



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on October 8, 2018

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## The Goodness of America

### Coffee With an Extra Boost of Support

A single kind gesture can mean the world to someone. There's no better proof of that than this lovely story out of Union Town, Ohio.

Nineteen-year-old Mackenzie Mauller was in the drive-thru lane at Starbucks when she randomly decided to pay for the order of the woman behind her, the Huffington Post reported. Unbeknownst to Mauller, or to the unsuspecting recipient of Mauller's kindness, the patron sitting in the next car was a nearby neighbor named Nicole Clawson, who had been going through a difficult time. Mauller's gesture meant the world to Clawson.

Imagine Clawson's surprise when she noticed Mauller, the kind stranger who bought her coffee, pulling into a driveway just a few houses away from Clawson's. Clawson was thrilled to learn that Mauller lived in her neighborhood, and wanted to leave her a note of gratitude that would explain just how much she needed to experience the kindness that Mauller had shown her, and why.

"My father just passed away and he was also my babysitter. My family and my children have had a really hard time," she wrote. "This morning, my babysitter called off sick and I had to take the day off work. I decided to buy my kids breakfast and get myself a coffee *with total guilt* because I am going to be a stay-at-home-mom for a while."

She continued, "Since I was not planning to go this route in my life, I was not emotionally and financially prepared to quit working. I cried when I found out you were so sweet to buy my coffee."

"I felt it necessary for you to know that what you did for me was more than just a coffee," she added. "It was something that has turned my whole day around, put tears in my eyes and a smile on my face."

Mauller was both surprised and touched to learn just how much her simple good deed meant to Clawson, and posted photos of the letter on Twitter on August 7.

"Yesterday I bought coffee for the lady behind me at Starbucks.... Later in the day I found this [in] my mailbox," she tweeted. "Small acts can make a big difference folks, spread some kindness."

Strangers were so impressed by Mauller's simple gesture that they even sent her \$150, which Mauller has spent on a Starbucks gift card that she gifted to Clawson. She has also volunteered her babysitting services to Clawson.

Mauller's good deed has already been an inspiration to others. Clawson states that her two children, aged three and six, have already asked her how they can pay it forward and help others.

### Here, Take Mine

Palm Beach Gardens Community High School teacher Robert Goodman of Florida was distraught when he learned in April that he has stage-three colon cancer and would need to undergo surgery and chemotherapy. In just a few short months, he used up all of his 38 days of paid leave and was in desperate need of more. He took to Facebook to ask his fellow teachers to donate some paid-leave days. Though he hoped for the best, he could not have predicted just how generous his peers would be.

Goodman was flooded with messages from school staff across the country offering to donate their paid



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leave. CNN reported that it was not just teachers who offered to donate, either. There were offers from administrators, college professors, and even cafeteria workers.

“Educators all over the country were reaching out to me to donate their sick days, even professors over at Florida Atlantic University,” Goodman told CNN. “I felt guilty because I knew there were people who had it much worse than me.”

Goodman figured he needed at least another 20 sick days for the work time he expected to lose because of his chemotherapy, but within four days after his posting, 75 sick days were transferred to him.

“I couldn’t believe it happened so fast,” he said.

Goodman says he hopes that the kindness of the strangers who reached out to him will serve as an inspiration to others. “Anybody can get cancer, but not everyone is willing to help,” Goodman said. “We all have it in us, but it’s good to get back in touch with our compassion.” Goodman also states that his students have been important during his road to recovery, as they have shown him much-needed support.

“Students sharing stories of how I’ve positively influenced them was a good reminder of why I chose to teach and why I can’t wait to get back,” Goodman said.

## **No Walk Is Too Long for Love**

Ninety-eight-year-old Korean War veteran Luther Yonger of Rochester, New York, has been married to his wife, Waverlee, for more than 50 years. When she ended up in a hospital six miles from their house, Yonger did not think twice about walking to the hospital daily to be by her side. Strangers across the country were so touched by this story that they responded with generosity.

Waverlee was diagnosed with brain cancer in 2009 and has since become paralyzed. In August, she was hospitalized at Strong Memorial Hospital, but despite the distance, Luther walked to her every day to be by her side — even in the rain.

Luther’s daughter more than once offered to give him a ride to the hospital, but Luther apparently gets too antsy to wait. He wants to leave as early as possible to get to his wife’s bedside.

“My dad’s always walked. He says he does it to stay alive,” says Luthta Yonger.

But now, Yonger has an even stronger reason to walk. “He ... says, ‘nope I have to get out there to my wife. I have to go,’” Luthta told Spectrum News Rochester.

Still, Luthta wanted to offer her help somehow. She started a GoFundMe page for her parents to help raise money for medical expenses and for transportation for her father. In just 13 days, nearly 1,300 people raised more than \$50,000 toward the \$65,000 goal.

As for Yonger, walking to his wife’s bedside is nothing extraordinary. In fact, he sees it as his duty. “She’s the best cup of tea I ever had,” he says, recalling how well she cared for him when she was well. “I ain’t nothing [without Waverlee].”

— Raven Clabough



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