



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on April 1, 2022

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## The Goodness of America

### Gas Relief

Biden administration policies are giving Americans gas pains (at the pump, that is!), but one station in Burnsville, North Carolina, offered lucky area residents some relief by selling gas at just \$2.25 per gallon.

According to ABC 15 News, the owners of a Burnsville Citgo at the corner of U.S. 19 East and Depot Street decided they would take the hit by selling gas at the reduced price while the national average was more than \$4.30 per gallon.

“We were tickled to death to be able to help people out,” said store manager Leigh Hopson.

The reduced-priced gas was made available at approximately noon on March 10. By 5:00 pm, the gas had sold out.

Customers who benefited from the owners’ kindness were thankful for the good deed.

“I think it’s really great and kind of them to do that for people around here like us. It’s really good of them,” Caylie Vess of Green Mountain said.

Hopson said the store hopes to run another discount soon.

### Peptoc

A group of elementary-school students in California launched a free hotline in February called “Peptoc” for individuals who need on-demand inspiration delivered in a way that can only come from the innocent hearts of children.

Callers who dial (707) 998-8410 are treated to inspiration and guidance from elementary-school children aged 5-12 at West Side Union Elementary School in Healdsburg. The messages vary depending on the prompt you select.

“If you’re feeling mad, frustrated or nervous, press one,” the greeting states. “If you need words of encouragement and life advice, press two. If you need a pep talk from kindergartners, press three. If you need to hear kids laughing with delight, press four.”

The hotline was the brainchild of Jessica Martin and Asherah Weiss, teachers at West Side Union Elementary School, *The Guardian* reported. The teachers went to each classroom in the school and gave the children a single instruction: Think of all the ways you have felt encouraged when you were frustrated or sad and use that to give advice to others who may need encouragement at this time.

“So all of the responses are really coming from the kids and their own life experience, and the advice they’ve gleaned over their short years on this planet,” Martin explained.

Some of the many tips callers will hear include, “If you’re sad or angry, go get a cookie, a smoothie or an ice cream”; “If you’re frustrated, you can always go to your bedroom, punch a pillow or cry on it and just go scream outside”; “You are OK”; and “The world is a better place with you in it.”

The teachers assumed the hotline would have “kind of a small reach,” said fifth-grade teacher Susie Dalton, but the project proved to have a much bigger impact.



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Initially, Martin signed up for the cheapest hotline provider she could find, hoping the kids would be excited to learn 100 people called in a given month. But within two days, there were 500 calls an hour. They eventually grew to 11,000 calls an hour!

Martin said the hotline has even been getting calls from staff and patients at Johns Hopkins Medical Center. According to the school's principal, Rima Meechan, one of the frequent callers is a woman who phones in during her cancer treatments. Weiss recalled a phone call from an administrator of an Iowa elderly-care facility, wherein most of the patients are more than 90 years old, who said she had not heard "laughter like that from them in years."

Martin said the hotline is a reminder of something very important: "Adults support children, but we don't really celebrate how much they support us. And to be able to be comforted by them gives us great hope that maybe we're all going to be OK," she told CBS News.

The hotline was initially funded through school donations and sponsorship, but to keep the now-viral hotline going, the project is being funded by donations through a GoFundMe page, which has already raised more than \$30,000 of its \$40,000 goal. The funds will be used to keep Peptoc available to all, 24 hours a day for months and years to come, the GoFundMe page said. The school also hopes to add a new option with rotating surprise pep talks every one to two weeks.

Martin said she is "thrilled" for the kids and happy that the project has achieved what it set out to prove for the kids' benefit.

## **Real-life Superhero**

Ultimate Fighting Championship fighter Kevin Holland helped apprehend a criminal for the second time this year.

On March 15, Holland was eating dinner at Ra Sushi restaurant in Houston with a friend, Patrick Robinson, when a man pulled out a gun and shot it into the air, ABC 13 reported. Approximately 40 people were dining in the restaurant at the time.

While most of the patrons ducked for cover after the initial round of bullets, Robinson, Holland, and another customer immediately sprang into action. They rushed the armed man, disarmed him, and held him down until the police arrived and arrested him.

According to Deadspin, this was not Holland's first "foray into vigilantism."

Last October, he was driving near his coach's home when he heard someone yell out that someone had stolen his car. Holland immediately began to chase the perpetrator. The thief eventually abandoned the car and attempted to run away, but Holland, who followed in pursuit, was too fast for him. Once he caught him, he applied a scarf hold until the man reportedly said he couldn't breathe. Holland released his hold until police arrived.

Following the harrowing incident at Ra Sushi, Holland took to Instagram to share his thoughts.

"I laugh a lot even when things aren't funny. I smile when I should frown," he wrote. "Super blessed and thankful to see today kiss ya kids hug ya family and treat random people with care. You never know what a mfer may be going through."



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