



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on February 3, 2020

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## **The Goodness of America**

### **Groceries Instead of Jail**

Fort Smith, Arkansas, Police Officer Kenneth Martin was called to a local Walmart when a family was found shoplifting, but this story out of Arkansas has a surprisingly sweet ending.

When Martin arrived at the retail chain on November 30, he found a husband, wife, and young children being detained for attempting to steal food. Martin decided to arrest the father but release the mother so that she could take her children home.

In a post about the incident, the police department acknowledged that both parents could have been sent to jail and the children given into state custody. Thankfully for the young children, Officer Martin used his discretion to do what was best for the children.

Martin can be heard on his body camera outlining his moral dilemma, KFSM reported. "They're stealing food and they've got kids," he said. "I have to take him to jail, but I don't have to make the kids think I'm a [censored]."

As Breitbart News reported, "That simple act of mercy might have been enough, but the Arkansas policeman was not satisfied to break even in front of hungry children in the dregs of winter."

In addition to letting the mother go home, Martin paid for the groceries that the family had been trying to steal. "I took care of these for you, okay?" he said. "I understand this is food and things that you need, but ask for some help. Don't do this with these babies."

The woman and one of her babies, who was sitting in the shopping cart, can be seen on the camera, though their images were blurred out for privacy protections. It's unclear precisely how old the child in the shopping cart is, but it is evident the child is very young.

Martin's actions earned him "Employee of the Month at the Fort Smith Police Department," where his treatment of the difficult situation was applauded.

In an interview with CNN's Lynn Smith, Officer Martin contended he did not see any other outcome than the one that played out.

"I don't think I could have handled it any different, it's just what we're all about," he told her. "This department is about giving for the community, and it's the way I was brought up."

### **Sam the Bottle Man**

Eleven-year-old Sam Rideout, affectionately known as "Sam the Bottle Man," made sure the children at Barbara Bush Children's Hospital in South Portland, Maine, had a Christmas to remember.

Sam and his friends had been collecting bottles and cans throughout the year so that he could use the money received from recycling the items to purchase the presents. This Christmas, Sam and his crew managed to raise a whopping \$20,000, and on a single night used \$10,000 to buy gifts.

"It was hard," Sam said. "Took a long time, but it's so much fun and knowing it's going to the hospital, it's a good feeling."

Four years ago, Sam used some of his birthday money to buy a toy to donate to Toys for Tots, but he



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wanted to do more. He decided to make a flyer to be hung in his neighborhood, wherein he asked for bottles and cans that he could turn in for money. That was the beginning of “Sam the Bottle Man.” According to his aunt, Caitlin Jordan, Sam has been using the funds he raises through his collection to purchase expensive medical equipment for children in need, as well as toys.

According to the *Press Herald*, Sam was inspired to help the children at the hospital because he himself had spent time at the Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital after complications from an autoimmune disease. Sam said he understands the frustration of being stuck in the hospital, especially over the holidays.

Naturally, Sam’s parents are proud of their altruistic son. “It doesn’t get any better than this,” Sam’s father Brandon Rideout said.

## **Strangers Raise Funds for WWII Vet After Scam**

When strangers all across the country learned of a World War II veteran who was scammed out of thousands of dollars, they went out of their way to show him that there are more good people in this world than bad.

MSN reported that 92-year-old Floyd Smith of Fresno, California, lent an acquaintance, Mark Gleizer, \$10,000 — a considerable portion of his retirement savings — to get new windows for his home after Gleizer convinced Smith he was in financial trouble.

“I thought, he’s a nice guy, you know?” Smith recalled to ABC30 of Fresno.

But Gleizer didn’t pay Smith back the money. Eventually, Smith was forced to take him to small claims court, where Gleizer was ordered to pay \$7,630 to Smith. Two years later, Gleizer still had not repaid the money.

Out of desperation, Smith took his story to ABC Action News. Smith said he had hoped to use some of his retirement money to take his wife on a proper honeymoon.

Smith’s story was aired on Action News in mid-December, and the response was tremendous. Nearly 400 people donated to a GoFundMe page that had been created for Smith, and by December 23, he was presented with a check in the amount of \$12,472.60.

In addition to the check, Smith was gifted a two-night stay for him and his wife by a hotel in the coastal town of Cayucos so that he could fulfill his dream of taking his wife on a honeymoon trip to a beach.

The Beltone company also reached out to Smith to offer him brand new hearing aids, ABC 30 reported.

As for Gleizer, ABC News reported that he had been arrested as recently as October 2019 for drug possession, and skipped a November court appearance. His whereabouts since then are unknown, though private detective Rocky Pipkin is currently trying to track him down.

Thankfully, despite Gleizer’s appalling behavior, Smith’s faith in mankind seems to have been restored. He was moved by the incredible kindness shown to him by people he’d never met. “Isn’t that amazing? So many good people in the world,” Smith told KFSN.

— Raven Clabough



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