



The Goodness of America

Walk the Walk

A wise old proverb says, "To understand a man, you've got to walk a mile in his shoes." Evidently, a few dozen men in Anchorage, Alaska, took this quote rather literally, as they donned high heel shoes on April 8 and attempted to walk a mile to raise awareness for sexual-assault violence against women. The endeavor was part of the fourth annual "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" event at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

The Associated Press described the scene: "The men teetered precariously along the mile-long route, trying to raise money for a local nonprofit that supports sexual assault victims. Donations to Standing Together Against Rape will go toward banishing sexual assaults and other acts of violence against women."

The participating men wore an array of high-heeled shoes, ranging in color and height. Vashon Hilliard, for example, shoved his feet into a colleague's black patent leather pumps. Though the shoes were extremely tight, Hilliard remained undeterred. "I just decided it's for a great cause, and why not?" he said.

The head of the Alaska State Troopers was one of the burly participants who slipped on a pair of red high heels and strutted for a mile, though he admittedly had trouble along the way. Colonel Keith Mallard explains, "I had a blowout. It didn't hinder my progress any. I just had to pull to the side and get a tire change."

The event manages to inject a bit of humor in an otherwise dark and ominous discussion. However, as noted by participant Walt Monegan, former head of the state troopers, that proved to be a positive thing.

"Sexual assault for some folks is still kind of a sensitive, dark issue. By bringing this in a humorous light, it eases the acceptance and discussion of it. So, any way we can bring it to the surface is a good thing."

This year's walk marked the 10th anniversary of the award-winning "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" event. As noted by the event's website, the number of participants for the event has increased every year since its inception, proving yet again the goodness of America.

No Good Deed Unnoticed

I introduced readers of this column to ABC's new television show, *Secret Millionaire*, in our April 18 issue and touted the program as one that will warm the heart. Thus far, the show has yet to disappoint. It highlights the good work and struggles of local charities as well as the charitable endeavors of the guest "secret millionaires."

Each episode has struck a chord in the hearts of Americans, but one in particular that stands out aired on March 27, and featured secret millionaire John Ferber and local volunteer Amin Moinzadeh.

Moinzadeh volunteers his time handing out clothing, hygiene kits, and sleeping bags in downtown Los Angeles' skid row. For several days, he was joined by Ferber, who posed as an "average Joe."



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That episode concluded in much the same way as all of the others, with Ferber revealing his identity and handing a \$25,000 check to Moinzadeh's charity, a generous donation indeed.

But Moinzadeh did something so genuinely kind on that program that it may have even surpassed Ferber's charitable gesture.

Ferber explains, "We see this guy and he's kind of walking through with a walker and I happen to look down at his shoes and they were covered with excrement. Without batting an eye, Moinzadeh takes his shoes off and gives them to him."

It was Moinzadeh's selfless gesture that inspired Ferber's generous donation. In addition to the \$25,000 check, Ferber also donated 200 sleeping bags for Moinzadeh to distribute.

Moinzadeh was visibly affected by Ferber's kindness and began shaking.

And once again we encounter the goodness of America.

Boy Scout Honors Flag

As pride in American exceptionalism and patriotic flag-waving has seemingly become taboo, one Boy Scout provides hope. Matthew Kuhn believes the American flag is worthy of honor every day of the year. So when he discovered a tattered version of the flag hanging above the Supreme Lube and Service in Willow Spring, North Carolina, he took matters into his own hands.

"I knew it was wrong to fly a flag like that because America is a strong country, and I stand behind our American flag and what it represents," explains Matthew.

The News Observer reports, "Wearing his Boy Scout uniform, [Matthew] went into the business and asked the manager if he could replace the worn out flag with a new one that he'd bought with his own money."

Matthew recalls, "I showed him what was going on with the flag and he and I took it down and put up a fresh new flag."

The store manager, Wade Lee, "hadn't even noticed" the tattered condition of the flag, and was both impressed with Matthew's boldness and reportedly happy to comply with the Boy Scout's request. "Most young people don't care much about what's going on.... He still cares," Lee observed.

Matthew not only saw to it that the ragged flag was replaced, but that the old flag was properly retired, a process that calls for cutting out the blue section and feeding it into a fire, followed by the stripes.

Matthew explains his motivation. As a Boy Scout, "The slogan is to 'do a good turn daily,' and by replacing that flag, I was doing a good turn for America."

Matthew has already garnered a worthy reputation as a do-gooder, having helped to repaint a local helipad and build benches in Lancaster, South Carolina. In North Carolina, he helped pick up litter along Sanders Road near Johnston High School, where Matthew is a freshman.



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