A little help, a little lunch, a lot of goats

Mary's caregiving memories led to a simple invitation: make somebody's day easier. The goats, meanwhile, had a very specific request.

When helping meant finding more help

What happens when the routine that keeps a family going suddenly stops working? One morning, Mary's mother sat on the floor instead of leaving for her dementia day program. She did not want to go. Until then, Mary and Joe had managed with daytime help and small familiar outings. At the grocery store, Joe would find her a chair in the deli so she could have coffee while he shopped.



Mary tells the story of caregiving and the people who helped her. Frame from her November 16 livestream.

Mary took two weeks off work to find live-in help. Her employer let her take the time without using her vacation days, and the extra help made things easier at home. Even then, asking for help was hard. Mary was the oldest, and she'd been used to doing what needed doing. With an aide there to handle most of her mother's daily care, Mary could spend more of their time together listening. "She knew that I was somebody who loved her. She just didn't know who I was."

Mary told that story on Monday as viewers shared their own experiences with caregiving. After her mother died, she volunteered to sit with people so their caregivers could get out for a while. She remembered sitting with a man who had Parkinson's so his wife could go out. When Gail suggested looking into a local care facility, Mary said she'd like to do that again, even if it meant hearing the same story over and over. Watch Mary's Monday conversation

The coffee plan took a lunch break

Mary's Wednesday invitation was simple: pay it forward, then come back Friday with a story. She thought she might buy coffee for the next person at Dunkin'. Did the coffee plan happen? She still had not made it there by Friday. After Thursday's packing work, though, she had bought lunch for Kathy, Glenda and Lauren. Kindness had found another route.

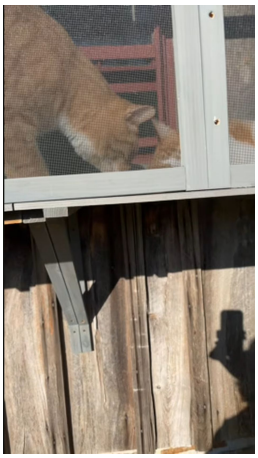


Mary speaking in the November 20 replay as the conversation turns to paying kindness forward, at 17:23.

Mary also had a story about being on the receiving end. On her way into a doctor's appointment, someone said good morning as she was getting out of the car. She said good morning back and walked in feeling a little less stressed. A viewer had mentioned greeting the bus driver, and Mary had just felt what a few familiar words could do. Watch Wednesday's invitation · Watch Friday's follow-up

Burlap outside, quilts inside

Mary moved more porch plants into the shed and spread some mulch early in the week. On Thursday, Justin helped her put up burlap to break the wind around some of the younger plants. She also had straw ready for the raised beds, and there were still a few daisies blooming on Wednesday.



The cats have the window view in Mary's catio, at 26:05.

The cats were conducting their own winter preparations. Mary needed two quilts to cover the log-cabin couch; they needed only a little pouncing to put both on the floor. OJ and Java took the quieter option, sunshine in the

catio. Cleo, Opie and Theo's mother, still preferred outdoors. Mary noticed her fluffy winter coat and wondered whether colder weather would finally bring her inside. Friday's catio visit

The herd had one question: where is breakfast?

Could Mary visit the barn without becoming responsible for breakfast? The goats were not convinced. Justin was unloading stools for the packing crew's tall worktable, and the herd was still waiting for grain. They spotted Mary and came running. She ducked into the pen she calls the middle school, faced the waiting row and explained: "I'm not the grain lady."



Mary's goats gather inside the barn during breakfast rounds. AI-reconstructed from the video frame at 34:28.

Mary made a barn tour out of the wait. She showed the old maternity stalls and introduced Hopscotch, who gets around on three legs, and Mallerie, who Mary says will sit on a lap for hours. When the herd turned to the hay, Mary made for the gate. They followed. Stella from the merch crew arrived just in time to help with the exit. Watch the Friday barn visit