

Feel-Good Friday: These Three Stories Give Hope for Humanity and a Better 2023

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By [Jennifer Oliver O'Connell](#) | 7:45 PM on December 30, 2022

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I had an uneven, and even a bit of a sad, Christmas. But I wasn't freezing my hindparts off in the Midwest or the East Coast, and I wasn't held hostage by [Southwest Airlines](#) and stranded at an airport. So, compared to a portion of America and the world, I was better off than most.

At least I got to spend Christmas Eve and Day warm, and in my own bed. Not so much for others, especially anyone who had the misfortune of flying Southwest. This happened to one girl who thought she was coming home to Simi Valley, California, from Denver. I do my utmost never to fly through Denver, even on a good day. Unfortunately this poor girl not only had a Southwest flight, but it was scheduled to leave Denver for California, and well, you know the drill.

Thus, here is our first story to our final, Feel-Good Friday offering for 2022.

The daughter was rebooked to return to California on New Year's Eve. Thank God for a proactive father, who said he was having none of that. The father, Vinay Patel jumped into his car and drove the 1,100 miles from Simi Valley to Denver, in order to retrieve [his daughter](#).

Southwest Airlines plans to resume operations Friday, but that was unacceptable for Vinay Patel of Simi Valley.

Patel's daughter was stranded in Denver on Dec. 24. After two days of delays and cancellations, then being re-booked on a flight for New Year's Eve, Patel and his wife got in their car and drove 1,100 miles through a winter storm to Colorado.

"We can see the change in her voice when she heard that we were in the city of Denver and 15 minutes away from her," Patel said. "You can feel the difference in the excitement of her voice."

Patel said he would do it again if he had to.

"If I have to, I have to. I can do it 100 times," he said.

That's a papa bear's love and care for their little one. Patel is blessed that he was able-bodied and in a position that he could do this for his child.

The journey lasted over 15 hours in the car each way, 2,200 miles in total and one night in a Denver hotel to rest. Patel said he couldn't sit back while his daughter was alone in a city where she didn't know anyone and with no guarantee Southwest Airlines would get their act together.

"They need to be realistic to tell what's happening so they can plan," Patel said.

For our second and third Feel-Good Friday story, [Buffalo, New York](#), is the epicenter. Stories from this region are coming from the right and left, on the individuals, neighbors, and communities that have stepped up during their [once-in-a-century blizzard](#) this week.

One of those stories is about a woman who heard a man's call for help outside her home, while the snowstorm was raging. The woman's boyfriend brought the frostbitten man into her home, and the woman cared for him until help [was able to arrive](#).

A New York woman found a man with frostbite outside her house during Christmas weekend's deadly blizzard, and she stopped at nothing to make sure he got the help he needed.

Sha'Kyra Aughtry heard a 64-year-old man screaming for help the morning of Christmas Eve in the frigid cold outside her home in Buffalo, New York. The man, identified as Joey White, was in terrible pain, suffering from frostbite to his hands.

Aughtry's boyfriend carried Joey White inside their home, where Aughtry did her best to take care of him, comfort him and feed him.

I am thankful her boyfriend was there to not only carry White, but that the boyfriend was there to watch over her and her children, as she struggled to keep White alive.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/1CHpkgEwo4o>

Finally, good Samaritans showed up in a vehicle that could make it through the snow, and Joey White was on his way to the hospital, with Aughtry by his side.

“This man could have died, 64 years old, could have died outside. I wasn’t letting that happen on my watch, and he wasn’t going to die in front of my kids,” Aughtry said.

As his severe frostbite is being treated, Joey White is in intensive care in the hospital’s burn unit. His sister says it’s touch and go as to whether his hands can be saved. But overall, he is in stable condition, and Yvonne White is extremely grateful to Aughtry for helping him.

Compassion knows no boundaries, and Aughtry’s compassion for this man, Joey White, is quite remarkable.

The last story from Buffalo involves firefighters who saved an entire family who was trapped in their car, and prevented them from freezing to death.

A New York family had a memorable Christmas.

In a news release, the Buffalo Airport Fire Department stated that Demetrice and Danielle lost electricity at their home in Williamsville at the start of the recent blizzard.

But as they drove to a nearby hotel, their car got stuck. The family was one of many motorists who had gotten stuck and were saved by the Buffalo Airport firefighters.

According to the news release, firefighters Mike Carrubba, Mark Wolhfiel, and Joel Eberth rescued 42 people and brought them to the aircraft rescue and firefighting facility.

Officials said the couple was the only ones with young children, so they stayed in the firehouse.

The firefighters went even further, playing Santa, bringing in a tree and gifts for the entire family.

“It was an amazing experience for our firefighters, and it definitely made us better people.” Said Joel Eberth, Assistant Chief Buffalo Airport Fire Department, in a statement. “With them being here, Christmas became a big concern because Aayden was so excited that Santa would know he was here and he would get to celebrate at a real firehouse. We didn’t want to disappoint, so we were able to find several items in the firehouse to wrap for the family. With the amazing help from the field office delivering some items from the terminal, we were able to make sure Santa paid a visit.”

Firefighters said the couple’s eldest child Aayden asked if he could be in uniform, so he was given a uniform and department t-shirt. They also taught him about dispatch.

Sounds like they might have a new recruit in a few years.

While the firefighters were – in some ways – doing their job (for which that family is thankful), the extra effort to ensure the children had a Merry Christmas is just heartwarming and reflective of the milk of human kindness.

My husband and I were blessed to drink from that milk this Christmas. There was no snowstorm here in Southern California or flight delays. Just a bout of the latest COVID variant. I took to calling it “Pokemon,” because I stopped paying attention to which version of the Wu-Flu we have been on a long time ago. I was a bit surprised after two years of being proudly unvaccinated and basically living our lives as normal (even during the lockdowns), that it would happen now. But I am grateful for #TeamReality (as my friend Roxanne Hoge calls it) — medical doctors and organizations like [America’s Frontline Doctors](#) and the [FLCCC Critical Care Alliance](#), that now show us exactly what to do to address COVID in the early stages, even without a medical practitioner’s help.

After traveling for almost two weeks, I came home to an empty refrigerator, not feeling well, and without any of the protocols or supplements recommended by both AFLD or FLCCC to treat the COVID. Two gift cards from Target sent to us from an anonymous source took care of the refrigerator, and a dear friend appropriately named “Angel” helped with the rest. I texted her all that we needed, compliments of both websites; Angel knew the places to go to get what we needed, and researched to find out where she could get the rest. That family that blessed us with the gift cards and especially Angel, went above and beyond to make sure we were taken care of. Thanks to prayers, good medical advice, good food and rest, we are turning the corner back to full health.

It is a blessing and a privilege to have brought you a window on what is good in our world in 2022, and why it is worth fighting for. As you enter into 2023, I wish you the greatest of hope, the greatest of health, and happiness beyond measure.

Happy Friday, and Happy New Year!

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Jennifer Oliver O'Connell (As the Girl Turns) is a contributor at Redstate and other publications. Jennifer writes on Politics and Pop Culture, with occasional detours into Reinvention, Yoga, and Food. You can read more about Jennifer's world at her [As the Girl Turns](#) website. You can also follow her on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Telegram](#).

Story leads: info@asthegirlturns.com.