

April 22, 2015 | Anita Reding

## Haskell County Coalition Makes Good Vibes—Local organization spearheads National Pay-It-Forward Day

The Haskell County Coalition is spearheading a local effort to “Pay it Forward,” in recognition of a global movement intended to spread a little goodwill in the world, with the hope that it can grow into something much greater.

April 30 is National Pay It Forward Day. Many have seen the movie ‘Pay It Forward’ or have read the novel of the same name. It is the story about a young boy who did three good deeds for others in need.

In return, all that the child wanted was that they pass on the good deed to three other people and keep the cycle going. Coalition member Royce Alverson said Haskell County’s group is “in the spirit of the whole thing” and is growing by the year. “We’re so excited each year when it comes around. When a person is involved and participates one time—when they do those first few good deeds—it’s kind of addicting. We’ve seen people just light up when they have the simplest things done, but I feel like I get more out of it myself than I give away. It’s a wonderful effort,” said Alverson.

In the movie, one good deed didn’t at first seem like much, but with so many doing something good for someone else, then the cycle of generosity and kindness caught fire and sparked many thousands to become better people. National “Pay it Forward Day” is intended to do just that. Established in September 2000, the Pay It Forward Foundation was established by Catherine Ryan Hyde, author of the inspirational novel Pay It Forward, as a way to inspire a movement of people, all around the world, to show acts of kindness for others. Pay It Forward Day is an extension of the author’s and foundation’s spirit. So how does it work?

One need simply perform between one to three good deeds for others without asking for anything in return. Instead the recipient should be instructed to pay it forward to someone else in need. After the deed, the ‘deed do-er’ simply marks a special card indicating what she or he has done. Pay it Forward Cards are available from Haskell County Coalition members Royce Alverson, Janice Williams, Stephanie Bates-Peters, Brandi Risehoover, Kay Box and Karissa Spears among others. Cards also are downloadable on the [PayItForwardday.com](http://PayItForwardday.com) website and are handed to each recipient explaining what Pay it Forward is all about.

There are 24 boxes on the back of the card that are ticked off as the card travels around—each box containing the potential for future good deed ideas. The Pay it Forward part can be completed at each person’s discretion, but good hearted people need not let one day or a card stand between them and doing a good deed every day.

Here are some ideas:

1. At a drive through, pay for the car behind’s meal and give the cashier a Pay it Forward card to pass on. You could do this on the KATS bus, at a coffee shop—anywhere you like.
2. If it is raining, give your umbrella together with a card to someone who does not have one. It might be worth taking a spare one with you.
3. Visit an elderly neighbor’s house and ask them if they need to have anything repaired.
4. Donate some money to your favorite charity—perhaps collect some donation money from people at work.
5. Tell the manager of a restaurant how great your waiter/waitress was. This can happen in any store/business you visit. Aim at brightening someone else’s day.
6. Talk to parking attendants—try and get them to hand out Pay it Forward cards instead of parking fines—wouldn’t that be nice? Alternatively you could top up other people’s parking meters to stop them from getting a fine.
7. Cook a casserole for a new mother. Caring for newborns is tiring and draining. Mothers will appreciate the ability to eat something home-cooked without having to cook it herself.

8. Buy Lottery Scratch-Off tickets and put one in an envelope with a "Pay It Forward Card" inserted. Hand it to a receptionist on the way out of a business appointment. You just might change that person's whole life.
9. Give a homeless person some food vouchers along with a Pay it Forward card.
10. If you are washing your own car or mowing your own lawn, do the same for your next door neighbor.