ms. Thomas’ cellphone. Eventually, Verizon Wireless security was able to use Ms. Thomas’ cell phone signal to better locate her position. EMTs finally found Ms. Thomas in an East 72nd Street apartment and took her to the Intensive Care Unit of Lenox Hill Hospital. Emergency Medical Dispatch Captain Weiss wrote that EMT dispatcher Hilman-Payne “remained on the phone with the
patient for almost eight hours being spelled only briefly for reasons of personal necessity.” He added, “I have no doubt that without the efforts of all involved [Ms. Thomas’] outcome would not have been positive.” (141)

“It was One of Those Gut-Wrenching Phone Calls, and I Knew Right Away I Couldn’t Ignore It”

On 6 May 2013, Ashley Yasick, a 27-year-old banker in Delray Beach, Florida, checked her messages and discovered that she had received a telephone call from a male stranger who needed help. She said, “It was one of those gut-wrenching phone calls, and I knew right away I couldn’t ignore it. I called him back. Clearly he was trying to reach out to somebody.” The man, Thomas Buck, an 84-year-old living in Pennsylvania, had dialed the wrong number. According to his daughter, Leslie Notor, who lives in New Jersey, Mr. Buck had been feeling dizzy and had attempted to call his sister-in-law. According to Ms. Notor, “He said, ‘Audrey, I have fallen a couple of times and can’t get up and I’m short of breath,’ and hung up.” Ms. Yasick called the number back and reached Mr. Buck. She said, “It was a very distressing phone call. I kept asking him, ‘Where are you?’ but he couldn’t really talk. I kept saying, ‘I need you to give me more information.’ He kept telling me he was in the back room of the house.” Mr. Buck was suffering from a urinary tract infection that was poisoning his blood. Ms. Yasick used Google to look up Mr. Buck’s phone number and found an address in Norwood, Pennsylvania. She then looked up the contact information of the Norwood Police Department online and called their non-emergency number: “I said, ‘This is going to sound really weird, but there’s a man I don’t know who may need help.’ I asked if they could send someone to check on him.” Officer Tim Kearney went to the address. Officer Kearney said about Mr. Buck, “He said he was having difficulty breathing. It was a good thing that [Ms. Yasick] called.”
Officer Kearney called an ambulance that took Mr. Buck to the intensive care unit at Taylor Hospital in nearby Riley Park. Ms. Notor said, “The final diagnosis was urosepsis [a life-threatening infection of the blood]. They had to blast him with ungodly antibiotics because he had been slowly deteriorating for the last week.” She added that she asked the police department for information about Ms. Yasick: “This woman had saved our father’s life, and we really wanted to thank her.” Ms. Yasick said, “I was just following my instinct. In my gut, I knew he needed help.” (142)

“I’ve Never Seen Two Young Girls Lift a Tractor Off Anybody Before”

On 1 April 2013, Jeff Smith, age 36, nearly died as he was using his tractor to pull a stump out of the ground near McDowell Creek Park in Oregon. His foot slipped off the clutch, and suddenly he was pinned underneath the tractor, which was on his chest, making it very difficult for him to breathe. He screamed for help and said later, “I was losing more and more breath every time I screamed.” His two daughters, who were walking the family pet, a dog, heard him. Fourteen-year-old Haylee Smith, an eighth-grader at Hamilton Creek School, and Hannah Smith, a 16-year-old sophomore at Lebanon High School, ran to their father and called 911. They also lifted the 3,000-pound tractor enough that their father could move into a position where he could breathe. Mr. Smith said, “It was almost instantaneous relief.” He added, “They saved my life.” Although he could now breathe, the tractor was still pinning his arm. Some neighbors helped Mr. Smith to free his arm, and then an ambulance arrived and took Mr. Smith to the hospital, where medical personnel treated his broken left wrist and some other injuries. Hannah called her mother to tell her about the accident, and at first her mother thought that it was an April Fool’s Day joke. Haylee pulled a leg muscle
while lifting the tractor, and Hannah said that the following day, “I felt like an 80-year-old getting out of bed.” The Smith family has given the tractor a new name: Satan. Mr. Smith’s neighbors not only helped during the emergency, but they also retilled his garden and they finished pulling the stump out of the ground. Lebanon Fire paramedic Nick Tyler, who was a first responder, said, “These type of crush injuries on your chest can really prevent someone from breathing.” As a paramedic, he has known people to do extraordinary acts of heroism and strength during emergencies: “They are few and far between, especially extraordinary situations like this. But I’ve never seen two young girls lift a tractor off anybody before.” (143)

“The Set a Wonderful Example to Others to Act and Not Just Stand Around While Things Happen”

On 9 January 2013, a Garnet Valley, Delaware County, Pennsylvania woman named Lainie Mingioni and her three preteen children — Luke Mingioni, age six; Chloe, age nine; and Christian, age 11 — helped save the life of roofer Doug Till, of Wilmington, Delaware. When Mr. Till fell off the roof of a house near the Mingionis’ residence, Luke, who was outside, heard a noise. He said, “I told my mom that the guy fell off the roof and the ladder fell on top of him.” His mother, Lainie, a critical-care nurse at Crozer-Chester Medical Center in Upland, Pennsylvania, immediately ran to Mr. Till. She also told Luke to tell his big brother Christian to call 911. Christian said, “I was like, ‘Yeah, OK, Luke,’ because I didn’t believe him at first. We walked outside, and I saw my mom. I ran back up to the house and grabbed the phone and dialed 911 from inside the garage where I could see my mom.” Chloe helped by going back and forth and carrying the supplies that her mother needed from their home. She also gave Christian the information that Mr. Till was unconscious but still breathing and with a pulse so that Christian could tell the
911 dispatcher. Lainie said about Mr. Till, “He had some pretty extensive injuries. There was blood everywhere.” Mr. Till had fallen about 25 feet from the roof. A neighbor arrived to help, and quickly medics and police officers arrived. From the time Mr. Till fell to the time he arrived at Crozer-Chester Medical Center, approximately 45 minutes had passed. Lainie said, “With trauma cases, you have that golden hour. If you can get to the hospital within the first hour, your chances of recovery are that much better.” Mr. Till’s wife, Sharon, said about the Mingioni family, “They set a wonderful example to others to act and not just stand around while things happen. It really can change someone’s life. He could’ve died. A half-hour more and that could have been it.” Lainie said about her children, “They really did great. When push came to shove, they did what they had to do.” Luke said, “Number 27 in my Cub Scout book is to have an emergency plan.” Christian said, “I feel better about myself. I learned that I can do better in a bad situation.” Chloe, who had run so quickly that she had lost her boots while fetching latex gloves for her mother, stated, “I said that I did not want to have that kind of experience until I was older. It might give you a chance to see if you want to be a doctor or nurse.” Sharon said, “We feel blessed, like God was watching over us and put Lainie and the kids there. They saved his life. Lainie should be proud.”

“I Love the People of Winnipeg”

The Winnipeg Free Press (Manitoba, Canada) has a feature titled Random Acts of Kindness, which contains letters to the editor about good deeds. For example, Cheryl Panisiak wrote that she was headed to Polo Park, Winnipeg’s largest mall, when her elderly mother slipped and hit her head. Ms. Panisiak wrote, “I was not able to lift her on my own, so I started calling for help. Many people came. I love the people of Winnipeg. A man lifted her up, and she didn’t
respond well. I was worried she had broken something or suffered a major concussion. It turns out she was OK — able to respond but in pain. We were watching her face closely for any signs she was feeling ill effects, and we did not notice that a bus had pulled up nearby. The driver came over and said she could get on the bus where it was warm while we waited for the paramedics. I believe it was the driver who alerted us to the blood seeping through the back of her hood. Once we were on the bus, he gave me some paper towels to mop up the blood and told her to lie down and wait for the paramedics. He then folded up his coat for her to use as a pillow. I really thought this was above and beyond. My mother didn’t want to get blood on the coat, but he told her it wasn’t a problem. Paramedics took us to Misericordia, where she was given some tests and only needed four stitches and some recovery time. Thanks to all of you who helped — the man who helped her up and onto the bus, the driver who went above and beyond, the transit supervisor who showed such concern, the paramedics, and the couple in the waiting room at the hospital who helped her out when I had to leave to attend to someone else. May God bless all of you. I am sorry I didn’t get your names but want to thank you for helping in a scary situation and making it a little less so.” This letter was one of 18 letters about good deeds in the Random Acts of Kindness feature in the 2 March 2013 issue of the Winnipeg Free Press.

“Joe Spry, a good deed appreciated”

Note: The following article, which is reprinted word for word, is in the public domain:

FORT STEWART Ga. — It was almost 10 a.m., on June 11 as Joe Spry drove along Hase Road going to a work site as part of his job with the Department of Public Works when he saw a lady on the side of the road in physical
distress.

Instead of driving past her like he said others had already did, he stopped to offer aid to the lady.

As it turned out, the lady, Christina Juarez, who is almost eight-months pregnant, was very sick.

Spry said he saw Juarez from about four cars back kneel down on her knees next to her truck throwing up and holding her belly.

Juarez is married to Cpl. Adam Juarez, a mortarman with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Juarez had just entered post on her way to Winn Army Community Hospital for an appointment when she started to feel sick. She said it felt like she was going to black out, so she decided to pull over.

She said she tried to get someone to stop, but to no avail. She said several cars passed her without stopping before Spry finally stopped.

“It was clear to see she was under distress,” said Spry, who has been with DPW about four years. “Finally when I got up to her, I jumped out and asked her and she said, ‘No, I’m blacking out.’ I said if you can secure your vehicle, I’ll take you to the emergency room.”

Spry said it took him a couple of minutes to get her to the emergency room.

“Surprisingly, it was only one other person in the ER at the time, so they saw her rather quickly,” said Spry, who retired as a master sergeant from the Air Force after more than 20 years.
Spry said he had never done anything like that before.

“I’ve helped people change tires before, but never anything like that, this is the first situation like this I’ve encountered.”

Juarez is glad he decided to stop.

“The guy was wonderful, he stopped and cared and showed some compassion,” said Christina Juarez, a Joliet, Ill., native who is expecting the couple’s first child, a girl, in August. “I don’t think I would have made it, I couldn’t even see.”

Juarez said the combination of the heat, drinking a lot of water and the position of her baby caused her blood pressure to drop. She spent about four hours at the hospital before returning home.

Juarez said she was concerned about leaving her husband’s truck, but Spry [as]sured her that it would be Ok. She drove her husband’s truck because he took her vehicle to Savannah to get serviced.

Spry placed a note on the windshield explaining the situation in case military personnel came upon her car. He also left his phone number, which Cpl. Juarez used to call Spry’s supervisors and Spry himself to offer his gratitude.

“He said how appreciative he was,” Spry said.

Christina agreed.

“He [Adam] felt kind of bad that he couldn’t be there, he felt kind of helpless because he is always there for me,” she said.

As a result of Cpl. Juarez’s call to DPW, the word of Spry’s good deed reached the Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield Garrison Commander Col. Kevin Gregory, who presented
Spry with a garrison coin on June 20.

“That’s the attitude we’re looking for and we personified around here in garrison and we really thank you,” Gregory said as he presented the coin. “You represent all the values that we hope to emulate.”

Note: “This work, Joe Spry, a good deed appreciated, by SSG Roger RyDell Daniels, identified by DVIDS, is free of known copyright restrictions under U.S. copyright law.”

(146)

“The Victim Did Everything Right. Screaming, Hollering for Help, Ultimately Alerting Neighbors Who Came to Her Aid. These Neighbors Did a Great Job Helping the Victim”

When in April 2013 a former co-worker assaulted a 35-year-old woman in Salt Lake City, Utah, several neighbors came to her assistance. The woman ran down the street, screaming, after the man assaulted her and took her keys. Previously, she had gotten a stalking injunction against the man who assaulted her. One of the Good Samaritans who came to her aid was wielding a Samurai sword. The son of Kent Hendrix, a 47-year-old Latter-Day Saints bishop and pharmaceutical statistician and martial arts instructor, woke him up and said that a man was attacking a woman outside. Mr. Hendrix said, “I threw on some clothes and grabbed my sword.” Ever since he was 17, he has owned a 29-inch steel Samurai sword. The alleged attacker fled when he saw the sword, and Mr. Hendrix chased him. The alleged attacker dropped a Chapstick, which Mr. Hendrix picked up, then the alleged attacker got into a car and drove away. Mr. Hendrix wrote down the license plate number. He remembered, “I said. ‘Ha! I have your DNA and your license number. You are so done!’” One hour later, the alleged attacker turned himself in to the police. Mr. Hendrix said, “You train for years, and years, and years,
and all of a sudden you’re called to act — so you do.” Unified Police Lieutenant Justin Hoyal said, “The victim did everything right. Screaming, hollering for help, ultimately alerting neighbors who came to her aid. These neighbors did a great job helping the victim.” (147)

“To Know that Someone had been There — to Hold Her Hand, to Stay with Her, to Tell Her [the Child] was OK — That’s of Immense Comfort”

In the darkness of the night of 14 March 2013, William Cregg, age 44, was driving on Verplank Road in Clay, New York, when he came upon the scene of a carjacking and rape and — after one of the victims died — murder. He saw running down the road a screaming, bloody 10-year-old girl with her hands tied behind her who had just been sexually assaulted. Mr. Cregg, a high-school baseball umpire, is the father of a five-year-old girl. He stopped and told the little girl that he was a father and that she would now be safe. He gave the girl his coat, let her into his car, and called 911. Another passerby, John Harke, arrived and stopped. Mr. Harke, age 47, stayed with the girl while Mr. Cregg went over to a car to investigate. Inside the car was Liverpool librarian Lori Bresnahan, age 47, who had been stabbed many times. As he gave her first aid, Mr. Cregg told her that the girl was safe. He gave Mr. Harke his car keys and said that if the attacker were to appear again, Mr. Harke should drive away with the little girl. Ms. Bresnahan died of her wounds; police made an arrest. Onondaga County District Attorney William Fitzpatrick, who will prosecute the man the police arrested, said about Mr. Cregg and Mr. Harke, “Many people maybe would have kept on going, but these two men made a decision to get involved. They are both men of action, and they are both heroes.” Mary Holland, a cousin of Ms. Bresnahan, was grateful that someone was with Ms. Bresnahan when she died: “To know that someone had been there — to hold her hand, to stay with her, to tell her [the child] was OK — that’s of immense comfort.” (148)

**Five Stray Dogs Save 12-Year-Old Girl from Being**
Raped

On 23 June 2013, five stray dogs saved a 12-year-old girl from being raped in the barrio Costa Azuld in Argentina. She was walking to her aunt’s house around 9:30 a.m. when the attacker grabbed her and dragged her to a secluded area. She screamed when he attempted to rape her, and the five stray dogs came to her defense and bit the attacker. The girl then ran away to the house of a neighbor, who called police. (149)

“You Again? How Many Times am I Going to Have to Beat the Tar Out of You Tonight?”

A woman was working the night shift at a convenience store in France when two men who had been in a fight — one had a black eye and a split lip, and the other had a nosebleed and a swollen cheek — came in and started making lewd comments to her and otherwise harassing her. Another man came into the store and said to the two harrassers, “You again? How many times am I going to have to beat the tar out of you tonight?” The two harrassers looked at the man and immediately left the store. The female employee asked the man, “What the f*** just happened?” The man replied, “They tried to mug me about two hours ago.” (150)

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A Hero Guy and a Non-Hero Guy

Some guys are heroes; others are predators. Redditor Aphrodite_whities wrote about both kinds of guys in a Reddit thread she titled, “When I was 14, a random guy saved me from a potential kidnapping by pretending to be my boyfriend. I never got to thank him. Reddit, what random act of kindness motivated you to ‘pay it forward’?” Of course, the title is very descriptive of the event. She was 14 years old and went to a movie that started at 10 p.m.
After the movie was over, the two female friends she was with went to the restroom while she waited outside. This movie theater lacked sufficient staff so often people snuck into the theater through a side door as people left. A man did this on this night — a man she described as “an extremely large, homeless/cracked-out-looking 40+ year old black man (only relevant because I’m pale as f**k and he could not pass as my dad). He was built like a truck.” He was aggressive, he kept asking for cigarettes, and she backed into a corner as he tried to make her leave with him through the side door. Her friends came out of the women’s bathroom and did nothing. Aphrodite_whities wrote, “Understandably, they later said they were confused as to what was happening and didn’t know what to do.” A movie let out, and most people passed by her and the threatening man without doing anything. Then a group of three boys around 16 or 17 years old came out of a movie, and one of the boys mouthed to her, “Do you need help?” She nodded yes, and the boy came over to her, put his arms around her shoulders and said some things like, “Thanks for waiting, babe. You ready to go? That was a great movie, huh? I’m glad we went in the end. Who’s this guy?” The threatening man let go of Aphrodite_whities’ hand and ran. Aphrodite_whities wrote, “My guy escorted me outside, and I was in such a state of shock that I think I just hugged him and ran away to my mom who had been waiting in the parking lot. I had been so sure that no one was going to help me, not even my friends, and in such a moment of panic I was really not thinking straight enough to follow the steps I should have (i.e. yell for help). Ever since, I’ve made an effort to make sure I’m aware of my surroundings just in case someone needs help but can’t ask. Haven’t ‘saved’ anyone yet, but only time will tell! The extent of my ‘paying it forward’ is saving girls from bad situations at the bar, nothing heroic yet, but hopefully I’ll be able to help someone out when they really need it.” She
also wrote, “(I also just want to add, in case this guy is a redditor and remembers saving some girl that one time, a sincere thank you. It has haunted me since that night that I never thanked you for what you did. Thank you.)”

“It’s Tragic When You Lose Such Good People”

When police officer Daryl Raetz and firefighter Brad Harper died on 19 May 2013, that became the first day that Phoenix, Arizona, lost both a police officer and a firefighter on the same day. A hit-and-run driver hit and killed police officer Raetz, and a fellow firefighter crushed firefighter Harper between two vehicles while they were fighting a fire. Firefighter Harper died of his injuries early the following morning. Firefighter Harper, age 23, had been married five months previously, and police officer Daryl Raetz, age 29, had intended to soon attend his five-year-old daughter’s graduation from kindergarten. Vice Mayor Bill Gates said, “It is on days like this that we are reminded of the ultimate sacrifice some of our women and men make as they protect our community. It is truly a sad day when we must say goodbye to two of our finest.” Arizona Governor Jan Brewer said, “No words of mine can ease sorrow this deep for the family and friends of these two men, nor the brothers and sisters in uniform who served alongside them. But we can hold high their memory — and in so doing honor the service and sacrifice of those who daily risk their lives on behalf of ours.” Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton said, “It’s incredibly important ... that the living officers and the living firefighters see the community pull together so that they know that when they go out every day and risk their lives, they do so with the full support of the citizens of this city.” Joe Clure, a representative for the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association, said, “Obviously, everybody is distraught over it. It’s tragic when you lose such good people. The community loses; the family loses. We all lose a very valuable part of our society.” Bobby Priest, a
Phoenix firefighter and high-school friend of firefighter Brad Harper, said, “The time I knew Brad and Lena liked each other, we were at a friend’s party and we looked up on the roof and the two were slow dancing on the top of the roof. And we thought, ‘Oh, Brad and Lena like each other.’ The next couple of days they became boyfriend and girlfriend.” The two were married in December 2012. On 22 May 2013, police officer Daryl Raetz’ five-year-old daughter, Tatum Raetz, graduated from kindergarten. Hundreds of Phoenix police officers were present because her father could not be. Police officer Keith Garn said, “The purpose of us is to be here in proxy for Daryl and to let her know that we’re here for her.” Police officer James Holmes said that at first only a few police officers were going to attend Tatum’s graduation: “But the word got out that this was happening and it went viral within the department and there was absolutely no way that you could keep officers who could be here away from here. They came, even with their families.” (152)

“It’s for a Good Cause. We’re All Brothers”

Danny Hendon used to be a police officer in Detroit, Michigan, and now he is the owner of Danny’s Family Car Wash in Phoenix, Arizona. Whenever a police officer or a firefighter dies in the line of duty, the car wash holds a benefit car wash for the families of the fallen. In 2013, they had done this for the past 15 years. Mr. Hendon said, “We do this every time for officers. Their job is hard, and it’s difficult when they’re taken from their family.” Heather Hendon said, “We wanted to get involved, and we wanted to give the community an outlet to come out and participate and donate to support these families.” Volunteer Michele Webb said, “They’re young and have families and so I can relate to them. I just got finished hiking with my dog, and we decided we would stop by and help out the families of the firefighter and police officer that were killed.” On 19
May 2013, Phoenix firefighter Brad Harper and Phoenix police officer Daryl Raetz were killed in the line of duty, and on 29 May 2013, Danny’s Family Car Wash held a benefit for their families. Josh Henderson, a police deputy, said, “It’s for a good cause. We’re all brothers.” (153)

“It’s Really Something When Someone Comes Up on the Street and Then Offers to Do a Kindness for You”

Phoenix, Arizona, Police Sergeant Natalie Simonick saw a teenager walking alone at night and questioned him to find out if he was underage and therefore out after curfew. Christian Felix, however, was age 18, and so she offered him a courtesy ride to his home. Police Sergeant Simonick said, “It’s really not a safe area; there were no residential homes or businesses. It was kind of desolate out there, so I asked if he wanted a ride. He said, ‘Sure.’” She found out that he walks miles to his job at a fast-food restaurant, and miles back. Police Sergeant Simonick said, “I asked him if ever had a bicycle, ’cause that’s a little safer than walking. He said he’s never ridden a bike before.” She added, “He never had a father in his life, so he had no one to teach him.” Therefore, she decided to teach him how to ride a bicycle and to give him a bicycle. She said, “Later I talked to my husband about teaching this young man how to ride a bike and I had an extra bike at home. We brought him to the precinct and taught him how to ride the bike in a parking lot.” Christian said, “It’s really something when someone comes up on the street and then offers to do a kindness for you.” He added, “It’s great. I’ve never had an actual bike before; now I just want to ride it all the time.” Police Sergeant Simonick said, “If everybody could help just one person in the world like this, I think it would definitely be a better place to live.” (154)

“Kindness and Selflessness at Its Finest”

On 16 April 2013, Nina Sanchez of Oxnard, California,
posted on Facebook an account of a good deed by Police Officer Michael Kohr. The Minnie Mouse bike — a Christmas present — of her daughter, Bella, had been stolen. Nina filed a police report, and the following day Officer Kohr brought over a new bike for Bella. This is Ms. Sanchez’ Facebook post about the good deed: “Yesterday morning on my way to take my daughter Bella on a bike ride, to our dismay we realized her cherished Minnie Mouse bike that Santa brought her had been stolen, along with our jogging stroller. To say we were heartbroken is an understatement. Through many tears and reassuring hugs I managed to call in a police report. This afternoon I received a call from Officer Kohr that he was on his way with a brand-new Princess bike. He not only surprised her with a bike that is her favorite color featuring her favorite princess he took the time to teach her how to ride it. This is kindness and selflessness at its finest. This officer went well above his call of duty and took the time to make a little girl’s day. I cannot fully express how grateful I am. He has left such an impression in our hearts, and I am thoroughly impressed with his generosity. Thank you once again, Officer Kohr.” The Oxnard Police Department stated, “We don’t get emails/messages like this directly from community members often. Thank you, Nina Sanchez, for sharing! And, thank you, Officer Michael Kohr, for taking exceptional service to heart and going above and beyond!” (155)

“I Always Said When I Started this Career 28 Years Ago, … that if I Could Just Save One Life, I’ll be Doing My Job”

On 26 March 2013, Indiana State Police Sergeant Luke Nathalang was traveling west on I-70 turning onto I-65 South when he saw that traffic had stopped. He went onto I-65 and saw a minor two-vehicle crash. Sergeant Nathalang said, “I edged ahead to see what was going on,
and I observed a semi against a wall there on the right shoulder.” By the semi was a van with a slumped-over driver: 48-year-old Ben Lindley. Sergeant Nathalang said, “I had to check for his vitals; check to see if he was breathing. If it was a medical condition or if he got knocked out during the collision.” Mr. Lindley had had a massive heart attack. Sergeant Nathalang said, “I extracted him from the van, got him out on the street, laid him out in front of the van and started CPR. He added, “He came to several times; and then he would go out; he would gasp for air and then I would stop the CPR, check his pulse, check to see if he was breathing and then he stopped.” The truck driver, who was uninjured, helped by calling 911. Indianapolis Fire Department emergency medical personnel quickly arrived and relieved Sergeant Nathalang. Medics took the driver to Methodist Hospital. Sergeant Nathalang said, “We’re considered the first responder, so it’s mandatory for us to have first aid training.” Mr. Lindley said later, “They [Methodist Hospital physicians] said that I died, and they said you don’t get any more massive than that.” His fiancé, Joyce Hayes, said, “It’s [Mr. Lindley’s being alive] a huge miracle. It just puts things in perspective, I think. I mean, it makes you think about what’s important and what’s not.” In his 28 years of working for the Indiana State Police, this is the first time that Sergeant Nathalang has had to use CPR. He said, “I honestly believe that God put me in that location in that situation for a reason.” He added, “I always said when I started this career 28 years ago, … that if I could just save one life, I’ll be doing my job.” On 1 April 2013, shortly after he was interviewed about using CPR on Mr. Lindley, a woman flagged him down because her grandmother was on oxygen and was not able to breathe. Sergeant Nathalang saw that a valve on the woman’s oxygen tank was not working; he fixed the valve and the woman immediately felt better. The two women were able to continue their journey. An article in the Dubois County
Free Press stated, “Sergeant Natalang’s actions are representative of the everyday work the men and women of the Indiana State Police perform daily to ensure the safety of the citizens and visitors to the State of Indiana.” (156)

“What Would Help You?”

On 16 April 2013, a police officer who wishes to remain anonymous and who works for the Madison, Wisconsin, Police Department checked up on a homeless man who had no legs. The homeless man was rubbing the stump of one of his missing legs and told the police officer, “I’ll move along.” The police officer replied that he was not there to make the man move but instead he wanted to find out if the man needed anything. The homeless man had two prosthetic legs, but he stated that he had been having problems with one of his legs. The police officer asked, “What would help you?” The homeless man replied, “A wheelchair would help.” The police officer said that he would see what he could do. He began to make calls, including to an officer at the Catholic charitable Society of St. Vincent de Paul, who located a used wheelchair that the Society was willing to donate to the homeless man. The police officer took the used wheelchair to a shelter where the homeless man was staying and left it with the staff. The next day, the police officer stopped by the shelter. The homeless man was using the wheelchair, and he said, “Thank you.” (157)

Inmates Can Also be Heroes

On 24 June 2013, in Maricopa County, Arizona, an inmate attacked detention officer Rachel Harris and bit off and possibly swallowed part of her ear. Other inmates came to Ms. Harris’ assistance and pulled the attacker off her. Surveillance cameras recorded the attack and rescue. Ms. Harris told a group of Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office inmates, “I just want to say thank you to those of you who
did help me. I really don’t know if I would have came out with anything more if you guys didn’t help me, so thank you.” Ricky Shillingford and Andrew Davis were the first two inmates to help Ms. Harris. Mr. Shillingford said, “He had her in a chokehold. I saw the blood was coming from her ears.” Mr. Davis said, “I seen her on the floor, crunched over, hunched over. I snatched him off of her. He took a swing at me and went back toward her.” Ms. Harris said, “I felt him being pulled off of me, and I knew they were over there helping me.” The inmates said that Ms. Harris and her father, who is also a detention officer, treat them with respect, and so they helped her when she needed help. Mr. Davis said, “Right is right and wrong is wrong. We make mistakes to get in here, but hey, if you can correct your mistakes, why not?” Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio gave the inmate heroes a pizza party. (158)

**Beer Thief Confesses**

In May 2013, Leo and Dee Samad of Villa Hills, Kentucky, received a confession from the person who had been stealing beer from their 12-foot bar in their backyard by the in-ground swimming pool. For several years, Leo and Dee had noticed that beer — and sometimes liquor — was missing from their bar. Dee found a note outside their sliding glass backdoor. Inside the note were seven $20 bills. The note was addressed “Dear Homeowner” and signed “Villa Hills Resident.” The one-paragraph apology included these sentences: “Enclosed is a sum of cash that my friends and I owe you and your family to repay you for all of the times we have stolen from your poolside fridge/bar over the past few years. I speak on their behalf.” The well-written and well-proofread note also stated, “I hope you will accept my most sincere apology for trespassing as well as feeling entitled to take what was not mine. The amount is a rough estimate, and I realize no amount will completely satisfy the anger you may have.” In
addition, the note stated that the thief had come to “a newfound understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” Dee stated, “My husband said he [the thief] would be welcomed in our home anytime just because he’s man enough to stand up and do this.” She said that they would not call the police. She added, “People need to hear good things once in a while.” (159)

“You Cannot Imagine Our Surprise at Seeing that Purse that We Assumed would Never be Seen Again”

On 20 October 1991, a foggy day, Dana and Debbie Nance were driving from Orange County to San Francisco and decided to stop at Pismo Beach, California. They took a break and when they returned to their car they discovered that a thief had broken a window and taken Debbie’s brown Louis Vuitton purse, which contained cash and credit cards. She had placed it under her seat. They found a pay phone — this happened before the widespread use of cell phones — and Debbie called the police. Shortly afterward, a police officer — Louis Tanore — arrived. In an email, Dana wrote, “We assumed he was there to take a report. As he got out of the car, he asked if we had had a purse stolen, we replied yes. He then revealed from behind him my wife’s purse. You cannot imagine our surprise at seeing that purse that we assumed would never be seen again.” All of Debbie’s cash and credit cards were still in the purse. A Pismo Beach resident named Bob — the Nances can’t remember his last name — had seen the thief break the car windows with his handlebars, take the purse, look through it, and start riding toward downtown. Bob followed the thief in the fog, and when they came close to the Pismo Beach Police Department, Bob went in to tell the police about the theft. In an email, Dana wrote, “A radio call went out, and as luck would have it an officer about to pull out of a parking lot heard the call, just as a man on a bike with a woman’s purse hanging from his handlebars [passed] right
in front of him.” Because of Bob, the police recovered Debbie’s purse and the Nances’ trip was saved. In April 2013, the Nances wanted to contact Bob, and so Cynthia Lambert of *The Tribune* (San Luis Obispo, California) wrote an article about them. In an email, Dana wrote, “The reason I am writing this is in the hopes that Bob is still around and that he knows … we still think of him and his courage to step up and do something for a total stranger. If Bob is no longer around or with us, I want his friends and family to know.” *The Tribune* did contact Detective Louis Tanore, who since 1992 to 2013 has worked for the Santa Maria Police Department. Detective Tanore said, “I don’t remember too much about it. The only thing I remember was a guy on a bike with a purse hanging off the handlebars — that sticks out. I appreciate them [the Nances] thinking about it after all these years.” (160)

“I was Really Scared. [But] My Instinct was to Go and Help Him”

On 14 April 2013, teenager Marisa Martinez stopped a 32-year-old registered sex offender from kidnapping an eight-year-old boy in her neighborhood in Modesto, California. Marisa, age 13, said, “I was really scared. [But] my instinct was to go and help him.” The boy, whose name was not released, said, “He got me by my shirt. When I was playing basketball, [the] ball went over the fence. When I went to get it, he picked me up. So, my friends had to pull me.” Marisa said, “The dude picks him up and grabs him — I ran as fast as I can, tried to grab him, and started screaming for my mom.” She added, “I think the dude got scared, and let go of him.” Kristen Martinez, Marisa’s mother, said, “I’m really proud of her.” Police made an arrest. Modesto Police Sergeant Ivan Valencia said, “Obviously, she could have been harmed by this subject. We are pretty astonished that she did this.” Kristen said, “I think it was natural for her to try to do something to help.” Marisa said, “It goes
through my mind every day: What would have happened if I wasn’t out there?” (161)

“It’s One of Those Things that Makes You Go Home and Kiss Everyone in Your Family”

On 15 April 2013, a group of 15 active-duty soldiers from the Massachusetts National Guard started the Boston Marathon four hours early. They were dressed in full combat uniform, and they each carried a 40-pound backpack filled with Gatorade, Camelbacks of water, and first-aid and trauma kits. Their purpose was to walk the course of the marathon in honor of fallen soldiers. Because they started the marathon so early, they finished early and were near the medical tent and close to the finish line — waiting for the elite runners — when the bombs went off, killing three people and injuring nearly 200 others. Lieutenant Stephen Fiola said, “Everyone was so happy. People were cheering, there was music playing, it was almost a surreal experience. A beautiful day.” Then the bombs went off. Lieutenant Fiola said, “I did a count and told the younger soldiers to stay put. Myself and two other soldiers, my top two guys in my normal unit, crossed the street about 100 yards to the metal scaffoldings holding up the row of flags. We just absolutely annihilated the fence and pulled it back so we could see the victims underneath. The doctors and nurses from the medical tent were on the scene in under a minute. We were pulling burning debris off of people so that the medical personnel could get to them and begin triage.” The victims were taken away to get medical help, and Lieutenant Fiola and the other soldiers then guarded the blast area. Lieutenant Fiola said, “We switched to keeping the scene safe, quarantining the area and preventing people from entering. There was a guy behind me covered, just covered, in his own blood, and I started to smell some smoke. I turn around to look and he’s actually on fire, from a piece of whatever caused the
explosion. I saw the smoke coming from his pocket so I reached in and pulled it out. It was his handkerchief, on fire.” Also assisting victims was Carlos Arredondo, whose son, Lance Corporal Alexander Arredondo, had in 2004 died in action in Iraq. His other son, Brian, depressed after the death of his brother, had committed suicide. Lieutenant Fiola said, “We had some sort of an influence, at least in helping the nurses get to the wounded and helping calm people down. It’s one of those things that makes you go home and kiss everyone in your family.” (162)

“What are Your ‘Good Samaritan’ Stories?”

Redditor Beavisandbootehead asked on AskReddit, “What are your ‘good samaritan’ stories?” One of her Good Samaritan stories (posted 2011) was this: “Last night I walked up to the store and when I had been home for awhile I realised I couldn’t find my debit card. I tore the apartment apart, searched my jeans, my wallet, called the store. No one had turned in a card. Walked back in case I had dropped it along the way. No luck. I was bummed because I have to pay rent in a few days and a replacement card can take awhile. Just a few minutes ago, I get a knock on my door. I’m thinking ‘Who the hell is at my door at 11pm?’ I’m cautious about opening the door that late seeing as how I’m a girl in the city. Well, anyway, it turned out to be my neighbor with the debit card! He had found it outside (we share a landing) and tried to return it earlier but it must have been when I was walking around looking for it. Anyway, he had just gotten home from work and wanted to make sure I got it before he forgot. Made my day a whole lot better!” Almost-Famous wrote in 2011, “I forgot my debit card in the ATM machine at the bank. I got a call from the bank telling me they had it. When I got there, the girl told me a guy had walked up to the machine and had just gone ahead with what he was going to do and then noticed he wasn’t on his account. He had taken my card
and the $200 he had mistakenly gotten from my account inside and given it to one of the tellers.” Beavisandboothedd had an additional story, which she also published on AskReddit in 2011: “When I was a teenager, I was going through a gothy-punk type phase. I liked to wear skirts and pants with chains on them, lots of makeup, and crazy hair and piercings. I found a cell phone at a gas station and looked through the contacts. I called ‘Mom’ and told her I had found a cell phone; she said she’d be by in a minute to get it and told me what vehicle to look for. Well, she pulled in and when I went to the vehicle, she gave me a deer-in-headlights look and locked the door. I held up the phone and she looked so embarrassed. Anyway, she offered me 10 dollars since I had returned the phone. I refused and she was so impressed she made me take 20. It was a good day.” (163)

**Good People Live in and Around Cincinnati, Ohio**

Many good people live in and around Cincinnati, Ohio, as shown by letters to the editor sent in to and published on <Cincinnati.com>: 1) In June 2013, Amy Stewart of Covington, Ohio, noticed the staff of the Johnny Rockets restaurant doing a good deed. In a letter, she wrote, “Monday night [17 June 2013], immediately after the Reds game, the general manager of Johnny Rockets at The Banks [in Cincinnati, Ohio] went outside into the middle of an extremely congested, taxi-filled Freedom Way to assist a lost and stranded elderly couple with car trouble. They were traveling from Florida and were coming in for a funeral. The manager personally fixed their over-heating car, fed them for free and printed them directions. He did not do it to gain favor, and did so quietly without boasting. His crew were kind to them, struck up conversations and generally kept them calm. If you visit the restaurant, please tell the staff you heard about their generous hospitality.” 2) Jean Nelson of Liberty Township in Ohio, wrote,
“Thursday evening, January 31 [2013]: To the gentleman in the pick up truck who followed me from the Lakota West Freshman School [in West Chester Township, Ohio] to the entrance of my subdivision on Princeton Road — thank you, thank you, thank you! I was trying for over two hours to find a way up those icy hills in my rear-wheel drive Mustang without joining all the accidents on the road. The police told me to wait it out in the parking lot. You came to my rescue and escorted me home. I will never forget it!” 3) Lee Porter of Huntington, West Virginia, wrote in January 2013, “I wanted the opportunity to thank three wonderful men for stopping to help me get my car out of a ditch near the Home Depot and Fields Ertel Road. They were so helpful, although they couldn’t budge it and I later had to call a wrecker. One of the guys was named Josh and worked for a plumbing place. He asked me to put the car in reverse and when I did, I covered him in mud from head to toe. I am so sorry for that. I cannot remember the names of the other two men, but if you read this you will know who you are. You were all so kind and caring, and true gentlemen. I thank you so much for trying to help an old woman in her time of need. May God bless you all. I will always remember these three gentlemen from Cincinnati.” (164)

“I Wish I Could Find that Grouchy Old Fart and Tell Him” the Rest of the Story

On 10 May 2013, Ashli Maris of Imperial, Nebraska, was standing in line at the Walmart in McCook, Nebraska, when an elderly woman discovered that she had forgotten her billfold and did not have enough money to pay for all of her items. Still in her cart after she ran out of money were a package of flour tortillas, French bread, carrots, and Kleenex. Ms. Maris said, “The guy in front of me got all grumbly and impatient. People are so impatient in this world anymore.” Ms. Maris offered to pay for the elderly
woman’s remaining items, which cost $6.11, and the elderly woman accepted the kind offer; she also asked Ms. Maris her name and where she lived. Ms. Maris believes, “We’re always getting, getting, getting, and it doesn’t feel as good as giving.” However, the impatient man told her, “Who forgets their wallet? She just used you.” In June 2013, Ms. Maris received a thank-you note and $10 in the mail from the elderly woman, who thanked Ms. Maris for her “time, trouble and most of all your kindness” in helping her pay for her groceries. Ms. Maris said, “It was such an interesting experience. It made my day when I did it for her. I didn’t want to be paid back by any means.” She added, “I wish I could find that grouchy old fart and tell him” the rest of the story. (165)

“Hope This Makes Up for the Skipped-Out Bill!!”

In June 2013, Redditor coldxshivers wrote about a good deed that a friend did when a couple of high-school students skipped out on their bill at a local Denny’s. The friend noticed the students’ server starting to cry as she looked for the money that the students did not leave behind, so the friend left a $19.71 tip and this note: “Hope this makes up for the skipped-out bill!! Cheer up [happy face].” (166)

“Don’t Get Discouraged by All of the Bad. There are a Lot of Good People”

Sometimes an unkind deed is followed by a good deed. In June 2013, someone illegally dumped trash on top of unmarked Civil War-era graves in Matoaca Cemetery in Chesterfield, Virginia, but after seeing a story on TV about the illegal dumping, Dennis Aldridge, a Good Samaritan, spent about two hours cleaning up the mess. He took it to a landfill and paid the $7 fee to unload the trash there. Witness Kathy Powers said, “He was throwing stuff up in his pickup truck and wiped the place clean. When I
walked around and saw the truck piled high with debris, I was smiling from ear to ear.” Mr. Aldridge said, “Well, I came by to clean up the mess that someone left in the cemetery. If you look around, this is a pretty, little cemetery.” Ms. Powers said, “You tend to forget the good things because there are so many bad things, but when I saw that I thanked him and I thanked him and thanked him.” Mr. Aldridge said, “I never expected anyone to see me do this. I wanted to get it done and go about my business.” Ms. Powers said, “You see me grinning from ear to ear. That is what I’ve been doing all morning. It really warmed my heart.” Mr. Aldridge said, “This is a beautiful place. Take pictures — leave footprints. If you see anything along the way, pick it up.” He added, “Don’t get discouraged by all of the bad. There are a lot of good people. Somebody would have cleaned it up if I didn’t. Someone would have, knowing this community.” (167)

**Barber Dan: Good Samaritan**

In June 2013, Barber Dan marked an important anniversary. For 30 years, he had been providing free haircuts to male residents, including the father of the author of this book, of the Cedar Hill Care Center in Zanesville, Ohio. Barber Dan retired on 1 August 2013. Best wishes to Barber Dan during his retirement, and thank you for all your years of service. (168)

**Velma Miller: “A Shining Example of a Good Samaritan”**

On 31 May 2013, the Danville Register & Bee (Danville, Virginia) published a letter to the editor by Louise Miller of Dry Fork, Virginia, who walks with difficulty and who came into Danville to get her electric bill put into her name because her husband had died. This was her first time going to the utility building and she was not sure how to get to the office she needed to get to. When she parked in what she
thought was the correct spot, it started raining, and she sat in her car for half an hour before getting out and trying to find the main office. She was unable to find an entrance into the building but did find a drive-through where people in cars paid their bills. She asked the female employee there how to get to the main office and found out that getting there required some effort. Ms. Miller wrote in her letter, “By this time I was wet, upset and crying. I walk with a cane. A lady in the drive-through rolled down her window and told me to come to her car and she would drive me around to the right place. She drove me to the office and said she would go in with me to be sure I got my business done. She had a precious 2-year-old girl in the back seat. She insisted she drive me back to my car. When I got home I found she had called several times to make sure I got home OK. I want to thank Velma Miller for her kindness. She is a shining example of a Good Samaritan.”

(169)

**Terry Hardee: Good Samaritan**

On 8 June 2013, the *Smithfield Herald* (Smithfield, North Carolina) published a letter to the editor by Jeff Lengel of Smithfield, who wrote about a good deed that Terry Hardee, owner of Clayton Tire and Muffler in Clayton, North Carolina, had done for him: “This is just a quick note to tell you about my experience with a business in Clayton. On May 17, I was in dire need of a car dolly [aka tow dolly]. Something simple, but not easy to come by after hours and on a Friday. I saw one parked at Clayton Tire and Muffler and pulled in after 6 p.m., expecting the business to be closed for the day. To my surprise, the owner, Terry Hardee, was still there. I told him what I needed, and he had one around back. Come to find out the receiver ball on the hitch on my SUV was the wrong size, and the ones he had in stock would not fit. So Mr. Hardee went to his own personal truck and let me borrow his. I had
never met Mr. Hardee, as I very rarely come to Clayton. Mr. Hardee got me out of a jam by loaning a complete stranger his personal property. This speaks volumes about him as a person and a business owner. It’s very comforting to know there are people in this world who help out for the common good. Mr. Hardee is a fine example of this.” (170)

“Please Take Pity on Us!”

Redditor Spacemonkey9001 ran into some trouble in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Spacemonkey9001 got locked out of his or her car and left this note for the parking official: “Dear Parking Official: We have lost our key. We are trying to find it! Otherwise, we have to go and get another one out of town. Please take pity on us!” PCO (Parking Control Officer) Jim Walton (#4978) read Spacemonkey9001’s note and left his own note: “Driver, I sincerely hope you find your key. Consideration granted for today. June 11th, 2013. Best of luck.” Redditor Smithd685 commented, “In Albany NY, my car battery was officially dead and I was just waiting to ask the parking cop not to give me a ticket. Instead of giving me a ticket, she called her mechanic boyfriend, got me a new battery, and didn’t charge me for it. F[**]king always buy her coffee when I see her around now.” (171)

“They Don’t Expect any Kind of Kudos or Thanks or Even a Pat on the Back”

In early 2013, 93-year-old World War II veteran Robert Slack of Fort Wayne, Indiana, overexerted himself while clearing snow from his driveway and collapsed. A neighbor, Heather Eracleous, said, “We found him at the end of his driveway, not in great shape.” Firefighters helped Mr. Slack, and he survived. A few weeks later, in early March, heavy snow fell in Fort Wayne, and Ms. Eracleous worried about Mr. Slack: “When I woke up this morning and saw how much snow there was, my first
thought actually was my neighbor, and ‘Oh, my gosh, how am I going to get over there and plow him out?’” Fortunately, help arrived. She said, “A fire truck pulls up, and I thought, ‘Oh, geez, he went out and did it again.’” However, nothing had happened to Mr. Slack; instead, the same firefighters who had helped Mr. Slack before had arrived to clear the snow from his driveway. Captain Russ McCurdy said that the firefighters “knew that we got a lot of snow, knew that he [Mr. Slack] was a pretty proud guy and more than capable, but we were out and we just wanted to stop and help him.” The firefighters cleared the snow from the driveway in only ten minutes. Ms. Eracleous said about Mr. Slack, “If he had gone out to do it, it could’ve ended with the fire department showing up in a much worse capacity.” Captain McCurdy said, “I’m just glad we got there, and it wasn’t done yet. I’m glad that we were able to do it for him. We stopped and helped Mr. Slack because he’s a veteran, and I think that’s the least he deserves.” Ms. Eracleous took a photo and shared the good deed with her friends on Facebook, and the photo went viral. She said about the firefighters, “They don’t expect any kind of kudos or thanks or even a pat on the back.” Captain McCurdy said, “It’s just what we do. We just go out and help, and if we can make that connection with one or two people and make their day better, that’s really what it’s about.” (172)

Warm Fuzzies in Auckland, New Zealand

Ana Samways writes an always entertaining and almost daily column titled Sideswipe in the New Zealand Herald. Occasionally, readers send her accounts of good deeds. For example, Pauline Bennett wrote about driving in peak-hour Auckland traffic on 27 May 2013 and stopping for the lights: “The guy in the car behind got out and he came and tapped on my window. ‘Did I know I had a flat tyre?’ he asked. I turned into a local business car park [the
American phrase is “parking lot”] and was resigned to a two-hour wait for the AA [Automotive Association] to arrive, but this lovely young builder from Papakura had followed me into the car park to ask if I needed help. He changed my tyre and insisted he didn’t expect or want anything from me. I have been filled with the ‘warm fuzzies’ since.” Also, an anonymous person sent this to Ana: “Our public transport system might not be the best in the world, but Auckland definitely has the nicest bus drivers! I was walking down Esmonde Rd in the rain when a bus stopped alongside me and opened its doors (very safely, I should add; I don’t want the driver getting in trouble for not stopping at the designated bus stop!!). ‘I thought you might like to hop on here,’ said the bus driver. ‘You’re not going to make it to the bus stop in time and you wouldn’t want to wait out in this weather for long!’ So to the gentleman who drives the 820 Citybound bus, thank you. You made my day and stopped me from getting soaked!” (173)

“It Meant a Lot to Me”

“On 26 May 2013, Redditor Cammiesue posted this under the heading “It wasn’t much but it meant a lot to me” in the Randomactsofkindnes section: “I took my 2 kids to the fair today. I’ve been unemployed since February and money is tight. I told the kids that they only got to go on two rides. They decided they wanted to go on the swings. The swings were 4 tickets each and I only had 8 tickets left (it’s $1 per ticket). The ride operator told me that my 4 year old daughter was too short and I would have to ride with her. I told him I didn’t have enough tickets and escorted her out of the ride area. He smiled and said ‘come on’ and let me go on the ride with her. It’s not a lot but it made my daughter happy and that means the world to me. :)” Redditor XLK9 commented, “Little things can mean a lot. Props to the operator. He could have been an uptight prick,
but he cut you a tiny break that I’m sure not only was appreciated, but saved you the humiliation of walking away from the ride.” (174)

**Dr. Jan Meyer: Recipient and Doer of Good Deeds**

Dr. Jan Meyer of Bluff County, Minnesota, has been the recipient of a couple of impressive good deeds. She once got up early and went shopping in the Twin Cities. After shopping, as she started to drive away, a man tapped on her window and said, “You left your purse in the grocery cart!” She thanked the man, who replied, “I try to do at least one Good Samaritan act every day.” In a column for the *Bluff County Reader*, Dr. Meyer wrote, “He indicated that he had found that is just a good rule to live by, and it always makes him feel good. I was pretty impressed that someone had found a way to bring joy into his life — and certainly into others’ — in what is really a very simple and straightforward manner.” She had previously been the recipient of another good deed, also in a store’s parking lot. She was inside the store shopping when a summer storm suddenly arose. Her car was a convertible with the top down; she always tried to baby it and did not take it out of the garage when bad weather was expected. When she came out of the store and saw all the pouring rain, she was sure that the inside of her car was drenched. Fortunately, that did not happen. In her column, Dr. Meyer wrote that someone had put the top up on her car: “Some Good Samaritan had come by and taken the trouble to put it up, not an easy task on that car. Obviously the person knew what s/he was doing, because all the snaps and hooks were attached the way they should be, and it takes practice to get it right. And because it was dry inside, the person had obviously done it just before it started to rain. I decided that thoughtful individual must also have a ‘baby’ of his/her own!” How can this kind of anonymous good deed be paid back? She wrote, “The only way to ‘pay [it] back’ is to pass
it on, which I do every chance that I have. More than once, when I have spotted military personnel in uniform eating in the same restaurant as me, I have anonymously paid for their meals by making an arrangement with the wait staff. I do keep an eye out for opportunities.” (175)

“Of Course. Have a Seat”

Someone who posted anonymously on Quora.com wrote about a man who may have been homeless who came into a truck stop and asked a waitress whether 38 cents was enough to buy a cup of coffee. She replied, “Of course. Have a seat.” The real price of a cup of coffee at the truck stop was 50 cents. (176)

Happy Street Day: “Go on, Spread a Little Joy”

Zoe Green, a woman who also goes by the online name Pea Green Girl, lives in Bournemouth, England, and she writes, “From my perspective, Shelbourne Road is just another long, fairly anonymous Bournemouth street. Nothing really happens here. Other than the occasional social gathering in the corner shop, we go about our daily routines side by side and yet our paths never seem to overlap. I only really know my next door neighbour Paul and his dog Foo. I don’t know who lives opposite, or 2 houses down, which really makes for quite a sad state of affairs. So how can I make a difference? One smile at a time.” On Happy Street Day, she rose early — 5 a.m. — and decorated the street. She wrote, “I don’t intend to change the world, but I know that if you brighten one person’s day they are highly likely to brighten someone else’s. Happy Street Day took place on Monday 15th April 2013. It was my personal mission to bring some unexpected cheer to my fellow Shelbournians, encouraging them only to stop for a moment and talk to one another. This project was about inspiring people. So take my ideas and share them with your community. Go on, spread a little joy.” Pea Green Girl pasted a “Good Morning!” sign on the
bridge. She also stuck Post-Its with encouraging messages on a telephone pole, and she put balloons at a bus shelter, post-box, and telephone booth. Anthea Quay of Designtaxi.ocm wrote this about the project: “Green’s little project aimed to inspire people, and it must’ve brightened up someone else’s day — and it was her tiny step to changing the world, one smile at a time. […] If you left your house one morning and walked down the street to find it filled with lovely signs and motifs, [wouldn’t] you feel like nothing could get you down?” (177)

“What’s the Kindest Thing Someone has Ever Done For You?”

Reddit is a fantabulous source of accounts of good deeds. In May 2013, Redditor Was_That_A_Joke asked, “What’s the kindest thing someone has ever done for you?” Here are some replies: 1) Pamelabonita wrote, “A few years ago, I was in a 4 1/2 year long abusive relationship. Anyway this guy could hurt me, he did. It was the holidays and I went back to my hometown and was having a sushi dinner with my friends from high school that I’ve known forever. While we’re eating, my phone rings. It’s him, screaming at me for going out without asking his permission and accusing me of going out with guys behind his back. I tried explaining quietly to him that I was having dinner with my girlfriends from high school, but he kept screaming so loud my friends heard and became concerned. I tried to look as nonchalant as I could, with some excuse of how I felt sick and needed to go home, my eyes brimming with tears. I guess the waiter noticed when he came to refill our water, and brought me some green tea ice cream in the shape of flowers. I was confused, and told him I didn’t order dessert. He told me, ‘You’re a beautiful girl, and you look so pretty when you’re smiling and happy. I know it’s none of my business, but no one deserves to make you cry.’ I damn near started bawling at the table, but later that night I had
an epiphany that if my pain was evident to total strangers who were capable of showing more compassion than some guy who supposedly was in love with me, it was time to leave. 2) Mrs_polamalu wrote, “When I was 14 and a freshman in high school, my family became homeless. We bounced around from shelters to motels to tents, and I missed a lot of my first period Spanish class. Just before winter break one day, my Spanish teacher handed me an envelope on my way out. Inside were two $20 bills, one taped to each side. On the card, she wrote that each year, she puts all of her students’ names in a hat and picks one. That year, my name came up. I remember being so thrilled about a whole $40 and that I could do almost anything with it! I think I treated my family to dinner with it. She knew about my family’s situation and I still wonder whether it was actually random, or whether her drawing was even a thing at all. But it was, and continues to be, a very bright spot during a very dark time.” 3) Numinouscosmos wrote, “When I was a really young [person], my crazy drug-addicted mother would spend all of our food money on, you guessed it, drugs. My brother and I were very malnourished, and it was obvious to the people in the apartment building. The last apartment down the hall was occupied by two men, whom my mother referred to as ‘faggots.’ I had no idea what it meant at the time, but I do remember that those two guys would leave bags of food in front of our door in the mornings and sometimes boxes of board games and toys. I have no doubt that they probably saved my brother and I from a really awful fate. In short: Gay men saved my brother and I from starvation, even though our mother was a hateful bitch towards them.” Many other amazing stories of kindnesses can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/bww5hbj>. (178)

Pay it Forward UAE

Nadia Mashar, age 27, is originally from California, USA,
but she has long had ties to the United Arab Emirates because in 1992 her parents started a small business in Dubai. In 2012, Nadia herself began working in Dubai in the private-equity sector. A friend of her brother’s offered to help her on a personal project, and she was so impressed by his offer of help that she started a new project: Pay it Forward UAE. She has a Facebook page on which she has listed 101 good deeds. She said, “Most of those things on the list, most of us can do.” She said about her brother’s friend, “I was just touched that someone would help me. After a few days, I sat down and put it [the project] together.” She herself has done approximately one-third of the good deeds; many of them she performed in the United States. The first good deed she did in Dubai was to leave a magazine outside the apartment of a neighbor. Nadia said that she hopes that people will pay good deeds forward to someone else. She said, “If I do something for someone, I don’t want them to do that to me. You know? I want them to go and do it to someone else. The point is not to give back, because then the circle breaks; then it becomes between you and another person. It has to keep on going.” Nadia has also done such good deeds as give a toy to a child in a hospital. She said, “If you look at it from a selfish point of view, it’s little things that don’t take a lot of money or time. You get the type of excitement — or, at least, I did — more than going to the best party in town.” Visit <www.facebook.com> and search for “Pay it Forward UAE.” (179)

“This Past Week an Incident Made Me Reassess What I had been Feeling About the Sad State of the Human Race”

Lois Oleson of Eugene, Oregon, knows that good people live in her city. In an 18 March 2013 letter to the editor of The Register-Guard (Eugene, Oregon), she wrote, “This past week an incident made me reassess what I had been
feeling about the sad state of the human race. My husband and I had gone to a local store. As we came out of the store, he took a shortcut across the dirt, tripped on a piece of concrete and could not catch himself. He fell hard on the front of his body and face. He lay there with blood running down his face, unable to get up. As I was attempting to help him sit up, a car went by and a young woman called out, ‘Can I help you?’ She pulled to the curb, and ran across the street to assist him. At that same time, a gentleman came by in a truck, pulled over and called, ‘Can I help you?’ As the young lady helped me get my husband to his feet, he brought Kleenex to wipe the blood. The woman helped us to our truck, helped him in and hooked his seat belt, all the time being compassionate about what had happened. She even tried to make him feel better by saying, ‘As we grow older our balance is not as good — I know I have found that out.’ (We found out she was 35, but was trying to make him feel better.) How special to be helped by two good Samaritans. My spirit is renewed, and I have new hope for the coming generation. I am grateful to those two compassionate people.” (180)

“To Whoever the Beautiful Soul is That Put a Trash Bag Over My Open [Car] Window in the Rain”

In April 2013, Reddit user Tylahstevahn wrote a post with this heading: “To whoever the beautiful soul is that put a trash bag over my open [car] window in the rain: I offer you a very sincere thank you!” His post included a photo of the note that the anonymous Good Samaritan had left behind: “Left your window down, been there [and] thought I would help!” In his answers to some of the comments on his post (some Redditors were suspicious because the note and the garbage bag and the car were not wet), Tylahstevahn wrote about the circumstances of the good deed in more detail, “I left my car and rode the bus, so my car was sitting in the parking lot in the sun long after the
rain had stopped.” … “The window was open, so the person opened the door and then closed it on the bag leaving it hanging over the window.” … “For anyone wondering about the validity, I’ll explain a little better. The back window was left down the night before. I live in a residence hall at my university and took the bus to campus from my room, so I didn’t use my car. It rained that night into the morning and it was raining when I left at 10 am. I got back at almost 5 pm and that’s when I saw this. It had stopped raining for a while and the sun had come out, drying the note and the bag.” He also wrote that he has a Honda Civic. Redditor user ThgeInnocents, who apparently lives next door to Tylahstevahn, backed him up: “While I can assure you that OP [Opening Poster] does in fact look like a 14 year old prepubescent Ellen Degeneress, he is being honest. It rained earlier in the day when he took the bus to campus and by the time he returned mid-afternoon it was a sunny 81 degrees outside.” In an interesting comment, Reddit user SuperDiglett joked, “wow, how nice! i would have drove your car to a nice safe dry small garage and leave with $2,000 in my pocket.” (181)

“It’s So Refreshing to Have our Keiki Malama our ‘aina”

Jan Esaki, who is a counselor at Kapa’a Elementary School, and her sister-in-law were walking on a multi-use path in Kealia, a community on the island of Kauai in Hawaii, when they saw three young males cleaning a small pavilion. The three young men were Logan Noice and brothers Tiger and Lion Fugett. Ms. Esaki was so impressed by the good deed that she got permission from the three young males’ parents to make the good deed public, and then she wrote in an email to the newspaper The Garden Island (Lihue, Hawaii), “We came upon these three young men vigorously cleaning one of the small pavilions. When I asked them if anyone had asked them to do this,
Logan Noice, a student at the Chiefess Kamakahelel Middle School, said his mom suggested they clean one.” Lion and Tiger Fugett, who attend the Kapaa Elementary School, then joined him. Ms. Esaki said, “It’s so refreshing to have our keiki malama our ‘aina.” Roughly translated, this means: “It’s so refreshing to have our children who were born and raised in Hawaii take care of it.” (182)

“Dear Toyota Yaris Owner”

On 8 April 20013, Redditor Squeezymo shared a note that a Good Samaritan left on his Toyota Yaris after a pickup driver hit it and drove away without leaving contact information: “Dear Toyota Yaris owner, We saw the jack[*]ss who hit the left side of your car with his pick up truck. He was trying to park behind you but he’s an idiot. He took off without leaving his info so here is his plate #: [redacted] I hope this helps you get him. Happy Hunting! =).” Squeezymo wrote, “I appreciate the gesture of what they did more than I appreciate the usefulness of it.” By the way, actor Ben Affleck is NOT a jack[*]ss. In October 2012, he accidentally hit a parked car in Santa Monica, California. He left this note and contact information: “Hi, I knocked off your mirror! Very sorry! Will cover everything. — Ben.” (183)

“My Mom Always Told Me to Do Nice Things for Good People”

Bill Leatherman, who lives in the Huttons Lake neighborhood off Skeet Club Road in High Point, North Carolina, is observant enough to recognize when a good deed needs to be done. A former college basketball coach at Bridgewater College in Virginia, he is elderly but in good health, and many of his neighbors are elderly. He picks up his elderly neighbors’ newspapers and puts them on their porch. In April 2013, he said, “It’s nothing, really — I just pick it up and put it at their doorstep. My mom
always told me to do nice things for good people.” A couple of years ago, he saw an elderly neighbor having a difficult time picking up his paper at the end of the driveway. Mr. Leatherman said, “He almost fell over. I would hate for one of these nice people to fall and get hurt. I’m 73 myself — and I consider myself a young 73 — but when I wake up in the morning, I’m still an old stiff, so I can imagine what it would be like for some of my neighbors who are in their 80s.” Mr. Leatherman’s beagle, Shiloh, knows the route he takes to pick up the newspapers. Mr. Leatherman said, “He even knows which driveways to go up. He’s pretty smart — he knows exactly where we’re going.” Jessie Simril, one of his neighbors, said, “It’s a very kind gesture. We have several widows and elderly people in our neighborhood, and he takes care of every one of us. And he does it summer, winter, rain or snow.” Jack Parsons, Mr. Leatherman’s 82-year-old next-door neighbor, said, “He does it every day. In fact, if my paper’s not there, I have to check on Bill to make sure he’s all right.” Mr. Leatherman said, “Maybe someone will see this and do the same thing for their neighbors.” (184)

“Britain’s Kindest Security Guard”

Gareth Gore, a security guard who is employed by security firm Securitas and is stationed in Marks and Spencer in Bolton, Greater Manchester, England, helped an old-age pensioner who was suffering from dementia to locate his wife. Mr. Gore saw the pensioner wandering around outside the store in the town centre of Bolton. Mr. Gore talked to the pensioner and then looked for the pensioner’s wife in the town centre. Because he could not find her, he called the police and discovered that she had been taken to Bolton Royal Infirmary following a fall. Mr. Gore’s work shift was done, and he drove the pensioner to Bolton Royal Infirmary. He waited for an hour for the pensioner’s wife to be released, and then he drove the couple back to their car
in Bolton’s town centre. Chloe McGuirk, a senior manager at Securitas, said, “We are proud to have Gareth as one of our security officers. It takes a very genuine and compassionate person to go out of their way to assist in the way he did. I am sure this couple and their family, along with Securitas, will never forget what he did.” Mr. Gore said, “I am surprised, yet thrilled that my instinct to help has led to such an accolade. I am just happy that I was there on the day to be able to give assistance.” In April 2013, an article in the Manchester Evening News called Mr. Gore “Britain’s kindest security guard.” (185)

Good Deeds with a Twist

Reddit has a number of threads devoted to good deeds. Writing in 2012, Redditor Pinkie_Pi wrote, “While walking home at night, I saw a rather muscular black homeless guy try to catch up to me. I then sped up, and so did he, and [he] shouted at me. He eventually caught up to me and put his hand on my shoulder. I don’t think I’ve ever been that scared. Turns out, I dropped my wallet, and he was giving it back to me.” Pinkie_Pi gave the homeless guy the money she had in the wallet: about $25. By the way, Redditor Danima2011 asked, “Are you sure you didn’t accidentally sign up for the White Woman’s Workout?” This workout — developed by satiric group FunnyorDie — involves white women paying black men to hide and then scare them — “What’s up, white girl!” The white women lose weight by screaming and running away. In 2012, Gman92 wrote about another good deed with a twist: “This was actually really recently. I was standing in line at 7/11, and there were two lines and two registers. I only had the last of my change in my pockets (about 3 dollars) and my bill came to $2.73. Well, this guy in the other line at the other register sees I’m counting out change for my bill, and he goes, ‘Hey man, can you give me a nickel?’ I was reluctant because it was my last money for a few days (I’m not very well off)
but I handed him the nickel. Well, the guy behind me in my line sees that I’m counting out change, assumingly surmises that I’m poor, and goes, ‘Hey, man, I got this.’ He whips out his debit card and pays for me. I thanked him profusely and he just is all like, ‘But you gave that guy a nickel. That was really nice of you so you get something nice back.’ It was really cool and kind of reset my mood about people.” (186)

**Good People Live on Whitbey Island, Washington**

Lots of evidence exists that good people live on Whitbey Island, Washington. For example, Norene Hilden of Coupeville, Washington, wrote this letter to the editor of the *Whidbey News-Times* that appeared online on 3 July 2008: “We read so much bad news about bad people, how about good news about a good person for a change? My faith in honest and everyday people has been given a real boost by a wonderful woman named Ana Aguirre. My husband died in December, and I had looked high and low for his wallet since then and had expected to see charges on his Visa card that weren’t ours. Ana bought a pair of pants at the Navy Relief Thrift Shop and discovered the missing wallet. I received a call from her and retrieved the missing wallet, complete with IDs, Visas and a considerable amount of money. She would not take money for returning the wallet, so I wish to give her a very public thank you for being so honest, caring and thoughtful — a real lady in every sense of the word.” Also, this letter to the editor of the *Whidbey News-Times* by Tim McManus of Coupeville, Washington, appeared online on 14 December 2012: “Monday evening I stopped in Walmart to make a quick purchase. I was in a hurry, on my way home from work, thus I was careless. As I was placing my wallet back into the inside pocket of my jacket, I apparently missed the pocket and the wallet landed on the floor. Some angel-in-disguise picked up the wallet and turned it in to customer
service who returned it to me. Many, many thanks and I hope all involved have a peaceful Christmas.” Here’s a third example: This letter to the editor of the *Whidbey News-Times* by Louise Aldana, Waste Management Customer Service Representative Supervisor appeared online on 27 January 2012: “During the recent winter storm I observed what I can honestly say is probably the most amazing piece of customer service I have ever experienced. It came from ‘Cliff’ from Island Transit, and it really blew my socks off. Three of our Waste Management employees ride the Island Transit bus from the south end of the island to work each day. By mid-morning on Tuesday, Jan. 17, Island Transit announced the closure of all its routes due to worsening weather conditions, which would leave our employees stranded in Oak Harbor. Cliff from Island Transit called our office to advise that if our employees could leave right now they would be able to come and pick them up to get them home. Cliff arrived in his car to pick up our employees and drove them to the bus station in town. Cliff had another van ready and waiting to transport two of our employees down to the south end of the island. The remaining employee needed to get to Madrona Way near Coupeville and Cliff drove him all the way home to his front door. Can you believe that! Cliff truly went above and beyond for our employees, and he inspired me so much that I have introduced a new customer service award in our customer service center in his honor. It is called the ‘Today I Blew Our Customers’ Socks Off Award’ and I can only hope that we too can provide all of our customers the same amazing customer service. Thank you, Cliff, you are truly amazing!” (187)

**Paid in Full**

Sybil Shephard got into trouble after taking out a loan from Speedy Cash in Arlington, Texas. The *Denton Record-Chronicle* published an article about the trouble. Ms.
Shephard had taken out a loan for $164, in part to help a friend, but had been unable to pay off the loan. With late fees, she now owed $282, and she did not know how she would ever be able to pay it off. In March 2013, a gray-haired man driving a blue Lincoln stopped by her home, but she did not open the door because, she said, “I didn’t know who it was.” She watched as he knocked on a neighbor’s door and then came back to her door. This time, she opened the door. He showed her a copy of the newspaper article about her, and he pointed to a photograph of her in the article and asked if that she was that woman. She admitted that yes, she was the woman in the photograph, and the man gave her a receipt for the $282 debt, which he had paid in full. She said to him that she did not even know him, but he replied that that did not matter. Ms. Shepard then cried, she said — “For about 20 minutes.” (188)

**Her Most Precious Possession in the World**

Lots of Redditors do good deeds, as can be seen by looking at the subReddit “Sh[*]t Reddit Does: An Archive of Good Deeds.” For example, in December 2012 Environmentalfreak posted this account of a good deed: “Driving around for my pizza delivery job, I almost ran over an old photo album in the middle of the road. It had been hit by a few cars and it was pouring rain, but I stopped, picked it up, and turned the heaters on in my car to dry it out. I took it home and found the address online, convinced [m]y friend to come with me, and went for an adventure. It was only 6 miles away, and when we started approaching the address there were some gorgeous big houses then this house, a doublewide trailer. I knocked on the door, no answer, then repeated 3 times. As I was considering what to do in the car, an old lady tapped on the driver’s window. I opened the door and she began to ask what I was doing on her property. I produced the photo
album and she broke into tears. Her husband had passed away 6 months ago and she had nothing left of his stuff because her stepson (his son) had been taking all of the stuff out of her place and evicting her in 5 days so he could live there. 5 days and that photo album would have been thrown away again. This lady described how this was her most precious possession in the world as these were the photos of her marriage, life, children’s photos, business certificates, and so much more. The last mementos of the life she had not completely lost. We smoked cigarettes and listened to her story, it was her birthday tomorrow and this was the only gift she was going to receive. I like doing good things.” (189)

**Reddit Acts of Kindness**

In April 2013, Jackksouth asked on Reddit, “What’s a random act of kindness you did but never bothered to tell anyone about it?” Lord_Finkleroy wrote, “There was a student at my middle school who for whatever reason never had clean clothes and was thus the stinky kid of our school. He smelled like he never showered and there was an apparent lack of parental care. My mother is a teacher, so I always got to school very early. This kid rode the bus and also got to school early. One day, after witnessing him get harassed about being the smelly kid, I asked my mom if we could do something to help. She gave me the ok to offer, and from then on I would get his uniform he wore the day before, take it home and wash it for him (I think he only had two outfits). At the beginning of each week we would give him bath stuff to clean with. This went on the entire 7th and 8th grade years. I would always deliver his clothes to him early in the morning to save him any embarrassment. I hope this little act of kindness improved his life in the long run.” PeopleInMyHead wrote, “Here’s my story. I don’t know if it really counts as not telling anyone. Right after I had my first son, I had a ton of
formula that a friend gave me and I couldn’t use it because my son had stomach issues. So I went on a website where you could give away/ask for things you needed for free. A young woman that lived in the same small town that I did at the time, messaged me and said she could desperately use the formula because her boyfriend had just left her. She gave me her number and I called. She said she'd have to wait to pick it up from me until she could find a way to get closer to town. I could hear her holding back tears when I asked if it was ok if we could bring it to her. We got her address and realized she lived in a very desolate, poor part of the town. It was in a trailer in the middle of the desert, no public transportation ran anywhere close to there. So I decided we could do more. We went through the pantry, fridge, and freezer trying to find anything we could give her that we couldn’t use/needed. We ended up with 3 big bags and a laundry hamper full. When we got to her house, she invited us in. She had almost nothing in her home. No tv, one couch, and the kitchen was empty. So we had to run out to the car a few times to get it all. She was shocked that we brought her food too. She hugged me and started to cry. She said, ‘Thank you. I didn’t know how we were going to eat for the next few weeks.’ Then she made her son a bottle right away. It broke my heart cause I could tell they were both very hungry.” Some responders wrote about other people. For example, Distinctly Random wrote, “This is what my uncle did for someone that we didn’t know about until the person he did it for told us at his wake. There was a single mom who did not have a lot of money, and her son loved baseball. My uncle was at a game and so he managed to catch one of the balls that went into the stands and get it signed by one of the players. He then gave it to the mom to give to her son and she told him, ‘Oh, he’s going to love you for doing this!’ to which my uncle responded, ‘No, tell him you did it. He’ll think you’re the best mom ever.’ He
never told anyone that story and it wasn’t until that mom was at his wake that we found out. A real selfless guy, my uncle. It’s a shame he died at 50. RIP, Uncle Peter.” (190)

“I Told Her, ‘I have Y’all’s Money.’ She Said, ‘What?’ And Then She Thought I was a Crazy Person”

On 18 June 2013, Candace Scott, a 1982 Texas A&M graduate and a former middle school teacher for the College Station school district, saw something on William D. Fitch Parkway in College Station, Texas. She said, “It looked like a gallon-size baggie with a blue zipper on top. I was in the left turn lane to turn on Arrington [Road] to come home. It just barely caught my eye, and I thought it was money, then was like, ‘Nah, it’s probably a dirty diaper.’ ” Other vehicles had passed the bag — Ms. Scott saw a dump truck run over the bag — but she stopped to investigate. She said, “There were two huge bundles of hundred dollar bills wrapped in rubber bands. The bag had ripped open because of the dump truck, but other than that it was just lying there.” She added, “At first I thought it was drug money or somebody threw it. I was kind of scared when I got it until I saw the Chase label on the bag.” Ms. Scott said that she was not tempted to keep the money: “There really wasn’t [ever a thought to keep it]. I’m having a hard time making people believe that but it never even entered my mind. I wanted to get it back to the rightful owner because I could just imagine the panic somebody was in.” Ms. Scott took the money to the nearest Chase bank branch, which was not yet open, and knocked on the glass until the bank manager came. Ms. Scott said that the bank manager “thought I had been in an accident or somebody had mugged me. I told her, ‘I have y’all’s money.’ She said, ‘What?’ And then she thought I was a crazy person. I told her to stay right there while I got it. She saw it and opened that door up as fast as she could.” Ms. Scott said about the bank manager, “She told me I’m the
most honest person in the world, and I said, ‘Or the dumbest.’” Greg Hassell, a regional spokesperson for Chase, said, “We’re very grateful to Ms. Scott for stepping up, doing the right thing and returning the bag dropped by our courier service. It is that neighborly spirit that makes College Station a great place to live.” Chase officials gave Ms. Scott a $500 credit gift card. She said about finding the money, “It’s just a very strange thing — almost like something divine caused it to happen.” (191)

“In that Hot Second, I Thought, ‘Yeah, I Could Use This, But No, I Need to Give it Back’”

Nik Koyama lost a wallet containing $4,000 in cash while rushing to get to his graduation ceremony at Righetti High School in Santa Maria, California; fortunately, Mark Huerth of Orcutt, California, found it and made sure it was returned to him. Mr. Koyama said, “I was just in graduation about to walk onto the stage when I got a call from my bank and they told me that someone found your wallet.” He had placed his wallet and cell phone on top of his car and then drove away. Mr. Huerth said, “I saw a black BMW go by with something black on the roof.” He decided to follow the car and let the driver know that something was on the roof of his car. Unfortunately, he could not catch up to the driver. Fortunately, he saw something black lying on the ground: It was a wallet filled with money. Mr. Huerth said, “So I counted it, $4,000, took it over to the County Sheriff’s and turned it in.” He said he had a good reason for turning in the money: “February I had two heart attacks, and with God taking care of me that way, I figured it was a little payback, I just need to pay it back. Like I said, in that hot second, I thought, ‘Yeah, I could use this, but no, I need to give it back.’” Mr. Koyama said that he had earned the $4,000 to buy a new car after graduation. Mr. Huerth said, “I’m glad he responded, just to say thank you and that’s all I needed back. Frankly, I hope he does it for somebody else
or somebody watching this does it for somebody, anything, we live in a world with all this crazy stuff going on [and] you might as well do something nice.” Mr. Koyama said about Mr. Huerth, “At first it’s pretty simple: ‘Oh, it’s a good guy,’ but then the more it sinks in, this guy returned $4,000, and that’s just kind of hard to grasp for a kid like me.” (192)

“You Guys, There’s No Food in Here. It’s Just Money”

In the summer of 2013, Kennidi Rue (age 18), Luke Postma (age 25), and Grant Kruse (age 20) ordered take-out from a Taco Bell in Kentwood, Michigan. They drove approximately a mile away before Ms. Rue opened the bag — she did not find the chicken burritos and two soft-shell tacos with no cheese that they had ordered. She said, “I opened my bag to get my food and it ended up being three bags of money, a lot of money, and then another wad of like a ton of 20s.” She told the other two, “You guys, there’s no food in here. It’s just money.” The money added up to $3,600 in cash. Ms. Rue said, “We just sat there and said, ‘What are we supposed to do?’ At first, we were like, ‘Think about what we can do with this money,’ but we weren’t raised like that.” Mr. Postma said about their second thoughts, “But then you’re like, ‘No, someone’s going to lose their job. Let’s bring this back.’” Mr. Kruse added, “It obviously wasn’t ours. It’s not like we were losing anything by giving it back. So we just thought we’d bring it back and I don’t know, just do it the right way, I guess.” They called the police department, and a police officer escorted them back to the restaurant, where they gave the money to a manager. Mr. Rue said, “The manager started bawling and was really shaken up and said, ‘Thank you so much.’ Right there, we thought, ‘Wow, we’re so glad we did the right thing. It was obviously a big deal for her.’” The manager immediately took the money to the bank after thanking the trio, who then received the food they had
ordered. Ms. Rue said, “I don’t think that will ever happen to us ever again. [It was] the craziest thing ever, for sure.” She added, “I thought it was a candid camera joke.” (193)

“It’s Good Deeds like This that [We] Should Never Take for Granted”

Finding a lost wallet and giving it to the police is a good deed. So is writing a letter to thank the good-deed-doer. On 5 January 2012, this letter by Gabriel Colucci, a high school senior in New Milford, New Jersey, appeared on Northjersey.com: “Dear Editor: I want to thank the United Water Company employee who found my wallet and handed it in to the police in Haworth the other night. I am thankful that everything was still in there. It’s good deeds like this that [we] should never take for granted. Thank you.” (194)

Don’t Throw that Envelope Away

On 4 June 2013 in the Israeli city of Bnei Brak, a man’s wife threw an envelope away. Unfortunately, the man had put a large sum of money in the envelope, something that his wife did not know. Once the man discovered what had happened, he begged for help from the city. The mayor’s office contacted Netanel Nachum, who manages the sanitation department. Garbage collection halted, and the man, yeshiva students, and municipal workers searched large trash dumpsters for the envelope and money. Eventually, they found the entire sum of money. The man was grateful. (195)

“Someone Lost This Money. Someone Could Lose Their Job. I Better Return This Money Quick”

In May 2013, Steven Lee needed to make a deposit at Fifth Third Bank in Palatine, Illinois. The drive-through window was closed, but he saw something on the ground. Mr. Lee said, “So when I drove here, I see something on this
pathway and said, ‘Oh, what is that? It look like a block.’ And I look at it and I went up there to pick it up and I said, ‘Oh, my God, this is cash — this is cash.” Mr. Lee knew immediately that he would return the money, but first he took a photo of it to show to his friends. The amount was over $8,000. He said, “Someone lost this money. Someone could lose their job. I better return this money quick.” He gave the money to a bank teller. Garrett Larkin, Regional Manager at Fifth Third Bank, said that the tellers “knew both of those clients, so the one that brought it in they actually weren’t surprised because they figured he would do something like that. But they were very appreciative as was our client that dropped it.” The local business whose money it was did not want to talk to reporters about it. (196)

“They Came Flying Through the Back Door … Running, and Out of Breath. I Thought There was Maybe Going to be Maybe $20”

In early May 2013, Max Griffin and Jake Keslar, both of whom are Edgewood Middle School students in Wooster, Ohio, found something important while playing on the playground of the former Layton Elementary School. Max said that they “spotted [a bank] envelope by the benches … with a bunch of money.” Max’ mother, Rosy, said about the two boys, “They came flying through the back door … running, and out of breath. I thought there was maybe going to be maybe $20.” When she counted the money, however, the amount was $180. The boys joked at first that they were rich, but when Rosy Griffin asked the boys how they would feel if they had lost the money, Jake said that he would feel “sick.” Max’ father, Jeff, said, “This is just a proud moment.” After all, the boys could have simply split the money between them and not have told an adult about finding it. Jeff returned the money to the bank it had come from — a bank slip was in the envelope — and the
money’s true owner was found. Carmen Keslar, Jake’s mother, said that she and her husband, Tim, are proud of Jake because he did the right thing. Carmen said, “That’s how we raised him.” The money was returned to Wooster resident Verna Hamilton, who believes that a thief stole her purse from her car and the envelope of money must have fallen from her purse. She said, “I’m so happy. I can’t say how much it picked up my spirits.” (197)

“Easy Money is Not Good Money, You Know?”

On 20 January 2013, Rachel Castillo found a bag containing $36,000 on the Miami Beach (Florida) Golf Course, where she serves drinks. She looked through the bag and found what she called “stack after stack” of money. Ms. Castillo said, “Easy money is not good money, you know? I was really freaking out a little bit.” She also found the ID of a 76-year-old man. She did the right thing and contacted police and gave them the money. Miami Beach Police Sergeant Bobby Hernandez said about the elderly man, “He is in an assisted living facility right now. He might have a medical condition. That’s undetermined. We are in touch with the family members getting more information, but we have identified that money as his through different transactions that he made. But it’s nice that there’s people out there … $36,000 is what a lot of people make a year.” That amount of money is close to a full year’s pay for Ms. Castillo, who said, “I believe in the Bible. I’m a Christian, and the Bible says, ‘Do not steal, do not lie,’ you know, all these things, and if you do what’s right, if you live the right way, you’ll be taken care of. I believe I’ll be taken care of … if you do what’s right.” (198)

Lynne Jones: A Good Samaritan Finds $500

In January 2013, teenager Jonathan King left a doctor’s office in Vero Beach, Florida. He also left behind a wallet
filled with $500 in cash that he was going to use to pay bills. Fortunately, Lynne Jones of Treasure Coast, Florida, found the wallet and money. She said, “I saw the wallet, so I picked it up. I counted the money and said, ‘Oh, that’s a whole lot of money in there.’ So I said, ‘Oh, look, their address is Vero,’ and my son said, ‘Why don’t we take it by when we get back?’” They did exactly that. They drove to Mr. King’s address, and Ms. Jones asked, “Did you lose something?” She said, “And he just got this big smile and [said], ‘Thank you so much.’” Mr. King said, “I almost broke down crying because I was just amazed about how there are actual good people in this world.” He offered her a reward, but she declined it. (199)

“If I Lost that Amount of Money, I Would Hope Somebody Would Do the Same Thing for Me”

An unidentified female passenger found an envelope filled with $1,125 in cash on a Route 73 trackless trolley heading from Harvard Square to Belmont. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority operates the trolley. The female passenger did the right thing. She gave it to the driver of the trolley: Kevin White. He also did the right thing. He gave it to MBTA employees who found the man who had lost the money. Mr. White, age 48, said, “I just wanted to make sure whose ever it was got it back. The amount of money, it was either someone’s payment for an expense or rent or something … It’s not something to play with. I look at it this way. If I lost that amount of money, I would hope somebody would do the same thing for me. I wouldn’t want to take a meal out of somebody’s mouth or have their electricity shut off because I took the money they lost. It’s nice knowing it’s being returned to the rightful owner.” (200)

CHAPTER 5: Stories 201-250

“When I Opened the Bag, the First Thing I Saw were
These Wads and Wads of Bills”

On 10 April 2013, two Norwegian teenagers found 467,200 kroner (approximately €62,000, or US$81,500) on a seat of a train running between Oslo, Norway, and a small town in southeastern Norway. One of the teenagers, identified only as 16-year-old Bendik, a male, said, “When I opened the bag, the first thing I saw were these wads and wads of bills. My first thought was to call the police.” They found in the bag along with the money the passport of an elderly man. The two teenagers gave the money, bag, and passport to the police, and the elderly man made plans to pick up the money from the police. (201)

“That’s Too Much Money for Me to Find and Not Turn It In”

On 6 April 2013 at the Speedy Mart on E. Main Street in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Joe Ellis was collecting aluminum cans to recycle from a dumpster when he found a small plastic bag containing $3,800 and three bank deposit slips. He said that at first, “I didn’t think it was real.” Mr. Ellis is an honest man, and he took the money, which was in $100 bills, to the managers of the Speedy Mart, who then called police. Mr. Ellis said, “I turned it in to the people, the two guys that worked there [Speedy Mart], and I told them about what happened and I gave them the money and he was counting it out, the guys, and they said it was almost $4,000.” Maulik Patel, manager of the Speedy Mart, said about Mr. Ellis, “I can tell he’s a trustworthy person, you know. He’s a nice guy.” Mr. Ellis said that he was tempted to keep the money, but he decided, “That’s too much money for me to find and not turn it in.” The money’s owner, who was located, had cleaned out his car and accidentally thrown away the small plastic bag. The owner gave Mr. Ellis a reward of $400. (202)

Mr. Bismark Mensah is a Mensch (A Person of
Integrity and Honor: Someone to Admire)

In mid-October 2012, Bismark Mensah, a 32-year-old immigrant from Ghana who arrived in the United States on 8 February 2012 and who then worked at the Walmart at South 345th Street and 16th Avenue South in Federal Way, Washington, found a white envelope with $20,000 in it. He made sure that it got back to its rightful owners: Leona Wisdom and Gary Elton, a couple from Black Diamond, Washington. Ms. Wisdom said that the money was for a down payment on a house the couple was buying; they did not want to use a check because of the time it would take for the check to clear. Mr. Mensah had helped her with her two carts of merchandise, and as her car was pulling away, he found the envelope full of money. He said, “I run after them. I think somebody heard me and signaled for them to stop.” He then ran to the car and handed her the envelope and money. He said, “She was like, ‘Wow!’ Tears are coming out. She took some money and tried to reward me. I said, ‘No, no. I’m all right.’” Mr. Mensah was staying rent-free in the home of Vicki Campbell, who has travelled to Ghana, has raised children who are adults now, and knows his mother. Ms. Campbell said, “He’s a hardworking young man. I don’t like to work with people who are slackers.” Mr. Mensah said that he was not tempted to keep the $20,000: “My conscience wouldn’t allow it. I couldn’t even drive home if I did that.” Ms. Wisdom let Walmart know about Mr. Mensah’s good deed, and he won Walmart’s 2013 “Integrity in Action Award.” Jeremy Smith, who was the store manager at the time that Mr. Mensah did this very impressive good deed, said that customers regularly called the store to compliment Mr. Mensah: “Maybe they were trying to load something heavy into their vehicle. He rushed right away to help them. They were overwhelmed with his kindness and generosity.” In April 2013, Mr. Mensah had a full-time position at
Walmart at $9.19 an hour, with benefits. He worked both in the parking lot and as an inventory specialist. Mr. Mensah said, “In the parking lot, people chat, tell you their problems, you see that a person is not happy. I tell them, ‘God is in control. Everything is OK.’” (203)

“I Believe in Karma: Whatever I Do will Come Back to Me, Good or Bad”

Carol Sutor, of Bristol, Pennsylvania, found $30,000 — cash — and she gave the money back. Ms. Sutor said, “I had to give it back. I believe in karma: whatever I do will come back to me, good or bad.” She had gotten some clothing in a bag from a cousin, and she started looking through the clothing. Ms. Sutor said, “So I unwrapped the bag, and there was another bag in another bag in another bag, one of those deals, you know? So I’m thinking maybe what’s in here are important papers. So I opened up the last bag, and got a surprise.” She found envelopes containing many, many $100 bills. She said, “At first I thought, ‘Is this play money?’ Then I started looking. I said to myself, ‘No, these are real hundred dollar bills. A lot of them.’” She added that if she had kept the money, “I’d never be able to look her [Ms. Sutor’s cousin] in the eye again.” She gave the money to her cousin, Marlene Lattanzi. Ms. Sutor said, “So she took the money and left. She calls her son-in-law, whose mother the money belonged to, you know, and tells him what happened. And you know what? Ten minutes later my cousin comes back and hands me $1,000 of the money. Her son-in-law said thank-you for returning his mother’s money.” (204)

“My Eyes Just Opened Really Wide, and I was Like, ‘Oh My God, This is $1,800 Right Here’”

On 1 February 2013, Devon Gluck, a finance major at the University of Delaware, used an ATM on campus. The ATM malfunctioned and dispensed from another student’s
account $100 bills — 18 of them. Mr. Gluck said, “My eyes just opened really wide, and I was like, ‘Oh my god, this is $1,800 right here.’ It’s pretty crazy.” He said, “After a couple days of just thinking about it [and consulting his father], [I knew that] the right thing would be just to return the money. I mean, it was just eating at me at the time because it isn’t mine and I didn’t even know what to do with it.” Mr. Gluck returned the money. Marcey Zwiebel, a spokesperson for PNC Bank, said, “Honesty is always the best policy when talking about money, and keeping money that you’re not authorized to have for any amount of time is unlawful.” Mr. Gluck said, “I kind of just thought maybe I can get something good out of this. I’ll definitely feel better, and I’m looking into going into banking and finance, so I felt like this was a good opportunity to meet someone, get a good reference and do the right thing.” (205)

“In a World Full of People Looking Out for Themselves, I Wanted To Prove that There are Actually People Who Care Enough to Do the Right Thing”

Engineer David Brown lost his wallet on the side of Highway 90, near Houma, Louisiana. Fortunately, in March 2013 two Grambling State University (Louisiana) students — Alexandria Smalls and Duvar Retherford — found and returned his wallet to him. The wallet contained $378, ID, and credit cards. Mr. Retherford, a senior sociology major, said, “Once his identity was found, we had a moral obligation to locate him.” Alan Blakeney, who is director of Grambling State University’s TV Center, and the two students had been in Houma, Louisiana, filming a rodeo. On their way back to the university, Mr. Retherford saw money blowing around on the highway near Houma. Investigating, they found the wallet. Mr. Blakeney called Mr. Brown, and Mr. Blakeney, Ms. Smalls, and Mr. Retherford met him and gave him his wallet and money. Mr. Brown offered the two students a reward, which they
declined. Mr. Blakeney said, “With so many negative stories in the public realm these days, this incident is a positive statement about our students’ values and a great reflection on this institution.” Ms. Smalls, a senior mass communication major, said, “In a world full of people looking out for themselves, I wanted to prove that there are actually people who care enough to do the right thing.” Of course, in a book that has *The Kindest People* in the title, readers expect to read about Good Samaritans finding lost wallets and turning them in; unfortunately, not everyone is a Good Samaritan. In January 2013, seminary student Joseph Smith dropped his wallet at a Kohl’s department store in Fayetteville, Georgia, as he folded up a baby stroller after shopping with his wife and their new baby. Mr. Smith said, “Of course I didn’t see it, it was pouring down rain, and I was hustling to get everything in the car.” He went back to Kohl’s the next day and looked at the store’s surveillance video, which showed a Caucasian woman finding the wallet. Mr. Smith said that the woman in the video “kind of stops, looks down, picks up the wallet, then walks into the next set of doors standing in front of the entrance. She opens up the wallet and starts handing out what’s in it to her kids. There was about $100 cash and 200 to 300 dollars in gift cards.” He added, “What really gets me is I can see an adult doing it, it’s just kind of the world we live in, but when you have your two kids with you. … To set that kind of example, to say here not only is [it] ok to pick it up but let’s go through it, let’s take what’s in it, and then not even turn it in.” The video appeared on TV and on the internet. All of us should be grateful for Good Samaritans who return lost wallets. (206)

**Two “People are Awesome” Highs**

Reddit user Rude_roit lost his wallet in Brooklyn, but fortunately a Good Samaritan found it and his wife mailed it back with this note: “Hi. My husband found your wallet
on Brooklyn street. Nothing inside was touched. Hope this saves you lots of trouble. ‘Pay it forward.’ Good luck.” The wallet was mailed anonymously with no return address, and Rude_roit’s $3 was still inside the wallet. In a comment on this story, Wicked_little_critta wrote, “I lost my wallet in a bar Brooklyn once … with $200 cash, debit/credit card, ID and my train tickets home. Went back the next day not expecting anything, but somebody found and turned it in to the owner with everything inside. I was on a ‘people are awesome’ high for the rest of my trip.” (207)

“My Faith in Human Nature has been Restored — I Didn’t Expect to See the Bag Again”

On 3 May 2013, Raymond Warner, of Hamp Green Rise, Bridgwater, Somerset, England, and his family ate at a KFC restaurant. Unfortunately, they left behind a plastic bag that contained his wallet, lots of money, and some lottery tickets. Approximately 30 minutes later, he realized the bag was missing and returned to the KFC, but no one had handed the bag in. He then went to Barclays, a British provider of banking and financial services to cancel his cards — and he learned that his plastic bag and its contents were there. Mr. Warner said, “Whoever found the bag must have looked through and seen I was a Barclays customer. I’ve no idea why they decided to hand it in at Barclays rather than KFC, but I’m very grateful. My faith in human nature has been restored — I didn’t expect to see the bag again.” (208)

“This Reinforces the Idea that There are Good People in the World”

Alex Coulson, a 22-year-old entertainer who lives in Manaccan, Cornwall, England, lost his wallet during a trip to celebrate his birthday in his hometown of Manchester, England, which is approximately 350 miles away. Of course, losing his wallet caused problems and made it
difficult to celebrate his birthday. Also, he desperately needed his driving licence. Fortunately, a Good Samaritan found his wallet and anonymously mailed it — first class — to his address in Manaccan. The wallet contained bank cards and a little money — these contents were untouched. Alex said, “I wouldn’t have bet money on my wallet being returned, but this reinforces the idea that there are good people in the world.” He added, “This person went out of their way to look on my driving licence, find my address, and take my wallet down to the post office without touching any of the cash. It was as good a deed as it could have been in the situation.” (209)

Julie, Thank You

On 9 January 2007, the Bridgwater Mercury (Somerset, England) printed this letter to the editor by Pernelle Rowe of Westcroft, Churchinford, Taunton, Somerset, England:

“My heartfelt thanks to a lovely lady called Julie who found my purse in the Crescent Car Park, Taunton, on Friday, January 5. When I realised I had lost it, I retraced my steps back to the car park — all the time thinking that I would not be lucky enough for an honest person to have come across my purse before anyone else. How wrong was I? When I called into the police station to collect it, I was delighted to be told ‘you would be surprised to know just how many purses and wallets are handed in here’. Many letters appear in the Gazette thanking people for their kindness — I hope you will have the space to print mine because I am so grateful to Julie for her particular good deed.” (210)

“I Want to Thank Them from the Bottom of My Heart for Their Honesty and Integrity”

On 7 April 2013, Kathy Schumacher lost her purse while driving around her hometown — Peachtree City, Georgia — on her golf cart. Her purse contained her cell phone and
her wallet, which contained her credit cards. When she realized that she had lost her purse, she wanted to retrace her steps and try to find it. Fortunately, three teenagers had found her purse and they returned it to her. In a letter to the editor of *The Citizen* (Fayetteville, Georgia), Ms. Schumacher writes, “As I was pulling out of my driveway, three teenagers on a golf cart stopped. They had found my purse, checked my ID inside my wallet, and drove out of their way to return it to me. I failed to get their names, but I want to thank them from the bottom of my heart for their honesty and integrity. I am proud of them, and their parents for teaching their kids the right thing to do.” (211)

**Pay It Forward**

Writing in May 2012 in *The National* (Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates), Sarah Ferguson stated that “I have become more paranoid the older I get. This distrust was cemented when my bag was snatched from my arm a couple of years ago, so my faith in mankind is not terribly strong. However, some of that faith was restored when she lost her wallet and a man called her to say that he had found it and would go to her hotel to give it back to her. He kept his word. Sarah offered to send his wife flowers, but he turned her offer down and instead asked her to pray for him because he had recently had a job interview. He also asked her to pay the good deed forward. Sarah wrote, “I will endeavour to do the good deed Wallet Man requested, and hope that whomever I help does the same.” She added, “This idea to ‘pay it forward’ — the theme of the 2000 film of the same name starring Kevin Spacey — and to create a chain of good deeds and acts of selfless kindness that would eventually make the world a better place is an attractive one, but one I never imagined working in reality. We will have to wait and see.” (212)

“Oh, My God, How Could Someone Lose This Much
Money!”

In March 2013 in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, Angelise Alba, a 20-year-old West Chester University student, found a wristlet wallet containing $1,000, credit cards, and other important items in the parking lot of King of Prussia Mall. She said, “My first thought was, ‘Oh, my God, how could someone lose this much money!’ This is just so much money. Somebody’s really freakin’ out. It needed to be given back.” Ms. Alba found ID in the wallet and telephoned the wallet’s owner: Angela Mohan, of Broomall, Pennsylvania. Ms. Alba left a message on Ms. Mohan’s answering machine saying that she had found the wallet. Ms. Monan, who has an Irish accent, said, “I nearly had a heart attack when I got home and realized I lost it. I went to the mall to buy a kettle to boil water. I didn’t have one. I burned a saucepan black boiling water and nearly set fire to my apartment. I was carrying the new kettle in the bag, and I must have dropped my wallet. I went back to the mall and created a scene. Security showed me the [surveillance] tape, and you can see me on the tape with the wallet on my wrist. My life was in that wallet plus the $1,000. The police told me if the wallet shows up to be prepared that the money will not be there. I didn’t sleep all night I was so worried. That is a lot of money. Then I got the phone call from Angelise who said she found my wallet. She gave it to her mom because she had to go back to school. I picked it up the next day at her house and there it was, everything down to the last penny, the $1,000 and even a few more dollars of mine. This is amazing.” Ms. Alda and her mother, Wanda, had just eaten dinner at the Cheesecake Factory to celebrate Ms. Alda’s 20th birthday when they found the wallet. Ms. Alda said, “We were walking back to the car and I saw the wristlet in a parking spot.” Wanda said, “I didn’t see it until she pointed to it and picked it up. I’m so very proud of my daughter. It made me
feel good.” Ms. Mohan gave Ms. Alda a $100 reward.
(213)

“This City [Flint, Michigan] has So Many Good Qualities”

Shortly after learning that Flint, Michigan, had a record-breaking number of homicides in 2012 — 67 murders — columnist Blake Thorne lost his wallet. He searched for it but had no luck. In a 24 March 2013 column, he wrote, “I’d had enough. I threw in the towel and resigned [myself] to replacing my wallet. I would cancel my credit card and get another. I would stand in line at the Secretary of State. It would be a drag. Thankfully, I’d had no cash on me. After all, I figured, it’s a tough city. If I dropped my wallet somewhere, I deserved to lose it. Many people in this city have lost so much more than a wallet.” But even in a city with a record number of homicides, Good Samaritans exist. Mr. Thorne returned to his car and found a note under his windshield wiper: “FOUND BROWN WALLET … TOOK WALLET TO POST OFFICE.” The next day, Mr. Thorne went to the post office and got his wallet. He wrote in his column, “I have no idea who helped me that day. They didn’t ask for recognition, they didn’t leave their name or their contact information. They didn’t ask for a reward. In fact, they made it impossible for me to give one. They did it for no reason other than that it was the right thing to do.” Earlier, a woman had said to him, “Flint has so many good qualities, and nobody focuses on those.” At the conclusion of his column, Mr. Thorne wrote, “It’s too bad that the right thing to do often gets the least recognition. I thought about the woman I spoke with earlier in the day. I think she was right. This city has so many good qualities.” (214)

“Everyone Loves Jessica”

While walking to Tremont Elementary School in Dixon, California, Jessica Gutierrez, age seven, found a pouch that
was stuffed with hundreds of dollars. She turned in the wallet at her school, the wallet’s rightful owner was found, and the wallet’s rightful owner gave her a cash reward. Moreover, the town of Dixon decided to do something more for Jessica. On 21 March 2013, a white, stretch limousine from the Bryan-Baker Funeral Home gave her a ride to school — the Dixon Police Department gave her a “lights-flashing” escort. She got to meet Canine Officer Kevin Szmurlo and his German Shepherd, which is named Fero. Her school class ate pizza from Mary’s Pizza Shack for lunch. Cattleman’s Restaurant gave Jessica and her siblings t-shirts; they get a free meal whenever they wear the t-shirts at Cattleman’s Restaurant. Jessica got a free lifetime pass to the World’s Largest Corn Maze, and Cool Patch Pumpkins gave Jessica and her family free pumpkins for life. Cool Patch owner Mark Cooley said, “As long as we grow pumpkins, Jessica’s family members will have their names on them.” Dixon Police Chief Jon Cox said, “Jessica showed everyone that honesty really is the best policy, and that is a great lesson for the children. Actually, it’s a great lesson for everyone. We honor her good deed.” Tremont principal Adriane Laughter (pronounced “Lodder”) said, “We are so proud of Jessica. When we told her about the limo, Fero the dog, and a pizza party that will be held in her honor, our quiet little student didn’t say much. But she was grinning ear to ear.” Bryan-Baker Funeral Home has started a college fund for Jessica. Chris Donhost, Bryan-Baker manager, said, “I can’t believe how many leaders in our town have jumped on the bandwagon to help her. Everyone loves Jessica.” (215)

“It Warms Your Heart to Know There are Still Good People Out There”

On Presidents Day — 18 February 2013 — a Good Samaritan showed up at the house of Craig and Holly Cumpston in East Hempfield Township, Pennsylvania. He
was carrying a brown wallet — the one that Craig had lost on February 16. The man, John Taylor, an electrician, said, “I work for Amtrak, and I found your wallet. I wanted to deliver it myself.” Holly said, “It warms your heart to know there are still good people out there.” The wallet, which contained credit cards and important ID, also had sentimental value. Craig’s two sons — Redmond, age 17, and John, age 13 — gave him the wallet for Christmas. Craig said, “As you get older, you don’t want as many things, but I wanted a wallet. I needed a new one, and this one was brand-new.” Before he lost the wallet, February 16 had been a good day for Craig, who had spent it among friends. He realized that he had lost the wallet when he reached for it to pay the bill at a restaurant in Lancaster. Craig said, “I had such a good day, and to have such a bad thing happen is sort of devastating. If it had happened at the beginning of the day, it likely would have ruined the day.” Mr. Taylor said that by returning the wallet, he was “paying it forward.” Thirty-five years ago, when he was in college, he had lost his wallet. A stranger found it and returned it to him. Mr. Taylor had found Craig’s wallet on an Amtrak train seat. He used Google to find the Cumpstons’ address. He said, “I could tell she [Holly Cumpston] was overwhelmed when I handed her the wallet, which made me feel good. I just did it because it was the right thing to do. I spent 20 years in the Navy, so maybe that weighed into my thought process.” Craig Cumpston said, “A total stranger went out of his way … if it was reversed, I would have wanted to do the same. A lot of times in life people won’t do it. It is nice to see someone rise to the occasion.”

“**I had Just Cashed a Check for a Little Over Six Thousand Dollars**”

One of the worst times to lose your wallet is just after you cash a large check. Rebecca Mireles did just that in early
2013. She said, “I had just cashed a check for a little over six thousand dollars.” She added, “I went shopping and I was putting my stuff in the back of my car and I just left it in the front of my basket — pushed it into the car rack.” Of course, when she lost her wallet while grocery shopping at the Walmart off Loop 289 and Quaker in Lubbock, Texas, she also lost valuable papers such as her children’s birth certificates and social security cards. Ms. Mireles said that when she realized that she had lost her wallet, “Oh, my God, I freaked! I pulled over at Target and started digging through everything.” Fortunately, an unidentified Good Samaritan found her wallet and turned it in at Walmart. Ms. Mireles said, “He did not take anything — everything was still there. I am beyond blessed — God was really looking out for me.” She added about the Good Samaritan, “I would just thank him so, so much for being so honest and just turning it in without any hesitation.” (217)

“Whoever You are, May God Greatly Bless You for Your Good Deed”

On 2 March 2013, Debbie Pippin of Weaver, Alabama, left her purse at the Walmart in Jacksonville, Alabama. Fortunately, a Good Samaritan found her purse and turned it in. In a letter to the editor of the Anniston Star (Alabama), she explained, “I had just ran in to pick up a couple things, and Jacksonville Christian Academy was there doing a food drive. I was handed a flyer of items that could be donated. As I finished picking up my items, I thought I should pick up a few items for the food drive. I overheard a young girl say that we will be blessed for this — unaware at the time that I would be blessed. As I rushed out the door, handing the students my donation, I put my bags in the car and pushed my cart into the rack in the parking lot. I had not realized that I left my purse in my cart until I was pulling into my driveway. I rushed in, called Walmart and they connected me to Customer Service, and
that is when I was told that my purse had been turned in to them. I believe, but I am not sure, that they told me a retired police officer turned in my purse. But whoever you are, may God greatly bless you for your good deed.” (218)

**Lost, Found, and Returned: 390,000 Euros ($509,700)**

In December 2012, an elderly woman left a bag containing 390,000 euros ($509,700) in cash on a bus in Vienna, Austria. The bus driver, identified only as Wolfgang R, found the bag while inspecting the bus. Wolfgang R said, “At first I thought it was shopping or medicine.” However, the bag was filled with 500-euro notes. Police in Vienna found a deposit slip inside the bag that allowed them to return the money to its rightful owner. (219)

**“Finding One Million Dollars in Cash is Not an Everyday Affair”**

In November 2012, Sia Ka Tian, a 70-year-old Singaporean taxi driver, found $1.1 million in cash in his cab. He did the right thing and returned the money to its rightful owners: a vacationing couple from Thailand. Mr. Tian said, “When I saw the money, I thought, trouble is here. I was sure there was at least $200,000 in the bag.” Mr. Tian added, “The money is unimportant to me. It doesn’t belong to me, so how can I use it?” The Thai couple called the taxi company, and Mr. Tian met them and gave them their money. They gave him a cash award — the amount was not reported. Tammy Tan, spokeswoman for the transport company ComfortDelGro, for which Mr. Tian works, said, “Finding one million dollars in cash is not an everyday affair and in fact, we wonder how many people would have possibly been tempted” to keep it. She added, “We are immensely proud of him and are glad that the passengers recovered their money.” (220)

**Richard Browne: Ring Finder Extraordinaire**
Richard Browne, a member of the organization Ring Finders and a resident of South Yarmouth, Massachusetts, uses metal-detecting equipment to find lost rings in the waters of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and returns them. The Ring Finders use metal-detecting equipment to find lost rings and other metallic items. He said, “They give me a call, and I go out anywhere on the Cape and find it for them and return it to them for nothing. Two years ago, I returned 22 rings and this past year, 10.” Often, Mr. Browne goes chest deep into cold water to use his metal detector. He said that he enjoys the quest, and that it does have another benefit: “It keeps me off the streets and out of the bars.” In 1982, he began metal detecting, and from that time to mid-January 2013, he estimates that he has returned 100 class rings. He said, “I don’t accept rewards; they’re taxable. If you want to give me a gift, I’ll think about that. A thank-you note is wonderful.” He has found many missing wedding bands and engagement rings, and he may have saved one marriage that was under stress due to a lost ring.

What is the most valuable ring he has found and returned? A $20,000 diamond ring. Of course, he finds other items: soda cans, spark plugs, coins, and other forms of jewelry. Mr. Browne said that he is just “trying to find a little fortune here and there.” He added, “It’s just relaxing. I don’t like going to the gym to work out. And you get out there and it gets cold and your heart starts pumping and you dig and try not to get water down your gloves and stay dry. It’s peaceful.” By the way, on 19 June 2013, Redditor abuaf wrote, “I lost a gold ring with sapphires & diamonds at the beach in Cape Cod. I gave my contact info to neighbors & lifeguards, posted a craigslist ad, but left the beach realizing my ring would be lost forever. Within 3 days I was reunited with my ring thanks to Rick Browne, Metal detector extraordinaire.”

“I Really Hope to Meet Bill Someday. He will Surely
Get a Great Big Hug and a Thank You for His Choice that Meant So Much to Me!”

On 7 June 2013, Kathi Rakestraw of Topeka, Kansas, lost her wedding ring that she had had for almost 28 years. In tears, she told her husband and friends about the loss. A friend suggested that she call the North Topeka Walmart, where she had spent some time, and tell a manager there about the lost ring. The following day, Walmart telephoned her and left a message that an employee had found her ring. Ms. Rakestraw wanted to thank the employee, so she wrote a letter to the editor of *The Topeka Capital-Journal*. In part, she wrote, “What I know is that a man named Bill, who works in the produce section during the night, found my wedding ring in the corn. Guess I was just digging in that pile of corn for just the right ear, and the rough husks pulled the ring off my finger. It would have been so easy for Bill to pocket the ring and sell it at one of the many pawn shops in Topeka. However, Bill made the choice to turn it in. I since have learned that it will be difficult for me to meet Bill or learn more about him due to Walmart’s privacy policy that is in place to protect their employees. I really hope to meet Bill someday. He will surely get a great big hug and a thank you for his choice that meant so much to me!” (222)

“I am Really Appreciative”

In early November 2012, Alice Lynch lost her driver’s license while she was going about doing her civic duty. Fortunately, someone from zip code 24022 (Roanoke, Virginia), found it and mailed it to her. Ms. Lynch wrote in a letter to the editor of *The Roanoke Times*, “I am really appreciative.” (223)

“If I Do Something Good Now, Then When I Die Good Things Will Happen in the Next Life”
In March 2013 in New York City, taxi driver Mohammad Riyaz, a 30-year-old native of Bangladesh, returned a brand-new iPhone 5 to an IBM sales manager who lived on West 69th Street. Mr. Riyaz declined to accept a reward for returning the iPhone, which is a favorite item for thieves to steal. A new iPhone 5 sells for $650 to $850. Mr. Riyaz said, “Money is nothing to me.” He often does such good deeds as returning fares’ cellphones, iPads, and luggage. Mr. Riyaz said, “If I died today, what’s my money going to do? If I do something good now, then when I die good things will happen in the next life.” He declined to accept an $80 reward for returning the iPhone, saying, “It was more than enough to give the person what was theirs.” The sales manager’s wife asked Mr. Riyaz, “What can I do to get you to take it [the reward money]?” She said, “And the guy wouldn’t take the money.” Her husband the sales manager said, “We tried so many times and he was so nice, so so nice.” Taxi and Limousine Commissioner David Yassky said, “Well done, Mr. Riyaz! As so many taxi drivers do, he exemplifies the professionals who made New York’s taxi industry the finest in the world.” (224)

“We’re Very Proud She Decided to Do the Right Thing, and Didn’t Hesitate for a Second”

On 18 January 2013, while walking home from Beverly Hills Middle School in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, Aniyah Butler, an 11-year-old sixth-grader, found a black purse with a new iPhone inside. Aniyah saw Police Sergeant James Reif walking to nearby Bywood Elementary School, so she gave him the purse. Shortly afterward, she saw an eighth-grade girl looking for something: a lost black purse with a new iPhone inside. Aniyah told the eighth-grader that Police Sergeant Reif had her purse, and he returned the purse to its rightful owner. Police Superintendent Michael Chitwood said, “In this day and age, most people would just walk away with the phone.” Aniyah’s mother, Vanessa
Butler, said about Aniyah, “She’s very sensitive and empathetic toward others. We’re very proud she decided to do the right thing, and didn’t hesitate for a second.” (225)

Flushed Down the Toilet: One Anniversary Ring; Found: One Anniversary Ring

In May 2013, a Richmond, Virginia, woman who was visiting family in Hampton, Virginia, accidentally flushed an anniversary ring down a toilet. A professional plumbing service tried to recover the ring, but failed, so the woman called Hampton Public Works for help. Wastewater employees recovered the ring for her by setting up a debris trap and asking the family to run water into all the drains and to flush all the toilets. The owner of the ring wrote this thank-you note: “We cannot express enough gratitude to everyone who had a role in recovering this very special ring to us. It’s not only the monetary value of the ring, but also the sentimental value that could not be replaced … Please do anything and everything you can to acknowledge their dedication, honesty, and hard work.” Each of the Wastewater employees received a $25 gift card from the city for going above and beyond. (226)

“When I Think About It, I Get All Choked Up Because I Didn’t Think I Would See This Ring Again”

In March 2013, Susan Hrabliuk’s lost wedding ring was returned to her several weeks after she had lost it on a street in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The ring was a combination engagement ring, wedding band, and first anniversary ring — all of which were soldered together. She said, “I thought my ring was gone.” However, she looked at the lost-and-found ads on Kijiji (a free classifieds site). There she saw an ad for a ring found on Corydon Avenue in Winnipeg and telephoned the number given in the ad. Rhonda Friesen answered the phone, and the two women arranged for a video chat later that day. Ms.
Hrabliuk said, “I couldn’t believe it! Here she is holding up my ring. Yeah, I couldn’t believe it.” Ms. Friesen’s 13-year-old son, Noah Gagawchuk, and some friends had found the ring in a snowbank. Ms. Friesen said that one of Noah’s friends “didn’t think it was worth anything so he tossed it at Noah, and Noah looked at it and put it in his pocket and brought it home.” He told his mother, Ms. Friesen, about the ring, and they took out an ad to find its rightful owner. Ms. Hrabliuk gave Noah a $200 reward for returning the ring. She said, “When I think about it, I get all choked up because I didn’t think I would see this ring again.” (227)

**Lovely Stacey**

On 28 June 2013, Redditor Skagirl, aka Stacey, posted a photograph on Imgur of something that had made her start her workday with a smile. Skagirl had gone into a Starbucks to buy her morning iced coffee, and a female employee who worked there remembered her name and wrote on the beverage container “lovely Stacey.” (228)

**A Nice Customer**

At a grocery store in Sarasota, Florida, an employee who was stocking shelves witnessed a pregnant customer shopping. The employee wrote on the website <Notalwaysright.com>, “A customer has been browsing the same aisle for quite some time. She is visibly pregnant, and looks as though she has been crying. She’s flipping through an envelope full of coupons and scrutinizing items before putting them back on the shelf. Another customer comes down the aisle and seems to pay her close attention for a moment. The second customer leaves the aisle but then comes back a few minutes later and hesitantly walks up to the pregnant customer.” The Nice Customer said, “Excuse me. I may be way out of line, and please feel free to tell me to mind my own business if I am, but … are you
afraid you’re going to have trouble paying for your groceries?” The Pregnant Customer said, “Actually, yes I am. How did you know?” The Nice Customer said, “A few years ago, I had a really difficult pregnancy. I was too sick to work and lost my job. It was a real struggle to make ends meet. I used to spend hours at the grocery store with every coupon I could find trying to save every penny I could. Looking at you was like looking in the mirror. Listen, I just went and checked out, and I came in a little under my weekly grocery budget. I know it’s not much, but I’d really like to give this to you.” The Nice Customer gave the Pregnant Customer a $20 bill. The Pregnant Customer started to cry. The Pregnant Customer said, “You have no idea how much this means to me. My husband just left me for another woman. I have no idea how I’m going to support myself and my kid. My mother and brother died this year, and I have no one to lean on.” The Nice Customer said, “After the hard times I went through, things got a lot better for me. It may sound like a cliché, but I believe you’ll get through this and be stronger than ever. Just hang in there, okay?” The Pregnant Customer said, “Do you think maybe I could give you a hug?” The Nice Customer said, “Of course.” The employee ended her post by writing, “The two women embrace for a long time. When they pull apart, they both wipe away tears. They don’t see, but so do I.” (229)

“Sometimes It Pays Off to be a Nice Guy. It Made Me Feel Good. I Went and Bought Myself a Bouquet of Flowers!”

A teenager wanted to impress his date with a fancy French dinner on Valentine’s Day, 1997, so he took her to Le Cafe Miche in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Unfortunately, when the bill arrived, the teenager did not have enough money for the expensive dinners. While his date was in the restroom, the teenager asked to talk to the owner. He
explained to the owner that he was approximately $40 short. Fortunately, Claus Hjortkjaer, who has spent his life working in French restaurants, gave him the $40. Le Cafe Miche closed down for a while, then reopened about 15 years later, in May 2013. One of the first customers to show up was the former teenager, who gave Mr. Hjortkjaer a $100 bill: $40 plus “interest.” Mr. Hjortkjaer said, “Sometimes things come back to you. You shouldn’t do them for that specific reason. You should just do it because it’s the right time and the right place and it just felt good.” He added, “Sometimes it pays off to be a nice guy. It made me feel good. I went and bought myself a bouquet of flowers!” (230)

**Big Macs for the Homeless**

In May 2013, the Canadian ice hockey team the Ottawa Senators scored a goal in the last minute of the third period, and because of a promotion by McDonalds, every fan who presented their ticket stub at the restaurant counter would get a free Big Mac. Redditor Engjosh88 and some of his friends asked people to donate ticket stubs to them so that they could give them to some homeless people. They collected 24 ticket stubs, and some homeless people were able to chow down on Big Macs. (231)

“This Man’s Unbelievable Generosity has Taken a Huge, Huge Weight Off our Minds, and We Can’t Thank Him Enough”

A mystery Good Samaritan gave Gordon and Betty Fowle, both age 88, £24,000 to repair their home in Polgooth, St. Austell, Cornwall, England, after their insurance company, Prudential, stated that their £500 per year homeowner policy did not cover the damage to a wall that had collapsed in January 2013. The gift will prevent the Fowles from being homeless; they had stayed with friends since the wall collapsed. Mr. Fowle is a former Royal Navy
serviceman who took part in the D-Day Landings of 1944. The mystery Good Samaritan comes from the Fowles’ village. Mr. Fowle said, “It’s tremendous — it really is. This man’s unbelievable generosity has taken a huge, huge weight off our minds, and we can’t thank him enough.” Mrs. Fowle said, “It’s wonderful — really wonderful that somebody would do this for us. We are very, very grateful to him. It’s quite overwhelming really. We’d like to say a big thank-you to him.” Locksmith James Flynn, age 43, who is married to the Fowles’ granddaughter, said about the mystery Good Samaritan, “His incredible act has shamed the Prudential. He has stepped forward to help Gordon and Betty on pure humanitarian grounds, which is what the insurance company should have done.” According to an article in the *Daily Mail* (UK), “Prudential bosses insisted the damage happened over a long period of time and was [caused by] water getting into the wall and then expanding and contracting with the changes in temperature. They maintained that home insurance policies do not generally provide cover for damage caused by property age or maintenance-related issues.” (32)

“Thank You, Random Woman from Santa Ynez ;)”

Redditor Yellowtwo remembers being the recipient of a remarkable Random Act of Kindness in Santa Ynez, California. In May 2013, Yellowtwo wrote, “This happened about 10 years ago, when I was 16, in the small town of Santa Ynez, CA. I’ll do my best to recall it. I had picked up my brother from work (we shared a car at the time) and we were on our way home but needed to get some gas. It was late, about 11pm, when we pulled into the gas station and it looked closed. I parked and walked up to the front door but it was locked. I didn’t have any other way of paying for gas than at the front counter because we didn’t have a debit or credit card. The small town was dead silent and dark at that time of night, and everything was closed. Even the gas
station had its lights off. There was only one other person at the gas station, and she had been watching us. When she saw me walk to the front door to realize it was locked, she said, ‘Yeah, they’re closed. You’ll have to pay with a card.’ I told her that I didn’t have a card and I’d have to wait until morning to fill up. Then, as I started to get back into my car, she swiped her card! ‘What? You’re paying for our gas?’ I asked her as she walked briskly back to her car to avoid any argument against her kindness. She said, ‘You’re always supposed to do nice things for people.’ Then she got in her car and drove off. I filled my tank up and, to this day, I still remember that night and how kind she was to us. Thank you, random woman from Santa Ynez :)” (233)

Savanna Janicki: Good Samaritan

Just before Easter in 2013 (March 31), Brittniey Berger left Duluth, Minnesota, and began driving to Baraboo, Wisconsin. Ms. Berger, who is a first-year student at The College of St. Scholastica, hoped to avoid a winter storm. Unfortunately, she ran into bad weather and icy precipitation in Jackson County, Wisconsin, just before reaching the city of Black River Falls. She said, “All of a sudden, my driver’s side windshield wiper just falls off, and I just start hyperventilating. I didn’t know what to do. I couldn’t see at all.” She turned on her flashing emergency lights and took exit 115, and then she pulled into the I-94 BP station just before closing time. Ms. Berger did not have her purse, which contained her money and credit cards, so she called her mother, Jean, on her cell phone, hoping to be able to use her mother’s credit card to buy a windshield wiper. Unfortunately, the BP station could not accept a credit card whose information came over the phone. Fortunately, BP clerk Savanna Janicki is a Good Samaritan. She paid for the windshield wiper blade with her own money, and she called her boyfriend to come to the gas station and install the blade. Ms. Janicki, who graduated
from high school in 2009, said, “She was crying, so I felt bad right away. She looked terrified with [trying to figure out] what she was going to do. She was pretty much stuck in the middle [between her starting point and her destination] with no money and no windshield wiper, so I told her I’d buy her one. I just would want someone to do that for me if I was stuck in that situation.” Jean Berger said, “I just couldn’t believe it. I thought, ‘How lucky is she that she came across the wonderful girl?’ She [Ms. Janicki] could go home [because it’s closing time], but she went above and beyond. I just thought, ‘What an angel.’ We hear a lot of negative stuff constantly, and it’s nice to hear a good story and that people are still good.” Brittney Berger said, “That was the nicest thing anybody could have done. I was in tears thanking her and thanking her. I appreciate it more than anything.” (234)

“Miss Jo, That’s Really Generous!”

In May 2013, CeCe Bruce was working at the Steak ’n Shake restaurant at Keystone and 54th Street in Indianapolis, Indiana, when she received a very generous tip. Ms. Bruce said, “I was having a hard time at another table, but kept smiling and going on.” She then picked up the credit card receipt of another customer — a regular customer called Miss Jo — she was serving and glanced at the tip that Miss Jo had left her. Ms. Bruce said, “At first I thought, ‘$46’? And I said, ‘Miss Jo, that’s really generous!’” Actually, the tip was for a much larger amount. Ms. Bruce said, “When I looked again, I said, ‘Oh, my gosh, Miss Jo, I’m not taking that!’ And she said, ‘Yes, you’re taking it,’ and I said, ‘No,’ and she said, ‘You need to take it.’” Ms. Jo had given her a $446 tip for a $5.97 order. Ms. Bruce said, “I didn’t think I was worth $400, but, you know, she feels I am.” CeCe, a part-time student at Martin University, knows what she will do with the money: “Pay bills, pay bills right on time, that’s what I’m definitely
going to do. Steak ’n Shake manager Lindsay Banack said, “You’ve seen how everyone was pepped up a bit … it just makes me feel good about humanity.” Ms. Bruce said about Miss Jo, “She’s a really sweet lady, and she didn’t want any gracious gratitude. She signed the receipt and walked out the door. Miss Jo, if you’re watching [a WTHR-TV news report on which Ms. Bruce appeared], I love you and thank you very much!” (235)

“Am I Counting This Right? Did They Think Those were Five $10s?”

On 3 July 2013, Kristen Ruggiero waited on a couple at Uncle Tony’s Pizza and Pasta restaurant in Cranston, Rhode Island. She got to talk them a little, and she learned that the man was 50 and the woman was 48 and that they had gotten together again after having broken up for a while. They learned that Ms. Ruggiero is a single mother with three children aged five, 10, and 15. She brought them their check: $42. They left the restaurant after leaving five $100 bills in Ms. Ruggiero’s black check holder. She remembers picking up the money and thinking, “Am I counting this right? Did they think those were five $10s?” She did not have the couple’s names, so she put the money aside, hoping that they would return to the restaurant so she could give them their money back. The couple did return — over a month later, on August 13. Ms. Ruggiero said, “I was so excited to see them a second time.” She discovered that no mistake had been made — the couple intentionally left behind a $458 tip. The man said, “It was no mistake. You deserved it.” She thanked them and waited on them again. Their check was $48, and they left her a generous $22 tip. Ms. Ruggiero said about the couple, “I just figured they were really nice people.” She used the money to pay some bills and take her children to a Six Flags amusement park. Fellow employee Christine Lamoureux said, “We were just so happy for her because she deserves it out of
anyone at this place the most. Because she’s a single mother of three and she works so hard and she’s just an amazing person.” (236)

**Turning Unintentionally Bad Parking into a Good Deed**

Snapkind user Aaronthomasdixon was able to turn his unintentionally bad parking into a good deed. He writes, “I accidentally parked in front of someone’s driveway. It was covered with leaves and grass, it looked like a yard and a curb.” The person whose driveway it was left a note that stated, “THANK YOU FOR BLOCKING MY DRIVEWAY,” followed by a happy face and “BUT REALLY,” followed by a sad face. Aaronthomasdixon bought Mentos and a gift-certificate from the local grocer and left it in the mailbox for the writer of the note. He also left this note: “i sorry,” followed by a sad face and “thanks for not keying my car,” followed by a happy face. (237)

**“Best $10 I Ever Spent”**

On 4 May 2013, Redditor XLK9 made a post with the title “Saw a lady at gas station paying for gas with dimes, put $10 on the counter and walked out.” The title explains the good deed, and the additional comments XLK9 made in the post are interesting: “Told a colleague of mine, and he said I was a bleeding heart liberal. I asked him if that was a euphemism for Christian” and “Best $10 I ever spent.” (238)

**“It was a Lusciously Smooth Ride from What I Can Remember”**

On 24 April 2013, Reddit user Seenic made a post with this title: “3 nights ago my bike was stolen. It just turned up back in my yard this morning with this note … Ain’t even mad.” Of course, Seenic posted photographs of the bike and of the thief’s note. This is the thief’s note: “Dear Bike Owner, On Saturday April 20 I graduated from University
and got straight white girl wasted. After the bar it was too late to catch a bus, and I am too broke to afford a cab, so I borrowed your bike without asking. It was a lusciously smooth ride from what I can remember. Anyways I am very sorry I did not ask to borrow your bike, so I have returned it with a coupon for a free lava cake at Domino’s as an apology.” Pistashley_O posted this humorous comment: “My bike was stolen a year ago. Can’t wait till I get it back, I probably earned a whole pizza!” (239)

A Dad and Daughter in the Tampon Aisle and Other Memorable People

In June 2013, Redditor Tiffwilliams15 wrote this comment on the thread “Is there a person, a stranger, whom you met once in your life and never met since and are likely to never meet again that you occasionally think of? If so, why?”: “While shopping at Target I saw a girl (maybe 12-13) with her dad in the tampon aisle. I could hear that this was her very first time shopping for tampons and her dad was confused (but trying so hard to help his daughter). I walked over and asked her if she wanted some help, with just the ‘girls’ there. Her dad went to another aisle and I explained the different options and how you actually use one. Sometimes I randomly think of her; I wonder where her mom was, and hope she figured all this stuff out.” In her first edit to her comment, she wrote, “This has come up enough that I should clarify, yes I am a girl.” And in her second edit, she wrote, “And thank you to all those dads out there doing their best to help their daughters. I hope you all know how awesome you are.” And in another comment, Barboski wrote, “When I was twenty-two-years-old, I was stabbed repeatedly in my own home by my psycho roommate. When I fled, I screamed for help from my stoop. A doctor who was at a restaurant down the street heard my cries, and actually applied pressure to a severed artery near my heart by inserting his finger into the wound and
pinching it off. He saved my life, rode with me in the ambulance to the hospital, and I never saw him again. When I awoke the next morning, drugged up and all kinds of cut open by surgeons, nobody knew who he was or how to contact him. It bums me out I could never thank him for doing such a courageous thing.” And in another comment, Insomnipresent wrote, “Shortly after my mom died, I was drunk as hell at a bar in my hometown (which was a frequent occurrence in those days). I was having a rough night, so I went outside to sit on the curb and have a cigarette. This older gentleman, probably around 60-65, sat down next to me because he said I reminded him of his daughter and he wanted to help me feel better if he could. I talked to this guy for a good hour, about my mom, about my life, about dropping out of college and basically losing control of everything because I couldn’t deal with her passing. He gave me some of the best advice I’ve ever received and made me feel like things could really be okay again, eventually. He waited there with me until the bar closed and my friends found me. I gave him a huge hug and tried to thank him as genuinely as I could. I never saw him again and I have no way of finding him, but I think about him all the time and how much of an impact a total stranger had on my life.” This is the advice he gave her: “He basically just let me unload all of this heavy shit onto him and told me I was a good person and said it didn’t take more than a minute to figure that out about me. He said I had the drive to do whatever I wanted to do, and that I’d eventually get back on track, but I had to remind myself what my mom wanted for me and what I wanted for myself. I couldn’t lose myself in her death, because I still had to live my life. It went on from there, but those parts really stuck with me. It just felt amazing that someone cared so much about me and saw good in me without really knowing me.” (240)
“One Final Present to Mommy from Daddy”

Reddit user Seek_the_heights has a friend whose father died in January 2013 a little before his 25th wedding anniversary. He had picked out a ring to give to his wife. After he died, his children began to make payments on the ring so that they could give it as a surprise to their mother. After a couple of months of making payments on the ring, they received a telephone call saying that someone had anonymously paid off the balance owed on the ring. Seek_the_heights’ friend posted a photo of the ring on Imgur.com and wrote, “We were kissed by an angel. This was one final present to mommy from daddy.” Seek_the_heights wrote about her friend, “She’s since graduated but was really involved in high school and her whole community. I was on the same cheerleading team as her and the entire organization knew her dad because he was an awesome guy. […] a lot of people care about the family. […] A bit of background on the family. All the kids are in their late teens or early twenties and the dad was the sweetest man you could meet. He actually was a mall Santa during the Christmas season — he had an awesome beard and kind heart. […] Mind you, my friend and her siblings are all in their teens and early 20s. She said that they would have been paying off this ring for quite a while. Thank you to whoever did this!!” (241)

James: Immortalized as a Roman Soldier in Total War: Rome 2

In the summer of 2012, a 24-year-old fan of the Total War series of videogames visited game-maker Creative Assembly’s HQ in Horsham, UK, where he became the first outsider to play the video game Total War: Rome 2. The fan, James (no other name given), was terminally ill with liver cancer, and he visited Creative Assembly’s HQ courtesy of the charity Willow, which gives terminally ill
people (and their loved ones) a special day to remember. Creative Assembly even took James’ likeness and made him a Roman soldier at the siege of Carthage in the game. Shortly after his visit, James died. Total War community manager Craig Laycock said, “What really struck me was how my colleagues reacted to James coming in. I was inundated with emails offering help with James’ day. The tour organised itself, as the guys around me scrambled to show James what’s going into making Rome 2. James was remarkable on the day. His enthusiasm knew no bounds. He asked passionate questions and offered clear and concise suggestions on features for the game. When I recently learned that James had died, it was devastating. Even though I had only spent a few hours in his company, it was absolutely devastating, because he was able to show us all here in the studio how passionate he was for our games. And although he won’t get the chance to see Rome 2 released, he will live on in some small way in our game — and every time I see him I’ll be reminded of what a great guy he was. In many ways, James represented what’s best about working in video games: crafting games that people enjoy and that stay with them. It’s why we all do what we do, and why we’re so passionate about it. He really brought that home to us.” (242)

“One Million Feels like You can Get It — 100 Million [Good Deeds] Would Change the World”

During the evening of 3 April 2010, Emily Rose Shane, age 13, was killed by a driver on the Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu, California, as she walked home from a friend’s house. Michel Shane, her father, said, “She was the kid who if you were sitting alone at lunch she would invite you over. If you were new to the school, didn’t matter if you were in 6th grade or 10th grade, she befriended you and showed you the ropes.” Her mother, Ellen Shane, said, “I really do suffer everyday, I miss her everyday, and I think
about her a lot.” The Shanes received a telephone call saying that a car had hit their daughter. Ellen remembered, “He said, ‘We have to airlift your daughter — there has been an accident.’ As soon as he said that, my heart sank. I said, ‘Oh, my God, is it serious?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ Michel said, “I passed the accident; I looked over [and] saw the overturned car. I said, ‘Well, Emily was supposed to be there, but no, there is no way.’ … So we stood out there and then they came out and they told us she was dead. That was April 3rd at 6 o’clock and our lives have changed ever since.” The Shanes started the Emily Shane Foundation in the memory of their daughter. The goal of the foundation is for 100 million people to do a good deed. The good deeds can be documented on the foundation’s Web site at <emilyshane.org>. Michel said, “I remember Ellen saying, ‘Why didn’t you just say one million?’ Because one million feels like you can get it — 100 million would change the world.” (243)

Providing Help When Help is Needed

Early in his career, comedian Fred Allen was a juggler who was a friend to fellow juggler Harry LaToy, although later they sometimes had disagreements. Despite the disagreements, on occasion Mr. Allen provided financial help to his former friend. Mr. LaToy died in St. Louis, Missouri, where no one knew him, and a newspaperman telephoned Mr. Allen, who was in another city, on the off chance that he might know something about Mr. LaToy. Mr. Allen gave the newspaperman the information he needed and said that he would take care of the funeral. However, when Mr. Allen reached the proper authorities, he discovered that someone else had done the very good deed of arranging for a funeral for Mr. LaToy’s body. A mortician in a suburb of Saint Louis was a former vaudevillian. Realizing that another vaudevillian needed help, he stepped forward and provided that help. (244)
In Death, Still Holding Hands

In the past, the people of the Netherlands were very aware of differences in religion and class. In a cemetery in Roermont is a cemetery that is divided into sections. The biggest section is for Catholics, but two smaller sections are for Protestants and for Jews. Those sections are walled off from the Catholic section. A monument exists that connects the Catholic and the Protestant sections. One part of the monument stands in the Catholic part of the cemetery, and the other part of the monument stands in the Protestant part of the cemetery. A wall is between the two parts of the monument. Spanning the top of the wall is a statue of two arms — one arm of a husband and one arm of a wife — whose hands clasp the other hand. The website “Varik and Church Records of the 17th Century” tells the story of the monument: “Here is an interesting story. It really happened in the southern part of the Netherlands where most people are Catholic. The place is Roermont. It has a cemetery with a very large burial site for the Catholics and a small area for Protestants. However the Protestants are separated with a tall brick wall. Jewish people have their own place towards the back, also with a tall brick wall. In 1842 a twenty-two year old Catholic woman of nobility (J.W.C. van Gorkum) married a colonel in the Dutch Cavalry. He was not of nobility and was Protestant as well. That must have been the scandal of the century in Roermont. However, the marriage had lasted almost forty years, when the colonel died. Eight years later the woman [passed] away also. She had refused to be laid to rest in the family’s large tomb and, instead, had ordered the monument that you can still see today. She lies on one side of the wall, he on the other, still holding hands.” (245)

“Tending to the Forgotten, the Forsaken and the Flat-Broke”
Who takes care of those who are unwanted after they die? Often, a funeral director does. Following the 15 April 3013 Boston Marathon bombing in Massachusetts that killed three people and injured over 200 people and following the death of Boston bombing suspect Tamerlan Tsarnaev, funeral home director Peter Stefan, age 76, who works in Worcester, Massachusetts, took and cared for Tamerlan’s corpse. As of 6 May 2013, Mr. Stefan was unable to get permission to bury Tamerlan’s body in any nearby cemetery. Tamerlan is a Muslim, and his religion forbids cremation. Mr. Stefan said, “I understand everybody’s feelings, but at some point we have to set feelings aside and say, ‘We have to do something.’” For many years, Mr. Stefan has been, in the words of reporter Tracy Connor, “tending to the forgotten, the forsaken and the flat-broke.” Josh Slocum, executive director of the Funeral Consumers Alliance, said, “He’s bent over backwards to serve the least in the community for decades.” Lisa Carlson of the Funeral Ethics Organization said, “He’s probably one of the few people with the guts to do the right thing.” Mr. Stefan said, “In this country, we bury people. We don’t leave them hanging around.” Mr. Slocum wrote about Mr. Stefan in an email, “He was the only one who would bury gay men dead of AIDS back in the ’80s. He did funerals for slain prostitutes that everyone else treated like some sort of subhuman trash.” Mr. Slocum added that Mr. Stefan is “a good man of rare character.” In 2004, Mr. Stefan organized a memorial for three prostitutes who had been killed by a suspected serial killer. Mr. Stefan did this because no one seemed to care about the lives or the deaths of the three prostitutes. In addition, he started a fund for the victims’ children. In a 2002 profile in the Worcester Telegram and Gazette, Mr. Stefan said, “God must have loved the poor, ’cause he made so many of them. That’s one of my favorite sayings. Nobody seems to give a crap. That’s why I’m involved, to take care of poor people.” (246)
“Thanks for the Laughs, Brian. 1980-2013”

On 30 May 2013, Brian Thaut, age 32, of Salt Lake City, Utah, crashed while riding his motorcycle. He was not wearing a helmet when he hit a parked, unoccupied car, and he suffered traumatic brain injuries and lay in a coma before dying on 8 June 2013. He worked for Adobe, which put up on one of its billboards Mr. Thaut’s photograph and the message “Thanks for the laughs, Brian. 1980-2013.” Dan Pearce, who writes for the blog *Single Dad Laughing*, wrote, “Adobe has my respect for that, and I think when big companies do such incredible personal things without asking anything in return (they didn’t even put their name on it), they deserve a little shout-out. That’s all. May all big businesses, and the people who run them, be so thoughtful.”

Mr. Pearce, who was friends with Mr. Thaut, paid him this compliment: “He died young, but he died living.”

Don LaVange wrote on Flickr about Mr. Thaut, “He was an amazing, wonderful, kind, and fun guy. The world will be missing something essential, and so will our lives.”

Diana Freeman, Brian’s aunt, emailed the author of this book on 15 December 2013 with the correction that Adobe did not put up the billboard: “Only one correction. Adobe did not put up the billboard. It was Chris Harrington with Domo.”

Diana Freeman then emailed the author of this book this information on 15 December 2013:

“I am Brian’s Aunt. His mom is my sister and she told me. She has talked with Chris himself as to when he is taking down the billboard. He said that he just can't bring himself to take it down so I don't know how much longer it will stay up. Initially we thought it would be up until Brian's birthday but that has come and gone. His birthday was 13
November. Then we thought maybe it would be 6 months after his death which would have been the 8th of December, but it still is up. Quite a tribute to our Brian. My husband and I are completing our LDS [Latter Day Saints] mission here in New Zealand and come home February 2014.

“I am so grateful that Brian chose to come spend his 3 week vacation with us here in New Zealand (plus 1 week in Fiji) a month before his accident. It was an amazing 3 weeks having Brian all to ourselves. He was larger than life and always a legend in our family. I was fortunate to come home and be with him and family that last week in the hospital and then attend his funeral.

“His legend lives on and maybe when I return home in February I will still see that billboard is still up.

“I know that Brian was being approached to come work for Domo and leave Adobe which he was seriously considering while he was here with us in New Zealand. Who know what he was deciding. But he was well respected by the folks at Domo.”

This is Brian Thaut’s obituary as posted on the Walker Funeral Home website:

“Brian Phillip Thaut passed from this life on June 8, 2013. He was born November 13th, 1980 to Phillip and Allison Thaut, in Provo, Utah. Brian truly was larger than life. Brian always saw the world through ginger eyes could stop crowds (often eliciting requests to rub his head for good luck), and a personality that enveloped you with pure happiness. Brian was loved by all.

“Life with Brian was infectious, as he never had a moment to waste, always having something to do or see and it almost certainly revolved around entertaining a loved one. More than the life of the party, Brian owned audiences
wherever he went. At the age of 18, Brian secured employment with ViewPoint Digital. His resume was more than a bit exaggerated, however Brian always rose to the occasion and within a few months was commanding an executive position with Computer Associates.

“At 20, Brian walked away from his immense success to serve a mission for the LDS church; his charm, love, and dashing good looks were immediately appreciated by the wonderful people of Sao Paulo, Brazil. Brian also developed a close friendship with a mission companion, of whom he declared was ‘destined to marry his sister’, and true to his prediction, eventually became his brother-in-law.

“Brian spent his remaining years building a successful career with Omniture and later Adobe as a company evangelist. Brian flew millions of miles forging strong friendships in almost every corner of the world.

“As for his family, Brian will be remembered as a most beloved son, brother, and best friend. And certainly, without any question, the greatest uncle a child might ever hope for. Brian is a bright ‘shooting-star’, who has accomplished more in the short 32 years we have had him, than most might accomplish in a lifetime. He is so very loved and will never be forgotten.

“Brian is survived by his parents, Phillip and Allison Thaut; his siblings, Stephen and Melissa Thaut, Jessica and Aaron Grimmer, and youngest brother, George. Brian especially loved his darling nieces and nephews: Josephine, Max, Madeleine, and Jameson. He leaves behind many cousins and Aunts and Uncles and his beloved bulldog, Sally.”

(247)

“I Love You. You are My Favorite”

A few months before the father of comedian Lizz Winstead died, he knew that he was going to die, and so he sent each
of his children a card that they were not supposed to open until after he had died. Lizz opened it immediately. Her card showed a photograph of the skyline of Manhattan. On the card, her father had written, “I love you. You are my favorite. Please don’t tell all the others.” This card made Lizz feel elated. After Lizz’ father died, all of her siblings and her mother were talking about him and the cards he had sent to each of his children, and it became clear that each of his children had opened his or her card and read it. Lizz’ mother said, “Dad wanted you to open those cards after he died, and since you all went against his wishes and already have, I would love to hear what he wrote to each of you.” Then she asked Lizz to tell everyone what her father had written to her. Lizz tried to get out of revealing the contents of her card, but her mother was insistent. Lizz thought about lying, but she could not lie immediately after her father had died. Finally, Lizz said, “The card said, ‘I love you. You are my favorite. Please don’t — ’” and all of her siblings said along with her, “tell the others.” And everybody laughed. In Lizz Free or Die, Ms. Winstead’s book of autobiographical essays, she writes about her father, “He knew we all would open that card the second we got it. And he knew how we would all believe what he wrote. And relish it and find some smug superiority in it. But more than anything else, he knew how hard we would laugh when we found out, having to laugh at our own ridiculousness and remembering that he made us laugh, even after his death. He knew that this moment would be more precious than ever feeling like the favorite.” Lizz’ mother also really loved her (and Lizz’ siblings). While attending Minneapolis Southwest High School in Minnesota, Lizz played Marian in the high school’s production of The Music Man. To get the part, she outperformed another girl — a girl who wrote a review of the production and severely criticized Lizz, whose feelings were hurt. Lizz cried as she read the review to her mother,
who hugged her and told her that she had worked hard and that the review was garbage. Then, without Lizz knowing it, her mother talked to the high school principal and told him that allowing a girl who had tried out for a part in the play and not gotten it to write a review of the actress who had gotten the part was an obvious conflict of interest. In the high school newspaper, the principal apologized for the review. Lizz writes, “It did not mention that the girl who wrote it had lost the part to me, but it did include some crappity crap that the play was a smash and that all the performers were very talented. That crappity crap made me feel better.” (248)

A Caring Mother

Mothers, even while dying, care about their children and want what is best for them. When Dawn French was writing her second novel, *Oh Dear Silvia*, in which people talk about a woman in a coma, her mother died. As her mother lay dying, Dawn was sitting by her bed. Her mother, who knew she was writing a book, said, “Come on, this is your research. Why aren’t you writing?” Dawn replied, “But you are dying.” Her mother then said, “Please use this time properly. Don’t sit there watching me die.” Dawn took out her notebook and started writing. Dawn believes, “I think my heart and soul went into the book as a result.” (249)

“Kelly was a True Roadside Angel”

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (Pennsylvania) runs a weekly column that consists of letters to the editor about random acts of kindness. For example, in the 30 May 2013 issue, Greg O’Laughlin of Gibsonia, Pennsylvania, wrote, “My brother-in-law C.J. Streiff was involved in a motorcycle crash this month that took his life on Route 28. Just after his crash a young woman named Kelly saw him lying on the road and stopped to be with him. She rubbed his back
and comforted him as he was dying. She has since reached out to his family with her beautiful comforting act of kindness. This deed has given solace to a grief-stricken family and should not go unnoticed. Kelly was a true roadside angel.” (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 1 HENRY IV, AKA HENRY IV, PART 1: A RETELLING IN PROSE**

— 1.1 —

In 1399, Henry Bolingbroke succeeded in deposing his first cousin King Richard II of England, thereby becoming King Henry IV. Even after becoming King, however, he ruled over an uneasy country, many citizens of which believed that he had unjustly seized the crown. After Richard II died, Henry IV vowed to go on a crusade to the Holy Land and return it to Christian hands. Political events, however, kept coming up that required delaying that crusade.

King Henry IV met with one of his younger sons, Lord
John, who was Earl of Lancaster, as well as with the Earl of Westmoreland and Sir Walter Blunt, and others in his palace in London. King Henry IV was under great stress due to political and personal troubles.

Using the royal we, King Henry IV said, “We are shaken by events and wan with care, but let us find time and breath in this shaky and still-frightened peacetime to talk about the new battles that we intend to fight in distant foreign lands. No more will the English soil drink the blood of her children. No more will the English field be filled with cutting war. No more will the English flowerets be bruised by the tread of armored warhorses. The soldiers of hostile forces that have recently opposed and killed each other in civil wars were all countrymen, as similar to each other as are shooting stars. Now, these formerly hostile forces shall all march as one in mutual well-ordered ranks. No more will they be opposed against acquaintances, relatives, and allies. They will be united for a common purpose. No more will the edge of war, as if it were an ill-sheathed knife, cut our people. Therefore, friends, we will hold a crusade and go as far as the sepulcher of Christ in Jerusalem. We are now the soldier of Christ, under Whose blessed cross we have been conscripted and for Whom we are pledged to fight. Therefore, we will raise an English army composed of people who were shaped in their mothers’ wombs and born to chase away the pagans from those holy fields over whose acres walked those blessed feet which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed for our benefit to the bitter cross. For twelve months, we have been planning to do this. You know this, so we need not tell you our plans again.”

He then ordered, “My noble kinsman Westmoreland, tell us what the council decided yesterday about planning this urgent crusade.”

The Earl of Westmoreland replied, “My liege, we hotly
discussed this crusade, and we had assigned many specific military responsibilities, but we were interrupted by a messenger bearing important news from Wales. The news was bad concerning the noble Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March. He led the men of Herefordshire to fight the lawless and wild Owen Glendower, who captured him. The Welshmen butchered a thousand men of Herefordshire. The Welshwomen did such a beastly shameless transformation to those corpses that it cannot be retold or spoken about except with much shame.”

*True*, the Earl of Westmoreland thought. *The wild Welshwomen castrated the English corpses.*

King Henry IV said, “The news of this new battle must have necessarily stopped your debate about our crusade to the Holy Land.”

Westmoreland replied, “This news and other news did that. Other news, even more disturbing and unwelcome, came from the north of England. On Holy-rood day, September 14, young Harry Percy — known also as the gallant Hotspur — fought the brave Earl of Douglas, that ever-valiant Scot, at the hill of Holmedon. The news we received was that they were fighting a serious and bloody battle with much firing of artillery. Our messenger left at the peak of the battle and so was unable to report who would win the battle.”

“I have received more recent news than you about that battle,” King Henry IV said. “A dear, truly devoted friend, Sir Walter Blunt, has newly alighted from his horse. He and his horse are stained with the various kinds of soil that lie between the hill of Holmedon and this palace of ours in London. He has brought us pleasant and welcome news: Hotspur has defeated the Earl of Douglas. Sir Walter Blunt himself saw the bloody corpses of ten thousand bold Scots and twenty-two knights heaped in piles on the plains by
Holmedon. Hotspur has taken some nobles prisoner: Mordake, who is the Earl of Fife and the oldest son of the defeated Douglas; and the Earl of Athol, the Earl of Murray, the Earl of Angus, and the Earl of Menteith. Is not this an honorable spoil? Is not this a gallant prize? Ha, Westmoreland, is it not?"

“Truly,” Westmoreland replied, “it is a conquest for a Prince to boast of.”

“Indeed it is,” King Henry IV said, “but you make me sad and make me sin in envy when you say that. I am envious that the Earl of Northumberland is the father to so blest a son as Hotspur. Anyone who wishes to speak of honor speaks about Hotspur. In a crowd of young men, Hotspur stands out; if he were a tree in a grove, he would be the very straightest tree in that grove. Hotspur is the darling and the pride of Fortune. I see people praise Hotspur, and then I look at my own oldest son, my young Harry — my Prince Hal and the future King of England — and I see debauchery and dishonor upon his brow. I wish that I could prove that a mischievous fairy had come by when the two Harrys were infants and had swapped them! In that case, Hotspur would be my son, and Prince Hal would be the son of the Earl of Northumberland. Such thinking is sinful. But let us move on to other matters. What is your opinion of young Hotspur’s pride? He has sent word to me that he shall deliver to me, from all his prisoners, only one: Mordake, the Earl of Fife. He has sent word to me that he will keep all the other prisoners. Hotspur knows that he cannot keep as prisoner Mordake, who is of royal blood, but all prisoners are required to be turned over to me, the King, so that we can ransom them.”

Westmoreland replied, “Hotspur must be following the advice of Thomas Percy, the Earl of Worcester, who is his uncle. Worcester is opposed to you in every way possible,
and his advice is making Hotspur proud and resistant to your authority. He is like a proud bird that preens its feathers and raises its crest.”

“I have sent word to Hotspur to come to me and to answer for his actions,” King Henry IV said. “Because of this, I must for a while put aside my crusade to Jerusalem. On Wednesday, we will meet with the council at Windsor. Inform all the lords about the meeting, and then quickly return here. More is to be said and to be done. I am angry now, and I do not wish to speak publicly.”

“I will do as you wish, my liege,” Westmoreland said.

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.

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