



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on June 27, 2023

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## **The Goodness of America**

### **Out With the Old**

Marine Corps veteran Fred Collins came home to a surprise on his front porch: a new Marine Corps flag to replace his old, worn-out one.

Collins, who served in the Marine Corps from 1987 to 1993, proudly flies his Marine Corps flag outside of his home. He was just returning from his usual daily walk with his dog, Summit, on Memorial Day when he spotted a bag on his front porch. Attached was an anonymous note from a neighbor explaining that his grandfather was also in the Marine Corps. He noticed Collins' flag was a bit run down, so he went out and bought Collins a new flag.

Collins said he was overwhelmed by the surprise.

"I mean, I almost had tears coming to my eyes trying to read this note out. It was really amazing," he said. "I couldn't help but go on to social media and post it because, I mean, you just don't see these random acts of kindness anymore."

The surprise prompted Collins to also replace his American flag with a new one. He retired his worn Marine Corps flag properly, he told Fox43.

The act of kindness also inspired Collins to be on the lookout for others in his neighborhood who may need a new flag.

### **Good as New**

Eighth grader Navene Town of Otsego, Michigan, has been cleaning and restoring veterans' headstones for free.

Years ago, Navene found the grave of his five-times great uncle while completing a family tree project for school and thought, "No one should have that dirty of a headstone." From that, a business was born: Navene Cleans Headstones.

Navene wanted to learn how to properly clean headstones without causing damage, so he took classes and became certified to do the job, WZZM 13 reported. He has posted photos and videos of himself at work.

He typically charges \$20 per job, and has cleaned almost 150 headstones. But when it comes to veterans' headstones, Navene performs the service for free.

"Cleaning headstones is taking care of something someone cares about. When I see ones that are dirty or broken I feel sad. No one should have a dirty headstone," he said.

Navene said he would like to be remembered for his good deeds. In addition to performing his cleaning services for veterans for free, he donates a portion of his proceeds to cancer research.

### **To the Rescue**

When Jonathan McCray was driving down a neighborhood street in Kenner, Louisiana, he saw smoke billowing out of one of the houses and immediately sprang into action, 11 Alive reported.



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According to the Kenner Fire Department, there were 15 people inside the house, most of whom were children as the home serves as a residential, in-home daycare. Not only did McCray rescue the people inside, but he even pulled dogs out of the house.

McCray recalled, "I just went into survival, help everybody out man, that was really it. My car was still running, I didn't even turn my car off or nothing, I just ran in there and started grabbing people."

The homeowner, Patricia Chaney, 69, said she smelled something burning but could not locate the source of the smell. It was then that McCray knocked on the door to help get people out. Chaney's son, Jack Morris, was also in the house at the time, and when he heard the commotion, he jumped in alongside McCray to help save the children and pets.

McCray said that though he was afraid of the fire, he believed he would be able to help before it got really bad.

"I know I had the opportunity before it got bad. It was just starting, it was maybe two/three minutes in so I knew I had time to get in there, by the time I got in there, the smoke started getting real thick," he explained. "I was grabbing everybody and just pulling them and grabbing them dogs and throwing them out the door, it was a lot."

Neighbor Carolyn Ursin, 59, said Chaney is a wonderful support in the neighborhood, caring for residents' children, including Ursin's now-teenage children when they were younger, according to NOLA.com. Ursin has also been doing her part to assist Chaney, who is unable to return to her home after the fire, by attempting to round up supplies that need to be replaced.

Ursin said, "We've got to get clothes, diapers, everything. We need to help them."

## **A Birthday to Remember**

Strangers and first responders in Loveland, Colorado, helped to salvage a little girl's fifth birthday party when none of her invited guests showed up.

Marlowe Hadley's mother, Nichole Danielle, invited Marlowe's entire class to her May 20 birthday party, KDVR reported, and was shocked when no one from the class arrived at the park where the party was set.

"We invited my 5 year old's entire class to her birthday party and not a single kid showed up," Danielle posted on the Lovelanders Facebook group page along with a photo of a picnic table holding several birthday presents. "So if you've got kids and you're hungry and have nothing to do we'll be here at North Lake Park pavilion #3 for a couple more hours. We've got burgers and hot dogs going!"

One mom who saw the post arrived at the park with her three daughters. She was moved by Danielle's post after having experienced something similar.

And much to Danielle's surprise, multiple first responders also came to wish Marlowe a happy birthday.

"Patrol officers, a police chaplain and co-responders along with Thompson Valley EMS and Loveland Fire Rescue Authority attended the party and were able to give Marlowe a few gifts and sing her a very happy birthday!" the Loveland Police Department wrote in a social media post on May 20. The post featured a photo of a smiling Marlowe surrounded by first responders.

Danielle later posted on the Lovelanders page to thank everyone who helped save Marlowe's birthday



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— *Raven Clabough*



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