

Written by <u>Raven Clabough</u> on July 23, 2021 Published in the August 9, 2021 issue of <u>the New American</u> magazine. Vol. 37, No. 15



The Goodness of America

The Lawn Kid

Fourteen-year-old Nathan Adams of New York started his own lawn-mowing business as an opportunity to make money, but when his veteran grandfather died, Nathan wanted to use his business as an opportunity to give back.

"My grandfather passed in February, and I thought that maybe in his honor since I had my own business, I could cut lawns for veterans for free," he said.

Nathan has set a goal of doing 50 lawns for 50 veterans. The first cut for each veteran will be free, and each additional mow will come at a "veteran's discount."

Nathan's mother, Angel, has been posting his progress on Facebook to spread the word and help Nathan reach his goal. Each of her posts contains a photo of a freshly mowed lawn, an American flag, and Nathan holding up his hand to show the number of lawns he has mowed.

Veterans' organizations have been contacting Nathan and donating military apparel to show their support for the good he is doing.

"I think my dad is looking down on Nathan ... with so much pride because my dad was a fighter and as a veteran, he taught myself, my sister and the grandkids that we should always be thankful to our veterans because they're the reason why we get to be free and make decisions," Angel Adams said.

It was Nathan's grandfather who taught him how to mow.

"When I was strong enough to push the mower. He taught me how to start it and how to make it look good," Nathan — known to his community as "the lawn kid" — told Fox News.

In kicking off his business, Nathan received tremendous support from the community. When his first mower broke down, area residents donated funds to help him get supplies. One of his clients, Leona Doherty, who worked for Lowe's, convinced the company to donate a brand-new lawnmower and other supplies, Angel told Fox News.

"There's always a way to put good into the world when it seems like there's so much bad going on," Doherty said.

And while Nathan has not yet reached his goal of 50 lawns, he has already said that it's possible he could do many more, WKBW reported.

"I could go to 100, I could go to 1,000," Nathan said, "I'm not sure when I would stop, I probably won't stop."

A Personal Touch

Florida high-school principal Jeff Reaves has gone above and beyong his duty to his students by hand-writing a personal note to each of the 459 graduates of the 2021 senior class at Matanzas High School.

According to the *Daytona Beach News Journal*, Reaves spent months crafting the notes ahead of the June 2 graduation so that a letter appeared on each graduate's seat at the ceremony. Reaves used transcripts, e-mails, and memories of the students to write a unique letter to each senior.





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"I want to be positive for our students, especially in a time where there's a lot of negativity and turmoil in the world," Reaves told the newspaper. "I wanted to shine some light on the students and encourage them as they begin their next journey in life."

Reaves said the process reminded him of what it meant to be a real part of the lives of his students.

"It was as much for me as them, and I got the chance to learn about each student individually," he said. "It's easy to get caught up in the numbers, but it's the names that really matter. I was doing my part to help them feel connected as a community and have their high school experience to be positive."

Reaves felt especially compelled because the students' last two years at school were marred by the pandemic, <u>ClickOrlando.com</u> reported.

"It was an incredible class of students, and I was honored to serve them," Reaves said. "In a sense they lost five quarters. The pandemic started when they were juniors and it impacted their entire senior year."

In June of 2020, when COVID-19 restrictions were in full force, Reaves found a way to make the graduation experience memorable for the seniors. Their ceremony took place at the Daytona International Speedway. On top of that, Reaves surprised the students with a customized yard sign for each student placed across the football field. He used a drone to film the signs for students and their families to see, *USA Today* reported.

Students and parents were touched by Reaves' personal letter, and expressed their appreciation on the school's Facebook page.

"It was the first thing my daughter showed me!" wrote one parent.

Another wrote, "It was very sweet and a first I've heard of.... Principle [sic] Reaves went above and beyond here and my child will never forget him."

One parent gushed, "As a parent, it meant a lot. That he knew our kiddos personally each and every one of them. MHS is extremely lucky to have such a wonderful leader."

Churchgoers and Firefighters

When a fire started on June 20 at a tire shop in Sacramento, California, and spread to a nearby church, several community members acted fast to save the church.

"I was pretty worried when I got word that the church I have loved since I was born was really close to it," 11-year-old Drake Jordan Chamberlain told KCRA.

Drake and his father bolted from their family's Father's Day dinner when they got word of the fire and rushed to the church to see how they could help.

KCRA reported, "The father-son firefighting pair got help from another woman in the neighborhood who jumped the church's fence to turn on the sprinkler system when she saw the flames from her window."

The woman, identified as Destiny Bohling, later explained, "I did what I thought was right."

The Sacramento Fire Department arrived on the scene and took over fire-fighting duties. Fortunately, no one was injured.

According to KCRA, the church, as well as the tire shop and nearby homes, were still standing after the





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fire was put out, though the church and tire shop did suffer some damage.



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