

# Feel-Good Friday: An Alabama Farmer Secretly Pays Pharmacy Bills for People in His Town

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By [Jennifer Oliver O'Connell](#) | 8:15 PM on January 20, 2023

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For a year-and-a-half, I traveled from Los Angeles to Alabama for my advanced Yoga teacher training. It was the best decision I ever made, not only because of the quality of the training and the friendships made, but because the people of Alabama are simply the friendliest I have encountered in my travels around the United States. This is also the reason why Alabama is high on our list of places to retire.

The people are beyond kind, and also beyond generous. The training doubled as a retreat, and as teacher trainees, we taught our own customized classes for the retreat participants. One of the participants was a local woman, and she was so inspired and grateful for the class, that she invited me to her gorgeous home in Huntsville for lunch, once the training/retreat was done.

That spirit of gratitude and generous giving is recognized and captured in this week's Feel-Good Friday.

The farming community of Geraldine (about 60 miles from Huntsville) received the benefit of one man's kindness and generosity in the form of monetary gifts to a local pharmacy.

Stay with me, it gets better.

From [The Washington Post](#):

Hody Childress was a farmer living off his meager retirement savings in the small town of Geraldine, Ala.

About 10 years ago, he walked into Geraldine Drugs and pulled aside owner Brooke Walker to ask if there were families in town who couldn't afford to pay for their medications.

"I told him, 'Yes, unfortunately that happens often,'" recalled Walker, 38. "And he handed me a \$100 bill, all folded up."

He told her to use it for anyone who couldn't afford their prescriptions.

"He said, 'Don't tell a soul where the money came from – if they ask, just tell them it's a blessing from the Lord,'" she said.

The following month, Childress returned to hand Walker another folded-up \$100 bill. And he repeated this every month for years, until he became too weak late last year from the effects of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease to make the trip.

Hody Childress was 80 years old when he passed away on New Year's Day. Geraldine Drugs owner Brooke Walker wanted to let Childress' family know about his generosity, and how much it had helped several hundred people in the farming community. Over that 10-year span, Childress' \$100 gifts added up to thousands of dollars, and Walker said she was able to help two people a month who didn't have insurance or whose benefits wouldn't cover their medications.

At the same time that Walker was thinking of calling Hody Childress's family, his daughter, Tania Nix, was preparing to let people know about her father's generosity at his Jan. 5 funeral.

Before he died, Childress had confessed to his daughter about the pharmacy donations.

"He told me he'd been carrying a \$100 bill to the pharmacist in Geraldine on the first of each month, and he didn't want to know who she'd helped with it – he just wanted to bless people with it," said Nix, 58.

An Air Force veteran and former product manager for Lockheed Martin in Huntsville, Hody Childress lived off a small retirement account and Social Security. But a fixed income did not stop him from helping those in need.

"It was just who he was – it was in his heart," said Nix, who works as a hairstylist in Ider, Ala., about 30 miles from Geraldine.

"He didn't spend a lot of money in life, but he always gave what he could," she said. "If he took you out to eat, you had to be quick to grab the ticket, or he was paying for it."

Even when Childress worked full time for Lockheed Martin, he still managed to find time for farming. In this, Childress was also generous, sharing his depth of farming knowledge, as well as the fruit of his harvest, with others.

“Being on his tractor was his therapy, and he spent a lot of time helping neighbors get their gardens planted,” Nix recalled. “Every time he went to the post office, he’d take the postmaster an apple, or some sweet potatoes, squash or okra he’d grown on his farm.”

Childress also took care of his first wife, Peggy Childress, who suffered from multiple sclerosis and eventually lost her ability to walk. His daughter said Childress carried Peggy in and out of all the places she wanted to go.

Peggy Childress passed away in 1999, and Childress took comfort in his farm and his family. He found love again and remarried, but even his new wife Martha Jo did not know about her husband’s secret beneficence.

At Hody Childress’s funeral, when people in town learned what he’d done for them, they were stunned, Nix said.

“I heard from people who said they’d been going through a rough time and their prescriptions were paid for when they went to pick them up,” she said, recalling one woman who didn’t have \$600 for an EpiPen for her son.

“She wrote to me, saying she never knew who had helped her until my dad died,” Nix said. “She said it brought her tremendous relief as a mother, and she couldn’t thank my dad enough.”

From behind the counter at Geraldine Drugs, Walker heard similar stories.

She recalled when a single mom and her daughter both needed a medication that their insurance didn’t cover. When Walker paid for the medicine out of Childress’s fund and handed the woman the prescription with the receipt attached, she said, the woman burst into tears.

“She came back several months later and asked to pay it forward,” Walker said. “I believe that Hody sparked that in her heart.”

There is a Proverb that says,

“One pretends to be rich, but has nothing; another pretends to be poor, yet has great wealth.”

Hody Childress was rich in generosity, and he inspired others to replicate his generous spirit and keep his legacy going.

Walker said she feels honored that Childress trusted her to do the right thing with his \$100 bills, month after month.

“His kindness motivated me to be more of a compassionate person,” she said. “He was just a good old guy who wanted to bless his community, and he certainly did. He established a legacy of kindness.”

People in Geraldine who hope to keep that legacy going are now dropping by the drugstore with donations of their own, Walker said.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/PKNtpTSKEz4>

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