

# **The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds:**

## **Volume 6**

Dedicated with love and respect to Randy Jones

“A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is brave for five minutes longer.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

“We can’t all be heroes because somebody’s got to sit on the curb and clap as they go by.” — Will Rogers

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## **The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 6**

**by David Bruce**

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## **PREFACE**

The doing of good deeds is important. As a free person, you can choose to live your life as a good person or as a bad person. To be a good person, do good deeds. To be a bad person, do bad deeds. If you do good deeds, you will become good. If you do bad deeds, you will become bad. To become the person you want to be, act as if you already are that kind of person. Each of us chooses what kind of person we will become. To become a hero, do the things a hero does. To become a coward, do the things a coward does. The opportunity to take action to become the kind of person you want to be is yours.

This book is a collection of stories of good deeds. Most of them I have encountered in my reading of books, and then retold in my own words. Some of them come from other sources, such as the World Wide Web. This book is organized by topic. Many people in the arts, in religion, and in everyday life have done good deeds, and I am happy that such people exist in this world.

I hope that you enjoy reading this book, and I hope that you are inspired to do some good deeds of your own.

## INTRODUCTION

### **“I Will Go with You Into the Grave”**

In a medieval Christian mystery play, a man asks who will go with him into the grave when he dies and give him support at the Day of Judgment. Time after time, he hears the answer, “I won’t go with you into the grave.” His wife won’t go with him into the grave, his children won’t go with him into the grave, his priest won’t go with him into the grave, his friends won’t go with him into the grave — even his wealth won’t go with him into the grave. Finally, the man’s good deeds say, “I will go with you into the grave,” and the man and his deeds knock at the door of death, together.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: James Fadiman and Robert Frager, *Essential Sufism*, pp. 251-252.

## COMEDIANS

### A Full-Time Comedian

When Richard Lewis was learning his craft as a comedian, he was also working three part-time jobs. He felt that he was good enough to make it as a full-time comedian, but he needed a stake to live on to get started. One day, he complained to his friend and very successful comedian David Brenner, saying that he wished that he could quit his three jobs and be a full-time comedian. Mr. Brenner asked how much money it would take for Mr. Lewis to be able to quit his three jobs. After Mr. Lewis said it would take \$1,000, Mr. Brenner gave him \$1,000 and said, “Here, you’re a full-time comedian.”<sup>2</sup>

### Everything About Texas is Big

Joe Bob Briggs once followed Bob Hope around at a golf tournament in Texas in order to write an article about him. He liked the comedian, and he even wrote a joke for him, which he passed along to Mr. Hope’s press agent. (Joe Bob was never able to actually meet Mr. Hope.) The press agent asked such questions as “You’re a joke writer?” and “You want money for this joke?” The answer to both questions was, No, and Joe Bob said to the press agent, “It would be an honor if I could say I wrote a joke for Bob Hope.” That night, Mr. Hope told the joke to an audience. The press agent found Joe Bob the next day and said, “Bob wanted me to personally thank you for the joke.” Joe Bob says today, “So I never met him, but I never got anything in professional compensation that compared to that moment.” What was the joke? This is it: “I love Texas. Big hats on the men and big hair on the women. Even the golf courses

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Richard Zoglin, *Comedy at the Edge: How Stand-up in the 1970s Changed America*, p. 92.

are big. I lost my ball three times today, and I was putting.” Joe Bob says, “Okay, I admit it, not that funny. The point is, when Bob Hope said it, it was hysterical.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Letters to a Young Fan**

Andrew Buckingham was 13 years old when he started to write comedian Kenneth Williams, co-star of many British *Carry On* movie comedies. The correspondence lasted almost three years, ending only with Mr. Williams’ death. Mr. Buckingham says today, “He replied to all my letters, often by return of post. It still surprises me.” The first letter was simply a request for a photo — autographed, of course. But young Andrew mentioned positively a book that Mr. Williams had written, and Mr. Williams thanked him for the compliment. The correspondence continued, and young Andrew, who knew that Mr. Williams had been bullied while in school, once asked him for advice about how to handle being around bullies. Mr. Williams wrote back, “Obviously, one does anything to avoid confrontation. My method was to chum up with a tough guy at school, and that provides protection. But the individual invariably has to find his own way round all the pitfalls.” After Mr. Williams died, his sister, Pat, went through his possessions, and she was surprised to find letters from young Andrew. She called Andrew and told him, “It’s amazing. Most letters from people your age would have gone straight in the bin.” She also asked Andrew if he wanted anything that had belonged to Mr. Williams. Today, he wishes that he had asked for Mr. Williams’ fountain pen.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Joe Bob Briggs, “The Secret Bob Hope.”  
 <<http://www.joebobbriggs.com/index.php?/en/the-secret-bob-hope.html>> Accessed 21 August 2010. Joe Bob keeps an archive of his essays at <<http://www.joebobbriggs.com/>>. Check it out.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Andrew Buckingham, “Experience: I was Kenneth Williams’ pen pal.” *The Guardian*. 21 August 2010

## Two Kind People

George Carlin's mother, Mary, was a kind woman. When George was a child, he would sometimes talk her into having a meal at the Automat. While they were there, she would often see a man nursing a cup of coffee because he had nowhere to go, and she would give George a quarter — which bought a lot more then than it does now — to give to the man. George says, "She really did have a generous heart." So did George, who used to be part of a comedy team with Jack Burns. (After they split up, Jack became very successful with Avery Schreiber.) One day, George and Jack were goofing around in a Chicago hotel when for some reason Jack threw a paperback out of the window. Suddenly, they remembered that Jack had put his pay in the paperback for safekeeping. They went to the window and watched twenties and fifties float down to the ground, knowing that the money would be long gone by the time they ran down the stairs and reached the street. A nice guy, George split his pay with Jack.<sup>5</sup>

## "Bill, are You OK? How's Everything at Home?"

Billy Crystal's father died when Billy was 15 years old, and Billy took it hard. He had a hard time functioning because he felt like he was carrying a boulder all the time. He did try out for the varsity basketball team, but during tryouts he played as if he were carrying a boulder. Obviously, if you're carrying a boulder and trying to play basketball at the same time, the basketball is not going to do what you want it to do. The coach, Mr. Farry, called Billy to his office and asked him, "Bill, are you OK? How's everything at home?" Billy told him all his troubles, especially

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<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2010/aug/21/kenneth-williams-pen-pal>>.

<sup>5</sup> Source: George Carlin, *Last Words*, pp. 30, 84.



including his father's death and the effect it was having on his mother. Coach Farry put him on the team. As an adult, Mr. Crystal wrote in his autobiography, *700 Sundays*, "That's the nicest thing anyone has ever done for me."<sup>6</sup>

### **"Now Don' Say Nuthin' to Her"**

Richard Pryor's grandmother was a kind and understanding woman. When he was 26 years old, he went back home to attend the funeral of his stepmother. At the wake were many dishes of food brought by neighbors. One dish brought by an elderly neighbor held baked dressing, and Mr. Pryor saw cockroaches in it. His face showed his horror, but his grandmother told him in a low voice, "Now don' say nuthin' to her. She old an' blind. She can't see no more. She probably lef' the oven door open an' they crawled in there las' night."<sup>7</sup>

### **Sarcasm — and Great Kindness**

Comedian Drew Carey sometimes has the persona of a very outspoken and sarcastic person, but he does good deeds. After the taping of an episode of Mr. Carey's TV sitcom, *The Drew Carey Show*, a man in the audience refused to leave until he had spoken to Mr. Carey. Of course, celebrities sometimes attract weird — and dangerous — fans. However, after Mr. Carey learned that the man was a former Marine like himself, he talked to the man for approximately 90 minutes. An unnamed source who spoke to Kathleen Tracy, author of *Home Brewed: The Drew Carey Story*, said, "It turns out the guy had just been discharged. He was depressed and was really having a hard time adjusting to life outside of the service. He didn't know what his future held and felt aimless." Mr. Carey had felt

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<sup>6</sup> Source: Billy Crystal, *700 Sundays*, pp. 138-140.

<sup>7</sup> Source: Jim Haskins, *Richard Pryor: A Man and His Madness*, p. 7.

the same way, so he knew what the man was feeling — and he was able to give him some encouraging words. In addition, Mr. Carey once organized a benefit for Antonio, an employee at the Improv, whose son had been shot and was racking up expensive medical bills. Another anonymous source who spoke to Ms. Tracy said, “Hardly anybody knew that Drew had done that, because it isn’t something he’d ever advertise. But that’s the kind of guy Drew is.” Antonio also is capable of great kindness. When Mr. Carey was a young comedian struggling to be successful, Antonio gave him free food.<sup>8</sup>

### **Cleaning the Unwashed**

Comedian Chris Rock’s parents, Julius and Rose, are good people. Together, they cared — well — for 17 foster children while Chris was growing up. Even as a schoolgirl, Rose was doing good deeds. Some very young children at her school would be unwashed for days, so she began bringing a bar of soap to school to clean them so that their classmates would not tease them.<sup>9</sup>

### **Not the Reality**

In 1918, Julian Johnson wrote an article titled “Charles, Not Charlie” for *Photoplay*. In it, he mentioned that an actor had died suddenly the previous winter in Los Angeles, but fortunately he had left behind no debts, some money in the bank, and wealth enough to support his family until his children grew up. However, Mr. Johnson went on to say that this was not the reality. He writes, “I am one of three people who know that the poor fellow had squandered all he made, had \$2.67 in cash, no insurance,

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<sup>8</sup> Source: Kathleen Tracy, *Home Brewed: The Drew Carey Story*, pp. 120-122, 142-143.

<sup>9</sup> Source: Anne M. Todd, *Chris Rock*, p. 10.

and owed half the tradesmen in town. Charles Chaplin righted all this, and not even the widow knows!”<sup>10</sup>

### **Afraid to Go Back to the Club**

Famous nightclub comic Joe E. Lewis went out of his way to help other comedians. When Alan King was a young comedian, he bombed — badly — at a small comedy club where he was booked to perform an early and a late show. He left quickly because he was sure the club manager was going to fire him before the late show. He happened to run into Mr. Lewis, who asked how it had gone. Mr. King explained why he was afraid to go back to the club. So Mr. Lewis called the club manager, introduced himself, and said, “I hear you’ve got my kid Alan King working for you. ... I’m coming over.” Mr. King went back and performed the late-night show for Mr. Lewis, who brought a bunch of friends with him, and Mr. King says, “I got lucky — I got funny. I stayed in the joint for about four weeks. I always remember Joe E. He was a very kind guy.” By the way, Mr. Lewis attended the wedding of fellow comedian Jack Carter. Mr. Lewis gambled — a lot — and when Mr. Carter said, “I do,” Mr. Lewis said, “D\*mn, I just lost another bet.”<sup>11</sup>

### **A Midnight Snack — for 2,800 People**

As long as he was not in the persona of either obnoxious jerk Tony Clifton or the obnoxious Intergender World Wrestling Champion, Andy Kaufman was a very nice guy. He did not shut himself off from ordinary people and even gave his telephone number to taxicab drivers and other people he met and liked. In 1979, at the end of his performance at Carnegie Hall, he invited all 2,800 people

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<sup>10</sup> Source: Kevin J. Hayes, editor, *Charlie Chaplin: Interviews*, p. 37.

<sup>11</sup> Source: Barry Dougherty, *A Hundred Years, A Million Laughs*, pp. 66-67.

in the audience to have milk and cookies with him. Buses that he had hired took all audience members who accepted the invitation to a place where they could enjoy the midnight snack, and Mr. Kaufman picked up the tab.<sup>12</sup>

### **A Good Response to Criticism**

Chico Marx's wife, Betty, once had to go into a hospital for an operation, and she criticized the slovenly way he was dressed when he and their daughter, Maxine, visited her. Therefore, after the visit, he asked Maxine to wear her prettiest dress the next day when they visited her mother again. This time, Betty did not criticize Chico — he was wearing a top hat, white tie, and tails. Maxine writes in *Growing Up with Chico*, "I had never seen my mother so much in love with him before."<sup>13</sup>

### **Bubba the Hero**

In 1995, gay comedian Ant got a gig in Arkansas, but when he arrived, he discovered that he was in a town that advertised itself as the "Proud Home of the KKK." He also discovered that the people who had hired him had confused him with a racist comedian whose name was similar to his. Stand-up comedians tend to be fearless, and Ant started doing his comedy, and when he came out as gay to his audience as he usually did, a wave of hatred came toward him, and he feared for his life. A huge man named Bubba who had no teeth came on stage and grabbed him and picked him up and carried him off the stage and out of the building, with Ant screaming all the while, "RAPE! RAPE! HATE CRIME!" Bubba then threw him into a pick-up, but instead of threatening him, said, "We've got to get you out of here, little buddy, or they're gonna *kill* you!"<sup>14</sup>

## SPORTS

### An NBA Star Who Can Stop Bullets

Comedian Carlos Mencia once stood up for a very young Freddie Soto, who was just starting out. Mr. Soto was on stage, and he was being heckled. Mr. Mencia liked Mr. Soto, so he told the hecklers, “Listen, he’s an amateur — it’s amateur night. Be nice. I’ll be up here in three minutes — f\*\*k with me.” In three minutes, he was on stage, and one of the hecklers asked him, “What are you gonna do? Some of your taco-bender jokes?” Mr. Mencia shocked the black hecklers by saying, “No, I’m gonna do some n\*gger jokes.” He then said, “Hey, you can’t get racial on me and think that I’m not gonna get racial on you. I’m not f\*\*king white. I’m from the ghetto, so if this is what you f\*\*kin’ want, let’s f\*\*kin’ do it.” The three black hecklers were Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, and The D.O.C. Mr. Mencia was funny, and some of his comedy came at the expense of the three black hecklers, with the result that one of the three black hecklers yelled that he was going to shoot him. Fortunately, NBA star Shaquille O’Neal was present, and he told the heckler, “Naw, you ain’t, b\*tch. You started that sh\*t. View it.” Mr. Mencia did a couple of more jokes and then his show was over. Approximately five years later, Mr. Mencia ran into Dr. Dre, who told him, “You’re incredible. You’re one of the funniest guys out there. I also want to apologize because we were gonna shoot you that night. If Shaq hadn’t stepped in, you were gonna get shot!”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Source: Darryl Lyman, *The Jewish Comedy Catalog*, pp. 131-132.

<sup>13</sup> Source: Maxine Marx, *Growing Up with Chico*, p. 74.

<sup>14</sup> Source: Ritch Shydner and Mark Schiff, compilers, *I Killed: True Stories of the Road from America’s Top Comics*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>15</sup> Source: Ritch Shydner and Mark Schiff, compilers, *I Killed: True Stories of the Road from America’s Top Comics*, pp. 24-25.

## **The World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame**

Former NBA star David Robinson is a 1998 inductee into the World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame in Boise, Idaho. He once told a group of 5<sup>th</sup> graders that if they stayed off illegal drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and if they maintained a C+ average, then he would give them college scholarships. Sure enough, seven years later Mr. Robinson awarded college scholarships to 72 high school seniors. Myron Finkbeiner started the World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame to recognize deeds such as this. A former coach, Mr. Finkbeiner says, “When I was coaching, it was very important that the kids that played under me, if they were not a better person at the end of the year from when they started, I felt like I didn’t do a good job.”<sup>16</sup>

## **NBA Player Jamaal Magloire, Hero**

In 2010, when single mother Lucita Charles was murdered in Toronto, Canada, leaving behind a seven-year-old son who has cerebral palsy, NBA player Jamaal Magloire stepped forward to help. He paid for Ms. Charles’ funeral expenses, and he set up a trust fund for her son. Mr. Magloire, a Toronto native, said, “It just really touched me, the fact it was a single mother and she left behind a special-needs child.” Mr. Magloire did not know Ms. Charles and her son.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Source: Tom Goldman, “A Sports Hall of Fame for Good Deeds.” National Public Radio. 20 December 2006  
<<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6652239>>.

<sup>17</sup> Source: Doug Smith, “NBA star to help murder victim’s son.” *Toronto Star*, 6 June 2010  
<<http://www.thestar.com/sports/basketball/nba/article/819775-nba-star-to-help-murder-victim-s-son>>. Also: “Jamaal Magloire.”  
<[http://www.nba.com/heat/roster/heat\\_player\\_jamaal\\_magloire\\_1011.html](http://www.nba.com/heat/roster/heat_player_jamaal_magloire_1011.html)>. Accessed 6 December 2010.

## Not Frugal When People Need Help

Abe Pollin owned the Washington Wizards, having changed the team's name from the Bullets, a name he considered offensive. Abe was not frugal when it came to helping other people. In 1984, he read a *Washington Post* article that stated that in Africa 40,000 children died each day from malnutrition. He called the *Post* to ask if the article was correct. It was, so he called UNICEF (The United Nations Children's Fund) and said, "I want to help. I will do anything." He became an honorary chairman of UNICEF. In 1997, he opened the Verizon Center, which he built with \$200 million of his own money, and which revitalized a bleak area of Washington, D.C. After Linda Pollin, his daughter, died at age 16 of congenital heart disease, he opened the Linda Pollin Memorial Housing Project in Washington, D.C. Just before he died in November of 2009, he gave all of his employees a Thanksgiving bonus. He also made sure that the staff of the Washington Wizards would be able to leave work early because of the holiday. And he sent his wife of 64 years, Irene, a bouquet of yellow roses.<sup>18</sup>

## Pass the Pumpkin

On 9 October 2010, Danny J. Niedecken, the pastor of St. Mark United Methodist Church in Cleburne, Texas, had a problem. A truckload of almost 2,200 bulk pumpkins was scheduled to arrive at the church, and he needed help unloading the pumpkins. He had sent out calls for help, and fortunately, the Cleburne High School Yellow Jacket football team responded, unloading pumpkins that day instead of lifting weights. Rev. Niedecken writes,

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<sup>18</sup> Source: Maureen Dowd, "The Wizards' Wizard." *The New York Times*. 28 November 2009

<[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/29/opinion/29dowd.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/29/opinion/29dowd.html?_r=1)>.

“Unloading 2,200 bulk pumpkins, one at a time, is not an easy task, but this group of young men took on the task with a style and grace that made it look fun and easy. Forming a bucket-type brigade, as early town people did to fight a fire, this group, which also included [Coach Phil] Young and his own family, began handing one pumpkin at a time down the line.” The football team won only one game that year, but Rev. Niedecken thinks that they are winners in a bigger way: “The game of life, in the bigger picture, is not all about unloading pumpkins or what always happens on a football field, but the game of life is about character, integrity, work ethic and being involved with others. As I see it, we have an outstanding football team in our Cleburne Yellow Jackets. They will win the game of life!”<sup>19</sup>

### **The Bruce McNorton Football Camp**

Former NFL player Bruce McNorton did not plan to host a football camp at the Derbyshire recreation complex in Daytona Beach, Florida — it just happened. Mr. McNorton and his son were throwing a football around when a couple of kids came up to them and asked if they could join them. Then they asked if the two would be back the following day. Joe Chirillo, a city rec department worker, heard about it and encouraged Mr. McNorton to host a football camp. Mr. McNorton says, “This is just a two-day camp, but it’s needed. I hope that we can expand it. More days, maybe a week or something like that. It’s a great feeling. When it first started, we were just out there messing around, and the kids came around. And they kept coming.” In the NFL, Mr. McNorton played for the Pittsburgh Steelers. In addition to

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<sup>19</sup> Source: Danny J. Niedecken, “Watching a football team do a good deed.” *Cleburne (Texas) Times-Review*. 16 November 2010 <<http://www.cleburnetimesreview.com/johnsoncounty/x1930920180/Watching-a-football-team-do-a-good-deed>>.



having a home in Daytona Beach, he has one in Detroit. A scout for the Steelers, he jokes, “I tell everybody my heart is in Detroit, but my paycheck is in Pittsburgh.”<sup>20</sup>

### **Fan Appreciation**

In 2010, the Washington Capitals were eliminated by the Montreal Canadiens in the first round of the NHL playoffs. Following the game, which was held in Washington, D.C., Capitals fans Mary Ann Wangemann and her 14-year-old daughter, Lorraine, were unhappy, but soon they had even more to be unhappy about — they got a flat tire. Fortunately, a man stopped and changed their flat tire for them. He was famous to hockey fans, and they immediately recognized him: Capitals center Brooks Laich. In addition to changing their flat tire, he also apologized for the Capitals’ elimination in the first round. Mary Ann said later, “When you think about what he was going through yesterday, just the disappointment .... Given everything else going on in his life, I just thought it was really remarkable. I want people to know it.”<sup>21</sup>

### **The First Modern Olympic Champion**

The modern Olympics’ first champion was James Connolly, who competed in the 1896 Olympics Games in Greece — the first held since the year 369. He went to Greece even though he had to leave Harvard to do so — and even though Harvard authorities told him that he might

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<sup>20</sup> Source: Ken Willis, “Good Deed Led to McNorton’s Annual Affair.” *The Daytona Beach News-Journal*. 11 June 2010  
<<http://www.news-journalonline.com/columns/hey-willie/2010/06/11/good-deed-led-to-mcnortons-annual-affair.html>>.

<sup>21</sup> Source: “Tire change a Capital good deed.” *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. 1 May 2010 <http://www.lvrj.com/sports/tire-change-a-capital-good-deed-92575579.html>.

not be allowed back into Harvard if he left to compete in the Olympics. Mr. Connolly withdrew the money that he had saved for school, paid his way to the Olympics, but had his pocket picked when the ship he and other American Olympians were traveling on stopped at Naples, Italy. Fortunately, Robert Garrett, a wealthy Princetonian and captain of Princeton's track and field team, paid Mr. Connolly's expenses to go to Greece and back to the United States. (Mr. Garrett also paid the expenses of three members of Princeton's track and field team to compete in the Olympics.) At the Olympics, Mr. Connolly won the silver medal, which was at the time the first-place medal, in the triple jump. (Mr. Garrett did well, too, taking first place in the discus and the shot put.)<sup>22</sup>

### **“No One Distanced Themselves From Me, Not One Single Person”**

Rugby legend Gareth Thomas is 6-foot-3 and 16 stone of muscle, and in 2005 he captained Wales to its first Grand Slam victory since 1978. Also, he's gay. For a long time, he tried to live his life as if he were straight, but he was not able to. Eventually, he told his wife, Jemma, that he was gay, and they split up. On 4 November 2006, after a rugby game, he started crying in the locker room, and coach Scott Johnson asked him, “What's up?” Mr. Thomas replied, “Me and Jemma have split.” Mr. Johnson then said, “Oh no, what's happened?” Then he said, “I know what's happened — I know what it is.” He had guessed that Mr. Thomas is gay. They went into another room, and Mr. Thomas confessed that he is gay. Mr. Thomas says, “After keeping it secret for so long, I felt a huge rush of relief.”

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<sup>22</sup> Source: Bruce Nash and Allan Zullo, *The Greatest Sports Stories Never Told*, pp. 53-55. Also, “Robert Garrett,” <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_Garrett](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Garrett)>. Accessed 21 November 2010.

Mr. Johnson then told him, “Right, I’ve got to speak now to three or four players in the Welsh team because you need the boys to surround you and support you. You can’t cope with this on your own.” Mr. Thomas sat in a bar, waiting for some of his teammates to show up and wondering what they would tell him. His teammates Stephen Jones and Martyn Williams showed up, patted him on his back, and said, “We don’t care. Why didn’t you tell us before?” Mr. Thomas says, “Two of my best mates in rugby didn’t even blink an eyelid. Martyn said he never had a clue, would never have thought it. I felt everyone was protecting me and closing in tight around me. No one distanced themselves from me, not one single person.”<sup>23</sup>

### **“We Should Be Proud of Young People Such as These”**

The members of the Lebanon Valley College Rugby Team, a women’s team, stopped by the home of Joe Donley of Lebanon, PA, in November of 2010 and cleaned up his leaves. In a letter to the editor of the *Lebanon Daily News*, Mr. Donley wrote, “We should be proud of young people such as these who take the opportunity to do good deeds.”<sup>24</sup>

### **“I’m Not Much of a Home-Run Hitter”**

On 30 April 1962, Billy Bradley practiced on his Little League baseball team in El Dorado, Arkansas, and then

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<sup>23</sup> Source: Helen Weathers, “British Lions rugby legend Gareth Thomas: ‘It’s ended my marriage and nearly driven me to suicide. Now it’s time to tell the world the truth — I’m gay.’” *Daily Mail*. 19 December 2009  
<<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-1237035/British-Lions-rugby-legend-Gareth-Thomas-Its-ended-marriage-nearly-driven-suicide-Now-time-tell-world-truth--Im-gay.html#ixzz0aQBxfYOW>>.

<sup>24</sup> Source: Joe Donley, “Letter to the Editor.” *Lebanon Daily News*. 21 November 2010  
<[http://www.ldnews.com/opinion/ci\\_16657961](http://www.ldnews.com/opinion/ci_16657961)>.

drank from the water fountain. A lightning bolt hit Billy, and at age nine he almost died. He lived, but he was blind. Fortunately, he was able to go to Methodist Hospital in Houston, Texas. There, Dr. Louis Girard announced that he could restore Billy's eyesight, but it would take three operations. Before the first operation, Billy and his parents went to a baseball game featuring the Houston Colt .45s, a team that is now called the Astros. They visited his favorite team's locker room, and Billy met his favorite player, third-baseman Bob Aspromonte, who told him, "You'll see again. You must believe that. And soon you'll be playing baseball again. Now, is there anything I can do for you?" Billy had a request: "Please, Bob. Hit a home run for me." Mr. Aspromonte was not a home-run hitter. In 1960, he hit one home run, and in 1961, he hit zero home runs, so he said, "I'm not much of a home-run hitter. How about a bunch of base hits?" Then he added, "You're a ballplayer, Billy, so you know how hard it is to hit a homer. But I promise you, Billy, I'll try as hard as I can." Mr. Aspromonte did not get a hit in his first three at-bats, and Billy had to leave the ballpark to go to the hospital to get ready for the next day's operation. But Billy was listening to the game on the radio when Mr. Aspromonte hit a home run. On the radio shortly after the game, Mr. Aspromonte said about the home run, "This one's for you, Billy." After two sets of operations, Billy was able to see, and the next season he attended another game, and he asked Mr. Aspromonte, "This time, will you hit one out that I can see?" Mr. Aspromonte replied, "Like I told you last year, I don't know if I can, but I'll do my best — for you." Mr. Aspromonte was hitless in his first four at-bats, but in the bottom of the 10<sup>th</sup> inning, he went to bat with the bases loaded and the score tied at 2 — and he hit a game-winning grand-slam homerun. Later, after the third set of eye operations, Billy's eyesight was fully restored. Again, he went to a game, and again he asked Mr. Aspromonte to hit

a home run for him. Mr. Aspromonte replied, “I don’t hit many homers, but with you here, I really believe I’m going to hit one tonight.” In the first inning, Mr. Aspromonte went to bat with the bases loaded, and he hit another grand-slam home run. His team won, 7-3. In 1973, Mr. Aspromonte had been retired from major-league baseball for three seasons. He was working on a car battery when it exploded, blinding him with its acid. He needed surgery — the same kind that Billy had gotten — and he got the surgery from the same eye surgeon that Billy had used. Billy telephoned Mr. Aspromonte in the hospital and said, “You made me believe that I would see again. I know you’ll get your vision back like I did. Don’t lose faith.” Some of Mr. Aspromonte’s vision was restored; he got back 40 percent of his vision.<sup>25</sup>

### **“I’ve Never Forgotten Duncan and Rudi for It”**

Some Baseball Hall of Fame inductees endured racism in their playing days. In 1967, when Reggie Jackson was playing in the minor leagues for the Oakland A’s in Birmingham, Alabama, he was the only black player, and he had a hard time finding a place to live. Also, because of Jim Crow, he could not go out and eat with his white teammates. Two of his white teammates, Dave Duncan and Joe Rudi, let him sleep on their couch. When the apartment manager found out what they were doing, the apartment manager did not like it. Mr. Duncan and Mr. Rudi said, “If he goes, we go.” Mr. Jackson says, “I’ve never forgotten Duncan and Rudi for it.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Source: Bruce Nash and Allan Zullo, *The Greatest Sports Stories Never Told*, pp. 6-9.

<sup>26</sup> Source: Dennis R. Tuttle, *Life in the Minor Leagues*, p. 57.

## A Good Man

Branch Rickey was a good man who was a driving force in integrating major-league baseball by hiring Jackie Robinson. In 1904, Mr. Rickey was coach of the baseball team at Ohio Wesleyan University, where he witnessed the evil of racial prejudice at first hand. African-American Charlie Thomas played first base, and he was refused lodging at a hotel in South Bend, Indiana, because of the color of his skin. Mr. Rickey saw Mr. Thomas cry and wipe his hands, saying, “Black skin! Black skin! If only I could make them white!” Mr. Rickey later said, “I vowed that I would always do whatever I could to see that other Americans did not have to face the bitter humiliation that was heaped upon Charlie Thomas.” Mr. Robinson became a hero in Brooklyn, and he was a hero to African-Americans everywhere, but still he received death threats. After someone threatened to shoot him, his teammates helped relax the tension by joking that all of them would wear Mr. Robinson’s number — 42 — in their next game to confuse the gunman.<sup>27</sup>

## Combating Prejudice

Back in the Jim Crow days, Althea Gibson was a major African-American tennis star. Unfortunately, white people dominated tennis, and the USLTA would not let her enter its competitions. White player Alice Marble challenged the USLTA to let Ms. Gibson compete against the best American players. Because Ms. Marble was so famous and so well respected, the USLTA changed its policy and let Ms. Gibson compete. Sometimes, not being a racist is well rewarded. English tennis player Angela Buxton needed a doubles partner, as did Ms. Gibson, so the two teamed up together — and they won the doubles championship at both

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<sup>27</sup> Source: John Grabowski, *Jackie Robinson*, pp. 21-22, 42.

the French Open and Wimbledon. In 1957, Ms. Gibson became the first black tennis player to win a singles' championship at Wimbledon.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Source: Ken Rappoport, *Ladies First: Women Athletes Who Made a Difference*, pp. 105-108.

## AUTHORS

### Georgie

When they were young men, friends George Plimpton and Farwell Smith had a picnic together, then went for a walk on the beach. When they returned to the picnic site, they discovered that two 10-year-old boys were stealing their stuff. They chased after the boys, who ran off in different directions, and caught them. Farwell was angry and was dragging the kid he had caught, and he even cuffed him. But George and the other kid were holding hands, and the kid was calling him “Georgie.” Farwell says, “George’s way of dealing with it was to persuade him that he’d been bad and to not do it again. It was one of the most touching, true parts of George, and it made me feel like a terrible bully.”<sup>29</sup>

### The Most Inspirational Person I Know

Ask Mark Mustian, author of *The Gendarme*, who the most inspirational person he knows is, and he will say, “My father. He grew up dirt-poor in Texas during the Depression. At times some of his family lived in a tent. He served in WWII, was injured during the war, but then sent back to the front. His commanding officer there told him he was needed because his replacements had been ‘too scared.’” After getting out of the military, he went to college on the GI Bill and became an administrator at a hospital. One day one of his assistants came to him, said that a man was outside the hospital begging for food, and asked what he should do. Mr. Mustian says, “My father reached in his pocket and gave the assistant a couple of

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<sup>29</sup> Source: Nelson W. Aldrich, Jr., editor, *George Being George*, pp. 71-72.



bucks and said, ‘Buy the guy something to eat. I know what it’s like to be hungry.’”<sup>30</sup>

### **“Onward, to 2000!”**

As a young man, Dominic Umile wrote author Ray Bradbury to tell him, “Happy birthday.” A few days after writing Mr. Bradbury, Mr. Umile received a note from the great man himself. The note was written on Mr. Bradbury’s personalized stationary — which Mr. Umile describes as “yellow cardstock with his address and a space-scape image in the margin” — and it contained two sentiments: 1) “Thanks for the kind words,” and 2) “Onward, to 2000!” As you would expect, Mr. Umile says, “I still have the envelope and the note.”<sup>31</sup>

### **Meetings with Celebrities**

In 1934, Ray Bradbury’s family moved west, and he was able to skate around Paramount Pictures. As a young teenager, he saw comedian W.C. Fields and asked him for an autograph. Mr. Fields kindly gave him the autograph, but true to his irascible comic character, said to young Ray as he handed him the autograph, “There you are, you little son of a b\*tch.” Young Ray also met George Burns in front of the Figueroa Playhouse on Figueroa Street. He asked the famous comedian, “Mr. Burns, you got your broadcast tonight, don’t you?” Mr. Burns admitted the fact. And young Ray asked, “You don’t have an audience in there, do you?” Mr. Burns admitted the lack of an audience, so

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<sup>30</sup> Source: Mark Mustian, “20 Questions.” Popmatters.com. 18 October 2010 <<http://www.popmatters.com/pm/feature/132309-20-questions-mark-mustian/>>.

<sup>31</sup> Source: Dominic Umile, “Ray Bradbury Wrote Me Back.” Popmatters.com. 1 November 2010 <<http://www.popmatters.com/pm/feature/129991-ray-bradbury-wrote-me-back/>>.

young Ray asked, “Will you take me in and let me be your audience?” Mr. Burns did exactly that, putting young Ray in a front-row seat as he and his wife, Gracie Allen, performed their radio show. Young Ray showed up thereafter every Wednesday for their broadcast. An older, famous Mr. Bradbury met actress Bo Derek, who said to him, “Mr. Bradbury, I love you. Will you ride on the train with me to the south of France?” He did exactly that, spending two days with her at a film festival. He says, “We became good friends.”<sup>32</sup>

### **Croquet and Leprosy**

Robert Louis Stevenson, author of *Treasure Island*, was a kind man. Molokai was the home of people with leprosy, and father Damien, who became afflicted with leprosy, served them. After Father Damien died, Mr. Stevenson paid a visit to Molokai. There, he visited the girls’ school, and he taught the young female students with leprosy how to play croquet.<sup>33</sup>

### **Publishing “Real Stories About Incest”**

*Sassy*, a magazine for North American teenage girls, published some important articles. The writers once spent a day looking through reader correspondence. In particular, they were looking for letters in which the writer wrote about being a victim of incest. Each time they found a letter from a victim of incest, they rang a bell. Unfortunately, the

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<sup>32</sup> Source: Susan King, “Ray Bradbury’s close encounters with W.C. Fields, George Burns and ... Bo Derek?” *Los Angeles Times*. 18 August 2010  
 <<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/herocomplex/2010/08/ray-bradbury-has-the-most-amazing-dreams-i-write-screenplays-he-says-with-a-wink-in-the-middle-of-the-night-when-he-wa.html>>.

<sup>33</sup> Source: Kinky Friedman, *’Scuse Me While I Whip This Out*, p. 136.

bell rang more often than anyone expected. The article that appeared in *Sassy* was titled “Real Stories About Incest.” It told the stories of three girls who were victims of incest. Running the story took courage on the part of *Sassy*, as many advertisers were boycotting it because it had run some articles about sex that the religious right disliked. Shortly after the article ran, Citicorp Venture Capital, which controlled 60 percent of *Sassy*, asked Sandra Yates, the founder of *Sassy*, to resign. Ms. Yates says, “It remains the most painful episode of my working career.”<sup>34</sup>

### **“Do Small Kindnesses for People”**

Amy Alkon, aka “The Advice Goddess,” does good deeds, as well as write an advice column for alternative newspapers. She advises, “Do small kindnesses for people.” For example, she buys and reads a newspaper every day. When she is finished reading it, she will look around wherever she is — often, she is in a café — and often see somebody who is looking for a newspaper. She will then ask, “Sir, would you like my newspaper?” She points out, “You’ve noticed a stranger, you’ve solved their problem, you’ve gone out of your way to do it and they’re gonna feel very good about that and I think people will tend to pass on good deeds, do other good deeds, if you do good deeds for them.” She adds that “it does make a difference.”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Source: Kara Jesella and Marisa Melitzer, *How SASSY Changed My Life. A Love Letter to the Greatest Teen Magazine of All Time*, pp. 31-32, 34-35, 39-40.

<sup>35</sup> Source: Scott Faingold, “Anatomy of an Advice Goddess.” *Illinois Times*. 29 July 2010  
<<http://www.illinoistimes.com/Springfield/article-7563-anatomy-of-an-advice-goddess.html>>.

### **“I was Adopted by the 6<sup>th</sup> Floor at Weyburn Hall!”**

Anna Thomas is the author of *The Vegetarian Epicure*, which was published by Knopf when she was 24 and has sold over a million copies. When she was young, she went to Los Angeles and after a month she was broke. But she had some friends at UCLA who were living in a co-ed dorm in which males lived on some floors and females lived on other floors. Her friends were male, and they took her in. They cleared the top shelf of a big closet, and she slept there. She remembers, “At night, I’d get in my PJs and stand stiff as a board, and two of them would grab me by the ankles and the shoulders and just sort of vault me up into that shelf. That’s where I slept.” In addition, people shared their meal cards with her so that she could eat. She says, “I was adopted by the 6<sup>th</sup> floor at Weyburn Hall!”<sup>36</sup>

### **“Sometimes, our Fate is in the Hands of a Perfect Stranger”**

In April of 2010, syndicated columnist Susan Estrich was walking in New York City when “[t]he world started spinning,” she says. “I literally couldn’t see straight.” It was a hot day, she had not slept much the previous night, she had drunk lots of coffee, and she had not eaten for several hours. Fortunately, a woman saw her and asked her if she needed help. Ms. Estrich said that she did in fact need help. The woman called for an ambulance and stayed by Ms. Estrich until the ambulance arrived. Ms. Estrich says, “I was carrying a purse full of credit cards and money. I was still carrying it when I got to the hospital. I was wearing an expensive watch and a fancy (looking) ring. I was still wearing them when I got to the hospital. She could

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<sup>36</sup> Source: Roger Ebert, “Anna Thomas: Honey, there’s a love in my soup.” 11 April 2010  
 <<http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100411/PEOPLE/100419999>>.

have slipped off the watch or the ring, or looked in my purse for my ID and found hundreds of dollars and a stack of credit cards. I would not have known or cared.” Ms. Estrich thanked the woman in a 14 April 2010, column: “Sometimes, our fate is in the hands of a perfect stranger, who we never get to thank. This is the best I can do. Thank you. And God bless you.”<sup>37</sup>

### **“Dear”**

One of the things that Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., believes firmly is this: “God d\*mn it, you’ve got to be kind.” One of the things that cheers him up is buying a morning cup of coffee in New York City, which he describes as mad for money. He says, “You can go into a little café and the waitress calls you ‘dear’ even though she knows the bill will be a small expenditure and the tip tiny. So she is responding to you as a person and feels happy and wants to communicate.”<sup>38</sup>

### **Two Replies to an Anti-Semitic Publishing Company**

In the summer of 1938, Germany was already displaying great prejudice toward Jews. A publishing company that was preparing a German translation of J.R.R. Tolkien’s fantasy novel *The Hobbit* wrote him to make sure that he had no Jewish ancestry. Mr. Tolkien was not an anti-Semite, so he wrote a flat reply to the publishing company in which he declined to reveal anything of his ancestry. However, he felt that he had an obligation not to do anything to hurt the profits of his publishing company, Allen & Unwin, and so he drafted another reply to the

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<sup>37</sup> Source: Susan Estrich, “The Kindness of a Stranger.” Creators Syndicate. 14 April 2010  
<<http://www.creators.com/liberal/susan-estrich/the-kindness-of-a-stranger-2010-04-14.html>>.

<sup>38</sup> Source: William Rodney Allen, editor, *Conversations with Kurt Vonnegut*, pp. 61-62, 149.

German publishing company: “[...] I regret that I am not clear as what you intend by arisch [Aryan]. I am not of Aryan extraction: that is Indo-iranian; as far as I am aware none of my ancestors spoke Hindustani, Persian, Gypsy, or any related dialects. But if I am to understand that you are enquiring whether I am of *Jewish* origin, I can only reply that I regret that I appear to have no ancestors of that gifted people.” Mr. Tolkien then sent both replies to Allen & Unwin and let the publishing company choose which reply to send. The publishing company sent the flat refusal to give the German publishing company any information about Mr. Tolkien’s ancestry. A German translation of *The Hobbit* did not appear in print until 1957.<sup>39</sup>

### **A Perfect Soundbite**

As a newbie in his newspaper’s features department, Sam Wollaston had to do ring-rounds. In these, the journalist telephones a number of famous people to get quotations about such things as what gifts they got for Christmas. Several of these quotations make up an article for the newspaper. Mr. Wollaston hated doing these; he writes, “It is, I imagine, a bit like working in an Indian call centre, but instead of the general public telling you to bugger off then hanging up, it’s the great and the good.” He once had to telephone Quentin Crisp, author of *The Naked Civil Servant*, in New York. Mr. Crisp knew how to treat a journalist. Mr. Wollaston writes, “Instead of telling me to go away, he was absolutely charming and delivered me a perfect soundbite, wise and witty, all ready-made and gift-wrapped in purple. Quentin Crisp was very good at that — talking as if he knew that someone was writing his words down to print them, which someone generally was.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Source: Neil Heims, *J.R.R. Tolkien*, pp. 100-101.

<sup>40</sup> Source: Sam Wollaston, “An Englishman in New York.” *The Guardian*. 29 December 2009 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/tv->

## Tutoring in Math

When Christopher Paul Curtis, author of the children's book *Bud, Not Buddy*, was ten years old, he opened the door of his home and found a group of strange men outside. He remembered his father's rule about not opening the door to strangers, and worried, but the men were people from the factory where his father worked. His father spent months tutoring them in math, so that they could get better-paying jobs at the factory.<sup>41</sup>

## Avoiding the Shattering of a Delicate Point Of View

F. Scott Fitzgerald was thought to be a spendthrift, but actually he was careful with money so that he would be able to work on his novels. However, the illness of his wife, Zelda, forced him to spend large amounts of money to take very good care of her. Occasionally, well-meaning friends recommended ways for him to reduce his expenses, but often Mr. Fitzgerald was unable to accept the recommendations. On 16 October 1936, he wrote to Max Perkins, his editor at Scribner: "Such stray ideas as sending my daughter to a public school, putting my wife in a public insane asylum, have been proposed to me by intimate friends, but it would break something in me that would shatter the very delicate pencil end of a point of view." By the way, when Mr. Fitzgerald was filling out his income-tax forms, the United States government had no way of double-checking — as it has now — that the taxpayer had reported all income. However, Fitzgerald scholar William J. Quirk's examination of Mr. Fitzgerald's financial records and income-tax returns shows that he was "impeccably honest in his reporting."<sup>42</sup>

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and-radio/2009/dec/29/an-englishman-in-new-york>.

<sup>41</sup> Source: Judy Levin, *Christopher Paul Curtis*, p. 20.

<sup>42</sup> Source: William J. Quirk, "Living on \$500,000 a Year." *The American Scholar*. Autumn 2009

### **A Gift from a Tough Guy**

Argentine author Jorge Luis Borges spent much time in the Northside area of Buenos Aires. Northside was frequented by hoodlums and tough guys who were basically old and retired when Mr. Borges met them. One old tough guy Mr. Borges met was Nicolás Paredes, who lived in great poverty but who had great pride and insisted on giving guests to his home a gift. When Mr. Borges visited him, then prepared to leave, Mr. Paredes told him, “No one leaves my house empty-handed, Borges.” He searched his house for something to give Mr. Borges, and he found an orange. Mr. Borges valued Mr. Paredes’ friendship, and he says he wishes that he could have preserved that orange forever.<sup>43</sup>

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<<http://www.theamericanscholar.org/living-on-500000-a-year/>>.

<sup>43</sup> Source: Adrian Lennon, Jorge Luis Borges, pp. 51-52.



## ART

### A Valuable Gift

In 1985, Cosima Von Bulow, the daughter of Claus Von Bulow, turned 18 years old. The circumstances were bad. Her mother was in a coma, and her father was accused of putting her in a coma by administering too much insulin to her in an attempt to murder her. Ordinarily, Cosima would have received a valuable gift from her mother, who had gifted two older children in that manner when they turned 18. Of course, her mother was in no condition to give Cosima a gift and the people administering the mother's estate did not give Cosima a gift — Cosima sided with her father when he was accused of murder. Andy Warhol heard about what had happened, and he gave Cosima a valuable painting that he had created. By the way, Andy Warhol regularly served dinner to the homeless on Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas at the Church of the Heavenly Rest in New York.<sup>44</sup>

### People Who Live in Glass Houses

When Philip Johnson built his Glass House in New Canaan, Connecticut, many people disliked it, and some people even threw stones at it. This caused Mr. Johnson to visit neighbors' house and throw stones, too, an act that got him in trouble with the law. Mr. Johnson and a few other local artists with unusual homes knew that their neighbors disliked their taste in architecture. Thinking about how to get on the good side of their neighbors, they decided to hold a tour of their homes annually, with the money going to a local charity. The tours were a great success, but one neighbor lady still told Mr. Johnson that she never wanted

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<sup>44</sup> Source: Christophe Von Hohenberg, photographer, *Andy Warhol: The Day the Factory Died*, unnumbered pages.

to live in his Glass House. He replied, “Madam, I haven’t invited you.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Source: Susan Goldman Rubin, *There Goes the Neighborhood: Ten Buildings People Loved to Hate*, pp. 34, 36.

## MUSIC

### Food Can Be an Important Gift

When Patti Smith decided to go to New York to be an artist, she almost did not make it because the bus ticket cost more than she thought it would. Fortunately for her, she found a purse in a telephone booth. It contained a brooch and \$32, which was a significant amount of money back then. She took the \$32, but left the brooch and the purse, hoping that its owner would come back and find it. Taking the money allowed Patti to go to New York and become an artist. She writes in her autobiography, *Just Kids*, “I can only thank, as I have within myself many times through the years, this unknown benefactor. She was the one who gave me the last piece of encouragement, a thief’s good-luck sign. I accepted the grant of the small white purse as the hand of fate pushing me on.” A more conventional good deed was performed in New York when a hungry Patti Smith ran across a barefoot street person whom she describes as “Saint, my guide, a black Cherokee with one foot in the street and the other in the Milky Way.” He saw her and asked, “Hey, sister. What’s your situation?” She replied, “On earth or in the universe?” He laughed and said, “All right!” He then took her with him as he made his rounds along a street lined with cafes. He and the cooks knew each other, and they would talk and he would ask, “Got anything for me?” They gave him day-old bread and lettuce that would soon go bad, and he and Patti went to the park, sat together on a bench and ate lettuce sandwiches. Patti commented, “A real prison breakfast,” and Saint replied, “Yes, but we are free.” For a few days, they ate together and slept separately, and once they shared a real breakfast after Patti found 50 cents in the park. But then Saint stopped showing up in the morning at the place they regularly met. That was OK with Patti, who comments, “He had given me what I needed to keep going.” Another good-

deed doer was Frances Finley. Frances and Patti worked together at Brentano's, but Patti was still very short of money, so Frances sometimes brought her homemade soup. As hungry people know, food can be an important gift. By the way, the title of Patti's autobiography, which is also a biography of her great friend Robert Mapplethorpe, comes from a day when two tourists, a husband and wife, saw them. The wife wanted her husband to take a photo of Patti and Robert because she thought that they might be artists, but her husband said, "They're just kids."<sup>46</sup>

### **Behaving Heroically When Every Second Counts**

On 30 July 2010, Matthew Leone, bassist of the rock band Madina Lake, responded to cries for help from a woman who was being beaten by her husband. He tried to separate the two, but the husband beat him and left him unconscious with severe head injuries. The woman's husband was arrested. Doctors removed part of Matthew's skull while waiting for the swelling of his brain to go down, and then they reattached the part of the skull they had removed. Matthew had no health insurance, but many musicians and bands and other people rallied to raise funds for his medical care. Benefit concerts by such groups as Smashing Pumpkins and Kill Hannah and auctions with items donated by such luminaries as Madonna, Marilyn Manson, Metallica, Nickelback, Gene Simmons, Pete Wentz, and many more have raised money for his medical care. In addition, the charity organization Sweet Relief raised tens of thousands of dollars for his medical care. *JVO of Chicago Now* wrote, "And let's be clear: Matthew's not a big guy. Both the twins [Matthew's identical twin is Nathan] look like they could use more butter, burgers, and ice cream in their diets. And yet, despite his size, Matthew behaved heroically in an every-second-counts scenario.

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<sup>46</sup> Source: Patti Smith, *Just Kids*, pp. 24-25, 27-29, 42, 47.

Justifiably, his actions and their results have resonated across countries and social circles.”<sup>47</sup>

### **Giving Credit Where Credit is Due**

Henry Rollins can admit when he is wrong, and he can give credit when credit is due. Kira Roessler played bass with hardcore group Black Flag from December 1983 through September 1985. Mr. Rollins, singer for Black Flag, did not like her much. The last song of her last gig with Black Flag was “Louie Louie” and Mr. Rollins used the song to rip her apart by singing his own made-up lyrics about what a “rancid b\*tch” she was. Actually, even though he didn’t like her, she was tough. Mr. Rollins remembers once when Ms. Roessler went into a bathroom and a woman started beating on her. Ms. Roessler’s hand was hurt pretty badly, but she played anyway. Mr. Rollins wrote in his journal, “She’s tough. I don’t like her very much, but I sure respect her.” In the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of his book *Get in the Van: On the Road with Black Flag*, which consists mainly of Mr. Rollins’ journal entries while he was with Black Flag, Mr. Rollins regrets having been so hard on her. He writes, “We were living hard in those days and a lot was asked of us and we weren’t always that kind to each other. [...] things were very strained in those days. We lived on top of each other, and too high stress levels were constant. In spite of all that,

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<sup>47</sup> Source: Lee Klawans, “Chicago musician Matthew Leone comes through surgery and is recovering.” *Cleveland Examiner*. 23 July 2010 <<http://www.examiner.com/performing-arts-in-chicago/chicago-musician-matthew-leone-comes-through-surgery-and-is-recovering-video>>. Also: “Matthew Leone,” Wikipedia <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew\\_Leone#Assault\\_and\\_hospitalization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Leone#Assault_and_hospitalization)>. Accessed 28 September 2010. Also: JVO, “Matthew Leone.” *Chicago Now*. 24 July 2010 <<http://www.chicagonow.com/blogs/journal-vitriolic-observations/2010/07/matthew-leone.html>>.

Kira never once complained. She was in the band for the brutal 1984 tour where the band played more often than it ate, a way of touring that would send most current bands running back for mom. The whole time, Kira hit it hard every night, took the same amount of sh[\*]t the rest of us took, slept as little or less than anyone else in the band and crew and never broke, not to mention, she played great.”<sup>48</sup>

### **Hugs from Taylor Swift**

Country music star Taylor Swift believes in hugging: “I’ve always been a hugger. If we all hugged more, the world would be a better place.” Michael Wekall and Ryan Leander, two 22-year-old seniors at Auburn University in Alabama, also believe in hugging. In fact, in 2010, they set two humorous goals for their lives: “1. Hug Taylor Swift and 2. Die happy.” To achieve their goal, they created a Facebook group (A Hug from Taylor Swift — please join), they began tweeting (@ahugfromtaylor — please follow, T. Swift does), and they got help to create a website and logo (AHugFromTaylorSwift.com). They also posted on YouTube some videos that documented their quest to hug Ms. Swift. All of this attracted the attention of the 19-year-old Ms. Swift, who posted on YouTube a video in which she stated that “these guys seem very dedicated, and they seem like they would be game for some fun, like, some challenges or something like that. Maybe they’d video them and put them up on their sites so I could see it ... something that kind of like, I don’t know, we’ll start simple, maybe something that kind of improves humanity. ... Let’s start with like the basic good deed: helping a little old lady across the street. Film it, and put it up. That’s your first challenge.” Ryan and Michael met that challenge: They helped across the street a 91-year-old ex-Auburn

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<sup>48</sup> Source: Henry Rollins, *Get in the Van: On the Road with Black Flag*, pp. 173, 246, 296.

professor with the assistance of Aubie (the Auburn mascot) and 50 or 60 other people. In fact, they also asked other people to help an old lady across the street and film it, and they put online a compilation video of lots of people helping little old ladies across the street. Impressed, Ms. Swift tweeted, “Last week I challenged these guys to help an old lady cross the street. Never expected to see this level of greatness!” Then Ms. Swift made a second challenge: to use her lucky number, 13, while doing another good deed, and to post a video of it. They did. The video showed themselves and other people sending 13 of Ms. Swift’s CDs as well as greeting cards and stickers to 13 children’s hospitals. The final challenge was to appear — and bring a crowd of people — at a certain time in the auditorium of a certain hotel at Auburn University to sing karaoke. A filmed message from Ms. Swift appeared on screen — she said, “I really wish I was there to see that” — and then she surprised people by showing up in person on stage. She sang a couple of songs for the 250 people in the audience, and then talked with Mr. Wekall and Mr. Leander backstage. And yes, they got their hugs. (They wore “A Hug from Taylor Swift” t-shirts; she wore “A Hug for Ryan and Michael” t-shirt.) Mr. Leander’s cheek even had lipstick on it. He said, “I’ll try not to wash it, but I have to take a shower sometime.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Source: Ely Portillo, “Charlotte pals pursue, get hugs from Taylor Swift.” *The Charlotte Observer* 27 April 2010.  
 <<http://www.thestate.com/2010/04/27/1261734/charlotte-pals-pursue-get-hugs.html>>. Also: Lauren Le Vine, “2 Guys, 1 Goal: A Hug From Taylor Swift.” *Tonic.com*. 31 March 2010  
 <<http://www.tonic.com/article/2-guys-1-goal-a-hug-from-taylor-swift/>>. Also:  
 <<http://www.ahugfromtaylorswift.com/Home.html>>.  
 Accessed on 6 December 2010.

## A Free Demo Tape

At Kansas State University, basso Samuel Ramey developed an interest in opera, and a friend told him about a small opera company in Central City, Colorado, that seemed ideal for him. This company used young singers in the chorus during a summer festival, and it had an apprentice program for young singers. Mr. Ramey went to his local radio station and asked if he could cut a demo tape there. They agreed, and Mr. Ramey says, “They didn’t charge me.” By way of explanation, he adds, “It was a small town.” That summer of 1963 he sang for the company in *Don Giovanni* and *Il Trovatore*; interestingly, he sang in an opera before he had ever actually seen an opera.<sup>50</sup>

## Complimentary Tickets

Conductor Leopold Stokowski once did flutist Donald Peck and one of Mr. Peck’s friends a kindness. In Oslo, Norway, Mr. Stokowski came over to Mr. Peck and his friend and asked, “Are you coming to my concert?” Mr. Peck and his friend explained that they had tried to get tickets, but that the concert was sold out. Mr. Stokowski said, “Not for you,” and he arranged for tickets to be given to them.<sup>51</sup>

## Climas Cool

Jam Master Jay of the rap group Run-DMC used to go to the barber shop of Marcus Iverson when he visited downtown Detroit. Of course, he always wore Adidas shoes, which was part of the uniform of his group. One day, Mr. Iverson complimented him on his shoes, which were a nice-looking style of Adidas that he had never seen in

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<sup>50</sup> Source: Joshua Jampol, *Living Opera*, pp. 262-263.

<sup>51</sup> Source: Donald Peck, *The Right Time, The Right Place! Tales of Chicago Symphony Days*, p. 64.



stores. Jay explained that they were named Climas Cool, and they were the lightest shoes Adidas made. A few days passed, and a package arrived for Mr. Iverson. Jay had sent him a pair of Climas Cool shoes.<sup>52</sup>

### **A Good Deed from a Raincoat, Plus a Good Deed**

Kurt Cobain of Nirvana fame respected The Raincoats, a British punk band, and when he was in London in 1992 he spent a lot of time trying to find a new copy of their 1979 self-titled debut album. Finally, he found Raincoats vocalist and guitarist Ana Da Silva in an antiques store. He begged her for a copy of the album, and she promised to send it to him. In the sleeve notes for *Incesticide*, a 1992 Nirvana album, Mr. Cobain wrote, “A few weeks later I received a vinyl copy of that wonderfully classic scripture with a personalized dust sleeve covered with Xeroxed lyrics, pictures, and all the members’ signatures. There was also a touching letter from Anna [should be Ana]. It made me happier than playing in front of thousands of people each night, rock-god idolization from fans, music industry plankton kissing my [\*]ss, and the million dollars I made last year. It was one of the few really important things that I’ve been blessed with since becoming an untouchable boy genius.” Mr. Cobain was able to return Ms. Da Silva’s good deed. In 1993, Rough Trade and DGC Records released *The Raincoats* and two other albums by the band — the liner notes were written by Mr. Cobain and Kim Gordon, the bassist of Sonic Youth. According to Ms. Gordon, “It was The Raincoats I related to most. They seemed like ordinary people playing extraordinary music.” The only member of The Raincoats who had any musical experience was Palmolive, who had been the drummer of The Slits. According to punk critic Steven Wells,

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<sup>52</sup> Source: Craig Marberry, *Cuttin’ Up: Wit and Wisdom from Black Barber Shops*, p. 33.

“Believing the punk propaganda that ‘anyone can do it,’ The Raincoats did just that — and made music that would inspire another generation of punk musicians in America. The Raincoats were the classic ‘can’t play, will play’ do-it-yourself punk band.” Punk really was DIY — Do It Yourself. A cartoon in the punk fanzine *Sniffin’ Glue* showed the reader a diagram of how to make three chords. The text of the cartoon stated, “This is a chord. This is another. This is a third. NOW FORM A BAND.”<sup>53</sup>

### **More Than 150,000 Well-Wishers**

In 1987, tenor Jose Carreras learned that he was suffering from leukemia. He got chemotherapy treatments, and then he got bone marrow treatments, and his cancer was cured, but it took a long time for him to be cured. During his treatments, both good and bad things occurred. Photographers sometimes dressed in hospital gowns in order to try to get access to his hospital room, and newspapers prepared his obituary in case he died. In a *New York Times* interview, he said, “My first reaction was to ask over and over, ‘Why me?’ But when I was moved to the hospital, my floor had twelve rooms, and in eight of those the leukemia patients were little children. Then you don’t ask, ‘Why me?’ anymore.” Fortunately, a good thing that happened was that he received more than 150,000 pieces of mail from people wishing him well. One of the first things he did when he could sing again was to perform at a benefit concert for the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, which is located in Seattle and is where he stayed from November 1987 to March 1988.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Source: Steven Wells, *Punk: Young, Loud, and Snotty*, pp. 5, 100-101. Also: “The Raincoats.”

<[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Raincoats](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Raincoats)>. Accessed 13 July 2010.

<sup>54</sup> Source: Nancy Shear, *The Three Tenors*, pp. 71, 73-75.

### **“My Priorities Shifted”**

On 19 September 1985, an earthquake hit Mexico, causing great devastation and loss of life. Opera tenor Plácido Domingo set up an emergency village to house victims of the earthquake, including children who had been orphaned. He also took a year off from appearing in operas and instead performed in benefit concerts that raised approximately \$1.5 million to help the victims of the earthquake. Mr. Domingo himself lost a number of extended family members in the earthquake; he says, “I was touched by tragedy, by loss, and I think as a result my priorities shifted.” By the way, on 11 October 1968, Mr. Domingo’s wife gave birth. The following night, Mr. Domingo performed at the New York City Opera. In one scene, he was supposed to throw candy to a chorus of children; instead, he threw cigars to the adults in the audience. Each cigar bore this message: “It’s a Boy!”<sup>55</sup>

### **Answering a Letter**

The father of jazz bassist Coleridge Goode was George Goode, who was important in the musical life of Jamaica. After reading a book titled *Fugitive Notes on Certain Church Cantatas* by the Bach expert William Gillies Whittaker, George Goode decided to include the cantata “Sleepers, Wake” in the program of the Diocesan Festival Choir. However, he was uncertain about how to interpret some of the cantata and so he wrote a letter requesting advice from Dr. Whittaker, who did the very good deed of writing back and giving detailed advice as he answered George Goode’s questions. He also told George Goode that the critics were “always wrong” and not to worry about

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<sup>55</sup> Source: Millicent Jones, *The World’s Greatest Tenors*, pp. 48, 50.  
Also: Plácido Domingo, *My First Forty Years*, p. 73.

them. The two men then continued a correspondence that lasted for years.<sup>56</sup>

### **A Torn-Up Check**

Bassist Milt Hinton played at one of the first recording sessions of Quincy Jones. Unfortunately, the copyist was late with the music, forcing Mr. Jones to pay overtime to all of the musicians. Because Mr. Jones was just starting out, Mr. Hinton tore up his check and sent it back to him. More than 35 years later, Mr. Hinton wrote in his book titled *Over Time*, “I didn’t know it until recently, but he’d had that check framed and it’s been hanging on his office wall for more than thirty-five years.”<sup>57</sup>

### **Battling Prejudice**

Dick Clark loves music, and he loves the people who make music. During the Civil Rights Era, he used to take caravans of music stars through the South. Some of the stars were black, and some of the stars were white. Some venues told Mr. Clark that the white stars could perform there, but that the black stars could not perform there. Whenever that happened, Mr. Clark would cancel the entire concert, and then he and the stars would move on to the next venue.<sup>58</sup>

### **Battling Prejudice, Part 2**

Joe Venuti was a white man who played jazz and who had no tolerance for racial prejudice. In the Jim Crow era, black musicians were not allowed to play in certain venues.

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<sup>56</sup> Source: Coleridge Goode and Roger Cotterrell, *Bass Lines: A Life in Jazz*, pp. 708.

<sup>57</sup> Source: Milt Hinton, David G. Berger, and Holly Maxson, *OverTime: The Jazz Photographs of Milt Hinton*, p. 98.

<sup>58</sup> Source: Mina Carson, Tisa Lewis, and Susan M. Shaw, *Girls Rock! Fifty Years of Women Making Music*, pp. xii, 21.

However, Mr. Venuti was able to get African-American violinist Eddie South booked into some of these venues simply by saying that he would not play those venues unless Mr. South could also play those venues. African-American musician Milt Hinton says, “Joe did some pretty courageous things long before it was popular.”<sup>59</sup>

### **A Famous Singer and a Famous Physicist**

When gospel singer Mahalia Jackson was invited to Princeton, she was unable to find a place to stay because of the color of her skin. Physicist Alfred Einstein heard about this, and so he invited her to stay at his home. Then, and thereafter, whenever Ms. Jackson came to Princeton, she stayed at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Einstein.<sup>60</sup>

### **“The Branch Rickey of Jazz”**

When Billy Crystal was five years old, his father took him to work with him. Before going to the workplace, they stopped at a little coffee shop, and Billy’s father ordered “the usual.” Billy did not know what “the usual” was, but it sounded important, so he ordered it, too — and learned that it was a buttered roll, a cup of coffee, and a cigarette. Billy’s father ran a jazz store and recorded great jazz artists. Later, Billy learned that some of the jazz artists considered his father “the Branch Rickey of jazz” because he integrated jazz players. On his recordings of jazz, black musicians and white musicians often played together — something that was not common back then. In fact, his father helped get Billie Holiday’s anti-lynching song, “Strange Fruit,” recorded.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Source: Milt Hinton, David G. Berger, and Holly Maxson, *OverTime: The Jazz Photographs of Milt Hinton*, p. 140.

<sup>60</sup> Source: “Walter Mosley: 20 Questions.” Popmatters.com. 22 March 2010 <<http://www.popmatters.com/pm/feature/122645-walter-mosley/>>.

### **“That Could’ve Been Me”**

Dee Dee Ramone of the Ramones gave money away to many homeless people. He once saw a homeless youth who looked a lot like Joey Ramone — tall and thin, and wearing holey jeans. The youth was barefoot, and he was tapping one foot back and forth from the curb to the street (which is something that Joey sometimes did because of his obsessive-compulsive disorder). Dee Dee yelled at his wife, Vera, who was driving, “Move over! Move over!” He then got out of the car and gave the homeless youth \$20. The youth looked at the \$20 bill and yelled at the departing Dee Dee, “Are you crazy?” Frequently, in Manhattan, while Dee Dee and his wife were waiting to go through the Midtown Tunnel, homeless people would wash their windshield. Dee Dee always gave them money, telling his wife, “That could’ve been me.” His wife, Vera, writes, “He never thought twice about giving strangers what little he had.”<sup>62</sup>

### **A Very Kind Man**

Dizzy Gillespie was a very kind man. When Jan Faddis was 15 years old, he brought 50 albums for Dizzy to sign. Dizzy signed all 50 of them. And when Chuck Mangione and his brother were in the mid-teens, Dizzy met them and invited them to jam with him. And when bassist Ray Brown arrived in New York for his first time, he ran into Dizzy, who invited him to his apartment. There Mr. Brown met jazz luminaries Max Roach, Charlie Parker, and Bud Powell.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Source: Billy Crystal, *700 Sundays*, pp. 38, 42-43, 46-47.

<sup>62</sup> Source: Vera Ramone King, *Poisoned Heart: I Married Dee Dee Ramone (The Ramones Years)*, p. 67.

<sup>63</sup> Source: Chip Deffaw, *Jazz Veterans: A Portrait Gallery*, p. 217.

### **“I Always Loved Hector!”**

Frank Sinatra was dining with friends at Nicky Blair’s restaurant on Sunset Boulevard. Unfortunately, a Mexican busboy named Hector dropped a tray of very expensive glasses, which shattered. Mr. Blair was angry and fired Hector. Mr. Sinatra, however, asked, how much each glass had cost. Mr. Blair answered that they had cost \$10 or \$20 each. Mr. Sinatra then gave Mr. Blair forty-five \$100 bills and said, “Bring me \$4,500 worth of glasses.” He also requested that Hector stay a while. Mr. Blair happily brought out the glasses (he was happy because of the profit on the markup of the glasses), and Mr. Sinatra said, “Hector, do you see all those glasses?” Hector did see them. Mr. Sinatra said, “Good. Now break ’em.” Hector broke each glass, and Mr. Sinatra said to Mr. Blair, “Every time I come in here I want to see Hector working for you. Understand what I’m saying?” Happy because of the profit on the \$4,500 of glasses — a sizeable profit even after deducting the cost of the dropped tray of glasses) — Mr. Blair said, “I always loved Hector!”<sup>64</sup>

### **Paying for the Bass Line**

One of Nancy Sinatra’s biggest hits was “These Boots are Made for Walkin’,” which has an incredibly effective and memorable bass line. Singer Jessica Simpson asked her for permission to cover the song, but Nancy would give Jessica permission only if she contacted and paid royalties to the original bass player, Chuck Berghofer. Nancy says, “Lee [Hazelwood] dictated the bass line to Chuck, but the way Chuck played it was psychotic!” Jessica promised, and later Nancy called Chuck. Nancy says, “Jessica was honorable and kept her word. He got paid.” By the way, Nancy, who

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<sup>64</sup> Source: Bill Zehme, *The Way You Wear Your Hat: Frank Sinatra and the Lost Art of Livin’*, p. 41.

is the daughter of Frank, also says, “When I die, I already know what my obituary will be, ‘Frank’s daughter died with her boots on!’ Ha.”<sup>65</sup>

### **Some Financial Breathing Room**

In September of 2008, the wife of musician Mark Mulcahey died, leaving behind three-year-old twin daughters and a husband who could use some money to raise his family and to keep on making music rather than to have to seek a day job. Coming to the rescue were many respected fellow musicians, who created an album of covers of Mr. Mulcahey’s songs. The album is titled *Ciao My Shining Star*, and its purpose is, in the words of journalist Nige Tassell, who interviewed Mr. Mulcahy, “to achieve a little financial breathing space for Mulcahy so he can resume his musical activities, the first of which will be the new record ‘that’s been sitting there blinking at me for nine months with nothing done on it.’” Of course, Mr. Mulcahy was touched that such musicians as Thom Yorke, Michael Stipe, and Frank Black would record the album of covers to give him some financial support. Mr. Mulcahy says, “It’s not that my house burned down and I’m in some drastic position. But I’m really, really touched, you know. It’s something that I wouldn’t want anybody to have to understand, but it’s incredible to try to understand it.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Source: Steve Horowitz, “You Only Live Once: An Interview With Nancy Sinatra.” Popmatters.com. 15 October 2009  
<<http://www.popmatters.com/pm/feature/111744-you-only-live-once-an-interview-with-nancy-sinatra/P0/>>.

<sup>66</sup> Source: Nige Tassell, “Mark Mulcahy ‘knocked out’ by surprise tribute album.” *The Guardian*. 17 September 2009  
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2009/sep/17/mark-mulcahey-surprise-tribute-album>>.



### **An Antique Spinnet at Cost**

Soprano Frances Alda once saw an antique spinet in a music shop in New York and fell in love with it immediately. She attempted to buy it, but the owner of the music shop said that it was not for sale — it was on display to attract customers. However, when the owner of the music shop learned that this woman who wanted to buy the spinet was the famous opera singer Frances Alda — a singer he had heard and enjoyed many times — he offered to give it to her in return for all the pleasure her singing had given him. Ms. Alda was finally able to convince him to accept a check for the amount that he had originally spent to buy the spinet, but he would accept no more money than that.<sup>67</sup>

### **An Important Choice**

African-American pianist J.W. “Blind” Boone made his living as a musician during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Because Mr. Boone was blind, a man tried to take advantage of him. The man became his manager and asked him to sign some papers for legal purposes. Blind Boone’s friend Wayne B. Allen discovered that the papers were large checks drawn on Blind Boone’s checking account and the deeds to Boone’s property. Therefore, Mr. Allen paid a visit to the man who was attempting to cheat Blind Boone. Mr. Allen drew a pistol, pointed it at the man’s chest, and told him, “You’ve known me all your life, and you know that I mean what I say. Either you tear up those papers, or I’ll drop you where you stand.” The man decided on the choice that did not end with a bullet tearing through his heart — he tore up the papers. Mr. Allen became Blind Boone’s new manager.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Source: Frances Alda, *Men, Women, and Tenors*, pp. 276-277.

<sup>68</sup> Source: Madge Harrah, *Blind Boone: Piano Prodigy*, pp. 100, 102.

## **As He Lay Dying**

When singer Nat King Cole lay dying in a hospital, he gave gifts to the people who helped take care of him. When he heard that a woman who worked in the kitchen was a fan, he sent her an autographed photograph. He also gave the workers on his floor a stereo, and the last photograph ever taken of him showed him posing with the gift and some nurses. Robert Kennedy sent him a note that said, “I have decided I will not sing publicly again unless it is with you.”<sup>69</sup>

## **The Coolest Gift Ever**

Some fans give good gifts. In Australia, Darryl McDaniels of Run-DMC fame received what he calls the “coolest” gift he has ever received. It came from a fan who gave him a stuffed Koala Bear that sported the Run-DMA look: a black hat, Adidas sneakers, and a gold chain.<sup>70</sup>

## **“Play It Loud”**

Courtney Love gave away a guitar to a girl during each of her performances in a tour in Australia. During one concert, she gave away a guitar to a girl, and then she noticed that a man was trying to take away the guitar from the girl. She called security and made sure that the girl got the guitar, and then she told her, “Play it loud, and don’t give it away to your boyfriend.”<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Source: Maria Cole, *Nat King Cole: An Intimate Biography*, pp. 142, 144.

<sup>70</sup> Source: David E. Thigpen, *Jam Master Jay: The Heart of Hip Hop*, p. 101.

<sup>71</sup> Source: Mina Carson, Tisa Lewis, and Susan M. Shaw, *Girls Rock! Fifty Years of Women Making Music*, p. 10.

## **Burying the “Blues Godfather” of Columbus, Ohio**

Willie Pooch was the “blues godfather” of Columbus, Ohio, but getting him properly buried took some effort. He died on 5 May 2010, of diabetes, and his funeral was well attended by central Ohio blues musicians and singers. Columbus Blues Alliance officer and board member Herb Sollars said, “It was packed. I had to park more than a block away.” Ray Fuller, of Ray Fuller and the Blues Rockers, said, “It was a very nice service. Wonderful sentiments were expressed by everyone. Beautiful music.” Mr. Fuller adds about Willie Pooch, “He was my hero, my friend, my mentor. I had the good fortune of playing a lot with him in the later years.” However, the service ended abruptly. Mr. Fuller said, “The preacher quoted Scripture — ‘ashes to ashes, dust to dust’ — and then the undertakers came right in, shut his coffin, cranked it shut and wheeled it away.” It turned out that Mr. Pooch’s family did not have the money to pay the costs of the funeral, and the funeral home was keeping possession of the body, which meant no procession of cars following the body to the cemetery could take place. When Mr. Fuller learned from his wife, Sherri, that Willie Pooch’s family could not pay the funeral costs, he did not hesitate, even when he discovered that the funeral costs were \$8,510. He says, “I’m not rich by any means. But I didn’t think twice. I pulled out my Visa card and said, ‘Let’s get this show on the road.’ Something like this can’t be done by committee. This was the family of my late musical friend and bandmate. I didn’t want them to be put through this.” The funeral home swiped Mr. Fuller’s Visa card and the funeral procession to the cemetery continued, late — in fact, so late that the preacher had gone home. “We had a nice service anyway, in the mausoleum chapel,” Mr. Fuller said. “The family spoke. Several members of the blues community spoke. I didn’t speak myself — I didn’t have any words.” (Later, a benefit

concert was held at the Roadhouse 66 Bar & Grille in Worthington, Ohio, to raise money in hopes to pay back Mr. Fuller for the cost of Mr. Pooch's funeral.)<sup>72</sup>

### **“God has a Purpose for All People”**

Musician and actor T.I. was in Atlanta, Georgia, and traveling to a video shoot when he heard on the radio that a 22-year-old black man on top of a building was threatening to jump off and commit suicide. T.I. says, “Something in my heart tells me to go down there. I’m thinking, ‘what can I do to help?’” He went to the building and talked to some police officers, saying that he wanted to help by talking to the young man. A police officer suggested a video message, so T.I. sent a message to the young man. T.I. says, “I say on the video that it’s not that bad, how it’s gonna be better, that I’m willing to help him get better, but you got to help me help you.” The young man agreed not to jump, and came down on the elevator, where T.I. greeted him: “He was kind of, not distraught, but just looked tired. I asked what’s wrong and he shook his head. I said, ‘it’s never as bad as it seems and if you know me, know what I’ve been through, you know I know it.’” Then the police took the young man away. T.I. says, “I’m aware some people are saying this was a publicity stunt. That’s preposterous. People refuse to acknowledge that God has a purpose for all people. Fate and destiny, all these things, they put us where we’re supposed to be. This was not a coincidence. I didn’t wake up in the morning knowing this

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<sup>72</sup> Source: Eric Lyttle, “Good deed sparks blues benefit.” *The Other Paper* (Columbus, OH). 17 June 2010  
 <<http://theotherpaper.com/articles/2010/07/01/music/doc4c1a2b8942dfe006510337.txt>>. Also: Mike Hardin, “Willie Pooch: He lived to style, and he went out in style.” 12 May 2010  
 <[http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local\\_news/stories/2010/05/12/willie-pooch-he-lived-to-style-and-he-went-out-in-style.html](http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/05/12/willie-pooch-he-lived-to-style-and-he-went-out-in-style.html)>.

was going to happen. This wasn't on my list of things to do today. If anything, I've known it before, felt it before, but in your darkest hours you lose sight of the fact that you can help people. This isn't out of the norm for me to go out of my way to help people, regardless of my circumstances. That isn't out of character for me, but I still have a hard time taking any credit for this. It was God's work, God's plan. I just happened to show up at the right time."<sup>73</sup>

### **An Impressive Gift**

Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn made a remarkable gift to the Queen of England. Mr. Ellington and Mr. Strayhorn composed the *Queen's Suite*. Mr. Ellington then paid the cost of three sessions in a recording studio, recorded the musical piece, and made exactly one album from a master tape. To make sure that it was a gift exclusively for the queen, he destroyed the master tape and he never performed the musical piece in public. (After he died, the piece was released to the public and it has been performed in public.)<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Source: Mimi Valdés, "T.I. Says Good Deed Not A Publicity Stunt." BET.com. 14 October 2010  
<[http://www.bet.com/Music/news/Tisaysgooddeednotapublicitystunt\\_musicnews.10.14.10.htm](http://www.bet.com/Music/news/Tisaysgooddeednotapublicitystunt_musicnews.10.14.10.htm)>.

<sup>74</sup> Source: Chip Deffaw, *Jazz Veterans: A Portrait Gallery*, pp. 108-109.

## DANCE

### **“Hi, This is Fred Astaire”**

In 1971, Twiggy went to Los Angeles to promote her movie *The Boy Friend*. While there, the publicity department asked if she wanted to meet any stars. As it happened, she did want to meet a particular star — she would love to meet Fred Astaire. Unfortunately, the publicity department pointed out that he was a very private man. Twiggy replied that she respected Mr. Astaire’s privacy, then gave up hope of meeting him. The very next day, she received a phone call inviting her to have tea with him. Here’s why: An MGM secretary who was a friend of Mr. Astaire’s had overheard her conversation with the publicity department and had told Mr. Astaire about it.<sup>75</sup>

### **“Hit Me as Much as You Like”**

Early in her career, Suzanne Farrell was rehearsing a dance with Arthur Mitchell when she accidentally hit him so hard that the rehearsal was cancelled to allow him to put ice on his chin. On the night of the premiere, Mr. Mitchell sent her a note: “Dear Suzanne, All the best. I know it will go well. Hit me as much as you like. Arthur.”<sup>76</sup>

### **Cheering Up a Future Ballerina**

When it was time for the young Alicia Markova to learn to dance the adagio from *Swan Lake*, Sergei Diaghilev decided to have the great Matilda Kchessinska, of the Maryinsky Ballet, teach it to her. Later, Ms. Markova became ill with pneumonia and remained behind in Monte Carlo while Mr. Diaghilev and his dance company traveled abroad. Ms. Markova was feeling sad because she didn’t

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<sup>75</sup> Source: Sarah Giles, *Fred Astaire: His Friends Talk*, p. 77.

<sup>76</sup> Source: Suzanne Farrell, *Holding On to the Air*, p. 75.

know anyone in Monte Carlo, but then Ms. Kchessinska and her husband, the Grand Duke André, visited her, bearing large gifts of fresh flowers and fresh fruit. Ms. Kchessinska had seen Mr. Diaghilev, inquired about the “Little One,” and had learned she was ill.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Source: Anton Dolin, *Alicia Markova: Her Life and Art*, pp. 131-132.

## TV AND MOVIES

### A Sly Gift-Giver

Makeup artist Kevyn Aucoin once did the makeup for Elizabeth Taylor. When he was finished, she looked in the mirror — critically — and then called to her assistant, “Come and see what he’s done to me!” Mr. Aucoin was afraid that she hated the makeup, but she told her assistant, “Isn’t it wonderful!” Mr. Aucoin was understandably relieved — for one thing, he greatly respects Ms. Taylor because of all the work that she has done to raise money for AIDS research. Ms. Taylor is sly when it comes to giving gifts. She told Mr. Aucoin that he reminded her of a person to whom she wanted to give a gift, and she asked what he would recommend. He told her about a baby-blue cashmere sweater that he had seen in a store, and later that day, Ms. Taylor gave him a gift — a baby-blue cashmere sweater.<sup>78</sup>

### A Kind, Encouraging Letter

In high school, David Morrell watched the TV series *Route 66*, many of whose episodes were written by Stirling Silliphant. He liked the series so much that he wrote Mr. Silliphant to say that he wanted to be a writer and was going to use Mr. Silliphant as a model. Mr. Silliphant wrote back, Mr. Morrell says, “a two-page, single-spaced letter that encouraged me to pursue my ambition.” Mr. Morrell did pursue his ambition, writing *First Blood*, a novel that introduced the character known as Rambo, who got his name in an interesting way. His wife, Donna, had stopped at a roadside stand and tasted an apple that was so good that she bought some. She told her husband, “You’ve got to try one. They’re delicious.” He did, and it was so good that he asked what was the name of that kind of apple. His wife

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<sup>78</sup> Source: Kevyn Aucoin, *The Art of Makeup*, pp. 162-163.



replied, “Rambo.” Mr. Morrell says, “If a name ever sounded like a force of nature, that was it.”<sup>79</sup>

### **Are All Paparazzi Bad?**

The day that Carey Mulligan, star of *An Education*, passed her driving test, three cars driven by paparazzi followed her. She tried to do such things as changing lanes to get rid of them, but she ended up driving into cul-de-sacs and making U-turns and getting lost. Eventually, she pulled over, and one of the paparazzi got out of his car and walked to her car and motioned for her to roll down her window. She did, and the paparazzo said, “We know where you’re going. We can’t take pictures of you there. But do you want us to show you how to get there?” She accepted his help — somewhat reluctantly — and he said, “Okay, I’ll show you where it is, and then we’ll leave you alone. Just follow me.” He led her to the place she was going — it was only two minutes away! Then next day, she went shopping and forgot to feed the parking meter — the same paparazzo fed the meter for her!<sup>80</sup>

### **“Be Excellent to Each Other”**

In June of 2010, a photo appeared on the WWW of actor Keanu Reeves sitting on a bench, eating a sandwich, and looking sad. Immediately, fans rallied around him, posting expressions of appreciation of him on the Web and recounting instances of his good deeds, of which there are many. For example, in 2003, Mr. Reeves gave £50 million of his earnings from the *Matrix* sequels to the members of the special-effects team. (This still left him £20 million.) He said at the time, “Money is the last thing I think about. I

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<sup>79</sup> Source: Otto Penzler, editor, *The Lineup*, pp. 257-258, 265-266.

<sup>80</sup> Source: Susan Sarandon, “Carey Mulligan.” Interviewmagazine.com. Accessed 26 April 2010  
<<http://www.interviewmagazine.com/film/carey-mulligan-1/>>.

could live on what I have already made for the next few centuries.” His sister has leukemia, and he has given away millions to the cause of fighting cancer. Other stories include him stopping his car so he could try to start a woman’s car for her with jumper cables. (It didn’t work, so he telephoned AAA for her and drove 50 miles out of his way to take her to her home. And he did not hit on her.) He also took stagehands out for free breakfasts and lunches for weeks at a time. He once gave a movie set builder a \$10,000 Christmas bonus after hearing that the man was having financial troubles. Mr. Reeves is also well known for simply having a genuinely nice personality. For example, he stopped in a New York coffee shop that grinds its beans and brews the coffee at the same time. Mr. Reeves ordered a coffee, asked an employee about the system of grinding the beans and brewing the coffee at the same time, and then sipped the coffee and said, “Whoa!” The brother of the employee who served Mr. Reeves says, “It was perfect. And it seemed like he was actually interested and impressed by the fancy nature of the coffee shop.” Regarding the recounting of Mr. Reeves’ good deeds and his fans’ outpouring of love for him, *Guardian* journalist Kira Cochrane wrote, “It was as though the world had suddenly awoken to the ideal espoused in Reeves’s *Bill and Ted* movies: ‘Be excellent to each other.’”<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Source: Kira Cochrane, “Keanu Reeves: an outpouring of love.” *The Guardian*. 13 June 2010

<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2010/jun/13/keanu-reeves-outpouring-of-love>>. Also: “Keanu Reeves gives £50 million to unsung heroes of ‘The Matrix.’” *Hello Magazine*. 28 May 2003

<<http://www.hellomagazine.com/celebrities/200305283652/keanu/reeves/matrix/1/>>. Also: “Keanu. More sadness in comments.”

<[http://www.reddit.com/r/pics/comments/cb8uo/keanu\\_more\\_sadness\\_in\\_comments/](http://www.reddit.com/r/pics/comments/cb8uo/keanu_more_sadness_in_comments/)>. Accessed 14 June 2010. Also: “Sad Keanu Reeves - The Latest Image Meme.”

## Interest Free — And No Points

When Jim Jarmusch was making his early feature film *Stranger Than Paradise*, he needed \$15,000, which Paul Bartel, an actor and independent filmmaker who had some money after finishing his film *Eating Raoul*, lent to him — interest-free, and without asking for a percentage of the film. Mr. Jarmusch says that “without his help I have no idea how I could have continued with the film.” The two men met in Germany, where Mr. Bartel was showing *Eating Raoul*. He read and enjoyed Mr. Jarmusch’s script, and Mr. Jarmusch says that Mr. Bartel told him “that he had spent so much time fighting to work independently, that now, since he had a little money from *Eating Raoul*, he wanted to turn around and help someone else.” By the way, Mr. Bartel and his wife, Mary Woronov, starred together in the cult movie *Rock ‘n’ Roll High School*, featuring the Ramones.<sup>82</sup>

## Making Dennehy Famous

Married couple Tom and Anna Dennehy (pronounced DUNN-a-hee) became lifelong friends of Jackie Gleason when Jackie (then a child) and his mother rented an apartment in the building in which the Dennehys were superintendents. The Dennehys helped Jackie and his mother — and later, Jackie and his wife — many times during the years, including lending Jackie’s wife money so she could survive until her husband, who was away trying to establish a show-business career, could send her money. Mr. Gleason made the Dennehy name well known when he had a weekly variety (mostly comedy) series. His character

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<<http://www.urlesque.com/2010/06/07/sad-keanu-reeves-the-latest-image-meme/>>. Accessed 14 June 2010.

<sup>82</sup> Source: Peter Belsito, editor, *Notes from the Pop Underground*, p. 69.

Joe the Bartender often appeared, and looking into the camera spoke to the not-visible customer Mr. Dennehy.<sup>83</sup>

### **Acting Tips**

When Bill Cosby starting acting, he co-starred with Robert Culp in *I Spy*. Because Mr. Cosby was new to acting, he was stiff in the first episode, and some NBC executives were concerned. However, Mr. Culp, an experienced actor, gave Mr. Cosby acting tips and advice about bits of business to perform. The advice worked. Mr. Cosby and Mr. Culp were up for Emmys as Best Actor in a Dramatic Series at the end of the season, and Mr. Cosby won. (Actually, the advice *really* worked — Mr. Cosby won Emmys for all three seasons that *I Spy* was on the air.)<sup>84</sup>

### **Two Very Special Jerseys**

On *The George Lopez Show*, the characters sometimes visit a sports bar, on the walls of which are two very special jerseys. On one jersey is the name “Hanson,” and on the other is the name “Johnson.” The jerseys are there to honor two women who were members of the United States Adult Soccer Association’s National Select Team. One jersey honors Jessica Hanson, who at age 22 in August 2005 died in a car accident along with her father, her boyfriend, and a family friend. The second honors Jenna Johnson, a teammate of Ms. Hanson’s, who died at age 22 in December 2005 while training to run in a marathon for charity. Ms. Johnson had worked as a production assistant on *The George Lopez Show*, and Mr. Lopez and his wife, Ann, paid the expenses for her funeral.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Source: Karen Adir, *The Great Clowns of American Television*, p. 119.

<sup>84</sup> Source: Larry Kettelkamp, *Bill Cosby: Family Funny Man*, pp. 33-34.

<sup>85</sup> Source: Lila and Rick Guzmán, *George Lopez: Latino King*, pp. 63-

## An Animated Gift

When actress Sharon Stone was starting work in the movie *Casino*, director Martin Scorsese asked her what her favorite film was. Hearing that it was the animated version of *The Jungle Book*, he told her that he had a print of that film. Actual prints, as opposed to videotapes or DVDs, are rare, and Ms. Stone asked if she could have it if she did a good job in the movie. After filming was completed, she went to her trailer and discovered the cans of film of the movie stacked in her chair.<sup>86</sup>

## Don't Feel Guilty Forever After

During the making of *To Catch a Thief*, starring Cary Grant and directed by Alfred Hitchcock, script supervisor May Wale Brown felt privileged to be included in their conversations. At one point, Mr. Hitchcock asked Mr. Grant, "How do you keep so fit?" Mr. Grant said that he followed the advice of nutrition expert Adelle Davis, who had written a book titled *Let's Eat Right*. Ms. Brown, another Adelle Davis follower, commented that she had lent eight copies of that book to friends who had never returned them. Mr. Grant showed up at the set the following day with two copies of Ms. Davis' book: one for Mr. Hitchcock and one for Ms. Brown. In Ms. Brown's copy, he had written, "Please return this copy to May promptly or feel guilty forever after. [Signed] Cary Grant."<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Source: Lawrence Grobel, *Above the Line: Conversations About the Movies*, p. 325.

<sup>87</sup> Source: May Wale Brown, *Reel Life on Hollywood Movie Sets*, pp. 90-91.

## UNICEF to the Rescue

Late in her life, actress Audrey Hepburn did good work as a Goodwill Ambassador for UNICEF, traveling the world and helping those who most need help. In a remote region of the Sudan, she saw a desperately ill 14-year-old boy who had been diagnosed with anemia, edema, and respiratory problems — these diseases were the effects of malnutrition. The diseases were familiar to Ms. Hepburn, who had been a child in Holland when the Nazis occupied it during World War II. At age 14, she had had the same three diseases that the boy had. The winter of 1944 in Holland was known as the Winter of Hunger — she remembers eating tulip bulbs and grass to stay alive. Ms. Hepburn had intended to be a dancer, but malnutrition took muscular strength away from her. She remembers the UNICEF trucks coming with boxes of food and medicine. She says, “I was one of the thousands of hungry youngsters and not all that well through many years of malnutrition, and it was UNICEF that came in with food packages ... I opened up a can of condensed milk and ate the lot.”<sup>88</sup>

## Transportation for a Dying Star

As Audrey Hepburn was dying, she received many kindnesses. She wanted to die at home in Switzerland, but because it was the Christmas season, getting home health care would be difficult. Her family asked Betty, a nurse who had been taking care of her at Cedars Hospital, to come to Switzerland. Betty did the very good deed of agreeing. Another very good deed was done by a person who gave her family the use of a private jet to fly her to Switzerland. The private jet was necessary because a steep take-off and landing could have ruptured one or more occlusions in her intestines and caused peritonitis.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Source: Robin Muir, *The World's Most Photographed*, pp. 132, 138.

## English Actress Joanna Lumley is a Goddess

In 2009, the people of Nepal declared that English actress Joanna Lumley is a goddess because of her work as a very visible member of the Gurkha Justice Campaign. Gurkhas are Nepalese soldiers who fight as a part of the British army. As a result of the work of the Gurkha Justice Campaign, a Gurkha who has been a member of the British army for over four years can now settle in the United Kingdom, if the Gurkha wishes. About her elevation to goddess from actress, Ms. Lumley says, “Well, it’s beyond comprehension actually, you know? Somebody explained to my son, Jamie, who was out there, that in Nepal they believe that if the gods can’t handle something, a problem, they pick somebody out and send them to Earth to solve the problem, and the person who solves the problem is called a god or a goddess. And because my head was above the parapet, because my face was the identifiable one of our team — we were a team — they maybe saw me as that person who had been sent to [solve] the problem.” Ms. Lumley was more than just a figurehead for the organization. When Ms. Lumley learned that five Gurkhas had been denied residency in the UK, she met with immigration officer Phil Woolas. As *Guardian* reporter Laura Barton writes, Ms. Lumley “pursued Woolas around the studio and forced him into an impromptu press conference, in which he agreed to further talks on the matter.” Ms. Lumley is a nice woman. She says that “with Mr. Woolas we had just come from a room where we had been talking with the lawyers and [Liberal Democrat] Peter Carroll for about half an hour about what the next step would be, and in that press conference all I was doing was saying aloud and corroborating with him what was said. But it looked a little bit as though I was giving him a tough

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<sup>89</sup> Source: Sean Hepburn Ferrer, *Audrey Hepburn: An Elegant Spirit*, pp. 152, 207-208.

time. So to make up for that I did invite him round for supper.” He accepted the invitation, and Ms. Lumley says that “he brought two friends and we had fish and chips and champagne by candlelight.” By the way, the people of Nepal also named a mountain after her. So, what kind of things does a goddess do? She says, “I’ve got to tell you in service stations on big motorways I always clean up the ladies loo. I pick up all the bits of hankies, I tidy up the bins, I get using the towels, I clean the tops, I shut the doors, I pull the plugs ... Because people live like animals. And surely if it looks nice, people won’t go on making it look so bad? If you walk into a midden of filth, maybe you just don’t care about it? But it does baffle me how people can behave so badly.”<sup>90</sup>

### **His Last Drink**

Film critic Roger Ebert took his last drink in August 1979. One of the things that helped make that his last drink was Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.), where he heard many interesting stories about fellow alcoholics discovering A.A. For example, he heard a Native American tell about crawling out from under an abandoned car (the closest thing to an address that he had), then seeing a police officer and asking where was an A.A. meeting. The police officer replied, “You see those people going in over there?” Another example: A hippie’s VW van broke down on a lonely road in Alaska. She started walking on a frozen stream. She heard bells ringing, and she sat down and waited to freeze to death. She really did hear bells — they were on a sleigh, and the people on the sleigh rescued her

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<sup>90</sup> Source: Laura Barton, “Joanna Lumley: ‘I don’t make a very good goddess.’” *The Guardian*. 31 August 2009  
 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2009/aug/31/joanna-lumley-interview>>. See also  
 <<http://www.gurkhajustice.org.uk/>>.



and took her to an A.A. meeting. A third example: A priest hid in the janitor's closet in the priest's own church so he could listen to an A.A. meeting — that was his very first A.A. meeting. By the way, A.A. occasionally has open meetings to which recovering alcoholics can bring friends and family members, if they want, but most meetings are closed — only recovering alcoholics can attend them. Eppie Lederer, aka Ann Landers, worked at the same newspaper — the *Chicago Sun-Times* — as Mr. Ebert. She was not an alcoholic, but she wanted to attend an A.A. meeting. Mr. Ebert took her to a place where a closed meeting was being held, and while Ms. Lederer waited outside, he asked if she could attend the closed meeting. The recovering alcoholics took a vote, and the majority voted No. Ms. Lederer said, “Well, I’ve heard everything! Ann Landers can’t get into an A.A. meeting!” Fortunately, Mr. Ebert knew where an open meeting was being held, and he took her there.<sup>91</sup>

## Lost and Found

Movie critic Richard Roeper walked to the bank in August of 2009 with three checks in his pocket: two checks for small amounts and one check for a large amount. When he reached the bank, however, he discovered that he had lost one of the checks — the one for the large amount. He retraced his steps but could not find the check, and just in case a bad person had found the check, he called the issuer of the check so that they could stop payment and send him another check. Fortunately, a bad person did not find the check. Instead, soon a piece of mail arrived for Mr. Roeper. The mail came from the River North Baptist Church at 800

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<sup>91</sup> Source: Roger Ebert, “My Name is Roger, and I’m an alcoholic.”  
 Roger Ebert’s Journal. 25 August 2009  
[http://blogs.suntimes.com/ebert/2009/08/my\\_name\\_is\\_roger\\_and\\_im\\_an\\_alc.html](http://blogs.suntimes.com/ebert/2009/08/my_name_is_roger_and_im_an_alc.html).

N. Clark Street, an address that he had passed when he walked to the bank. Mr. Roeper writes, “Inside, there’s the lost check, along with a note saying they found it on the street near the church. The note is signed, ‘God bless!’ There’s no request for a reward, no plea for a donation or for any publicity. I’m giving them the pub, and I’m sending them a little something anyway. God bless indeed.”<sup>92</sup>

### **Repaying a Good Deed**

One of comedian Gene Baylos’ funniest routines involved boasting about how good his dentist was, but as he boasted, his teeth — actually, white pieces of candy — would fall out. Back when Dean Martin was really, really down on his luck, Mr. Baylos lent him money. Mr. Martin never forgot that, and when he had his own TV show, he had Mr. Baylos on as a guest many times.<sup>93</sup>

### ***Lunch with Soupy***

Comedians on television often don’t know exactly how they are affecting their audience. All too often they are performing for cameras and the cast and crew. At Soupy Sales’ 75<sup>th</sup> birthday party, his son, Tony, shared a letter that he had found on the Internet. It was from Janet Daines, who had been a child when Soupy was writing and performing his *Lunch with Soupy* TV program in Detroit: “When I was a little girl in Detroit, during the ’50s, I was very lonely. My father was an alcoholic, my mother took prescription drugs. They were so involved with their own problems. I was alone most of the time. I would run home for lunch every day to eat with Soupy Sales. It was like having lunch every day with a friend. I never met him, but I want to thank him for all those lunches that I didn’t have to eat alone.”<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Source: Richard Roeper, “Didn’t count on this on my way to the

## THEATER

### **“Dedicated to Dorothy Fox, Wherever She May Be”**

In Providence, Rhode Island, Spalding Gray was about to perform one of his monologues when a woman said to him, “Mr. Gray, I’ve seen all of your monologues, and would you mention my name tonight in any context? My ego needs a boast. My name is Dorothy Fox.” That night, he remembers, he opened his monologue *Booze, Cars and College Girls* with a dedication to “‘Dorothy Fox wherever she may be,’ and she just lit up like *Candid Camera*.”<sup>95</sup>

### **Giving Credit Where Credit is Due**

Not all good deeds are as successful as we would like, but the people who attempt to do remarkable good deeds deserve much credit anyway. In 1931, during the Great Depression when many, many show-business people were out of work, newspaper columnist Heywood Broun put together a revue titled *Shoot the Works* in order to provide work to out-of-work theatrical people. Unfortunately, even with help from Irving Berlin, Ira Gershwin, Nunnally Johnson, and Dorothy Parker, the show did not last long, in part because it opened in the summer in the years before air conditioning. (Actors need to eat during the summer as well as at other times.)<sup>96</sup>

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bank.” *Chicago Sun-Times*. 26 August 2009  
 <<http://www.suntimes.com/news/roeper/1734766,CST-NWS-roep26.article>>.

<sup>93</sup> Source: Barry Dougherty, *A Hundred Years, A Million Laughs*, p. 144.

<sup>94</sup> Source: Soupy Sales, *Soupy Sez! My Zany Life and Times*, p. 229.

<sup>95</sup> Source: Peter Belsito, editor, *Notes from the Pop Underground*, p. 138.

<sup>96</sup> Source: Karen Adir, *The Great Clowns of American Television*, pp. 91-92.

### **“I’ll Double It!”**

Jack Gilford’s future wife, Madeline, was very good at fundraising for various liberal causes. While acting in a play with Ethel Barrymore, Madeline began collecting for the Independent Citizens Committee to Reelect Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Ms. Barrymore called Madeline into her dressing room and said, “Here’s \$100, and if you find out how much my brother Lionel gave Thomas E. Dewey, I’ll double it!”<sup>97</sup>

### **Escorting the Mistress**

A madman stabbed the actor William Terry, and he died in the arms of his mistress, who loved him very much. At the funeral, the great 19<sup>th</sup>-century actor Sir Henry Irving performed a kindness that few people were capable of doing — he escorted the mistress.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Source: Kate Mostel and Madeline Gilford, *170 Years of Show Business*, p. 74.

<sup>98</sup> Source: Edward Wagenknecht, *Merely Players*, p. 177.

## EDUCATION

### The Fear of Kindergarten

Sometimes, children have a difficult time adjusting to kindergarten. Such was the case with the little son of Maureen Link of Springfield, Illinois. On his first day of attending kindergarten at Christ the King School, his eyes filled with tears and he found it very difficult to walk into the school. Fortunately, Anna Thoele, a 8<sup>th</sup>-grader who helps patrol the parking lot, saw him and helped him into the school. In a letter to the editor of *The State Journal-Register*, Ms. Link writes, “Since that day, she has learned our car and makes a point to come to our drop-off location every morning and help my son into school. She always approaches us with a warm smile, helps my son with his backpack and lunchbox, tells all of us to have a great day, and walks with him into school. She was never asked to do this; she does it out of the goodness of her own heart. I feel so blessed to have her there every morning to help tame the fears and worry I see in my son’s eyes. She has helped our family in so many ways just by being kind. We thank you, Anna, for helping our son’s transition into kindergarten. Your family should be so proud to have a daughter who is so unselfish and kind! God bless you and your family!”<sup>99</sup>

### A Storm Home

The winters in Minnesota can be cruel and dangerous. When Garrison Keillor was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, he and each of his classmates were assigned a storm home. If they were ever caught in a storm while going either to or from home, they could seek shelter at their storm home. Fortunately,

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<sup>99</sup> Source: Maureen Link, “Letter to the Editor.” *The State Journal-Register* (Springfield, IL) 11 October 2010 <<http://www.sjr.com/firstinprint/x1722965769/Good-Deeds-8th-grader-helps-kindergartner-adjust-to-school>>.

young Garrison never had to use his storm home, but he was comforted by the knowledge that it (and the kind people whose real home it was) was there if he ever needed to use it.<sup>100</sup>

### **Protecting Students' Rights**

These days, many people — including students — are losing their rights. Fortunately, a few students (and lawyers) are fighting back. On 27 March 2007, four high-school students — two in Virginia and two in Arizona — filed a lawsuit against Turnitin. The students attended high schools that required them to submit essays to this anti-plagiarism service, which compares the essays with documents on the Web (and with student papers in its database) and then archives the students' essays. Robert A. Vanderhye, lawyer for the unnamed students (who represented them pro bono), says, "Our clients have no problem ... submitting documents for review. But when it comes to archiving, it raises a number of very serious issues, the first of which is copyright infringement." The lawsuit asked for \$900,000 in damages. The lawsuit was settled out of court in 2009, although Mr. Vanderhye was thinking of filing a different lawsuit against Turnitin. Wendy Warren Austin of Edinboro University of Pennsylvania writes that the students were concerned about this important point: "Mandatory submission of student papers helps build Turnitin.com's database without any monetary compensation. Although licensing fees are paid for professional articles that are contained within the database, students' papers are obtained with no compensation though they add considerably to the product's profitability. Furthermore, although these high school students digitally sign a 'consent' form as they have their papers submitted, they are in fact "signing" these

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<sup>100</sup> Source: Peg Bracken, *On Getting Old for the First Time*, p. 109.

consents under duress, i.e. under penalty of getting a zero, and by virtue of their status as minors, lack capacity to enter into a binding contract.” Ms. Austin also writes that the student were concerned about this important point: **“The presumption of guilt** — The idea of ‘guilty until proven innocent’ prevails in this model of plagiarism detection, especially when the submission of papers is deemed as mandatory, not voluntary.’ By the way, two of the students were from McLean High School in Virginia. Some McLean High School students (and parents) created a Web site called Dontturnitin.com.<sup>101</sup>

### **Why San Gabriel High School is Not Famous**

Columbine High School is famous today because of the shootings there, but because of 18-year-old senior Ruben Ortega, San Gabriel High School is not famous. On 20 April 1988, he went to school as usual. However, on this day, another student carried an assault rifle to school. The student with the rifle held many students hostage after making the teachers leave. A few students escaped, but the student with the rifle fired a shot after them, showing that he was dangerous. The student with the rifle ordered the classroom to be barricaded, and then he ordered pizza — which had to be delivered in 10 minutes. Reuben said that the student with the rifle later “got comfortable. He sort of sat down, leaning back on a chair with the gun between his legs. He had the phone in his left hand and his right hand on the barrel of the gun. Then I noticed that some other

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<sup>101</sup> Source: Eric Robelen, “Anti plagiarism Services Violate Students’ Rights,” pp. 81-82. Also: Erica Hendry, “Students Reach Settlement in Turnitin Suit.” 3 August 2009  
 <<http://chronicle.com/blogPost/Students-Reach-Settlement-in/7569/>>. Also: Wendy Warren Austin, “Virginia High School Students Rebel Against Mandatory Use of Turnitin.com.” 5 July 2007. NCTE-CCCC.  
 <<http://www.ncte.org/cccc/gov/committees/ip/127372.htm>>.

students were walking within five feet of him, and he didn't get mad." Reuben became one of the students walking within five feet of the student with the rifle — then Reuben rushed the student with the rifle. Reuben said later, "He saw me as I grabbed the barrel of the rifle. He stood up, and we struggled together, shoving and yanking over the rifle." One shot went into the ceiling, but four other students helped Reuben subdue the student who had the rifle. Police came, and they took over. In September of 1988, Reuben was presented the Young American Medal for Bravery by President George H.W. Bush.<sup>102</sup>

### **Helping a Kid with More than Reading and Writing**

Jennifer Mazzotta-Perretti assigned the students in her summer creative writing class in Long Island a paper in which they wrote about doing good deeds. A student asked her if she would give life to another person if she would not have to give up her own life. She answered that she would. Then he asked her if she would give him one of her kidneys. Again, she answered that she would. Actually, the student, Kevin O'Brien, did not need one of her kidneys — then. Later, he did, and he asked her again if she would give him one of her kidneys. Both had type O negative blood, and as it happened, they shared other physical characteristics that made her kidney a good match for his body. On 3 September 2009, in an operation performed at Columbia University Medical Center, the 32-year-old Ms. Mazzotta-Perretti gave the 19-year-old Mr. O'Brien one of her kidneys. Ms. Mazzotta-Perretti says, "It was an awesome feeling that I was going to help this kid with more than reading and writing." Mr. O'Brien felt better immediately after the operation, saying, "You wake up and you're like, 'Whoa, is this for real?'"<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Source: Barbara A. Lewis, *Kids with Courage: Stories About Young People Making a Difference*, pp. 91-97.



## **\$15 a Month**

Hilde Back is a German Jew who went to Sweden when she was a small child — the Holocaust claimed the lives of her family. She became a never-married schoolteacher, and each month she sent \$15 to fund the education of a boy in Kenya. The student was Chris Mburu, who later attended the University of Nairobi and graduated from Harvard Law School. Today, he is a United Nations Human Rights Commissioner. The HBO documentary *A Small Act* shows Mr. Mburu seeking Ms. Back and taking her to Kenya, where she is honored, and where many children wish to attend school. Ms. Back is asked whether — since she never married and never had children — she regards Mr. Mburu as her son. She replied, “But I have had children. I was a teacher. I had many, many children.” As Roger Ebert writes in his review of *A Small Act*, “And one lived in a mud house in Kenya.”<sup>104</sup>

## **Hip-Hop Dance, and Grades**

At Westside High School in Houston, Texas, educator Sharon Roberts uses hip-hop dance to keep students in school. This can be difficult. She says, “Working with the boys is like trying to put puppies in a box. You get four in, then one jumps out.” Ms. Roberts’ Inertia Dance Company wins — a lot — both in dance competitions and in life. In 2004, the Inertia Dance Company won the prestigious M.A. Dance Company’s National High School Dance

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<sup>103</sup> Source: Susana Enriquez, “Nassau BOCES teacher donates kidney to student.” *Newsday.com*. 16 September 2009  
<<http://www.newsday.com/long-island/nassau/nassau-boces-teacher-donates-kidney-to-student-1.1453840>>.

<sup>104</sup> Source: Roger Ebert, “An Education ... for \$15 a Month.” *Suntimes.com*. 6 July 2010  
<<http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100706/REVIEWS/100709991>>.

Championships — and no student flunked out and all of the seniors graduated. Kirk Beecher, who was 18 years old in 2004, says, “The only reason I passed classes is because of dance. If I didn’t do it, I wouldn’t be happy — and I’d be on the street.” According to Ms. Roberts, “People see the dancing, but to me this is all life lessons. It’s about being successful when you leave.” Andres Flores, age 23, who was in the first group of boys whom Roberts invited into her studio, gives this testimonial: “I grew up in Houston’s Third Ward, in the bad side of the neighborhood. People were always breaking into your house. My friends were in gangs. At Lamar High School, one of my friends was going to her dance studio, so I started going there. I started liking it. So every single day I started going to the after-school practices. Sharon’s no-pass, no-play policy motivated me to always pass. I was almost kicked out for smoking in the parking lot. But Sharon went and stood up for me and really helped me out. I’d always hung around with a bad crowd. Dancing got me away from that. Because of dance, my grades improved. Now I am actually the advanced hip-hop teacher at Lamar. That’s one of my biggest accomplishments. Dancing got me a long way in life. A long, long way.”<sup>105</sup>

### **“Won’t Robbie’s Head Get Hot?”**

Robbie, a young child in the class of Kathleen A. Montgomery, returned to the classroom after a bout of chemotherapy that left him feeling as if he now looked funny. Therefore, with special permission he was wearing a woolen cap in the classroom — something that was normally against the rules. Of course, the children were

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<sup>105</sup> Source: Thomas Fields-Meyer and Wendy Grossman, “Dance Queen.” *People*. 21 June 2004  
 <<http://www.people.com/people/archive/article/0,,20150374,00.html>>.

curious about Robbie's woolen cap, and they asked such questions as these: "Why is Robbie wearing his hat in class?" "Won't Robbie's head get hot?" and "Can I wear my hat in class?" One child suggested, "Maybe Robbie should change his seat so he's closer to the window. That way his head won't get so hot." Finally, Ms. Montgomery asked if there were any questions about the lesson, which was about early explorers. One child raised her hand and asked, "If Robbie was on the ship with Christopher Columbus, would he still want to wear his hat?" Robbie answered that question: "I'll always want to wear my hat." Then he explained to his classmates why: "Because I look funny." One child then said, "Robbie, you don't have to wear a winter hat. ET looks funny, and we love him." Robbie took off his hat.<sup>106</sup>

### **"We Can Make a Difference"**

Back when John Sentamu, the Archbishop of York, was the vicar of Holy Trinity Church, he recognized the importance of education (as he still does). He says that "it was clear to me that if we did not tackle education, we were going to be in real difficulty." And he — and the teachers, and the parents — did tackle education. In 2006, a young man whom he had known 18 or 19 years ago came up to him and asked, "Do you remember me, sir?" However, it had been so long ago and the young man had changed so much from when he was a boy that John Sentamu did not recognize the young man, who gave him a hint: "You came and pulled me out of bed when you were chair of governors, and told me I must go to school." John Sentamu said, "OK, I remember you now. What are you doing?" The young man replied, "I'm a lecturer in physics." John

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<sup>106</sup> Source: Stephen D. Rogers, editor, *My First Year in the Classroom: 50 Stories That Celebrate the Good, the Bad, and the Unforgettable Moments*, pp. 156-159.

Sentamu says about this encounter, “I suddenly realized that we can make a difference.”<sup>107</sup>

### **A Hungry Boy**

Persis Chua, a pre-teenager in Singapore, used to think that all people in Singapore had enough to eat. However, after lunch in the school cafeteria, Persis noticed that a thin boy waited until the other children had eaten, then he ate the scraps that were left on their plates. Persis took action. Persis bought him lunch, and then collected money for the boy’s family, raising about \$60, and Persis talked to a teacher, who then talked to the school administrators, and the boy began receiving meals at the school.<sup>108</sup>

### **Openness and a Role Model**

Tim Gill is a gay business executive of the company that manufactures Quark XPress. He serves as a role model by being open about his sexuality. Once, a gay man came up to him and thanked him very quietly for being open about being gay. Mr. Gill told, “It’s really okay — you can say it.” The gay man then spoke up loudly and with pride. On another occasion, Mr. Gill mentioned in a speech to the National Press Photographers Association that he had a boyfriend, and afterward a transgendered person — a woman who had become a man — came up and also thanked him for being open about being gay.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Source: Stephen Moss, “Archbishop John Sentamu: ‘Mammon has been given a pasting.’” *The Guardian*. 23 November 2009  
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/nov/23/archbishop-john-sentamu>>.

<sup>108</sup> Source: Dr. Lee Tzu Pheng, editor, *Always in Season: A Harvest of Kindness Stories*, p. 160.

<sup>109</sup> Source: Michael Thomas Ford, *Outspoken*, pp. 199-200.

### **“My Life Isn’t Worth Saving Anyway”**

Kevin Jennings, the founder and executive director of the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN), was one of the United States’ first gay teachers to come out of the closet. The first openly gay student he counseled said something that disturbed him very much. The student was practicing unsafe sex, and when Mr. Jennings advised him to practice safer sex, the student said, “Why should I use a condom? My life isn’t worth saving anyway.” One reason Mr. Jennings founded GLSEN was to help ensure “that no student ever feels that way again, that no kid ever feels that his or her life is worth less than someone’s else just because he or she is gay. And also that no straight student feels that another person’s life is less important because he or she is gay.”<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Source: Michael Thomas Ford, *Outspoken*, p. 177.

## FAMILY AND FRIENDS

### **“It Gets Better”**

In 2010, several gay or allegedly gay young Americans committed suicide after being bullied, including the high-profile case of 18-year-old Rutgers University student Tyler Clementi. After learning that some fellow students had allegedly broadcast on the Web some video of him having a sexual encounter with a man, he killed himself by jumping from the George Washington Bridge outside New York. In another suicide case, 15-year-old Billy Lucas was bullied at school — other students allegedly called him “fag” and told him to commit suicide — and hung himself in his grandmother’s barn. Dan Savage, the gay columnist who writes the sex column “Savage Love,” wished that he could reach in some way people like Billy and tell them that life as a gay person gets better. Mr. Savage thought that that message might convince some gay youths not to commit suicide. He also thought that he would never get permission from school authorities to give teens the message that gays can and do lead happy lives. Mr. Savage, who is a problem-solver, says, “It occurred to me that I didn’t need permission any more. I could upload a video and speak directly to these kids, and tell them before they commit suicide that it gets better.” He uploaded a video on <YouTube.com>, and many others followed suit, including Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and President Barack Obama. In her video, Ms. Clinton says, “Take heart, and have hope, and please remember that your life is valuable, and that you are not alone. Many people are standing with you and sending you their thoughts, their prayers and their strength. Count me among them.” In his video, President Obama says, “I don’t know what it’s like to be picked on for being gay. But I do know what it’s like to grow up feeling that sometimes you don’t belong. With time you’re going to see that your differences are a source of pride and

a source of strength.” Thousands of people have posted videos, including celebrities Chris Colfer (actor), Gloria Estefan (singer), Jesse Tyler Ferguson (actor), Kathy Griffith (comedian), Tim Gunn (fashion consultant), Neil Patrick Harris (actor), Perez Hilton (blogger), Jewel (singer), Ke\$ha (singer), Michael Kors (designer), Adam Lambert (*American Idol* star), Zachary Quinto (actor), Sarah Silverman (comedian), and Eric Stonestreet (actor). The videos can be seen on the “It Gets Better” YouTube channel.<sup>111</sup>

### **“I’m Gay, and I’m Proud of It”**

World-famous makeup artist Kevyn Aucoin was a very out gay man. In interviews, he would mention his boyfriend and he would also talk about the problems that gay teens faced. Sean Byrnes, the stylist for covers of *Cosmopolitan*, was impressed by exactly how out Kevyn was in public: “He would take the subway to the studio wearing a long hot-pink coat! I told him he was going to get killed, but he didn’t care.” Instead, Kevyn simply said, “I’m gay, and I’m proud of it.” Sean adds, “What he did for gay rights and gay youth was extraordinary.” By the way, gay youth do need help. Kevyn grew up in a homophobic area in which he heard the local Catholic priest rail about the evil of homosexuality. Young Kevyn was afraid that he would grow up to be either a rapist or a child molester. Instead, he grew up to be a good-deed doer, donating his make-up skills to celebrities who were raising money for good causes. By the way, Kevyn once gave a pair of fancy Chinese pajamas to a gay friend who was dying of AIDS. The hospital nurses helped the friend walk the hallways so he could show the Chinese pajamas to everyone. Of course,

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<sup>111</sup> Source: Katie Connolly, “Clinton and Obama tell gay teenagers ‘life will get better.’” BBC News. 21 October 2010  
<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-11592505>>.

we should note that other people helped Kevyn. When he first moved to New York City to find success, he was severely impoverished and severely hungry. Kevyn was trying to be successful as a make-up artist, and some of his friends at Ford Models who knew of his plight used to take him out for expense-account lunches.<sup>112</sup>

### **“They’ve been Brilliant”**

Rugged rugby player Gareth Thomas got a lot of support when he came out as gay, although his being gay resulted in a divorce from his wife, Jemma, whom he loved and still loves. Jemma has stated that she is proud of Mr. Thomas for coming out publicly. Jemma’s family also supports Mr. Thomas, who says, “They’ve been brilliant. I got a message from Jemma’s dad. He said, ‘I’ve heard about your move into rugby league [another change in Mr. Thomas’ life was going from rugby union to rugby league], mate, and I’m just calling to wish you all the best.’ Amazing.” In addition, Mr. Thomas’ parents have supported him. He says, “When I announced it publicly, I asked them if they wanted to read the article first but dad said, no, it was OK. I went to see them the night it came out and I thought they’d be tired. But mum insisted on opening some champagne. She said it was a celebration of the rest of my life and so there I sat, drinking champagne with them, thinking how daft I’d been to worry for so many years about them finding out.”<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Source: Kerry Diamond, *Kevyn Aucoin: A Beautiful Life*, pp. 38, 67, 87, 98.

<sup>113</sup> Source: Donald McRae, “Gareth Thomas on being gay in sport and switching to rugby league.” *The Guardian*. 4 May 2010  
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2010/may/04/gareth-thomas-gay-interview-crusaders>>.



## Hotel Rwanda

In 1994, genocide occurred in Rwanda, when in 100 days hate-filled Hutus murdered 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus, often using machetes as their weapon of choice. Paul Rusesabagina, who managed a hotel in the country's capital, Kigali, saved the lives of 1,268 refugees by turning his hotel into a place of safety. Like so many other heroes, he denies that he is a hero. Like so many other heroes, he became a hero gradually, refusing to turn his back on a few people who needed help, then many people who needed help, then over 1,200 people who needed help. He says, "Initially, I was not concerned by what was going on. There was a government, there was a war, the United Nations was there. But when I saw the government completely dismantled, I had to take responsibilities. The very first day, I had 26 neighbors in my house. When I had to leave my house, I was not going to leave those people behind. So it became a very big extended family, from 6 to 32, and then 400 and something. That is how it happened — people kept on coming to the hotel. And toward the end, I had 1,268 people. It would have been easier to care for six people — my wife and four children and myself — than caring for a thousand. But if you turn your back, leave a thousand people, that's on your hands. That is cowardice." Don Cheadle played Mr. Rusesabagina (and was nominated for a Best Actor Oscar) in the 2004 movie *Hotel Rwanda*.<sup>114</sup>

## Cultivate the Gardens

When Debbie Schammel retired from her job with the Department of Correctional Services after being diagnosed with terminal cancer, she needed someone to plant two

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<sup>114</sup> Source: Julia M. Klein, "Paul Rusesabagina." *Mother Jones*. May/June 2006 <<http://motherjones.com/media/2006/05/paul-rusesabagina>>.

flower gardens: one on the east side of the home she shares with her husband, Rocky, and one on the west side of their home. She got it. A friend named Patty Conradt asked Debbie what she could do for her, and Debbie replied, “Weed my garden and plant my flowers.” In the spring of 2010, Patty and over 50 other friends of Debbie’s did exactly that. Patty says, “She’s really well loved by everybody, and they wanted to help.” Debbie’s husband, Rocky, adds about her, “She has a really strong faith, and with that faith her cancer doesn’t bother her quite as much as it does me. I get a little more uptight about it because it is happening to her and not me.”<sup>115</sup>

### **A New Roof**

Lorraine Bates has done a lot for Zachary Yancey, and Zachary Yancey has done a lot for Lorraine Bates. Mr. Yancey attended high school with one of Ms. Bates’ sons, and when Mr. Yancey started a family with his wife, their daughter attended Ms. Bates’ pre-school when his wife started working again. Tragically, in January of 2010 the Yanceys’ 16-month-old daughter died from a virus. Ms. Bates came through for the Yancey family. She and her sons comforted them, and she and her sons held a benefit concert to raise money for them. Later in 2010, Ms. Bates ran into trouble of her own. She learned that her homeowner’s insurance was going to be dropped, and in order to get new homeowner’s insurance and to keep her home pre-school open in New Smyrna Beach, Florida, she would need to put a new roof on her single-story home, which is the location of her pre-school. She was able to borrow the money to get the materials for the new roof, but

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<sup>115</sup> Source: “Good Deed in Rose Creek.” *Austin (MN) Daily Herald*. 27 May 2010  
 <<http://www.austindailyherald.com/2010/05/27/good-deed-in-rose-creek/>>.

she had no money to pay for a roofer. A son was going to attempt to put on the new roof, but he had no experience. Fortunately, Mr. Yancey, a professional roofer, heard about her problem. He approached his boss, Dave Eckels of DNH Roofing, and asked to borrow the tools necessary to do the job. When Mr. Eckels heard about Ms. Bates, he volunteered not only the use of his tools, but his labor as well. Together, they put a new roof on Ms. Bates' home/pre-school. Ms. Bates says, "You hear about so much negative in the world, and this is a positive. It shows there are still good people in the world." Mr. Yancey says, "She did so much for me just by being there. I felt this is something I could help with. She is awesome." Replacing the roof took four days. Ms. Bates says, "I want people to know there are good people out there."<sup>116</sup>

### **Saving a Little Girl from Drowning — and Me from Prison**

Should governments pass Good Samaritan laws — laws that make it illegal, for example, not to shout a warning if you see that a flowerpot has fallen from an apartment and is about to hit a passerby on the head? I'm not so sure. Long ago, I and other employees of *The Athens (Ohio) News* had a get-together on a lake with pontoon boats. While we were still on shore, a small daughter of an employee slipped and fell into deep water and started struggling to keep her head above water. I was closest to her and could have easily walked over and pulled her out of the water, but I froze. Because I was closest to the struggling girl, other people waited for me to do something. The one person who did not

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<sup>116</sup> Source: Mark I. Johnson, "Edgewater roofer pays good deed forward." *The Daytona Beach News-Journal*. 15 October 2010 <<http://www.news-journalonline.com/news/local/southeast-volusia/2010/10/15/edgewater-roofer-pays-good-deed-forward.html>>.

wait for me to do something was Bruce Mitchell, publisher of *The Athens News*. He was at least twice as far from the little girl as I was, but he ran past me and saved the little girl. If he had not done that, the little girl might have drowned and I would still be wracked with guilt. And if a Good Samaritan law had been passed, I might still be in prison.<sup>117</sup>

### **Raking and Bagging Leaves**

On Saturday, October 20, 2010, Sara Guiffre was driving to Erie, PA, to go shopping when she noticed an elderly man struggling to rake leaves while sitting in a lawn chair. Ms. Guiffre stopped her car, got out, and raked and bagged the leaves for the elderly man. Regina Jabo wrote about this good deed in a letter to the editor of *The Times Observer* (Warren, PA), and added, “Good job, Sara, and I am proud to say she is my granddaughter.”<sup>118</sup>

### **“A Great Settlement”**

When George Plimpton and his first wife, Freddy, divorced because she had met someone else whom she wanted to marry, the settlement was very much in George’s favor. In fact, George’s lawyer, Jim Goodale, said, “Boy, did I work out a great settlement here!” However, Freddie’s new marriage did not work out because, she says, her new husband, a “sociopath,” “became physically abusive.” Fortunately, although George had no legal requirement to do so, he continued to support her and even bought her a house. Freddy says, “I had hurt George badly. Yet when I really needed help, when I had walked off with some crazy

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<sup>117</sup> Personal story.

<sup>118</sup> Source: Regina Jabo, “Letter to the Editor.” *The Times Observer* (Warren, PA). 13 November 2010  
<<http://www.timesobserver.com/page/content.detail/id/542245.html>>.

guy and felt destroyed and had nothing, nothing — George was the most reassuring, the most helpful, the most generous, the sweetest person. [...] What a true gentleman he was.”<sup>119</sup>

### **Aunt Liz Noah**

When author Peg Bracken’s Aunt Liz Noah fell and broke her hip, her friends and relatives noticed that she could not clean her house well anymore. They also noticed that she did not eat well. Basically, she ate whatever was handy, which meant that she ate the same thing — often toast and tea — for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, sometimes for a few — or several — days in a row. Because no relative lived in town and because she did not want to leave town, she was put in a nursing home. Peg visited the town and saw her at the nursing home, and after leaving, she prayed to God, “Get her out of there,” even though she knew that the way most people leave nursing homes is by dying. Fortunately, Aunt Liz Noah left the nursing home on her own two feet. One evening, she dressed herself, packed an overnight case, walked out of the nursing home and into a hotel, and told the hotel clerk, whom she had known all his life, that she was moving in. The hotel clerk did the good deed of registering her, and he did the good deed of calling one of her out-of-town relatives: Peg’s Mama. Peg’s Mama arrived on the scene the next day, investigated the situation, and found that the only thing wrong was that no one had thought of it before. At the hotel, Aunt Liz Noah had maid service. She had room service for her meals. She also had good company at the hotel. Add occasional visits by a nurse, and she had all she needed. In addition, even with the room service and the visits from a nurse, staying at the hotel was cheaper than staying in the nursing home. Ten

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<sup>119</sup> Source: Nelson W. Aldrich, Jr., editor, *George Being George*, pp. 297-299, 340.

months later, Aunt Liz Noah ate too much strawberry shortcake, complained of a stomachache, and went to bed. The stomachache apparently was a heart attack because she woke up dead. All in all, not a bad way to go, and not a bad place to go in, especially for someone with the independence of Aunt Liz Noah, about whom Peg says that “I would like to think that when I’ve been dead and gone for thirty years, someone will think of me as often and for the most part as cheerfully as I think of her.”<sup>120</sup>

### **The Pack Takes Care of the Cub**

Thomas Jondall was an almost homeless kid who showed up for the Shootout, a weekly training bike ride for serious bicyclists in Tucson, Arizona. He showed up with an old 6-speed Schwinn, he biked for as long as he could keep up with the older, experienced cyclists, and then he would silently drop out of the Shootout. After a while, when he was 12, he was able to complete the Shootout with the other riders. Thomas became friends with The Grey Wolf, aka Gary Evans, who gave him a Trek 5900, a bike for serious bicyclists. The experienced riders in the Shootout Pack discovered that Thomas was often hungry, often slept in the park, and always wore the same shirt and shorts, whether it was summer or winter. Thomas acquired a nickname: The Cub. The Pack started doing things for him. Greg Hart managed to get him into Edge (Charter) High School. Steve and Katie Jonsson gave him a place to sleep and live, and eventually got legal custody of him. Cycling coach Neil Stewart had a rule of never coaching anyone under age 16, but he broke his own rule in order to train Thomas. Now Thomas does such things as ride in Europe (he is a member of the USA Junior cycling team) and work

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<sup>120</sup> Source: Peg Bracken, *A Window Over the Sink*, pp. 184, 196-197, 206-213.

toward his goal of becoming a Pro Tour rider. He also eats meals regularly and sleeps in a bed.<sup>121</sup>

### **Kindness for Willie Fox**

When he was 71 years old, Vernon Winfrey admitted to being old, but he denied being spent. When someone asked him whether Oprah was his only child, he replied, “The only one so far.” Some drunks and other “lost” men sometimes hung around his barbershop, and he was occasionally entertained by what they said. For example, a preacher tried to convince one alcoholic to give up drinking, and the alcoholic replied, “Preacher, you right. I ain’t gonna drink no more — and no less.” Sometimes, these people needed help, and he would buy them a pack of cigarettes or give them some pocket change. On holidays, he would sometimes invite them home for supper. When she was a little girl, Oprah wondered why her father brought these men home for supper. He told her, “Christ comes in different forms. You never know who you turning away.” One drunkard was named Willie Fox. Because of Willie’s drinking, his landlord locked him out of his apartment on a very cold night, and Mr. Winfrey saw him and picked him up and carried him home. Oprah took a quilt off of her own bed and made a warm place for Willie to sleep in the kitchen.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Source: Tom Danehy, “A kid cycles his way out of near-homelessness toward a new goal.” *Tucson Weekly*. 26 August 2010  
<<http://www.tucsonweekly.com/tucson/danehy/Content?category=1063741>>.

<sup>122</sup> Source: Craig Marberry, *Cuttin’ Up: Wit and Wisdom from Black Barber Shops*, pp. 28-30.

## Saving a Friend

In the year 1960, two friends — 15-year-old Mark Seath and 14-year-old Gordon Kilmer — went boating in a 14-foot aluminum boat along with Gordon's pet dog. Unfortunately, it capsized. They grabbed onto the boat, but their weight pulled the boat completely underwater, so for 15 minutes they took turns holding on to the boat. The water was cold, and they decided to swim for shore. Unfortunately, Mark had suffered from polio when he was younger, and polio had affected his strength. After swimming for a while, he sank into the lake. Gordon dove after him and brought him to the surface. Mark panicked and grabbed Gordon, who had to break free from him or be drowned. Mark even grabbed the dog's tail and pulled the dog underwater, but when he saw air bubbles coming from the dog's mouth, he released the dog, thinking, "If I'm going, I'm not taking the dog with me." After that, Mark does not remember anything. He became unconscious, and Gordon was able to tow him to the shore and give him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Mark recovered fully, and Gordon was awarded the 1960 Young American Medal for Bravery. When President John F. Kennedy awarded Gordon the medal, Mark was with him. President Kennedy gave them a tour of the Oval Office, and then he looked at Gordon, who was holding the medal, and at Mark, who was not holding anything. President Kennedy unclipped his gold clip — which was in the form of President's Kennedy's World War II boat, PT 109 — from his necktie and gave it to Mark, saying, "I think you should have something, too."<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Source: Walter R. Brown and Norman D. Anderson, *Rescue! True Stories of the Winners of the Young American Medal for Bravery*, pp. 40-46.



### **“I Think I Can ... I Think I Can”**

Marty Lyons played 11 years as a defensive tackle for the New York Jets, and he started the Marty Lyons Foundation, which grants last wishes to terminally ill children and children who have been diagnosed with a life-threatening condition, but the hero of this story is Rocky, his son, who was five years old when his mother had a bad car accident after her Ford pickup hit a pothole and she lost control and went off the road and down an incline. The pickup rolled over a number of times, and both of her shoulders were hurt, with the result that she could not raise or use her arms. In addition, she had so much blood in her eyes that she thought that she had gone blind. Rocky was OK. His mother says, “I think what kept Rocky safe was that he was asleep. He really didn’t fully awaken until the truck had completely stopped.” He was also safe because his mother had thrown her body over his. The pickup was upside down when it stopped rolling over, and she told Rocky to run away from the pickup — she did not know whether it would explode. Rocky got out of the pickup, and then he said, “I can see how to get you out of there — if you’ll just let me help you.” He got back inside the pickup, and he helped push her through the window. Then Rocky said, “We’ve got to get you up the hill.” Getting up the hill was tough for her because she could not use her arms, but Rocky kept pushing her. At one point, she even asked him not to be afraid but to look at her arms and see if she had two of them — she could not feel her left hand and she could not see. He looked and told her, “Yeah, you do.” She was in bad shape, and she told Rocky, “I don’t think I can do it.” Fortunately, Rocky’s favorite book when he was younger was *The Little Engine That Could*, and whenever Rocky thought that he couldn’t do something, she would tell him, “Rocky, think about that little train.” Now, it was Rocky telling her, “Mama, think about that train ... I think

I can ... I think I can ... I think I can ....” When they reached the top of the hill, a car saw them and stopped and took them to a hospital. One year later, Rocky’s mother said, “Now, thanks to Rocky pushing me up that hill, I’m alive. They told me I’d never have full use of my arms again, but they were wrong. I’m doing fine.”<sup>124</sup>

### **A *Sillogos* for Children**

Syndicated columnist Marilyn Preston sometimes spends her vacation on a small Greek island. In 2010, she visited the same small Greek island she had visited the year before, and she noticed a new playground. Actually, it was an old playground, but it had been filled with new equipment that the children were happily playing on. The equipment did not come from the government. Instead, the mothers and fathers took action by themselves. She writes, “As a small association — the Greeks call it a *sillogos* — the neighborhood moms and dads decided that a first-class playground was a priority for them. They saved, they fund-raised, they pooled their resources, and just last week, they made it happen — a revitalized play area with so much new equipment crammed into it the kids can barely move. That’s OK. They’ll figure it out. That’s what the Greeks are known for.”<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Source: Neal Shusterman, *Kid Heroes: True Stories of Rescuers, Survivors, and Achievers*, pp. 14-19. According to Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marty\\_Lyons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marty_Lyons), which I accessed on 29 June 2010, Rocky is now a physician in Alabama.

<sup>125</sup> Source: Marilynn Preston, “In the Playground of Life, Balance Beats Bullying.” Creators Syndicate. 2010  
<<http://www.creators.com/health/marilynn-preston-energy-express/in-the-playground-of-life-balance-beats-bullying.html>>.

## A Polite Constable

Dick King-Smith, the author of *Babe: The Gallant Pig*, had a great-grandfather named William Esau Heard, who did not retire until age 95. Until he was 90, he walked to work (he was in shipping); however, one of his daughters worried about him because he looked neither right nor left while crossing a road. The daughter called the chief constable, and thereafter a constable would wait for him at the road and stop traffic until the old man had crossed the road.<sup>126</sup>

## “Welcome to the Neighborhood”

Texas teacher Julie Norris remembers a student named Jenna very well. When Jenna was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, she sometimes visited Ms. Norris because they lived on the same street and she sometimes saw Ms. Norris gardening. During one visit, she saw an elderly man and asked about him. He was Ms. Norris’ father. Because he had had a stroke, he was living with her. Jenna picked some daisies, then she walked to the old man, held them out, and said, “These are for you. Welcome to the neighborhood.” She then talked to the old man, who was unable to answer her because of his stroke. Therefore, Jenna did both sides of the conversation, asking the old man questions and answering the questions herself, just like she would if she had had an imaginary companion. She visited the old man often, and by listening to her, he learned to speak some words, and he also learned to laugh again. He lived for several more years, and even after Jenna grew up enough to stop visiting him, she never did. Ms. Norris says, “I have no doubt Jenna extended my father’s life, and also greatly improved its quality.”<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Source: Dick King-Smith, *Chewing the Cud*, p. 110.

<sup>127</sup> Source: Eileen Birin, compiler and editor, *Chalkboard Dust*, pp.

### **“I Did What I was Brought Up to Do — to Help People”**

Abdulrahman Zeitoun is a hero of Katrina because he helped save lives when the hurricane struck New Orleans. Because of this heroism, Dave Eggers wrote about him in a book titled *Zeitoun*. Mr. Zeitoun’s wife and children evacuated New Orleans before Katrina struck, but Mr. Zeitoun, a building contractor, remained because he felt called to help other people. In his canoe, he paddled around his neighborhood to ask if anyone needed help. At one house on stilts, he heard someone cry, “Help!” Inside the house was a very heavy woman in her 70s up to her shoulders in water. Mr. Zeitoun estimates, “She must have been in the water for about 24 hours by then.” He helped her to safety. He also helped rescue a Baptist pastor and the pastor’s wife. And he used his canoe to bring food and water to a man who was stranded. In all, he helped approximately 10 neighbors: “The way I thought of it was, anything you can do to help. God left me here for a reason. I did what I was brought up to do — to help people.” Unfortunately, as an American Muslim, Mr. Zeitoun came under suspicion. A National Guardsman and six police officers appeared at a property that Mr. Zeitoun rented out and was visiting, asked for his ID, and then arrested him and some people he was with. He was denied habeas corpus, he was not allowed to telephone anyone (including his wife), and when his wife, Kathy, asked the location of the courtroom in which he would appear to face a charge of looting, she was told that that information could not be divulged. She says, “How could the address of a courthouse be private? I cried harder then than I did at any other time. I felt like I was a little kid again — with no say-so, no rights, no voice. I felt lost.” Eventually, the charges against him and the people he was with were dropped. He spent nearly

one month being detained by the authorities, some of whom accused him of being al-Queda or Taliban — one month in which, if free, he could have helped many, many people. Mr. Zeitoun says, “‘Muslim’ is a very simple word. Translated into English it means ‘peace’ or ‘believers.’ So why have these two nice, beautiful words been changed in people’s minds to ‘terrorist’?”<sup>128</sup>

### **“She Just has a Kindness About Her”**

One day, syndicated columnist Connie Schultz was reading a book and her almost three-year-old daughter, Cait, was playing in a toy kitchen with her dolls and stuffed animals. Cait stopped playing and went over to her mother and said, “Mommy, Mommy.” Connie put her head close to Cait’s head, and Cait touched Connie’s face and said, “Mommy, I’m glad I picked you.” And when a not-quite-three-year-old named Sydney and her mother visited Connie, Sydney was concerned when Connie’s daughter accidentally banged her knee on a table leg. Sydney walked to Cait, touched her knee, and asked, “You OK?” Cait smiled and replied, “Yes, I’m OK, Syd.” Sydney asked, “You sure?” Cait replied, “I’m sure.” Sydney’s mother says about her, “She’s been that way ever since she could talk. She just has a kindness about her.”<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Source: Ed Pilkington, “The amazing true story of Zeitoun.” *The Guardian*. 11 March 2010  
 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/mar/11/dave-eggerts-zeitoun-hurricane-katrina>>.

<sup>129</sup> Source: Connie Schultz, “We’re Kinder Than We Think.” *Creators.com*. August 2009  
 <<http://www.creators.com/liberal/connie-schultz/we-re-kinder-than-we-think-2010-02-17.html>>.

## **She was More than the Way She Died**

Someone asked syndicated columnist Connie Schultz, “When did you think your opinion mattered?” She knows the exact time she realized that. She was a sophomore at Kent State University, taking a political science course from a professor named Trudy Steuernagel, who spoke to Ms. Schultz after she had participated in a debate in class. Ms. Steuernagel told her, “You should speak up more in class. You have something to say.” Ms. Schultz says, “I can quote her exact words because I wrote them down on an index card and posted it over my desk for the rest of my college career.” In 2008, many years later, she wrote Ms. Steuernagel a note thanking her for her words. In 2009, Ms. Steuernagel died violently. She was murdered by her autistic son, whose name was Sky Walker. In a safe, she left a letter that revealed that she knew that she might die that way. The letter stated, “If this letter has been opened and is read, it is because I have been seriously injured or killed by my son, Sky Walker. I love Sky with my whole heart and soul and do not believe he has intentionally injured me. I have tried my best to get help for him and to end the pattern of violence that has developed in this home. I believe my best has not been good enough. That is my fault, not Sky’s. ... I do not want him to be punished for actions for which he is not responsible.” Sky was incompetent to stand trial. A judge ruled that Sky had killed his mother, and probably until he dies, Sky resides in a locked facility.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Source: Connie Schultz, “A Professor Was More Than Her Cause of Death.” Creators Syndicate. 9 December 2009  
 <<http://www.creators.com/liberal/connie-schultz/a-professor-was-more-than-her-cause-of-death-2009-12-09.html>>.

## **Saving the Twins**

On 27 October 1965, a fire started in the home of the Cassidy family. Mr. Cassidy was at work, and Mrs. Cassidy got herself and her six children out of the apartment. Unfortunately, confused, the three-year-old twins, Sean and Gregory, went back into the apartment. Their 13-year-old sister, Gloria, went after them. She ran through the rooms of the smoke-filled apartment, looking for them, and finally found them hiding in a closet. She got one twin out of the apartment and then went back for the other one. By this time, the fire had spread, and she suffered third-degree burns to her face, neck, hands, and arms when her hair and clothing caught on fire, but she got the other twin out safely. For her courage, she was awarded the 1965 Young American Medal for Bravery, which was presented to her by President Lyndon Baines Johnson.<sup>131</sup>

## **“The Most Beautiful Act”**

Movie critic Gene Siskel was orphaned at an early age: When he was four years old, his father died of a heart attack, and when he was nine, his mother died of cancer. Fortunately, his aunt and uncle took him and his two siblings in and raised them. Mr. Siskel says, “It’s really a story of being saved. It’s always been the most beautiful act that I’ve ever been witness to.”<sup>132</sup>

## **A Hero Dog**

When a fire broke out in the utility room of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Carlson’s home in Granite Falls, Washington, their

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<sup>131</sup> Source: Walter R. Brown and Norman D. Anderson, *Rescue! True Stories of the Winners of the Young American Medal for Bravery*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>132</sup> Source: Lawrence Grobel, *Above the Line: Conversations About the Movies*, pp. 372-373.

German Shepherd mix, named King, came to the rescue. King could have escaped by going out some open sliding glass doors, but instead he chewed through the wooden door leading to the utility room. King first woke up 16-year-old Pearl Carlson by nudging her and whining. Then he and Pearl ran into the Carlsons' master bedroom. The fire destroyed the house, but the family made it to safety. King had splinters in his mouth, a gash on his back, and burned paws, but he recovered fully. Mrs. Carlson says, "When King joined our family five years ago, we never dreamed that he would someday save our lives." King was named the Ken-L Ration Dog Hero of the Year for 1981.<sup>133</sup>

### **Ringling the Dinner Bell**

In Kansas, W.A. Bigelow owed an Abyssinian cat named Trixy who loved to ring the dinner bell outside of his house by jumping up and clawing the rope that hung from it. However, the neighbors complained about the noise of the dinner bell and so W.A. tied the rope higher so that the cat would not be able to jump and reach it. Unfortunately, on 8 December 1977, W.A., who was elderly, fell and broke his hip outside his house. Trixy came over to him, and he said that he needed help. Then he thought that he was silly for talking to a cat. Trixy went over to the dinner bell, crouched, and then jumped — high. She clawed the rope, holding on long enough for the dinner bell to ring. She rang it about a dozen times, and neighbors who came over to complain found W.A. and got help for him.<sup>134</sup>

### **A Very Long-Distance Telephone Call**

En route to a poker game at the County Building, Chicago *Herald-Examiner* reporter Bob Fraser saw a weeping

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<sup>133</sup> Source: Peter C. Jones and Lisa MacDonald, *Hero Dogs: 100 True Stories of Daring Deeds*, p. 163.

<sup>134</sup> Source: Marilyn Singer, *Cats to the Rescue*, pp. 59-60.



washerwoman. He asked why she was crying, and she explained that she had learned from a letter posted several days ago that her father was ill back home in Poland and she did not know whether he was alive or dead. At the time, telephone long-distance calls to other countries were very expensive, and few individuals could afford them. Bob wondered whether he could put through a long-distance call at the County Building. It turned out that there was no problem — the long-distance telephone call went right through and the weeping washerwoman learned that her father was alive and getting well again. This was a good deed, but the reporters playing poker abused their newly discovered long-distance calling ability. They racked up a bill of \$7,000 that the county officials did not want to pay. The county officials were going to force the reporters to pay it. Of course, the reporters also did not want to pay the \$7,000 bill. Reporters publish a lot, but they know more than they publish. One reporter mentioned that it was time that he broke a story about a land deal that would be embarrassing to the county officials, and other reporters mentioned breaking other stories that would be embarrassing to the county officials, and the county officials paid the bill. Thereafter, however, reporters were not permitted to make long-distance — or local — telephone calls from the County Building.<sup>135</sup>

### **A Good Way to Get Killed**

Mark Twain once marveled at the ability of very young children to find ways to get themselves killed. In Malmo, Sweden, two-year-old Anneli Rongemo managed to climb out a window and onto a ledge that circled the building. The ledge was two feet wide — and 36 feet high! The family pet, an Alsatian dog named Roy, climbed out of the

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<sup>135</sup> Source: John J. McPhaul, *Deadlines and Monkeyshines: The Fabled World of Chicago Journalism*, pp. 250-251.

window and followed the crawling baby. As people 36 feet below held a blanket taut in case the toddler fell, Roy, whining softly, grabbed the baby's diaper in his teeth. Backing up very slowly, Roy brought the baby close enough to the window that her mother could grab her and bring her to safety.<sup>136</sup>

### **Another Child with a Talent for Getting Himself Almost Killed**

In 1926, near Holden, Washington, a two-year-old boy named Richard Moore turned up missing. His mother searched for him and discovered him on a nearby train track — with a train headed toward him. Trains are impossible to stop quickly, and although the train engineer blew the train whistle, Richard stayed on the track. Fortunately, the family pet, an English pointer named Bill, jumped on Richard and knocked him away from the track. Bill and Richard were on the other side of track, and because Mrs. Moore could not see them, she kept screaming, not knowing whether her son was alive or dead. When the train finally stopped, and she was able to get on the other side of the track, she saw Bill and Richard in a ditch. Bill had his forepaws on Richard's chest so that he could not get up. For his heroism, Bill received a Gold Medal, the highest honor given by the Latham Foundation.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Source: Christopher Farran, *Animals to the Rescue!*, pp. 81-83.

<sup>137</sup> Source: Tim Jones, *Dog Heroes*, p. 55.

## THANKSGIVING

### A Wrong Number Makes Things Right

Before Thanksgiving of 2009, Lucy Crutchfield telephoned her daughter and left a message on her answering machine. The message said that she would help her daughter out by buying groceries for her although it would mean missing a mortgage payment. However, she had dialed the wrong number and left the message on the answering machine of a stranger: San Diego real estate agent Virginia Saenz. Ms. Saenz called Ms. Crutchfield back because, she said, “On the phone, she sounded so desperate for her daughter, it broke my heart.” Ms. Saenz told Ms. Crutchfield to go ahead and make the mortgage payment because she, Ms. Saenz, would buy the daughter groceries. She called up the daughter, who requested only milk and eggs, but Ms. Saenz bought her everything that was needed for a Thanksgiving feast and everything that was needed until the end of the month, when the daughter would have a payday. Ms. Saenz even took her own 14-year-old son along while she did the shopping because he could tell her what kids liked to eat. Ms. Saenz said that she did benefit from her good deed that Thanksgiving: It “made the day special for me.”<sup>138</sup>

### A Thanksgiving Good Deed

A person who goes by the moniker “Mormon Red Death” and whose personal motto seems to be “BYU *delenda est*”

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<sup>138</sup> Source: Kathryn Hawkins, “Wrong Number Turns Into Thanksgiving Gift.” Gimundo.com. 24 November 2010 <<http://gimundo.com/news/article/wrong-number-turns-into-thanksgiving-gift/>>. Also: Eric S. Page, “Wrong Number Miracle.” NBCsandiego.com. 24 November 2009 (Updated 2 December 2009) <<http://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/weird/Wrong-Number-Miracle-76368647.html?yhp=1>>.

(“Brigham Young University must be destroyed”) wrote online about a good deed that his wife did. Just before Thanksgiving of 2009, his wife was shopping at Aldi’s, where she saw a mother with three teenage daughters. They were shopping carefully and in small amounts. Mormon Red Death wrote, “The mom with 3 teenage daughters was going through their list and getting just enough to have a small Thanksgiving meal.” His wife could tell that this family needed money for a better and bigger Thanksgiving meal, so she walked over to the mother and said, “I couldn’t help but overhear. Here is \$50 — have a happy Thanksgiving.” Later, she told her husband that the looks on their faces were “confused” but also “grateful.”<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Source: Mormon Red Death, “The Good Deeds Thread.”  
 CougarUteForum.com. BYU/Utah/LDS Sports Forum and  
 Message Board.  
 <<http://cougaruteforum.com/showthread.php?p=483927>>.  
 Posted 23 August 2010. Accessed 6 December 2010.

## CHRISTMAS

### Over 813 Customers Pay It Forward

The week before Christmas of 2007, a woman at a Starbucks in north Marysville, WA, bought her regular iced tea, and as she occasionally did, gave the server some money to pay for the next person's order. Often, the day after she does this, she will ask, "Did it keep going?" This time, it did — it really did. She bought her iced tea Wednesday morning, and by Thursday afternoon, over 813 customers had paid the good deed forward, giving the server some money to pay for the next person's order. Starbucks shift manager Sarah Nix said that many people gave servers \$10, \$15 and \$20. Any extra money not needed to pay for the next person's order went into the fund for Starbucks' toy drive. Assistant manager Michele Case said, "We're just so thrilled and proud to be part of this in our community, and it's cool to see how one act of kindness can grow so big."<sup>140</sup>

### "It Took So Little to Make Them Happy"

After Germany surrendered at the end of World War II, Christmas finally was peaceful. It was also a time for GI Ralph Bishop, who worked repairing railroad cars for two years after the end of the war, to do a good deed for the German children of Neidwald, Germany. In a 2001 interview, he said, "We weren't supposed to give the Germans anything, but how could we not? It was the first Christmas of peace for so many people. I went to the colonel and said, 'How about if we throw a party for the

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<sup>140</sup> Source: Scott Pesznecker, "Good deed at coffee stand is repeated 813 times." *The Herald* (Everett, Washington). 21 December 2007  
<<http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20071221/NEWS01/713228077>>.

little ones?”” The colonel agreed to ignore official Army policy, and Ralph started to collect donations from other soldiers: candy such as chocolate, chewing gum, bars of soap, and new socks. Also: oranges. Ralph said, “Some of them [the children] tried to bite through the rind. I had to show them how to peel the orange to get to the fruit.” Now, when he looks at an orange, he remembers that 1945 Christmas when nearly a thousand German children received gifts: “It took so little to make them happy. That always stayed with me. It was just a wonderful, wonderful time.”<sup>141</sup>

### **\$5 of Christmas Cheer**

The Great Depression hit many families hard. One person who still had money in the Great Depression was Samuel J. Stone, owner of a chain of clothing stores. In December of 1933, he took out an advertisement in a Canton, Ohio, newspaper, using the name B. Virdot and promising to send Christmas cheer in the form of a \$5 check to the neediest people who sent him a letter. Of course, \$5 is not a fortune, but \$5 then could buy what \$100 would buy today: in 1933, a dozen eggs cost 30 cents, and a gallon of gas cost 18 cents. Many people wrote in behalf of others: relatives and friends. In all, Mr. Stone sent out 150 checks.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Source: Cathy Free, “Post-war yule treat was sweet.” *Deseret News* (Salt Lake City, Utah). 27 December 2001  
<<http://www.deseretnews.com/article/886148/Post-war-yule-treat-was-sweet.html?pg=1>>.

<sup>142</sup> Source: Tom Perrotta, “A Suitcase of Secrets, Good and Bad.” *Wall Street Journal*. 6 November 2010  
<[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303467004575574183342570738.html?mod=WSJ\\_LifeStyle\\_Lifestyle\\_5](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303467004575574183342570738.html?mod=WSJ_LifeStyle_Lifestyle_5)>. Ted Gup writes about Mr. Stone (his grandfather) in the book *A Secret Gift*.

### **“They Fit Me Just Perfect”**

When Frank Daily was 14 years old, he got on a bus in Milwaukee on a cold day close to Christmas. Soon afterward, a pregnant woman wearing ragged clothing but no shoes got on the bus. The bus driver, John Williams, who was nicknamed “Kojak” because of his baldness, asked the woman, “Where are your shoes, lady? It ain’t more than 10 degrees out there.” The pregnant woman replied, “I can’t afford shoes.” Kojak requested, “Tell me how come you can’t afford shoes.” The woman replied, “I got eight kids. They all got shoes. There’s not enough left for me.” Frank slipped off his basketball shoes, and when it was his stop, he let the others get off first, and then he gave his shoes to the woman, saying, “Here, lady, you need these more than I do.” The woman slipped them on and said, “They fit me just perfect!” Kojak saw what Frank did, and he said to Frank, “I’ve never seen anything like that in the 20 years I’ve been driving this bus.” Crying, the woman told him, “Thank you, young man.” He replied, “You’re welcome. It’s no big deal. Besides, it’s Christmas.”<sup>143</sup>

### **“The Little Drummer Boy”**

Religion writer Clark Morphew does not believe much in miracles. He writes, “I am convinced God gave us a natural order of things and the system is never changed.” However, one December long ago he was visiting a man named Dale, a farmer who had suffered a brain aneurism, was in pain, and was close to death. The day before Dale died in the first week of December, because of the pain he was enduring he wished for death, but he did say, “I wish I could hear ‘The Little Drummer Boy’ once more.” Mr. Morphew writes, “Within a minute, a group of singers

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<sup>143</sup> Source: Barbara A. Lewis, *Kids with Courage: Stories About Young People Making a Difference*, pp. 81-85.

stood in the doorway of his room singing, ‘I am a poor boy too — I have no gift to bring — that’s fit to give our King — pa rum pa pum pum.’<sup>144</sup>

### **A Gift that Does Not Invade Privacy**

Actress Wynona Ryder is a big fan of J.D. Salinger’s *Catcher in the Rye*. When she was 19 years old, her then-boyfriend gave her a gift: a Christmas card that Mr. Salinger had sent someone in the 1950s. The card simply contained the handwritten words “Merry Christmas!” and his signature, but she treasured it for years. However, she was aware that Mr. Salinger treasured his privacy and that this might not be the kind of thing that he would want her to have, so she mailed the Christmas card to him. Ms. Ryder says that she “tried not to gush, but I was like, ‘Dear Mr. Salinger. I received this as a gift because I’m a big fan, but I want to return it to you because I respect your privacy.’” Mr. Salinger respected this, and Ms. Ryder got something else that he signed that did not invade his privacy. He sent her a thank-you letter.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Source: Clark Morphew, “I Am A Poor Boy Too.” 28 November 2001

<<http://morpheweb.com/clarkmorphew/poorboytoo.html>>.

<sup>145</sup> Source: Stephen Mooallem, “Winona Ryder.” *Interview Magazine*. Accessed 19 November 2009

<<http://www.interviewmagazine.com/film/winona-ryder/>>.



## HOLOCAUST

### Helping Jewish Children in Big and Small Ways

Marion Pritchard helped save 150 Dutch Jewish adults and (mostly) children during the Holocaust. Once, she hid some children under some floorboards in her house while a Dutch police officer and three Nazis searched her house. After the men had left, she let the children out of their hiding place — and the tricky Dutch police officer returned, alone, and saw the children. She shot and killed him. Karel Poons, a Jewish ballet dancer, came to her aid. Despite the curfew, and although he might have been killed if he had been caught, he walked to the village and spoke to the baker, who agreed to come and remove the corpse of the slain Dutch police officer. Ms. Pritchard took an active role in saving Jewish children, and other people helped in smaller ways. Some people knew that other people were hiding Jewish children, but they kept quiet and did not turn them in. The man who delivered milk to her house guessed that she was hiding Jewish children, and every day he left her some extra milk.<sup>146</sup>

### **“You Can’t Turn your Back on People Who Need Your Help. It’s a Matter of Decency”**

Preben Munch-Nielsen was 13 years old on 9 April 1940, when wave after wave of Nazi bombers flew over Denmark and dropped leaflets saying that German soldiers were going to occupy Denmark to protect its citizens from an Allied invasion. Of course, no one in Denmark had requested this “protection.” Preben, like other Danish students, detested the Nazi occupation of their country, and

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<sup>146</sup> Source: Leo C. Bollinger, “Foreword.” Penny Schreiber and Joan Lowenstein, editors, *Remembering Raoul Wallenberg: The University of Michigan Celebrates Twentieth-Century Heroes*, pp. 38-39.

he, like other Danish students, began to distribute underground newspapers that were critical of the Nazis. In 1942, a Danish police officer named Thormod Larsen saw him secretly distributing the underground newspaper and said, "You realize that you can be arrested for having copies of an illegal newspaper and for distributing them." Preben replied, "You can't believe anything the regular newspapers say because they only print what the Nazis want. So we need to print the truth. Why should that be a crime?" Officer Thormod asked, "Is the truth worth you risking the wrath of the Nazis?" Preben answered, "Doing the right thing is always worth the risk, sir." Preben was afraid that he would be arrested, but Officer Preben surprised him by smiling, taking one newspaper to read, and giving back to him the rest of the newspapers. Later, the Danes received word that the Nazis were going to start deporting all Danish Jews to concentration camps. Officer Thorson asked Preben, "Are you still delivering underground newspapers?" Preben admitted that he was, and Officer Thorson enlisted his help in saving Jews: "I have a job for you. There's a Jewish family who needs our help. Within an hour they'll arrive at the train station. Go there and meet them. Take them to Dr. Jorgen Gersfelt's home." Preben did that, and then he was ordered to the Snekkersten Inn, where he met members of the Elsinore Sewing Club. The purpose of the club was not sewing; instead, its purpose was saving Jews. Preben began delivering Jews first to safe houses and then to fishing boats that would take them to Sweden. This was dangerous work. The Nazis confiscated one Danish fishing boat because after it returned from a trip delivering Jews to Sweden, its fishing nets were dry. After that, Danish boats transferred Jews and dry nets to Swedish boats, and Swedish boats transferred fish and wet nets to Danish boats. Soon, Preben began making crossings on the fishing boat of Erling Kiaer. These heroes often paid a price for

saving lives. Preben eventually had to go to Sweden to escape being arrested by the Nazis. The Nazis shot Officer Thorson, but he was taken to a hospital where he recovered. The Nazis captured Erling Kiaer on 11 May 1944, and they imprisoned and tortured him for nearly a year, but he lived to be free again. Erling Kiaer's fishing boat is now on permanent display at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. That fishing boat carried an estimated 1,400 refugees to Sweden. Why did Preben and other Danes act to save Denmark's Jews, 99 percent of whom survived the Holocaust? Preben once said, "You can't turn your back on people who need your help. It's a matter of decency."<sup>147</sup>

### **Muslims Helping Jews**

During the Nazi occupation of Paris in World War II, some Jews found help in the Grand Mosque of Paris. Most Jews spent little time in the Grand Mosque, which was part of a kind of underground railroad to safety. Underneath the Grand Mosque were miles of underground passages that led to such places as the bank of the river Seine, from which the Jews — and Allied spies and injured Allied pilots and other people who were helped at the Grand Mosque — could sail to safety. However, the Grand Mosque did have living quarters, and some Jewish children stayed there. It is difficult to tell how many people were helped at the Grand Mosque because, of course, few records were kept. If the Nazis had discovered proof that the Muslims were helping Jews, the Muslims and the Jews would have been murdered. However, an examination of the records of the numbers of Muslim children reveals about 400 too many children. Most likely, these were Jewish children who had been given Muslim identities to protect them. The Nazis

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<sup>147</sup> Source: Allan Zullo and Maria Bovsun, *Heroes of the Holocaust: True Stories of Rescues by Teens*, pp. 157-183.

strongly suspected that Muslims were helping Jews. A Vichy (the French collaborationist government) memo dated 24 September 1940, mentions these suspicions. Because this date is only three months after the Nazi occupation of France began, Muslims acted quickly to save Jews. One Jew who was helped by the Muslims was Salim Haladi, the father of modern North African song. After he went to the Grand Mosque for help, its rector, Si Kaddour Benghabrit, gave him a forged Certificate of Conversion. Salim was able to show this to the Nazis to “prove” that his grandfather had converted to Islam. Si Kaddour Benghabrit even paid a stonecutter to engrave Salim’s grandfather’s name on a tombstone in the Muslim ceremony to serve as further “proof” of Salim’s grandfather’s conversion. Salim lived in the Grand Mosque until the Allies freed France.<sup>148</sup>

### **The Angel of Bergen-Belsen**

The very first night Luba Tryszynska was in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in December of 1944 after spending time at Auschwitz, she thought she heard a voice crying, “Mama! Mama!” She investigated, going outside on a winter night, and heard the cries more clearly. They were coming from a field. In the field she found 54 children, some of them babies in pillowcases. The children were Dutch, and their parents had been diamond-cutters in Amsterdam. The children had been separated from their parents, who were forced to work for the Nazis, and the children were supposed to be killed. However, the two men assigned to shoot the children could not do it, and they left them in the cold field. Luba took them to her barracks, where the other women greeted and comforted the children — and wondered how they could feed them. Nevertheless,

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<sup>148</sup> Source: Karen Gray Ruelle and Deborah Durland DeSaix, *The Grand Mosque of Paris: A Story of How Muslims Rescued Jews During the Holocaust*, all pages.

they helped Luba to take care of the children during the months before the camp was liberated. Fortunately, Luba was able to get food for them. The Nazis thought that she was a nurse, and so she had special privileges. Since the Nazis in Bergen-Belsen did not know she was a Jew (perhaps because of the mix-up that made them think she was a nurse), she made sure that her long sleeves covered the tattooed numbers that identified her as a Jew, thus allowing the Nazis to think that she was a political prisoner. Her ability to speak both German and Russian also helped protect her. Because of her special privileges as a nurse, she had freedom to move around the camp, and she would ask cooks and bakers for food to feed the children. (Although the children's existence was kept secret from the Nazis, many of the prisoners in the camp soon learned about the children.) She was able to hide the food under her coat and carry it to the barracks. The children were grateful to Luba, and for her birthday they wanted to give her a present. The price of the present was two loaves of bread, and they were able to get two loaves of bread by giving up one-half of their daily slice of bread for two days. The present they gave her was a red scarf. (Luba probably would have preferred that they eat the bread, as food was scarce, but she appreciated the gift — and the poem the children wrote to accompany it.) As the war wound down, food grew scarcer, but in April of 1945 the Nazis left and the British arrived. Luba and the children and all the surviving inmates of Bergen-Belsen were free. Of the 54 children whom Luba found, 52 survived the Holocaust. Luba accompanied the children back to Holland, where the children joined their surviving family members. Luba was a hero in Holland, and the Dutch called her “the Angel of Bergen-Belsen.” Queen Wilhelmina asked Luba to stay in Holland, but Luba went back to help other survivors and to try to find any surviving members of her family. Unable to find any surviving family members, she went to the United States

and married Sol Frederick, who had also survived the Holocaust, and raised a family with him. In April of 1995, 40 years after liberation, the children she had saved — who were now middle-aged — flew her to Amsterdam so Queen Beatrix could present her with the Silver Medal of Honor for Humanitarian Services. Luba says, “I never thought of myself as a particularly brave person, certainly not as a hero. But I found that inside every human being there is a hero waiting to emerge. I never could have done what I did without the help of many heroes.” Estella Degen, who was the youngest child rescued by Luba, says, “My mother always told me that she gave birth to me, but that Luba gave me life.”<sup>149</sup>

### **Buried Alive**

Alicia Jurman survived the Holocaust with much luck and determination. At a prison near Chortkov, Poland, she and other prisoners were given contaminated water to drink. She fell ill with typhoid fever and lapsed into a coma. When she woke up, she discovered that she was in the home of Jules and Sala Gold. They told her that she was now in the Jewish ghetto of Chortkov and that she had been in a coma for two weeks. The German prison guards had thought that Alicia was dead, and they had taken her out to be buried. They forced the Golds to bury Alicia and some other prisoners who were really dead. The Golds noticed that Alicia was still alive. They put her in a grave, but left an airhole so she could breathe. When the guards left, the Golds dug her up, took her home, and nursed her back to consciousness. Much more, and much of it bad, happened to Alicia, but she survived the Holocaust, came to the United States, and married Gabriel Applebaum.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Source: Michelle R. McCann, *Luba: The Angel of Bergen-Belsen*.

The pages of this children’s book are unnumbered.

<sup>150</sup> Source: Allan Zullo, *Escape: Children of the Holocaust*, pp. 25-55.

## Approximately 1,000 Jewish Children Saved

Hilde Jacobsthal was a Jewish student nurse who, with the help of many other people, rescued many Jewish children from Hollandse Schouwburg (the Dutch Theater) in Amsterdam. Born in 1925, she was 15 when the Nazis invaded Holland. When she was 16, she became a student nurse at a Jewish-run child-care center called the Crèche near the Dutch Theater, which was being used as a place for Jews to stay before they were transported to the Westerbork Concentration Camp. Hilde and other student nurses and nurses brought — with the permission of the Nazis — Jewish children to the day-care center to give them meals and a bed until they were transported. They soon did more. Viri Cohen, the nurse who was in charge of the student nurses, enlisted Hilde's help in placing some of the Jewish children with Christian families. They always asked for the Jewish parents' permission, and when they had found a Christian family who was willing to shelter a child, they would spirit the child away. With the help of many, many people, approximately 1,000 Jewish children were smuggled out of the Crèche, and the Nazis captured none of the children.<sup>151</sup>

## Remembering the Angels of Frankfurt

The morning following *Kristallnacht* (The Night of the Broken Glass), the Morgenstern family, who lived in Frankfurt, Germany, was awakened by an anti-Semitic mob knocking on their door. They were looking for the head of the family, who fortunately was not present. Among the members of the family was Elfriede, who remembers her mother explaining that the head of the family was out of town on business. The Nazis did not believe her, and they

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<sup>151</sup> Source: Allan Zullo and Maria Bovsun, *Heroes of the Holocaust: True Stories of Rescues by Teens*, pp. 72-101.

knocked on the door of the house next door. Hearing the noise, Frau Storch, who lived in an apartment over the garage of the house next door, investigated what was going on. Even though she barely knew the Morgenstern family, she told the mob that Mr. Morgenstern was frequently out of town on business and that she had not seen him recently. The mob moved on, and Mr. Morgenstern arrived in a car. He had heard about the violence of *Kristallnacht* and had come home to make sure that his family was safe. Frau Storch told him that his family was safe, but that a mob was looking for him and he had better hide somewhere away from his home. He thanked her and hid in a German friend's house. In the days that followed, Mr. Morgenstern was able to get papers that allowed him to go to the United States. However, he was unable to get the necessary papers for his family because the distant cousin who sponsored him would not agree to be financially responsible for Mr. Morgenstern's family, too, as required by American law. The cousin wanted Mr. Morgenstern to come to the United States, work and save money, and then bring his family to the United States. Mr. Morgenstern had no choice but to do this. Soon after Mr. Morgenstern left, Mrs. Morgenstern and her two daughters, Elfriede and Sylvia, were forced to move to a Jewish ghetto. In the ghetto, ration books were necessary to do such things as purchase winter clothing, which Mrs. Morgenstern needed for her daughters. One day, a pretty woman approached Mrs. Morgenstern. She said that her boyfriend was in charge of distributing the ration books for clothing and she could get Mrs. Morgenstern extra ration books — for a price. Mrs. Morgenstern was interested, but she was also worried. If the Nazis were to find out that she had acquired extra ration books, things could go badly for her and her family. Hearing that, the pretty woman, whose name was Erika, asked for the sizes of Mrs. Morgenstern's six-year-old and nine-year-old daughters and told her to send the girls to her



apartment the next afternoon. The girls did exactly that, and Erika had acquired lots of winter clothing for them. Erika fed them hot chocolate and cookies, and she and the Morgensterns became friends. Each week the two girls spent time with her, although they had to leave whenever one of Erika's numerous gentleman friends stopped by. (Elfriede, who was then nine years old, now understands that Erika was a prostitute.) Unfortunately, Erika and her boyfriend were arrested — the authorities were not happy about the thousands of missing ration books. Winter came, and the girls wore the winter garments constantly in their unheated apartment to keep warm. Elfriede says, "Without them, we would have frozen to death." Food grew scarce. Erika had always had plenty of food, which she shared, but Erika was gone. One evening, a scratching noise sounded at the window. Making the scratching noise was Frau Storch, who had helped them the morning following *Kristallnacht*. She had a few potatoes and greens for them. Each week she or her young son brought some food for them. Elfriede says, "It would have been difficult, if not impossible, to survive without her weekly gift of sustenance." Meanwhile, Mr. Morgenstern had worked hard and saved money, and finally he was able to send for his family. They went across Germany, France, Spain, and Portugal, and then took a ship to the United States. Many years later, Elfriede went to Frankfurt to see if she could find Erika and Frau Storch and Frau Storch's son. She was unable to find them, but she states, "Their memory may eventually be buried under the sands of time and history, but not as long as I am alive."<sup>152</sup>

### **A Forger for Freedom**

Jaap Penraat, the son of a printer, forged documents to keep Jews alive in Holland during the Holocaust. Immediately after the Nazis took over Holland, permits and ID cards

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<sup>152</sup> Source: Arnold Geier, *Heroes of the Holocaust*, pp. 114-121.

were needed everywhere. The ID cards for Jews had a big, black J stamped in a corner. In his father's printing shop, Mr. Penraat created new ID cards and new identities for many Jews. (He was assisted by photographer Carel Blazer and Carel's assistant, Kreen — no last name given.) Soon, however, the Nazis started deporting large numbers of Jews to concentration camps, so Mr. Penraat took more action. He had heard about the Atlantic Wall that the Nazis were having built along the Atlantic coast. He got the letterhead of a German company and forged it on blank paper and wrote a letter saying that the bearer of the letter was transporting workers who would take part in constructing the part of the Atlantic Wall that was supposed to be constructed in France. However, he and Kreen had to go to Paris in order to get some travel documents so that he could forge them. They obtained the travel documents, Mr. Penraat forged them, and he and Kreen began taking Jews in groups of 20 to France, where they delivered them to the French Underground, who helped the Jews to reach Portugal, from where the Jews could travel to safety to England. Mr. Penraat is credited with saving the lives of 406 Jews, and he was awarded the medal of the Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.<sup>153</sup>

### **Many Good-Deed Doers**

It is possible to be too honest. For example, in 1944 five-year-old Martin Stern was attending a nursery school in Amsterdam when two Dutch men who were working for the Nazis asked for him. Martin's teacher said that he was absent that day, but Martin raised his hand and said, "But I am here." The two Dutch men took him away because he was Jewish. Later, Martin knew that his teacher had been

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<sup>153</sup> Source: Hudson Talbott, *Forging Freedom: A True Story of Heroism During the Holocaust*, pp. 20-22, 32-34, 40-41, 46-47, 62, 64.

trying to protect him by saying that he was absent. He says, "I'll never forget the look on her face as I was led away." Before he and his sister were arrested, two separate Dutch families did the very good deed of taking care of them. (His father died in Buchenwald, and his mother had died when giving birth to Erica.) Two of his caretakers, Cathrien and Jo (Johannes) Rademakers, were arrested because they had been taking care of Martin, a Jewish boy. Jo died in the Neuengamme concentration camp near Hamburg. Martin and Erica were taken to Theresienstadt, where another brave person from Holland, Catharina Casoeto de Jong, who had been imprisoned because she had married a Jew, looked after Martin and Erica, taking them food from her job in a ghetto kitchen — if this good deed had been discovered, she could have been executed for the "crime." Both Martin and Erica survived the Holocaust. Martin lived for a few months with Cathrien Rademakers, then both children lived with the family who had taken care of Erica before the children were arrested: the Bangmas. After Mrs. Bangma died, the children went to live with relatives. The two children grew up and did good things with their lives. Erica grew up to teach at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. Martin went to Oxford to study medicine and became an immunologist and an expert on asthma.<sup>154</sup>

## **A Mogen David**

Comedian David Brenner grew up in Philadelphia, and he likes to joke about how tough his neighborhood was. For example, he says that he once walked into a bar and asked, "What do you have on ice?" The bartender replied, "You wouldn't know him." Mr. Brenner has been very successful

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<sup>154</sup> Source: Stuart Jeffries, "Memories of the Holocaust: Martin Stern." *The Guardian*. 27 January 2010  
 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jan/27/holocaust-memorial-day-martin-stern>>.

and owns a luxurious four-story townhouse on Manhattan's Upper East Side. He sometimes tells visitors, "Four hundred years of Brenner poverty stops here." By the way, he points out, "I wear a tiny Mogen David [aka the Jewish star and the Star of David]. I wear it in memory of one of the more than one million Jewish children murdered by the Nazis in World War II." Ask him if he knew any of those children, and he says, "I knew every one of them."<sup>155</sup>

### **A Silent Hero**

Some Holocaust heroes did not speak about their heroism. One such hero was Nicholas Winton, an Englishman who helped out at a refugee camp in Prague, Czechoslovakia. He saw that the children in the camp needed help, and he convinced many families in England to take these children into their homes. Over 600 children were taken to England in a *kindertransport* and adopted. Most of their biological parents ended up being killed by the Nazis. Once England declared war on Germany, the *kindertransport* had to stop. Years after the war, his wife, Greta, ran across an old briefcase belonging to her husband. It was filled with letters from parents who were grateful that he had found safety for their children. Only then did she learn that her husband was a hero.<sup>156</sup>

### **"If There are Angels, She is One"**

In 1931, Miriam was born in Poland, and Marisia served as her governess. However, the Nazis came into power and in 1939, they invaded Poland. Soon, Miriam's family was forced to move into the Warsaw Ghetto because they were Jews. At the end of 1942, the Nazis announced that certain workers would be moved to a better location. Miriam's

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<sup>155</sup> Source: Darryl Lyman, *The Jewish Comedy Catalog*, pp. 59-60.

<sup>156</sup> Source: Gloria Teles Pushker and Mel Tarman, *Toby Belfer Learns About Heroes and Martyrs*, pp. 47-49.

father realized that the “better location” would be a death camp, so he decided to do everything he could do to save his daughter. Marisia was not Jewish, so she lived outside the ghetto, and Miriam’s father was able to find a way to get her out of the ghetto. She met Marisia, who got some false ID papers for her. At times she stayed with Marisia, and at times she stayed in a convent. After liberation by a Russian army, Miriam was registered as a Jewish orphan — her parents died at Poniatowa Concentration Camp. She emigrated to Canada and started a new life there. She did not make it back to Poland to see Marisia before Marisia died, but Miriam Krysia Goldwasser Fellig says, “If there are angels, she is one. If there is a heaven, she is there.”<sup>157</sup>

### **A Daring Nighttime Rescue**

During the summer of 1942, many Jews in Belgium were being arrested by the Nazis and sent to death camps. Some heroic Catholics worked to rescue Jews. Cardinal Van Roey, who was the Archbishop of Malines, asked nuns and monks to hide Jews in convents and monasteries. Among those responding were Sister Marie Amalie, who was the Mother Superior of the Tres-Saint-Saveur convent in Brussels. She hid 15 Jewish girls in the convent, where the nuns looked after them well. But on 20 May 1943, three Gestapo officers suddenly and unexpectedly came to take the Jewish girls away. Sister Marie was able to convince the Gestapo officers that the Jewish girls were not at the convent at that time but would be there the next day and the Gestapo could take away the Jewish girls then. The Gestapo left, and Sister Marie informed both Cardinal Van Roey and the woman who had delivered the Jewish girls to the convent what had happened. The woman reassured her that a rescue would be made, but she did not give Sister Marie any details of the rescue. Sister Marie and the other

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<sup>157</sup> Source: Arnold Geier, *Heroes of the Holocaust*, pp. 92-97.

nuns got the Jewish girls packed and ready to leave, and then they waited. At nighttime, the Jewish girls went to bed fully clothed. Sister Marie and the other nuns knew that the rescue would take place that night, but they did not know in what form the rescue would take place. Just before 10 p.m., some people in Nazi uniforms came inside the convent. They tied the nuns to chairs in an office, and they cut the telephone lines. Sister Marie and the other nuns worried that these people were really Nazis, but they heard one of the “Nazis” speak a few reassuring words in Yiddish to the Jewish girls as they took the girls away. Inside the office, the nuns waited to make sure that the Jewish girls had gotten away safely, then they began to yell for the Belgian police. The next morning, the real Gestapo officers arrived to take away the Jewish girls, but of course no one was left to take away. The Gestapo officers were angry, but they could do nothing. When the war was over, Sister Marie and the other nuns learned that all 15 Jewish girls had survived. Both Cardinal Van Roey and Sister Marie have been honored as Righteous Persons by Yad Vashem. The rescuers were Paul Halter (a Jewish commander of the Belgian armed resistance), Toby Cymberknopf, Bernard Fenerberg, Jankiel Parancevitch, Andrée Ermel, and Floris Desmedt.<sup>158</sup>

### Unnecessary Repairs

During the Holocaust, some Germans opposed the Holocaust, and they helped the rescuers of Jews when they could. For example, when the Danes were ferrying Jews to Sweden in a rescue that involved the entire nation of Denmark, a German coast guard commander ordered all of his ships into port for unnecessary repairs. This allowed the

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<sup>158</sup> Source: Sally M. Rogow, *They Must Not Be Forgotten: Heroic Priests and Nuns Who Saved People from the Holocaust*, pp. 83-89.

Danish rescue of Jews in that area to proceed with no opposition.<sup>159</sup>

### **A Village That was Not Annihilated**

During the Holocaust, the village of Le Chambon in France became a center of resistance to the Nazi scheme of genocide. André and Magda Trocmé were leaders of the Le Chambon peasants who worked to rescue Jews, and the Trocmés sometimes wondered why the Nazis did not annihilate Le Chambon. After the war, at a conference about nonviolence, they met Julius Schmahling, who had been an army major in charge of Le Chambon and the surrounding territory. They asked him why Le Chambon had not been annihilated during the war. He replied that as a youth, he had attended services in a Catholic Church, and he had absorbed at least some of its lessons. When he was an army major, the resistance of the Le Chambon peasants had impressed him, and therefore he had ignored some of the orders that the Nazis had given to him.<sup>160</sup>

### **“A Bottle of Schnapps if You Don’t Shoot Him!”**

Some SS men once paid a surprise visit to Oskar Schindler’s factory. There, they saw an old Jew named Lamus. This was surprising because the old and the young Jews had been sent away to concentration camps to die or be killed. The SS commander ordered his aide to shoot the Jew, and then he left. The aide had no problem with shooting the old Jew, but first, in order to humiliate him, he ordered him to drop his pants and walk away. That way, the aide could shoot the old Jew in the back. Fortunately, Mr. Schindler noticed what was going on. He complained to the aide, “You are interfering with all my discipline here! The

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<sup>159</sup> Source: David K. Fremon, *The Holocaust Heroes*, p. 75.

<sup>160</sup> Source: Jayne Pettit, *A Place to Hide: True Stories of Holocaust Rescues*, p. 60.

morale of my workers will suffer!” The aide didn’t care about the morale of Mr. Schindler’s workers, so he prepared to shoot the old Jew. But Mr. Schindler was persistent. An old master at bribing Nazis, he told the aide, “A bottle of schnapps if you don’t shoot him!” The aide didn’t shoot the old Jew, and Mr. Schindler gave him a bottle of schnapps. No fool, Mr. Schindler kept much liquor in his office, some for his own use, and quite a lot to have handy when it was necessary to bribe someone or to get inspectors drunk so they didn’t do their work well. (One of Mr. Schindler’s factories was supposed to produce weapons for the Nazis; he made sure that it produced nothing of value.)<sup>161</sup>

### **A Very Dark Night**

Many people in Denmark resisted the Nazis and their planned deportation of Danish Jews to concentration camps. Almost everyone in the seaport town of Gilleleje knew that ships took Jews to safety in Sweden, and the rescuers simply trusted that their neighbors would not turn them in to the Nazis. One night, Leif Wasserman, his sister, and his parents and his grandparents were supposed to go to Gilleleje to get on board a ship that would take them to safety in Sweden. The car that arrived to take them to Gilleleje quickly filled up with people, leaving no room for Leif’s father, who said that he would walk. Leif worried about his father because the night was so dark, but he learned after his father arrived safely that many, many Danes had stood in their doorways and given him the directions he needed.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Source: Ann Byars, *Oskar Schindler: Saving Jews from the Holocaust*, pp. 8-13, 111.

<sup>162</sup> Source: Ellen Levine, *Darkness Over Denmark: The Danish Resistance and the Rescue of the Jews*, pp. 82-84.



## **The Paperclip Memorial**

In 1998, Sandra Roberts taught her 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Whitwell Middle School in Whitwell, Tennessee, about the Holocaust, in which the Nazis killed 6 million Jews and 5 million other people. One of the students talked about how difficult it was to imagine such large numbers, and another student asked if they could collect millions of something. Ms. Roberts answered yes — but whatever they collected had to be connected to the Holocaust in some way. After doing research, the students discovered that in 1899 a Norwegian had invented the paperclip and during World War II Norwegians would wear a paperclip on their clothing as a way to protest the Germans' policies against the Jews. Therefore, the students decided to collect paperclips. The principal of Whitwell Middle School, Linda Hooper, wanted to put the paperclips in a transport car that had been used to take Jews to concentration camps. Two German journalists, Peter and Dagmar Schroeder, located one and had it shipped to the school. It arrived on 5 October 2001. The transport car now contains 11 million paperclips to represent the 6 million Jews and 5 million other people the Nazis killed. Outside the transport car is a sculpture containing 11 million paperclips that is another memorial to Holocaust victims.<sup>163</sup>

## **The Boogieman, and Multi-Colored Socks**

During the Holocaust, Ruth Jacobsen was a hidden Jewish child in Holland. She spoke Dutch well and had blue eyes, and in some of the families she lived with she was allowed to go outside. Her parents, however, from whom she was separated, but very occasionally could visit, were not so fortunate. They had to stay indoors, and often knowledge of

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<sup>163</sup> Source: Gloria Teles Pushker and Mel Tarman, *Toby Belfer Learns About Heroes and Martyrs*, pp. 118-121.

their existence was hidden from the children of the families they lived with so that the children would not accidentally reveal that Jews were hiding in their house. In one house, the attic her parents were hiding in was located above the room where the young children, who did not know of their existence, slept. Once, the young children heard noises coming from the attic, and so their mother invented the boogiemán. When the children were naughty, she would tell them that the boogiemán would come to get them unless they were good. She would then use the handle of a broom to hit the ceiling, and Ruth's parents would stamp their feet on the floor. Following the end of the war, Ruth was reunited with her parents, but none of them had much clothing. Ruth attended a Catholic school, and the nuns wanted her to wear socks, but she had no socks. Therefore, the nuns had each student bring a ball of cotton yarn — in any color whatsoever — to school, and the nuns knitted multi-colored socks for young Ruth, who wrote as an adult, "The socks really stood out, and I loved them. After hiding for so long, standing out made me feel good. I was visible again."<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Source: Ruth Jacobsen, *Rescued Images: Memories of a Childhood in Hiding*, pp. 18, 38, 65-66.

## RELIGION

### Muslims in the World Trade Center

On 11 September 2001, terrorists attacked and destroyed the Twin Towers, aka the World Trade Center, in New York City. In doing so, they destroyed a Muslim prayer room in the south tower, and they killed many practicing Muslims. Sinclair Hejazi Abdus-Salaam, a construction electrician, remembers, “We [Muslims] weren’t aliens. We had a foothold there. You’d walk into the elevator in the morning and say, ‘*Salaam aleikum*,’ to one construction worker and five more guys in suits would answer, ‘*Aleikum salaam*.’” (The words mean, “Peace be upon you.”) Zafar Sareshwala, a financial executive for the Parsoli Corporation, remembers the prayer room: “It was so freeing and so calm. It had the feel of a real mosque. And the best part is that you are in the epicenter of capitalism — New York City, the World Trade Center — and you had this island of spiritualism. I don’t think you could have that combination anywhere in the world.” In addition, about three dozen Muslim employees of Windows on the World, the restaurant at the top of the north tower, said their prayers in a stairwell between the 106<sup>th</sup> and 107<sup>th</sup> floors. They would put a tablecloth on the landing in the stairwell, and they used flattened cardboard boxes as prayer mats. During the holy month of Ramadan, the Muslims brought favorite foods from home, and after the daylight fast, they ate the iftar meal together in the cafeteria for employees. A Muslim chef named Sekou Siby says, “Iftar was my best memory. It was really special.” Many practicing Muslims — approximately 60 — died during the terrorist attack, and Fekkak Mamdouh, a head waiter, and other Muslims attended and participated in a worship service, which had the support of city, state, and federal authorities who arranged buses to transport the Muslims to Warren Street, from which they saw the ruins of the Twin Towers. During

the worship service, the Muslims did the very good deed of chanting the salat al-Ghaib, which is a funeral prayer chanted when no intact corpse exists. (The bodies of many victims of 9-11 were not recovered.) During 2010, a controversy raged over the construction of a Muslim community center with a prayer room that would be built near the site of the Twin Towers. Mr. Mamdouh says, "It is a shame, shame, shame. Sometimes I wake up and think, this is not what I came to America for. I came here to build this country together. People are using this issue for their own agenda. It's designed to keep the hate going."<sup>165</sup>

### **A Gesture of Interfaith Good Will**

In August 2010, a drunken intruder urinated on the prayer rugs at the Al-Iman mosque in Astoria, Queens. Rabbinical student Rachel Barenblat posted a message on her WWW blog and asked for donations of money to either replace the prayer rugs or have them steam-cleaned. She wrote in a later blog, "My hope was to raise a few hundred bucks as a gesture of interfaith good will, a way of showing this one Muslim community that the actions of that drunk man do not represent the beliefs of most Americans." She raised over \$1,100. The donations came from Jews and Christians and Unitarian Universalists, as well as Pagans, Buddhists, and Muslims. Most donations were small: \$5, \$10, \$20. *New York Times* columnist Nicholas D. Kristof says, "Bravo to those religious leaders who are fighting the anti-Islam frenzy."<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Source: Samuel G. Freedman, "Muslims and Islam Were Part of Twin Towers' Life." *The New York Times*. 10 September 2010 <[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/11/nyregion/11religion.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/11/nyregion/11religion.html?_r=1)>.

<sup>166</sup> Source: Nicholas D. Kristof, "Is This America?" *The New York Times*. 11 September 2010 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/12/opinion/12kristof.html?ref=columnists>>. Also: Rachel Barenblat, "A Gesture of

### **Showing Kindness to an Artist — and Author**

While traveling in the south of France, Sylvia Plath visited the town of Vence to see the Chapelle du Rosaire, which Henri Matisse had designed and decorated. The chapel was open only two days a week, and it was closed when she visited. An artist as well as an author, Ms. Plath wanted to sketch it. As she looked at the chapel, she saw how the colors of the stained-glass windows and the colors of southern France complemented each other, and she cried. A nun saw her crying and allowed her to go inside the chapel, a kindness for which Ms. Plath thanked the nun.<sup>167</sup>

### **Very Little Water**

During a harsh winter, Rabbi Israel Salanter (1810-1883) used very little water in ritually cleaning his hands before a meal. When asked why, he explained that he was unwilling to send a poor servant girl out into the bitter cold to get more water.<sup>168</sup>

### **What is Your Name?**

Catherine Shipley and her father, Thomas Shipley, were Quakers. In addition, her father was involved in helping slaves escape to freedom in the Underground Railroad in Cincinnati. Once, Ms. Shipley was in New York, where she was helped by a black porter. She asked the porter his name, and she was surprised when he answered, “Thomas Shipley.” It turned out that Thomas Shipley had helped the

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Repair.” The Velveteen Rabbi. 30 August 2010  
 <<http://velveteenrabbi.blogspot.com/blog/2010/08/a-gesture-of-repair.html>>.

<sup>167</sup> Source: Peter K. Steinberg, *Sylvia Plath*, p. 56.

<sup>168</sup> Source: Lawrence J. Epstein, *A Treasury of Jewish Anecdotes*, p. 199.

porter's father to achieve his freedom, and the porter's father had named his son after Mr. Shipley.<sup>169</sup>

### **Grape Juice Instead of Wine**

Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, M.D., works with people who are addicted to alcohol and/or illegal drugs. A Catholic priest he was treating was addicted to alcohol, so Rabbi Twerski urged him to use grape juice instead of wine during Mass. Unfortunately, the priest responded, "We can't use grape juice. It must be wine." Fortunately, Rabbi Twerski knew Cardinal Wright, who worked at the Vatican. Rabbi Twerski called Cardinal Wright to request that he ask Pope Paul VI to allow this alcoholic priest to use grape juice instead of wine during Mass; otherwise, the priest would die. Cardinal Wright promised to do that, and Rabbi Twerski told him, "Tell the Pope I said that he will have a *mitzvah* [good deed]." After two days, Cardinal Wright called Rabbi Twerski to give him the very good news that Pope Paul VI had given instructions that *all* alcoholic priests must use grape juice instead of wine during Mass."<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Source: Helen White Charles, collector and editor, *Quaker Chuckles*, p. 6

<sup>170</sup> Source: Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, M.D., *Do Unto Others: How Good Deeds Can Change Your Life*, pp. 138-139.

## WAR

### **“There is No Distinction of Creed or Race; We Are All Americans Here”**

“Father John,” aka Chaplain Rev. Father John De Valles, died a hero of World War I. He worked hard in No Man’s Land, bringing back many wounded soldiers so that medics could take care of them. Once, after Father John had carried a wounded soldier out of No Man’s Land, someone said, “That is a good joke on you. He is a Protestant.” Father John replied, “There is no distinction of creed or race; we are all Americans here.” (Other Chaplains felt the same way, and they respected the religion of all. During World War I, one Chaplain, a Jewish Rabbi, held a cross before a dying Christian soldier’s eyes in No Man’s Land.) Father John was free in giving away his possessions to soldiers; in fact, he was so free that soldiers sometimes took what they wanted when he was not around. After a soldier took his last pair of underwear, Father John smiled, then said ruefully, “That was rubbing it in.” As you would expect, Father John won many medals and awards; they included the Distinguished Service Cross and the French *Croix de Guerre*, with gilt star. Major-General Clarence R. Edwards said about Father John, “He was the bravest man I ever knew.”<sup>171</sup>

### ***There’s Some Humanity Left in Me***

Sisters Judi and Rachel Becker survived the Holocaust. They suffered horribly, but eventually managed to escape the worst conditions and pose as Catholics. One day, Judi heard moaning in the woods, and she discovered a wounded German pilot who had parachuted from a

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<sup>171</sup> Source: Chaplain Chellis V. Smith, *Americans All: Nine Heroes Who in the World War showed that Americanism is above Race, Creed, or Condition*, pp. 23-34.

damaged airplane. Without hesitation, she helped the pilot, although he was the enemy, because he needed help. She also rejoiced because, she thought, *I can still feel for another person. There's some humanity left in me.* Rachel, her sister, saw them and also helped. Bombs began falling, people ran to an air-raid shelter, but the two sisters continued to help the German pilot. That was fortunate because a bomb fell directly on the air-raid shelter, killing everyone inside it.<sup>172</sup>

### **“The Time You are in Here, You Forget You’re in Iraq”**

Army food is often not thought to be very good, but just outside the Baghdad airport, the Pegasus chow hall has a very good reputation. The prime rib is perfect, and the fruit platter is beautiful. Soldiers sometimes drive from the well-protected Green Zone on a dangerous road just to eat at Pegasus. The major reason for this excellent reputation is Floyd Lee, who is in charge of the chow hall. He says, “As I see it, I am not just in charge of food service; I am in charge of morale.” That is why eating at Pegasus is such a pleasant experience. It has soft lighting, not harsh fluorescent lighting. It has green tablecloths with tassels. The white walls are covered with sports banners. Pegasus serves the same menu as other chow halls, but Mr. Lee’s emphasis on improving morale, not just feeding soldiers, makes a big difference. One soldier said, “The time you are in here, you forget you’re in Iraq.”<sup>173</sup>

### **A Heroic Bicycle Trip, and Teatime**

During the evening of 14 November 1940, the Germans bombed the city of Coventry as part of its blitz against

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<sup>172</sup> Source: Allan Zullo, *Escape: Children of the Holocaust*, pp. 56-82.

<sup>173</sup> Source: Chip Heath and Dan Heath, *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die*, pp. 186-187.



England. Alan Hartlet was only 16 when the bombs fell. The attack was concentrated, and it was devastating. In fact, the German Luftwaft was so pleased with the destruction that it invented a new word: to coventrate, which meant to reduce a city practically to rubble. By day Alan worked in an aerospace factory, and by night he was an Air Raid Precautions (ARP) messenger. He did such things as report the locations of fires, help put the fires out, and help wounded citizens. At 6:30 p.m. he heard the air-raid sirens and reported to work at the ARP post. He remembers hearing the bombs explode: "They were coming straight for us; it's the most terrifying experience to stand there, hearing these bombs from a distance and them getting louder and louder and louder, wondering how many have they got left and are you going to be the next one?" He also remembers, "The Germans bombed Coventry very systematically. They bombed in straight lines from east to west, and then they started from south to north. It was like darning a sock. They picked out the whole centre of Coventry; it was the most accurate bombing seen in the war [to that point]." Many people died: 554, to be exact. An incendiary bomb exploded in the face of a warden at the ARP post and severely burned him. To get medical help for the warden, Alan rode his bicycle 2½ miles to the city centre. He remembers, "Shrapnel was falling — big, red-hot shards of shrapnel hitting the road; the searchlights were swinging; and I could see the glow in the sky as Coventry burned. Marks & Spencer was burning on one side, Woolworths on the other, the cathedral was in flames, and the air was full of brick dust, smoke and sparks." He managed to reach the city centre, although he had to carry his bicycle across a huge bomb crater. He went to city hall and got medical help for the warden, who survived. Of course, the Germans hoped to sap the will of the English by bombing them. Of course, the blitz did not succeed in doing that. When the all-clear sounded after the bombing raid, the

destruction was terrible, with shops burning, cars burning, lamp-posts leaning over, windows broken. But Alan remembers a surprising detail that shows the resilience of the English during the blitz: “To my great surprise, at six in the morning, a tea wagon arrived within minutes of the all-clear sounding, and the rescue squads were queueing up and having tea.”<sup>174</sup>

### **Fourteen Times a Hero**

On 20 August 2008, Ed Freeman, aged 80, died in Boise, Idaho. On 14 November 1965, while serving with Company A, 229th, Assault Helicopter Battalion, First Cavalry Division Air Mobil, he came to the rescue of troops who were under attack, who had suffered heavy casualties, and who were running out of ammunition. Captain Freeman piloted — 14 times — a helicopter into the battle area, delivering ammunition and carrying out wounded American troops. In 2001, President George W. Bush awarded Captain Freeman the Medal of Honor. President Bush said, in part, “His flights had a direct impact on the battle’s outcome by providing the engaged units with timely supplies of ammunition critical to their survival without which they would almost surely have experienced a much greater loss of life. After medical evacuation helicopters refused to fly into the area, due to intense enemy fire, Captain Freeman flew 14 separate rescue missions, providing the life-saving evacuation of an estimated 30 seriously wounded soldiers, some of whom would not have survived, had he not acted.”<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Source: Stephen Moss, “Remembering the blitz: ‘They bombed in straight lines, east to west, south to north.’” *The Guardian*. 7 September 2010  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/sep/07/remembering-the-blitz-coventry>.

<sup>175</sup> Source: David Emery, “Ed Freeman, Medal of Honor Recipient.”  
 Last updated: 9 April 2009

## A Fondly Remembered Mother

Michael Foreman, the author and illustrator of many books for children, was a child in England during World War II, and he experienced bombing in his coastal town, where were stationed many soldiers. He remembers the King's Own Scottish Borderers — Company D in particular. Soldier Gus Dalglish was especially kind, and he had a miniature uniform made for young Michael, whom the soldiers inspected each morning in the shop run by his mother. If a button was lackluster or chalk was smeared on part of his uniform, the misdeed was duly noted and written down. Whenever Company D passed by on parade, young Michael made sure that his uniform was clean and in proper military order. The soldiers spent lots of time in Michael's mother's shop, and they attended such events as Michael's birthday in his home. When Michael's mother died, Mr. Dalglish wrote Michael that he was "honoured to have shared in her friendliness among so many, for so many years. She was held in high esteem by her boys [soldiers] who frequented the wee shop on the corner, for their sweets, cigs, a coffee and a wee motherly chat — and when we have our reunion this year, we will remember her."<sup>176</sup>

## A Gift of a Ham

During and following World War II, food was scarce in Great Britain and was rationed. Therefore, many Americans sent food to Britains. For example, Dr. Warfield M. Firor of Johns Hopkins University sent a ham to J.R.R. Tolkien. Mr. Tolkien served it to his friends at a party, and he, his son, and his guests sent Dr. Firor a thank-you note,

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<[http://urbanlegends.about.com/od/military/a/ed\\_freeman.htm](http://urbanlegends.about.com/od/military/a/ed_freeman.htm)>. Accessed 20 June 2010.

<sup>176</sup> Source: Michael Foreman, *War Boy: A Country Childhood*, pp. 36-37, 42, 92.

on which Mr. Tolkien wrote, “The undersigned, having just partaken of your ham, have drunk your health.”<sup>177</sup>

### **“What Was Going on Wasn’t Right”**

When American soldiers shot civilians at My Lai in South Vietnam, Hugh C. Thompson and two crewmembers, Glenn Andreotta and Larry Colburn, witnessed what was happening from a helicopter overhead. They landed the helicopter between some advancing American soldiers and a group of Vietnamese civilians consisting of children, women, and old men, and they stopped the American soldiers from killing the Vietnamese civilians. Later, Hugh C. Thompson and his crewmembers took off in the helicopter, and crewmember Mr. Andreotta saw movement in a body-filled ditch. They landed the helicopter and rescued a two-year-old child from among the corpses. Why did they intervene to stop as much of the slaughter and save as many lives as they could? Hugh C. Thompson explained that “what was going on wasn’t right.”<sup>178</sup>

### **Food Fit to Eat**

In 1918, during World War I, Karl Heinzmann was a German prisoner of war in a French prison camp. The food the German prisoners were fed was very poor, and sometimes an ingredient was “floor flour” — that is, flour swept from the floor along with sand, dirt, and hairs. The prisoners complained, but nothing was done. One day, an elderly French guard came to work at the prison camp. When he saw the bread the prisoners were forced to eat, he took a sample to the head of the prison camp. An argument arose, the elderly guard was punished, but afterward the

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<sup>177</sup> Source: Neil Heims, *J.R.R. Tolkien*, p. 67.

<sup>178</sup> Source: Ted Gottfried, *Heroes of the Holocaust*, p. 96.

bread was better. Mr. Heinzmann says, “Such guards were very rare.”<sup>179</sup>

### **An American Hero**

Colin Powell is a hero. On 16 November 1968, a helicopter that he and some other soldiers were in crashed in Vietnam. Mr. Powell suffered a broken ankle, but he succeeded in pulling out of the wreck four men, including Major General Charles M. Gettys, Colonel Jack Treadwell (Major General Gettys’ chief of staff), Ron Tumelson (Mr. Powell’s aide), and the pilot. For his heroism, he received the Soldier’s Medal. Of course, Mr. Powell eventually became a four-star general and an important figure in politics. At one time, he was getting 300 letters a day, and he made sure to answer each letter that had been written by a student. At the end of each letter, he wrote, “Stay in school!”<sup>180</sup>

### **Killing — Fish or Men?**

Guns or butter? Any resource spent on weapons cannot be spent on food, or can it? During World War I, the Germans were occupying the North of France, and food was scarce. What to do? Hans Fischer and some other German soldiers decided to go fishing — with grenades. They threw a grenade into the water, and soon dead pike, carp, and other fish floated to the surface. The Germans shared their bounty with the French, although doing so was strictly against regulations. Mr. Fischer (an apt name) says, “The two days under arrest for disobeying orders did not dampen our spirits. We preferred killing fish to men.”<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Source: Reinhard Diebold, collector and editor, *The Book of Good Deeds: 1914-1918*, p. 197.

<sup>180</sup> Source: John F. Wukovits, *Colin Powell*, pp. 47, 86.

<sup>181</sup> Source: Reinhard Diebold, collector and editor, *The Book of Good Deeds: 1914-1918*, pp. 208-209.

## MEDICINE

### 10,000 Books

A few years ago, Alec Robinovitz, along with his mother and an ill younger sister, was sitting in a hospital clinic waiting room. Alex knew that the kids looked scared, and he knew that the kids had nothing to do. Therefore, he convinced some family members and friends to donate gently used books so he could give them to the pediatric clinics at the Medical University of South Carolina. The project grew over four years, as people learned about the project and gave him books, and as his sister, 2<sup>nd</sup>-grader Amanda, started helping. In November 2010, 11-year-old Alex and seven-year-old Amanda dropped off more books, bringing to over 10,000 the number of books they have donated. Medical University of South Carolina pediatric clinics director Rosemarie Battaglia appreciates the donations, saying that now children can leave the clinic with a book. She also appreciates that the two youngsters also collect and donate books for middle- and high-school students as well as for young children. According to Alex, “It doesn’t matter how big and strong or young or old you are. Anyone can give.”<sup>182</sup>

### A Friend Takes a Complete Medical History

At age six, future actress Molly Ringwald started a friendship with a fellow student named Jenny. The friendship lasted many years, but eventually they drifted apart. The final break came when Molly, at age 19, played a role in a movie in which her character, who was pregnant, sipped some champagne. Jenny, who was then in medical

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<sup>182</sup> Source: Diane Knich, “Boy’s good deed grows to 10,000 books.” *The Post and Courier* (Charleston, SC). 23 November 2010 <<http://www.postandcourier.com/news/2010/nov/23/boys-good-deed-grows-to-10000-books/>>.

school, wrote Molly an angry letter pointing out that the fetus is in danger when its mother drinks alcohol. Later, when she was in her early thirties, Molly had a late-term miscarriage, and she became very depressed and worried about whether she could ever carry a baby to term. She called Jenny's parents, who gave her Jenny's telephone number. Jenny, who was now a practicing obstetrician, took Molly's complete medical history, and gave her hope that yes, she could carry a baby to term. She also gave Molly the names of some trusted doctors in her area whom she could contact. Molly says, "I have to say, there is nothing quite as comforting as having a friend that you have known since you were six years old take your medical history." And yes, the two are friends again and stay in contact with each other. And yes, Molly has carried babies to term.<sup>183</sup>

**"It's a Pneumopericardium. I Know it. Stick the Heart"**

A baby in a neonatal intensive care unit had been changing color subtly over a few hours, losing and then regaining its healthy pink. The baby then suddenly lost its healthy pink, turning a deep blue-black color. The secondary nurse immediately diagnosed a pneumopericardium — air had filled the sac around the baby's heart, preventing it from beating. Unless the air was immediately released, the baby would die — the secondary nurse had previously seen a baby die because of a pneumopericardium. However, the primary nurse believed that the baby had suffered a collapsed lung (which is common when a baby is on a ventilator), and she was calling for an X-ray technician and a neonatologist. The secondary nurse said, "It's the heart — there's no heartbeat," but the heart monitor showed — falsely — that the baby's heart was beating. The secondary

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<sup>183</sup> Source: Molly Ringwald, *Getting the Pretty Back: Friendship, Family, and Finding the Perfect Lipstick*, pp. 82-87.

nurse yelled for quiet, then used a stethoscope to listen for a heartbeat — there was none, so she began to compress the baby's heart. The secondary nurse gave the neonatologist, who had just arrived, a syringe and says, "It's a pneumopericardium. I know it. Stick the heart." The X-ray technician confirmed the secondary nurse's diagnosis — air had filled the baby's pericardium. The doctor saved the baby's life by releasing the air around the baby's heart. Afterward, the health professionals discussed why the heart-monitoring equipment was showing that the baby's heart was beating although the baby's heart was not beating. They realized that the equipment picked up only the heart's electrical impulses. The baby's heart was sending out electrical impulses, but the baby's heart could not beat because of the air around the baby's heart.<sup>184</sup>

### **"I'm Going to Die, so I can Give My Heart to Donna"**

Felipe Gaza was 15 years old, and he liked Donna Ashlock, who was 14 years old. He started having very bad headaches, and Donna started having health problems, too. Tests showed that she had cardiomyopathy. Her heart was deteriorating, and unless she had a heart transplant, she would most likely die in a few months. When Felipe heard about Donna's health problems, he said to his family, "I'm going to die, so I can give my heart to Donna." Of course, this startled his family, since no one thought that Felipe would die until many more decades had passed. Just a few days later, Felipe complained of a very bad headache, collapsed, and died — a blood vessel in his brain had burst. He was taken to the hospital, put on a respirator, and pronounced "brain dead." His parents remembered that he

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<sup>184</sup> Source: Gary Klein, *Sources of Power: How People Make Decisions*, pp. 178-179. Unfortunately, this source does not give the nurse's name, but this story was told during a nurses' decision-making workshop held by Beth Crandall.



had wanted Donna to have his heart, and she got it. Felipe had type-O blood — the blood of the universal donor. He and Donna were the same size, so his heart was not too big for her body. Finally, he had died in time for Donna to have a heart transplant — a few weeks later, and she might have died before she got his heart. At the hospital, Donna's father told her that Felipe had died, and his eyes and kidneys were now helping other people. Hearing this, and without being told about his heart, Donna said, "And I have his heart." A few years later, Donna's body rejected his heart and she died, but she had lived an extra three years with his heart in her body.<sup>185</sup>

### Hugs for Cures

One of syndicated columnist Connie Schultz' treasured possessions is a quilt that her great-grandmother made from Connie's mother's school clothing. When Connie was a child, her mother would put the quilt over their laps and then tell her about all the squares: "This was my favorite Sunday school dress. This was my cheerleading skirt. This was the blouse I wore the day I met your father." By the way, Connie's mother had worked as a nurse's aide, and she often spoke to people about their ailments while waiting at a pharmacy for prescriptions to be filled. Ms. Schultz remembers, "When you are 12, you do not want your mother pondering for all the world to hear the possible causes behind strangers' bloating. Lord. But oh, the joy on her face when we'd run into them again and they'd hug her for their cures."<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Source: Neal Shusterman, *Kid Heroes: True Stories of Rescuers, Survivors, and Achievers*, pp. 55-58.

<sup>186</sup> Source: Connie Schultz, "Making Time for Women's Stories." Creators Syndicate. 2010  
<<http://www.creators.com/liberal/connie-schultz/making-time-for-women-s-stories.html>>.

## Preventing Birth Defects

Dr. Frances Oldham Kelsey, who was born in 1914 on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, and Dr. Helen Taussig prevented thousands of American babies from being born with severe birth defects. In 1960, Dr. Kelsey began work at the Food and Drug Administration, where in her first month of work she declined to approve the use of thalidomide in the United States. The approval had been expected to be routine, as the drug was widely used in Europe as a sleeping pill. However, Dr. Kelsey studied the scientific data and learned of the dangerous side effects of the drug. Soon, reports came from Germany and the United Kingdom that mothers who had used thalidomide during pregnancy had given birth to babies with severe birth defects. Dr. Helen Taussig traveled to Europe and investigated the cause of the birth defects, and she testified before the Senate that the drug had caused the birth defects. This resulted in the banning of the drug in the United States and prevented thousands of American babies from being born with severe birth defects. On 7 August 1962, President John F. Kennedy awarded Dr. Kelsey the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service, which is the highest honor that can be given to a civilian in the United States. In 1964, Dr. Taussig, who was renowned for her work with "blue babies" — babies who had a heart defect that prevented the babies' bodies from getting enough oxygen — was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President Lyndon Johnson.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Source: Sarah Boseley, "Simon Singh and the silencing of the scientists." *The Guardian*. 26 February 2010  
 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2010/feb/25/simon-singh-silencing-scientists-libel-law>>. Also: "Dr. Frances Oldham Kelsey."  
 <[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/changingthefaceofmedicine/physicians/biography\\_182.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/changingthefaceofmedicine/physicians/biography_182.html)>. Accessed 26 February 2010. Also: Helen Brooke Taussig.

### **“You’re Doing Research. I’ve Got a Checkbook. You and I are Going to Get to Know Each Other”**

When the teenaged daughter of Victoria Jackson and her husband, Bill Guthy, contracted neuromyelitis optica, a disease that can leave patients paralyzed and blind, they took action. Fortunately, they are rich; she has a money-making cosmetics business, and he has a billion-dollar infomercial marketing firm. Together, they formed the Guthy-Jackson Charitable Foundation, and as of November 2009 they had spent \$15 million combating this disease. The two visited the Mayo Clinic to consult one of the few physicians working on this rare disease. Ms. Jackson said to the physician, “You’re doing research. I’ve got a checkbook. You and I are going to get to know each other.” One of the things the foundation did was to sponsor a conference about the disease. They paid for physicians and patients to come to Beverly Hills. For many of the patients, it was the first time that they had ever met someone else suffering from the disease. Ms. Jackson said, “Can you imagine, in this day when everybody’s got a support group, for these people to feel so alone? I wanted them to be able to sit down together, talk to one another.”<sup>188</sup>

### **“Smart and Brisk and Utterly Capable”**

In September of 2009, Garrison Keillor of Lake Wobegon fame suffered a minor stroke and ended up in a hospital for a while, where he discovered — or realized anew — that

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<[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/changingthefaceofmedicine/physicians/biography\\_316.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/changingthefaceofmedicine/physicians/biography_316.html)>. Accessed 26 February 2010.

<sup>188</sup> Source: Sandy Banks, “A daughter’s cure is priceless.” *Los Angeles Times*. 28 November 2009

<<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-banks28-2009nov28,0,4438140,full.column>>. For more information about neuromyelitis optica, go to <<http://www.spectrum.guthyjacksonfoundation.org/>>.

“[n]urses are smart and brisk and utterly capable.” In addition to being capable at the technical part of their job, they are capable of humor. For example, when a nurse was putting an ID band on Mr. Keillor’s wrist, she asked, “Care for some jewelry?” In addition, Mr. Keillor writes that “women have the caring gene that most men don’t. Men push you down the hall in a gurney as if you’re a cadaver, but whenever I was in contact with a woman, I felt that she knew me as a brother.” Nurses take care when doing such things as drawing blood, as Mr. Keillor points out: “The women who draw blood samples at [the] Mayo [Clinic] do it gently with a whole litany of small talk to ease the little blip of puncture, and ‘Here it comes’ and the needle goes in, and ‘Sorry about that,’ and I feel some human tenderness there, as if she thought, ‘I could be the last woman to hold that dude’s hand.’ A brief sweet moment of common humanity.”<sup>189</sup>

### **Giving Credit Where Credit is Due**

Frederick Banting wanted to learn more about the secretions of the pancreas and their relationship to diabetes. He received help from a student, Charles Best, who could measure blood sugar, and at the University of Toronto, they began experimenting on dogs. They injected a dog that was dying from diabetes with the secretions from healthy pancreases. The dog’s blood sugar returned to normal, and the dog’s health returned. The secretions turned out to be insulin, and this discovery saved the lives of many diabetics, who formerly would have died quickly from the disease. Mr. Banting was a co-recipient of the 1923 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine. He was upset that Mr.

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<sup>189</sup> Source: Garrison Keillor, “Nice 67 y.o. man has brush with mortality.” *Chicago Tribune*. 16 September 2009  
 <<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/columnists/chi-oped0916keillorsep16,0,4606270.column>>.

Best was not also named as a recipient, so he made sure to give him the credit that was due him and he gave Mr. Best half of the Nobel Prize money.<sup>190</sup>

### **Going Beyond the Minimum**

On 16 January 1999, staff nurse Ong Seck Sze received a telephone call while she was attending a church service. The call came from the daughter-in-law of one of her patients, who had to be fed through a tube because of a stroke. The feeding tube had become dislodged, and the daughter-in-law could not contact the usual home nursing staff because it was late Saturday afternoon and nursing clinics had closed for the day. Ms. Sze replaced the feeding tube quickly. Later that night, the feeding tube again became dislodged, and again Ms. Sze quickly arrived, this time from her home, to replace the feeding tube. Lim Jock Hong says about Ms. Sze, “Her care and kindness for her patients certainly go beyond her work in the wards.”<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Source: Nathan Aaseng, *The Disease Fighters: The Nobel Prize in Medicine*, pp. 62-67.

<sup>191</sup> Source: Dr. Lee Tzu Pheng, editor, *Always in Season: A Harvest of Kindness Stories*, p. 195.

## POLITICS

### **“So I’m Your Third Choice”**

At a dinner at the White House, country musician and author Kinky Friedman was seated by Laura Bush. He used the opportunity to ask her to headline a benefit for the Utopia Animal Rescue Ranch in Austin, Texas. He also mentioned that he had already asked Willie Nelson and Lyle Lovett to headline the benefit but they had been unable to do that. Ms. Bush said, “So I’m your third choice. OK, I’ll do it.” With her help, the benefit was a huge success.<sup>192</sup>

### **A Boycott Can be a Good Deed**

In 1910, when Mother Jones was 80 years old, she organized the female bottle washers in the breweries of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In return for scrubbing beer bottles for several hours, these women earned less than a dollar a day. When Mother Jones spoke to the owner of Milwaukee’s Blatz Brewery about improving the lives of the bottle washers, he dismissed her and did nothing. Therefore, Mother Jones went to Cincinnati, Ohio, where she advocated the boycott of Milwaukee beer by 500,000 United Mine Workers. Quickly, the brewery owners caved in — the bottle washers got paid more and their working conditions improved.<sup>193</sup>

### **A Knight on a Shining Bicycle**

Boris Johnson, the mayor of London, saved documentary filmmaker and environmental activist Franny Armstrong

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<sup>192</sup> Source: Kinky Friedman, *’Scuse Me While I Whip This Out*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>193</sup> Source: Judith Pinkerton Josephson, *Mother Jones: Fierce Fighter for Workers’ Rights*, p. 122-124.

from a street attack by what she calls “feral kids” on 2 November 2009. She says, “He was my knight on a shining bicycle.” She also pointed out how he had helped her: “I was texting on my phone so didn’t notice the girls until they pushed me against the car, quite hard. At first it was quite funny, because they were only about 12. Then I saw that one of them had an iron bar in her hand. It was more than a meter long. It was as big as her. Then along came a cyclist. And I thought, ‘Good, he’s a big bloke,’ and shouted, ‘Can you help me, please?’ He stopped and turned around and I thought, ‘Oh, my God, it’s Boris Johnson.’” Mr. Johnson asked the girls what was going on. They didn’t answer, so Ms. Armstrong told them that he was the mayor of London. The girls ran away, perhaps because they were afraid that they would get in trouble. Mr. Johnson then walked Ms. Armstrong home to ensure that she would be safe.<sup>194</sup>

### **Forced to Provide Protection**

As Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke inside a Montgomery, Alabama church, a mob of 3,000-4,000 angry white people gathered outside. Mr. King was forced to appeal to Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy for protection for the people inside the church. Mr. Kennedy telephoned Governor John Patterson and told him that if he did not provide protection for the people inside the church, President John F. Kennedy would call out the National Guard and provide the protection himself. Governor Patterson was forced to protect the people inside the church.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> Source: Helen Pidd, “Boris Johnson saves woman from street attack: Green filmmaker Franny Armstrong pays tribute to ‘my knight on a shining bicycle.’” *The Guardian*. 3 November 2009  
 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2009/nov/03/boris-johnson-attack-camden-london1>>.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### **Playing Music for the Old People, and Other Good Deeds**

A man who goes by the moniker “Cowboy” is in a band. One of his fellow band members has several guitars stashed at the houses of widows and old couples. Frequently, he visits these friends, and he always has a guitar handy so that he can play a few songs for them. In addition, he plays every Sunday at a nursing home. This is enjoyed by the residents and by their visiting family members. By the way, Cowboy also plays at the nursing home every couple of weeks. He started playing there when his grandparents went there to live, and he continued after they passed away because he had grown to like the residents. He calls them, affectionately, “my old people.” Cowboy cares about good deeds. He started the Good Deeds thread at <CougarUteForum.com>, writing, “I hold to the notion that life’s success is not measured by money made, but by good accomplished. When I die, I want to be remembered as someone who did good things for people. I’ve known lots of people whose kindness and generosity defined them, and when they passed on, it was their good deeds that became the focal point of their funerals.” Cowboy also got the thread started by writing about two good deeds that he knew of personally: 1) After his wife’s cousin died in a snowmobile accident, story after story of his good deeds was told at his funeral. He had done such things as buy tires for a neighbor, pay money for kids to go on religious missions, and weed gardens for people. Cowboy writes that “the really cool thing was that nobody knew about it. He made them promise to keep his help between them, and only after his death did it come to light.” 2) Cowboy

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<sup>195</sup> Source: Catherine Corley Anderson, *John F. Kennedy: Young People’s President*, pp. 86-87.



belongs to an appraisal company, one of whose members has a daughter with autism. The member's family wanted to get a specially trained dog for her from Ohio, but the cost of the dog was \$10,000, and they did not have \$10,000. The secretary of the society learned about this, and she emailed all 200 of the members of the society, and within a week had gotten the needed \$10,000. One member was late in responding, but did not want to be left out of a good deed, so the member, who wants to be anonymous, purchased the plane tickets for the family to go and pick up the dog. Cowboy didn't stop there. He added another good-deeds story to the good-deeds stories that other people were adding to the thread: A man from his part of the country was driving to the mountains and stopped to help a woman and some kids with a flat tire. She was very worried. The car was nearly falling apart, she was returning from visiting her husband, who was dying in a cancer treatment ward, she still had 1,000 miles to go before reaching home, she and the kids were sleeping at night by the side of the road because they could not afford a motel room, the tire was so worn that it could not be repaired, and she had only enough money for gas and sandwiches. Fortunately, the man who had stopped to help her was a Good Samaritan. He paid for four new tires for her car, and he paid for a hotel room for her and the kids for a night. Cowboy writes, "He paid for all of it and didn't tell anyone, but the very grateful lady told the gas station owner who told the rest of us."<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Source: Cowboy, "The Good Deeds Thread."

CougarUteForum.com. BYU/Utah/LDS Sports Forum and Message Board.

<<http://cougaruteforum.com/showthread.php?p=483927>>.

Posted 21 August 2010, 22 August 2010, and 11 October 2010. Accessed 6 December 2010.

### **Proof that She had a Heart**

Police captain Kathy Mazza responded on 9-11 to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, going to the burning North Tower and using her service revolver to shoot out glass doors and walls, thereby opening passageways to save lives. She died when the North Tower collapsed. By the way, in her office she displayed a photograph of her heart, which had been taken during open-heart surgery and which was proof, she said, that she had a heart despite her toughness.<sup>197</sup>

### **“This is Beautiful”**

In April 2009, Aidan Loster, age 11, and his nine-year-old twin sisters, Rhiannon and Laura, bought for impoverished families \$422.59 of groceries with money that they had earned doing such chores as shoveling driveways and raking leaves for their neighbors in the hamlet of Canton, which is north of Port Hope, Ontario, Canada. Aidan says, “At first we were charging \$2, but now I let them pick their own price because I’m a bit older now and capable of doing more things.” He got the idea from a television program about helping the less fortunate. The three children put up posters in their neighbors and work the entire year doing chores to raise money for the less fortunate. The food the children bought went to the St. Vincent de Paul Society from Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church, which gave it to four families who rely on social assistance. Church representative Jim Scherer said, “This is beautiful.”<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Source: “A Tribute to the Heroes of 9-11.” January. National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. 2010 Calendar.

<sup>198</sup> Source: Pete Fisher, “The Good Deed Kid.” *Toronto (Canada) Sun*. 19 April 2009  
 <<http://www.torontosun.com/news/canada/2009/04/19/9161806-sun.html>>.

## The 93 Dollar Club

On 11 August 2009, Jenni Ware went to a Trader Joe's and loaded a cart with groceries before discovering that she had left her money at home. Fortunately, Carolee Hazard was in a generous mood and in what she calls "a knee-jerk reaction," she put Ms. Ware's \$207 bill on her own credit card. Ms. Ware, who was also in a generous mood, then sent her a check for \$300, telling her to spend the extra \$93 any way she wanted. Ms. Hazard then asked on Facebook what she should do with the money. The overwhelming response was to give it to charity, and so she donated the \$93 to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. Actually, she matched the \$93, sending a total of \$186 to Second Harvest. Lots of people read about this on Facebook, and lots of people posted her story on their own Facebook pages, and lots of people sent money to Second Harvest. Within one year, Second Harvest had received over \$93,000 in donations, often by way of \$93 checks; in addition, a child donated 93 cents from her allowance. (Yet another donation was for \$9,300.) Second Harvest spokeswoman Poppy Pembroke said, "We are thrilled to be the recipient and so thankful that Carolee chose our organization. This will provide over 180,000 meals to people in need in our community." Ms. Hazard said, "Life experiences come your way when you least expect them and you have to see where they take you. I've been blessed to be able to throw my weight behind this."<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Source: "Sarah Haughe, "Woman's Good Deed Sparks Outburst of Charitable Gifts." *San Francisco Examiner*. 7 August 2010 <<http://www.sfexaminer.com/local/woman-s-good-deed-sparks-outburst-charitable-gifts>>. If you would like more info on the 93 Dollar Club or would like to donate, visit <[www.facebook.com/93dollarclub](http://www.facebook.com/93dollarclub)>. Ms. Ware and Ms. Hazard are both involved in the Facebook page.

## **A Winner of the Presidential Citizens Medal**

Jorge Munoz' mother told him, "Share." He does. He works as a school bus driver and uses the money he earns plus donations to feed 130 poor people a day. In New York City, with the help of his mother, sister, and nephew, he serves the meals from the back of his truck. In the past six years, they have missed only one day of serving meals. According to an Associated Press article, the meals that Mr. Munoz makes take "22 pounds of rice, 20 pounds of pasta, 60 pounds of chicken, 150 cups of coffee and 160 pieces of bread in one night." In 2010, President Barack Obama awarded Mr. Munoz and 12 other good-deed doers the Presidential Citizens Medal, which President Richard Nixon established in 1969. The award recognizes exemplary service by American citizens. President Obama said about the 2010 award winners, "They are heroes to those who need it the most. And together they remind us that we all have a purpose on this Earth that goes beyond our own lives and our own individual needs."<sup>200</sup>

## **Thinking Beyond 9-11**

On 11 September 2001, Susan Retik of Needham, Massachusetts, became a widow as a result of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City. Rather than becoming bitter toward Muslims, she devoted herself to helping widows in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, a country from which none of the 9-11 terrorists came. Ms. Retik says, "After the attack and [when I was] newly widowed, people immediately began to help me with financial and emotional support. But when I

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<sup>200</sup> Source: Ann Sanner, "Obama honors 13 citizens for their good deeds." Associated Press. 4 August 2010  
[http://lacrossetribune.com/news/local/state-and-regional/article\\_e6fb2fa-a01d-11df-8346-001cc4c002e0.html](http://lacrossetribune.com/news/local/state-and-regional/article_e6fb2fa-a01d-11df-8346-001cc4c002e0.html).

watched the news and saw war widows in Afghanistan, I knew they had no such support system. [...] I felt compelled to help those widows as I had been helped.” She formed Beyond 11<sup>th</sup>, a nonprofit organization, one of whose goals is this: “Build connections between the US and the Muslim world.” The organization has collected \$600,000 for programs to help Afghani widows with such things as literacy training and job-skills training and for the organization Mountain to Mountain, which does such things as train birth attendants in skills that help prevent infant mortality and the death of Afghani mothers in childbirth. In 2010, a major controversy arose with plans to build Cordoba House, aka Park51, aka the Ground Zero Mosque, near the site of the former World Trade Center. About Cordoba House, Ms. Retik says, “As an American, I am proud that our nation is a land of religious freedom. Yes, there are fanatics who do atrocious things ... but the lesson of 9-11 is not about those fanatics; ultimately, it is about what 99% of those who practice all religions desire: peace. We 9-11 families have suffered from the actions of these fanatics, but as a nation, we must not change our values and become as they are. So to me, supporting the construction of the Cordoba House signals to the world that we still are the great nation we always have been.” In 2010, President Barack Obama made Ms. Retik one of 13 recipients of the Presidential Citizens Medal.<sup>201</sup>

### **Providing Military Honors at the Funerals of Veterans**

In 1977, a veteran friend of George Weiss Jr., who is also a veteran, died. Unfortunately, the local Veterans of Foreign Wars post was unable to provide military honors at the

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<sup>201</sup> Source: Hal Portner, “Interview with Presidential Citizens Medal recipient Susan Retik.” *Boston Examiner*. 8 August 2010  
 <<http://www.examiner.com/mentoring-in-boston/interview-with-presidential-citizens-medal-recipient-susan-retik>>.

friend's funeral. Therefore, following his retirement as a utility repairman with Ford Motor Co. Mr. Weiss decided to form an all-volunteer rifle squad to provide military honors at the funerals of veterans. He started the Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad with six volunteers, but today the rifle squad has 130 volunteers. The volunteers have provided military honors at more than 56,400 military burials at Fort Snelling National Cemetery in Minneapolis, MN. Mr. Weiss says, "We don't know 99 percent of the people we're burying — they're strangers. But still, we've all been in the military, and we try to take care of each other." In 2010, President Barack Obama awarded Mr. Weiss the Presidential Citizens Medal.<sup>202</sup>

### **Finding Her Voice and Her Mission**

When Betty Kwan Chinn was seven years old in the 1960s, her wealthy family became a victim of Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution. Most members of her immediate family were imprisoned, and she was forced to live homeless on the streets of Kai Ping, China. Soldiers of the Red Guard made her wear a sign around her neck that said, "Child of the devil." For four homeless years, she was often hungry and friendless. She even became mute for a while as a result of the deprivation. When President Barack Obama awarded her the Presidential Citizens Medal, Ms. Chinn said, "I can't believe it. They made me wear a sign saying I was a child of the devil, and now I have this. Now, I'm in the White House." Ms. Chinn's citation from the United States government says this: "As a child growing up in China, Betty Kwan Chinn's family was the victim of persecution, and she was separated from her parents and forced to live on the streets. As a result of the trauma, she

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<sup>202</sup> Source: "Minnesotan wins Presidential Citizens Medal." *Star Tribune* (Minneapolis, MN). 3 August 2010  
<http://www.startribune.com/local/99909744.html>.

became mute. But when she came to America, Betty Chinn found both her voice and her mission: Aiding those without shelter on our own shores. Every day, starting before dawn, she loads up a truck that provides hot meals to the homeless as an expression of gratitude to the Nation that welcomed her. The United States honors Betty Kwan Chinn for renewing America's promise by serving those in need." President Obama told all 13 recipients of the Presidential Citizens Medal in 2010, "You exemplify what it means to be a citizen of the United States of America. We're grateful."<sup>203</sup>

### **Goodbye, Wedding Reception; Hello, Fundraiser**

Robin Rogers, a professor of sociology at Queens College, was getting married. She had everything she needed: a fiancé, reservations for a wedding reception at the renowned Dressler restaurant in Brooklyn, and money deposited at a printer for wedding announcements. But then things changed, and she was no longer getting married. Her ex-fiancé told her that she could have the \$3,500 deposit that they had given the restaurant and the \$1,000 that they had given the printer, but instead of getting the deposits back, she had a better idea. She called Pastor Ann Kansfield of the Greenpoint Reformed Church soup kitchen, which distributes more than 400 bags of groceries a week in Brooklyn and said that she was going to hold a fundraiser. In an interview with the *New York Daily News*, Ms. Rogers said, "When the wedding was called off, I was heartbroken. We really thought it was going to work. And then I made peace with the idea. And then I found that it became exciting, the idea of doing something bigger. I'm

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<sup>203</sup> Source: Thadeus Greenson, "Eureka's Betty Chinn receives Presidential Citizens Medal." *The Times-Standard* (Eureka, CA). 5 August 2010 <[http://www.times-standard.com/ci\\_15682436?source=most\\_viewed](http://www.times-standard.com/ci_15682436?source=most_viewed)>.

really happy about it. I know that sounds odd, but it's a better use of resources." Pastor Kansfield said, "I was really bummed for her because there's so much hope and expectation in anticipating the joy of a wedding. But she totally came up with this idea, called me out of the blue and said, 'We're going to do a fundraiser.' And I thought, 'What an awesome way to turn sorrow into joy.'"<sup>204</sup>

### **Clackamascoug Does a Good Deed**

A person who goes by the moniker "Clackamascoug" gassed up at a convenience store and went inside to pay her bill. A family—father, mother, and eight-year-old girl—came into the store after her. The family obviously did not have much money, and the little girl saw some packages of Fig Newtons—on sale at two packages for \$1—and said, "Oh, I love these. Can we get two?" The father answered, "No," and he and the little girl went outside. Clackamascoug asked the mother if she could buy the Fig Newtons for the little girl, and the mother said that doing that would be nice. Clackamascoug paid the extra dollar, went outside, and the little girl yelled to her, "Thank you!" Clackamascoug gave her a thumb's up.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Source: Chris Morran, "Erstwhile Bride-To-Be Transforms Canceled Reception Into Charity Fundraiser." Consumerist.com. 3 December 2010  
 <<http://consumerist.com/2006/05/bad-charge-at-macys-leads-to-good-deed.html>>. Also: "Greenpoint Gala."  
 <<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/139152>>.  
 Accessed on 5 December 2010. Also: Jake Pearson, Vinnie Rotondaro and James Fanelli, "Queens College Prof. Robin Rogers turns canceled wedding into gala fund-raiser for soup kitchen." *New York Daily News*. 3 December 2010  
 <[http://www.nydailynews.com/ny\\_local/2010/12/03/2010-12-03\\_queens\\_college\\_prof\\_robin\\_rogers\\_turns\\_canceled\\_wedding\\_into\\_gala\\_fundraiser\\_for.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/ny_local/2010/12/03/2010-12-03_queens_college_prof_robin_rogers_turns_canceled_wedding_into_gala_fundraiser_for.html)>.

<sup>205</sup> Source: Clackamascoug, "The Good Deeds Thread." CougarUteForum.com. BYU/Utah/LDS Sports Forum and



### **“This Bloke’s Going to be at the Airport in a Bit of a State”**

In 2009, Brian Tapp, a 59-year-old florist in Sydney, Australia, who had been recently evicted from his shop, found a stranger’s wallet and passport lying by the side of a road. He picked them up, and he picked up a travel itinerary: In less than two hours, the stranger was leaving Australia and flying to Bali. Mr. Tapp thought, “This bloke’s going to be at the airport in a bit of a state. So I’ll see if I can find him.” He rushed to the airport, where Adam Morison had discovered that he had lost his wallet and passport. Discouraged, Mr. Morison had left the airport and started to retrace his route to see if he could find his lost items. However, the airport called him to let him know that a Good Samaritan had found his wallet and passport. He returned to the airport, where he found “this angel with a beard. I still can’t believe it. I’m a perfect stranger, and he’s having a shocking day, yet he’s picked up my passport, my wallet, all my stuff, found a way of contacting me, and has gone out of his way to make sure I get my flight.” Some of the money and other items were missing from the wallet, but Mr. Morison was able to make his flight. Meanwhile, Mr. Tapp returned to the place where he had found the wallet and passport, and he found the missing money and other items, which he delivered to Mr. Morison’s home: “I found the money, a Medicare card, a MasterCard, and his barrister’s identification card. Amazingly, they were still lying on the road.” Mr. Tapp says about his good deed, “It’s what I’d expect anyone to do. I’m a person who really hates losing things, so I can put myself in the place of the owner. It’s just the way I was brought up, I suppose.”<sup>206</sup>

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Message Board.

<<http://cougaruteforum.com/showthread.php?p=483927>>.

Posted 8 September 2010. Accessed 6 December 2010.

## **“Why Spend Money When You Already Have Everything You Need?”**

On 14 July 2010, Violet and Allen Large, a retired couple in Nova Scotia, won \$11.25 million in a lottery. They gave it away. First they helped family members pay off debts, and then they made donations to charities, including a donation to the hospital that had treated Violet for cancer. The Larges were not rich before winning the money — their truck is five years old and their car is 13 years old — but they are happy with what they have. Violet told *The Globe and Mail*, “We didn’t do it to get recognized.” She added, “We haven’t spent even one penny on ourselves. Why spend money when you already have everything you need?”<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Source: Kathryn Hawkins, “Man’s Good Deed Saves Stranger’s Vacation.” Gimundo.com. 30 September 2009  
<http://gimundo.com/news/article/mans-good-deed-saves-strangers-vacation/>>. Also: Malcolm Knox, “How one good deed turned a bad day into a holiday.” *Sydney Morning Herald*. 26 September 2009  
<http://www.smh.com.au/national/how-one-good-deed-turned-a-bad-day-into-a-holiday-20090925-g6a5.html>>.

<sup>207</sup> Source: Kathryn Hawkins, “Canadian Lottery Winners Allen and Violet Large Give \$11 Million Fortune to Charity.” Gimunso.com. 4 November 2010  
<http://gimundo.com/news/article/lottery-winners-allen-and-violet-large-give-11-million-fortune-to-charity/>>. Also: Oliver Moore, “Maritime community hits jackpot, with lottery winners in their midst.” *The Globe and Mail*. 4 November 2010  
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/atlantic/nova-scotia-couple-give-away-11-million-lottery-windfall/article1785586/>.

## **Not Superman — “Just an Ordinary Guy Seeing Someone in Danger”**

Off-duty firefighter Brant Baker, age 43, saw a motorist trapped in an overturned car, and he responded heroically, freeing the trapped motorist seconds before the car exploded. Mr. Baker kicked the door open, crawled into the smoke-filled car, released the motorist’s safety belt as fire began coming through the dashboard, and then dragged the motorist out of the car. Mr. Baker said, “The guy was trapped upside down in a burning car. I had to get him out of there — simple as that. I felt around for the seatbelt and got lucky. I don’t think it was the fireman in me. When you’ve got your uniform on and the hosepipe in your hand, you feel like Superman — but this was different. I wasn’t in uniform. I was just an ordinary guy seeing someone in danger. I would have tried to save him even if I wasn’t a fireman. I’m just glad this man’s mum has still got her son and his family aren’t grieving his death.”<sup>208</sup>

## **A Three-Year-Old Heroine**

Alesaundra Tafoya, a three-year-old girl living within two blocks of Manteca Fire Station 243, which is located on the corner of Louise Avenue in Manteca, California, had been told that if she ever needed help to go to the fire station. She knew where the fire station was because she had passed it many times as a passenger in her family’s car. One day her father had a bad reaction to some prescription medicine that he had taken and he became unconscious. Young Alesaundra walked to the parking lot behind the fire

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<sup>208</sup> Source: Genevieve Roberts, “Off-duty fireman rescues trapped driver from blazing car seconds before explosion.” Thisislondon.co.uk. 28 September 2010  
<<http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/standard/article-23882699-off-duty-fireman-rescues-trapped-driver-from-blazing-car-seconds-before-explosion.do>>.

station. There some members of an Alcoholics Anonymous support group that met nearby noticed her. She told them about her father, and they took her to the fire station. Captain Robert Vilalovoz and fireman Brian Swift walked with her (and firefighter Bob Kacobson drove a fire truck) to see about her father, Frank Tafoya, who was unconscious in a chair. They then took him to a hospital. According to doctors, if he had not been taken to a hospital he likely would have died. Captain Vilalovoz, who has been a firefighter for 20 years, says that three-year-old Alesaundra is the youngest person he has seen seek help from the fire department.<sup>209</sup>

### **“Why Don’t You Feed Them Pasta?”**

Bruno Serato owns the White House Restaurant in Anaheim, California, where he serves both paying and nonpaying customers. Five years ago, his mother visited him from Italy. He showed her first his restaurant, where customers pay \$25 for pasta, and then he showed her the local Boys and Girls Club, of which he is a board member. After he told his mother that some of the children there often did not have enough to eat, she asked him, “Why don’t you feed them pasta?” So he fed all the children at the local Boys and Girls Club, and he has kept on doing that — every weeknight for five years. CBS News did a story about him, and he said that his mother’s advice to give away the food — more than 250,000 meals so far — has been one of the best things to happen to him. In 2010, however, because of the deep recession, he was giving away more food than he sold, and he worried about going out of business, but after CBS’ story on him he received

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<sup>209</sup> Source: Glenn Kahl, “3-year-old hailed a ‘hero’ for saving her father’s life.” *The Manteca Bulletin* (CA). 23 August 2010 <<http://www.mantecabulletin.com/news/archive/16572/>>.

more than \$20,000 in donations — and many more paying customers at his restaurant.<sup>210</sup>

### **Four Preschoolers Inspire 135,000 Meals**

Many people, including preschoolers, support the San Francisco Food Bank with donations. In 2009, Phoebe was in preschool. When she saw some homeless people in her community, she asked her mother, “Why do they look so sad and dirty?” Hearing about the homeless, she wanted to help, and she got help to help from her preschool teacher, Kathleen Albert, and from her classmates. They set a goal of making \$1,000 from collecting aluminum cans, and then donating the money to the San Francisco Food Bank. Ms. Albert had to be convinced that this was possible. She said, “Cans? What are you talking about? I thought five cents a can, one thousand dollars. It was unrealistic. But Phoebe was adamant about it.” They wrote letters and sent them to 150 people in their community, including friends and family members. Cans started appearing at the preschool’s door, as did checks and cash. Some businesses began to match donations. Phoebe and her helpers raised \$3,736.30. An organization called Go Inspire Go (GIG) attended a party that was held to celebrate the donation, and GIG made a video and posted it on the Internet. The video ended with this message: “If a 5-year-old could raise enough to feed nearly 18,000 people, what can YOU do? Please make a donation to the San Francisco Food Bank, and tell them Phoebe sent you.” Six months later, with the video going viral, the amount of money sent to the San Francisco Food Bank had reached over \$20,000. In addition, Tyson Foods

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<sup>210</sup> Source: Kathryn Hawkins, “Chef Bruno Serato Feeds Homeless Kids at His Gourmet Restaurant Every Night.” Gimundo.com. 5 September 2010 <<http://gimundo.com/news/article/chef-bruno-serato-feeds-homeless-kids-at-his-gourmet-restaurant-every-night/>>.

saw the video and donated 15 tons of chicken. Three other preschoolers, Ethan, Emily and Sophia, were inspired by Phoebe. Ethan said, “I like helping other people.” Sophia said, “I don’t like seeing hungry people.” Emily said, “We asked other people to help.” They also sent out letters, collected and sold cans, and collected donations, giving over \$5,000 to the San Francisco Food Bank. According to Toan Lam, the CIO (Chief Inspiration Officer) of the nonprofit organization Go Inspire Go <[www.goinspirego.com](http://www.goinspirego.com)>, “Thanks to Ethan, Emily, Sophia, and Phoebe, this small altruistic act of goodness means more than 135,000 meals can be shared in their community.”<sup>211</sup>

### **A \$30,000 Good Deed**

On Friday, 19 November 2010, Brock Terriah, who is a 24-year-old student and graphic artist, and his mother saw something fly off the top of a car. The something turned out to be a black zippered folder with \$30,000 — half in cash, half in checks — in it. Brock quickly returned the folder and money to its rightful owner: Freightliner Cornwall in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada. “I thought how great it would be to spend,” Brock said, “but my mom always taught me to be honest. I would feel terrible, because it’s not my money. It would be dirty money.” When Freightliner Cornwall president Uwe Paschek heard that the folder and money had been returned, he said, “I was impressed. The honesty was appreciated.” Brock works at Mad Moose. Bob Dawson, president of Mad Moose, said about the good deed, “We were blown away by it. This kid has got so

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<sup>211</sup> Source: Toan Lam, “Four Preschoolers Provide 135,000 Meals.” Tonic.com. 26 November 2010  
 <<http://www.tonic.com/article/four-preschoolers-provide-135000-meals-for-the-san-francisco-food-bank/>>. Watch “Four Preschoolers Inspire 135,000 Meals” at  
 <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Ox1JPVYP0o>>.

much of my respect. This is an example that should be shown to young folks about what's right. It's a wonderful story."<sup>212</sup>

### **Walking a Confused Senior Citizen Home**

Katie Tomashiro, a 9<sup>th</sup>-grade student at Ecole Secondaire Beaumont Composite High School in Beaumont, Alberta, Canada, walked a senior citizen home after the senior citizen became confused and could not remember in which direction was her home. The senior citizen walked into Mac's convenience store to ask for directions. She knew that she lived near the fire station, and she felt that if the way to the fire station was pointed out to her that she could find her way home; however, overhearing the woman ask for directions, Katie offered to walk her home. Katie says, "I wanted to help her because she was kind of lost. I had an idea of where she lived."<sup>213</sup>

### **Bad Charge**

A man who wants to be called Chris had an interesting experience in which a salesperson at Macy's messed up, but then she and other Macy's employees worked hard to make things right. He stopped at Macy's to buy some Lancome eye cream for his wife. The purchase cost \$110, and he decided to get Macy's credit card so that he could get 15 percent off. The salesperson was still new, and she gave him credit protection for his purchase. This surprised

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<sup>212</sup> Source: Melissa Di Costanzo, "A \$30,000 good deed." *Standard Freeholder* (Cornwall, Ontario, Canada). 2010  
<<http://www.standard-freeholder.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=2865223>>.

<sup>213</sup> Source: Heather McIntyre. "Teen's good deed did not go unnoticed." *Beaumont News* (Beaumont, Alberta, Canada). November 2010  
<<http://www.thebeaumontnews.ca/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=2852368>>.

Chris, so he asked her about it. “Oh,” she said, “I give that to everybody because it’s free.” This also surprised Chris because usually credit protection is something that must be paid for. It turned out that she was wrong that the credit protection was free, and she was horrified. She called over a more experienced employee, who confirmed that yes, there is a fee for credit protection. The new hire tried valiantly to call Credit and get the charge dropped, but she eventually gave up, and called a supervisor, who also tried valiantly — holding onto the line for a good 30 minutes — to get the charge dropped. Chris is a nice guy and did not make a fuss, and the supervisor informed Credit, “I have a very patient customer waiting here.” She also tried to make up for Chris’ lost time, telling the new hire to find a gift to add to Chris’ purchase. The new hire came back with a small gift, but the supervisor told her, “We have better gifts. Find some of the good gifts in the back. And find one of the nice gift boxes.” In addition, the store manager said, “Have someone take him [Chris] over to the men’s fragrances and see if we can find him a tester he likes.” A tester is a fairly large sample that customers can use to see if they like the product. Eventually, the supervisor got to the right person in Credit, who advised that a \$15 charge for credit protection would show up on his first statement but he should ignore it as a \$15 credit would show up on his second statement. The supervisor also told Chris that if the \$15 credit did not show on his second statement that he should see her and she would take care of the problem. When Chris went home, he had Lancome eye cream for his wife, and he had these free gifts: an unused 4oz tester of Obsession Night for Men (perhaps worth about \$45), 10 samples of other colognes for men, about 20 tubes of various Lancome lotions and creams, about 10 tiny “flat pack” Lancome samples, and some manicure sticks and a bag to hold them. Chris said, “Other than the cologne I couldn’t say what the value of all this was, but my wife was



impressed and happy.” Chris was also pleased by Macy’s employees’ attitude that “we know this is a big waste of your time and we’re going to try and make up for it somehow.” Chris also said, “Thanks!”<sup>214</sup>

### **A Bad Deed, Followed by a Good Deed**

Sometimes a bad deed is followed by a good deed. On 17 March 2008, Yetta Shipon ate an early-bird dinner with some friends at a restaurant. She went to pay the check and put \$22 on the counter. Ahead of her was an elderly man, who spoke with the cashier and asked for five \$1 bills in exchange for a \$5 bill. Ms. Shipon’s attention was distracted for a moment when someone asked her a question, and suddenly she realized that the elderly man and her \$22 were gone. In a letter to the editor of *The Northeast Times* in Philadelphia, PA, she writes, “At that point, a gentleman of about 63 tapped me on the shoulder and said, ‘Miss, may I pay your bill? I had a good day and don’t worry about paying it back.’ I was flabbergasted and asked him his name and he gave me a card. When I got home, I looked at the card and saw my benefactor’s name and address. He is a lawyer, and his name is Jay S. Gottlieb. I immediately sent him a check and thanked him for restoring my faith in mankind. May God bless him and his family. His parents should be very proud of him. There are good people out there, and I was fortunate to find one.”<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Source: Chris, “Bad Charge at Macy’s Leads to Good Deed.” Consumerist.com. 8 May 2006  
<<http://consumerist.com/2006/05/bad-charge-at-macys-leads-to-good-deed.html>>.

<sup>215</sup> Source: Yetta Shipon, “Letter to the Editor.” *The Northeast Times* (Philadelphia, PA). 10 April 2008  
<<http://www.northeasttimes.com/2008/0410/letters.html>>.

## Help with a Fallen Tree

In late 2007, Beth Williams of Cave Junction in southern Oregon had a problem when a change in weather caused a shallow-rooted tree to fall across her driveway. She telephoned a male friend for help, and then she went down by the tree to wait. Before the male friend could arrive, however, a red crewcab pickup truck drove by. Seeing the tree, the four men in the pickup stopped. Using a chain saw that they had with them, they cut the tree in pieces, and then threw the pieces into the woods. She told them, "Thank you." They replied, "You're welcome," and drove away. In a letter to the editor of the *Illinois Valley News*, Ms. Williams writes, "I was still stunned by such kindness when my friend arrived. We traded round-eyed stares and a laugh before he too drove away, and I left to run errands. What a wonderful place to live. My benefactors are appreciated."<sup>216</sup>

## Unsung But Not Forgotten

Sue Brown's Honda broke down near a gas station, and a student on a bike stopped and offered to push her to the gas station. Fortunately, because the pushing was difficult, he got plenty of help. In a letter to the editor of the *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, Ms. Brown wrote, "That poor young man was dripping with sweat and never complained once. As the hill got steeper, two young women joined him and pushed me over the hill where I coasted to the gas station. Once there, two other men joined in and pushed me right to a pump." She added, "I can never thank these folks enough for their efforts and very good

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<sup>216</sup> Source: Beth Williams, "Letter to the Editor." *Illinois Valley News* (OR). 5 December 2007 <<http://www.illinois-valley-news.com/archive/2007/12/05/letters.html>>.

deeds. Yes, these unsung heroes in my eyes will never be forgotten.”<sup>217</sup>

### **Good Samaritans at New York Fries**

In late 2010, while driving to North Bay, Sandra Reid of Simcoe, Ontario, Canada, left her purse at New York Fries on Highway 11. Two hours later, she realized what she had done. She immediately telephoned the owner of New York Fries, who gave her the good news that another customer had found her purse lying on a chair and turned it in. He also gave her his home telephone number so that some of her friends who were traveling north could telephone him so he could give them her purse to take to her. In a letter to the editor of the *North Bay Nugget*, Ms. Reid wrote, “Thank you very much to the good Samaritan who owns New York Fries in Orillia and North Bay and to the good Samaritan who handed my purse to the owner.”<sup>218</sup>

### **“No, You Don’t Have to Put Anything Back. This is on Me”**

Chato Stewart of Port Charlotte, Florida, is a father of four, and his budget is very tight. One month he spent too much money, and while in line at a supermarket he discovered that his account had only \$4.42 left. He started putting things back, even though they were things his family needed. Fortunately, the woman next in line sensed his problem and told him, “No, you don’t have to put anything back. This is on me.” Then she swiped her credit card and

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<sup>217</sup> Source: Sue Brown, “Letter to the Editor.” *Chattanooga Times Free Press* (Tennessee). 30 November 2010  
<<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2010/nov/30/letters-editor/>>.

<sup>218</sup> Source: Sandra Reid, “Letter to the Editor.” *North Bay Nugget* (Ontario, Canada). 2010.  
<<http://www.nugget.ca/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=2841834>>.

put \$39.11 worth of his groceries on it. Mr. Stewart asked, “Are you sure?” She replied, “Yes.” In a letter to the editor of the *Charlotte Sun and Weekly Herald*, Mr. Stewart writes, “My girls and I would like to publicly thank our ‘Wonder Woman’ for her very generous deed. Thank you!”<sup>219</sup>

## **A Hero of the Holocaust**

Raoul Wallenberg saved tens of thousands of Jews in Hungary during the Holocaust. He also did many other good deeds. For example, while attending the University of Michigan, he once bicycled approximately 70 miles from Ann Arbor to Owosso so he could do a favor for a friend by lecturing at a women’s club. And while in Budapest, he once let a Jewish woman give birth in his room after a hospital turned her away — he slept in a hallway.<sup>220</sup>

## **Good Deeds While Traveling**

Journeywoman.com is a Web site for women travelers. In a newsletter, Evelyn Hannon asked readers to send in stories of good deeds that they had done while traveling. One good deed, sent in by Dawnene of New Orleans, was helping someone with car trouble: She was in Mexico, and she saw in the middle of a desert a Canadian family with car trouble. Dawnene writes, “Their car just so happened to be the same make and model as our vehicle. It turned out their distributor cap had gone bad or become damaged from the rough roads. We had an extra with us (we are well prepared Journey Women) and had them back on the road within

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<sup>219</sup> Source: Chato Stewart, Letter to the Editor.” *Charlotte Sun and Weekly Herald* (Port Charlotte, FL). 3 September 2010  
<<http://blogs.psychcentral.com/humor/2010/08/to-my-wonder-woman-thanks-for-the-good-deed/>>.

<sup>220</sup> Source: Penny Schreiber and Joan Lowenstein, editors, *Remembering Raoul Wallenberg: The University of Michigan Celebrates Twentieth-Century Heroes*, pp. viii.

five minutes! There was no town or village for about 40 miles in any direction, so it was a real lucky chance that we happened upon them at that exact time. We have performed many good deeds while traveling, but that particular story is my favorite because it just seemed so strange that they had the same make and model car and that we just so happened to have an extra distributor cap.” Of course, we are unlikely to ever be able to do exactly that kind of good deed, but Lynn, a retired children’s librarian from Tulsa, Oklahoma, often does a good deed that we can emulate: “When I travel, I pack a dozen or so new children’s paperback books in my bag. I’ve given them to kids, parents, grandparents in schools, shops, restaurants, and even on the street. In Mexico, Peru, and Ecuador, I took books in Spanish and left them for the housekeeping staff (along with a tip).”<sup>221</sup>

### **Repairing a Flagpole**

On the day before Veterans’ Day of 2010, the Central Maine Power Company did a good deed for World War II veteran Gene Bernard of Topsham, Maine. The rope on his flagpole had broken, and he had been unable to find a way to get to the top of the flagpole and pass a new rope through the swivel. All of his attempts to get help were unsuccessful until he noticed a CMP road crew working on a nearby power line that a storm had caused to come down. He asked the foreman for help, and the foreman replied that it was up to the crewmember who was in the repair truck bucket and working at the top of the pole. The crewmember was willing, and once his work was done, he fixed Mr. Bernard’s problem. In a letter to the editor of *The Times*

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<sup>221</sup> Source: “Good Deeds Done by Journeywoman Travellers.”

Journeywoman.com. Accessed 29 November 2010

<<http://www.journeywoman.com/travel101/GoodDeedsDonebyWomenTravellers.htm>>.

*Record* (Mid-Coast Maine), Mr. Bernard wrote, “We are very grateful. Our lighted flag means a lot to us and our neighbors.”<sup>222</sup>

### **Subway Rescue #1**

On 2 January 2007, Cameron Hollopeter, age 20, suffered a seizure and fell from a New York City subway platform and between the rails of an oncoming subway train. Wesley Autrey immediately leaped down to help him. Because Mr. Autrey did not have time to get Mr. Hollopeter back onto the platform, he covered Mr. Hollopeter’s body with his own in the drainage area between the two rails. The train engineer hit the brakes, but the train went over the two men. After the train stopped, Mr. Autrey yelled to the people on the platform, “We’re O.K. down here, but I’ve got two daughters up there. Let them know their father’s O.K.” Later, Mr. Autrey said about his daring rescue, “I don’t feel like I did something spectacular; I just saw someone who needed help. I did what I felt was right.” Mr. Hollopeter’s father, Larry, said, “Mr. Autrey’s instinctive and unselfish act saved our son’s life.”<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Source: Gene Bernard, “Letter to the Editor.” *The Times Record* (Mid-Coast Maine). 16 November 2010  
<<http://www.timesrecord.com/articles/2010/11/16/opinion/letters/doc4ce2d41ee6089622921903.txt>>.

<sup>223</sup> Source: Cara Buckley, “Man Is Rescued by Stranger on Subway Tracks.” *The New York Times*. 3 January 2007  
<<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/03/nyregion/03life.html?ex=1325480400&en=bfb239e4fab06ab5&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland&>>. Also: Associated Press, “Subway hero enjoys his 15 minutes of fame.” CNN. 4 January 2007  
<<http://web.archive.org/web/20070122233612/http://www.cnn.com/2007/US/01/04/subway.rescue.ap/index.html>>.

## Subway Rescue #2

On 5 September 1987, Alex Cumba, 23, of Manhattan, suffered a seizure and fell onto the tracks of a New York City subway train. Three men — Melvin Shadd, age 26 old; Edwin Ortiz, age 30; and Jeff Kuhn, age 44 — jumped in after him and tried to raise him back to the platform, but he was too heavy. With a train coming, Mr. Shadd scrambled back to the platform, while Mr. Ortiz and Mr. Kuhn pushed Mr. Cumba into the recess formed by the platform overhanging the track and then jumped in with him as the train came roaring into the station. Except for a slight cut that Mr. Cumba received when he fell, no one was injured. Mr. Cumba said about his rescuers, “I sure as hell thank them.”<sup>224</sup>

## Virginia Tech Hero

In a horrific school shooting at Virginia Tech on 16 April 2007, 32 students and faculty members were murdered. Engineering professor Liviu Librescu became a hero when he blocked the door of his classroom and told his students to escape through the windows. All but one student escaped. Professor Librescu and the student were murdered by the gunman. Dr. Ishwar Puri, head of the Engineering Science and Mechanics department at Virginia Tech, said, “Professor Librescu died as he lived, devoted to his students and to his profession. He loved his position as a professor. A prolific researcher and wonderful teacher, he devoted himself to the profession, solely for the love of it.” Some Virginia Tech students emailed accounts of his heroism to his wife. Joe, his son, said, “My father blocked

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<sup>224</sup> Source: Associated Press, “3 Rescue Unconscious Man From Subway Tracks.” *The New York Times*. 6 September 1987  
<<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B0DE3DC1438F935A3575AC0A961948260>>.

the doorway with his body and asked the students to flee. Students started opening windows and jumping out.”<sup>225</sup>

### **Avoiding a Financial and Identity Nightmare**

In February 2008, Earlene Meredith lost her purse when it fell out of her car. Fortunately, a student found the purse and turned it in to a nearby bookstore, where an employee found a list of telephone numbers and called the first number on the list. The number was that of Ms. Meredith’s sister. In a letter to the editor of the *Collegiate Times*, the student-run newspaper of Virginia Tech, Ms. Meredith writes, “Because of your integrity and caring action to go out of your way to do this for a stranger, what could have been a financial and identity nightmare for me, turned out to be only a minor inconvenience of backtracking to retrieve my purse. Due to your quick action, I had my purse back in my hand within 20 minutes. [...] I don’t know your name, but I wanted to try to reach you in some way to say thank you. There aren’t enough words to express how grateful I am that you crossed my path yesterday. There truly are guardian angels and one of them was walking the Virginia Tech campus on Monday.”<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> Source: “We Remember: Liviu Librescu.” Virginia Tech. Accessed 16 November 2010  
 <<http://www.weremember.vt.edu/biographies/librescu.html>>.  
 Also: “In Memory of Professor Liviu Librescu, 1930-2007.” Virginia Tech. Accessed 16 November 2010  
 <<http://www.esm.vt.edu/librescu.php>>. Also: “Holocaust Survivor, Professor Killed Helping Students Escape.” Fox News. 17 April 2007  
<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,266506,00.html>.

<sup>226</sup> Source: Earlene Meredith, “Letter: Good deed did not go unnoticed.” Letter to the Editor. *Collegiate Times*, the student-run newspaper of Virginia Tech. 20 February 2008  
 <<http://www.collegiatetimes.com/stories/10693>>.



### **“No Charge. Thank You for Your Generosity”**

Linda Beringer, a Registered Nurse who works for the Kettering Health Network in Kettering, Ohio, and some of her friends delivered a truckload of items such as blankets, clothes, health and beauty aids, sheets, and toys from Kettering Hospital to the Friends & Family Food Pantry in Coolville, Ohio, which is in Athens County. They then stopped at the Hampton Inn in Athens, Ohio, to stay the night. The next morning, as they were eating breakfast, the manager of the Hampton Inn, Mark Samuels, checked to see that everything was all right and asked why they were in Athens. They told him, and later, as they were checking out and wanted to pay their bill, he told them, “No charge. Thank you for your generosity to Athens [County].” Ms. Beringer wrote in a letter to the editor of *The Athens News*, “I just wanted the people of Athens to know what a kind and thoughtful man they have in their community.”<sup>227</sup>

### **Trucks for Food Pantries**

WalMart does such good deeds as donate trucks to food banks. For example, in 2010, WalMart donated a new \$90,000 refrigerated food truck — which a news article describes as “a 2011 Freightliner 16M with a 24-foot Morgan Refrigerated Body, capable of moving up to 13,640 pounds” — to Second Harvest Food Bank in Lorain, Ohio. Second Harvest Executive Director Julie Chase-Morefield said, “The truck comes at a time of particularly high need in our community, with many of our friends and neighbors struggling to make ends meet. WalMart is a valued partner in the fight against hunger providing not only donations of highly nutritious food, but

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<sup>227</sup> Source: Linda Beringer, “Local motel manager made Athens County look good.” Letter to the Editor. *The Athens News*. 15 November 2010.

the trucks to transport them as well.” This was the 100<sup>th</sup> truck that WalMart has donated across the United States.<sup>228</sup>

### **Shelter from the Storm**

On 17 September 2010, a very bad storm hit New York City and endangered lives. One woman was caught in the storm while walking her 10-year-old daughter home. She said, “With the wind and the rain, it was like being trapped in a car wash. And then a tree crashed down on a car right in front of us.” The storm was so bad that she and her daughter went to a brownstone building and asked for shelter. The owner was a complete stranger but did the very good deed of letting them sit out the storm inside. The storm uprooted trees, blew roofs off buildings, and killed one woman.<sup>229</sup>

### **Helping a Wheelchair-Bound Man**

Some people take action when they see that someone needs help. For example, a man in a wheelchair was having trouble getting over a curb at a busy intersection, so a driver pulled his car over and then helped the wheelchair-bound man get over the curb. Witnessing this good deed was Sharon R. Brittain of Modesto, CA, who wrote in a 13 September 2007 letter to the editor of *The Modesto-Bee*, “To the man in the red car on H and 17th Monday morning: I noticed a slowdown as I approached the intersection. There was a small red car with an open driver door. Thank

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<sup>228</sup> Source: Richard Payerchin, “Donated truck helps Second Harvest Food Bank keep its food on the road.” *The Morning Journal* (Lorain, OH). 20 November 2010  
<<http://www.morningjournal.com/articles/2010/11/20/news/mj3704548.txt?viewmode=fullstory>>.

<sup>229</sup> Source: Bob Herbert, “Two Different Worlds.” *The New York Times*. 17 September 2010  
<<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/18/opinion/18herbert.html?ref=columnists>>.

you for getting out of your car in the middle of a messy intersection at rush hour to assist a wheelchair-bound man over the curb. An additional nod to all of the other drivers for waiting patiently while you helped. Traffic congestion in our city is worsening all the time, but it's wonderful to see people looking out for each other."<sup>230</sup>

### **Hometown Heroes**

On 13 September 2010, some employees of the Nelsonville-York school district in Ohio noticed a man's home on fire across the street from an elementary school. Ed Price, Joe Warren, and Tim Warren learned that a man was inside the burning building. They tried but failed to open the locked front door and broke a window to gain entry into the house, where they found a man in a disoriented state. They got the man out of the house, which was eventually destroyed by the fire. York Township firefighter Scott McManus helped battle the fire, which was so hot that his hands blistered inside his gloves and the top of his helmet and his facemask melted.<sup>231</sup>

### **"You Have Me"**

In 2006, Kwame Gordon, age 17, was shot to death in Eagle Rock, an upper-middle-class neighborhood in Los Angeles, CA, outside a house party. Before he was shot to death, he shot another man, 26-year-old Alex Foster, who had a toddler, and who was manning the door of the party for his in-laws. The house party was for his in-laws' 18-

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<sup>230</sup> Source: Sharon R. Brittain, "Letter to the Editor." *The Modesto-Bee* (Modesto, CA). 13 September 2007  
<<http://www.modbee.com/2007/09/13/67010/she-witnessed-a-good-deed.html>>.

<sup>231</sup> Source: Joe Higgins, "School employees rescue man from burning house." *The Athens (Ohio) Messenger*. 14 September 2010. Pp. 1, 6.

year-old daughter. Alex remembers Kwame shooting him, and he has no doubt that it was Kwame who shot him; he points out, "You kind of remember who shoots you in the head." Alex's father says, "My son was not making trouble; he was not looking for trouble. He was shot in the head by a cold-blooded killer." Alex had turned Kwame and two of Kwame's relatives away from the party because the guests were beginning to go home; the party was almost over. According to Alex, Kwame did not seem angry or upset. Kwame's hand reached out toward Alex, and Alex says, "I thought he was going to give me a handshake, or a fist bump." In Kwame's hand was a gun, and he shot Alex. Whoever shot Kwame, it wasn't Alex, and Alex says that it wasn't his friends: "It wasn't retaliation. My friends weren't there.... And they don't carry guns." Alex's skull was fractured, and he was blind for months. However, he says, "I'm at peace. I'm not looking for sympathy." He still prays for Kwame's family. At first, Alex's father wanted to sue Kwame's family; Alex says, "My dad [...] had the lawyers, the paperwork, everything. I said, No. Because that would mean the last image Kwame's mom would have of her son would be him being an attempted murderer. I told my mom, 'Let it go. You have me. What does Kwame's mother have? Why would I put such pain on her?'" His father says now, "It's embarrassing for me to be reminded of that. I wanted revenge. I don't anymore. We're not victims; we're survivors. I just want to move on."<sup>232</sup>

### **The Hero Brothers**

In the summer of 2010, a man tried to abduct a young white woman in Chapel Hill, NC, grabbing her and trying to pull

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<sup>232</sup> Source: Sandy Banks, "Forgiveness is the Best Revenge." *Los Angeles Times*. 6 July 2010  
 <<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-banks-20100706,0,6671959,full.columnn>>.

her into his car after spraying her face with pepper spray. Two black men, brothers Joey (age 51) and Freddie Shelton (age 50), stopped the abduction. They positioned their vehicle in such a way to make it difficult for the attacker's car to maneuver, and then they jumped out. The would-be kidnapper let go of the young woman and jumped in his car. Escaping, he hit Joey twice with his car, fracturing Joey's back. The young woman survived and celebrated her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday the day after the attempted abduction. Police quickly made an arrest in the case. UNC Health Care donated Joey's health care at its facility. Chapel Hill businessman Mike Miles donated \$1,000 to start a fund for Joey's care, a fund to which many other people have donated. The Chapel Hill mayor honored the hero brothers in a ceremony. Joey says, "It's just mind-blowing. The love and support and appreciation! It's wild — after turning 50, you think it's gonna all be downhill." Why did the hero brothers help the young woman? Joey says that they looked "at her face, how terrified she was. She needed help. I find it hard to believe that anyone who saw what we saw wouldn't have stopped to help." The young woman and the hero brothers have had meals together since the rescue. One more point: Joey says, "Doing the right thing comes from what you are taught." Joey and Freddie were taught right.<sup>233</sup>

### **A Returned Wallet**

While bicycling in 1963, 18-year-old Gulli Wihlborg lost her wallet in the southern Sweden town of Trelleborg. Forty-one years later, the wallet — and the money that was inside of it — was returned by mail anonymously. The money in the wallet was a lot of money to her in 1963 — it

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<sup>233</sup> Source: Diane Dimond, "When Neighbors Help Neighbors." Creators Syndicate. 3 July 2010  
<<http://www.creators.com/opinion/diane-dimond/when-neighbors-help-neighbors.html>>.

was half of the rent that she paid for a rented furnished room back then. The anonymous person who returned the wallet to her enclosed this note: “Dear Gulli, you should never give up hope. Here’s your wallet that was found on [the street] Oestersjoegatan many years ago. Greetings from Trelleborg!”<sup>234</sup>

### **Superhero for a Day**

The Make-A-Wish Foundation frequently grants the wishes of very ill children. For example, 13-year-old Erik Martin, who has cancer, wanted to be a superhero like those in comic books. In April 2010, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, with the help of hundreds of volunteers, granted his wish, and Erik assumed a secret identity: Electron Boy. He received a telephone call from Spider-Man, who requested that he save the players of the Seattle Sounders, a professional soccer team, whom Dr. Dark and Blackout Boy had imprisoned in a locker room. Erik put on his superhero costume, and Moonshine Maid drove him to Qwest Field in her DeLorean sports car — accompanied by more than 20 police officers riding motorcycles. At Quest Field, assisted by Lightning Lad, Erik, aka Electron Boy, used his lightning bolt to open the locker-room door, freeing the soccer players. After receiving the accolades of the Sounders, as well as photographs and a jersey and an autographed soccer ball, Erik listened as the Jumbotron broadcast a message from Dr. Dark and Blackout Boy: “We are here to take over Seattle and make it dark!” The Jumbotron also displayed video of a Puget Sound Electric employee trapped in the top of his bucket truck. Again, Erik, aka Electron Boy, rode in the DeLorean, accompanied

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<sup>234</sup> Source: Brian Bernbaum, “The Odd Truth, Feb. 2, 2004.”

Cbsnews.com.

<<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/02/03/national/main597806.shtml>>.

by the police officers on motorcycle, to the scene of the crime, where he rescued the trapped employee and then travelled to the Space Needle, where he captured Dr. Dark and Blackout Boy — and rescued the hostages trapped on the observation deck. What was the final result of all this activity? Many people were saved, evildoers were punished, and Erik said, “This is the best day of my life.”<sup>235</sup>

### **A Gold Nugget on a Gold Chain**

On 3 December 2009, Judy Turner of Kenogami was returning home after shopping in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, Canada. While listening to CJKL radio, she heard a list of lost-and-found items, including a gold nugget on a gold chain. Immediately, she reached for her gold nugget on a gold chain, which had sentimental as well as dollar value, and she discovered it was missing. She went back to Kirkland Lake and claimed her lost item. The person who had found the item was a woman named Sally Owens, who worked at the pharmacy in Pettenuzzo’s Independent Grocers. In a letter to the editor of the *Northern News*, Ms. Turner wrote, “I am extremely grateful for having gotten this treasured item back and especially thankful to Sally Owens, the honest person who made this a happy and heartwarming event.”<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> Source: Katherine Long, “Local boy with cancer turns into a superhero for a day.” *Seattle Times*. 29 April 2010  
<[http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2011740342\\_electronboy30m.html](http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2011740342_electronboy30m.html)>.

<sup>236</sup> Source: Judy Turner, “Good deed proves KL’s heart of gold.” Letter to the Editor. *Northern News*.  
<<http://www.northernnews.ca/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=2212641>>. Accessed 10 April 2010.

## Encouragement for a Young Skier

On 24 March 2010, Gib Marchand and his eight-year-old daughter, Ruby, had skied partway down on Snowmass Mountain in Colorado, when he ran into a difficulty: His daughter did not want to ski down the rest of the slope. She had to, of course, to get off the slope and back to civilization. Fortunately, a woman named Wendy and a few of her friends came to the rescue. They suggested that Gib ski a little ahead of Ruby, and they coaxed Ruby down the slope with lots of encouragement and help. Mr. Marchand wrote in a letter to the editor of *The Aspen Times*, “Together, they instilled confidence in Ruby, and got her to ski out of the predicament. Due to their selflessness, friendliness, and expertise, they transformed what could have been a nightmare into a positive learning experience. Ruby and I ended up having a most excellent day.”<sup>237</sup>

## The Sweatsuit Project

When a victim of rape is taken to a hospital so that evidence of rape can be gathered, her (usually, the victim is a her) clothing is also taken as evidence. This means that often the rape victim has to go home wearing only a hospital gown. Because of this, the American Red Cross Stark County Regional Chapter started a “Sweatsuit Project.” In addition to providing survivor advocates who help the victim during the process of the gathering of evidence, the American Red Cross Stark County Regional Chapter provides new sweatsuits to survivors of rape so that they don’t have to wear a hospital gown home.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Source: Gib Marchand, “A good deed on the slopes.” Letter to the Editor. *The Aspen Times*. 24 March 2010  
<<http://www.aspentimes.com/article/20100329/LETTER/100329817>>. Accessed 10 April 2010.

<sup>238</sup> Source: American Red Cross Stark County Regional Chapter. “Rape Crisis Services.”



## Paying It Forward

On Thursday, 8 October 2009, Paula Antonacci of Springfield, Illinois, went to a drivers' license facility so she could get her license renewed before work. However, once she was there, she realized that she had not brought enough money with her to pay for the license renewal. She wrote in a letter to the editor of *The State Journal Register*, "A very kind person named Barbara came up to the counter and asked how much I needed. I had only needed \$2, which she generously gave to me without hesitating. I asked for her address to return the money, but she would not give it to me. She said many people had helped her out in such situations and that I could help someone out next time." Ms. Antonacci promises to pay the good deed forward and writes that she appreciates people such as Barbara.<sup>239</sup>

## Good and Honest People Working at Goodwill

Claudiann Hart of Virden, Illinois, once donated a purse to Goodwill, but neglected to take her calling card, money and some important papers out of a zipped-up compartment in the purse first. She immediately called Goodwill, and Ann Clemmons, an employee there, was able to find and return Ms. Hart's important possessions to her. In a letter to *The State Journal Register* of Springfield, Illinois, Ms. Hart writes, "Thank you to all the good and honest people working at Goodwill."<sup>240</sup>

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<[http://www.stark.redcross.org/index.php?pr=Rape\\_Crisis\\_Services](http://www.stark.redcross.org/index.php?pr=Rape_Crisis_Services)> and

<[http://www.stark.redcross.org/index.php?pr=Home\\_Page](http://www.stark.redcross.org/index.php?pr=Home_Page)>. If you would like to contribute money to the Sweatsuit Project, go to the Web site for the American Red Cross Stark County Regional Chapter.

<sup>239</sup> Source: "Good Deeds: Oct. 24." *The State Journal Register* (Springfield, Illinois). 24 October 2009 <<http://www.sj-r.com/letters/x1717105507/Good-Deeds-Oct-24>>.

<sup>240</sup> Source: "Good Deeds: Oct 31." *The State Journal Register*

### **“This is Not Going to Ruin My Day”**

Gayle Spellman, an 81-year-old widow in Lenexa, Kansas, once visited a Target store to buy some groceries, but she discovered that she had left her credit card and checkbook at home. She told the grocery clerk, “This is not going to ruin my day!” She was right. The grocery clerk set aside the three bags of groceries until Ms. Spellman returned with money to pay for them, but in the Target parking lot, a woman came up to her and said, “Here are your groceries.” At first, Ms. Spellman believed that the woman had thought that she had forgotten the groceries, so she said, “Thank you, but I have not paid for them.” The woman replied, “I did.” The woman declined to give Ms. Spellman her name, but Ms. Spellman told her, “God bless you.” She also wrote about the good deed in a letter to the editor of the *Kansas City Star*.<sup>241</sup>

### **A Lost \$10 Bill**

In March 2009, Paula J. Holmes-Greeley shopped at Benson Drugs on Spring Street just off Apple Avenue in Muskegon, Michigan. She paid for her purchase with a \$20 bill, but as she did so, a \$10 bill slipped out of her hand. Fortunately, the next day she returned to Benson Drugs, and the employees there had the \$10 bill in an envelope waiting for her. In a letter to the editor of the *Muskegon* (Michigan) *Chronicle*, Ms. Holmes-Greeley writes about Benson Drugs, “It is an old-fashioned store where they know your name and always treat you with dignity and respect. Kudos to owner Randy Dahlquist and the honest employee, Amanda Boot.”<sup>242</sup>

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(Springfield, Illinois). 31 October 2009 <<http://www.sjr.com/letters/x23533301/Good-Deeds-Oct-31>>.

<sup>241</sup> Source: Gayle Spellman, “Kind stranger pays for groceries.” *Kansas City Star*. 9 January 2009  
<[http://blogs.kansascity.com/unfettered\\_letters/good\\_deed/](http://blogs.kansascity.com/unfettered_letters/good_deed/)>.

## A Hero Who Lived Down the Street

These days, when someone is asked to name a hero, that hero may very well be a celebrity or other famous person, who of course are people and as capable of doing good — or evil — as the rest of us. All too often, we don't think of a hero as being a person who lives down the street. For example, when *Guardian* journalist Shazia Mirza was asked to name some heroes, she mentioned a number of famous people. Only after the interview was over did she think about Maureen, who lived down the street when Shazia was a child. Shazia writes, "She had burgundy hair and walked down the street in an apron with Rolf Harris's face on it and rollers in her hair. She was always happy and always busy. She took 20 children into her care and brought them up as her own, and to earn extra money she washed other people's clothes by hand and did their gardening." Such a person does great good in her life without ever achieving fame or being mentioned on lists of top-10 heroes. Shazia writes, "A select list of stereotypical heroes is presented to us by other people and the media. Maureen wasn't on that list, so I didn't say her name. But I should have."<sup>243</sup>

## A Fiery Rescue

In 2008, chiropractor Jonathan Gose was driving his car on a highway when another car approached him — the driver was traveling in the wrong direction. Both cars swerved

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<sup>242</sup> Source: Paula J. Holmes-Greeley, "Letter: Good deed made his day." *Muskegon (Michigan) Chronicle*. 14 March 2009  
<[http://www.mlive.com/opinion/muskegon/index.ssf/2009/03/letter\\_good\\_deed\\_made\\_his\\_day.html](http://www.mlive.com/opinion/muskegon/index.ssf/2009/03/letter_good_deed_made_his_day.html)>.

<sup>243</sup> Source: Shazia Mirza, "Holding out for a hero." *The Guardian*. 26 September 2009  
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2009/sep/26/shazia-mirza-no-more-heroes>>.

and missed each other, and afterward Mr. Gose looked in his rearview mirror but he could not see the other car. Thinking that the other car had gone over an embankment, Mr. Gose turned his car around and checked it out. The car had gone off the road and over an embankment, had crashed, and was on fire. Mr. Gose went to the car, which was filled with smoke, and discovered that the driver was unconscious. He pulled the driver from the car, almost certainly saving his life. Athens, Ohio, Fire Chief Robert Troxel nominated Mr. Gose for the Ohio Fire Service Citizens Award, writing, "With total disregard to his personal safety, Mr. Gose chose to help an individual who most certainly would have been critically injured, or worse, died, as a result of the accident." Mr. Gose won the award, but like many heroes, he said that he had done only what other people in the same circumstances would have done.<sup>244</sup>

### **Finding Two Survivors at the World Trade Center**

On 11 September 2001, terrorists attacked the World Trade Center in New York City. Very few survivors were found after the towers fell. However, a former Marine named Dave Karnes and a Marine named Sgt. Thomas (his other name is not known) found two survivors buried in the rubble: Port Authority police officers Will Jimeno and Sgt. John McLoughlin. Mr. Karnes was an accountant working for Deloitte Touche in Wilton, Connecticut. When he heard about the attack on the World Trade Center, he got a military haircut, put on an old uniform, loaded his car with gear, and drove to the site. Police saw his uniform and his gear and waved him on to the site, where he met Sgt. Thomas and together they started searching the rubble. Rescue workers had been ordered to stay away from the rubble because it was unstable and very dangerous, but the

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<sup>244</sup> Source: Steve Robb, "Fiery rescue leads to hero award." *The Athens (OH) Messenger*. 16 September 2009. pp. 1, 6. Print.

two men kept searching, yelling for survivors to cry out or to tap something to make noise. Finally, they heard a cry and they discovered two survivors. Sgt. Thomas looked for help, and Mr. Karnes called his wife on his cell phone, reasoning that she could call the New York City police and get help to dig the two survivors out. Soon, help arrived in the form of Chuck Sereika, a former paramedic with an expired license. Like Mr. Karnes, Mr. Sereika had put on his old uniform and come to the site. Scott Strauss and Paddy McGee, officers with the elite Emergency Service Unit of the NYPD, also quickly arrived. Digging Mr. Jimeno out of the rubble took three hours. Sgt. McLoughlin was buried deeper in the rubble, and digging him out took an additional six hours. Both men survived.<sup>245</sup>

### **“He Was a Human Being”**

In June 1991, Bella Freund heard shouts of “Terrorist” in a shopping center in Jerusalem. An Arab had used a knife to stab a Jewish boy, and now a mob of angry Jews was attacking the Arab. Bella was an Orthodox Jew, but she threw herself on top of the Arab to protect him from the mob. Why did she protect him? Her parents were survivors of the Holocaust, and she said, “I protected someone because he was a human being.”<sup>246</sup>

### **Alert, Helpful, and Kind Neighbors**

In early 2009, Chris Parker of Tiltonsville, Ohio, had to be out of town due to a death in the family. Unfortunately, while he was out of town, an outdoor water faucet at his home malfunctioned, sending water everywhere.

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<sup>245</sup> Source: Rebecca Liss, “An Unlikely Hero.” *Slate*. 10 Sept 2009  
<<http://www.slate.com/id/2227969/pagenum/all/#p2>>. This is a reprint of an article that appeared a year after the terrorist attack.

<sup>246</sup> Source: Ted Gottfried, *Heroes of the Holocaust*, p. 98.

Fortunately, Chris' mail carrier, Jennifer Borton, heard the sound of the water and called the post office to report the problem to Marsha Sines, who called the water department, who sent Jonathan Sgalla to go to Chris' house and shut the water off. Chris wrote in a letter to the editor of *The Times Leader*, "They deserve a pat on the back! Had they not responded to the problem, I could have had major water damage in my home. I am exceedingly grateful. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! How nice to live in a small town with caring people!"<sup>247</sup>

### **Finding and Returning a Lost Purse**

In a letter to the editor of the *Naples News* in Naples, Florida, Nancy Pritchard wrote, "As we are all aware, good deeds go unreported and bad deeds fill the news." However, she quickly did something to rectify the situation by writing about a good deed that had been done for her. She had bought groceries at the Naples Walk Publix Supermarket, and had driven away leaving her purse in the shopping cart. After 20 minutes had passed, she realized what she had done and so she returned to the supermarket. Fortunately, Joanna Schrenko of John R. Wood Realtors had found the purse and had turned it in to an employee of Naples Walk Publix. Ms. Pritchard closed her letter by writing, "Thank you from the bottom of my heart."<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Source: Chris Parker, "Good deed." Letter to the editor. *The Times Leader* (Martins Ferry, OH). 14 May 2009  
<<http://www.timesleaderonline.com/page/content.detail/id/510867.html?nav=5007>>.

<sup>248</sup> Source: Nancy Pritchard, "A Good Deed Indeed." Letter to the Editor. *Naples News* (FL). 11 June 2009  
<<http://m.naplesnews.com/news/2009/jun/10/letters-editor-june-11-2009/>>.

### **Feline Heroine of the Year**

In March 1996, a stray cat showed that animal mothers love their offspring. A building caught on fire in New York City, and firefighters from Hook and Ladder 175 put out the fire. As they were about to leave the area, firefighter David Giannelli heard the sound of mewling. He investigated and found five kittens with smoky and scorched fur. Nearby, the mother cat was lying down, breathing with difficulty. She was badly burned, and even her eyes were blistered. It wasn't hard to figure out what had happened. The mother cat had saved her kittens from the fire, returning time after time to get them. Mr. Giannelli took the mother cat and her kittens to the North Shore Animal League. One kitten died, but the other kittens, and their mother, who was now named Scarlett, recovered and found good homes. Scarlett received much media attention, and the International Cat Association named her the 1996 Feline Heroine of the Year.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> Source: Rosanna Hansen, *Animal Rescuers*, pp. 16-27.

## CONCLUSION

### **“But, Daddy, Aren’t We Going to *Do* Anything About That Family?”**

A preacher in a church described his visit to a poor family. He spoke about the threadbare clothing of the children and parents in the family, their lack of medical care, and their lack of food. After finishing his description of the impoverished circumstances of the family, the preacher announced the number of the closing hymn. Before anyone was able to begin singing, however, the preacher’s small son stood up and asked, “But, daddy, aren’t we going to *do* anything about that family?”<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> Source: E. Paul Hovey, compiler, *The Treasury of Inspirational Anecdotes, Quotations, and Illustrations*, p. 23.



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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

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

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

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

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

### Shameless Commerce

Visit David Bruce’s storefront at

<http://stores.lulu.com/bruceb>

If all goes well, I will publish one or two books a year for the rest of my life. (On the other hand, a good way to make God laugh is to tell Her your plans.)

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*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*

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*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*

*The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds,*

*Volume 1: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds,*

*Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*Maximum Cool: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes*

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*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***

***Nadia Comaneci: Perfect Ten***

***Resist Psychic Death: 250 Anecdotes***

***Seize the Day: 250 Anecdotes and Stories***