



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on March 7, 2023

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The Goodness of America

Kidney Friends, Football Rivals

A Chiefs fan and an Eagles fan who bonded over a kidney donation attended the Super Bowl together this year.

John Gladwell and Billy Welsh met during their time in the Marine Corps, but they would not have described themselves as friends, according to KMBC. It wasn't until Welsh put out a request online to help him find a kidney that things changed. Gladwell responded that he wanted to help, and the kidney donation went through in 2020.

"I was shocked, when he said he was a match and he was going to be in town next week, I cried," Welsh said. "Never in a million years would I have ever thought that dude would've given me a kidney," he added.

Gladwell explained his motivation to Today.com.

"You never leave a brother behind," he said. "Marines are a band of brothers. We don't leave someone behind."

He also said he wanted to make sure that Welsh's two-year-old son at the time would have his dad around to take him to sporting events.

"I don't think I could've lived with myself if I could do something but didn't. I wanted him to have dad going to Eagles games, Phillies games, Flyers, 76ers all of that. I wanted him to be able to experience all of that with his dad," Gladwell said.

Two years after the donation, Gladwell contracted Covid and ended up in the intensive care unit with stage-four chronic kidney disease, but miraculously made a recovery.

Welsh and Gladwell's story caught the attention of the Philadelphia Eagles' president, who contacted the Chiefs to arrange bringing the two men to the Super Bowl in Glendale, Arizona.

"A Chiefs kidney? I don't know how my body will react if the Chiefs win. The Eagles are gonna win. Go birds!" Welsh joked ahead of the Super Bowl. Of course, the Chiefs did win the Super Bowl, 38-35.

The men are hopeful that their story will draw attention to organ donation. Gladwell said, "I hope that it brings out a lot of awareness for organ donation. You're not a match for everybody but you are a match for somebody."

Icy Rescue

When Iowa teen Joe Salmon, 17, witnessed a Jeep plunge through the ice of East Okoboji Lake on February 4, he teamed up with four strangers to rescue the 83-year-old driver and his six-year-old dog.

The Epoch Times reported that the driver, Thomas Lee, was trying to access his son-in-law's ice-fishing shack when his vehicle broke through the ice.

"I took one step and [the water] went to about my chest," Salmon told the *Des Moines Register*. "I got on the bumper of the rear and tried opening the back door, but all the windows were locked, but one guy gave me a knife and I hit the back glass a couple of times."



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After a few strikes, the window shattered and the men were able to rescue the dog, Cooper, first, as he was in the back seat of the vehicle.

Salmon then climbed through the car to help Lee, who had become trapped between the driver's seat and the center console. The men and the dog were then welcomed into the Okoboji Store, where they dried themselves off and warmed up.

Once he was assured that Lee and Cooper were safe, Salmon had the opportunity to consider what he did.

"It was just crazy at the time," he said. "I've never done anything like that."

The other rescuers who helped save Lee were identified as Corey McConnell, 30, of Spirit Lake; Kody Harrelson, 26, of Nevada; Cody Chester, 27, of Estherville; and Chris Parks, 27, of Hawarden.

"I Could Use a Hug"

Deputy Jake Thorne of the Macomb County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) in Michigan was called to investigate a driver who had stopped on the road in the snow, but the encounter was not at all what he was expecting.

A concerned passerby noticed a stationary vehicle on the side of the road in early February and called the police, believing the driver may have passed out.

When Thorne arrived moments later, he met the driver, identified only as "Joe" to protect his privacy. Officer Thorne asked Joe what compelled him to stop on the side of the road, and his answer was a surprise.

"Joe explained to Deputy Thorne that he was headed to work and had to pull over, because he was feeling down and just needed a break," MCSO wrote in a Facebook post. "He didn't want to hurt himself. He was upset and had multiple stressful issues making him feel overwhelmed."

When Thorne asked Joe what he could do to help him in that moment, Joe's answer was simple: "I could use a hug."

Thorne was "more than happy" to comply. Thorne and Deputy Officer Fred Parisek, who arrived shortly after Thorne, spent 20 minutes with Joe, talking him through his troubles and sharing their own stories. The moment ended when Thorne gave Joe his personal information. Days later, Thorne reached out to Joe to see how he was doing and learned that Joe was "doing much better," CBS Detroit reported.

The entire interaction was captured on the officers' body cams and shared with the public on Facebook, with Joe's face blurred for his protection. The department wanted to make it a teachable moment.

"Please remember that we are all human," the Facebook post read. "We all have good days, bad days, and days that we feel we might not make it through. But you can. Never be afraid to reach out and make that phone call to hear a helpful voice on the other end."

Facebook users from near and far commended the officers for the kindness they showed to Joe.

"I cried reading this as a mother and a human being," wrote one user. "This is what is needed. Compassion not judgements. Thank you so much!!! From Missouri!"

"I want to give this guy a hug and let him know that there are others that understand!" another user



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noted. "Awesome job officers!"



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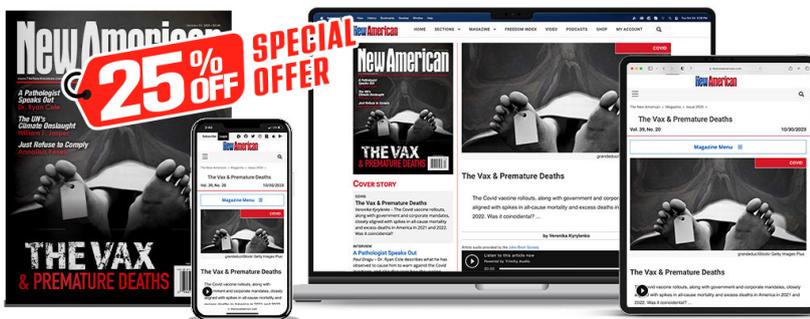
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