



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on December 26, 2023

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The Goodness of America

Bikes for Christmas

This Christmas marked the 10th year that Robert Crane of Henderson, Nevada, gave away bicycles to children in need.

Bob's Bikes for Needy Kids is a local nonprofit founded by Crane that gives out hundreds of bikes every Christmas to area children of all ages. He conceived of the idea a decade ago when his own grandson wanted a bike for Christmas that his daughter, the boy's mother, could not afford to purchase. Crane found a used bike for his grandson and refurbished it, but when his grandson ended up not needing the bike, Crane listed it for sale on Craigslist. Within one hour, he had 80 replies, he recalled to 8 News Now.

"And that's when the lightbulb went off, kids don't have bikes and that's what started Bob's Bikes," he said.

Crane receives bike donations from the public, and ensures that they all are clean and safe before giving them away to children who want them.

The "Bob's Bikes for Needy Kids" Facebook page is full of photos of people who have benefited from his kindness through the years. Users who have witnessed Bob's kindness first-hand have taken the opportunity to share their own experiences and express their gratitude.

"About 5 years ago he helped my sister who has 4 kids all of them got bikes and helmets! thank you BOB!!! You brought light to our family and so many over the years!" one person commented.

"It's amazing. It's so nice to see smiles and I get more hugs than even Santa Claus ever even dreamed of," Crane told News 3.

Eastern Idaho Secret Santa

For years, an anonymous "Secret Santa" of eastern Idaho has blessed residents with \$1 million worth of donations each Christmas. The Secret Santa is aided by the East Idaho News team, led by reporter Nate Eaton, who pairs deserving families with the anonymous donor.

This year, the Secret Santa made many dreams come true:

When a young Madagascan couple's baby was born prematurely at 27 weeks, the medical bills from the baby's NICU stay put the family in a difficult financial position. Secret Santa sent Eaton and his team to surprise the family with \$2,000 for groceries, rent payments for six months, and a \$5,000 check to help with additional expenses.

The baby's mother, Ihanta, was overcome with emotion as she held her infant son, Lucas, who is now home and well.

JenniLynn and Doyle Lacey were devastated earlier this year when a house fire destroyed everything they owned. The family has since been living in a neighbor's house, as their house is not expected to be move-in ready for a year. The family has virtually nothing.

When Secret Santa learned of the Lacey family's situation, he sent Eaton and the news team to their neighbor's home with a sack of presents that included \$2,000 in grocery-store gift cards and \$3,000 in



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gift cards for a variety of other stores. The last present included a \$5,000 check.

Ruth Clark is no stranger to loss. Four of her five children died from complications related to muscular dystrophy, and her fifth child died from a different, undisclosed illness. Still, her heartbreaking losses never broke her kind spirit. After her children passed, Ruth and her husband, Rick, decided to gift her family's wheelchair-accessible van to a family in need.

This year is going to be harder than ever for Ruth, however. Her husband died in October, and Ruth continues to grieve for him. When Secret Santa learned of Ruth's heartache, he graced her with enough money to pay off the debt from her husband's funeral. He also blessed her with \$4,000 to visit her grandchildren in Maine.

When the news crew showed up at her home to surprise her, Ruth was shocked and believed she did not deserve it.

"There are other people that need it more than me!" she said when opening the gifts.

Secret Santa also surprised the Inkom Elementary School principal, Lilian Pyper, with a \$10,000 donation to help her husband receive a life-saving kidney transplant, including the \$5,000 premium payment the Pypers needed to come up with before their insurance would cover the transplant, as well as \$2,000 worth of gas-station gift cards and \$3,000 worth of grocery-store gift cards.

Pyper had been working a second job as a waitress to try to save enough money for her husband's surgery and to make ends meet as food costs and gas bills from frequent medical visits mounted.

When the news crew showed up at Pyper's school, she was speechless.

"Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh," she said. "Wow, I don't even know what to say, thank you! Thank you!"

Christmas Giveaway

Willie Wilson is a multimillionaire Chicago businessman who has made a reputation for himself by giving back to his community. This Christmas season, Wilson announced plans to distribute \$333,000 worth of food coupons and free gas to struggling Chicagoans, Fox 32 reported.

Wilson provided 5,000 people across Cook and DuPage counties with \$50 food coupons, donated to 21 grocery stores, and provided \$50 in free gas at 14 participating gas stations.

Despite Wilson's incredible success, he has not forgotten his humble beginnings.

"I've been so poor," he told Fox 32. "Thirteen years in Louisiana as a sharecropper, we worked, and we didn't get paid — we had been so poor we had to ask our neighbor for food, and the next week, we had to pay them back, and today I still consider myself poor."

Wilson insisted on pumping the free gas into people's cars, a gesture that continues to shock those he is already blessing with his giveaways.

"One lady walked up to me, and she said, 'You're pumping my gas? I can do this; you're giving it to me.' I said, 'No, ma'am; it's my job to do this for you,'" he recalled.

He also visited Cook County Jail and donated to 520 detainees, adding money to their books for necessities.

Wilson scheduled a separate giveaway in his native state of Louisiana later in December, and said he



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plans another food and gas giveaway in Chicago in 2024.



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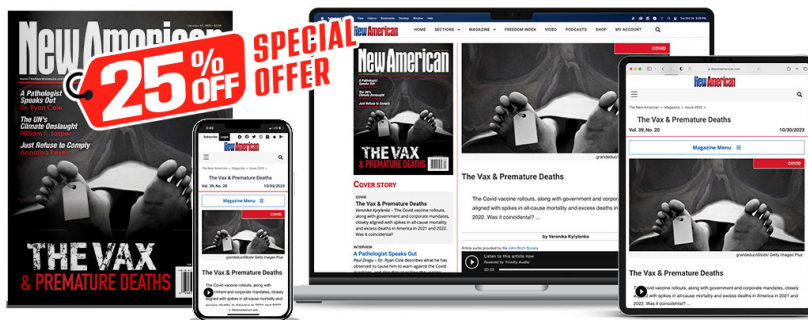
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