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## August 2021 Newsletter

Stories of Hope:

# Sports: Moments of Joy, Love, and Hope



Women and men, young and old, black and brown and white, Milwaukee Bucks fans celebrate the Bucks winning the 2021 NBA Championship.

One of the best things about sports is that it peacefully unites people as team members and as fans.

It fills them with joy.

Almost always, after a team wins a Super Bowl, World Series, Stanley Cup, or the NBA Championship team members talk about how they love one another.

It is one of the few times when men say that they love one another.

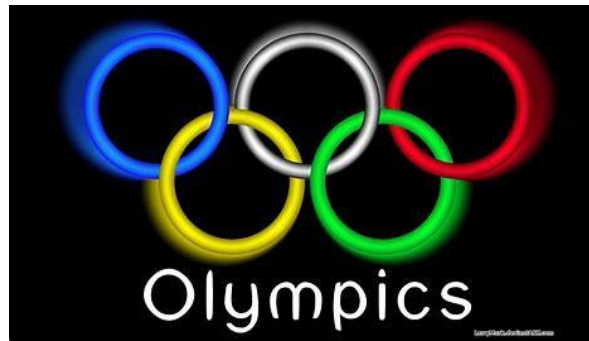
They help each other grow individually and grow together for the common goal of winning a championship.

They all want to be the best they can be individually,

but just as importantly, they want to be the best they can as a team.

It fills me with hope that the same openness, mutual support, and thriving as individuals and as groups as demonstrated in team sports can carry over into our lives  
As families, as neighbors, as a community, as a country, and across the world.

**Working together as a championship team, We can do it!!!**



## Olympic Motto Amended

It was “Faster, Higher, Stronger”  
On July 20, 2021, it was changed to

“Faster, Higher, Stronger – Together”

The change was made in response to the Covid pandemic and to recognize and promote the idea that we need the best from everyone and that we need to all work together to make progress in fighting Covid and making the world a better and more peaceful place.

### Hope-Filled Organizations:



<https://www.shpbs.org/>



## Helping Children in Need Sleep Better

All children deserve a safe, comfortable place to lay their heads. In Idaho and across the US, too many boys and girls go without a bed—or even a pillow—to sleep on. These children end up sleeping on couches, blankets, and even floors. This can affect their happiness and health.

That’s where Sleep in Heavenly Peace® comes in. We’re a group of volunteers dedicated to building, assembling and delivering top-notch bunk beds to children and families in need. Our organization has grown steadily over time, and we’re working on opening more chapters to serve more people. Click on this link to find a chapter near you: <https://www.shpbs.org/chapters>

### Back to Stories of Hope:

## Anton House—From Prison Reentrant to College Professor

One of the many stories of hope by the work done by Racine Vocational Ministry



The headline read - **From a drug dealer to a doctor of US history; the inspiring story of Anton House.**

The article goes on to say, “Anton House is a doctor of United States history, earning his doctorate from Howard University, a historically black university in Washington, after serving time in prison for drug peddling.” Truly, these are the bookends of his remarkable story.

In 1998, at 18, he went to prison for the first time. He returned to prison again in 2001. It was at this time that he knew he had to do something different! He was referred to RVM by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections in 2006. At this time, he started to map out his career. Within a year he was enrolled and studying at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. By the time he graduated in 2011, he was on the Dean’s List, had a degree in history, and was President of the Black Student Union. He looked to college professors to confide and be mentored. Anton was building a new life!

Following graduation, he was accepted to Howard University. By 2019 he had finished his master’s and doctorate. He states, “I was able to utilize my mind to take me someplace, and that’s what I try to impress on a lot of the boys and girls who come from, not only from Racine but some of the lower socioeconomic communities that I work in.” He went on to say, “your mind can take you as far as you fill it.” The vision and determination to persevere were also factors in his success. In addition, Anton used his knowledge of history to ground his own life. He confessed that, “In finding my family’s history, I found my place in the world.”

Anton’s career has taken him to Delaware State University, in Greenbelt Maryland, a historically black university, where he now serves as Assistant Professor. He shares his message of hope and resilience with people at the university and local neighborhood centers. We suspect that Anton will be paying it forward for many years to come! To read more about the wonderful work done by Racine Vocational Ministry click on this link:

<https://hopefromthebottomup.com/hope-filled-organizations#racine-vocational>

## **One Man’s Crazy Idea For Michigan Town Lands Them As Finalist in “Nicest Places in America” Contest**



*This story was chosen as one of the top ten nominations to win the Reader's Digest "Nicest Places in America" contest: a crowd-sourced effort to uncover nooks where people are still kind and compassionate in an era of global pandemic and political divide.*

It was a Field of Dreams, just waiting to be built.

On Christmas Eve 2020, fire trucks rushed to the Chittle home in the sleepy little town of Manton, Michigan. It wasn't because of an accidental fire, or anything you might associate with a holiday nightmare. Instead, it was a dream come true. The local fire department was there to pitch in on a project that would capture the imaginations of the 1,287 souls who call Manton home, bringing them months of mirth during one of the darkest winters in memory.

Outdoor activities and a slower pace of life are a mainstay in this rural town about 110 miles North of Grand Rapids. But, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced the town to shut down, Scott Chittle decided that the community needed a safe place to come together, and something to spark some joy during the dreary winter months.

And what is a better activity to get people outside in the cold than ice skating?

In order to make his dream a reality, Chittle scoured the Internet for YouTube tutorials on how to build an ice rink. He ordered a large 3,000 square foot tarp online and purchased some lumber to create the walls. It took 12 firetrucks to get enough water to fill the plot.

After his 'field of dreams' was built, however, nobody came.

So, Chittle went door-to-door coercing neighbors to convince people to come see his creation, and soon Chittle's backyard ice rink became a Manton hotspot. Parents pitched in to help Chittle purchase second-hand skates and hockey sticks for all the neighborhood children. Soon enough, the children were skating and shooting, a fire was burning, and hot chocolate was steaming in to-go mugs. To read more, click on this link:

[https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/michigan-man-builds-ice-rink-nicest-places/?utm\\_campaign=newsletters&utm\\_medium=weekly\\_mailout&utm\\_source=14-07-2021&fbclid=IwAR00VabOOEcT190Y5di40QQ7-NymJfBqazJQChYU7w3qIbdCYzHTQWLyzns](https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/michigan-man-builds-ice-rink-nicest-places/?utm_campaign=newsletters&utm_medium=weekly_mailout&utm_source=14-07-2021&fbclid=IwAR00VabOOEcT190Y5di40QQ7-NymJfBqazJQChYU7w3qIbdCYzHTQWLyzns)



<https://www.rd.com/article/nicest-places-in-america-2021/>

For the fifth year in a row, Reader's Digest is searching for the Nicest Place in America, where people are kind, resilient, and work to make their communities better. After America faced a global pandemic and fought together for racial equality in 2020, this year is one of healing and building, of bouncing back stronger, together.

## **Volunteers help Racine be more 'House-Proud'**

[Dee Hölzel](#), Racine Journal Times, July 6, 2021

RACINE — They scraped and painted, weeded, planted, fixed, tore down and rebuilt. There were teens and adults, some skilled labor, all were volunteers.



*Juan Morales, 15, gets a lesson in using the drill as he helps to rebuild a porch. He said what he has learned so far is "we can turn anything around and make someone's home better."*

For a week, starting on June 21, [ACTS Racine Youth Ministry](#) and the Racine Christian Reformed Church provided the labor through a summer services work camp. Throughout the week, the teens and their adult mentors made repairs to 11 houses between the 1100-1400 blocks of Villa Street and Park Avenue.

The effort benefitted the "House-Proud Program" of Racine Revitalization Partnership, Inc., which offers homeowners home repair and improvement services. To read more, click on this link: [Volunteers help Racine be more 'House-Proud' | Local News | journaltimes.com](#)

One of the Partner Organizations in this project is Racine Revitalization Partners (RRP).



To learn about RRP and see a 4 ½ minute video about the Partnership, click on these links: <http://revitalizeracine.org/> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c6BdltfBNL8>

### **The Future:**

## **Priority #5 Environment: Sustainability, Global Warming, Environmental Repair**

The Environment is the fifth highest priority in our survey. All of our respondents agreed that stopping environmental deterioration and increasing sustainability in all aspects of the environment, is very important. But they gave other issues higher priority for the immediate future.

If someone is hungry, has no health care, works two jobs, can't make ends meet, and are discriminated against because of race, religion, or gender, getting those matters turned around now are more important to them than addressing environmental issues.

But environmental damage is growing every day, and soon it will become irreversible and catastrophic.

If we let things deteriorate as they have in the last 50 years, our grandchildren and great-grandchildren are going to face some major crises which will negatively affect their lives and the lives of all people on Earth. To read more click on this link and scroll down to first article: <https://hopefromthebottomup.com/future>

## **Share this Newsletter!**

If you find this Newsletter to be a positive contribution to promote Hope and positive changes for now and in the future, please consider forwarding this Newsletter to people you think would enjoy it and who may want to share their hopeful stories and programs for future Newsletters.

**Thank You**