



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on November 20, 2020

Published in the December 7, 2020 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 36, No. 23

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## The Goodness of America

### Race to Kindness

Fifth-grader Orion Jean of Dallas, Texas, is on a mission to prove that kindness can change the world and has set some ambitious goals to achieve just that. His latest campaign is to donate 100,000 meals to people in need by Thanksgiving, CBS Dallas reported.

According to the news outlet, altruism is in Jean's blood. Earlier this year, he won a Think Kindness National Speech Contest in which he answered the question, "How can kindness change a nation?"

"The difficult situations impacting our world has shown us that kindness is more important now than ever before," he wrote. "We've heard about the families hurting from this pandemic; the communities suffering injustice, and the people being OVER virtual learning.... We could really use a big hug right now. And that's just it. Kindness is like spreading hugs around the world to those who need it and those who might not even know they need it."

"The acts could be something small, but in the end, make a big difference to the person receiving it."

Jean's speech won first prize: \$500. But Jean walked away with so much more than just prize money. The speech contest inspired Jean to create his own "Race to Kindness" events, according to Jean's Race to Kindness website.

"Of course I told everyone in my speech to go do an act of kindness and the best way to do that is lead by example so I decided there's more money coming in anyway, why don't we start a series of events?" Orion said, according to KTEM News Radio 14.

It was with the \$500 he won from that speech contest that Jean started his Race to 500 Toys Drive, in which he collected and donated more than 600 toys to hospitalized children.

Jean has now launched the Race to 100,000 Meals food drive and is asking for food donations. Meals will consist of a bottle of water, two tangerines or one apple, one cup of applesauce or a tuna pouch, and one packaged granola bar. The items should be placed in a brown paper bag with an uplifting message written on the outside.

"I'm asking everyone to join me in a race to kindness," Orion said. "This has been a rough year for everybody."

The Race to 100,000 Meals campaign will go until November 25. Individuals who wish to donate can either drop off donations locally or submit monetary donations via [racetokindness.com](https://racetokindness.com).

### Heroes Helping Heroes

When wildfires destroyed the homes of six volunteer firefighters in Berry Creek, California, in September, a local hero stepped in to provide shelter.

Woody Faircloth had founded a nonprofit with his then-seven-year-old daughter, Luna, in 2018, called RV4CampfireFamily. The two started the nonprofit after a campfire in Paradise, California, turned into the deadliest wildfire in California history, killing 85 people and destroying 14,000 homes, leaving more than 50,000 people homeless. Faircloth's nonprofit saw to it that more than 70 RVs were delivered to survivors so they had shelter.



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“People have RVs (that) may be used once or twice a year, or maybe they don’t use them anymore at all,” he explained. “When they donate them to us, we can immediately deploy them to people that need them most.... It’s super powerful and just an amazing gift from the donors.”

Recently, when Faircloth learned that the homes of six volunteer firefighters from Station 61 had been destroyed in a wildfire and that the losses did not keep the firefighters from working around the clock to save others, he knew he wanted to thank them in a big way. With just 14 miles between Berry Creek and Paradise, Faircloth was local enough to provide nearly immediate help from his recently renamed nonprofit, [EmergencyRV.org](#).

According to CNN, all the firefighters who lost their homes received RVs within a week.

The firefighters were beyond grateful for Faircloth’s generosity. One firefighter, Katherine Molohon, recalls the moment she learned her home was destroyed by the fire and how she kept working in spite of it.

“We were driving through, trying to get people evacuated, drove by my house — I said, ‘Bye house’ and kept going,” she told Faircloth.

Until Molohon was given one of Faircloth’s RVs, she had been living in a shed on her mother’s property.

Berry Creek’s fire chief, Reed Rankin, who heads the volunteer department, also lost his house, and had been forced to sleep in a truck before Faircloth stepped in.

## Get Well, Zion

A family friend of four-year-old Zion of Trenton, New Jersey, put out a Twitter request for “Get Well” notes for the toddler, who was struggling following a bone-marrow transplant, and the response has been enormous.

“Dear parents of small children, I have a 4 y.o. friend having a tough time,” family friend Theresa Chapple tweeted. “I would like your help in making her smile. Could your child make and send Zion a get well card?”

Zion suffers from sickle cell anemia, and recently required a bone-marrow transplant. To prepare her body for the transplant, Zion required chemotherapy, which caused her a lot of pain and discomfort. According to Zion’s mother, Sara Hicks, Zion was having a hard time and had not smiled much.

Chapple wanted to do something to help. She explained the pandemic has been particularly hard on families of children with health issues. Support services have been suspended in many areas, and families have been feeling isolated, [Today.com](#) added.

“All I was out to do from this is to try to get Zion to smile,” she told [Today.com](#). But she did not expect the flood of support that followed. The tweet received approximately 900 responses, according to Chapple.

“It really took off quickly,” Chapple said. “People wanted to know if there were other things that they could send, if Sara needed anything else with her hospital stay.”

[Today.com](#) reported that, in addition to sending notes of encouragement and “Get Well” cards, people have donated meal vouchers for Zion and her mother, who has been staying at the hospital at Zion’s



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bedside. People have also donated toys to help Zion and other sick children who have been at the hospital for lengthy stays.



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