



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 18, 2016

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Goodness of America

Extended Family and Friends

When World War II veteran Serina Vine died last month, she had no known relatives. With just three people expected to attend her funeral, 200 strangers decided to pay their respects to a woman who was invaluable to the U.S. Navy.

During World War II, Vine served in radio intelligence in the Navy and spoke three languages. After leaving the military, she reportedly became homeless and has been in a Veterans Affairs hospital for the last 20 years.

Retired Army Major Jaspen Boothe read of Vine's death in the obituary section and decided to rally other veterans to attend Vine's memorial service.

ABC News explained, "Vine's story hit home for Army Maj. Jaspen Boothe, who used to be homeless herself."

She posted on her Facebook page about Vine's contributions in the Navy and her homelessness and the fact that Vine spent the last 20 years of her life at the Washington, D.C., VA hospital. Most importantly, she wrote that Vine left behind few people to mourn her death. "She never married and had no children," Boothe wrote. "She will have full military honors at her funeral but so far it is just three of us attending the gravesite funeral."

Boothe also reached out to the website Ms. Veteran America, who also encouraged others to attend Vine's funeral.

Upon arrival at the Quantico National Cemetery in Virginia on June 7, however, Boothe was surprised to see hundreds of people in attendance.

ABC News stated that Martin Fuller of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs was in attendance. He met Vine in the VA Community Living Center. "I felt like I had to go because I didn't think anyone was going to show up," he explained. But he too was surprised by the show of support from strangers. "I've never seen anything like it."

According to Boothe, Vine now has "200 known family and friends in the area."

Vine received full military honors, including a 21-gun salute, at Quantico Cemetery, ABC News reported.

New Family of Eleven

A woman in Virgilina, Virginia, has agreed to take care of her dying friend's six children. Stephanie Culley already has three kids of her own, but when her friend Beth Laitkep, who was dying of breast cancer, asked her to care for her six children after her death, Culley agreed. Laitkep passed away on May 19, and Laitkep's six kids — ranging in age from 15 to two — have since moved into Culley's Virginia home.

CBS News reported, "Laitkep was a single mom and dear friend who leaned on Culley while battling cancer this past year. When doctors told Laitkep they'd run out of treatment options in April, Culley was the only option to take care of Laitkep's children."



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Laitkep's primary concerns were that the children were kept together and that they were raised in a Christian home. Beth discussed various options with her children, who unanimously agreed that they would like to live with Stephanie and her family.

Culley recalls when Laitkep asked her to be the children's guardian. "She was never worried about herself. She was never worried about anything but them," Culley said. "And she looked at me and she said, 'Can you do this for me? Can you do this?'"

When Culley approached her husband with Laitkep's request, his answer was simple: "We'll do what we have to do."

Stephanie and her husband's decision to take in Laitkep's children brought Laitkep some much-needed relief.

"And I told her that I would love them. I would never be able to love them like she would but I would do the very best that I could," Culley said.

The Culleys have temporary custody of Laitkep's children until a permanent custody hearing on July 19. According to Laitkep's 14-year-old daughter, Selena, the transition has been "easier than anyone ever would expect."

Of course, the children are still grieving the loss of their mother. But the Culleys have definitely made the loss a little less difficult by stepping in immediately as parental figures.

For her part, Culley said. "I just love these kids. To walk in the door and see all of them in the living room dancing and playing and happy, that's what it's all about."

A GoFundMe page has been created to raise money for Laitkep's children. The goal for the page was \$10,000, but as of June 10, that amount was far surpassed, with \$56,161 having been raised.

Khloe Kares

Nine-year-old Khloe Thompson has started her own charity, Khloe Kares, to provide homeless women with tote bags filled with personal items, People.com reported on May 6.

Khloe was inspired to action when she began to notice homeless people in her neighborhood. "I would pass the same homeless people, and then I would always ask my mom why or how did they get there?" Khloe told Pop-Sugar Celebrity. "And she would tell me and I would feel bad."

The tote bags are personally sewn by Khloe, who was taught how to sew by her great-grandmother. She then fills them with items such as shampoos and toothbrushes and hand delivers them to the homeless women in her neighborhood in Irvine, California.

Khloe told Pop-Sugar that the tote bags were an important component of her charity. "I would think they could have a nice, sturdy bag so that they can keep it forever and it wouldn't just break like a regular plastic bag," she explained.

Khloe's mother, Alisha, was initially concerned about her daughter approaching the women to whom she was giving the bags. But she indicated that the reaction to Khloe has been genuinely positive and that she is always with Khloe during the deliveries to ensure her safety.

The response from the homeless community has truly touched Khloe. She recalled one woman telling



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her that she made her feel like “a human being.” “She said what I gave to her is making her feel like a normal person just like us,” Khloe explained.

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