

The Humble Award

“Good evening, ladies, gentlemen, and the youth of our community. Most of you know me and for those of you who may not know me, I’m Steve Glendall. I am this year’s Chairman of the Youth and Community Guidance Committee. But it’s not about me. I am surrounded by good-hearted people who come together to help lift each other’s spirits in any way they can.

The Humble Award has always stood for prestige, compassion, tenaciousness, and honor. Well, the recipients of this year’s Humble Award are all these things and more. They are selfless and go above and beyond to help others when it is needed. Let me tell you a few things about our extraordinary friends.

They get their hands dirty. When the Walters family was having trouble selling their house, they went over and helped them conquer the clutter, paint the inside of the house, and do landscaping to make the house look pretty.

When old lady Estelle Jones passed away at the age of 97, it was found that she didn’t have money for her own funeral, nor did she have a will or life insurance. Estelle’s family was small and had passed away years ago, and she was the last surviving member. So, they put together a benefit to help pay the funeral home and any final expenses she left behind.

They volunteer at the local youth center. Unfortunately, there are more troubled and homeless youths than there are volunteers. These days life is remarkably busy for

most, but we are lucky to have our friends in our community who dedicate their retirement years to our young kids. They make them feel loved, welcome, and guide them for a successful future. Our youngsters love and respect them in return, and they work hard to please them.

If someone is sick, they will visit, if someone needs a ride somewhere, they will drive them, and when there are ball games playing, they will be there to cheer them on.

They don't do it for notoriety, nor do they do it for the gratitude. They do it because they love it. They love people, they love this community, and they love seeing people happy and succeed. You see, they know they have been truly fortunate in their lives, blessed family, successful careers, beautiful home...they wanted to give back. Frankly, I don't know what our town would do without them.

So, I know you are tired of listening to me and would rather hear from our favorite people.

Laughter.

So, without further ado, I would like to introduce to you the winners of this year's Humble Award...Mr. and Mrs. Andrew and Jean Caldarini!"

Applause and standing ovation.

"Thank you. Thank you all," says Andrew. "We are overwhelmed. When Steve stopped by our house a couple of days ago and told Jean and I we were this year's winner of the Humble Award, I asked him if he had been drinking. His reply was, "not on a school night."

Laughter

“I told him...we don’t do what we do for any kind of award. We do it to give back.”

Jean says, “we have been very blessed in our lives, and we want others to feel the same. We want others to know they can have as many blessings as possible and more in their lives too. When we came here to retire in Turlington, we loved it, but we were surprised at the countless people here were only existing and not living and how many others including young kids needed help and guidance with education and life ethics.”

“So, Jean and I decided to be involved. Our town where we were born, lived, and raised our family was so incredibly good to us that we wanted to pay it forward. Both of us are in good health and have a fairly good sense of life since we are older than most. We hoped that our life experiences could help others. We saw people struggle and it broke our hearts, so we step in when we are able.”

“It keeps us busy and our minds sharp and at our age, that’s a big deal,” Jean says.

Laughter

“We have gotten to know everyone in this community and think of you all as our family...a very big family...who we care about and love,” says Jean. “We see you happy and that makes us happy. We do not do this for the adoration, although that’s a great perk.”

Andrew steps in and says, “I want to tell you a little story. Shortly after we moved to Turlington, Jean and I were taking a walk, getting to know the neighborhood, and we

found ourselves at the park and kept walking through. Along our path, we came across two young boys, Jack who was eight years old, and Michael was ten years old at the time. They were on the swings, but they weren't swinging. They were sitting with their heads hanging down, and tears in their eyes.

Jean and I looked around for a mom or dad but the only people we saw were other kids at the far end of the playground, but their moms and dads were nearby. We thought they were lost, we got concerned, and we cautiously approached them staying a couple of feet away not to scare them by getting too close.

After talking to them a bit, Jack and Michael had recently lost their father who they missed terribly but also, the dad promised to buy them a new basketball hoop for their driveway. Their mom had told them they couldn't afford it for a while, and she would have to get a better job just to make ends meet. Of course, this was upsetting to the boys, yet understandable from the mom's point.

We asked them to walk with Jean and I to show us where they lived which was close by. The playground was near their backyard and mom, Jackie, came outside and thanked us for watching out for her boys.

The next day, Jean and I went to Walmart, bought a basketball hoop, and brought it to Jack and Michael. I can't tell you how happy that made them. The look on Jack and Michael's face's lite up like a sunrise at early morning. Jackie cried saying she couldn't possibly pay us back, but we told her it was our gift.

We stayed the rest of the day. Jack, Michael, and I put the hoop together and Jean helped Jackie inside the house. From that day on we looked out for the boys, and all

became a family. Now Jack is graduating from college and Michael is a CPA at a firm in the next town over. Jackie, Jean, and I couldn't be prouder.

So, it was the look on those boys faces and the help we were able to give that family is why we do this work. Not for the prestige, not for awards, and not for the thank you given back to us. It's for the smiles."

"Jack, Michael, and Jackie, stand up," Jean says.

They stand as applause sounds the room.

"Andrew and I aren't sure we deserve such praise, because we love the smiles, happiness, and the people," says Jean.

"Thank you." "Thank You"

Cheers and applause